



NEWSBRIEFS

New SISD head

The Socorro ISD board of trustees approved the hiring of their solo finalist for the position of superintendent on Dec. 20 and Dr. Sylvia P. Atkinson took the helm of the district on Jan. 16. The district's three-year contract with the new superintendent will provide a \$205,000 base salary per year plus a \$700 a month auto allowance and a \$625 monthly expense allowance. She has also been provided \$4,000 in relocation funds. Dr. Atkinson comes to SISD from the South Texas school district of Santa Rosa where she has been superintendent since the spring of 2006. She holds a Doctor of Education in Administration and Supervision from the University of Houston, a Masters from UT-Brownsville, and a Bachelor's in political science and sociology from Southern Methodist University. She will be taking on considerably larger responsibility as Santa Rosa had four campuses with an enrollment of about 1,200. SISD today has 36 schools with two more under construction and a current enrollment of 38,000.

No movies, please

The El Paso Police Department would like to warn the public about possible bad advice they may be receiving. The Texas Transportation Code section 547.611 states: "A motor vehicle may be equipped with video receiving equipment, including a digital video disc player, a videocassette player, or similar equipment, only if the equipment is located so that the video display is not visible from the operator's seat." In 2006 officers of the El Paso Police Department issued approximately 70 citations for this offense. Many of the persons cited told the Officer the salesperson where the video system was purchased said it was legal. The El Paso Police Department wants the public to know it is not illegal for a store or company to install a video receiving device in a location where the video display is visible from the operator's seat. It is, however, illegal for a person to operate a motor vehicle that is equipped with such a device visible to the driver. If you intend to purchase a video receiving device for your vehicle, ensure it is installed in a location where the passengers can enjoy a video while on the road, but not put the driver at risk of getting a ticket. There are obvious safety reasons behind this law. A driver cannot focus on driving if he or she is splitting their attention between the road and a movie.

In other news

■ The 2007 Texas Master Naturalist course, a nationally recognized program which certifies a group of well-informed volunteers to provide natural resources management assistance to the public, will again offer classes beginning Feb. 21. Wednesday evening classes are conducted from 6-9 p.m. for 13 weeks at Memorial

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The only people you should want to get even with are those who have helped you.

— Quips & Quotes



— Photo courtesy Canutillo ISD

MAGIC FINGERS — David Shimoni, pianist with the Piatigorsky Foundation performs for the students on the stage of the CHS theater.

Musical excellence pays special visit to Canutillo High School

By Kim Guzman
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO — Students from Canutillo High School recently experienced musical excellence in their own auditorium through a concert sponsored by The Jenna Welch and Laura Bush Community Library at El Paso Community College. The concert featured two outstanding Piatigorsky Foundation artists: Erika Wueschner, soprano and David Shimoni, pianist.

The Piatigorsky Foundation is a non-profit organization whose mission is to make live classical music part of the fabric of everyday life for communities throughout the United States. The foundation concerts bring top quality musicians to audiences who would otherwise not have the opportunity to hear such performances.

"Our students that attended the concert are in band, choir, and theater arts and therefore have an appreciation for music, but even they were amazed by the outstanding musical performances by Wueschner and Shimoni," said Fred Hurd, CHS Assistant Principal.

Wueschner and Shimoni performed several songs for the students including *Some Enchanted Evening*, by Richard Rodgers, and *Los Dos Miedos*, by Joaquin Turina. They also dialogued with the students between songs, answering their questions and providing the students with insights into each musical number.

The Foundation carries on the legacy of Gregor Piatigorsky (1903-1976), who performed not only in the world's great concert halls but also in cities, towns, and villages all over the U.S. "Music makes life better. Music is neither a luxury nor a frill — it is a necessity! It is rich. It is imaginative. And it is for everyone," said Piatigorsky.

68,000 El Pasoans would earn more under new minimum wage

By Kira Maas
Special to the Courier

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Legislation to increase the federal minimum wage would provide higher pay for over 30 percent of El Pasoans. The measure passed the U.S. House of Representatives on Jan. 10. Congressman Silvestre Reyes said he voted in favor of the bill, which is part of the House Democrats' 100 Hours Agenda.

"Increasing the minimum wage will have a profound impact on El Paso workers," said Reyes. "Our community is full of hard working families that have dealt with the rising costs of health insurance, gasoline, and attending college. Many members of these families work at jobs where they make minimum wage, which has not increased in ten years. This increase is

in the best interests of our working families and our economy."

The bill, H.R. 2, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007, increases the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 an hour over two years. Sixty days after the legislation is enacted, the minimum wage would increase to \$5.85. One year later it would increase to \$6.55 per hour. The following year, the minimum wage would increase to \$7.25 an hour.

Reyes said raising the minimum wage would provide an additional \$4,400 per year for a family of three, equaling 15 months of groceries, or over two years of health care. Nationwide, over six million children have parents who will be helped by this bill. He noted that in the four years following the last federal minimum wage increase, the economy enjoyed its strongest growth in over three decades, adding nearly 11 million new jobs.

Canutillo Middle School launches Dr. Martin Luther King Book Drive

By Kim Guzman
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO — Canutillo Middle School has launched a book drive, art exhibit and student essay display in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King's dream of equal opportunity and literacy for all.

Students from CMS student council, art club, teachers, staff and the Canutillo ISD community are promoting literacy throughout the community by collecting books and magazines through Feb. 26.

Collection sites for the book drive are: Canutillo MS, located at 7311 Bosque Road, and CISD Administration Facility, 7965 Artcraft. The donated materials will be distributed to various shelters in the county.

"Displays of students' artwork and essays demonstrating their understanding of Dr. King's contributions to literacy and civil rights will be posted in the CMS Library and foyer," said Laura Biernacki, CMS English teacher.

The public is encouraged to donate books

See BOOKS, Page 6

Foundation provides loans for water wells

By Cliff Treyns
Special to the Courier

Certain low- to moderate-income individuals or families may be eligible for money to construct, repair or improve household water well systems through one percent interest loans from the Foundation for Affordable Drinking Water.

The Foundation was established through the National Ground Water Association.

Qualified applicants can borrow up to \$8,000 at one percent interest for a term not to exceed 20 years. To qualify, households must:

- Own the home and use it as the principal residence.
- Have as the primary drinking water source an individual household well system located on the property of the home.
- Must meet income eligibility requirements.
- Be in a city, town or unincorporated area with a population of less than 50,000.

Currently, the program is available in Alabama, Colorado, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

The Foundation will not underwrite a loan once a project is underway or has been completed. Most new home construction projects are not eligible.

Another important aspect of the loan program is to educate loan recipients on the importance of regular well maintenance and annual testing of their well system.

Complete information, including application forms and requirements and income eligibility

See WELLS, Page 6



One perspective

By Francis Shrum

A good laugh

The winter chill had left the sparkling afternoon air

they are laughing about, but it uplifts the spirit unless it is directed at tearing down someone else.

when I got out of my car. Across the street a group of men were working on a construction site.

Then we grow up. That doesn't mean we have to stop laughing. A good sense of humor doesn't come with an expiration date.

A radio was playing inside a parked truck with music pouring out the open door with words I couldn't understand but with a gusto that I could appreciate. Several of the workers were using shovels while one sat idle in the seat of a nearby backhoe.

My circumstance these days brings me in contact with a host of people of various ages, races, backgrounds and personality types, all mixed together in a common room.

Suddenly, the entire group burst into shouts of laughter that carried to me on the bright air, a moment of mirth so robust and hearty that I wanted to join in. I have no idea who the men were, what their lives are like, what struggles they have or even what the joke was.

The way humans react to the challenges of organized education is completely individual but the one sure thing that will unite a small group or an entire classroom is something in common to laugh about.

I probably don't want to know that.

A gifted teacher is one who can make his or her students laugh out loud.

"If we may believe our logicians," said the English essayist Joseph Addison, "man is distinguished from all other creatures by the faculty of laughter."

I bought Jeff's Foxworthy's *Redneck Dictionary* the other day and had it in my backpack. A desk mate happened to see it, pulled it out, and spent our break reading it out loud. It was so hilarious that we both dissolved into tears on occasion. Our subsequent assignments seemed a lot easier.

I don't know about the distinguished part, but a good, hearty laugh, for whatever reason, is one of the best tonics to the human soul our Creator ever gave us.

Some people get uncomfortable when a group nearby bursts into laughter. Maybe they've been the butt of too many jokes or were laughed at when they were kids. That's a pretty sad thing because, mostly, when people bust out laughing, it has nothing to do with anyone nearby. It usually has to do with something within the group. It is a thing to be celebrated and absorbed.

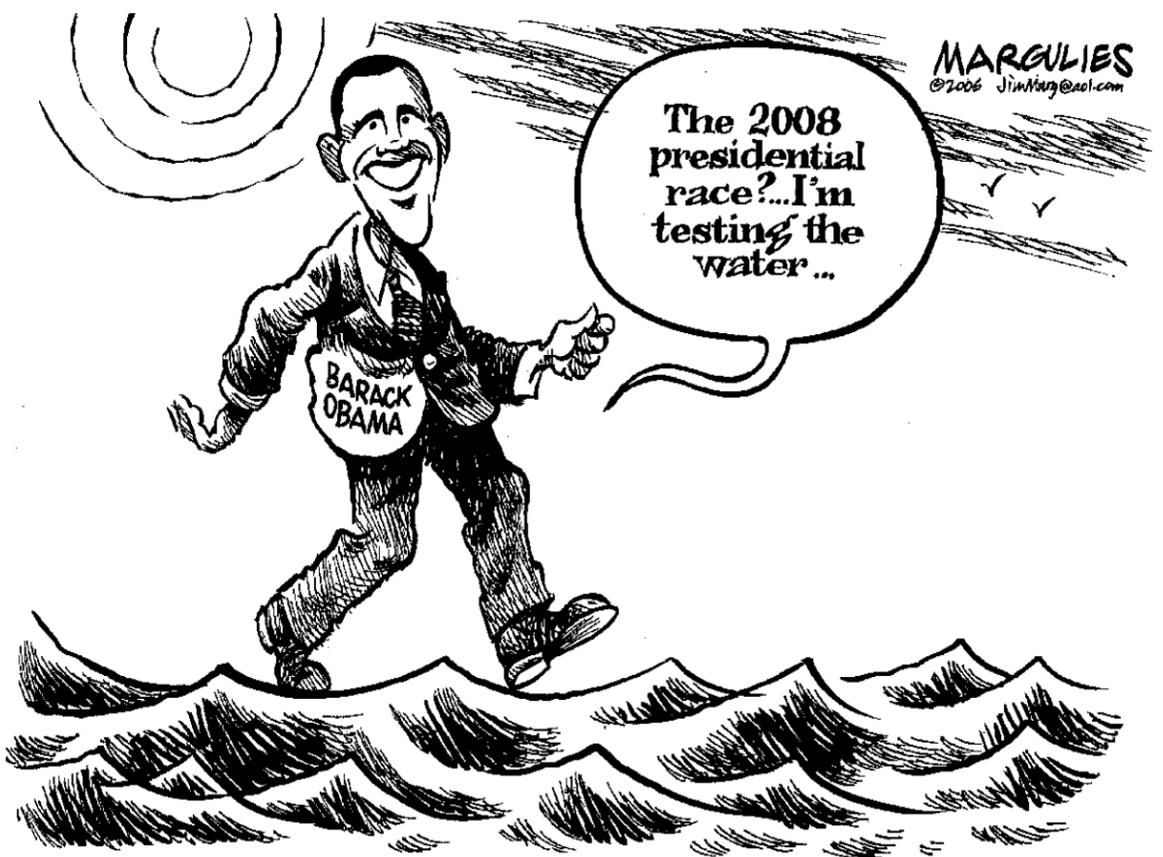
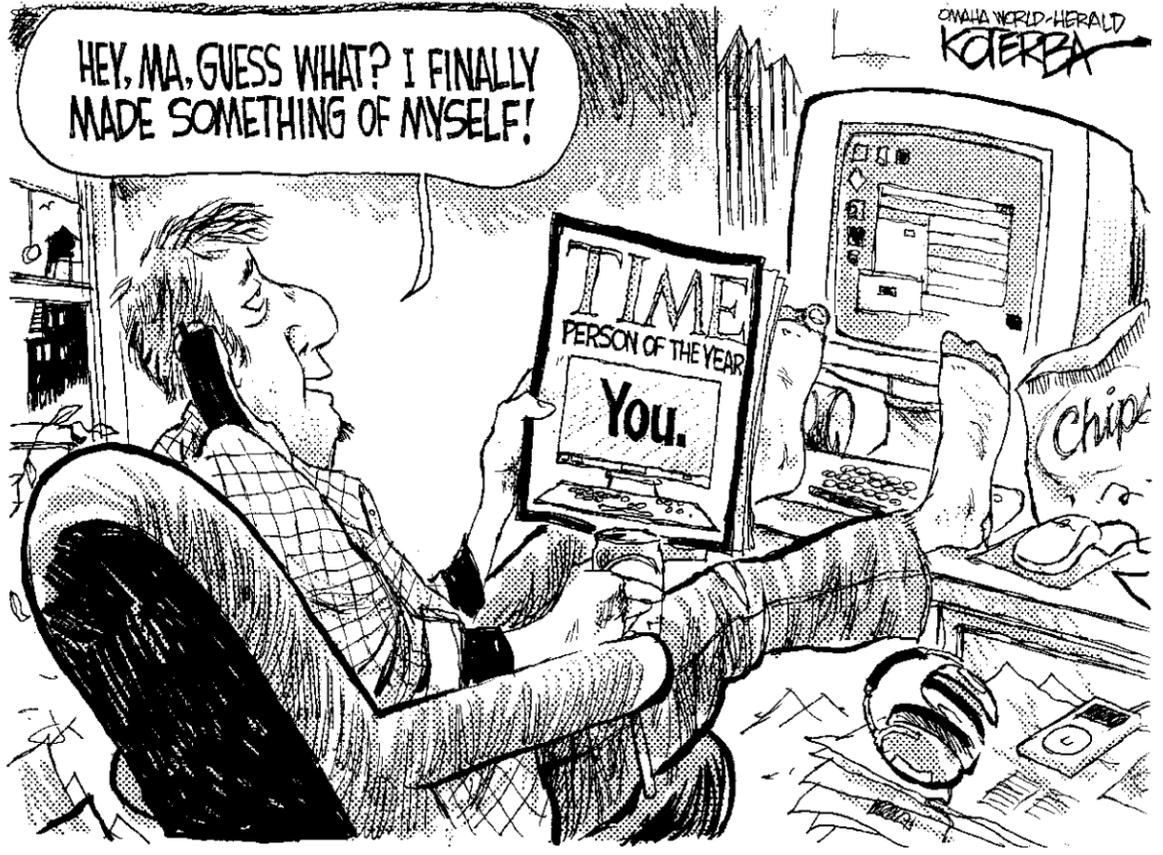
I remember how much I loved to listen to my kids playing in the back yard. Their rustling little conversations reminded me of chickens pecking and scratching. Ever now and again the rustling would be interrupted with a peal of laughter, so high and clear it made my heart soar. The laughter of a child is a wonderful thing. Maybe I'm glad I don't know everything they were laughing about, either.

Mirth is medicine.

Kids grow up and go into the school setting. There is always lots of laughing going on among kids. As with construction workers, you probably don't want to know everything

I like people who can create humor in the most mundane of situations. I recently heard a woman make a special request of a co-worker. When he agreed to come help her, she replied, "Thanks. I love you more than my luggage. It's been all around

See LAUGHTER, Page 3



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View from here

By Byron Schlomach, Ph.D.

Budget surplus: Where the money should go

We're rich! That is what some are thinking as they eye the \$14.3 billion in "new" money the Texas Legislature has at its disposal. Of course, a substantial amount of that money is already promised for property tax relief, but that will not keep big spenders from proposing new and expanded programs.

The chief argument for new spending is always the desire to "meet people's needs." As good as this might sound, it is a strategy often doomed to failure.

A few years ago, an Austin columnist recorded the story of an alcoholic panhandler taken off the street by a small businessman. Given a job for which it turned out he had a talent, this once-homeless man got his own apartment. It looked as if he would make a home for himself, but one day, he quit his job because the businessman would not give him a raise ahead of his gaining a certified rating in his profession. The man became a homeless alcoholic again — and died a short time later.

Why did this man, who seemed to finally have everything going for

him, give it up for so trivial a reason? Although we may never fully understand this man's actions, we can be certain of one thing: he knew his basic human needs would be satisfied once he quit his job.

Men and women stand on street corners in the heat, cold, and rain because there is a payoff. People give them money. Unfortunately, those who give the money and feel good about it are classic enablers. Their simple rule is: see a panhandler with a sign, give them money. Good intentions trump the reality that a destructive cycle is perpetuated.

Government is like that. Despite the complicated applications and bureaucratic hoops, the one over-arching rule in government is simple. If certain criteria are met — often a result of people making poor choices in their lives — those who apply for aid, get the aid. Government becomes an enabler.

The contrast between the businessman who attempted to help rehabilitate the homeless man, and people who hand over money at street corners, is mirrored in pri-

vate charities and government social programs. The businessman's efforts were undermined by well-intentioned enablers whose actions caused an alcoholic to believe he would not fully face the consequences of his own actions. Instead, this led to the alcoholic's early demise.

Private charities like Goodwill and the Salvation Army take the time to understand peoples' needs. They also have the ability — and the right — to customize their services to peoples' real needs, and to deny help to the recalcitrant. That is the advantage private charities have over government. It does not take an act of Congress or any elected body to change a private charity's rule when it discovers that the rule rewards bad behavior.

Government can never be like private charity. Government cannot truly care or be compassionate. All government can do is redistribute wealth. Private charities focus scarce resources on where the

See SURPLUS, Page 6



THE TWO EXTREMES OF NETWORK NEWS



Por la Gente
By State Rep. Chente Quintanilla

80th legislative session begins

Hola mi gente. The 80th session of the Texas Legislature is now in full swing. The first week is behind us and now we can focus on the people needs of the people.

As you may be aware, the first vote that I and my colleagues made was for the Speaker of the House. Rep. Tom Craddick, the incumbent speaker, was opposed in his re-election bid by Rep. Jim Pitts. Originally there were a total of four members running for the office but two of them, Rep. Zenfronia Thompson and Rep. Brian McCall, dropped out. The maneuvering for votes continued right up to the floor vote.

When Rep. Pitts announced on the floor of the House that he was removing his name for consideration, the race was over. Tom Craddick is the Speaker of the House for the 80th Legislature.

There was still the need to exercise a vote for the Office of Speaker. I voted to start out the new session fresh. What has happened in the past is behind us. Now is the time to act as gentlemen and do what is good for Texas. I did not place a vote against the remaining candidate just for the sake of making a negative statement. I wanted something positive to come out of the first big vote. It made no sense to me to come out fighting; there will be plenty of fights later on.

Within the next week, the Speaker will publish our committee assignments. Once that is behind us, we will begin the long process of hearing testimony for and against the thousands of bills that are filed. Most bills do not get past the committee. By that filtering, the votes that we take with the full House in session are for the more important bills.

I sincerely hope that this session ends with less animosity than in the past. That is how the people of Texas want us to work.

Laughter

From Page 2

the world and never got lost."

And she walked away. Her co-worker and I were both smiling.

Smiling at other people is also lots of fun. It's fun even if you are the only one doing the smiling. Sidewalks, department stores, restaurants and other places of business are good places to practice smiling. You never know what kind of reaction you'll get if you look a passer-by in the eye and smile at them. It can be pretty gratifying sometimes.

Places that are particularly in need of more laughter are hospitals, police stations, court houses — except in the courtroom, your honor — and nursing homes. Way too serious.

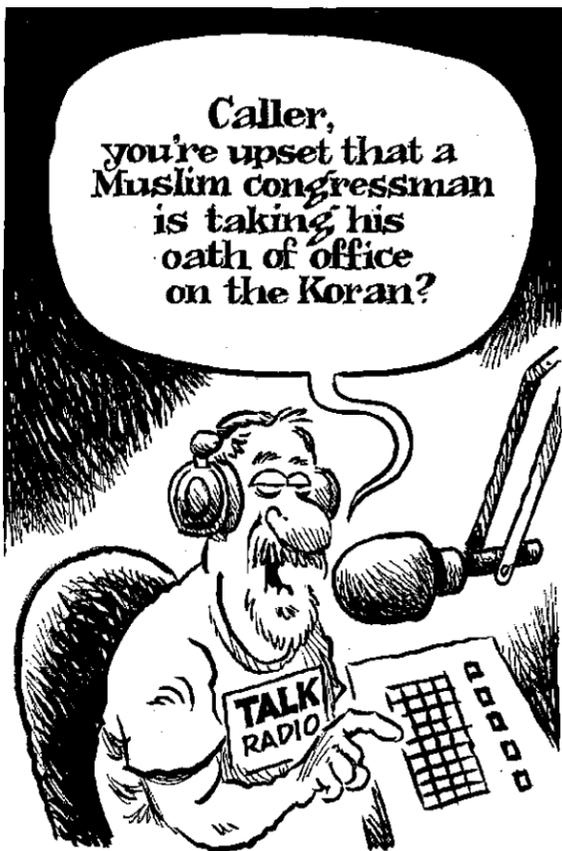
Ever wonder why they send

clowns to hospitals mostly to cheer up the sick kids? Maybe the clowns should make a visit to the other parts of the hospital where the grownups are. They probably need to be reminded that life can be funny more than the kids do.

Just because someone is laughing doesn't mean they aren't having difficulty or aren't serious about their situation. One of the most serious things I ever did was help my daughter deliver her son. She was in pain but we played cards and laughed as long as possible. The attending nurse would shake her head, slightly disapproving, but it helped us get on with our labor.

No matter what misfortune befalls us, I've found that if you can find something in the situation to laugh about, it will at least keep you from crying.

Or singing, but that's a whole other story.



Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes



'100 Hours Agenda' helps Americans

The health care needs of El Paso's senior citizens are extremely important. The federal government plays a critical role, through the Medicare federal health insurance program, in helping our seniors access health services and prescription drugs. Just last week, I joined many of my colleagues in the House of Representatives in passing legislation to improve the Medicare program by helping beneficiaries in El Paso and across the country pay the lowest price possible for their prescription drugs.

We passed H.R. 4, the Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiation Act of 2007, an important component of the House Democrats "100 Hours Agenda." I served as a co-sponsor of this bill, which righted what I thought was a serious wrong with the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act passed by Congress in November 2003. I have long been a strong advocate for providing

America's Medicare beneficiaries with an affordable, comprehensive prescription drug benefit under Medicare, and voted against the 2003 bill because, among other things, it did not allow the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to negotiate prescription drug discounts. In short, it intentionally forced our seniors to pay higher costs for their prescription drugs.

However, last week's bill, H.R. 4, specifically fixes that portion of the current, flawed Medicare law. H.R. 4 requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to negotiate drug prices on behalf of Medicare and provides the Secretary with discretion on how to implement the negotiating authority to achieve the greatest price discounts. It continues to prohibit the HHS Secretary from requiring a particular formulary (i.e., a list of covered drugs) to be used by Medicare prescription drug plans or limiting access to any prescription medication, and negotiated prices would go into effect in January 2008. To ensure that Congress has over-

sight in the negotiation process, the bill mandates biannual updates from the Administration, and reports must include drug prices and any price discounts achieved by the Secretary as a result of such negotiations.

Many El Paso seniors — and many seniors across the country — rely solely on Medicare to pay for their health care services. It was unfair to force them to pay higher costs, especially when the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs currently negotiates drug prices for our nation's veterans. In fact, allowing Medicare to negotiate prices in bulk could save taxpayers as much as \$60 billion over ten years. Former Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson, upon his departure from office in December 2004, mentioned that he would "like to have had the opportunity to negotiate" drug prices on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries.

A recent poll conducted by *Newsweek* magazine indicated that an overwhelming majority of Americans, 92 percent, favor providing Medicare with negotiating authority.



Moore Texas by Roger T. Moore Jan. 18, 1892: Birthdate of rodeo star, Wild West Show performer and World Champion Trick Roper Chester Byers. The World's authority on fancy ropin' died in Ft. Worth in 1945.

I am proud that my colleagues and I put the needs of the American first and passed this legislation that the vast majority of Americans supported.

The first 100 hours of the 110th Congress have been filled with victories for the American public. We passed legislation improving Congressional ethics standards, imple-

menting the 9/11 Commission recommendations, and raising the minimum wage. We also made history by swearing in the first female Speaker of the House, Representative Nancy Pelosi. This is a critical time in our nation's history, and I am proud that, from health care to homeland security, we are working hard to meet the needs of the nation.

Briefs

From Page 1

Garden Center, 3105 Grant Ave. in El Paso. Some classes will be held at UTEP, and five Saturday morning field trips will be conducted. Deadline to apply is Feb. 9 by calling the Texas Cooperative Extension at 851-2515. Topics training includes geology, botany, archaeology and desert ecology. Projects currently being aided by volunteers educated through this program include the Rio Bosque, Keystone Heritage Park, Franklin Mountain State Park, Feather Lake, Wyler Tramway, and McKelligan and McKittrick Canyon.

■ *Strong Women, Strong Futures* is the theme of the First Annual Mother-Daughter Conference at Americas High School on Saturday, Jan. 27 from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For more information, call Janice Masters at 937-2897 or, for Spanish language, Argelia Morales at 937-2962.

■ The El Paso Police Department investigated 13 pedestrian fatalities during 2006, 13 for 2005 and 9 for 2004. The Safe Communities section of the El Paso Police Department educates the community on pedestrian safety throughout the year. Safe Communities is available to present for any group at no cost. To schedule a seminar please contact Margaret Meraz at 564-7352. Safe Communities along with the El Paso Police Department would like to offer the following safety tips:

- Use crosswalks at intersections;
- Never cross against a "Don't Walk" signal;
- Look left, right, and left again before crossing the street. Cross when the street is clear and keeping looking both ways;
- Stop at the curb, or at the edge of the roadway if there is no curb, before crossing the street;
- Never run into the street;
- Walk facing the traffic, on sidewalks or paths. Walk as far to the left as possible if there are not sidewalks;
- Watch for cars that are turning or backing up; and
- Carry a flashlight at night, dawn, and dusk. Add retro reflective ma-

terials to clothing and were visible clothing during these hours.

■ As part of Sun Metro's ongoing revitalization effort, starting this week, all of the 102 bus shelters in the city will be repainted. Beginning Monday, Jan. 15, the work crew will begin in the Eastside on Montana Street and will continue painting shelters over the next few months. In an effort to enhance passenger satisfaction and to assist in route recognition, Sun Metro will paint the bus shelters according their public schedule. Once Sun Metro crews begin painting the shelters, staff recommends for passengers to stand next to the shelter and away from the work crew. Coach operators will make a courtesy stop before or after a shelter location, whichever is safest. Signal to the driver that you are waiting for the bus and wish for it to stop. After the job is finished, the shelter will remain closed for the remainder of the day. Starting Jan. 15, Sun Metro passengers using Routes 4 and 55, will experience minor route changes. Due to construction on San Antonio Street the bus stops located in front of Sun

Plaza Apartments (Route 4) as well as those from Cotton St. to Virginia St. (Route 55) will not be serviced. For alternative bus stops please use Magoffin St. Outbound Route 55 Bus will avoid San Antonio by continuing on Magoffin towards regular route. Inbound Route 55 Bus will avoid San Antonio by continuing on Myrtle towards regular route. Outbound Route 4 Trolley will take an alternate route by turning left on Newman off of Magoffin. It will continue on Myrtle to Virginia, and will then turn on San Antonio. The trolley will resume its regular route on St Vrain. Inbound Route 4 Will not be affected. Customer Service Line is 533-333.

■ Whether your travel destination is Canada or China, you need to make sure you have the official papers necessary for your trip. That's why the Department of State has put together the handy publication, *Foreign Entry Requirements*. It features the passport, visa, and immunization requirements for 200 countries, along with embassy and consulate addresses and phone numbers. This publication costs \$1.00. For your

copy, send your name, address, and a check or money order for \$1.00 to the Federal Citizen Information Center, Dept. 349P, Pueblo, CO 81009. Or call toll-free 1 (888) 878-3256, and ask for Item 349P. Visit www.pueblo.gsa.gov to place your order online or to read or print this and hundreds of other FCIC publications for free.

■ Do you know that nearly 10 million teenagers, aged 12-20, consume alcohol? Educate your teen about the dangers of underage drinking with *Ask, Listen, Learn—What You Don't "NO" Can Hurt You*. It's filled with important information on the harmful effects of alcohol and creative ways your teens can say no. There are even trivia cards and interactive games to help you reinforce the dangers. For your free copy, send your name and address to the Federal Citizen Information Center, Dept. 527P, Pueblo, CO 81009. Or call toll-free 1 (888) 878-3256, and ask for Item 527P. Visit www.pueblo.gsa.gov to place your order online or to read or print this and hundreds of other FCIC publications for free.

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Town of Horizon City PUBLIC NOTICE

During the Regular Council Meeting on Tuesday, January 9, 2007 the Town of Horizon City Council approved the following ordinance(s):

- 1) Ordinance 0156 — Rezoning property from R-2 Single Family Residential to R-PD Residential — Planned Development. Being a portion of Tracts 8, Section 30, Block 78, Township 3, and a portion of Section 31, Block 78, Township 3, Texas and Pacific Railroad Surveys, El Paso County, Horizon City, Texas. Area consists of approximately 18.8138 acres.

Ordinances are always available for viewing or copying upon request from the City Clerk at Town Hall, 14999 Darrington Road, Horizon City, Texas, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or call 915-852-1046.

Sandra Sierra
City Clerk

WTCC: 01-18-07

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House passes 9/11 Commission recommendations

By Kira Maas
Special to the Courier

WASHINGTON, D.C. — As part of the House Democrats' 100 Hours Agenda, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1, a bill to further implement the 9/11 Commission recommendations. This bill is intended to improve homeland security and prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, and develops strategies to prevent the spread of Islamic terrorism.

Congressman Silvestre Reyes, Chair of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, said he voted in favor of the bill.

"This bill includes a provision for risk-based funding of homeland security grants that will especially assist border communities like El Paso," said Reyes. "This measure is reminiscent of recent changes to the Urban Area Security Initiative grant program that I worked to implement for El Paso. The current funding formula for homeland security grants is similarly troubling, and I am proud to cast this vote to change to a risk-based program."

H.R. 1 would substantially increase the share of homeland security grants that are provided to states based on risk, rather than population. Under the bill, a Department of Homeland Security risk assessment would determine each state's funding and most states would be guaranteed a minimum of 0.25 percent. The bill would provide for a larger minimum (0.45 percent) for border states. The bill also phases in 100 per-

cent inspection of all cargo on airplanes, and creates a grant program ensuring communications interoperability for first responders.

"Last year, the bipartisan 9/11 Commissioners gave Congress and the Administration a number of poor grades on implementing the Commission's recommendations," said Reyes. "These poor grades were a call to action. This critical bill address the shortfalls the 9/11 Commissioners highlighted."

The bill includes the following steps to improve homeland security:

- Creating a stand-alone grant program to provide first responders with the type of equipment that allows them to communicate with one another during emergencies;
- Phasing in a requirement of 100 percent inspection of the cargo carried on passenger aircraft over the next three years (most of this cargo is not inspected today);
- Quickly accelerating the installation of explosive detection systems for checked baggage at the nation's airports;
- Improving explosive detection systems at passenger checkpoints at the nation's airports; and
- Phasing in a requirement of 100 percent scanning of U.S.-bound shipping containers over the next five years.

The bill also includes provisions to better prevent terrorists from acquiring WMD, such as:

- Strengthening the Cooperative Threat Reduction ("Nunn-Lugar") program that focuses on securing loose nuclear materials in the former Soviet Union;
- Providing increased tools for the

Proliferation Security Initiative, through which the U.S. and participating countries interdict WMD; and

- Establishing a U.S. Coordinator for the Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism at the White House, who would serve as a presidential advisor on proliferation issues.

Finally, the bill also includes provisions to reduce the appeal of extremism, including:

- Providing for the establishment of a Middle East Foundation, to promote economic opportunities, education reform, human rights and democratic processes in the countries of the Middle East; and
- Promoting quality educational opportunities for youth in Arab and other predominantly Muslim countries, including expanding U.S. scholarship and exchange programs.

UASI program

The Department of Homeland Security created the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant program in 2003, which focuses on the unique planning, equipment, training and exercise needs of high-threat, high-density urban areas. Funds assist communities in building capacity to prevent, protect, respond, and recover from acts of terrorism. Since the program's inception in fiscal 2003, El Paso was not considered eligible for the program. This year the DHS placed additional emphasis on the presence of critical infrastructure such as military installations and ports of entry when determining which cities to make eligible for funds. El Paso now qualifies.



— Photo courtesy Canutillo ISD

Springer named to All-Region Band

UPPER VALLEY — Miranda Springer, Canutillo High School sophomore and member of the CHS Eagle Pride Band was named tenth chair, second band for the El Paso Area All-Region Band recently. Springer has been playing the flute for five years as a student in the Canutillo Independent School District. Springer will perform with the All Region Band in the Magoffin Center at UTEP in January. Each year students throughout public schools in Texas have the opportunity to audition individually in local competition and be recognized by being named to All-Region Band. Springer qualified to advance to Area auditions for All-State Band honors.

— Contributed by Kim Guzman

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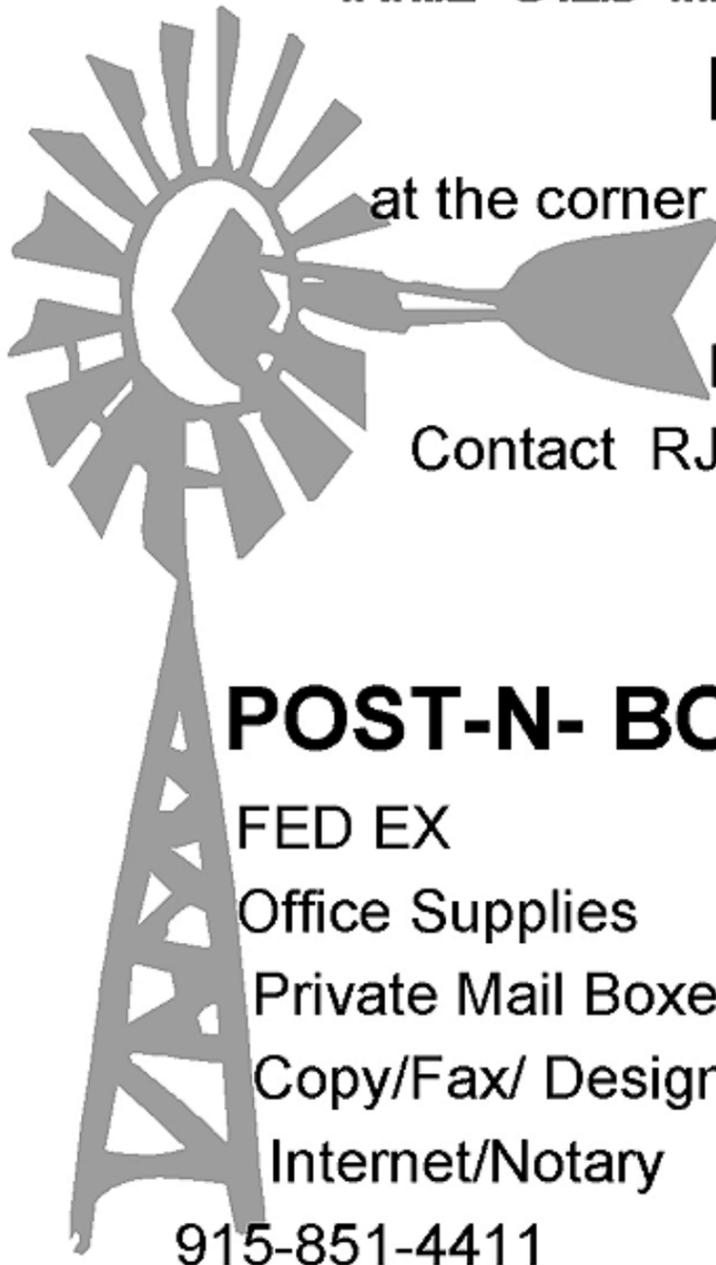
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Strahan's defense for divorce full of holes, wife wins legal battle

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Many people have been quoted as saying that love is a many splendor thing. New York Giants star defensive tackle Michael Strahan recently found out that love can also be a many "expensive" thing.

If Strahan was contemplating retiring any time soon he's going to have to put that thought on the back burner for a while.

See, Strahan got married back in 1999 and, knowing that he would be worth many millions in the future, decided to have his new bride sign a prenuptial agreement.

You know — so he could protect himself financially.

Yeah, right.

Seems Strahan now wishes he had a different financial consultant when he signed on the bottom line.

A judge ordered Strahan to pay his ex-wife a whopping \$15.3 million, which happens to be even more than half of his net worth.

Under the agreement, Jean Strahan is entitled

to 50 percent of her ex-husband's net worth, including 20 percent of his yearly income for the entire time they were married.

Ouch! Who in his right mind would agree to that deal? I think we have to go to the videotape and add up the number of times Strahan took a blow to the head.

Strahan, who also was ordered to pay thousands in child support, did his best to get out of some of it by claiming that his ex never claimed her 20 percent over the years, so he felt she wasn't entitled to it.

Wrong!

The judge said that it was in the agreement so he has to pay it.

I love the statement given by his ex-wife after the proceedings. "It pays to tell the truth, and I told the truth. I never asked for a penny more than the prenup that Michael and his lawyers wrote and made me sign," she said.

What a gal! I don't think would I have needed to ask for a penny more either. By the way, how many pennies are there in \$15.3 million? Let's see, write out the whole number, move the decimal, and... and, well, there's a bunch.

I don't know if you've seen the Subway com-

mercial in which Strahan appears with Jared (the fast food sandwich's spokesperson), but the New York Giant is now pushing the lean subway sandwich.

I don't know how many times a week (or a day) Strahan was used to eating steak, but I think he may want to get used to those meatball subs.

They're quite tasty and I hear they don't make much of a dent on the old pocketbook.

Girls behaving stupidly

There are many reasons college coaches are reluctant to let freshmen athletes play right away.

One reason is that they don't know the system yet. Another is that they need time to become acclimated to college life. But the most obvious reason is that — for the most part — freshman are just plain too immature.

Case in point, the Colorado State Rams women's basketball team will be without a few of their freshmen players for a while because of — well — some mighty stupid behavior.

Seems the girls on the team are very close friends and there's nothing wrong with that.

But sometimes friends like to play pranks on each other and, normally, there's nothing wrong with that either.

But this prank wasn't your normal sit-on-a-whoopie-cushion kind of gotcha.

With one of their teammates in her apartment, the foolish four thought they would give her a little scare. So they put a little chemical bomb together outside her window.

I sure hope some of these players were at least chemistry majors.

You probably guessed by now that this was no firecracker-like pop and little puff of smoke.

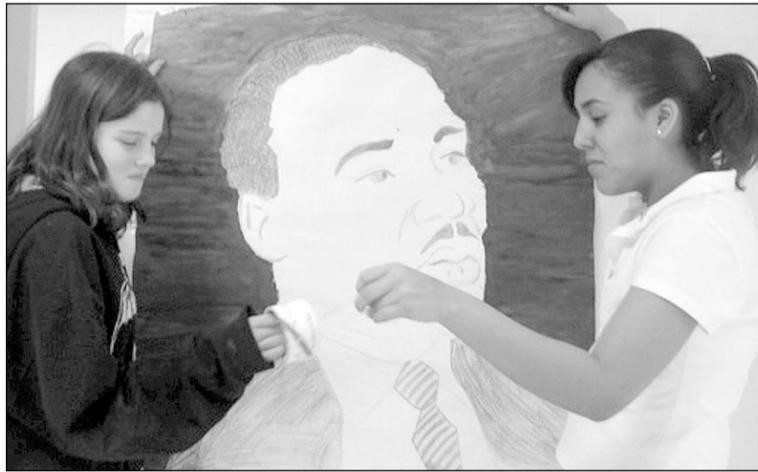
Fortunately, the blast didn't injure anyone or cause any structural damage, but it was quite a blast.

As the detective working the case put it, "No one was hurt, but if someone had opened the door at the time the device exploded there could have been serious injuries."

The bomb was made of chemicals that create an explosive acid.

The girls didn't mean any harm, but as they say, "youth is wasted on the young."

Especially when the young are some of those wacky freshmen.



— Photo courtesy Canutillo ISD

Books

From Page 1

and magazines and visit Canutillo Middle School to view the students' exhibits. Information: 877-7900.

AND LITERACY FOR ALL — Canutillo Middle School students displayed their artwork for the school's book drive. Kristyn McMillie, left, a seventh grader and Desiree Dominguez, an eighth grader, work together on a portrait of Dr. King.

Wells

From Page 1

limits, can be accessed by going to www.ngwa.org and clicking on the link for Foundation for Affordable Drinking Water. Applications and additional information can also be obtained by contacting the Foundation at 800-551-7379, or e-mail Paul Humes at phumes@fadw.org. You also can learn more about the program by visiting www.wellowner.org and clicking on "Financing."

"Water is essential, and the Foundation is committed to helping those in greatest need," said Humes, foundation director. "If you have a real need and meet the qualifications for this program, we encourage you to apply."

Surplus

From Page 2

potential payoff is greatest — on those most willing to change. Government must follow simple rules that protect those unwilling to change from the consequences of their own actions.

There are a myriad of ways to spend \$14.3 billion, all of which sound good to somebody. We need to consider, however, whether our money is being spent well or if we are employing a people in government to work a lot but accomplish very little. Because Americans are a generous people, there is no doubt that if the unobligated portion of the \$14.3 billion surplus were returned to taxpayers in the form of reduced taxes, Texans

would do great things with it.

So the choice is stark: grow state government programs through coercive taxation by letting government spend our money, or get our money back and determine its fate ourselves. The former obligates taxpayers far into the future, limiting their ability to personally bring positive change to their communities. The latter releases the generosity and creativity of millions. Neither path is likely to completely eliminate human misery, but private action has demonstrated an ability to subtract from it while government action has a tragic tendency to add to it.

Byron Schlomach, Ph.D., is Chief Economist for the Texas Public Policy Foundation a non-profit institute in Austin (www.TexasPolicy.com).

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AUTOMOTIVE SERVICES CSP NO. 199-0126-7051 ACCEPTED

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EMPLOYEE UNIFORMS FOR OPERATIONAL SERVICES CSP NO.

199-0126-7029 ACCEPTED UNTIL 2:30 P.M.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

As per Article V, Sec. 5.05(a), all owners and lienholders have ten (10) days from this date to reclaim their vehicles at South West Wrecker, 1401 Darrington Rd., 855-1900, 851-2091-fax, or it will be sold at public

auction for charges: VIN - 471SK13E3PU250931, 1993 Toyota Camry, green, New Mexico license GSA 083 WTCC-01/18/07

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Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



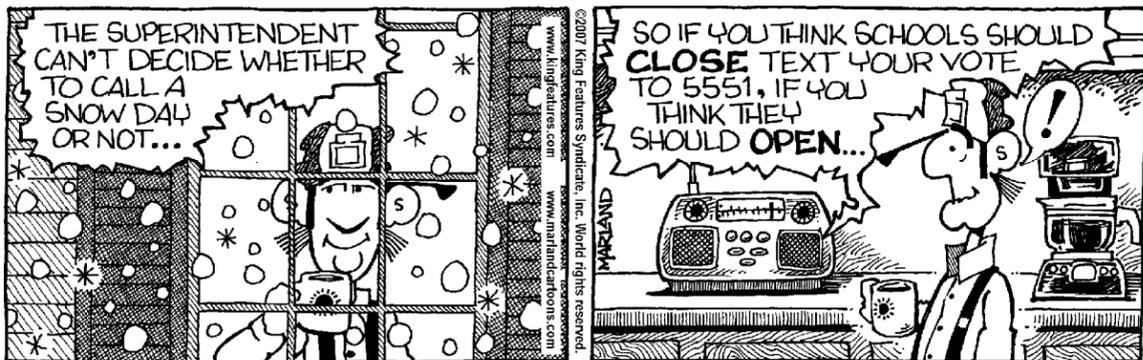
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Dealing with personal demons

By Don Flood

To err is human, to forgive is Donald [Trump].

Tara Conner, Miss USA, recently received forgiveness from The Donald after reports surfaced that the pageant winner had been partying a little too hard in New York.

"I believe in second chances," said Trump, who, to cite but one example, has given his hairstylist many, many "second" chances.

At the press conference, Conner explained her problems by crying and looking cute, though she did refer darkly to her personal demons, for which she claimed complete ownership.

"My personal demons are my personal demons," she said.

(Readers who would prefer their very own personalized demons, as opposed to those tiresome generic demons employed by so many, should visit

veryownpersonaldemons.com. The site offers a wide variety of personal demons to choose from, with tips and advice about personalizing them and making them unique.)

Not all pageant girls were so fortunate. Katie Rees, who until recently served as Miss Nevada, had personal demons too, but hers were of a far more serious nature; in other words, there was photographic evidence of those personal demons on the Internet.

In this case, there was no forgiveness from The Donald, who serves as something of a Pope of American Pop Culture.

(Readers should not read too much into my comparison between the pope and the Donald. The pope's infallibility is limited to matters of religious doctrine. Trump's infallibility knows no such boundaries.)

Sadly, racy Internet photos are fast becoming a major threat to the pageant industry.

With Web sites such as MySpace churning out 187 bobillion racy images per minute — just an estimate, I don't have time to count them all — the U.S. will soon run out of suitable pageant contestants.

In fact, if present trends continue, that point will be reached 3:30 p.m. next Tuesday, right after school lets out.

Meanwhile, Miss Nevada will have to pay the price for her transgressions.

While it's too early to say what the exact penalties will be, experts say she is likely to serve time fielding movie, TV and modeling offers.

Following her sentence she will be released to the custody of Paris Hilton and Britney Spears, who will supervise her and provide her with tips on public dress and decorum.

That will be followed by a further probationary period, monitored by Lindsay Lohan.

(By the way, there is no truth to the rumor that the remaining 49 state Miss USA representatives are setting up their own racy Internet photo Web sites to further their careers. At last count, only 42 had such Web sites.)

Also not expecting to be forgiven by The Donald are the contestants on the forthcoming episodes of "The Apprentice."

According to the commercial, the winners will live in a mansion while the losers will live in tents, which will make for — and yes, they actually used this joke — an intense competition.

Get it? In tents? Intense? It's really funny. It's even been certified by Donald Trump as being extremely funny, so if you're not laughing uproariously there's something seriously wrong with you.

In fact, you may be suffering from personal demons.

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King Super Crossword

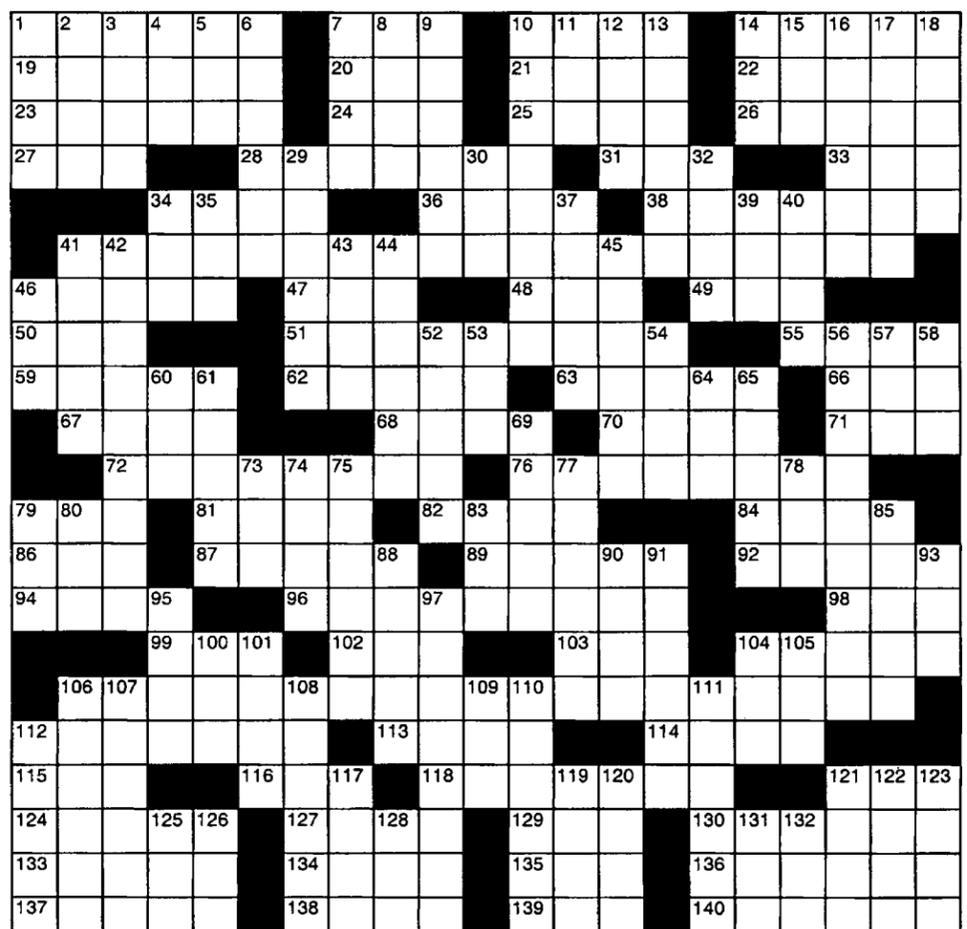
UPLIFTING STORY

- ACROSS**
- 1 Yacht spot
 - 7 Label
 - 10 Country singer Hank
 - 14 Hopeless case
 - 19 Mistreated
 - 20 _ Simbel
 - 21 "I could _ horse!"
 - 22 Madrid museum
 - 23 Start of a remark by Gene Perret
 - 24 Makes one's mark
 - 25 Fragment
 - 26 High points
 - 27 Ben, to Hoss
 - 28 Sparkle
 - 31 Tend a tot
 - 33 Actress Meyers
 - 34 _ gras
 - 36 One of the Waughs
 - 38 Prickly plant
 - 41 Part 2 of remark
 - 46 Managed
 - 47 Burton or Curry
 - 48 Doe in "Bambi"
 - 49 Comic Charlotte
 - 50 "Alley _"
 - 51 Rash
 - 55 Unrestrained
 - 59 Handbag part
 - 62 "_ Be Me" ('60 hit)
 - 63 Designer Simpson
 - 66 Baseball's Berg
 - 67 "_ Is for Heroes" ('62 film)
- DOWN**
- 68 Crude cartel
 - 70 Gray or Moran
 - 71 Comics' noise
 - 72 Wedding gift, perhaps
 - 76 Electrician's device
 - 79 "You bet!"
 - 81 Conductor Karl
 - 82 Puerto _
 - 84 Piccadilly figure
 - 86 Mellow
 - 87 Athenian arcades
 - 89 French impressionist
 - 92 Inclines
 - 94 Playwright Hart
 - 96 Fusilli's predecessor
 - 98 "_ favor"
 - 99 Curious
 - 102 Quisenberry or Quayle
 - 103 "I've _ it!"
 - 104 Texas athlete
 - 106 Part 3 of remark
 - 112 Rudy Vallee, for one
 - 113 Showstopper
 - 114 Tibetan monk
 - 115 Word on a pump
 - 116 Cotton clump
 - 118 Bit
 - 121 Davis' dom.
 - 124 See 5 Down
 - 127 Prepare to be shot
 - 129 "_ whiz!"
 - 130 End of remark
 - 133 Martini garnish
 - 134 Depraved
 - 135 April initials
 - 136 Paganini's instrument
 - 137 Olympic award
 - 138 Medieval menial
 - 139 Squirrel's snack
 - 140 Graceland, e.g.

- 1 A sweeping success?
- 2 "_ -Ca-Dabra" ('74 song)
- 3 Wished undone
- 4 "It _ far, far better ..."
- 5 With 124 Across, "Air Music" composer
- 6 Leisuredly, to Liszt
- 7 Judd Hirsch sitcom
- 8 Help a hood
- 9 Holst or Mahler
- 10 Hid
- 11 Slangy negative
- 12 Publisher Chandler
- 13 Elk
- 14 Scholastic abbr.
- 15 Mythical monster
- 16 Jet of yore
- 17 Swimmer Gertrude
- 18 Riveting woman?
- 29 Soup type
- 30 Yalie

- 32 Heavenly hammerer
- 34 Adversary
- 35 Approved
- 37 Cretan port
- 39 One _ million
- 40 Prepare prunes
- 41 Diner feature
- 42 Acts the tyrant
- 43 Lifesaver flavor
- 44 Caveat _
- 45 One following another
- 46 _ Cob, CT
- 52 More mature
- 53 Multipurpose vehicle
- 54 Semester
- 56 Musical composition
- 57 Card game
- 58 Morning moisture
- 60 PC key
- 61 Commoners
- 64 Speak with a forked tongue
- 65 Record
- 69 Winter warmer-upper
- 73 Bon _
- 74 "Hold your horses!"
- 75 Blake or Plummer
- 77 Neighbor of Hokkaido
- 78 Distinctive period
- 79 Tasty tuber
- 80 Self-esteem

- 83 Mischief-maker
- 85 Hurling or curling
- 88 Corset parts
- 90 List ender
- 91 Learn to walk
- 93 Theater sign
- 95 London district
- 97 Per se
- 100 Bear's lair
- 101 Comic Carey
- 104 Bk. convenience
- 105 Health club
- 106 Baltimore bird
- 107 Steamy
- 108 Long curtains
- 109 Fire
- 110 Starting point
- 111 Homegrown
- 112 Pool shot
- 117 Mourning _
- 119 Callao's country
- 120 Nuisance
- 121 Fountain order
- 122 Loretta of "M*A*S*H"
- 123 Melodious Murray
- 125 "Die Meistersinger" heroine
- 126 Gibson or Blanc
- 128 Tynemouth title
- 131 "Whether _ nobler in the mind ..."
- 132 Decimal point



Answer Page 6

Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Q: My friend and I both get Supplemental Security Income (SSI). But she gets more than me because of my "living arrangement." What does that mean?

A: Because Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a needs-based program, your living arrangements affect how much you can receive in monthly payments. For example, if you live with a friend or relative and do not pay your share of the household expenses, your payment will be

less than if you live on your own and pay all of your own bills.

Q: I've lost my Medicare card and need to have it replaced. How can I apply for a new one?

A: If you need to replace your Medicare card, there are a few ways you can apply. The easiest method is to use the Medicare Card Replacement Page online, and request your replacement right over the Internet. You can do so at

www.socialsecurity.gov/onlineservices/. The form is completed online and the process only takes a couple of minutes. You also can call us at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) and request a replacement over the phone.

Q: I get Medicare and would like to get extra help with my prescription drugs. Can I still apply for help?

A: Yes. To qualify for the extra help with your Medicare prescription drug costs, your income cannot be more than \$14,700 (or \$19,800 for a married couple living together) and your resources cannot be more than

\$10,000 (or \$20,000 for a couple). Some exceptions apply but if you are interested in extra help, you can apply online at www.socialsecurity.gov, call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) or visit your local Social Security office. To learn more about the Medicare Prescription Drug coverage, visit www.medicare.gov.

Q: My application for Social Security disability benefits was denied and I need to appeal. Do I need to hire a lawyer?

A: Many people handle their own Social Security appeals, but you

may choose to have someone help you with your appeal or to represent you. Your representative may be a lawyer or other qualified person familiar with you and the Social Security program. Social Security will work with your representative or with you.

For more information on any of the questions listed above, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.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.

7-DAY FORECAST FOR EL PASO, TX

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Thursday	Thu. night	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
55°	33°	46° / 25°	43° / 28°	51° / 30°	56° / 32°	57° / 23°	48° / 27°
RealFeel 57°	RealFeel 25°	RealFeel 40° / 17°	RealFeel 38° / 18°	RealFeel 49° / 22°	RealFeel 55° / 27°	RealFeel 50° / 17°	RealFeel 47° / 22°

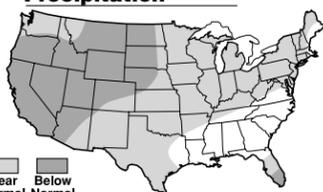
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WEATHER TRENDS THIS WEEK

IN THE SKY

Temperatures

Precipitation



Sun

	Rise	Set
Thu.	7:05 a.m.	5:27 p.m.
Fri.	7:05 a.m.	5:28 p.m.
Sat.	7:05 a.m.	5:28 p.m.
Sun.	7:05 a.m.	5:29 p.m.
Mon.	7:04 a.m.	5:30 p.m.
Tues.	7:04 a.m.	5:31 p.m.
Wed.	7:03 a.m.	5:32 p.m.

Moon

	Rise	Set
Thu.	6:58 a.m.	5:04 p.m.
Fri.	7:44 a.m.	6:14 p.m.
Sat.	8:23 a.m.	7:24 p.m.
Sun.	8:58 a.m.	8:33 p.m.
Mon.	9:29 a.m.	9:40 p.m.
Tues.	10:00 a.m.	10:47 p.m.
Wed.	10:31 a.m.	11:54 p.m.



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REGIONAL CITIES

U.S. CITIES

City	Thursday			Friday			Saturday			Sunday			City	Thursday			Friday			Saturday			Sunday		
	HI	LO	W	HI	LO	W	HI	LO	W	HI	LO	W		HI	LO	W	HI	LO	W	HI	LO	W	HI	LO	W
Abilene, TX	41	31	c	36	26	r	37	30	sh	51	33	r	Atlanta	44	35	r	52	33	c	53	31	pc	51	37	pc
Albuquerque, NM	47	25	pc	43	24	pc	41	25	sn	48	27	pc	Boston	34	30	pc	36	26	sn	28	16	pc	32	22	pc
Amarillo, TX	37	18	c	35	21	pc	40	21	sn	43	25	pc	Chicago	35	22	sf	25	15	c	29	20	pc	33	24	pc
Austin, TX	41	38	r	47	35	r	42	36	sh	53	39	r	Denver	28	7	c	38	14	pc	41	16	pc	38	18	pc
Brownsville, TX	55	51	r	65	48	r	63	52	sh	67	55	c	Detroit	38	25	c	30	19	sf	27	19	pc	31	25	pc
Dodge City, KS	34	11	c	44	16	pc	41	20	c	37	20	pc	Houston	48	44	r	50	39	r	50	44	sh	57	46	r
Jackson, MS	54	40	pc	48	33	r	51	36	c	57	42	c	Indianapolis	43	25	pc	30	21	c	36	24	pc	35	25	pc
Laredo, TX	44	40	r	53	43	r	47	42	sh	62	47	c	Kansas City	36	18	pc	32	16	pc	38	21	pc	37	22	sn
Little Rock, AR	48	31	pc	43	27	pc	48	28	pc	44	30	r	Los Angeles	64	42	s	68	43	s	67	46	s	68	46	s
Lubbock, TX	42	24	c	34	22	sn	38	23	sn	47	28	pc	Miami	81	66	c	78	63	pc	76	63	pc	78	65	pc
Memphis, TN	50	34	pc	42	29	pc	51	32	pc	43	37	c	Minneapolis	23	10	sf	17	8	pc	23	15	sf	27	13	c
Midland, TX	47	27	c	35	29	sn	35	29	sh	44	28	pc	New Orleans	56	50	c	59	47	r	54	51	c	64	52	c
Pueblo, CO	34	3	c	41	2	pc	42	9	pc	42	13	pc	New York City	34	34	pc	42	32	c	33	24	pc	39	30	pc
Roswell, NM	44	29	c	37	25	c	39	22	sh	50	27	pc	Omaha	24	12	c	28	9	pc	29	17	pc	33	19	c
St. Louis, MO	38	25	pc	30	21	pc	41	25	pc	38	25	sn	Phoenix	62	39	pc	61	40	pc	64	43	sh	66	42	s
San Antonio, TX	42	39	r	49	35	r	44	40	sh	57	42	c	San Francisco	58	41	s	58	43	s	58	45	s	60	45	s
Texarkana, AR	43	33	r	42	30	r	40	34	sn	50	34	sn	Seattle	41	33	pc	44	35	c	45	37	c	48	39	r
Waco, TX	40	36	r	43	33	r	44	36	sh	51	37	r	Washington	38	33	pc	44	31	pc	33	24	s	42	32	pc
Wichita, KS	36	16	c	36	17	pc	43	22	c	32	22	sn													

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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