



NEWSBRIEFS

A taxing oversight

A constitutional amendment will be on the ballot for the May election to correct an error made by Texas lawmakers when they voted for a reduction in school property taxes in 2005. When they voted for a one-third reduction school property taxes beginning in 2006 and to be completed this year, they forgot to include the Homestead Exemption for senior citizens and people with disabilities. The state constitution caps school property taxes for homeowners 65 years and older and those who are disabled — however, they did not get the same reduction when the property tax cut for schools was voted on two years ago. An amendment is on the May ballot to correct this. Some see a problem in that many voters who are younger than 65 or not disabled may not notice the amendment. Elderly and disabled support groups are encouraging voters to vote for this amendment. They say, if not for yourself, then for your parents, etc. The fear is that with a low voter turnout, the amendment might not pass.

Piano men

The Dorris Van Doren branch library, located at 551 Redd Rd., will host two University of Arizona pianists on tour on Friday, May 4 at 4 p.m. Astrid Chan and Thomas Azar, of El Paso, will perform classical pieces by Chopin and Beethoven as well as various other composers in an open and intimate setting at the library. The concert is free and open to the public. For more information call 875-0700.

Vranish honored

Tornillo ISD Superintendent Paul Vranish was recently named Communities in Schools Superintendent of the Year by Texas Education Agency. Citing the "Parent Chat" programs which provides a link between the parents and schools as a major factor in their decision, TEA also cited Vranish's efforts to bring free high-speed internet access and accessibility to computers to his community. Vranish has been in Tornillo since 2002.



Paul Vranish

CV soccer signup

All kids, boys and girls, age 4-10 years of age, in the Horizon, Socorro, San Elizario and Clint communities are encouraged to sign up for summer youth soccer on Saturday and Sunday, May 5-6, at the Big 8 at Horizon Blvd. and North Loop. Games will begin on May 19, and will be played Saturday mornings at Surratt Elementary in Clint. Practices will be held at various

See BRIEFS, Page 8

Sleep is something that always seems more important the morning after than the night before.

— Quips & Quotes

Best Buddies program thrives at Montwood

By Irma Flores
Special to the Courier

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Getting through high school is a difficult task for any adolescent, for those students with mental disabilities maneuvering the hallways can be especially daunting. But at Montwood High School, students get a boost through the Best Buddies Program. Best Buddies High Schools matches students with intellectual disabilities with other high school students and creates one-to-one friendships between them.



Yvonne Salazar

This year, the Texas Best Buddies Program recognized a Montwood staff member for her dedication in helping lead the only high school program in the state chapter. Yvonne Salazar, Special Education Aide at Montwood High

School has been named Outstanding Special Education Advisor for the Texas program. Each year, the Texas Best Buddies program selects individuals who have shown a commitment to bringing awareness to the needs of special education students.

Salazar, who started working at Montwood five years ago, says she fell in love with the program and the Special Education students.

"I'm been doing the Best Buddies program for three years. It's important for me to keep this going and making it strong. Our students love the social outings we do with the Best Buddies program," says Salazar who will be graduating from UTEP this summer.

She adds the program has received great support from Montwood students. "We have football players, cheerleaders, student council and theater students interacting with Special Education students," she said. "This is helping build friendships between all students and is opening the school community to those with disabilities."

The program, with chapters throughout the U.S., helps bridge the gap between students who may share the same building but are left out of social activities. There are two chapters in El Paso, one at UTEP and the other at Montwood High School.

Horizon teacher to serve on national council for honor society

By Laura Cade
Special to the Courier

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Annette Loomis, Horizon High School teacher and National Honor Society sponsor, has been elected as the Chairperson for the National Council for the National Honor Society (NHS) and the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) for the upcoming year.



Annette Loomis

Loomis has served on the National Council for the past three years representing Region 8

which includes the states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. During that time, she attended the annual spring meetings, represented the council at the national Conference in November, and assisted with a presentation to the Texas Honor Society advisers at a workshop sponsored in September by the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals.

The purpose of the National Council is to govern the activities of the two

See LOOMIS, Page 4

Sarah Sepulveda to compete in state UIL contest

By Erica Mendoza
Special to the Courier

FABENS — Sarah Sepulveda, a senior at Fabens High School, is a UIL state competition qualifier after placing second in the Regional News Writing Competition, held in Odessa.

Sarah competed against 24 of the region's top news writing contestants from 13 schools. Thanks to her natural writing talent and hard work she will compete at the UIL State Meet in Austin.

"It's great that she's going. Sarah has made it to the Regional competition for several years and all of her hard work is paying off," Ms. Penny Jones, UIL coordinator, said.

Sarah, 17, is the oldest of three daughters. Her parents are Robert Sepulveda, principal of Fabens High School, and Mrs. Marcy Sepulveda. She is taking dual credit courses and is a member of National Honor Society and the Greek Crusaders. She is one of the Top Ten Cats and a Ready Writing contestant for UIL. She also competes in volleyball, basketball, and track.

"I just try to make time for everything," Sarah said. She is the first Fabens Wildcat to compete in UIL at the state level in six years. Mr. Sepulveda is now able to announce the news as a proud administrator and ecstatic parent. He knows how hard she works.

"She's very meticulous. At home she'll stay up until midnight doing her work," he said.



Sarah Sepulveda

— Photo by Cesar Gallo

Student-operated credit union will teach money skills

By Don Woodyard
Courier Staff Writer

CANUTILLO — From "loan averse" to students better versed in matters of finance — it's a step to ensure that its students have greater financial familiarity and knowledge. The Canutillo Independent School District, in partnership with GECU (Greater El Paso Credit Union), is establishing a student-run credit union on its high school campus.

The credit union, which will open in August, is unique. It will be the first student-run branch in the El Paso area and one of only a handful in the state of Texas.

The credit union, the first of its kind in the El Paso area, will open in August. According to CUNA (Credit Union National Association), there are only 11 in-state and 515 nationwide as of February 2007.

"It is a great way for students to learn the importance of saving, how to budget, establish credit and most importantly the value of a college education," says Dr. Pam Padilla, superintendent of Canutillo ISD.

"We are so excited to be the first one in El Paso," she said at an April 11 press conference. She described GECU as a "very committed partner" and "very progressive."

Asked why Canutillo was chosen rather than one of the larger school districts, Al Perez, GECU branch manager and project coordinator said Padilla's excitement about the plan "turned them on. She embraced it." He saw no need to inquire of other school districts.

The "no pass, no play" rule will apply to the four student tellers who will operate, on a rotation basis, the credit union. They will be paid and receive the same training as any GECU employee. They will be supervised by a credit union employee.

The credit union, which will be housed in the rotunda of the new high school building, will offer checking and savings accounts as well as small loans. There will also be an ATM and a cyber cafe. The credit union's services will be available to students only, not the general public.

Padilla says the administration has learned through interviews that approximately 60 percent of students work and have "money to manage."

As students prepare to graduate and look to the future, Padilla says many students and families are "loan averse." She elaborates, pointing out that they don't know about the loan process and are concerned about the prospect of getting into debt through a college loan. Rather than take the chance, they decide not to look for financial aid and close the college door.

"This is a vehicle for students to finance college — to help with the dreams they have for college"

Perez echoes her words. "This has been a collaboration to help those students' dreams become a reality. This has been a labor of love."

He adds, "Students working at the Canutillo credit union will have the opportunity to learn about working in the real world.

GECU will also provide on-going financial presentations for students and host workshops on similar topics to community residents.



One perspective

By Francis Shrum

What we used to know

How did we let such valuable information slip away from us?

It is real simple stuff. So simple, in fact, that in the rush and shuffle of modern civilization it is fading from existence.

This simple knowledge, however, was the basis of most of our nation's past successes and without it, we are

already facing many future failures. I'm not talking about super secrets like how to make a weapon of mass destruction. I'm not talking about a negotiating formula that will produce peace accords to solve international conflicts. I'm not even talking about how to get elected president.

I'm talking about how to raise successful kids.

I said it was simple. I didn't say it was easy.

A veteran educator, newly retired from the Fabens Independent School District, gave a presentation last week during the annual appreciation luncheon for parent volunteers and community partners in education.

His material would be considered revolutionary in a modern education seminar. After all, it simply isn't politically correct to say that parents should teach their kids to accept the word "no" the first time it is said to them. Or that kids should actually be required to stay at their parents side when shopping and keep their hands off items they have not purchased.

Or even — a hush falls over the crowd — that

they should learn to *sweep the floor and do dishes!*

The credentials of the man making these statements, Enrique Pérez, are impeccable. He has been a son for 64 years. He has been a husband for 46 years, and a father for 45 of those. He has been a grandfather for 25 years and a great-grandfather for three. He has 42 years of teaching experience in public education, 35 of those as an administrator.

I'd say he is pretty well qualified to remind us of what we used to know — that children who are taught a few basic things at home before they go to school are going to do better than those who have no background at all in sitting still, listening, obeying instructions, knowing when to keep your voice down or your mouth shut, the ability to wait a turn and share, or in being respectful, courteous, patient, or considerate. Responsibility, knowing how to work and put your stuff away is also extremely helpful.

These are things *any* parent can teach and parents in past generations did. They are skills that will guarantee that your kid does well in any given situation in his or her future.

The truth is, however, that public education has added two years to the front side of formal education — in the form of Headstart and Pre-K programs — in an attempt to teach kids *how* to go to school because they are not learning it at home.

Pérez credits his mother for his own success in life. He said she understood there were two kinds of education. The first kind you learned as a child at home. The second kind you learned at school. The success of the second kind invariably depended on the success of the first.

Wise woman.

There is no definition for the first



Enrique Pérez was presented an award for his years of outstanding service to Fabens ISD during the annual Parent Volunteer/Partners in Education Appreciation Luncheon last week. With him is the event's coordinator, Melissa Rodriguez.

On Equal Pay Day, Rodriguez calls for equal pay for equal work

By Angela Barranco
Special to the Courier

WASHINGTON, DC — Congress-

man Ciro D. Rodriguez has called on Congress to make truly equal pay for equal work a top priority by strengthening the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and endorsing the Paycheck Fairness Act

in an effort to close the pay gap between men and women.

"I strongly support the Paycheck Fairness Act," said Congressman Rodriguez. "Equal pay is not just a women's issue, it's a family issue. When women earn more, an entire family benefits."

Equal Pay Day marks the day that women "catch up" on the yearly wage gap. In 1963, when the Equal Pay Act was signed by President Kennedy, women who worked full-time year-round made 59 cents on average for every dollar earned by men. According to the 2006 Census Bureau, women last year earned 77 cents for every dollar earned by men. Statistics for women of color were far worse: Hispanic women earned only 55 cents on every dollar earned by men, and African American women made 66 cents on the dollar.

The 2007 Paycheck Fairness Act:

- Requires the Department of Labor to enhance outreach and training efforts to work with employers to eliminate pay disparities;
- Prohibits employers from retaliating against employees who share salary information with their co-workers;
- Allows women to sue for punitive damages in addition to compensatory damages now available under the Equal Pay Act;
- Requires the Department of Labor to continue collecting and disseminating information about women workers; and
- Creates a new grant program to help strengthen the negotiation skills of girls and women.



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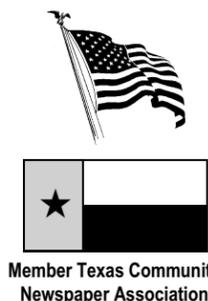
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View from here By Marie Cox

Socorro celebration raised funds for scholarships, not councilman

Let me begin by saying that I do not intend to get caught up in all the political bickering among Socorro City Council representatives. It is my hope that all of the representatives can get past this latest setback, regroup and get back to the goal that should be first and foremost — the reason that the citizens of Socorro elected them — and that is doing what is best for the entire City of Socorro.

With that said, however, there is one particular issue that came up in the article on April 19 that was submitted by Mary Perez that I feel I must address. I am referring to her statement, "Perhaps Mr. Cox has suffered from selective memory loss. Mr. Cox has, himself, accepted hundreds of dollars in contributions from various clients of this lobbyist, in order to host a celebration at a Socorro ballroom and be able to pay for the

rental of it and the meals." There are several points that must be clarified. First, Mr. Cox has never received any monetary donations. He, in fact, turned down numerous offers that were made to contribute to his campaign. We paid for every cent of campaign expenses out of our own pockets, to the tune of approximately \$1,500. I am proud of his stand to accept nothing from any individual or interest group so as to have no "ties" or concept that he owes anybody any "favors."

Second, the "celebration" that is referred to was a fund-raiser to establish scholarships in honor of two outstanding educators, Mrs. Sandra Reinhardt and Coach Chris Forbes, who dedicated their lives to children from the City of Socorro. Thanks to the weeks and weeks of hard work, phone calls and persistence of Mr. Cox, this

function was a great success.

Last, but definitely not least, every contribution to this scholarship event that Ms. Perez is referring to was made directly to the City of Socorro and/or Socorro High School and was deposited into an account at Socorro High that was established specifically for that scholarship fund. There was no money spent on the hall or food, because both of those were generously donated.

The final amount of the funds raised and donations made was \$2,837. As a teacher at Socorro High School and the sponsor of this scholarship fund it gives me great pleasure to inform the public that in the next couple of weeks we will be awarding the "City of Socorro, TX — Chris Forbes Baseball Scholarship" and the "City of Socorro, TX — Sandra Reinhardt Math/Science Scholarship" to three or four students.

Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes



Agenda tackles problems of economy and workforce

Today, El Paso is building something great — a diversified economy and an educated workforce that will compete on the basis of its education and talents. It's a lot of hard work, but it's an important lesson from which the entire country can benefit, especially now as the U.S. is losing its competitive edge in the global economy. In the U.S. House of Representatives, we are tackling this problem through the Innovative Agenda.

House Democrats' Innovation Agenda

Broadly, the House Democrats' Innovation Agenda involves partnerships with the private sector to invest in a workforce ready for global competition. It will create a new generation of innovators, invest in federal research and development, spur affordable access to broadband, achieve energy independence, and provide small business with tools to encourage entrepreneurial innovation.

This past week, my colleagues and I considered Innovation Agenda legislation on the floor of the U.S. House and passed bills that address crucial innovation and competitiveness issues for our country. These measures will increase the number of highly qualified math and science teachers in K-12, support young researchers to foster the most innovative scientific research, and make capital more

accessible for small businesses, which are catalysts for technological innovation.

10,000 Teachers, 10 Million Minds Science and Math Scholarship Act

One of the bills we passed was the "10,000 Teachers, 10 Million Minds Science and Math Scholarship Act," which invests in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) teachers. I strongly supported the bill, which played an important role in moving the Innovation Agenda forward, but also recognized that it needed to include language to bring more teachers to areas like El Paso as minority students are under-represented in the critical STEM fields.

I struck a deal with House Science Committee Chairman Bart Gordon (D-TN) to modify the "10,000 Teachers Act" to amend the National Science Foundation's Noyce Teachers Scholarship Program to provide students who agree to serve as teachers in high-need classrooms with increased scholarship funding.

National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2007

Congress is also currently working to re-authorize the National Science Foundation Act. I worked with Congressional leadership to ensure that H.R. 1928, a bill I introduced that provides for a report by the National Academy of Sciences on broadening opportunities for minorities in the

STEM fields, was included in the National Science Foundation Authorization Act. My measure would require NAS to complete a report regarding how increased opportunities for women and under-represented minorities would impact our country's strategic objectives in STEM, innovation, and competitiveness; and the identification of strategies for bringing more women and under-represented minorities into the STEM fields.

Congressional Diversity and Innovation Caucus

There are obviously many issues and ideas about creating an innovative workforce in the U.S., and to ensure that my colleagues in Congress and other policymakers realize the connection between promoting innovation and the need to educate a diverse workforce, I have created an umbrella group addressing this specific connection. Known as the Congressional Diversity and Innovation Caucus, this caucus will provide leadership and policy ideas to increase the participation of groups under-represented in the STEM fields.

In El Paso, our diversity is our strength, and given our current population trends, diversity is also a national strength, if we take the right steps to harness it. I am leading the way in the U.S. House to raise these issues on the national stage to ensure that all our students will have the tools to succeed.

Safe Kids Week reminds us to protect precious young

By Lt. Mario E. Hernandez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY — El Paso Fire Department officials would like to remind the citizens of El Paso that this week is National Safe Kids Week. Accidents kill one million children each year around the world and permanently disable many more.

More children between the ages of one and 14 die from accidents involving fires and drowning than from any other cause; most of these injuries are preventable.

Fires

Fires remain a leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children in the United States. Simply installing smoke alarms on

every level of your home and in every sleeping area cuts the chances of dying in a home fire by 50 percent. Keeping matches, lighters and other heat sources out of children's reach can help eliminate child-play fires, the leading cause of fire-related death for children five and under. Preparation and education are key elements

See SAFETY, Page 4

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Moore Texas by Roger T. Moore At the end of WW II, bombs were attached to balloons and set adrift towards America by the Japanese. Two such devices touched down in Woodson and Desdemona Texas.

Loomis

From Page 1

honor societies nationwide and to serve as the final selection committee for the NHS National Scholarship. As Chairperson, Loomis will attend the National Conference in Atlanta in the Fall and serve as the facilitator of next year's council meeting, working with the national staff to coordinate the agenda and address important issues facing the 23,000-plus chapters of NHS and NJHS nationwide.

"I am greatly honored to represent Horizon High School as well as Clint ISD in this very prestigious position," says Loomis.

Texas comptroller offers delinquent taxpayers a 'Fresh Start'

By Allen Spelce
Special to the Courier

AUSTIN — Comptroller Susan Combs will offer a 60-day tax amnesty to businesses with overdue state taxes and those that may be operating without required tax permits.

From June 15 through August 15, 2007, taxpayers can come forward, file past-due tax reports and pay their taxes in full, and the Comptroller will waive penalty and interest charges normally added to delinquent taxes. The tax amnesty applies to taxes and tax reports originally due before April 1, 2007.

"We're calling the amnesty period Project Fresh Start, because taxpayers have a unique, limited-time opportunity to clear up unpaid, underreported or overdue taxes without fear of penalty or interest and get a fresh start with the state," Combs said.

The Project Fresh Start amnesty period applies to sales tax, franchise tax and all other state and any local taxes and fees administered by the state Comptroller, except unclaimed property and PUC gross receipts assessments. Eligible taxpayers include those who did not file a required tax return or report; misrepresented, understated or omitted any tax liability

on a past report; or erroneously claimed tax credits or tax deductions.

The amnesty does not apply to assessments already identified by the Comptroller, taxpayers currently under audit or review and taxpayers the Comptroller has already contacted about an audit or possible tax deficiency.

Combs urges taxpayers to visit the Project Fresh Start Web site at www.freshstart.texas.gov for complete details about how to participate in the tax amnesty, or call (800) 252-1390 or contact the nearest Comptroller field office. Field office information, tax permit applications and tax forms are available on the Web site.

SISD recognizes 150 Partners in Education businesses

By Irma Flores
Special to the Courier

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Students in the Socorro Independent School District are learning valuable lessons outside of the classroom thanks to the local businesses and organizations that team up with the schools each year. On April 5, Socorro ISD honored the more than 150 partners that help nearly 39,000 students throughout the District.

This year, ten partners were selected for outstanding commitment and seven Core Values Awards recognized the efforts of those who demonstrate how accountability, commitment, trust, respect, integrity, high expectations and teamwork impact students' lives.

"It's wonderful to see so many of our local businesses at this recognition," says SISD Superintendent Dr. Sylvia P. Atkinson. "Along with grants and other contributions, SISD's Partners in Education provide



— Photo courtesy Socorro ISD

HEART OF SERVICE — Ben Narbuth, representing the Horizon City Kiwanis Club, was presented the Core Value Award for Commitment for projects at Escontrias Elementary. Principal Richard Lopez presented the award.

excellent role models for our students. Our program today is just a small token of appreciation for all they do for Socorro schools."

This year's SISD's Superintendent's Award went to two recipients. 1st Battalion 363-ADA, a Partner in Education with Hurshel Antwine School provides guest readers, set up a Patriot Missile system for exhibition, and shows up to assist with tasks like putting together bleachers, demonstrating the meaning of pride and patriotism. The second Superintendent's award was given for the first time to an SISD Campus Liaison, Escontrias Elementary/Early Childhood Center Counselor Mary Harder, who has been active in SISD's Partners in Education program for more than 10 years.



— Photo courtesy Socorro ISD

SUPERINTENDENT'S CHOICE — Escontrias Counselor Mary Harder received the Superintendent's Award for Campus Liaison from Dr. Sylvia P. Atkinson, SISD Superintendent of Schools.

Safety

From Page 3

of preventing fire tragedies. Planning and practicing a fire escape route with your family, and talking to your children about what to expect in a fire, are simple steps anyone can take. A prepared child is more likely to escape a house fire unharmed.

Drownings

Despite a 40 percent decline since 1987, drowning is still the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death to children ages one to 14, taking more than 900 children's lives each year. For every child who drowns, four more are hospitalized

for near drowning. Drownings and near-drownings tend to occur during the weekend (40 percent) and between the months of May and August (62 percent). Most drownings and near-drownings occur in residential swimming pools. More than half of these drownings take place in the child's home pool, and one-third occur at the homes of friends, neighbors or relatives. However, it's important to know that children, especially younger ones, can also drown in as little as one inch of water. This puts them at risk of drowning in wading pools, bathtubs, buckets, diaper pails, toilets, spas and hot tubs.

A child should never be unsupervised in or near water, even shallow wading pools.



EL PASO CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT

Property Tax Protest and Appeal Procedures

The law gives property owners the right to protest actions concerning their property tax appraisals. You may follow these appeal procedures if you have a concern about:

- the market or special appraised value placed on your property
- the unequal appraisal of your property
- the inclusion of your property on the appraisal roll
- any exemptions that may apply to you
- the qualification for an agricultural or timber appraisal
- the taxable status of your property
- the local governments which should be taxing your property
- the jurisdiction in which you are being taxed
- the ownership of property
- the change of use of land receiving special appraisal
- any action taken by the Chief Appraiser, Appraisal District or Appraisal Review Board (ARB) that applies to and adversely affected your property.

Informal Review

The El Paso Central Appraisal District has a trained staff to assist you with your tax appraisal problems.

In order to have a preliminary or ARB hearing **you must file a written protest before your deadline** (see below for deadlines).

If you receive a notice of appraised value, a protest form is attached to the bottom below the perforation. If you wish to protest, simply tear off this form, sign the back, and return it to the El Paso Central Appraisal District.

If you do not receive a notice of appraised value, you should send a letter or postcard stating that you wish to protest your property value. Be sure to include your name and address or property identification number.

After your written protest is received, the Appraisal District will send you a letter notifying you of the date and time of your preliminary and/or ARB hearings.

However, if you have a question about exemptions, procedures, or anything not related to a protest, you may call (915) 780-2131. Your call will be logged, your question noted, and given to the appropriate department for a call back.

Review by the Appraisal Review Board

If you cannot resolve your problem in a preliminary hearing with the Central Appraisal District (CAD) staff, you may have your case heard by the Appraisal Review Board (ARB). The ARB is an independent board of citizens that reviews problems with appraisals or other concerns listed above. It has the power to order the CAD to make the necessary changes to solve problems. If you file a written request for an ARB hearing (called a Notice of Protest) before the deadline, the ARB will set your case for a hearing. You will receive written notice of the time, date and place of the hearing. If necessary, you may request a hearing

on Saturday or Sunday, or in the evening. Prior to your hearing, you may ask to review the evidence the CAD will use to uphold their determination. The CAD may ask you for a copy of the evidence you plan to present. The hearing will be informal. You or a designated agent may appear in person to present evidence, or you may send notarized evidence for the ARB to review at your hearing. The CAD representative will present evidence about your case. You may cross-examine the CAD representative. The ARB will make its decision based on the evidence presented. The CAD has the burden of establishing the property's value by a preponderance of the evidence presented. You can get a copy of a protest form from the Appraisal District office at:

5801 Trowbridge Drive

Note: You should not try to contact ARB members outside of the hearing. The law requires ARB members to sign an affidavit saying that they have not talked about your case before the ARB hears it.

Review by the District Court

After it decides your case, the ARB must send you a copy of its order by certified mail. If you are not satisfied with the decision, you have the right to appeal to district court. If you choose to go to court, you must start the process by filing a petition within 45 days of the date you receive the ARB's order.

Binding Arbitration

If you have protested the market value of your real property and the ARB has determined that the value is less than \$1 million dollars, you may request binding arbitration if you disagree with the value. The CAD will provide information and a request form with your order from the ARB. You must submit the request with a deposit of \$500 within 45 days of the date you receive the ARB order.

Tax Payment

If you appeal and your case is pending, you must pay the lesser of the amount of taxes due on the portion of the taxable value not in dispute, or the amount of taxes due on the property under the order from which the appeal is taken.

More Information

You can get more information by contacting the El Paso Central Appraisal District, 5801 Trowbridge Drive, El Paso, Texas 79925-3345, (915) 780-2131. You can also get a pamphlet describing how to prepare a protest from the Appraisal District or from the State Comptroller's Property Tax Division at P.O. Box 13528, Austin, Texas 78711-3528.

Requests for Evidence

You can request to review evidence to be used by the CAD in your formal ARB hearing by addressing it to the ARB at the El Paso Central Appraisal District office. The envelope should be labeled "Request for Evidence."

Deadline* for Filing Protests with the ARB

Usual Deadline

On or before May 31, (or 30 days after a notice of appraised value was mailed to you, whichever is later).

Late protests are allowed if you miss the usual deadline for good cause. Good cause is some reason beyond your control, like a medical emergency. The ARB decides whether you have good cause. Late protests are due the day before the Appraisal Review Board approves records for the year.

Military personnel on active duty outside the United States and property owners employed on offshore oil drilling, production facility or vessel have until the date the taxes are due to file a protest.

* The deadline is postponed to the next business day if it falls on a weekend or holiday.

Special Deadlines

For change of use (the Appraisal District informed you that you are losing agricultural appraisal because you changed the use of your land), the deadline is before the 30th day after the notice of the determination was mailed to you.

For ARB changes (the ARB has informed you of a change that increases your tax liability and the change did not result from a protest you filed), the deadline is before the 30th day after the notice of the determination was mailed to you.

If you believe the Appraisal District or ARB should have sent you a notice and did not, you may file a protest until the day before taxes become delinquent (usually February 1). The ARB decides whether it will hear your case based on evidence about whether a required notice was mailed to you.

Contact the Central Appraisal District for more information.

Clint seniors named to Academic All Stars

www.wtccourier.com



— Photo courtesy Clint ISD

CLINT — The Clint High School Girl's Basketball team has been honored by two organizations for their success as players and students. Five members of the team have been named to the Texas Girls Coaches Association 2006-2007 Basketball Academic All State Team. Shown from left, seniors Nikki Gonzalez, Lauren Eveler, Alex Mendoza, Krystal Rivera, and Yedith Cortez have excelled both on the court and in the classroom. Academic All-State athletes must: be graduating seniors; have an overall GPA average of 94 for grades 9-11; and be a varsity participant in good standing and be of good moral character. Enid Sanchez and Yvonne Dickson (not shown), Yedith Cortez, Lauren Eveler, Alex Mendoza, and Krystal Rivera were also recognized for their talent and skill on the court during the McDonald's High School Senior Showcase Banquet on April 24, 2007 at the Convention Center and participated in the Basketball Game for the event held at the Don Haskins Center on April 29.

— Contributed by Laura Cade

Deanna Davenport Elementary students win web design award

By Kim Guzman
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO — Fifth grade students, Isaac Licerio, Nancy Mares, and Carolina Sanchez from Davenport Elementary School, in the Canutillo Independent School District, recently won second place in the Texas Library Association's Texas Media Awards competition for Web Design, in the third through fifth grade division. The students were presented their awards during the TLA's Annual Conference held recently in San Antonio.

"Our students worked very hard on their website, showing the effects of the floods experienced in our area last August. They took a problem that our community was dealing with and created this website to show others the efforts and perseverance of the families in the area," stated Julie Hoy, DDE librarian.

The Texas Media Awards promotes excellence in amateur media production and its importance in life-long learning. The competition is an annual, statewide event open to school-aged Texas residents. Entries are judged by media professionals based on the criteria for each individual contest.

The Texas Media Awards program is sponsored by the Texas Media Awards Committee and the Media and Related Technologies Round Table of the Texas Library Association.



— Photo courtesy Canutillo ISD

WEB AWARD — Shown in photo from left are Nancy Mares, Isaac Licerio, and Carolina Sanchez, all fifth grade students from Davenport Elementary School who attended the Texas Library Association's Texas Media Awards presentation in San Antonio.

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"A Voice for Education"

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- ⇒ Reduce paperwork for educators
- ⇒ Improve SISD's resources, facilities
- ⇒ Monitor SISD's expenditures
- ⇒ Endorsed by State Representative Chente Quintanilla, El Paso Times & Greater El Paso Realtors Association
- ⇒ My goal is to represent our children, parents, teachers and the District fairly, without partiality, to the best of my ability. If you have any questions about me or my goals for Socorro ISD, please send them to: mpjguerra@sbcglobal.net
- ⇒ Please vote Guerra on May 12! (Early voting April 30 - May 8)



- ◆ Married to Ann Apodaca Guerra, an educator at Sanchez Middle School
- ◆ Proud father of 3-year-old triplets
- ◆ 1993 UTEP Graduate
- ◆ Former Canutillo ISD educator, coach

Political ad paid for by Paul Guerra Campaign
Paul Guerra, Treas., 11108 N. Loop, Socorro, TX 79927

Anthony Independent School District NOTICE OF ELECTION AVISO DE ELECCION GENERAL

To the Registered Voters of Anthony, Texas

Notice is hereby given that the polling place listed below will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on May 12, 2007, for voting in a General Election, to elect 2 (two) School Board Members at Large, three positions for a full 3 (three) year term.

Positions presently held by Susie Singh and Christine Singh.

A los votantes registrados de Anthony, Texas

Notifíquese por la presente, que la casilla electoral citada abajo se abrirá desde las 7:00 a.m. hasta las 7:00 p.m. el 12 de mayo de 2007, para votar en la Elección para 2 (dos) Miembros de la Mesa Directiva de las Escuelas en representación de todo el distrito con posiciones por un termino completo de 3 (tres) años.

Puestos ocupados por Susie Singh y Christine Singh.

LOCATION OF POLLING PLACE:

The polling place for Election Day will be the Anthony Town Hall, 401 Wild Cat Drive, Anthony, Texas

DIRECCION DE LA CASILLA ELECTORAL:

El Lugar de votación el día de Elecciones será la Presidencia Municipal de Anthony, 401 Wild Cat Drive, Anthony, Texas

Early voting by personal appearance will be conducted each weekday at Anthony Town Hall, 401 Wild Cat Drive, Anthony, Texas, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. beginning on April 30, 2007, and ending on May 8, 2007.

Early voting by personal appearance will be conducted at all locations within El Paso County, at which Early Voting is conducted by the County Elections Department beginning on April 30, 2007, and ending on May 8, 2007.

La votacion temprana en persona se llevara a cabo de lunes a viernes en la Presidencia Municipal de Anthony, 401 Wild Cat Drive, Anthony, Texas, entre las 8:30 de la mañana y las 4:30 de la tarde, empezando el 30 de abril de 2007 y terminando el 8 de mayo de 2007.

La votacion anticipo en persona se llevara a cabo en todos locaciones en el Condado de El Paso, en donde se lleva a cabo votaciones tempranas manejadas por el Departamento de Elecciones del condado empezando el 30 de abril de 2007 y terminando el 8 de mayo de 2007.

Applications for ballot by mail should be mailed to:

Las solicitudes para boletas que se votarán en ausencia por correo, deberán enviarse a:

Helen Jamison
500 E. San Antonio, Room 402
El Paso, TX 79901

Applications for ballots by mail must be received no later than the close of business on May 4, 2007.

Las solicitudes para boletas que se votaran en ausencia por correo deberan recibirse para el fin de las horas de negocio del 4 de mayo 2007.

Issued this the 20st day of February, 2007

Emitida este día 20 de febrero, 2007

Salley Flores
Signature of Presiding Officer
Firma del Oficial que Preside

WTCC: 05/02/07

To Advertise Call 852-3235

NFL draft leaves Quinn shaken, UTEP standouts on teams

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

When I was a kid growing up in the seventies, the NFL draft was something you read about the next morning in the newspaper. You might know a couple players your team picked, but most of the picks were guys you'd never heard of.

Now the draft is covered *ad nauseam*. You hear talk about possible draft picks and trades about ten minutes after the end of the Super Bowl.

It can be a little much, but it can also be exciting. The draft is now televised with as much fervor as a presidential election. We know all about the players, their families, their pets and their agents. And every year I tell myself I'm not going to waste an afternoon watching every pick of the first round but I always seem to end up doing just that.

There's some drama, some surprises and enough story lines to keep me watching. But there was another aspect of watching last weekend's draft that was painful.

It was projected that the Cleveland Browns were going to use their first pick, the third overall, to select Notre Dame quarterback Brady Quinn. And why not? Quinn is a talented pretty-

boy quarterback who grew up near Cleveland. It appeared to be set in stone.

The Browns shocked everyone by choosing Joe Thomas, an offensive lineman out of Wisconsin, instead. No one looked more shocked than Quinn.

Then everyone figured that the Minnesota Vikings would pick the disappointed Quinn, but they decided to go with Oklahoma's Adrian Peterson.

After that, it was complete certainty that Quinn would go to the Miami Dolphins, who are looking for a quarterback. In the stunner of the draft, Miami decided to go with wide receiver Ted Ginn Jr. of Ohio State.

The look on Quinn's face was tough to watch. I felt like I had to turn away from this guy's utter anguish. It got so bad that the NFL commissioner, Roger Goodell, fearing Quinn would sit for a while, offered him a private room to stay in to hide from the cameras covering the event.

And Goodell was right. Pick after pick after pick was made and the former Notre Dame quarterback sat in his temporary exile.

All the talk surrounding the draft was concentrated on why no team would take a chance on Quinn, especially when he was expected to go so high.

Then, finally, about four hours after everyone thought he'd be picked, Quinn went home to the Cleveland Browns after all with the 22nd pick, thanks to a trade by the Dallas Cowboys.

Of course, we won't know who was right and who was wrong. If Quinn turns out to be a star, then all the teams who skipped him will kick themselves. If Quinn turns out to be a bust, they'll all look like geniuses.

We won't know for a few years, but in the meantime, the draft continues to be good drama.

At times, like any spectacular car wreck, it can be tough to look at, but impossible to turn away from

Athletes behavin' badly

For the most part, when you think of a Joe Paterno coached team, you think of hard-working, blue-collar guys. Not thugs who break the law for stupid reasons.

But thugs engaging in utter stupidity is exactly what Penn State is dealing with this week.

In fact, six football players were charged after they busted into a private party and started throwing punches at guys inside.

But at least they had a good reason. See, one of their players and his girlfriend had a brief altercation with some guys on the street. Af-

terward, he followed them and saw what apartment building they went into to.

He then called his football buddies and they met him outside the apartment, where they worked out a game plan. It went something like this, "Let's kick the door in and run in there and hit anything that moves."

There was a party going on when the players burst in. Some of the victims were punched in the face, another had a beer bottle broken over his head, knocking him out.

One of the players was quoted as telling police, "You got to do what you got to do — we went down to protect."

When will football players ever learn to open their minds and keep their big mouths shut?.

Miners called up

UTEP football players — receiver Johnnie Lee Higgins and quarterback Jordan Palmer — were drafted by NFL teams this weekend. They went to the Oakland Raiders and Washington Redskins, respectively. Higgins went in the third round and Palmer in the sixth. Three other players have working free-agent deals. They are defensive end Alex Obomese (Dallas Cowboys), kicker Reagan Schneider (Washington Redskins) and defensive lineman Zach West (New England Patriots).

Know your rights — about your credit card, that is

By Samantha Donaldson
Special to the Courier

Think resolving credit problems is as difficult as finishing a five-star Sudoku puzzle? Then check out Credit Card Rights, a new, informative package of publications from AARP, the Federal Reserve Board, and the Federal Citizen Information Center. It's filled with helpful tips and advice on how you can protect your credit history and fix any errors that may occur.

Your credit report includes information on where you live, how you pay your bills, whether you've been sued or arrested, or if you have filed for bankruptcy. And mistakes on it can affect your ability to get insur-

ance, a loan, an apartment, or even a job. That's why it's important for you to check your credit report annually with all three of the nationwide consumer reporting agencies. Find out how to order your free report and what to do if you discover inaccurate information with this useful package.

You should also be on the look out for errors on your credit card statements. Billing errors include incorrect credits for payments, charges that you didn't make, and charges for goods or services that you didn't receive or that weren't as promised. Under the Fair Credit Billing Act, you have the right to contest the mistake within 60 days

See RIGHTS, Page 8

Area athletes sign letters of intent

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Two athletes from area high schools in the East County have signed letters of intent to play at the university level.

In a special ceremony on April 25, Brandi Gutierrez, a senior at Horizon High School, signed a national letter of intent to compete for New Mexico State University. She is the first senior from Horizon High School to receive an athletic scholarship, as a member of only the second class to graduate from the new school. She is number two academically in her class, carrying a 4.0 GPA, and has excelled in track and cross country events, qualifying for state four times.

Richard Norris, son of Adrian Fonseca and Cathy Norris-Fonseca, has signed a letter of intent to play football for the United States Military Academy during a ceremony on Wednesday, April 25. The 6'4" offensive lineman from Americas High School was awarded the 2005-2006: 1st Team All District, Honorable Mention All-City and the 2006-2007: Pre-season 1st Team All-City, 2nd Team All District, AP Honorable Mention All-State, TSWA Honorable Mention All-State. He will attend the United States



— Photo courtesy Socorro ISD

PEN IN HAND — Richard Norris received support from cheerleaders as he signed his letter of intent to play for Army.

Military Academy Prep School in Fort Monmouth, New Jersey for the 2007-2008 year where he will report July 20. He will attend the United States Military Academy at West Point the following year.

Classified Ads

LEGAL

SOCORRO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Invitation to Bid/Respond:

Sealed bids/proposals/CSP/RFP to furnish the District with the following products and/or services will be accepted at the following times:

MONDAY, MAY 07, 2007

PLUMBING

MATERIALS CSP NO. 199-0507-7096 ACCEPTED UNTIL 2:00 P.M.

DUST MOPS SERVICES CSP NO. 199-0507-7080 ACCEPTED UNTIL 2:30 P.M.

PA AUDIO EQUIPMENT CSP NO. 199-0507-7095 ACCEPTED UNTIL 3:00 P.M.

PAPER SUPPLIES CSP NO. 199-0507-7097 ACCEPTED UNTIL 3:30 P.M.

LINEN SUPPLIES CSP NO. 199-0507-7098 ACCEPTED UNTIL 3:45 P.M.

Proposals will be received at Business Services Dept., 12300 Eastlake Drive, El Paso, Texas 79928 until the specified times. Detailed specifications are available from the above office between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and on the Socorro ISD website: www.sisd.net. WTCC-05/03/07

BARGAINS

2001 Chevy 1500

Sport pickup, 6-cylinder, standard five-speed, A/C, good condition. \$4900. 525-3865. 5/3

DOCUMENT ASSISTANCE

Divorce documents prepared, includes petition, waiver, final decree. Covers children and property. \$275. (915) 851-1425 5/3

HELP WANTED

Need part-time office assistant with very flexible hours. Call 851-2391, ask for Mary. 5/3

El Paso County Tornillo WID

The El Paso County Tornillo WID is seeking applications for full time groundwater operator for an 880 meter system. Qualifications: TCEQ Class C licensed groundwater operator preferred, valid Texas driver's license with good driving record, experience of basic water works operation and operating a backhoe. Salary based on experience. Position open until filled. Apply at 19225 Highland St., Tornillo, TX, (915) 764-2966. An Equal Opportunity Employer WTCC: 05/02/07; 05/10/07

SELF-HELP

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

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

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Windshield Repair Specialists
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20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31
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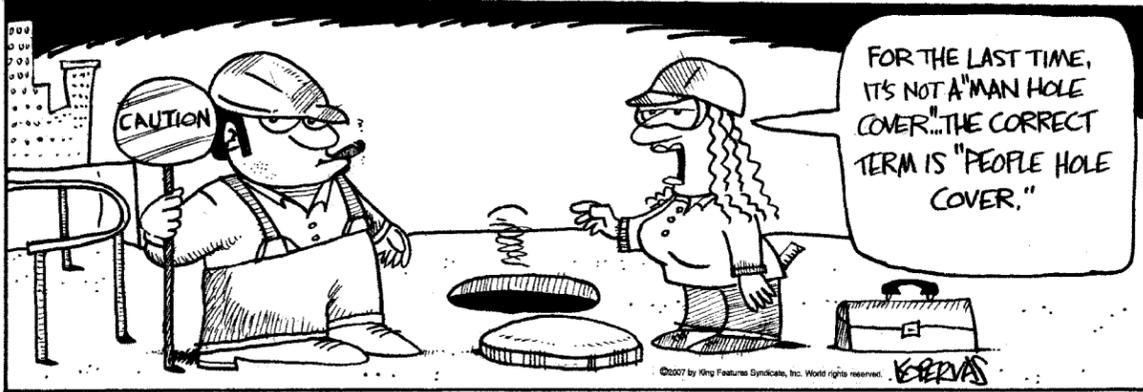
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15344 Werling Ct.
Horizon City, TX 79928
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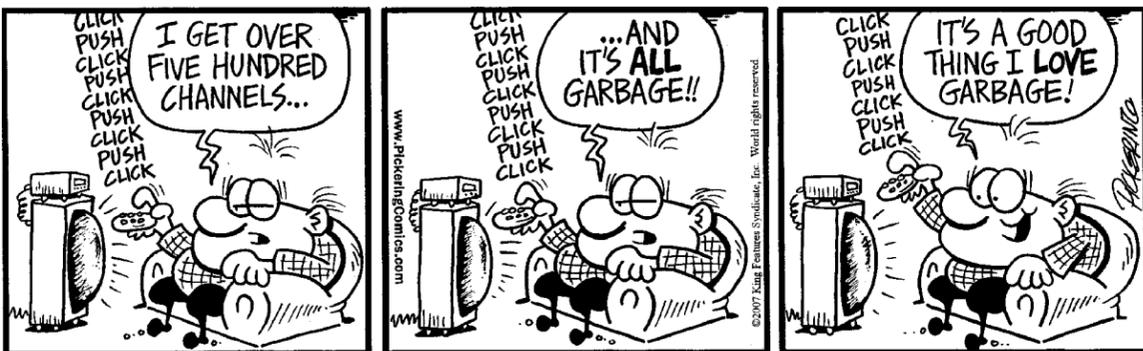
OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Ashes to ashes

By Don Flood

Rolling Stone Keith Richards recently broke an old taboo by announcing in public that he had snorted his father's ashes.

Richards had been asked what was the strangest thing he had ever snorted, and he replied — perhaps to the interviewer's surprise — that he had snorted his dear old dad, who, conveniently enough, had been cremated.

"I couldn't resist grinding him up with a little bit of blow," was how Richards described this stage of his grieving process.

Many experts list five stages of grief, but the desire to snort the ashes of the deceased is becoming recognized as a separate — and meaningful — sixth stage.

(Richards' agent and later Richards himself tried to pass off his description of the funeral rites he held for his father as a joke, but I'm inclined to accept it as authentic.)

While Richards' expression of grief remains relatively uncommon, as cremation becomes more popular — making ashes more readily available for snorting — this custom is sure to become more accepted and even fashionable, especially now that it has received the seal of approval from an A-list celebrity.

But that doesn't mean it's right for everybody or for every family.

The first consideration is, how would the deceased himself feel about being snorted?

Richards, for example, was quite sure where his father stood.

"My dad wouldn't have cared — he didn't give a [Rolling Stone-esque expletive deleted]. It went down pretty well."

In many cases, however, the recently departed have expressed no opinion on the subject.

Many people help plan their funeral — often including location,

type of casket, music, etc. — but relatively few specify their preference about being snorted.

While it may seem hip now, experts say, it's a mistake to assume that everyone would want to have his memory celebrated in this manner.

Hopefully, Richards' recent announcement will encourage people to be more open about discussing the issue.

Here are some commonsense "dos and don'ts":

- Do make the ashes available for all those who would like to acknowledge their grief by snorting the remains of the dearly departed. A funeral is not the time to settle old scores. It is acceptable, however, for families not comfortable with this approach to announce, "Private snorting services will be conducted following the funeral."

- Do provide plenty of tissues and moistened towelettes so that people can give themselves a good wiping down afterward.

- Don't feel you have to have a "snort service" because it's become trendy or because "everybody's doing it."

- Don't mix ashes with any other other substance that might cause people to sneeze. Sneezing at such a moment is common enough as it is, and experts say it detracts from the solemnity of the occasion.

- Don't make people feel their grief is any less genuine if they choose not to snort.

- Don't have the entire service revolved around the "snorting of the ashes." Most experts recommend a smaller gathering where the snorting can be conducted with the proper respect and dignity.

And if you remain unsure about how to proceed, ask yourself what Keith Richards would have done.

(c) 2007 King Features Synd., Inc.

King Super Crossword

FRIENDLY FIBBER

- ACROSS**
- 1 Balaam's beast
 - 4 Spud
 - 9 Passing fashions
 - 13 Swerve
 - 17 "Mighty _ a Rose"
 - 18 Physicist Joliot-Curie
 - 19 Flick
 - 20 Correctional
 - 22 Start of a remark by Milton Berle
 - 24 Where Devils fight Flames
 - 25 Musical of "Tomorrow"
 - 26 Swit co-star
 - 27 They may be frozen
 - 29 Dweeb
 - 31 "Born in the _" ('84 hit)
 - 32 Neat as _
 - 34 Part 2 of remark
 - 38 Jeopardize
 - 42 Fairy-tale start
 - 43 Base stuff?
 - 44 TV's "The _ Squad"
 - 45 Johnson of "Brief Encounter"
 - 47 Rainbow shape
 - 49 Where to find edelweiss
 - 52 Shopper's Shangri-la
 - 54 Napoleon's cousin

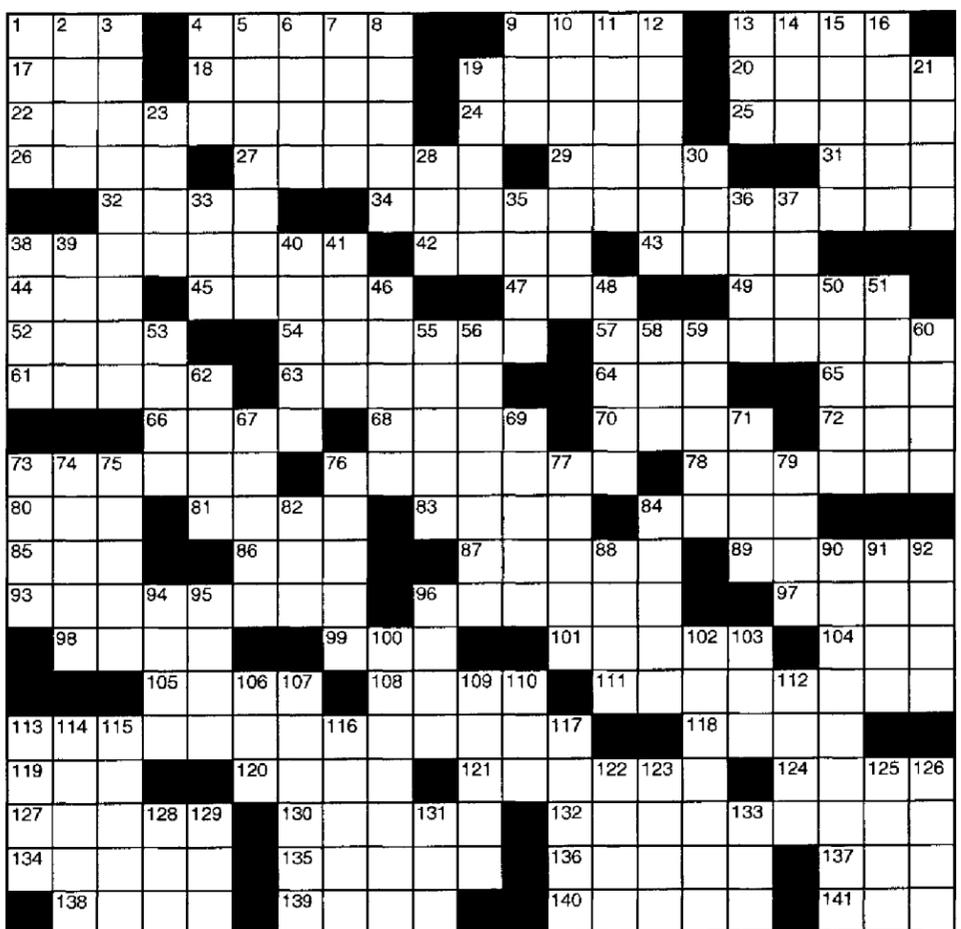
- 57 Quilled critter
- 61 Winning
- 63 Winner
- 64 Altar answer
- 65 Actor Vigoda
- 66 Adroit
- 68 Velvety plant
- 70 Theater section
- 72 DC figure
- 73 Dental appointment, for some
- 76 Part 3 of remark
- 78 Circular, e.g.
- 80 For each
- 81 Tibetan monk
- 83 Ceremony
- 84 Conceal
- 85 Sedan season
- 86 Maglie of baseball
- 87 Crete's capital
- 89 Beardless dwarf
- 93 "A Christmas Carol" name
- 96 Cocktail ingredient
- 97 Breaker
- 98 "Kismet" character
- 99 Bit part in "Cleopatra"?
- 101 Mythical weeper
- 104 _ Pan Alley
- 105 Spellbound
- 108 Word with candy or copy
- 111 Labors
- 113 Part 4 of remark
- 118 Connecticut campus
- 119 USN rank

- DOWN**
- 1 Utah resort
 - 2 Comic Mort
 - 3 Vamoose
 - 4 Ascot or bolo
 - 5 Set up
 - 6 "Guarding _" ('94 film)
 - 7 Hazzard County deputy
 - 8 Extend a subscription
 - 9 In place of
 - 10 Steed or Peel
 - 11 Alice's restaurant?
 - 12 Barbecued
 - 13 Loser's locale
 - 14 He's a doll
 - 15 Boredom
 - 16 Pants measurement

- 120 Leave
- 121 San Luis _ CA
- 124 "Them!" critters
- 127 Actor Christopher
- 130 Incited, with "on"
- 132 End of remark
- 134 Designer Donna
- 135 Card or bill
- 136 Mrs. Ethan Frome
- 137 Kauai keepsake
- 138 Lovett or Wagoner
- 139 "Eat your dinner _ dessert!"
- 140 "Rawhide" role
- 141 Fashion monogram

- 19 He's dropped a few bricks
- 21 Wife of Jacob
- 23 Daddy
- 28 Even if, informally
- 30 Narcs' org.
- 33 Business abbr.
- 35 Rent- _
- 36 Forest father
- 37 Corduroy ridge
- 38 Madame Bovary
- 39 Wyle of "ER"
- 40 Choose
- 41 Loaded
- 46 Battle site of 1836
- 48 Prepare the champagne
- 50 Part of a process
- 51 Dignified
- 53 Stow
- 55 "_-propre" (self-esteem)
- 56 Massachusetts town
- 58 Tokyo, formerly
- 59 Cowboy's critter
- 60 Fellow
- 62 Distribute the deck
- 67 Instant
- 69 Indian lute
- 71 Writer Bagnold
- 73 Crude cartel
- 74 Fashionably nostalgic
- 75 Night vision?
- 76 "Big Three" site
- 77 October
- Revolution name

- 79 Deliberate
- 82 _ tai (rum cocktail)
- 84 Mist
- 88 Give off
- 90 Without complaining
- 91 Sinister
- 92 Desires
- 94 Skater Lipinski
- 95 Grouch
- 96 Petty clash?
- 100 '65 Jr. Walker & the All Stars hit
- 102 New Jersey city
- 103 _ Marie Saint
- 106 Raven maven?
- 107 Prom wear
- 109 _ Island
- 110 Society miss
- 112 Sitka's st.
- 113 Escapade
- 114 Perfect
- 115 Abrasive substance
- 116 _ lily
- 117 Posh
- 122 Queens stadium
- 123 Artist Mondrian
- 125 Stocking stuffers?
- 126 Besmirch
- 128 Actor Kilmer
- 129 Compass pt.
- 131 Author Umberto
- 133 Helium or hydrogen



Answer Page 6

Rights

From Page 6

after the bill's statement date. If you think your bill has an error, follow the steps outlined in the Credit Card Rights package to help dispute the amount.

And what if your credit card is lost or stolen? Do you know what to do? Once you discover your card is missing, immediately notify the card company. By doing so, you won't have to pay more than \$50 for unauthorized charges. And remember this protection is guaranteed so there's no need to buy "credit card insurance." It's also a good idea to make a list of your account numbers and the corresponding toll-free phone numbers and keep them in a safe place.

Order the Credit Card Rights

package today and be an informed consumer. This package costs \$2.00. There are three easy ways to get your package: Send your name, address, and a check or money order for \$2.00 to Credit Card Rights, Pueblo, Colorado 81009.

Visit www.pueblo.gsa.gov/money.htm to read or print more credit-related publications and hundreds of other Federal publications for free.

Call toll-free 1 (888) 8 PUEBLO. That's 1 (888) 878-3256, weekdays 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time and ask for Credit Card Rights. Have your credit card handy.

Get even more information and take advantage of online government services resources at www.USA.gov and www.GobiernoUSA.gov — your official English and Spanish web portals to the Federal government.

Legislators honor TRTA with resolution

AUSTIN — At the conclusion of the 54th Texas Retired Teachers Association Convention on April 17, the group hosted a Legislative Appreciation Breakfast for all Texas legislators for their interests in the needs of educational retirees. Among the 100 legislative attendees were Rep. Chente Quintanilla and Sen. Carlos Uresti. Aubrey Cherry, District XIX President and Tim Lee, Executive Director of TRTA presided at the function. The legislators were greeted by Erma Nelson, District XIX First Vice President and several of the El Paso area delegates. Later that day, a resolution was presented in the House by Rep. Truitt and in the Senate by Sen. Robert Duncan honoring the retired educators and the 54th TRTA Convention. Shown in photo, back row from left, are Ray Jones, President of the El Paso Lower Valley RTA, Cherry, and Erma Nelson. Seated are Rep. Quintanilla and Julie Jones, First Vice President of the EPLVRTA.



Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Two Social Security provisions all government employees need to know

When it comes to Social Security, many government employees have questions about two provisions of the law that may affect them. These provisions are the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP).

Yes, these terminologies sound confusing, but here are some simple questions and answers that should help readers understand what the two provisions are all about.

Who is affected by GPO and WEP?

Government employees. The Government Pension Offset (GPO) re-

duces the potential Social Security spouse's/widow's/widower's benefit amount someone could receive if he or she also receives a pension from a federal, state or local government for work on which no Social Security taxes were paid. The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) can reduce a worker's monthly Social Security benefit amount, if he or she also receives a pension from work not covered by Social Security.

What is the purpose of these provisions?

GPO and WEP are designed to ensure that all American workers are

treated equally under the Social Security system. GPO stipulates that any Social Security spouse's or widow's benefit that a worker might be entitled to must be reduced by two-thirds of that worker's government pension. Why? Well, GPO removes an advantage that some government workers once had. Before GPO, a person who worked in a government job that was not covered under Social Security could receive, in addition to a government pension based on his or her own earnings, a full Social Security spouse's or surviving spouse's benefit. No other workers had this option because Social Security benefits payable to a person as a spouse or surviving spouse must be offset, dollar for dollar, by the amount of that person's own Social Security benefit.

Similarly, WEP takes away an advantage that the regular Social Security

benefit formula would give people who have substantial pensions from non-Social Security covered jobs. Without WEP, a worker who spent most of his or her career in employment not covered by Social Security and who worked for a short time to get Social Security coverage would end up with much higher benefits than if all of his or her work were done under Social Security.

How many retirees actually see an effect in their benefit payments?

Last year, out of more than 49 million Social Security beneficiaries, only about 440,000 were affected by GPO. Also, last year there were more than 880,000 retired and disabled workers who had their Social Security benefit partially reduced by WEP.

The above information provides just a brief overview of these two provisions. For more information, including examples of just how the

two provisions work in real-life situations, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov/gpo-wep or call toll-free, 1-800-772-1213 (for the deaf or hard of hearing, call our TTY number, 1-800-325-0778) and ask for Social Security publications on the Government Pension Offset or the Windfall Elimination Provision.

(May 7-13 is Public Service Recognition Week, a time to honor the men and women who serve America as federal, state, and local government employees.)

For more information on any of the information 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.

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East County locations. However, registration will conclude on May 6. For more information call 855-7423, 540-0765 or 478-1770 or log on at www.cvyso.com.

In other news

■ A comprehensive El Paso Zoo Volunteer Training Session will be May 12 and 26 from 9 a.m. until noon at the El Paso Zoo Paraje for anyone who wants to primarily volunteer for weekends at the El Paso Zoo. Rick LoBello, Zoo Education Curator, will be the instructor. The session will cover all aspects of the Zoo, the animals and the areas of opportunities to volunteer. Prospective volunteers must attend both classes to complete training. Call Anne Langenfeld for more information at (915) 351-5340 or e-mail langenfeldAR@elpasotexas.gov. The deadline to register is May 5.

■ The No Limits Track Team will begin summer track on May 7. Practice is held at Ensor Middle School. Kids ages 8 and up are welcome. For more information call 203-7005.

■ Ed Archuleta is this year's Honorary Chair for the El Paso Zoological Society's annual fundraiser being held at the El Paso Country Club, Saturday, May 19. Attire is "Safari Chic" for this year's fabulous and fancy event. Reception opens at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner buffet stations, live music by Quintessential Brass, and silent

and live auctions. Tables for 10 are \$1,000; individual seats are \$100. RSVP: 532-8156 by May 11. The winner of an eleven day African Safari, round trip from El Paso to Kenya, for two will be announced. Raffle tickets at \$100 are still available — to purchase call 532-8156. Only 500 raffle tickets will be sold.

■ Morehead Middle School is helping Keep Texas Beautiful by sponsoring a trash pickup, coordinated by Roxanne Tyroch. Science students will be weighing the trash and transporting it to the Clint landfill — and students are awarded a raffle ticket for each bag of trash they gather and turn in. A \$150 prize along with several smaller prizes will be awarded during the day. Call 585-8964 for more information.

■ The American Heart Association will celebrate Stroke Awareness Month by hosting the third Go Red for Women Luncheon on May 11, 2007. Tracey Conway was 38 when her life changed forever. The Emmy-winning actress was taping a television comedy show when she literally dropped dead from sudden cardiac arrest. Twenty minutes later, paramedics shocked her heart into beating again. Overcoming 20-to-1 odds, she survived and turned her miraculous recovery into a poignant yet laugh-out-loud presentation that has wowed everyone from maximum-security inmates to Oprah Winfrey. The event will be at the Wyndham Hotel, sponsored by Humana. Free cholesterol, diabetes, and blood pressure screenings will begin at 11 a.m. and lunch will be served at noon. The cost for this event is \$30 per person or \$300

for a table of 10. For more details or to reserve your table, please contact the American Heart Association at 915-832-0202.

■ UTEP's College of Education will host a Mother-Daughter Reunion at 4 p.m. Friday, May 4, at the new Canutillo High School, 6675 S. Desert Blvd. The inaugural reunion will bring together Mother-Daughter participants from the Canutillo Independent School District, according to spokeswoman Laura Cruz. Created in 1986, Mother-Daughter is an innovative program that helps young Hispanic girls and their mothers develop life goals and increase self-empowerment through activities such as field trips, exposure to professional role models and family-friendly opportunities. The program also helps fathers and sons plan for college and a career. The Mother-Daughter/Father-Son program is nationally recognized for its success in providing educational and career opportunities for thousands of Hispanic girls and boys. Keynote speakers for the reunion include Josefina V. Tinajero, Ph.D., College of Education dean; and Pam Padilla, Ph.D., Canutillo ISD superintendent. Participants will enjoy food, music and activities, including a fashion show to demonstrate how professionals should dress. The reunion is sponsored by the college, Canutillo ISD and Project Action for Equity. Additional reunions are expected to take place for other local school districts in the future. For more information, call 915/747-5572 or visit <http://academics.utep.edu/education>.

■ A missing person case became a murder investigation with the discovery of the

body of 20-year-old Adam Thomas Oury. Crimes Against Persons (CAP) detectives have arrested four people in connection with the murder. Oury's father reported him missing on April 13 and detectives from the Westside Regional Command Center requested media assistance on April 20. When information was obtained suggesting foul play, Crimes Against Persons Unit took over the investigation, finding that Oury was a victim of murder with probable cause indicating Joseph Brandon Jones, 20; Andrew James Cotto, 21; and Roberto Octavio Corral, 18 were responsible for his death. Ember Jean Schlieter, 20, was charged with attempting to conceal the murder. Detectives located the body of a male believed to be Oury in a desert area near the Santa Teresa Airport in Dona Ana County, NM. Corral was arrested in El Paso; Jones, Cotto and Schlieter had all fled from El Paso after the murder and were arrested in Las Vegas, NV.

■ EP-SHARE has partnered with Animal Regulation and Disease Control to hold a Pet Adoptathon on May 5, 2007, the day traditionally set aside as "National Adopt A Shelter Pet Day," at the Animal Regulation and Disease Control Shelter located at 5001 Fred Wilson Blvd. The adoption event will be from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., on Saturday, May 5, 2007. The public is invited to come to Animal Control where Adoption Coordinators will be available to counsel on proper pet care, screen potential adopters and help match pets to families. Adoption fees are \$100, which includes spay/neuter, vaccinations, microchip, disease testing and one month of free pet health insurance.