



## NEWSBRIEFS

### STARS reach out

The STAR (Sustainable Texas Agriculture Research) Advisory Group of the Canutillo Independent School District will host an Outreach Session 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 30, at the Mission Campus of the El Paso Community College, to gather input from the community. The committee has developed a project called Sustainable Agriculture Innovations Lead to rural Success (Project SAILS). Project SAILS was designed to help promote awareness of the link between agriculture and the community. The Economic Development Subcommittee plans to improve community awareness, business retention, and to address each area through the creation of the Agronomics Center on the Rio Grande, an agriculture center located on 75 acres of land in the village of Vinton. The STAR Advisory Group is hoping to gain assistance in making Project SAILS a success through wide-spread community participation.

### SISD on break

More than 34,000 students of the Socorro schools and their began an intersession break Sept. 27 and will return to classrooms Oct. 11. The break is made possible by the District's year-round educational schedule. Some student groups, such as the high school bands, are scheduled to practice during the break to prepare for the annual SISD Marching Contest, scheduled for Oct. 9, the Saturday before the intersession ends. Employees in the District's administrative offices at 12300 Eastlake Drive, as well as other administrative and operational functions will on duty during the break.

### In other news

■ The Socorro schools will soon have \$350,000 more to spend on intervention programs to improve student performance through the Texas High School Completion and Success Grant's Cycle 2 announced by the Texas Education Agency. District Grant Writer JoAnn Houchin says the funds will be used to meet the District's dual goals of increasing the number of students who stay in school and graduate by 10 percent, and increasing student performance on the science, math, English language arts and social studies portions of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills by 10 percent. "We'll use the money at Americas, Montwood and Socorro high schools and KEYS Academy to help students recover their credits by after-school tutoring, Saturday TAKS camps and online credit courses," Houchin says. "The grant is valid through August, 2006." The program is scheduled to begin in Socorro Oct. 8, and the distribution to Socorro is part of more than \$16.3 million to be awarded

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*Some people seldom repeat gossip — the way they heard it.*

— Quips & Quotes



**A HUMBLE EXPERIENCE** — Canutillo Independent School District teachers at Humble Administrator's Garden in Suzhou, China. From left, Margarito Duran, 6th grade teacher at Childress Elementary; Magdalena Valdez, kinder teacher at Childress; Isabel Ruiz, 4th grade teacher at Canutillo Elementary; and Karen Salas, 3rd grade teacher at Childress Elementary; and Antonio Del Campo, lead teacher at CISD.

## Canutillo teachers travel to China

By Don Woodyard  
 Courier Staff Writer

CANUTILLO — East met West — to learn and share in the classroom, not to spar or posture in the political arena.

Five Canutillo ISD teachers were among a group of 29 American educators nationwide who traveled to China in July to spend part of their summer vacation teaching in the Suzhou International Foreign Language School near Shanghai.

The five Canutillo bilingual teachers were Magdalena Valdez, Isabel Ruiz, Karen Salas, Margarito Duran and Antonio del Campo. They left July 2, returning July 25. The educational exchange was arranged through the National Association of Bilingual Educators and a California teacher whose father is principal of the foreign language school.

Subtracting time for touring, the actual teaching time was about two weeks. It was, to say the least, a different type of learning experience for the quintet of teachers who shared their knowledge of bilingual education with their Chinese counterparts.

Their work day began at 7:30 a.m. when they left their hotel and returned about 5:30 p.m. There was no weekend respite; they worked Saturdays and Sundays. Despite the demands of the academic schedule, Valdez was enthusiastic about the experience.

"It was the opportunity of a lifetime to teach in another country. It expanded my awareness of the Chinese culture. It has made us better teachers."

Valdez and Del Campo indicated the Chinese wanted to learn more modern educational techniques with which to teach English. And what better way than to have Chinese bilingual teachers observe and learn from American bilingual teachers in the classroom. Valdez said the Chinese taught in a 1950's style that focused on a repetitive learning and memorization method.

The Oriental classroom experience — what was it like for them? How did they cope?

The classrooms used by Valdez and Del Campo were basic — no frills, just a blackboard and chalk. The Chinese did have computers, but all of the programming and instructions, of course, were in Chinese.

Away from the comfortable and familiar surroundings of her Canutillo classroom, Valdez said she felt "totally frustrated" when she first stepped into the room. "I was away from what I was accustomed to," she said. She began to adjust as she ate with her students during lunch. "I intermingled with them; I had dialogue with them."

The Chinese students, the two teachers pointed out, had a rudimentary grasp of English, basic expressions of greeting, such as

## Horizon City Health Fair offering a lot more than check ups this year

By Marina Lee  
 Special to the Courier

HORIZON — The Horizon City Health Fair is just around the corner, and this year's event is packed with a healthy dose of screenings, immunizations and information. Set for Oct. 16 from 8 a.m. to noon at the Oz Glaze Senior Center, the Health Fair is sponsored by the Horizon City Lion's Club, HCIA (Horizon Communities Improvement Association), Oz Glaze Senior Center and Del Sol Medical Center.

Wilhemina Dockum, president of Horizon City Lions Club, said, "This really is a community effort, and we've all been working hard to plan the health fair for several months." Dockum said last year's event brought about 200 clients, and she hopes to see even more people attend this year.

The free screenings will include blood sugar, cholesterol, blood pressure, wound assessment, vision, hearing and speech. Flu and pneumonia shots will be offered at a cost of \$15, and Medicare is accepted. Registration for CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program) will be available. Chair massages are a popular offering at the fair, and so is fingerprinting of children.

Dolores Acosta, director of community relations for Del Sol Medical Center, has been involved in planning and presenting the fair since its inception in 2000. "We want to reach out to many of the elderly people in the community who just can't go to the clinics, but they can attend this event. In addition to doing screenings, we provide a lot of health information, including materials on cancer, maternity, hip, knee and shoulder pain, women's services, sleep disorders, rehab services and diagnostics. It's a good service, and a very important part of Del Sol's community outreach efforts," Acosta said.

The chairman of the Horizon City Health Fair and an active Lion Club member, Wally Thompson, is in complete agreement with Acosta. "This is one of our most important projects because it is such a community service. We are doing one thing a little bit different this year. We want to encourage everyone to stick around longer and visit all the exhibits, so we're offering a grand prize of a barbecue grill to one lucky winner who has visited all the exhibits," Thompson said. There will also be other door prizes.

Thompson added a little suggestion, "We have to credit Tobe Davis for coming up with the idea of this health fair and I think we should name it after him." Regardless of the name, the health fair has a lot to offer. The organizers offer a final few suggestions for those planning to attend, "Come early, stay 'til it's over, park behind the building, don't eat breakfast if you're planning to have your blood sugar tested, and have an educational and enjoyable morning!"

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## One perspective

By Francis Shrum

# Simple truth

Round and round and round we go. Where it stops nobody knows...

Whoever penned that old children's rhyme, to those many years ago, had no idea that their creative effort would so aptly describe what our society loosely accepts as "truth." When we get really righteous, we call it "fair and balanced."

The opposite of this is, of course, untruth, and we are as just about as loose in defining what is not true. Since we can't bear political incorrectness, we wouldn't dare call it a lie.

So we call it "spin."

This is what media people do when information becomes public that is unfavorable to their cause. It is sort of like performing plastic surgery on the body of an aging beauty — a vain attempt to make reality look better, to deny disaster, to create an illusion of desirability.

This surgical procedure on the truth is also sometimes performed to make favorable information look even better. In other words, it's a lie.

I don't know who came up with the word "spin" to describe this, um, this "coloring" process, but in a vain attempt to understand it I did what I always do when confused.

I looked it up in the dictionary.

The word "spin" has so many definitions it takes up about one whole column in my old Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, copyrighted 1983, back before media hijacked the word, so it doesn't mention lying as an alternate meaning.

But among the few definitions that were applicable to this situation I found the one I figure described it best: "A state of mental confusion."

Also mentioned were "a plunging

descent or downward spiral" which could well define the current direction of our national media; and "to plunge helplessly or out of control" which is a pretty good description of what happened to Dan Rather recently.

At least every four years we really spin out of control as the presidential elections near. One only has to turn on the TV for a second or two before the screen starts spinning so wildly that there is no point in watching. You can't decipher anything with your eyes crossed and your ears ringing — an unmistakable symptom of having been spun.

I can't help but chuckle about media types who claim to take all the spin out of the most recent gossip — this generally involves an interviewing style that is so obnoxious nobody can get a word in edgewise, so I guess in a way it does.

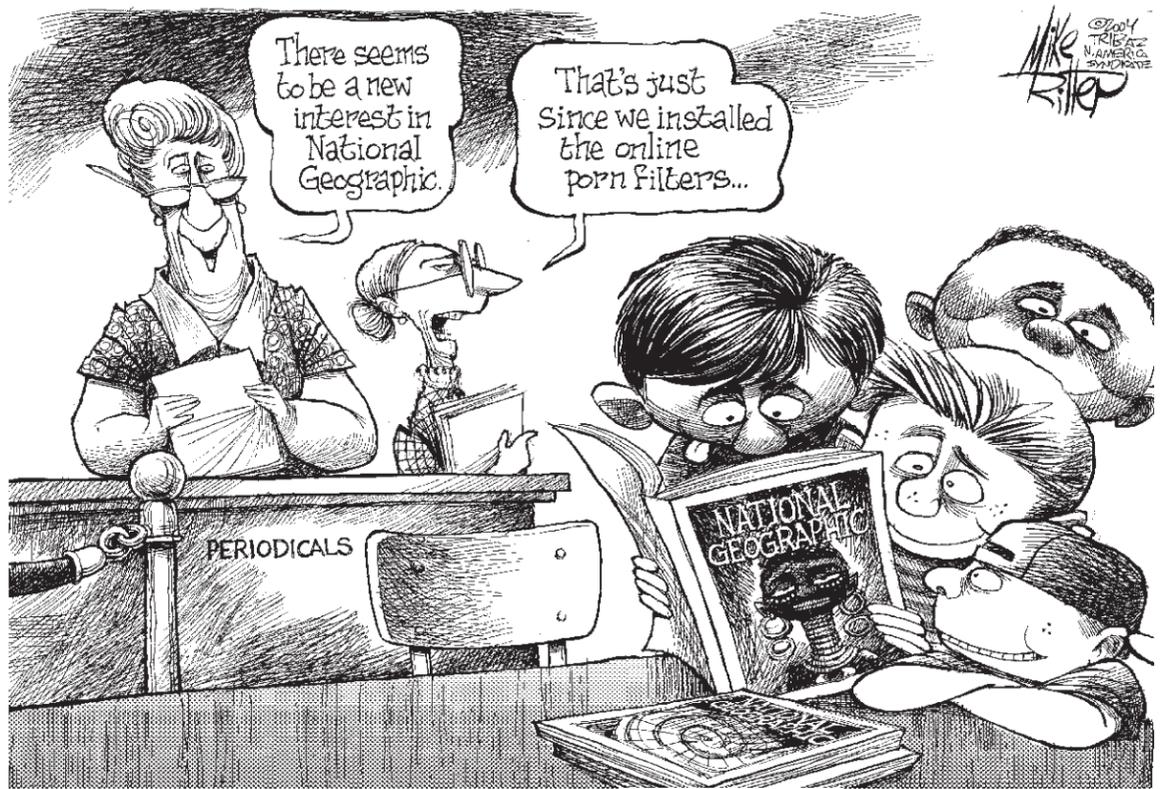
We all know that modern times have blurred the edges of black and white, but when it comes to media truth and spin, there's more gray in it than in my hair. The difficulty of determining the validity of one's sources has always been a media industry hazard. Lately we don't even make too much effort, it seems.

The rule of thumb seems to be: Broadcast what suits your cause of the moment, hope you don't get called on it, and if you do, circle the wagons and defend yourself. Never voluntarily admit to being in error, and if forced to do so, make sure the last word in the sentence is "but."

In all the hype and hoopla, we lose sight of anything that resembles the unbiased truth. The most honest news stories I've seen in years have to do with hurricanes and natural disasters. Even with these stories, though, just

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Brookings REYNOLDS TIMES-SPRINGER



## Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes

# Middle class tax cuts benefit El Pasoans



Fiscally responsible tax cuts that benefit middle-income Americans are good for working families in El Paso and for our economy as a whole.

My colleagues and I in the House of Representatives have worked hard for several years to ensure the middle class receives tax cuts that help them achieve financial security. We have passed a number of tax cuts critical to the middle class, and last week we extended those that were due to expire at the end of the year.

This tax cut package is important to hardworking families in El Paso and I was pleased to support it for that reason, though I did have reservations about this bill.

This legislation will extend several important middle class tax cuts through 2010 including: the \$1,000 child tax credit, tax benefits for married couples, and the expansion of the ten-percent tax bracket through 2010. It will also extend a provision to ensure that middle class families are exempt from the burdensome Alternative Minimum Tax.

This measure also extends a num-

ber of tax deductions and credits for businesses. These include an extension of the welfare-to-work and work opportunity tax credits, the research and development tax credit, and the tax credit for wind and biomass electricity production.

These tax cuts will help our middle-class families; however, there is much more we can do to provide fiscally responsible tax relief to hardworking Americans.

Most importantly, this bill does not adequately help the families of the 150,000 men and women currently serving in Iraq and other combat zones. Under current law, soldiers' families are denied needed tax relief because combat pay is not counted in their gross income, which keeps many families under the income threshold necessary to receive the Earned Income Tax Credit. While this bill provides tax relief for these military families, it is only a temporary two-year fix. Especially with our servicemen and women serving overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan and around the world — often in dangerous situations — we have an obligation to do everything we can to help

them and their families.

Given the record budget deficit and the loss of 1.7 million private-sector jobs over the past three years, it is also important that tax cuts are enacted in a fiscally responsible manner. Federal deficits can raise interest rates on mortgages, consumer credit and business borrowing, which will slow economic growth and job creation. My Democratic colleagues and I developed a fiscally responsible tax cut package that would pay for the cuts through a small surtax on only the most affluent 0.2 percent of households in America. Unfortunately, the House Republican leadership blocked consideration of our proposal.

On the whole, the targeted tax relief for hard-working Americans in this legislation is good for our nation's economy and good for El Paso's families. Now, Congress needs to finish the job by ensuring that the tax assistance included in the bill for our soldiers and their families is made permanent. With all our men and women in uniform are doing for us, that's the least we can do for them.

# WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

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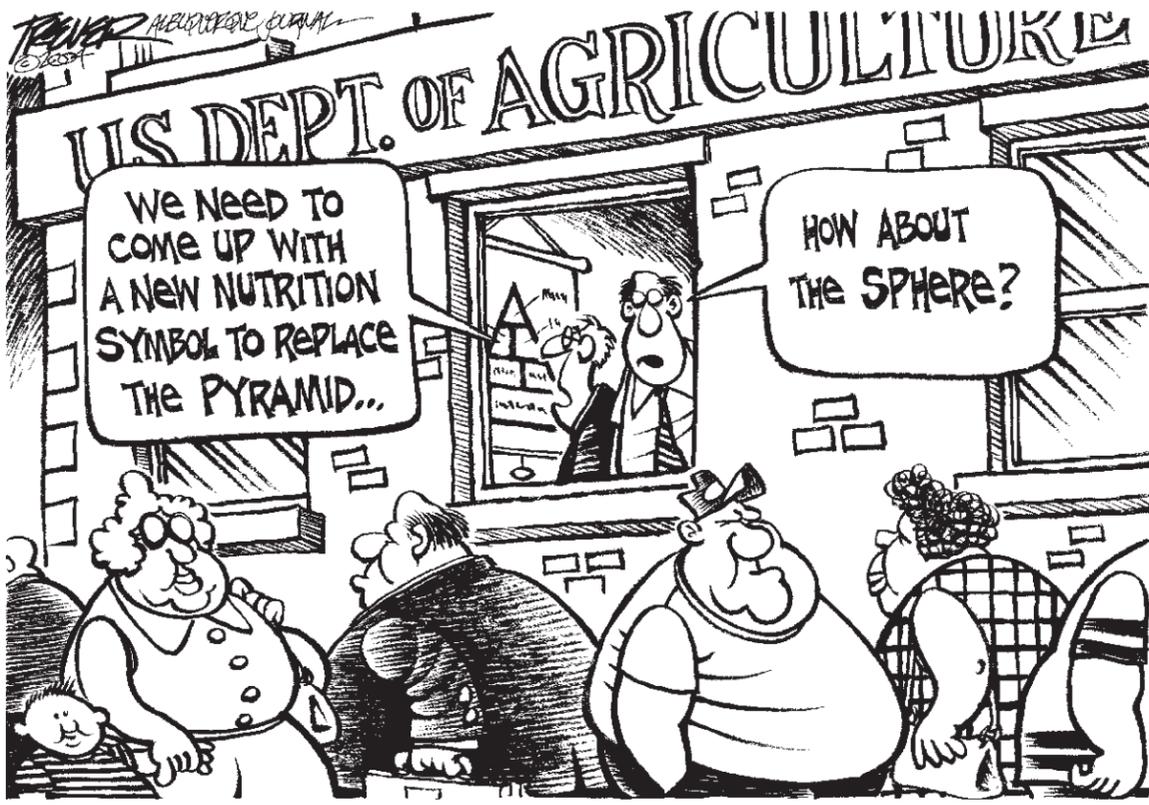
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# Bugged!

By Albert M. Balesh, M.D.

Anthrax, plague, botulinum, brucellosis, cholera, and smallpox: a small cadre of bacteria, viruses, and toxins that could spell big trouble, though excessive fear of contagion might be as unfounded and unwarranted as a child's disproportionate mental "knee-jerk" to imaginary Halloween gargoyles, ghosts, goblins, or the boogie-man. Let's debunk, or "debug," some of the more common misconceptions associated with infectious disease, transmissible human pathogens and their vectors, biological weapons, and the microbes themselves by taking aim at anthrax.

Historical perspective on the "measles experience" in the United States from 1912 to 1963 gives us a point of departure. The incidence of measles during that period never dropped below 100,000 cases per year, and epidemics were quite common. After the introduction of the first vaccine in 1963, the number of cases fell to very low levels. We are now faced, however, with an entirely new scenario that risks taking us back to square one.

Obtaining pathogens, culturing them in vast quantities, and "weaponizing" them, or turning them into a form that remains virulent, has not appeared to pose a problem to those who seek to undermine our democracy. Anthrax is a relatively com-

mon veterinary disease. Collect a little blood from a cow that has died of anthrax (or even get spores from the soil or a carcass), put it in a petri dish, and, "abracadabra," you have anthrax.

To date, more than 70 bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi are serious human pathogens. The anthrax bacillus, for example, can infect skin (20% fatal), lungs (90% fatal), or gastrointestinal (GI) tract (25% to 60% fatal). Anthrax spores can enter the skin through minor cuts, and then grow into toxin-producing bacteria. Skin rash follows, with toxins striking surrounding tissue and immune cells carrying microbes from the skin to the lymph nodes and the rest of the body. Exposure to airborne spores, on the other hand, can result in their deposit in the alveoli of the lungs. After germination of those spores, which in some cases may take up to 60 days, flulike symptoms begin, followed by bacterial multiplication, toxin release, and further deterioration of lung tissue. Immune cells, the "taxicabs" of the body, then ferry the microbes from the lungs to lymph nodes and other sites in the body.

What can we do to prevent this public health nightmare? If you think you've been exposed to anthrax, telephone your doctor or your local health department, who will set up immediate lab testing which can quickly diagnose anthrax in blood or nasal secretions. Should you test positive for anthrax, immediate drug therapy will, and should be, initiated.

All forms of anthrax are highly treatable if detected within the first few days of exposure. Drugs are useless, however, once a person develops symptoms. Ciprofloxacin (Cipro), a potent, broad-spectrum antibiotic, is currently being used to treat suspected cases of inhaled anthrax. It should be pointed out, however, that the vast majority of anthrax infections can also be managed with penicillin or tetracycline (Doxycycline). The standard course of treatment is 60 days, or 30 days of antibiotic and a series of three vaccine shots. A preventive vaccine is available to military personnel and scientists, but has not been approved for general use or tested in the general public at large.

There are downsides, however. Ciprofloxacin should not be prescribed to pregnant women or to anyone under 18 years of age, except in known cases of anthrax exposure.

Although clearer heads, comfort levels, government reassurance, and enactment of adequate public health measures will go a long way to curtail panic, we must resign ourselves to the fact that anthrax and other "little fellas" will be around to "bug" us for quite some time. After all, they were here first. Cool heads and rational use of the medical weapons at our disposal, however, will ensure that we are the only ones left standing.

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# Protect the pledge

The Pledge of Allegiance is a deep-rooted symbol of America — every American knows that. But if some federal judges have their way, our children will be barred from saying the Pledge of Allegiance in our schools.

We cannot sit idly by as the courts try to rewrite our heritage and traditions. That's why I recently co-sponsored legislation to protect our Pledge of Allegiance.



By U.S. Rep. Henry Bonilla

## Eye on D.C.

free-exercise rights, guaranteed by the First Amendment. It is also an effective check on the power of the court when it abuses its power of judicial review.

I'm pleased to report that the Pledge Protection Act was brought before Congress this week and approved by the House of Representatives.

Freedom of religion is a principle that is central to our Nation's Declaration of Independence. Congress has taken this positive step to protect our freedom to express allegiance to America's flag and the ideals it represents.

I can't think of a better way to educate our children about America than with the Pledge of Allegiance. It teaches the ideals that our flag represents, and about the lives dedicated — and sometimes lost — to protect those ideals.

The Pledge Protection Act stipulates that states — not activist judges — have the right to determine whether or not the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance is constitutional. The measure would put an end to the practice of federal judges essentially deciding to strip our pledge of its historically important reverence for God.

Passage of the plan is an important step toward safeguarding the

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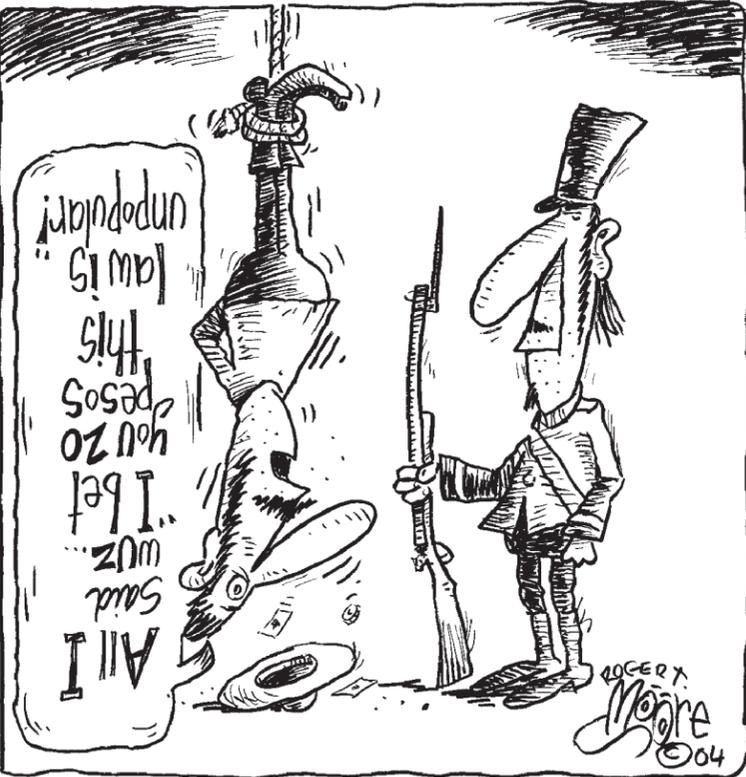
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**TRUE TEXAS FACTS** by Roger T. Moore, Sept. 25, 1830: The first Texas law against gambling is enacted.



## Tuition-free pre-K program now offered in Clint ISD

By Laura Cade  
Special to the Courier

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — To prepare students in the Clint Independent School District for education in kindergarten and beyond, the district has invested in a tuition free pre-Kindergarten program.

When the district decided to offer these classes in the spring of 2004, it meant the district needed to budget for additional staff and instructional materials. The district hired teachers with early childhood certifications or endorsements and instructional aides for the 12 sections of pre-kindergarten

ten classes in the district. \$14,092 dollars were utilized for each pre-kindergarten classroom to purchase books, manipulative and investigative materials for the core subjects and the fine arts and to develop gross motor skills with the children. The district also purchased furniture including student sized tables and chairs, lofts, couches, brightly colored area rugs, and sand/water tables.

"Early childhood is a proven key to successful education. We want to insure that all students have the appropriate skills to begin formal academics in our kindergarten classroom. By offering pre-kindergarten to all students, we are promoting high performance standards for all children in our district," says Dr. Donna Smith, Superintendent of Clint ISD.

Clint is the only district in Region 19 that has a universal pre-kindergarten open to any four year old child living in the district. As of the first day of school, 380 students are enrolled in the districts half day pre-kindergarten program.



GLAD TO MEET YOU — Pre-kindergarten students from Ms. Aida Leal's afternoon class at Desert Hills Elementary get acquainted on the first day of school.

Any child in the district who has reached the age of four by Sept. 1, 2004 is eligible to enroll in the pre-kindergarten program at any one of the district's five elementary campuses.

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### Briefs

From Page 1

to 106 districts and charter schools.

■ The San Elizario ISD has named Martha Foix and Felix Rangel as its Teacher and Employee of the Month for August. Foix is a Monolingual Kindergarten teacher at Loya Primary School and Rangel is a custodian at San Elizario Middle School. Both were recognized during the September Board of Trustees meeting, Sept. 8.

■ Three distinguished officials from the Canadian Immigration authority visited Socorro High School this week. Geneviève Bouchard, Director of Research for the Institute of Public Policy in Montreal; Jean Cheney, Director of Canadian immigration; and Patrick Hyndman, Coordinator of the Department of Immigration for the province of Quebec and coordinator of the department's international relations learned about SHS's magnet education programs. "They're coming to us through the El Paso International Visitors Council," said Socorro High principal Oscar Troncoso. "I think they want to ask us how we do things, and maybe take some of those ideas back to Canada." The visit was coordinated by the U.S. State Department's International Visitors' Program.

■ Socorro ISD's Board of Trustees approved the appointment of four administrators during its Aug. 17 meeting. Kim Baxter, an assistant principal at Col. John O. Ensor Middle School, will move to Montwood High School as an assistant principal. Montwood High School teacher Roberta Abdo was also promoted to an assistant principal position at Montwood High. Dinah Lopez, a teacher at Jane A. Hambric School will move to another pre-K-8 campus, Paso del Norte, as an additional assistant principal. Martha Serna was selected as a new Director of Community Services, responsible for the District's adult education pro-

grams. Serna had previously been coordinator of the District's Even Start program. Previously, the board approved the selection of Dr. Rachel Cervantes as the District's new Director of Special Programs, returning to El Paso from the Albertville, Alabama City Schools where she was that district's assistant superintendent.

■ Socorro ISD's Director of Purchasing, March Vechione, has earned certification as a Texas School Business Specialist in the field of purchasing, according to the Texas Association of School Business Officials. Socorro science teacher, Sharon Mitchell, has earned an opportunity to accompany UTEP's Dr. Robin Hoffer to Alaska for the International Geosciences and Remote Sensing Symposium on Sept. 21.

■ Aaron Chibli, son of Maricela and Eduardo Chibli, and grandson of former El Paso County Commissioner Rogelio Sanchez, was recently selected as one of the top 150 soccer players in the nation, and invited to attend the 2004 Elite Soccer Program at Loomis Chaffee School in Windsor, Connecticut. Aaron, who is a senior midfielder at L.D. Bell in Colleyville, Texas, trains three to four hours a day, six days a week throughout the summer.

■ Marine Corps Pvt. Fabiola Escobedo, daughter of Maria E. Lechuga, recently completed the Administrative Clerk Course at Personnel Administration School in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, qualifying her to handle official orders for Marines changing duty station. She is a 2003 graduate of Socorro High School and joined the Marines in February of 2004.

■ Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Fernando Berumen, a 1997 graduate of Socorro High School, was among the Marines and Sailors who recently concluded operations in Afghanistan after three months conducting operation there in the war on terrorism. His unit is part of the expeditionary intervention force with ability to rapidly organize for combat operations in virtually any environment.



**FROM THE TOP** — Magdalena Valdez, kinder teacher at Bill Childress Elementary, introducing a lesson to students.



**PLACE OF LEARNING** — Suzhou International Foreign Language School in Suzhou, China.

**China**

From Page 1

"How are you? I am fine."

Del Campo spoke of, on occasion, kneeling down and putting a comforting and reassuring arm around the children. Undoubtedly a first, Chinese students were sometimes addressed in familiar Hispanic terms — mija and mijo.

The students, who were "starved for attention," responded. On the second day, Del Campo said one student came up to him and said, "I love you, teacher." Del Campo said he was "in shock."

Michelle, one of the Chinese teachers who observed the Americans at work in the classroom, liked Del Campo.

"He is a good teacher. He is very patient and very responsible," Michelle said in a neat, hand-written letter to him. "Antonio taught students not only knowledge, but also American culture and etiquette."

Echoing that student's expression of affection, Michelle added, "We all love you, Tony! We'll miss you! Welcome to China again!"

Del Campo had a special way of coping with the language barrier.

"When you speak from the heart, your eyes do the talking; I know how to read eyes. I could sense what they were saying.

"There is no barrier to my love for the kids."

Looking back on her experience, Valdez says, "I hope I left a good impression."

Songtang Mao, the principal of Suzhou International Foreign Language School, feels she and the other 28 left a good impression. In a letter to the participants, he says, in part, "Your professionalism, spirit, warm and caring devotion as educators for our students are greatly appreciated. You have not only been inspirational, but a great role model for our students and teachers."



**UNIVERSAL CHILD** — Antonio Del Campo, lead teacher at CISD (center) interacts with students at the school.

**Canutillo High School Homecoming to honor Porras as Outstanding Ex**

By Alfredo Vasquez  
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO — Canutillo High School Homecoming Week will get an added boost as reunions for the Classes of '74, '84, and '94 join in the celebration this year. The traditional events, including a parade, bonfire, pep assembly, football game, and dance, begin Wednesday and continue through Saturday, Oct. 2.

Special guest for CHS's 41st annual homecoming celebration will be the Outstanding-Ex, Peter O. Porras, 1980 graduate and current healthcare management consultant in Mesquite, Texas. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in gerontology and education psychology from St. Edwards University, in San Antonio, and a Master of Science degree in therapeutic recreation and gerontology from the University of North Texas, in Denton.

"I am honored and humbled to be selected for this recognition," said Porras. "I look forward to all the festivities and to visit with some of my

classmates whom I have not seen in many years." The honored graduate will address the student body during the pep assembly and be introduced to the community during the football game halftime show.

Festivities kicked off with a parade on Wednesday. The bonfire program will begin at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, at the CISD Support Services Facility grounds, 7700 Cap Carter Road.

The pep assembly will kick off at 10 a.m., Friday, at Eagles Stadium, and will include the introduction of the Outstanding-Ex, Homecoming court, varsity football and volleyball teams, and special performances by the CHS Eagles Marching Band, cheerleaders, and modern dancers.

The homecoming football game will pit the Eagles versus the Austin High Panthers, at 7:30 p.m., Friday.

The weeklong festivities will culminate with the semi-formal dance and homecoming court coronation, from 8 p.m. to midnight, at the CHS cafeteria and patio area.



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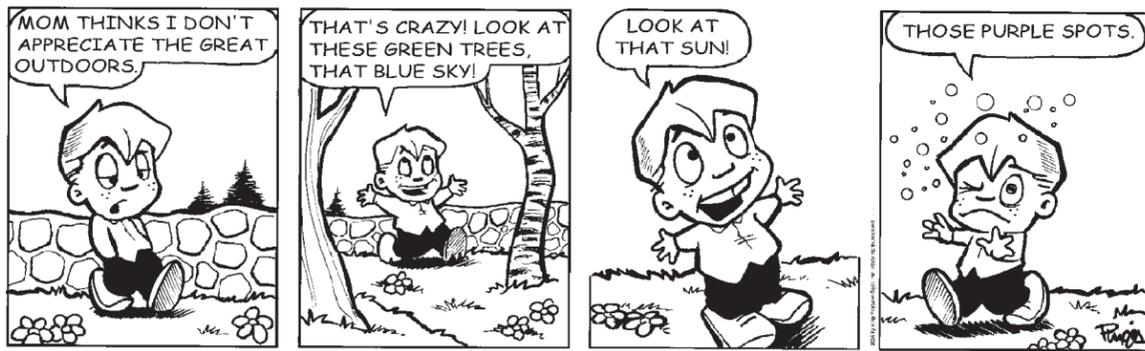


Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



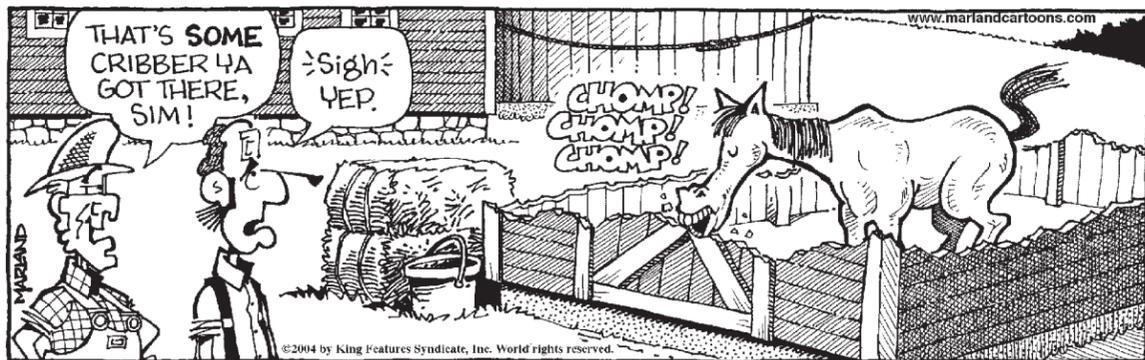
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Group makes lying easy and fun

By Don Flood

If you're like most people — and my great new spyware says you are — then you often wonder, "Sure, cell phones are great, but when will modern technology empower me to be the big-time sleazeball I was always meant to be?"

Fret no more! Through the help of an "alibi and excuse club," you can take your petty dishonesty and magically multiply it by the thousands of members of this great, new organization.

Here's how it works (and, yes, this is a real organization).

The story told of a college student who wanted to spend a weekend with a woman other than his girlfriend.

In the old days this meant telling a lie yourself or, worse, persuading a friend to do it.

Instead, he text-messaged thousands of members of this club, one of whom immediately volunteered to call his girlfriend with an excuse.

It worked! What was once a dream — the instant mass production of lies and the liars to execute them — has become a reality!

This advance is a huge boon for the telephone, which sadly has been something of a disappointment since its earliest days, as evidenced by the recently discovered — approximately 15 minutes before this column deadline — daily journal of Alexander Graham Bell:

March 10, 1876: Complete world's first telephone call to assistant Watson. Watson asks what I'm calling about, as he's rather busy.

March 11: Idiot Watson asks receptionist to "screen" calls, "especially from Mr. Bell."

March 12: Wife asks, "So can I take pictures with this?" And,

"How come it isn't portable?"

March 13: Man drops by with business proposal: charge people so much per minute to talk "dirty" on phone (?).

March 14: Much complaining about something called "telemarketers." Perhaps I have made a mistake.

But those doubts about telephones are gone now, as this new group not only serves cheaters, but the liars who help them cheat.

For years now, our country has been facing a mounting crisis in self-esteem: We have too much of it!

Tragically, people grow up enduring endless rounds of positive reinforcement. Kids simply aren't given ample opportunity to feel bad about themselves, however much they should.

But with the help of the alibi club, they can finally look themselves in the eye — this is assuming of course they're looking into a mirror or have those special cartoon-character pop-out eyeballs — and say, "Hey, I did something low and dishonest today for which I have no excuse. I am bad, bad, bad."

Not that there isn't a downside. According to the story, "One member recently used the club to fool his wife so he could stay at a sports bar and watch the NBA finals."

I have to admit, that sounded a little weak.

Americans have always been self-reliant, do-it-yourselfers: people who had the gumption to make up and tell their own lies.

If taken too far, the alibi club could turn us into a country that outsources all our lying to other people.

That would be a shame. No lie.

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Classified Ads

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Truth

From Page 2

how much damage they did or didn't do will spin like a tornado when it comes to determining the number of dollar signs attached to the politically-sensitive disaster relief check.

Our society has swallowed the

Coach

From Page 6

are interested in coaching.

"These coaches and refs can come from anywhere," Miller said.

"We're looking for coaches with a background in soccer," Rodriguez added. "If they know the sport, we can take care of the Special Olympics part of it."

On the Special Olympics side of the situation, coaches will have to be prepared to coach a 5-on-5 format while their players compete on a smaller field. A range of ages has

spinning hook that everything we do must always look good and smell good, so we'll go to almost any length to prevent the actual truth coming out that we're all just people with strengths and weaknesses, who have all done many good things and, without a doubt, more than a few things we hope and pray no one ever finds out about. Especially our kids.

You'd think people in public life

would get used to the media nosing around in their closets. Eventually, everything in there is going to get aired, including dirty socks and skeletons.

The market demand should remain strong for good public relations professionals who know how to spin a web out of air freshener and Febreze because only one thing stinks more than old socks and bones.

The simple truth.

not been established for the teams, but both Rodriguez and Miller say that middle school to high school ages are typical. Ideally, there would need to be a coach or volunteer at every school participating in the soccer program for Special Olympics.

"It would also be good to have a coach or parent volunteer for every athlete," Miller said.

Miller will be responsible for both training coaches as well as training referees, and if interested, Miller has the power through the NISOA to certify refs.

New coaches will most certainly be given an orientation and like any

Special Olympics coach, be given the chance to earn certification credit by attending various training opportunities.

While Miller and Rodriguez begin their search for coaches, Rodriguez will begin contacting school district athletic directors to gauge their interest in the program, as well, according to Miller.

In the meantime, special athletes will for the first time have an opportunity to showcase their skills and have fun playing the game of soccer during the Special Olympics.

If you would like to become a coach, call the Special Olympics office at 532-1795.



Miss an issue? Visit: [www.wtccourier.com](http://www.wtccourier.com)

## Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

**Q:** My daughter is 19 years old. In her senior year of high school, she had a sporting accident that partially paralyzed her. It doesn't look as if she will be able to work in the near future. Because she did not work long enough under Social Security to qualify for benefits, is there any other program that could help her?

als who are disabled and who have not paid enough in Social Security taxes to qualify for regular Social Security disability insurance benefits. To qualify for the SSI program, a person must be disabled, and have limited resources and income. You should contact your local Social Security office for more information.

**A:** Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a needs-based program paid for by general revenue taxes and administered by the Social Security Administration. It can help individu-

**Q:** I want to apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, but I don't know if I would qualify since I own my own home. This house was left to me by my parents, but I cannot

afford my utilities or groceries, and I cannot work because of my disability. Can I still get SSI?

**A:** For SSI purposes, the things that you own, or resources, cannot be valued at more than \$2,000. However, the house that you live in is not counted as a resource. So it is possible for you to get SSI, even if you own your own home. Of course, you must file an application and a decision must be made about your disabling condition.

**Q:** I was recently informed that I will no longer receive supplemental security income. My only benefit pay-

able is \$560 from social security on my husband's account. Because of my financial situation I had to move into my daughter's home therefore I am no longer eligible for SSI. I heard that social security can dismiss the premium I pay for Part B Medicare. How do I go about requesting this help? Also, if you are contributing towards the household expenses and you pay your fair share, we might be able to reinstate your SSI benefits.

**A:** Individuals receiving supplemental security income are also eligible for Medicaid benefits. In these situations the State of Texas pays the Part B premiums on their behalf. Once

you lost your SSI benefits, you also lost this benefit. You might still be eligible to request that the State of Texas help pay the Part B premium but you must contact the Texas Department of Human Services for an evaluation of your circumstances. If they find you meet their income and resource criteria, they can help you pay the premium.

For more information visit your local Security office, see [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) or call us at 1-800-772-1213. If you have any questions that you would like to have answered, please mail them to the Social Security Office, 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
▲ 80°	▼ 56°	▲ 82° ▼ 56°	▲ 78° ▼ 54°	▲ 80° ▼ 56°	▲ 82° ▼ 60°	▲ 84° ▼ 60°	▲ 86° ▼ 62°

### UV INDEX Statistics for noon.

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

Thursday	7	High
Friday	8	High
Saturday	8	High
Sunday	8	High
Monday	8	High
Tuesday	8	High
Wednesday	8	High

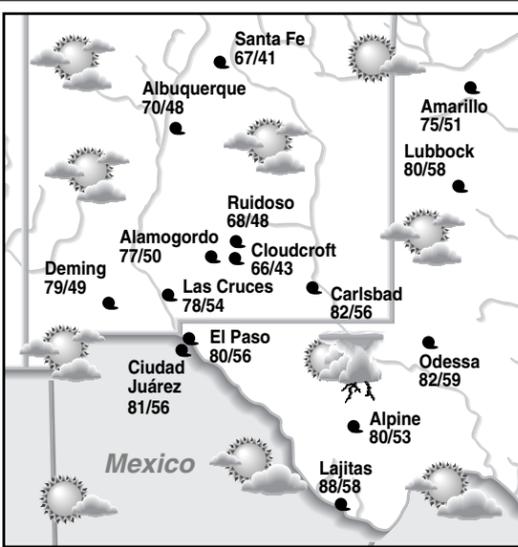
### REAL FEEL TEMP®

The exclusive AccuWeather composite index of effective temperature based on eight weather factors.

Thursday	82°
Friday	73°
Saturday	72°
Sunday	71°
Monday	76°
Tuesday	84°
Wednesday	86°

### TEXAS WEATHER

Anthony	81	56
Canutillo	81	57
Clint	81	57
E. Montana	80	56
Fabens	81	57
Horizon	82	58
San Elizario	79	55
Socorro	80	56
Tornillo	81	57
Vinton	81	57



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	70/48/t	70/50/t	70/50/pc	73/51/pc	77/55/s
Atlanta	80/62/sh	80/64/pc	80/62/t	80/62/pc	78/58/pc
Atlantic City	72/51/s	74/54/pc	77/54/sh	73/53/sh	73/51/r
Austin/San Antonio	87/63/s	88/64/pc	88/65/t	87/62/pc	87/66/pc
Baltimore	74/56/pc	76/58/pc	76/56/sh	72/54/sh	72/52/r
Boston	68/52/s	68/54/s	70/52/sh	66/53/sh	67/51/pc
Chicago	72/50/s	72/48/sh	64/42/sh	62/42/pc	72/47/pc
Dallas/Ft. Worth	86/65/pc	86/67/pc	85/64/t	82/64/pc	83/65/sh
Denver	66/42/t	50/40/r	60/43/pc	69/41/pc	70/44/pc
Flagstaff	58/30/t	62/32/pc	66/32/s	68/31/s	70/37/pc
Houston	86/68/pc	88/70/pc	88/70/t	88/68/t	85/68/pc
Kansas City	79/61/pc	70/52/t	68/48/s	72/51/s	73/51/pc
Las Vegas	84/62/s	84/62/s	86/64/s	86/63/s	89/62/s
Miami	89/77/sh	87/77/t	87/75/t	87/75/t	87/75/t
Minneapolis	73/50/pc	58/43/sh	62/48/pc	66/47/pc	68/48/c
New Orleans	87/72/pc	87/71/t	87/71/t	86/70/t	83/67/t
New York City	71/56/s	74/60/pc	74/58/sh	71/58/sh	70/57/r
Philadelphia	74/56/s	74/60/pc	76/58/sh	70/56/sh	73/56/r
Phoenix	88/64/s	87/67/s	90/68/s	93/70/s	98/71/s
Portland	75/53/s	80/55/s	78/52/s	76/52/s	69/43/sh
San Francisco	65/55/pc	68/56/pc	68/56/s	68/55/pc	69/49/s
Seattle	70/50/s	74/51/s	72/52/s	64/49/c	61/41/r
Tucson	83/56/pc	86/58/s	88/60/s	90/63/s	94/66/s
Washington, DC	72/56/pc	77/62/pc	79/60/sh	73/60/sh	73/57/r

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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