

NEWSBRIEFS

Immigrant flights

Mexican nationals who are detained for illegally entering the U.S. will be returned via charter aircraft from Tucson, Arizona to Mexico City or Guadalajara and offered bus transportation from there to the communities from which they originated, according to a July 12 announcement by the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security and the Government of Mexico. The program, dubbed Interior Repatriation Program (IRP), is intended to "save immigrant lives and stop the cycle of human and illegal trafficking," according to DHS Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security, Asa Hutchinson. He said the objective of the IRP, which is offered on a voluntary basis to detained illegal immigrants, is to disrupt the cycle of human smuggling by removing them from the border region where smuggling organizations flourish. "The deaths of so many in the desert are a tragedy that must end," Hutchinson said. The IRP will be assessed over the summer months and is currently billed as a pilot program. IRP flights are not offered to migrants charged with other crimes. Families of illegal immigrants will also not be separated, the announcement said — if the entire family does not opt for the flight, no one in the family will be eligible.

CHIP criticized

The Texas State Auditor has issued a report highly critical of the administration of the Children's Health Insurance Program by the Health and Human Services Commission. The report — available at the state's website, <http://www.sao.state.tx.us/reports/2004/04-042.pdf> — finds in excess of \$20 million in unnecessary or excessive payments by the commission out of CHIP funds to the contractor. Brooke Rollins, president of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, issued this statement: "This is precisely why the calls to simply throw more money at government programs flunks the common sense-test. Programs like CHIP must be scrubbed for sound management, fiscal efficiency and effectiveness long before we entertain the idea of simply giving them millions more. Solutions such as deregulating health insurance thus making it more affordable for employers to offer to employees is the real answer to our uninsured crisis in Texas." The Texas Public Policy Foundation is the state's largest and oldest independent, free market research institute focusing on Texas' public policy challenges. Based in Austin, Texas, the Foundation does not accept government funding.

In other news

■ Residents of Hudspeth County and numerous visitors and dignitaries converged

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Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.

— Quips & Quotes



SISD WELCOMES NEW FLAGPOLE — Construction crews from U.S. Flag and Flagpole of Beaumont, Texas installed Socorro ISD's new Freedom Flag pole July 8 on the landscaped northwest grounds of the Student Activities Complex, 1300 Joe Battle Boulevard. The white, 100-foot pole, delivered in sections, was anchored and assembled July 7 and 8. The installation has been designed to support a garrison-sized flag 20 feet tall by 38 feet wide — and the District is working on plans to illuminate the flag and pole. During the past two years, community individuals and businesses donated money for the project. A dedication ceremony is being planned for this fall.

Canutillo continues to fill out five-year picture of the future

By Don Woodyard
 Courier Staff Writer

CANUTILLO — Two more Canutillo ISD administrators have added their own brush strokes and filled in the blank areas of the five-year plan currently being formulated by the district.

Presentations on the long-range picture of the district came at a recent special meeting of the district's board of trustees.

Dr. Renee O'Donnell, executive director for human resources, explained the steps being taken to ensure that Canutillo ISD staffing, from bus drivers to teachers, keeps pace with the projected growth in student population.

Comptroller Tony Reza went over state and local funding and how they impact budgets for the years ahead.

Their presentations followed those of Dr. John Kessinger, assistant superintendent for operations and planning; and Dr. Pam Padilla, assistant superintendent for student performance, as highlighted in a previous issue of the *Courier*.

The four administrators' pictures of the future were framed with change — outside factors over which they had no direct control. These included present and future housing developments, as indicated by Kessinger, and changing state funding formulas as pointed out by Reza.

Based on past performance and experience, the educators gave an educated guess for the future.

O'Donnell based her personnel projections on an average three percent growth per year plus an additional housing construction factor that could accelerate the growth rate.

Key points include:

- There are 354 teachers now. In five years that number could be 510.
- Specifically, she sees the need for an increase of 156 in the teaching and professional support staff over the next five years. In addition to that, there could be a need for seven new administrators, counselors and instructional coordinators.
- Damian is projected to become the largest of the district's elementary schools with an enrollment of just over 1,400 in the five-year period.
- A new school, Alderette Intermediate, is expected in the 2006-07 school year with an enrollment of just under 800.

Reza went over proposed preliminary budgets for the coming years, highlighting elements of those budgets from salaries and benefits to debt service and capital outlay. His financial projections for the future are based, in significant measure, on the previous administrators' assumptions. Change is the name of the game, they said.

He emphasized that projected budgets are based on the best available information on state funding formulas and how they can change from year to year.

Change is inherent in property tax revenues that are based on changing tax rates.

Change is also found in the growing student population that affects the number of new

TDH says first human death from West Nile virus this year is confirmed

AUSTIN — The Texas Department of Health (TDH) today announced the year's first confirmed human case of West Nile in Texas. The victim, an adult resident of Orange County in Southeast Texas, became ill in June and later died.

For medical confidentiality and personal privacy reasons, TDH is not providing additional information about the individual.

TDH encourages people to take personal precautions against West Nile, a viral illness spread by some mosquitoes.

Precautions include using an insect repellent that contains DEET, draining standing water where mosquitoes hatch, dressing in long sleeves and pants when appropriate and limiting outdoor activity at night, especially around dusk and dawn when many mosquitoes are more active.

"The most important personal precaution is the use of an insect repellent," said Joe Garrett, a TDH epidemiologist.

He said more than three-fourths of the Texas cases of serious West Nile illness last year never used an insect repellent. "That's a strong and unfortunate illustration that use of an insect repellent is extremely important," Garrett said.

TDH recorded 439 human cases of West Nile in Texas last year, including 38 deaths. In 2002, there were 202 human cases, including 13 deaths.

Since the virus was first found in Texas in 2002, West Nile has been detected in humans, birds, mosquitoes or horses in 230 of Texas' 254 counties, including 11 this year.

"We have to assume that the West Nile virus is present throughout the state, and we're encouraging people not to wait on reports of cases in their areas before taking personal precautions," Garrett said.

West Nile is a virus spread by some mosquitoes after they have bitten infected birds.

Most people who become infected with the virus do not become ill. Others may have fever, headache, body aches and swollen lymph nodes. A small percentage may develop serious West Nile illness, including encephalitis and meningitis.

The first human case of West Nile in Texas last year became ill June 11. The first case in 2002 became ill July 3.

More information about West Nile, including statistics updates, is available online at www.tdh.state.tx.us.

— Contributed by Doug McBride, TDH

teachers and other support staff that must be hired. For the upcoming school year he assumes an increase of 5.66 percent in state funding to more than \$580,000 and an average daily attendance increase of 14 percent to 5,101.

The 2003-04 budget was \$33.6 million. Next year's budget is set at a little more than \$36 million. The budgets show increases within the time period, reaching an estimated \$50.8 million in 2008-09.

"Canutillo ISD's financial operations are on solid ground," Reza said in a recent district publication, "Now is the time." He adds that "Canutillo's ISD financial goals are to remain fiscally sound and maximize taxpayers' money."



One perspective

By Francis Shrum

Practically speaking

I recently attended an event sponsored by one of the area school districts. As the keynote speaker approached the lectern, he greeted the audience — in both English and Spanish.

Thereafter, everything he said in English he repeated in Spanish.

It was evident — since the audience was mostly educators and area

professionals or businessmen — that there was only a fraction of a chance that someone in the group did not speak, or at least understand well, the English language.

I don't speak Spanish. I wish I did. Because I understood just enough of what the speaker was saying in Spanish to know that it was somewhat different from what he had said the first time in English.

What I am going to say next may sound ethnically divisive, but believe me, that is not my intent. What I want to say is being said in absolute, complete sincerity and I'm not joking.

Practically speaking, I want somebody to teach me to speak Spanish — and I don't want to have to shell out big bucks to pay for it. Speaking Spanish in El Paso County these days is as essential to living a complete and successful life as is speaking English.

Since our governmental agencies offer free English lessons to everyone, children and adults, we should offer free Spanish lessons, too.

Not too long ago, I bought an extensive — and expensive — Spanish-language course, complete with audio tapes, work books and the

whole bit. I proudly showed it to Spanish-speaking friends, who sadly shook their heads.

This will do you little good here, they said. The Spanish you speak when you get through this course will hardly be more recognizable in everyday use in El Paso County than English.

I can understand that. Sometimes the English I speak to English-speakers gets me some odd looks. I know that my accent and sometimes odd metaphorical references — which make perfect sense where I grew up — don't carry the same connotations with somebody from another part of the country, sometimes even from another county.

So what I want is a class that will teach me how to speak passable, ac-

ceptable, rudimentary Spanish that I can fill in with use. But I don't think I should have to pay a lot of money to get it.

Over the years I've lived in the El Paso area, I've met many embittered people who have been financially and socially penalized because they don't speak Spanish.

In fact, right now there is a young woman who is joyously brushing the dust of El Paso off her feet as she heads back to Indiana. A well-educated, capable person, she said she has been miserable ever since moving here, due to the language barrier.

She's far from being a rarity in this community. I've known innumerable people who get turned down for jobs here because they don't speak Spanish. They have a hard time making friends because in many social settings, such as PTO meetings or Tupperware parties, the group you are with lapses into Spanish and you're left wondering what the end of the story was.

It's real hard to bargain at garage sales in El Paso County if you don't speak Spanish.

I went to a folklorico dance recital for my daughter several years ago, and the master of ceremonies conducted the entire thing in Spanish. That didn't ruin it for me, of course, but it left an impression. Along about that same time I had a part-time job as a playground monitor. It was me and four other ladies. But my supervisor spoke only Spanish. She'd give long, detailed instructions, and then one of the other ladies would translate to me — a short, abbreviated version that left me woefully uninformed.

Don't get me wrong. I loved all those ladies and they were warm, friendly and sincere in their affection for me. It's just that the language barrier made it real hard for me to do my job.

It is an undeniable fact that the Spanish language is always going to be a heavily dominant force in this community. So how about it?

Practically speaking, shouldn't we be teaching people how?



WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

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PUBLISHED: Published each Thursday by Homesteader News, Inc. Appreciation to our many contributors. Office open Monday through Thursday.

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MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS: 52 issues for \$35. Delivery via 1st class mail.

ADDRESS: 15344 Werling Court Horizon City, TX 79928

Phone: 852-3235
Fax: 852-0123
E-mail: wtcc@wtccourier.com
Website: wtccourier.com
Publisher Rick Shrum
Business Manager Francis D. Shrum
Contributors Don Woodyard Steve Escajeda Arleen Beard



Homesteader News, Inc. Est. 1973

Por la Gente By State Rep. Chente Quintanilla



Young truants help clean up

Hola, mi gente. For the past few days, I've been thinking about how wonderful teenagers are, if we stop to consider how valuable they are to our community and how important they are in the grand scheme of things. This includes the group of truants who helped clean up the Montana Vista community the day after the Fourth of July.

Every year, thousands of El Pasoans trek to that far east community to shoot off their fireworks, leaving a horrific mess for others to pick up after them. Even though they are asked to pick up their own mess, too many people don't heed that advice. Some of them think it's someone else's responsibility to conduct clean up efforts. Others simply don't care. They don't live there, so why should they worry about dumping their excess garbage? They figure someone else will take care of that problem.

Two years ago our office joined forces with Judge Ruben Lujan and

organized the "After 4th of July Beautification and Clean-Up Project for the Montana Vista Community." Approximately 130 youths who were adjudicated for having problems attending school were sent by Judge Ruben Lujan to help in the clean up effort in lieu of paying a fine. Even though they were forced to contribute their time and energy, they did so with speed and dedication to the task.

With trash bags in hand, these truants roamed throughout the Montana Vista community picking up the huge mountains of trash left by revelers. Yes, they were forced to be there, and yes, they have problems in school, but you wouldn't have known it to see them work.

Another positive about these youngsters' community service, is that their parents receive some financial relief. Normally, if a child is truant to the point where it becomes a problem, the parents are also punished. They must pay a fine because they can't keep their child in school. By making their kids clean up the area the parents got a break. However, many parents also participated

in the trash pick up along with other El Paso volunteers. The way I see it, from negative situations, positive actions arise. Donations may not always be monetary — sometimes sweat labor takes the place of donations.

This event was one example of the so-called "sweat equity" which some communities have adopted as ways to improve their infrastructures without having to spend exorbitant amounts of money. What can be better than to see teenagers, and even younger, El Pasoans — and, let's not forget the adults — performing a service that will benefit our city and our county.

To the truants who did such a great job, and to the other volunteers who also worked hard under the scorching sun, I offer a humble thanks for a job great done. We'll see you here next year. And, if you were one of those truants. Play your cards right and don't mess up in school and, who knows, maybe next year you will just be a volunteer, instead of a truant. Know what I mean?

Until then, I remain your friend and public servant, Chente for la gente.

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

Internet pharmacies are not worth the safety risk



Recent news reports have mischaracterized the results of a government report on Internet pharmacies, misleading many readers to believe that buying drugs online is safer.

In fact, the report — released by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress — contains disturbing information about the growing amount of medicine purchased over the Internet, and the associated risk to consumers. It's important to clarify these findings and the safety concerns they present.

Some of the highlights of the June 17 report, entitled *Internet Pharmacies: Some Pose Safety Risks for Consumers*, include:

- Significant problems were found with the handling and authenticity of drugs shipped. Some lacked the necessary refrigeration, or arrived in damaged or unconventional packaging. One shipment that was supposed to contain the pain medicine OxyContin was received in a CD case wrapped in brown paper, devoid of warning labels or instructions. Another was shipped inside a sealed aluminum can enclosed in a box labeled "Gold Dye and Stain Remover Wax?"

- Two-thirds of the drugs the GAO attempted to buy were easily purchased without a prescription. Some web sites required only the completion of an online questionnaire, even for controlled substances such as narcotics.

- Four of the 68 samples of drugs purchased over the Internet were entirely counterfeit. Orders for Accutane, OxyContin and Viagra from foreign countries either had lesser amounts of the active ingredi-

ents or completely different chemical compositions than the real form of the drugs, putting patients at serious risk.

- Several Internet pharmacies engaged in fraudulent business practices, such as not delivering orders at all or using invalid return addresses. Fourteen of the 68 web sites were under investigation by authorities either in the United States, Canada or other countries.

- Not one of the foreign pharmacies outside of Canada provided labels with instructions on appropriate use of the prescription, as U.S. regulations require. Few included important warning information on drug interactions or side effects. And ostensibly Canadian web sites aren't guaranteed, either: The Washington Policy Center recently noted that the drugs they sell to Americans can actually be from Iran, Argentina, South Africa or Brazil. In addition, the FDA has a commission investigating imported drugs from Canada.

While the Internet has helped to connect society in unprecedented ways, and led to the growth of a genuine global marketplace, it has significant limitations — particularly a vulnerability to fraud and abuse.

In no area is it more critical to recognize and guard against these weaknesses than pharmaceuticals. The GAO acknowledged as much, concluding its report by stating, "It is notable that we identified these numerous problems despite the relatively small number of drugs we purchased." These are not isolated incidents.

Lives are literally on the line. Take the tragic story of Ryan Haight, a 16-year-old honor roll student in La

Mesa, California who died from a mixture of hydrocodone, morphine, Valium and Oxazepam obtained from Internet pharmacies. The experience of University of San Francisco professor Rick Roberts, diagnosed with AIDS in 1988, provides another cautionary tale. Several months after starting treatment with a new drug, he began to notice a stinging sensation at the injection site. After months of intensive lab work, it was discovered that he had received two different types of counterfeit medicine: one was 1/16 of the strength of the growth hormone that he was supposed to be taking, and had been contaminated; the other was a hormone produced by pregnant women.

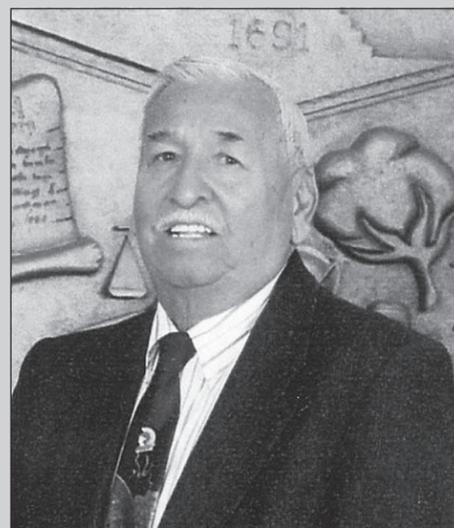
As a result of research and development of new pharmaceutical products, we have made tremendous strides in treating conditions that previously offered patients little or no hope. We cannot compromise this progress by allowing potentially unsafe products to enter our drug supply.

The Medicare Modernization Act of 2004 is beginning to provide relief to seniors who are struggling to purchase affordable drugs. Discount cards are available and provide \$600 in transitional assistance for low-income beneficiaries. The full, integrated drug benefit will become available in 2006. These efforts will reduce the costs of prescription drugs without creating new risks for consumers. As tempting as the low prices of Internet pharmacies are, the risks are far higher, and not worth taking.

The full GAO report is available at www.gao.gov.

Socorro community servant, Ricardo F. Ortiz, dies at 73

SOCORRO — Ricardo F. Ortiz, 73, died on Monday, June 28. He was a longtime resident and community leader in the City of Socorro.



Ricardo F. Ortiz

Ortiz had a long history of community service to this Lower Valley community where he was born. In 1988 he helped form, and served as president of, the Concerned Citizens Group, which worked to bring the Socorro community back to the status of an active incorporated municipality.

Throughout his long history of service he served as a member of the boards of the Rio Grande Council of Governments, the Texas Leadership Forum, and the Socorro ISD. From 1988 to 1992 he was president of the City of Socorro's Planning and Zoning, and was a founding member of the Lower Valley Water District board of directors. In 1994 he served as vice president of the Socorro Charter Commission, and in 2001, he was appointed chairman of the sec-

ond Socorro Charter Commission. Most recently he served as chairman of the Socorro Civil Service Commission in 2002.

A veteran of the U.S. Army, he is survived by his wife of 52 years, Olivia M. Ortiz; his four children: Gloria, Richard, Rudy and Marta; his son-in-law, Adan; and five grandchildren: Andrea, Matthew, Melina, Nicholas and Marissa. He is also survived by his sister, Elva Robledo and his brothers: Willie Ortiz and wife Martha; and Reymundo Federico and his wife, Gloria.

Socorro High student attends West Coast forum

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Socorro High School junior Jackie Lee Beltran is spending 10 days in San Francisco, July 7-16, as part of the National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine. He will be one of 350 high school students who will be introduced to concepts of public health, medical ethics, research and general practice during the 10-day session.

"This will help me get ahead in my studies at Socorro High," Beltran says. He's part of the Health Professions Academy Magnet School program at Socorro High.

"I think this forum will really help me because during the coming school

year, we'll do rotations in El Paso hospitals," he said before his trip. "In San Francisco, I'll be able to see facilities and learn about their operation." The group will also participate in problem-solving sessions to diagnose and develop treatment for a fictional patient.

Beltran is keeping his career options open. "I'm interested in cardiology, and the ear, nose and throat specialty, and I'm also interested in physical therapy."

The NYLF is a nonprofit educational organization that brings together various professions with outstanding young people enabling the students to make informed career choices.



Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes

Veterans deserve strong GI bill

This year, we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, better known as the Montgomery GI Bill. This landmark legislation, ushered through Congress and signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944, not only recognized veterans for their service to our country, it contributed more to the welfare of our veterans, their families and the economy as a whole, than any other federal program. And today, 60 years later, it still continues to have an enormous positive impact on the lives of our nation's servicemembers.

When passed in 1944, the GI Bill provided veterans with the financial means to further their education, buy homes or start businesses. It also provided unemployment pay for up to 52 weeks. Today's GI Bill covers 36 months of education benefits for college courses, technical or vocational courses, correspondence courses, apprenticeship, job training or flight training.

Today, it is still of the utmost importance that we continue to provide

generous education benefits, as well as the health and retirement benefits our servicemembers and their families have earned and deserve. A new generation of veterans are now serving in Iraq, Afghanistan and other posts around the world. We need to send a positive message to these troops that the nation they are so selflessly serving will take care of them with equal commitment and dedication.

In Congress, we are debating the budget for fiscal year 2005. The House of Representatives passed its fiscal year 2005 budget resolution this past March. I had many reservations about this bill — among them the paltry funding for veterans initiatives — and voted against the bill. The House-passed budget reflected President Bush's budget in that it included higher co-payments for veterans' drug benefits, a new enrollment fee for more affluent veterans seeking to obtain VA medical care, and was billions short in addressing the Veterans Administration's needs. The House-passed budget resolution also did not put an end to two unnecessary and unfair taxes veterans and their families currently endure: the Widow's Tax, which reduces

widow's retirement benefits at the age of 62, and the Disabled Veteran's Tax, which reduces a veteran's retirement benefits by the amount equal to their disability pay.

As Congress continues to debate funding for these veterans programs for the upcoming fiscal year, I hope my colleagues will keep the GI Bill in mind. For six decades, the GI Bill has grown, providing educational opportunities for countless numbers of veterans — helping not only our veterans and their families, but our economy, our military, and our country as a whole. Subjecting veterans and their families to the Widow's Tax, the Disabled Veterans Tax or poor health coverage isn't going to help our veterans or our country. Providing strong health, education and retirement benefits for our veterans isn't just the right thing to do, it is in the best interests of our country. We need to take care of the individuals that make up the U.S. military, including servicemen and women, their spouses and their children — after all, these men and women have fought and are fighting for the safety and security of our country. Why must they also fight the government to get the benefits they deserve?

TRUE TEXAS FACTS by Roger T. Moore. The 1015 sweet onion is the official state vegetable...things are sweeter in Texas.



Help and information available for users of private well water supply

EL PASO COUNTY — Private water well owners are in a unique position. They control their own water supply. With this benefit comes some responsibilities. Private well owners are responsible for protecting their ground water resource as well as their families' health.

Occasionally, based on a news report or the color or smell of the water, well owners may wonder about the safety of their water supply. What can they do?

Testing water for the most common well contaminants is the best course of action. The following information from the National Ground Water Association (NGWA) also may answer some of your questions:

• How common are water problems? "Pure" water does not exist—all natural water contains some gases and minerals, and is likely to contain some microbial organisms. Most water bacteria are harmless and many are actually beneficial.

• I've heard about coliform bacteria. What are they?

Coliform bacteria originate as organisms in soil or vegetation and in the intestinal tract of warm-blooded animals (fecal coli). The many sources of bacterial pollution include runoff from woodlands, pastures and feedlots; septic tanks and sewage plants; and animals (wild or domestic).

• Will coliform bacteria make us sick?

Maybe, maybe not. Most coliforms are harmless residents of soil and will not make people sick. Some strains of E. coli, the most common fecal coliform bacterium, may be pathogens. Some found in

food have been lethal. Their presence should be taken very seriously.

• If my water is clear and smells ok, is it safe?

You cannot directly smell unsafe bacteria or protozoa. They can only be detected using tests designed for that purpose. Therefore water quality should be checked regularly. NGWA recommends an annual check of water quality and well maintenance, unless changes in water quality suggest the need to test the water at a lesser interval. For instance, some sources of odors are bacteria or septic, or the presence of chemicals. It is a good idea to take your nose seriously. Have the water tested.

• What is the "iron bacteria" problem? Better described as iron biofouling, it consists of biofilms, which include living and dead bacteria, their sheaths, stalks, secretions and other leavings, and embedded metal hydroxide particles. "Iron bacteria" is one type of biofouling among several, including the white sulfur slime of sulfur springs. Manganese and even aluminum biofouling also is found in ground water systems. These biofilms are natural and usually harmless. Natural iron biofouling often acts as a preliminary iron filter in wells and therefore can serve a positive function as well. Biofouling can be a nuisance, however. Generally, iron biofouling is the cause of iron buildup in wells and pipes.

• If I have bacteria in my well, where do they come from?

Many types of bacteria are native or adapted to saturated sediments and rock, and are present in signifi-

cant numbers in most water supply aquifers, even deep formations. Given time and a route (soil and rock provide plenty of both), bacteria will migrate into and take up housekeeping in an aquifer. "Non-native" coliform bacterial or "protozoa" of potential health concerns, such as Giardia and Cryptosporidium, are most likely introduced from the surface.

What do we do about this problem? If possible, do whatever it takes to correct the problem in your existing system. Sometimes this may even involve a new well and water inlet system away from the source of contamination.

• What's the best way to maintain my good water supply?

You should have your water tested annually for radon, bacteria and anything else of concern to you, even if you do not perceive a change in your water. Have your water tested by a qualified laboratory. They are listed in your phone book under "Water Testing" or "Laboratories."

The question of whether or not to have water tested is a serious one that concerns the health of the families who use it. Those who obtain drinking water from privately owned wells are responsible for assuring that it is safe.

• Where can I get more information?

For more information, contact a local ground water contractor or the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791. You can find an NGWA member contractor near you by going to www.wellowner.org and clicking on "Contractor Lookup" at the top of the page.

New assistant superintendent on board at SISD

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Anna Lisa Banegas-Peña has joined Socorro ISD as Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education after seven years with El Paso's Region 19 Education Service Center and 13 years as principal of elementary, middle and high school campuses.



Banegas-Peña

Banegas-Peña received her bachelor's degree in elementary education from New Mexico State University. She also holds a Master's degree in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis on bilingual education and is certified in Administration, Early Childhood, Special Education and Reading.

At Region 19 the Texas Education Agency's El Paso headquarters, Banegas-Peña worked as a district liaison for SISD and as a program specialist for the bilingual and English-As-A-Second-Language (ESL) programs. She also worked with the Principal Development and Assessment functions and finally as director

of the Migrant Education Program. "I've always felt a connection with Socorro. When I first came into Texas schools from New Mexico, I was a principal in Canutillo at a low-performing school. We received help from the Region, and Lorenzo Nieto of SISD, who was very helpful to us at that school, and at the end of the first year, we went from something like the 19th percentile to the 45th in passing rates."

She says that and subsequent events including her selection as Region 19's liaison to SISD have made her feel close to the District.

Banegas-Peña says she's looking forward to working closely with Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education Antonio Baca, adding that one of Socorro's strong points is that principals really desire to be where they are. "I envision the District collectively going forward to a destination of ongoing student achievement."

Sainz joins Socorro ISD administration

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Terri Sainz is Socorro ISD's new director of elementary Education, and comes to Socorro from the Ysleta Independent School District where she was Director of the Math/Science Partnership (MSP) and the Urban Systemic Program (USP).



Terri Sainz

Prior to becoming the MSP/USP Director, she was principal at Mesa Vista Elementary School. Sainz attended the University of Texas at El Paso where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with a minor in sociology and a Master's degree as an Instructional Specialist with a minor in Early Childhood Education. Her teaching experience consists of el-

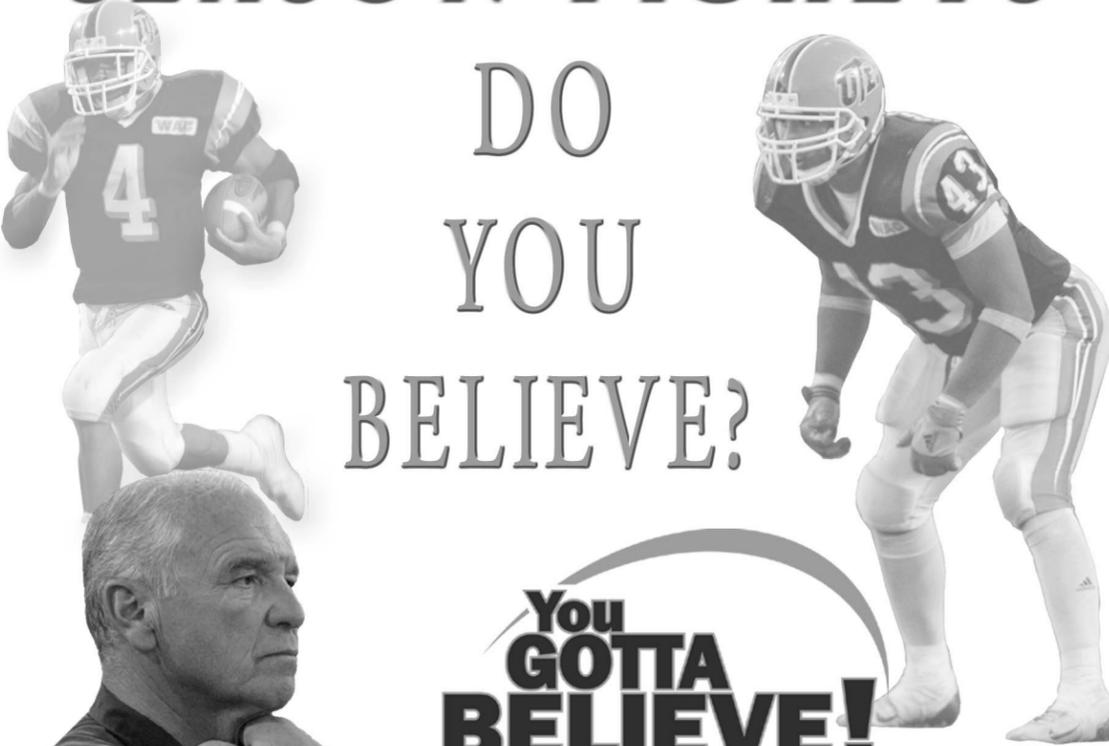
mentary education including early childhood, middle school math and Spanish, high school English as a Second Language or ESL, and basic math and reading skills at El Paso Community College (EPCC).

At EPCC, she worked in the Instructional Development Services office assisting in course development and was Curriculum Coordinator for the PIC Summer Youth Program.

Sainz is a member of many professional organizations and is especially passionate about math and science education. "I'm looking forward to joining Socorro ISD in its 'Mission of Excellence'" Sainz says, says "and helping move the District from good to great!"

2004 FOOTBALL SEASON TICKETS

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Canutillo Independent School District

Millions in funding for Ft. Bliss clears another hurdle

WASHINGTON D.C. — Funding for Fort Bliss, White Sands Missile Range and Holloman Air Force Base is included in the fiscal year 2005 Defense Appropriations bill, which the House of Representatives passed. Congressman Silvestre Reyes said the following is included in the bill:

- \$7 million for an Air and Missile Defense Training Center at Fort Bliss to improve soldiers' performance by providing increased feedback during exercises and allowing Fort Bliss soldiers to train as they fight;
- \$2 million for missions and headquarters support at Joint Task Force Six (JTF-6), located at Biggs Army Airfield;
- \$938 million for theater missile defense, including \$490 million for 108 PAC III missiles (the advanced Patriot anti-ballistic missiles used by Fort Bliss soldiers);
- \$62 million for 56 Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) missiles - all-weather, day/night, long-range, rapid response weapons assembled in Horizon City;
- \$5 million to modernize the test ranges at White Sands Missile Range;
- \$35 million for Impact Aid, a federal program that compensates school districts affected by a lo-

cal federal presence, such as a military base;

- \$9.8 million to upgrade 10 F-117A Nighthawks at Holloman Air Force Base; and
- \$7.9 million to maintain 52 F-117A Nighthawks at Holloman Air Force Base.

"Fort Bliss, White Sands Missile Range and Holloman Air Force Base are critical to our nation's security," said Reyes. "The Air and Missile Defense Training Center will provide Fort Bliss with the technology to improve their current training and readiness. Unlike most of our ground forces, our Air and Missile Defense (AMD) units currently do not have the opportunity to 'train like we fight' with rotations at the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, CA.

"This bill restores funding for F-117A Nighthawks at Holloman Air Force Base. Responding to the Air Force's decision earlier this year to retire ten Stealth Fighters at Holloman, I strongly urged the Air Force to reconsider their decision. The F-117As at Holloman are the only Nighthawks in the world and cutting the fleet would compromise our national security. I was pleased that this bill recognizes the importance of these radar-evading Nighthawks," said Reyes.

Canutillo Elementary School awarded \$35,000 technology grant

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

UPPER VALLEY — Canutillo Elementary School was selected recently as one of the 151 elementary, middle and high schools nationwide to receive an HP Technology for Teaching grant, which is designed to transform and improve learning through the innovative use of technology.

A team of five CES teachers will use the HP wireless technology and other resources to enhance learning in the classroom. The teachers are: Susan C. Smith, technology lead teacher; Joe Bueno, sixth grade teacher; Judith Valle, Gifted & Talented program teacher; Sharon Walker, sixth grade teacher; and Rick Armstrong, music teacher.

CES will receive an award package valued at more than \$35,000, which will include five HP Tablet PCs, five multimedia projectors, an Officejet all-in-one, digital camera, help desk support for one year, a \$500 stipend per teacher and a professional development program that includes customized learning opportunities, expert mentoring and participation in an online learning

community to support teachers' use of technology.

The grant participants will use the technology in many ways to encourage and develop student learning. Plans are to have sixth grade students use the HP technology to create a documentary of the people and the environment that make up their community.

"The technology will be used as a tool to create the first ever video documentary of the students' hometown. Students will learn to film, edit, and produce the video documentary while researching and writing about the history of Canutillo," said Smith.

"The project will begin in September and be completed in February. We hope to enter the video documentary in the Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA) technology competition and in the annual film festival in Las Cruces in March," stated Smith.

The HP Technology for Teaching grants, totaling more than \$10 million over 2004-05 among 151 kindergarten through 12th grade public schools and 42 two- and four-year colleges and universities, support HP's broader education goal of transforming teaching and learning through the integration of technology in the classroom and beyond.

Briefs

From Page 1

on the community of Sierra Blanca to rededicate the historic Hudspeth County Courthouse on July 3. A landmark building familiar to the area from the earliest days of the community, the courthouse is the only remaining courthouse in use in Texas constructed of adobe. Extensively and faithfully renovated, the center of Hudspeth County government still houses the original jail quarters, though they are no longer in use. Visitors to the event were treated to a parade, historic exhibitions, music, dancing, fireworks, and an extensive arts and crafts show and a gun show.

■ All children are welcome to share their favorite book or come and listen to stories throughout the month of July, Monday through Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the El Paso County Library 1331 N. Fabens St. in Fabens. Information is at 764-3635.

■ Want to be a master gardener? The Texas Cooperative Extension of Texas A&M is offering 14 weeks of intensive horticulture

training in exchange for at least 75 hours of volunteer service after the course is completed. Classes begin in September and run through December. Enrollment is limited and application deadline is Aug. 1. Call 859-7725 for details and registration.

■ A Refuse to be a Victim seminar will be offered in El Paso on Aug. 21, a crime prevention program developed by the women members of the National Rifle Association. The seminar offers commonsense crime prevention and personal safety strategies and devices that may be integrated into daily life — firearm instruction is not included. Emphasis is on prevention of criminal confrontations. The seminar, to be held at the Chamizel room of the Ysleta ISD Headquarters at 9600 Sims, requires pre-registration by July 26 by calling Alice Tripp at 512-253-9032 or e-mailing agtripp@aol.com. Opportunities to become a seminar instructor are also offered — for information call 800-861-1166, e-mail at refuse@nrahq.org or visit the program's website at <http://www.nrahq.org/rtbav>.

■ Over 1,000 early childhood educators from Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Arizona

have converged on El Paso for a three-day conference that started this morning. The sixth annual Academy for Teachers of Young Children conference is being held in the Judson F. Williams Convention Center, 1 Civic Center Plaza, starting today through Wednesday afternoon. This is a regional conference that now attracts more attendees than the statewide conference it grew out of six years ago did. Local organizers say the Academy was started to get West Texas educators to a conference closer to their area — focusing mainly on West Texas and the Panhandle. The Academy broke off from the Early Childhood Summer Institute (ECSI) which always held its conventions in East Texas. The ECSI stopped hosting a conference two years ago and the Academy has seen its numbers increase in that time. This is the second time the Academy is in El Paso and includes participants who work in pre-school programs for children with disabilities, head start programs, child care, Texas state agencies and in hospital settings. The conference is being coordinated locally by the Region 19 Education Service Center. The mission of the Academy is to provide a high quality training opportunity for professionals who work with all

young children and infants. The focus for 2004 is on behavior issues, attention issues, and language.

■ The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has awarded the University of Texas-El Paso (UTEP) \$189,741 to recruit Hispanic students into the nursing profession. This grant is the first installment of a \$670,000 three-year grant for the Nursing Workforce Diversity Program at UTEP. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) created this program to improve the racial and ethnic diversity of the nursing workforce and meet the increasing needs of the population for culturally sensitive and appropriate health care. "The El Paso community not only needs more nurses, we need more nurses who understand the particular health risks and challenges of the Hispanic community," said Congressman Silvestre Reyes, D-El Paso. "HHS's investment in UTEP takes important strides towards providing this culturally-relevant care."

■ El Paso Academy, the city's self-paced charter school has hired a new superintendent to begin Aug. 1. Ben Tice, Jr., former administrator at Helen Ball Elementary School, has accepted the Superin-

tendent position at El Paso Academy. Tice said he is excited to take the helm at El Paso Academy which gives high school students



the opportunity to learn at their own pace. "Education has been cookie-cutter for so many years and innovation is tough," Tice

he said, adding that El Paso Academy is uniquely suited to meet the special needs of non-traditional high school students who hold down a part-time job or need to graduate early because it has smaller class sizes and an educational process tailored to individual needs. Tice graduated from UTEP with a Bachelor's degree in Mass Communications and a Master's degree in Anthropology. He has worked in education for the last 17 years, including time at Cathedral High School, Our Lady of Assumption, San Elizario schools, and the Socorro ISD. He expects to complete his doctorate next year from UTEP emphasizing education in multicultural diverse settings.



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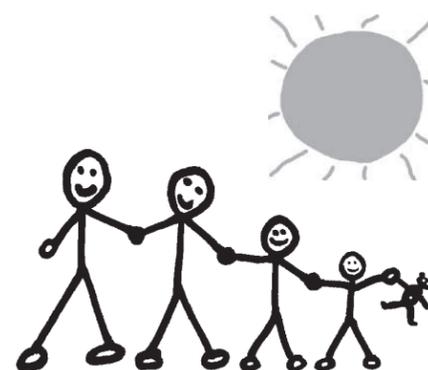
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NOTICE TO CUSTOMER

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 approximately \$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.

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION AND INTENT TO OBTAIN A WATER QUALITY PERMIT

PROPOSED PERMIT NO. WQ0014529001

APPLICATION. El Paso County Tornillo Water Improvement District, P.O. Box 136, Tornillo, Texas 79853-0136, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for a Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

(TPDES) Permit No. WQ0014529001 (EPA I.D. No. TX0126772) to authorize the discharge of treated wastewater at a volume not to exceed a daily average flow of 730,000 gallons per day. The domestic wastewater treatment facility is located at 695 Henderson Road, at the northwest corner of the intersection of Henderson Road and the Tornillo Drain, approximately 7,000 feet southwest of State Highway 20 in El Paso County, Texas. The discharge route is from the plant site to the Tornillo Drain; thence to the Rio Grande River, below the riverside diversion dam. This application was submitted to the TCEQ on May 13, 2004. The permit application is available for viewing and copying at the El Paso County Tornillo Water Improvement District Office, 19225 Highland Street, Tornillo, Texas.

The TCEQ executive director has determined the application is administratively complete and will conduct a technical review of the application. After completion of the technical review, the TCEQ will issue a Notice of Application and Preliminary Decision.

PUBLIC COMMENT / PUBLIC MEETING. You may submit public comments or request a public meeting about this application. The purpose of a public meeting is to provide the opportunity to submit comments or to ask questions about the application. The TCEQ will hold a public meeting if the executive director determines that there is a significant degree of public interest in the application or if requested by a local legislator. A public meeting is not a contested case hearing.

Written public comments or requests for a public meeting must be submitted to the Office of the Chief Clerk, MC 105, TCEQ, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087.

ADDITIONAL NOTICE. After technical review of the application is complete, the executive director may prepare a draft permit and will issue a preliminary decision on the application. **Notice of the Application and Preliminary Decision will be published and mailed to those who are on the county-wide mailing list or**

the mailing list for this application. That notice will contain the final deadline for submitting public comments.

OPPORTUNITY FOR A CONTESTED CASE HEARING. After the deadline for public comments, the executive director will consider the comments and prepare a response to all relevant and material, or significant public comments. **The response to comments, along with the executive director's decision on the application, will be mailed to everyone who submitted public comments or who requested to be on the mailing list for this application. If comments are received, the mailing will also provide instructions for requesting reconsideration of the executive director's decision and for requesting a contested case hearing.** A contested case hearing is a legal proceeding similar to a civil trial in a state district court.

A contested case hearing will only be granted based on disputed issues of fact that are relevant and material to the Commission's decision on the application. Further, the Commission will only grant a hearing on issues that were raised during the public comment period and not withdrawn.

MAILING LIST. In addition to submitting public comments, you may ask to be placed on a mailing list to receive future public notices mailed by the Office of the Chief Clerk. You may request to be added to: (1) the mailing list for this specific application; (2) the permanent mailing list for a specific applicant name and permit number; and/or (3) the permanent mailing list for a specific county. Clearly specify which mailing list(s) to which you wish to be added and send your request to the TCEQ Office of the Chief Clerk at the address above. Unless you otherwise specify, you will be included only on the mailing list for this specific application.

ISSUED: JUNE 30, 2004

WTCC: 07/15/04

Further information may also be obtained from El Paso County Tornillo Water Improvement District at the address stated above or by calling Horacio Juarez, P.E., Brown and Caldwell at 915-545-4400.

Issued: JUNE 30, 2004

WTCC: 07/15/04

BARGAINS

1991 GMC Vandura passenger van. Engine needs work. \$750, negotiable as is. 565-4410.

Three mountain bikes, special editions, excellent condition. Yellow women's 26-inch; red women's 24-inch; white men's 26-inch. Cost average of \$350 when purchased, will sell for \$125 each. 852-2610. 7/15

CHILD SERVICES

A free playgroup for children ages birth to five years meets every Tuesday in Horizon City at St. Brendan's Episcopal Church for an hour of playtime beginning at 10 a.m. At 14999 Darrington Rd., call

at www.tceq.state.tx.us for scheduling and information at 433-7727 or 637-1982.

HELP WANTED

HINES TRUCKING: OTR driver needed, three-year's experience and clean MVR. 855-4630.

SELF-HELP

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

Tiene problemas con el alcohol? Hay una solución. Informacion: 838-6264.

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WAYNE'S WORLD ACROSS

- 1 Big bargain
- 6 Carpentry device
- 11 Diplomacy
- 15 Sault Marie, MI
- 18 Fill with fizz
- 19 "Bolero" composer
- 20 Return address?
- 21 Pallid
- 22 Frequent Wayne co-star
- 24 Film directed by Wayne
- 26 Wayfarer's whistle wetter
- 27 Thrill
- 28 Troubles
- 30 Pianist Gilels
- 31 Word with car or pea
- 33 Muhammad's daughter
- 36 Commotion
- 38 Tune
- 41 Small mall
- 42 Bearing
- 43 Faced the day
- 44 Wayne's birth name
- 49 Grande
- 50 Plot
- 53 Facilitate a felony
- 54 Poetic preposition
- 55 Makes one's mark
- 56 Tortellini topping
- 57 Fretful
- 60 Songwriter
- Greenwich
- 62 Jean of "Upstairs,

- Downstairs" 63 " _ Sorry Now" ('58 hit)
- 64 Gossip material
- 65 Numbers man?
- 67 Wayne's final film
- 72 Went jogging
- 73 Maestro Zubin
- 75 "Braveheart" costume
- 76 Fielder's equipment
- 78 Yale or Root
- 79 Corn
- 81 Simon's "Plaza _"
- 82 Rascal
- 85 Out of sorts
- 86 Restaurateur
- Toots
- 88 Seat cover?
- 89 Actress Peggy
- 90 Oscar-winning Wayne role
- 95 Hugh of "Small Time Crooks"
- 97 Spineless
- 98 Egg evaluation
- 99 Rich soup
- 100 Insist
- 103 Lost one's tail?
- 104 A shake in the grass?
- 105 "Star Trek VI" actress
- 106 Bendix role
- 108 Tease
- 109 Spigot
- 112 Frequent Wayne

- director 114 Wayne's role in "The Searchers"
 - 120 Rink legend
 - 121 New York city
 - 122 Shortstop Pee Wee
 - 123 Volcanic state
 - 124 Comedian Louis
 - 125 Actor Epps
 - 126 A la King?
 - 127 Proficient
- DOWN**
- 1 Navy warrior
 - 2 " _ Colors" ('86 hit)
 - 3 Teacup part
 - 4 Tackled a taco
 - 5 Margin
 - 6 Singer Sheryl
 - 7 _-di-dah
 - 8 Palindromic name
 - 9 "Mal de _"
 - 10 Luciano's colleague
 - 11 Neon _
 - 12 Flu symptom
 - 13 _ cat
 - 14 Shelley's " _ Skylark"
 - 15 Okfeenokee, for one
 - 16 Indian tongue
 - 17 " _ Gay"
 - 18 Internists' org.
 - 23 " _ if I can help it!"
 - 25 Tea of "The Naked Truth"
 - 29 Prayer finale

- 31 _ Cob, CT
 - 32 Forsyth's "The _ File"
 - 33 Surround a Seurat
 - 34 "God's Little _" ('58 film)
 - 35 Skater Babilonia
 - 37 Olympian Al
 - 38 "You Bet Your Life" emcee
 - 39 Part of HOMES
 - 40 Author Anita
 - 41 Don of "Cocoon"
 - 42 Melville title start
 - 45 "Nowhere _" ('66 hit)
 - 46 Actress Diamond
 - 47 Sky stalker
 - 48 _-do-well
 - 51 Supermarket vehicle
 - 52 "Be quiet!"
 - 57 Complete
 - 58 Night noise
 - 59 Relative of -ator
 - 61 Tempt
 - 62 School subject
 - 63 Crackerjack
 - 65 Casals' instrument
 - 66 Detective Vance
 - 68 Emulate 102
- Down**
- 69 Exotic pet
 - 70 Lingerie item
 - 71 Shopper's sack
 - 73 Golda of Israel
 - 74 Darcy's creator
 - 77 "The Aeneid"

- author 79 Mindy's mate
- 80 Circle section
- 81 Fathered a foal
- 82 Neighbor of Jordan
- 83 Waiter's offering
- 84 Fancy appetizer
- 87 TV's "Max _"
- 88 Teen title
- 91 Proust protagonist
- 92 Eye appreciatively
- 93 Cheeseboard choice
- 94 " _ Girls" ('79 smash)
- 96 Pretoria's loc.
- 99 "The Enlightened One"
- 100 Mustard city
- 101 Atlanta campus
- 102 Athlete Phil
- 103 More advanced
- 104 Rush
- 107 Role for Shirley
- 108 Patella's place
- 109 Kisses
- 110 Mine feature
- 111 Pressure meas.
- 113 To and _
- 115 Pigskin prop
- 116 "Tell _ About It" ('83 song)
- 117 " _ see it..."
- 118 Gum gob
- 119 Overwhelm

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NBA trades and pay generate more questions than answers

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

How about that NBA action? No, I don't mean the Detroit Pistons' rout of the Lakers in the finals. Who cares about that? I'm talking about the trade rumors and signings that have occurred since that 5-game snoozer ended.

Some fascinating — and troubling — things have come to light since season's end. I guess the biggest two questions have been where will Shaq be traded and where will Kobe sign to play basketball if he isn't playing the triangle offense in an eight by eight foot cell this time next year.

As of the writing of this column on July 11, it appears that Shaq will call Miami home next year. The Lakers look like they'll get Lamar Odom, Brian Grant and Caron Butler in exchange for the big guy, but that's not enough.

One of the analysts on one of the national sports shows put it best, "This trade makes both the Lakers and the Heat weaker."

And I tend to agree. Nobody benefited from Shaq's presence more than Kobe Bryant.

If Kobe is under the assumption that the Lakers are going to ride his coattails to any NBA titles, he is totally mistaken. Kobe is a

great player, but not a team player. And without Shaq providing that undeniable threat under the basket, teams will now focus on shutting Kobe down like the Pistons did in the finals.

As for the Heat, what are they left with after the trade? Shaq and Dwayne Wade. Two great players, but that's it. Maybe Eddie Jones can help a bit but he's going to be 33 years old and averaged just 13 points in the playoffs this past season.

And here's just one more thought for Lakers fans out there. The possibility still exists that Kobe will win his court case in Colorado this fall and still chose to play with a team other than the Lakers. Isn't that a scary thought?

Usually disaster scenarios like these around Hollywood are conjured up in the back lots of film studios but this one is all too real.

P.S. — Something else I want to say about these NBA signings. How in the world does former Cleveland Cavaliers forward Carlos Boozer end up with a \$68-million contract with the Utah Jazz?

That's \$68-mil over six years. An average of over \$11-million a season!

Boozer had a good season along side LeBron James last year. But with a scoring average of 15 points and 11 rebounds, that hardly makes him superstar material.

But I guess it does on paper — that special little green paper — if you know what I mean.

No more juice

I recently wrote about the information coming out of the BALCO investigation in northern California.

The biggest name being tossed around concerning the possible taking of illegal performance enhancing drugs is Barry Bonds. But the next biggest name was that of the "fastest woman on Earth," Marion Jones.

If Jones was taking steroids to enhance her performance over the last few years, she would certainly have to stop using it now with all this talk about it going on.

Now, the following news doesn't prove she was on the "juice" but it does raise the eyebrow or two.

Jones failed to qualify for the U.S. Olympic team in the 100-meters last weekend finishing fifth in the finals.

How do you go from the best in the world to fifth in your own country from one Olympics to the next? That question could be answered in the next few weeks.

And I'm not the only one talking about it. A swimmer trying to qualify for the Olympics, Gary Hall Jr., had some strong words for Jones this week.

"It's theft because she's taking away oppor-

tunities from other athletes. In an Olympic year, there's only a handful of athletes that get the attention they deserve financially and it's what keeps us going for another four years," Hall said. "If she has cheated or if anybody has cheated they should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. She should be banned for life."

Ouch! Now there's a guy who isn't afraid to speak his mind.

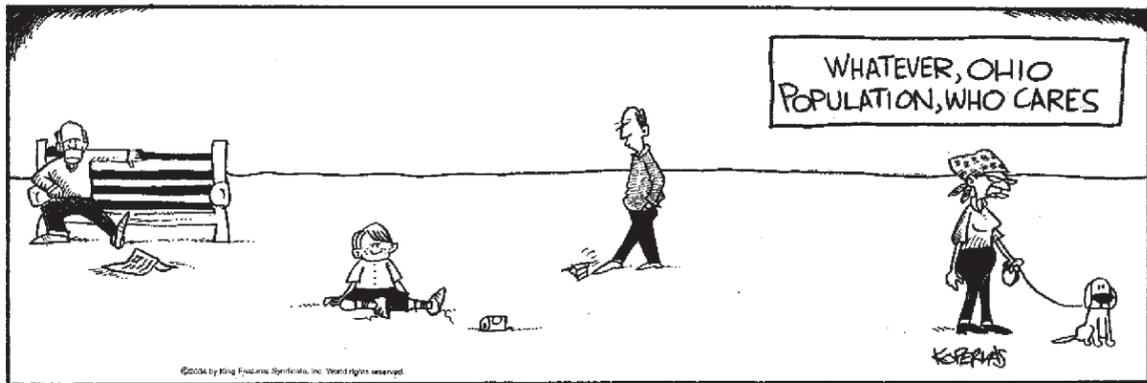
Jones will still try to qualify in the 200-meters and the long jump, or get on the team by being chosen as part of a relay.

And if it turns out that Jones is found guilty of using steroids, can Barry's day of reckoning be far away?

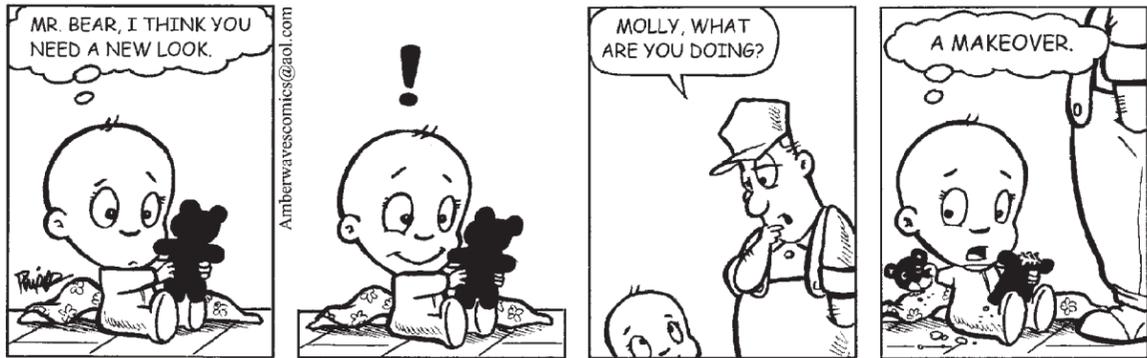


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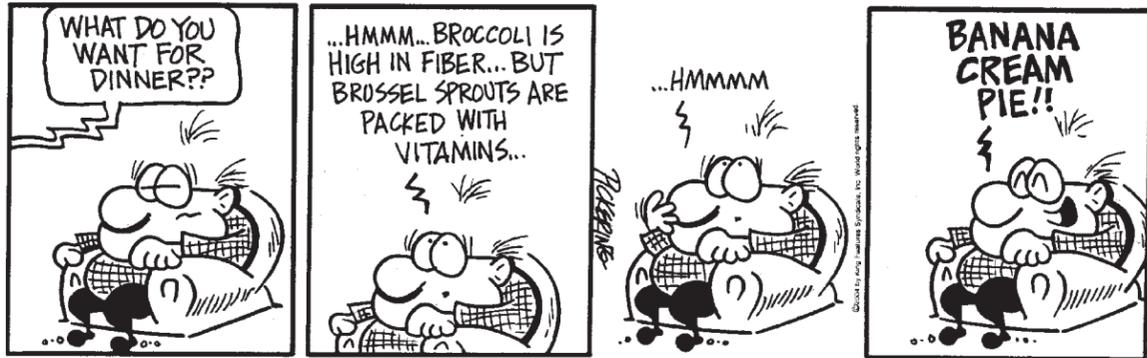
OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



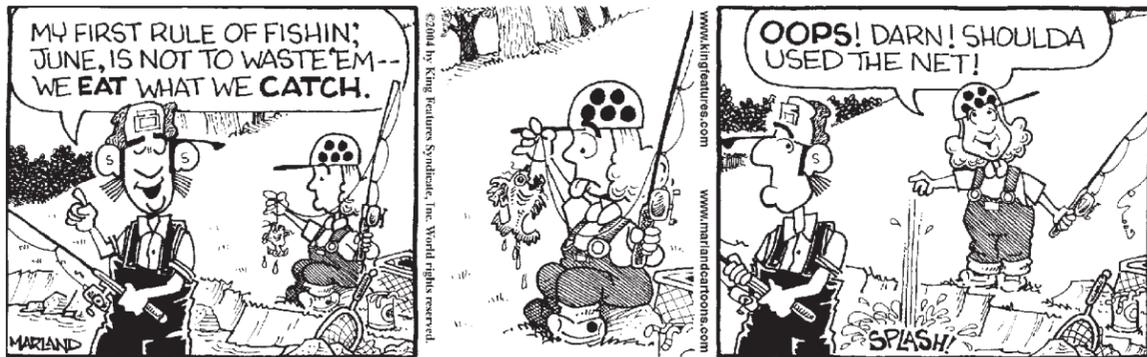
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Stay ahead of the news

By Don Flood

We'll get to the rest of today's column in a minute, but first this late-breaking news bulletin: *Jennifer Lopez is still married!*

(Well, at least she was at press time.)

Reeling from the news, Hollywood insiders remain shocked and surprised, as perhaps does J.Lo's reported husband Marc Anthony himself.

I say "reported" because Anthony, unlike, oh, 75 million other American men, doesn't want to admit he's married to Jennifer Lopez.

In an attempt to do some hard-hitting investigative journalism, the "Today" show's Matt Lauer tried to get Anthony to confirm that he was indeed married to J.Lo.

That's personal business, Anthony sternly told Lauer.

Somebody needs to get this memo to Anthony: You need to announce you're married to Lopez before she dumps you.

While the relationship developed fairly fast by most standards — about 11 minutes — it was clear something was up when the press began reporting that the two had been spotted "canoodling" around town.

No one actually knows what "canoodling" means, but it's something Hollywood stars do together — especially those who are married to other people.

Now that they are actually married, of course, the canoodling will stop — at least with each other, though they are now free to canoodle with other stars.

But providing important news bulletins simply isn't enough for today's columnist, so this week I introduce a new feature entitled: News of the Future — Tomorrow's Headlines Today.

Here's the first one: "Emergency Rooms Overwhelmed With Twisted Ankles, Whiny Baby

Boomers."

"Baby Boomers, jumping into the latest fitness craze, are threatening to overwhelm the nation's healthcare system.

"Doctors are calling on Congress to pass a Constitutional amendment forbidding anyone over the age of 30 from playing dodgeball, a kids' game that delusional adults have taken up as their own.

"It wouldn't be so bad if they would just come to the Emergency Room and shut up," said one doctor. "But no, they whine and complain, and the really pathetic part is they ask when they can play again, saying their team really needs them."

"I tell them they can play when they become 30 years younger, but it's too subtle for them."

OK, I'll admit to starting with an easy one for my first News of the Future. Clicking on a Web site teaser that said "hottest new adult exercise," I came to a story about dodgeball, of all things, and foresaw a national Emergency Room crisis in the making.

So Baby Boomers, it's time to relax — especially if you've already injured yourself playing dodgeball.

And to help you settle back, I offer the first sentence of "My Life," from former Boomer In Chief Bill Clinton:

"Early on the morning of August 19, 1946, I was born under a clear sky after a violent summer storm to a widowed mother in the Julia Chester Hospital in Hope, a town of about six thousand in southwest Arkansas, thirty-three miles east of the Texas border at Texarkana."

It continues on for 957 pages. ZZZZZZZZZ... That's right, no more dodgeball today, it's time for a nap.

Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

New online registration for Social Security now available

Applying for Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits just got easier. You no longer have to physically sign a paper application when you file for benefits — whether you do so over the Internet, over the phone, or even during your visit to a Social Security office.

Instead, you just verify that the information you provide to Social Security is correct and it is entered into the system with an electronic signature. The purpose of the new procedures, which went into effect at Social Security offices across the country on June 21, is to speed the handling of claims and to move government offices away from unnecessarily storing so much paper. Social Security will maintain all of the information it needs to handle your case

electronically. Here is how it works.

- **Online**
Before you begin the online application, we will tell you that it will be signed electronically. After you enter the information needed, we will ask you to confirm the truthfulness of the information you provide, under penalty of perjury as with the paper application. You will be able to review and correct your answers before sending them to us, and you can also print out the pages if you wish to do so. When you click on the “sign now” button at the end of the application, you are accepting responsibility for the accuracy of the information you submit to Social Security.
- **In Person**
For people who apply over the phone or in person, the process is slightly different. If you apply in person, the claims representative will explain your responsibility for providing accurate information for your claim, under penalty of perjury. At the end of the interview, you will receive a printed copy of the information you have given us. You will then be able to review and correct it, if necessary. Our representative will then ask you to confirm the accuracy of that information, and he or she will enter your consent into the computer.
- **By Phone**
For claims taken over the phone, the process will be the same as an in-person interview, except that we will mail you a copy of your information to review and correct, if necessary.

We will still need to have appropriate proofs to make a decision on your claim, such as proof of age, earnings, marriage, and sufficient medical evidence for disability claims. But we will be able to streamline the claims process and provide better service to you by eliminating the need to sign and return the application form.

WEATHER

AccuWeather.com

SEVEN-DAY FORECAST FOR EL PASO

THURSDAY	THUR. NIGHT	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy; small chance of a t-storm.	Partly to mostly cloudy.	Sunshine and some clouds; stray t-storm late.	Sunny to partly cloudy.	Partial sunshine.	Partly sunny.	A good deal of sun.	Partly sunny.
▲ 96°	▼ 72°	▲ 96° ▼ 72°	▲ 96° ▼ 74°	▲ 96° ▼ 72°	▲ 94° ▼ 72°	▲ 94° ▼ 69°	▲ 93° ▼ 66°

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	10	Very High
Sunday	10	Very High
Monday	10	Very High
Tuesday	10	Very High
Wednesday	10	Very High

REAL FEEL TEMP™

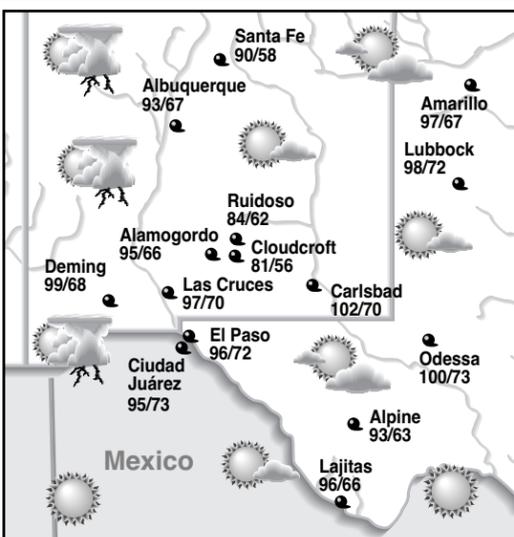
The exclusive AccuWeather composite of the effects of temperature, wind, humidity, sunshine, precipitation, and elevation on the human body.

Thursday	95°
Friday	93°
Saturday	93°
Sunday	93°
Monday	92°
Tuesday	92°
Wednesday	90°

TEXAS WEATHER

Anthony	97	72
Canutillo	97	72
Clint	96	72
E. Montana	96	72
Fabens	96	72
Horizon	96	73
San Elizario	92	70
Socorro	94	71
Tornillo	96	72
Vinton	97	72

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	93/67/t	95/69/t	93/69/t	91/69/s	92/63/c
Atlanta	92/70/pc	90/68/pc	88/70/t	88/70/t	88/70/pc
Atlantic City	84/64/t	84/62/pc	84/66/pc	77/65/t	84/64/r
Austin/San Antonio	101/72/s	97/73/s	97/74/s	97/74/pc	97/74/s
Baltimore	84/64/t	84/64/pc	86/66/t	84/68/t	84/64/pc
Boston	74/64/t	78/64/t	80/64/pc	80/66/sh	78/64/sh
Chicago	82/64/sh	84/62/pc	78/60/t	78/60/pc	82/63/s
Dallas/Ft. Worth	100/78/s	100/78/s	100/78/s	97/78/pc	98/75/pc
Denver	92/62/t	90/58/t	90/60/t	88/62/c	89/60/c
Flagstaff	82/53/t	82/53/t	82/53/s	81/52/s	79/47/c
Houston	98/76/pc	96/76/s	96/76/t	94/76/t	94/76/pc
Kansas City	89/71/t	88/70/t	89/70/c	89/70/t	87/66/c
Las Vegas	104/82/t	104/82/t	106/82/t	104/80/s	102/78/s
Miami	91/77/t	91/79/t	91/79/t	91/77/t	89/75/t
Minneapolis	84/65/t	84/65/t	79/63/t	85/61/pc	83/63/s
New Orleans	96/79/t	93/77/t	92/77/t	93/78/t	92/75/t
New York City	81/66/t	80/66/t	84/68/t	82/69/t	83/68/pc
Philadelphia	84/66/t	82/66/t	86/68/t	84/70/t	85/67/pc
Phoenix	104/87/t	104/86/t	106/86/t	107/87/s	105/78/c
Portland	84/58/pc	76/60/pc	76/58/sh	78/60/pc	78/58/pc
San Francisco	75/56/pc	68/54/pc	66/54/pc	72/56/pc	71/56/s
Seattle	78/58/pc	73/56/sh	71/58/sh	73/56/sh	74/54/s
Tucson	94/76/t	99/76/t	99/76/s	101/76/pc	101/76/c
Washington, DC	86/68/t	86/68/pc	88/70/t	86/70/t	84/67/pc

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

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