

NEWSBRIEFS

Crime Stoppers

A woman is dead, and El Paso County law enforcement officials are asking for community assistance to lead to the arrest of her killer. On Saturday, Jan. 20, El Paso County Sheriff's Office deputies responded to a "man down" call at 4:15 p.m. A body had been spotted in the desert area off Gateway East and FM 1110 near Clint. An investigation determined that 42-year-old truck driver Vernice Colvin of Los Angeles, California, had died of severe trauma to the head. She was last seen at the Petro Truck Stop, I-10 and Horizon Boulevard, on Jan. 11, where she may have been looking for a ride west to L.A. She was last seen wearing black sweat pants, white t-shirt, black shoes, and a blue denim jacket with a gray hood. She had brown eyes, brown shoulder-length hair, and weighed about 170 pounds. If you know anything about this case, call Crime Stoppers at 566-TIPS (566-8477) or go on-line at www.crimestoppersofelpaso.org. Contacts remain anonymous and, if tip leads to an arrest, callers can qualify for a cash reward.

— Contributed by Rick Glancey

Juarez curfew

The El Paso Police Department has been informed by the Juarez Police Department that a curfew has been instituted in downtown Juarez as of June 2, 2007. The curfew will affect anyone under 18 years old. It is important for parents and teens to know anyone under eighteen, not accompanied by a responsible adult, after 10 p.m. is subject to arrest for curfew violation. The Juarez Police Department is held a press conference regarding the new curfew on June 2 at the Plaza Del Mariachi on Avenida Juarez. The El Paso Police Department has been working in conjunction with the Rio Grande Safe Communities Coalition to address underage drinking for several years. Director Marge Bartilletti will represent the Coalition at the press conference. Both the El Paso Police Department and Bartilletti are optimistic this new curfew will help efforts to curtail underage drinking.

Passport assistance

In response to a growing demand for passports, the El Paso County Clerk's Office will open for one day only, Saturday, June 16, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the County Courthouse specifically to process birth certificate requests. The cost for a certified copy of a birth certificate is \$23, cash or money order only. For information call 546-2071 or log on at countyclerk@epcounty.com.

In other news

■ The Socorro Independent School District Community Education program is offering free classes for adults. The program

See BRIEFS, Page 4

It's a grand person indeed who can laugh at himself with others and enjoy it as much as they do.

— Quips & Quotes



— Photos courtesy Socorro ISD

EASY AS ONE... TWO... THREE — Cady Snell has given hair twice to Locks of Love, a program that makes hairpieces out of donated hair for children with long-term hair loss from medical conditions or treatments.

Snell makes a difference one haircut at a time

By Irma Flores
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY — A simple act from an Elfida Chavez student is helping bring a smile to a child's face. For the second time, 10-year-old Cady Snell donated her hair to the "Locks of Love" program. With the help of students in the cosmetology program at El Dorado High School, Cady had eight inches of her hair cut off. The first time she donated her hair was at the end of the 04-05 school year. Cady, who will head into the 5th grade, plans on donating

again. It took her two years to grow her hair a suitable length to donate.

Locks of Love is a public non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children under age 18 suffering from long-term medical hair loss from any diagnosis. The prostheses we provide help to restore children's self-esteem and confidence. Donated hair is evaluated for its usefulness according to the following guidelines:

It must be bundled in a pony tail or braid and must be free of bleach. Colored hair and permed is acceptable. For more information visit www.locksoflove.org.

San Elizario assistant superintendent, Longoria, to retire after 30 years of service

By Cynthia P. Marentes
Special to the Courier

Robert Longoria's remarkable tenure at San Elizario ISD where he served most recently as Assistant Superintendent of Support Services officially will come to an end on June 14 after nearly 30 years of service. As Assistant Superintendent of Support Services Longoria was responsible for the delivery of quality service from a number of fronts including: nutrition services, facilities, maintenance, custodial services, security, transportation, and warehousing. However, Longoria's long and distinguished career with the school district began from one vantage point, inside a classroom. As a 6th -12th grade teacher and coach, Longoria taught English for six years when he first came to the district. He remembers teaching as a great experience and fondly recalled when past students would return to thank him and continued to remember him in later years.

Over the years, Longoria witnessed many changes but the most noticeable difference he was part of was the growth of the district. When Longoria first arrived, San Elizario school district had only two campuses. He was on board to welcome a new high school, two new elementary

schools, a primary school, and an alternative campus to the district. Longoria believes that the increase in the number of buildings in the school district indirectly affected the students. "The growth has had a positive impact on the students who are becoming successful and proving themselves in their studies," Longoria said.

One of the biggest challenges that Longoria believes continues to face San Elizario is in getting the resources needed at home for students to hone their academic abilities. However, Longoria is hopeful that the community and the school district will rise to the challenge of meeting the needs of students because he is convinced that everyone truly cares about the students. As an example, Longoria cites his relationship with the San Elizario ISD School

See LONGORIA, Page 5



— Photo courtesy San Elizario ISD

THREE GOOD REASONS TO STAY HOME — Robert Longoria hugs his daughter-in-law Lizette Lopez-Longoria who is holding his granddaughter Leah, and his wife, Lydia.

USDA expands support for rural broadband access

By Jay Fletcher
Special to the Courier

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas C. Dorr has announced the publication of new proposed rules designed to facilitate the further deployment of broadband services to rural communities nationwide.

"These proposed changes will improve broadband coverage in rural America," said Dorr. "Refining eligibility and coverage areas, along with increased emphasis on reaching areas with limited service are priorities within these proposed rule changes."

Dorr outlined several key elements of the proposed rules: promoting deployment to rural areas with little or no service; ensuring that residents in funded areas get broadband access more quickly; limiting funding in urban areas and areas where a significant share of the market is served by incumbent providers; clarifying and streamlining equity and marketing survey requirements; increasing the transparency of the application process, including legal notice requirements, to make more informed lending/borrowing decisions; promoting a better understanding of all application requirements, including market survey, competitive analysis, business plan, and system design requirements; and ensuring that projects funding are keeping pace with increasing demand for bandwidth.

Dorr noted that significant progress has been made in facilitating rural broadband deployment since the program began. Over 70 loans have been made totaling \$1.2 billion for broadband deployment projects headquartered in 36 states. Through these loans, more than half a million households in more than 1,000 rural communities will receive broadband service. Over 60 percent of these communities had little or no broadband service at the time.

In addition, as part of its 2007 Farm Bill proposal, the USDA has requested re-authorization of the broadband program through 2012. Because of broadband technology, to an unprecedented degree, people have choices about where to live and how to work. From a rural development perspective, this allows rural residents to live locally and compete globally. Broadband is eliminating the barriers of distance, remoteness, and time that face rural businesses, teachers, and physicians. Children growing up on farms, ranches and in small towns can have the same access to the best education the nation can provide. Rural citizens are offered access to health care and rural economies prosper and grow with new markets only a computer screen away.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development has invested over \$76.8 billion since the beginning of the Bush Administration to provide equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. As a result, over 1.5 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments.

For more information: www.rurdev.usda.gov.

Three-year-old dies after falling into irrigation canal

TORNILLO — El Paso County law enforcement officials said a three-year-old boy, Ivan Durante, died Saturday, June 2, after falling into an irrigation canal in Tornillo.

Sheriff's Deputies and Public Safety crews arrived on scene after being dispatched at about 7:40 p.m. to a report of a child falling into a canal. The child was found and pulled from the water shortly after 8 p.m. CPR was administered and the child was transported to another location by ambulance to be airlifted to R.E. Thomason General Hospital. He was hospitalized Friday night in critical condition. The boy was pronounced dead shortly after 6 a.m. Saturday, June 2, 2007.

On Friday evening, an adult had noticed the child was no longer present in the home and started

searching for him. Officers said several minutes may have passed before anyone noticed he was missing.

It appears he entered the irrigation canal about 80 feet from the back of the home. His body was found downstream about 1,300 feet from his original point of entry. It is unknown how deep the water was on Friday evening.

"This is a very sensitive case and the investigation is progressing. The death of a child is not easy to handle for all involved. It will be several days before we get beyond the preliminary stage of this investigation. The final autopsy report is not available," said Sergeant Jim Belknap, Criminal Investigation Division, El Paso County Sheriff's Office.

The child's parents have been identified as Jorge and Gabriella Durante of Tornillo.

San Elizario woman dies in one-car crash

EL PASO COUNTY — A San Elizario female died in an early-morning traffic collision in the Mission Valley on June 2. Officers from the El Paso Police Department's Special Traffic Investigations Unit were called out to assist Mission Valley Patrol Officers investigate a one car traffic collision.

The investigation revealed that at approximately 3:30 a.m. Brenda Zubiata the driver and sole occupant of 1999 Pontiac Grand Prix was traveling northbound on Loop 375 when

she lost control of her car and crossed over the south bound lanes, down the embankment at Americas. The car rolled several times and come to rest at the 400 block of S. Americas. Zubiata was not wearing her seat belt and was ejected from the vehicle. She was transported to R.E. Thomason Hospital where she died.

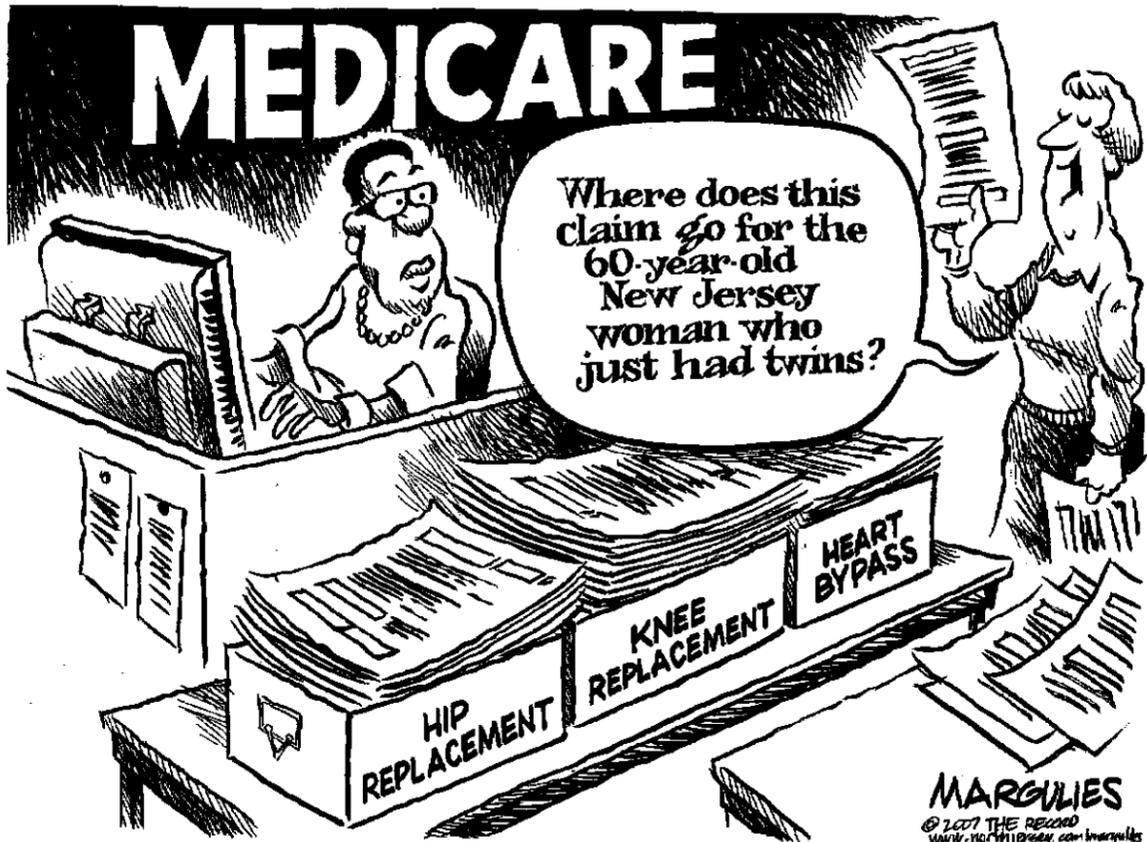
Special Traffic Investigators believe that speed, alcohol and failure to wear a seat belt are factors in this latest fatality. This is the city's 25th traffic fatality as 19 at this time last year. This investigation continues.



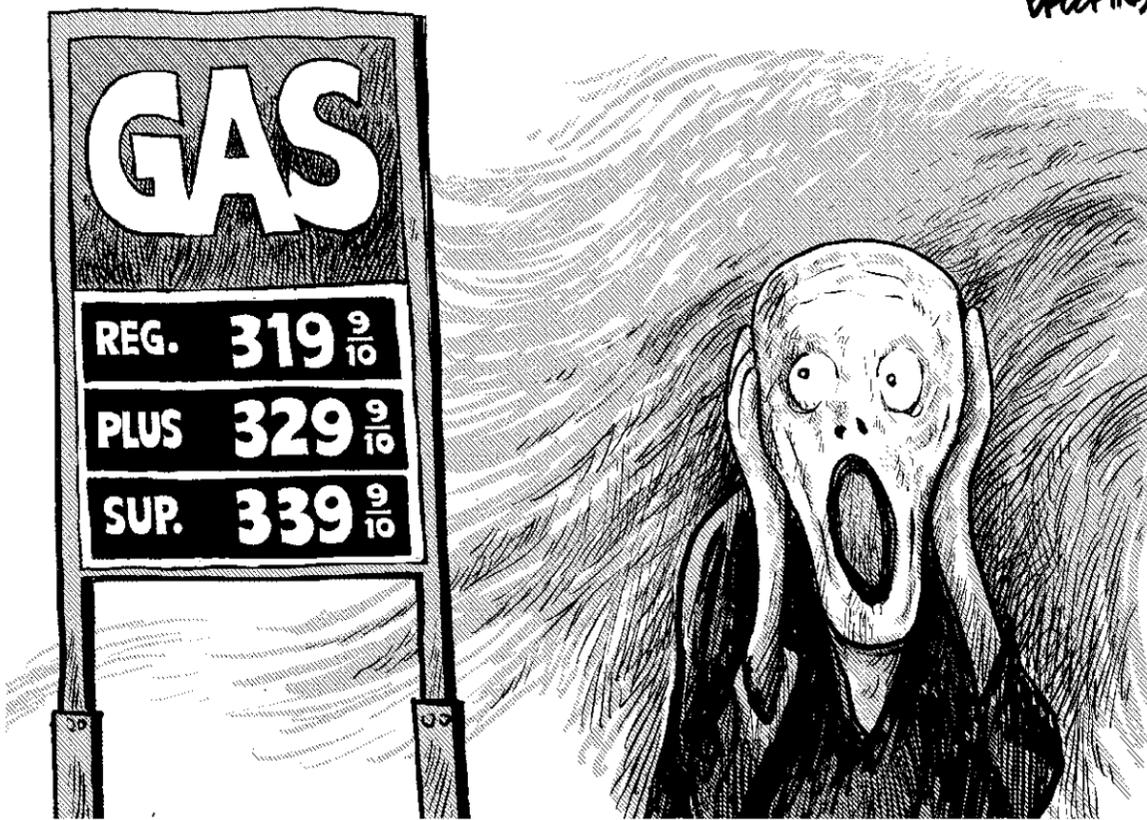
One perspective

By Francis Shrum

One perspective will return next week.



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RICHMOND TIMES DISPATCH BROOKINGS

WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

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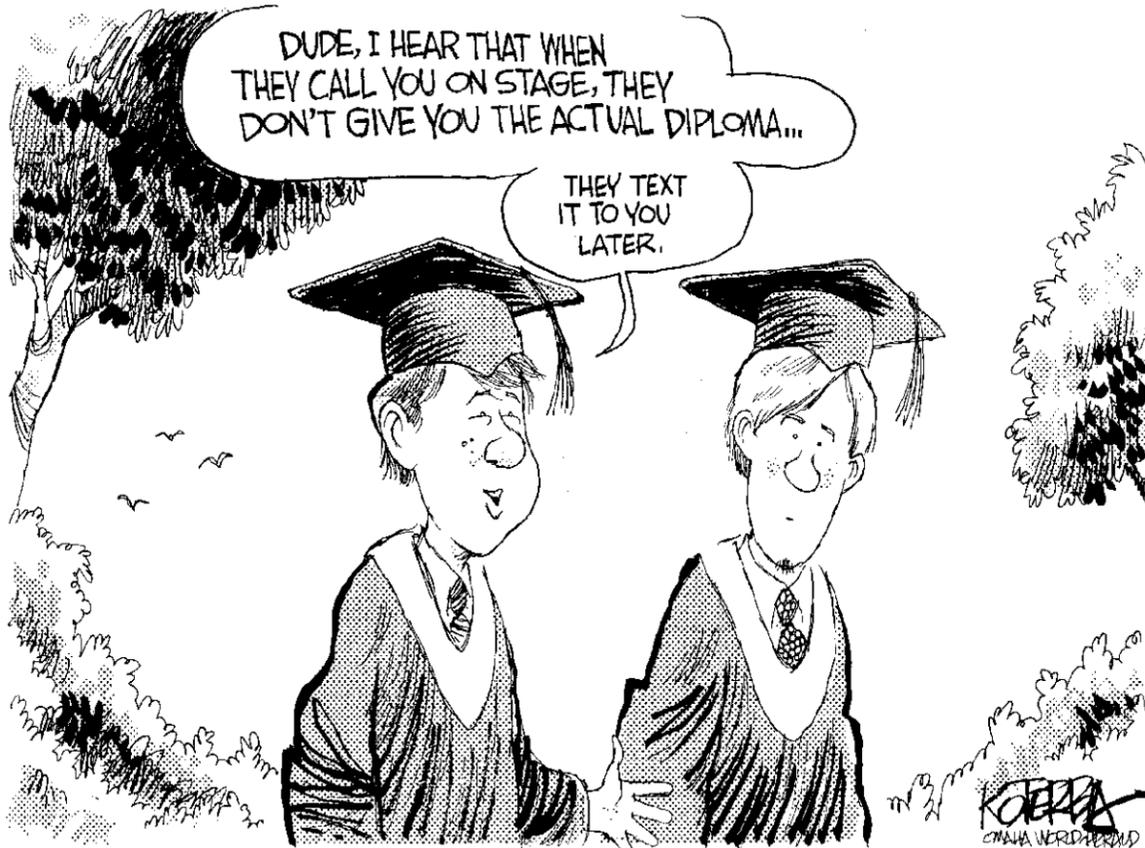
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Canutillo ISD graduates 270 students

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

Canutillo High School Class of 2007 garnered more than \$5.8 million in scholarships and grants, as 270 seniors walked the stage during the graduation ceremony held Saturday night (May 26) at the Julius & Irene Lowenberg Eagles Stadium.

CHS Valedictorian for the Class of 2007 is Carlos Carrasco, and salutatorian is Erik Pavia. Both have been awarded the Presidential Scholarship to attend the University of Texas at El Paso. Carrasco was also awarded the U.T. Austin Longhorn Scholarship.

"Erik and I have been going to school together since we were in first grade. It's not that we competed against each other; it's just that we tried our best, and we helped each other along the way," said Carrasco. Both plan to attend UTEP in the fall and major in business.

Some of the other CHS graduates receiving scholarships were: Andrew Lopez, \$35,000 to Briar Cliff University, in Sioux City, Iowa; Juan Carlos Gonzalez, \$40,000 to the College of

Santa Fe; Marcus Maldonado, \$40,000 to Eastern New Mexico University; Oscar Trillo, \$74,000 to St. Mary's University; Tahlia Leyva, \$42,000 to Texas State University in San Marcos; Anja Kruger, \$30,000 to U.T. Austin and \$10,000 to Marquette University; William Black, \$16,000 to UTEP; and Berny Apodaca, \$44,000 to U.T. Austin.

Of the 270 seniors participating in the graduation ceremony, 59 have not successfully completed one or more of the TAKS assessments. They participated in the graduation ceremony because CISD Board of Trustees waived Board Policy to allow seniors, who have completed all course and attendance requirements but have not yet passed one or more of their TAKS tests, to participate in the graduation ceremony.

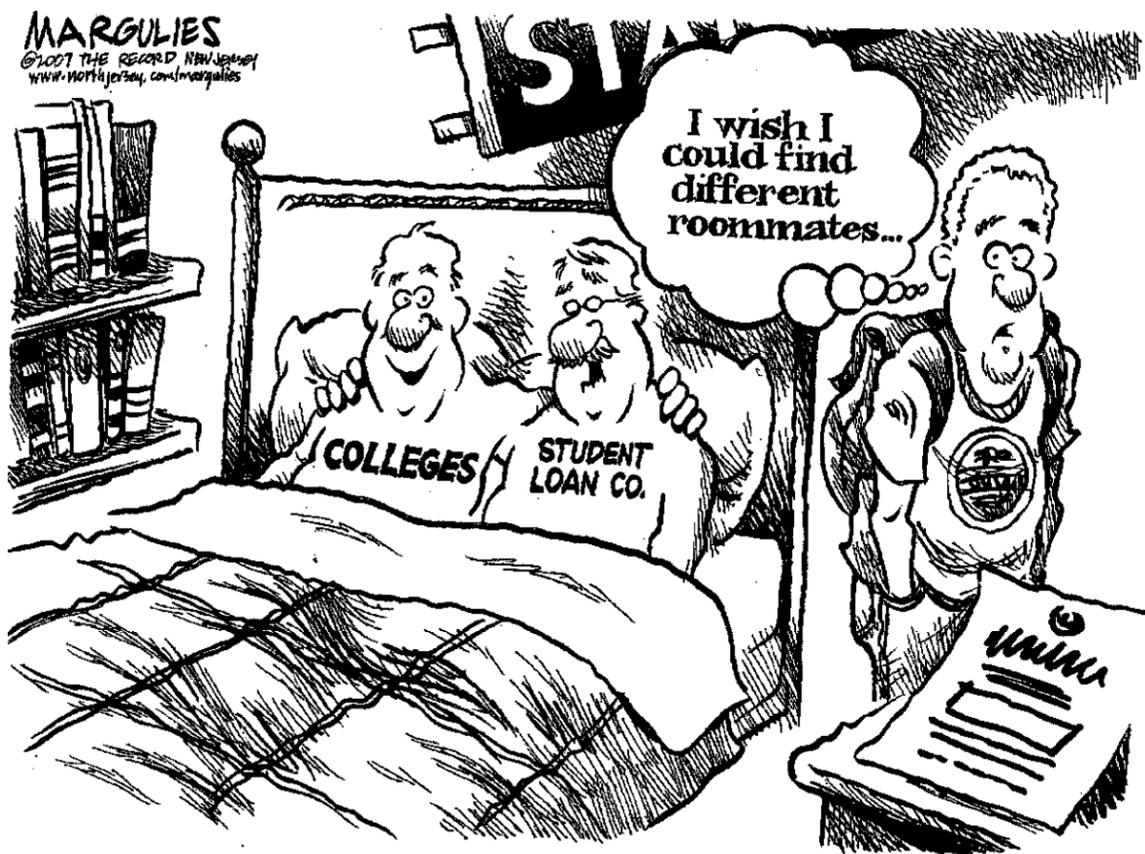
As part of the waiver, students, and their parents, were required to sign a contract stating that they will commit to voluntarily enroll in a local elective course for credit to prepare them to take the portion of the TAKS they need and that enrollment is subject to compulsory attendance laws. These students will attempt to pass the TAKS tests in July.



Carlos Carrasco



Erik Pavia



Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes

Time spent in El Paso informative and encouraging

The past few weeks, which included the Memorial Day district work period, allowed me to spend more time in El Paso than the regular Capitol Hill schedule generally affords, and I had the opportunity to participate in numerous events across El Paso and discuss important local and national issues with many of you. A sampling of these events includes:

Diocesan Migrant & Refugee Services' (DMRS) Annual Free Citizenship Fair

I helped coordinate the DMRS' Second Annual Free Citizenship Fair, which was held at both their office on East Yandell and Socorro High School. Volunteers and immigration attorneys from throughout El Paso provided free legal advice and other services to hundreds of eligible immigrants applying for citizenship. This fair was widely attended and the result of hard work by many volun-

teers. I applaud everyone for their efforts and look forward to planning our next event together.

The annual LULAC State Convention

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) held their annual state convention in El Paso last Saturday, which was a great opportunity for our El Paso LULAC leaders to host participants from across Texas. I served as keynote speaker at Saturday's dinner, and focused on one of the most pressing and controversial issues facing Congress and our country right now - immigration reform. It's good news that the Senate has struck a deal on immigration legislation, as it's long overdue that Congress address this issue, and we need to move forward before the window of opportunity closes. In the U.S. House of Representatives, I helped draft and am an original cosponsor of comprehensive immigration legislation known as the

STRIVE Act. The next step is the passage of immigration bills in the House and Senate, then the House and Senate must work out their differences to send a unified bill to the President for his signature.

I emphasized to the LULAC audience that any legislation must include: 1) increased border security; 2) earned legalization for those who qualify; and 3) a guestworker program with tough employer sanctions.

Annual Awards Dinner for Navy Junior ROTC Cadets

I also had the opportunity to attend El Paso's Annual Awards Dinner for the Navy Junior ROTC Cadets last week, where we honored five outstanding cadets. I spoke to members and guests about current military and intelligence issues facing our nation. We are all so proud of these students, and admire them for their hard work and courage.

Ray Mickens Football

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Moore Texas by Roger T. Moore June 4, 1827: Some members of Stephen Austin's colony receive land titles to build future homes in Texas.

Camp for Kids

Through his charitable education initiative, the Ray Mickens Football Camp for Kids, Andress High School graduate and NFL standout Ray Mickens has been giving back to El Paso and serving as an inspiration to El Paso students. I had the opportunity to attend his football camp at Andress High School, which included programs for both students and parents. Mickens is a role model for many El Paso students, and I was

happy to join with him. I also presented him with a Congressional plaque honoring his work.

As Congress returns from the district work period, immigration reform and the Iraq war will continue to dominate the debate. I am always happy for the opportunity to meet with many El Pasoans at these events and discuss various issues, and please continue to keep me informed of your thoughts either at future events in El Paso or by contacting my office at 534-4400.

Deanna Davenport Elementary School teacher appointed to State Review Panel

By Kim Guzman
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO — Virginia Fiske, advanced academics teacher at Davenport Elementary School (DDE) in the Canutillo Independent School District (CISD), has been appointed to the State Review Panel for Mathematics; English and Spanish versions for grades 3-5, which will meet in Austin during the week of June 18 - 22.

As a state review panel member, she will play an important role in determining which instructional materials will be used by school districts and open-enrollment charter schools for the next few years.

"As a member of the State Re-

view Panel, Fiske's responsibilities will include reviewing and evaluating instructional materials submitted for the November 2007 adoption by the State Board of Education. As a review panelist, she will determine the extent to which instructional materials cover the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)," stated Anita Deibert, Review and Adoption Specialist in Instructional Materials and Educational Technology for the Texas Education Agency (TEA).



Virginia Fiske

"I am honored to be a part of the State Review Panel for Mathematics and I am looking forward to representing CISD in this endeavor," said Fiske, who has been teaching for 13 years at DDE.

Briefs

From Page 1

will offer English as a Second Language (ESL), GED (English and Spanish) and Computer Classes.

• The day time classes will be held Monday through Friday at the Community Learning Center and H.D. Hilley Elementary.

Community Learning Center
313 S. Rio Vista Road
ESL — 8 a.m. to noon
GED — 12:45 to 2:45 p.m.

H.D. Hilley Elementary School
693 N. Rio Vista Road
ESL I & II — 8 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.
Spanish Literacy — 8 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

• Evening classes for ESL and GED will be held from Monday through Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m. ESL classes will be held at El Dorado High School, 12401 Edgemere, and Sierra Vista Elementary, 1501 Bob Hope. ESL and GED will be offered at the Community Learning Center and Jane A. Hambric School, 3535 Nolan Richardson.

• Saturday classes are also available from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for ESL and GED courses at the Community Learning Center.

• The Community Education Department is also holding day time Even Start Family Literacy Classes. This program provides literacy training to parents and children. Classes are from 8:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Monday through Friday and will be held at:

Escontrias Early Childhood Center, 205 Buford;
Campestre Elementary, 11399 Socorro Road;
Robert R. Rojas Elementary, 500 Bauman; and
Sgt. Roberto Ituarte Elementary, 11860 Tierra Sonora.

For more information on the program and courses offered, please call Community Education at 937-1700.

■ The Clint First Baptist Church is hosting Vacation Bible School with the theme of "Game Day Central Where Heroes are Made," July 9-13, 9 a.m. to noon, for children ages pre-K through 6th grade. The event will be at 220 Main Street in Clint. Call 592-9081 or 851-1599 for information.

■ The El Paso Police Department will once again offer this educational program free of charge to children between the ages of five to eight. Classes will be held Monday through Friday beginning June 4, 2007 and continuing through July 20, 2007. Classes are one week long and are held from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Children will receive valuable pedestrian, bicycle, home, fire and personal safety lessons. Friday of each week is graduation

day, complete with a cap and gown ceremony. All graduates will also receive a certificate and "photo license." For more information or to register your child please contact the Pebble Hills Regional Command Center at 599-5516.

— Contributed by Chris Mears

■ Drivers nationwide are feeling the pinch at the pumps, and as record high gas prices set in across the country, the pinch isn't likely to lighten up during the peak driving season. According to a recently released survey from AAA, traveling this summer will be more expensive than last — and not just at the gas pumps. Combined, lodging and restaurants are expected to be about 3.7 percent more expensive than last year.

If you are going to travel, these tips can help you save money:

• **Keep vehicle properly maintained**

Get regular tune ups and vehicle maintenance checks to improve gas mileage. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, drivers who follow the manufacturer's maintenance recommendations should avoid fuel economy problems due to worn spark plugs, dragging breaks, low transmission fluid or the transmission not going into high gear.

• **Check tires**

Check your tire pressure regularly to be sure that they are inflated in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. AAA says properly inflated tires can increase gas mileage as much as 2 percent.

• **Combine trips**

Let your daily or weekly errands accumulate until you can complete them in a single trip. In addition to saving gas, you will reduce wear and tear on your car.

• **Lighten the load**

Remove heavy objects from your vehicle. The heavier the vehicle, the more gas it expends.

• **Drive gently**

An easy touch on the accelerator and slower speeds will also save on gas.

• **Do your homework**

Check around for the cheapest gas in your area. Prices can vary up to 20 cents per gallon from block to block. Web sites like <http://gasbuddy.com> provide users with a list of the cheapest gas stations by zip code.

• **Avoid peak driving times**

If possible, adjust your work or school hours to avoid peak traffic times at rush hour. This may involve coming into the office an hour later and leaving an hour early, or visa versa. This way, you and can get to your destination sooner with fewer stops and idle time.

• **Find alternative modes of transportation**

Carpool or use public transportation whenever possible. This can include trips to work, school, sports practice or a night on the

town. You should also consider walking or cycling to nearby locations.

■ Five of El Paso's most popular rock groups headline the El Paso Public Library's Teenfest 2007 at the Main Library on Saturday, June 16 from 12:30 to 6 p.m. Aside from the music, teens will be able to enjoy a day of activities such as video games, board games, a car and motorcycle show, an art exhibit, face painting and caricatures. Teens will also review services that the new Teen Town section of Main Library has to offer, including books, magazines, computers and videos. Admission is free and open to teens from throughout the area. The participating bands include Fixed Idea, Kingdom Scab, Memento Mori, Operador and Strategic Investments. For more information visit www.elpasolibrary.org or call 543-5495.

— Contributed by Jack Galindo

■ The Texas Historical Commission (THC) is encouraging vacationers to plan trips using their "itinerary builder." The routes, based around 10 scenic driving trails, incorporate the perfect partnership between historic preservation and tourism. The heritage regions included in the program are: Texas Brazos Trail, Forest Trail, Forts Trail, Hill Country Trail, Lakes Trail, Independence Trail, Mountain Trail, Pecos Trail, Plains Trail and Tropical Trail Regions. To visit the 10 regional web sites visit www.thc.state.tx.us/travel. Use the map to select a region of interest. For free heritage trail guides call (866) 276-6219. For additional information on Texas travel events and vacation destinations, visit www.TravelTex.com, for a free Texas State Travel Guide call (800) 8888-TEX.

■ The FBI has published their preliminary Uniform Crime Report (UCR) statistics. El Paso bucked the national trend with a decrease in violent crime but showed a significant increase in motor vehicle theft. Violent crime was down 8.35 percent in El Paso and aggravated assaults were down 13.67 percent, while motor vehicle theft increased 34.38 percent. Robberies were up 12 percent. "We saw a decrease of almost 12 percent in the county in auto thefts from 2005 (161) to 2006 (142). The Stationary Vehicle Checkpoints was one of several law enforcement measures we used to deter such criminal activity," said Chief Deputy Jimmy Apodaca, El Paso County Sheriff's Office. "We will employ a number of additional strategies to look for ways to improve," said Chief Deputy Jimmy Apodaca, El Paso County Sheriff's office.

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Town of Horizon City PUBLIC NOTICE

A PUBLIC HEARING will be held at **6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 12, 2007** during the **Regular Council Meeting** at City Hall, 14999 Darrington Road, Horizon City, Texas. Purpose of the public hearing is to allow any interested persons to appear and testify regarding the following proposed ordinance(s):

1) Proposed Ordinance 0161 — Rezoning from M-1 (Light Industrial) to C-1 (Light Commercial) approximately 7.648 acres consisting of Tract 1-A, Section 42, Block 78, Township 3, of Texas and Pacific Railroad Surveys, El Paso County, Texas.

Those who are unable to attend may submit their views in writing to the City Clerk of Horizon City. Accommodations for handicapped persons will be available and individuals in need of special assistance for attending the hearing are encouraged to contact the City Clerk at 915-852-1046, forty-eight (48) hours prior to this meeting. Ordinances are available for viewing or copying upon request from the City Clerk at the above address or call 915-852-1046, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Fidel Morales
Interim City Clerk

WTCC: 06-07-07

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Woman loses precious cargo — her children — when drugs are found in vehicle

By Roger Maier
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY — U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers working at the Paso Del Norte (PDN) port of entry in downtown El Paso discovered 311 pounds of marijuana hidden in the floor of a van Tuesday (May 29) night. The seizure is one of 14 drug busts made by CBP officers in El Paso in just two days.

The large seizure was made just before 5 p.m. when a 1992 Dodge Grand Caravan entered the port from Mexico. The vehicle was driven by a 37-year-old female who was accompanied by two children. CBP officers noticed that the driver was nervous during routine questioning. CBP drug sniffing dog "Max" searched the van and alerted to the floor. CBP officers continued their inspection and discovered a hidden compartment in the floor of the van. CBP officers removed

a total of 153 marijuana-filled bundles from the compartment. The total weight of the seized marijuana was 311 pounds.

ICE special agents arrested the driver. She is 37-year-old Martha Nelida Salcido Pena of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Her children were turned over to a relative. In addition to this seizure, CBP officer working at the PDN, Bridge of the Americas,

and Ysleta crossings in El Paso seized 685 pounds of marijuana and a small quantity of cocaine in 13 additional drug seizures throughout Tuesday and Wednesday.

"CBP officers are working hard to balance enforcement of U.S. laws with the facilitation of law abiding border crossers," said David Longoria, U.S. Customs and Border Protection El Paso Port Director.

"The inspections CBP officers perform are thorough yet the results of their efforts indicate a continuing need for vigilance at the border."

While anti-terrorism is the primary mission of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the inspection process at the ports of entry associated with this mission results in impressive numbers of enforcement actions in all categories.



— Photos courtesy CBP/Roger Maier

BUSTED — Max, a drug sniffing dog, alerted officers to a problem with this 1992 Dodge Grand Caravan driven by 37-year-old Martha Nelida Salcido Peña of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Her two children were in the van with her.



GOING TO WORK — An unidentified agent rips in to the floorboard of the van revealing the illegal drugs.



EXPOSED — CBP officers found a total of 153 marijuana-filled bundles in the compartment. The total weight of the seized marijuana was 311 pounds. Agents gave custody of the children to a relative.

Longoria

From Page 1

Board of Trustees, "I'm really appreciative of the support that the Board has given me over the years because it made my job a lot easier," Longoria said. It is that community support and commitment to the success of the students that Longoria states he will miss the most. "The quality and char-

acter of the community really kept me there. You know a lot of people show appreciation for educators but the community here is really appreciative of teachers and the buildings, the growth demonstrate the commitment of an active board," Longoria added.

Longoria's decision to retire was driven by a personal goal to retire by the age of 50 and a professional goal of achieving a quality standard in his division. "I felt the timing was right

and the department was moving in a positive direction. All the right people were in place," Longoria said.

For the meantime, Longoria is keeping his schedule wide open. He plans to just relax and enjoy life with his family and maybe do a little bit of traveling. However, he doesn't dismiss the possibility of returning to education in the future. "I will miss working with great colleagues. But deep in my heart there is still a soft spot for students," Longoria added.

Do you know the signs?

El Paso heat already taking toll on people

By Lt. Mario E. Hernandez
Special to the Courier

El Paso Fire Department emergency crews responded to 5 heat related emergencies during the first three days of June. Four males, ages 8, 35, 38, and 50 years old and one female, age 13, were all treated for heat emergencies and all occurred in different areas of the city. All of the patients displayed heat related symptoms such as cool, moist skin, heavy sweating, headache, nausea, dizziness and vomiting.

Fire officials are urging the public to use caution when conducting outdoor activities and offer this helpful information on heat emergencies. There are three types of heat emergencies you should be concerned about.

Heat Stroke

This is the most serious type of heat emergency. It is *life-threatening* and requires *immediate* and *aggressive* treatment!

Heat stroke occurs when the body's heat regulating mechanism fails. The body temperature rises so high that brain damage and death may result unless the body is cooled quickly.

Signs and symptoms: The victim's skin is *hot, red and usually dry*. Pupils are very small. The body temperature is *very high*, sometimes as high as 105 degrees.

First aid: Remember, Heat Stroke is a life-threatening emergency and requires prompt action! Summon professional help. Get the victim into a cool place.

Cool the victim as quickly as possible in any manner possible. Place the victim in a bathtub of cool water, wrap in wet sheets, and place in an air-conditioned room.

Do not give victim anything by mouth. Treat for shock.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is less dangerous than heat stroke. It is caused

by fluid loss, which in turn causes blood flow to decrease in vital organs, resulting in a form of shock.

Signs and symptoms: *Cool, pale and moist* skin, heavy sweating, dilated pupils (wide), headache, nausea, dizziness and vomiting. Body temperature will be near normal.

First aid: Get the victim out of the heat and into a cool place. Place in the shock position, lying on the back with feet raised. Remove or loosen clothing. Cool by fanning or applying cold packs or wet towels or sheets. If conscious, give water to drink every 15 minutes.

Important: While heat exhaustion is not a life-threatening emer-

gency like heat stroke, it can progress to heat stroke if left untreated.

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps are muscular pain and spasms due to heavy exertion. They usually involve the abdominal muscles or legs. It is generally thought this condition is caused by loss of water and salt through sweating.

First aid: Get victim to a cool place. If they can tolerate it, give one-half glass of water every 15 minutes. Heat cramps can usually be avoided by increasing fluid intake when active in hot weather.

Socorro Independent School District 2007 Summer Lunch Program

Socorro Independent School District sets up its Summer Lunch Program starting on May 29, 2007 and runs until June 29, 2007. The program offers free meals to anyone 18 and under. Adult meals will be available for \$3. Lunch is served between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Participating schools are subject to discontinue due to low participation. For more information please call Child Nutrition Services at 937-0765 or for a site listing, please log onto www.sisd.net.

The following sites have been selected as Summer Food Service sites for May 29 - June 29, 2007:

- Col. John O. Ensor Middle 13600 Ryder Wood
- O'Shea Keleher Elementary 1800 Leroy Bonse Dr.
- Vista Del Sol Elementary 11851 Vista Del Sol Dr.
- Benito Martinez Elementary 2640 Robert Wynn St.
- Jane A. Hambric School 3535 Nolan Richardson
- Ernesto Serna School 11471 Alameda Ave.
- Lujan-Chavez Elementary 2200 Sun Country
- Loma Verde Elementary 12150 Ted Houghton
- Paso Del Norte School 12300 Tierra Este
- Sgt. Roberto Ituarte Elementary 12860 Tierra Sonora
- Socorro High School 10150 Alameda Ave.
- Sparks Community
- Centro Socorro Ramirez 106 Peyton Rd.

The following sites have been selected as Summer Food Service sites for June 4 - June 29, 2007:

- Montwood High School 12000 Montwood Dr.
- Aericas High School 12101 Pellicano Dr.
- El Dorado High School 12401 Edgemere Blvd.
- Salvador H. Sanchez
- Middle School 321 N Rio Vista Road
- Campestre Elementary 11399 Socorro Rd.
- Escontrias Elementary 205 Buford Rd.
- Sierra Vista Elementary 1501 Bob Hope Dr.
- Desert Wind Elementary 1100 Colonia De Paz Dr.
- Bill Sybert School 11530 Edgemere Blvd.

WTCC: 06/07/07

Kobe's love-hate relationship with Lakers is a disaster

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

I love the Lakers — I love them not — love the Lakers — love them not — love the Lakers — love them not ...

What will Kobe Bryant do next season when it comes to his love-hate relationship with the Los Angeles Lakers?

Last week the ball-hogging Bryant elbowed his way into the national airwaves to announce to the world that he wanted to be traded from the Lakers. Then he appeared on another radio station later that same day and said he didn't want to go anywhere, the Lakers were his team.

Then even later that same day, he reiterated that he wanted to be traded.

Wow, talk about your flip-flopping. Even John Kerry must be envious.

Since Kobe's little tirade, everybody and their gramps has tried to figure out what kind of trade the Lakers could pull off for the immature superstar.

Talk has been about him going to the Chi-

cago Bulls or the Los Angeles Clippers. But what could the Lakers get in return?

No doubt, they would have to get at least two quality players and a high draft choice.

But what would another team get by trading for Kobe? They'd be stuck with a high-priced malcontent who would rather keep the ball in his hands and go up against three defenders than hit an open teammate.

What would the Lakers get by unloading him? They'd get some quality young players and some piece of mind.

How would you like to be Lakers owner Jerry Buss, or Lakers GM Mitch Kupchak, or coach Phil Jackson or any of Kobe's teammates? By calling for an overhaul of the organization, he's basically said that he is the king of all things basketball and they are all incompetent.

If the Lakers were smart they would look at the New York Knicks (Stephon Marbury), the Minnesota Timberwolves (Kevin Garnett), the Boston Celtics (Paul Pierce) and any other NBA teams that have put all their eggs into one basket and realize that this is a recipe for disaster.

With all the pouting, the huffing and puff-

ing, all the childish antics, you know that Kobe is going to get exactly what he wants — and that, in a nutshell, is what is wrong with professional sports today.

Those wacky inmates have the key to the arena.

Especially Kobe, who I'm sure we'll see back in Lakers uniform next season — or we won't — or we will — won't — will — or ...

Athletes behavin' badly

If any of you out there had any perceptions that college athletes were getting any smarter, this may bring you back to Earth.

An off-duty police officer in Tennessee notified on-duty officers that a guy in another vehicle was waving a weapon at him on the interstate.

After officers stopped University of Tennessee cornerback Marsalous Johnson, they found a toy Uzi submachine gun under his passenger seat.

I don't know what makes a supposedly grown man carry a toy machine gun in his car, but lacking the intelligence not to wave it around at other traffic has got me even more at

a loss.

The move Johnson made rates awfully high on the stupid-scale, but the decision by the jury in his trial rated even higher.

A Tennessee jury found Johnson not guilty of simple assault. No doubt they were all season-ticket holders.

Even more bizarre and alarming were the all-too-typical comments of Tennessee's bonehead coach Phil Fulmer after the trial. "I am really happy for Marsalous and his family. They have been through a lot of heartache and emotion through all of this."

Poor, poor Marsalous Johnson. I guess he's the real victim here. It's all those other motorists who can't take a joke that are the real villains.

Oh, by the way, Johnson is expected to start at cornerback at Tennessee this season. But, of course, coach Fulmer never had that in mind when so loyally backed his player.

Hey, maybe coach Fulmer can move Johnson to quarterback whenever his team is facing a third-and-long situation. Naturally, he'd have to put Johnson in the shotgun formation.

Exercise is a good thing but approach with caution

By Rebecca Ewing
Special to the Courier

Andre Agassi may be a professional athlete in great physical shape, but he's probably got some of the same soreness and stiffness that you do. If you're active like so many of

today's adults, you've probably had a few twinges that spring up unexpectedly. To learn how to prevent injuries and what to do if you are hurt, order the free Sports Injuries package from the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Federal Citizen Information Center.

Whether you've always been active or just recently decided to exercise more, congratulations! Along with eating right, exercising on a regular basis can do wonders for many aspects of your health. But you need to treat your body a little better than you did when you were in your teens or twenties. The tendons and ligaments around your joints become less stretchy with age, so warming up and cooling down properly is important. Accepting your body's limits can also prevent needless injuries. You may not be in the same shape you were 10 or 20 years ago, but if you follow the prevention tips in this package and increase your activity levels gradually, you'll have a better chance of exercising without getting injured.

If you do get hurt, don't ignore the injury. You can take care of minor pain

at home using the RICE method — rest, ice, compression, and elevation. But if the pain persists or there's a lot of swelling, see a doctor. A small fracture or torn ligament left untreated could quickly become a chronic source of pain that is difficult to treat. Use the booklets in this package to learn more about the injuries you should watch out for, including shoulder problems. And find out what treatments are available, whether you need a cast for a broken bone or joint replacement surgery for your arthritic knee.

Learn how to avoid injuries and recover the right way if you do get hurt by ordering the Sports Injuries package. There are three easy ways to get your free publications:

- Send your name and address to Sports Injuries, Pueblo, CO 81009.
- Visit www.pueblo.gsa.gov/rc/n55sportsinjuries.htm to place your order online. (Read or print these and hundreds of other Federal publications for free.)

• Call toll-free 1 (888) 878-3256, weekdays 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time and ask for the Sports Injuries package.

Get even more information and take advantage of online government services resources at www.FirstGov.gov and www.Espanol.gov.

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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:

THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 2007

SCIENCE CURRICULUM AND MATERIALS
CSP NO. 199-0614-7118
ACCEPTED UNTIL 9:00 A.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 be-

tween 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and on the Socorro ISD website: www.sisd.net. WTCC-06/07/07

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:

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 2007

BAKERY PRODUCTS
CSP NO. 199-0613-7112
ACCEPTED UNTIL 2:00 P.M.

DAIRY PRODUCTS
CSP NO. 199-0613-7114
ACCEPTED UNTIL 2:00 P.M.

MEXICAN FOOD PRODUCTS
CSP NO. 199-0613-7115
ACCEPTED UNTIL 3:00 P.M.

BEVERAGE AND SNACKS
CSP NO. 199-0613-7113
ACCEPTED UNTIL 3:30 P.M.

FULL LINE FOOD SERVICE
CSP NO. 199-0613-7111
ACCEPTED UNTIL 4:00 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-06/07/07

PUBLIC NOTICE
El Paso Collaborative for Community & Economic Development

The El Paso Collaborative for Community and Economic Development announces the availability of its proposed Statement of Activities for a Housing Preservation grant application to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The document is available at 1359 Lomaland, Room 516, between the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday. The public is invited to review the document and submit comments through June 18, 2007.

El Paso Collaborative is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

Delia Chavez
Executive Director

WTCC-6/7/07

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REAL ESTATE

For Sale: Former Justice Court Building, 12708 Alameda Clint, TX. Call Frank Macias, 851-2007/588-0968.

SELF-HELP

Persons who have a problem with alcohol are offered a free source of help locally. Alcoholics

Anonymous - call 562-4081 for information.

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10'X20' space for rent. \$65/month. 852-9371, Horizon Self Storage.

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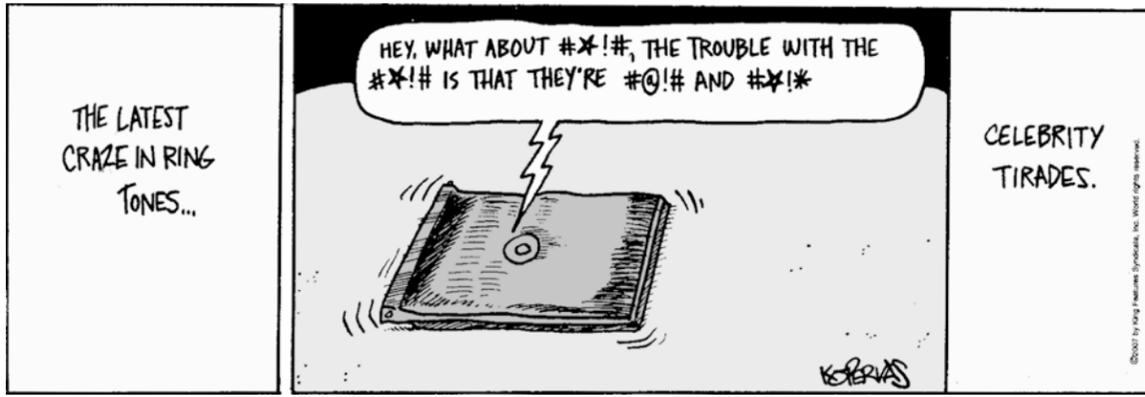
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OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



It takes money to be a nudist

By Don Flood

Least surprising headline of the week: "Nudists Seek Younger Following."

No. Kidding. It seems the nudist lifestyle is undergoing a transition — and not just because of gravity.

A recent story reported the disturbing news that the average age for members of the Solair Recreation League, a Connecticut nudist camp, is 55.

The membership director — this is true — even expressed the fear the camp would turn into a nude assisted-living facility. Wow.

But here's the odd part. Among the reasons it's hard to attract younger nudists is that nudist camps are becoming "increasingly upscale." One man even referred to the "financial barrier" of joining the nudist lifestyle.

I would have thought fair skin was more of a barrier.

Isn't that the whole point, that along with their clothes, nudists also doff their status in society and live simply?

Sure, nudist camps might spend more on towels and making sure the wooden chairs are splinter-free, but upscale nudity should be a contradiction in terms.

This is something Congress needs to look into, though hopefully without turning it into a fact-finding mission or the first nude Congressional hearings.

Also on the clothes/no clothes news front is the real live report of a Washington, D.C., judge who is suing his dry cleaners for losing his pants. The amount sought: \$67 million.

But what really impressed me was not the monetary sum — I have an old pair of sweats I value conservatively at \$35 million — but the number of witnesses — 63!

I don't think the Enron trial had that many, though admittedly that case did not involve a man's most cherished pair of pair of pants.

Here's how the trial might go: **LAWYER:** How long have you been acquainted with the plaintiff and his pants?

WITNESS: I roomed with the plaintiff in college. Some time after law school, he called and said he wanted me to meet his new love.

LAWYER: You are referring to his wife?

WITNESS: No, I am referring to his pants. He was very excited.

LAWYER: Did you and the plaintiff ever discuss the value of those pants?

WITNESS: Yes, quite often. Those pants were the apple of his eye.

LAWYER: Did he ever mention a figure?

WITNESS: Yes, many times. I can remember him quite specifically saying those pants were worth at least \$67 million to him.

LAWYER: Did you find that expensive?

WITNESS: Quite the contrary. I think \$67 million is a rather nominal amount for those pants. They were a truly extraordinary pair of pants. If you would permit me to expand...

LAWYER: Of course.

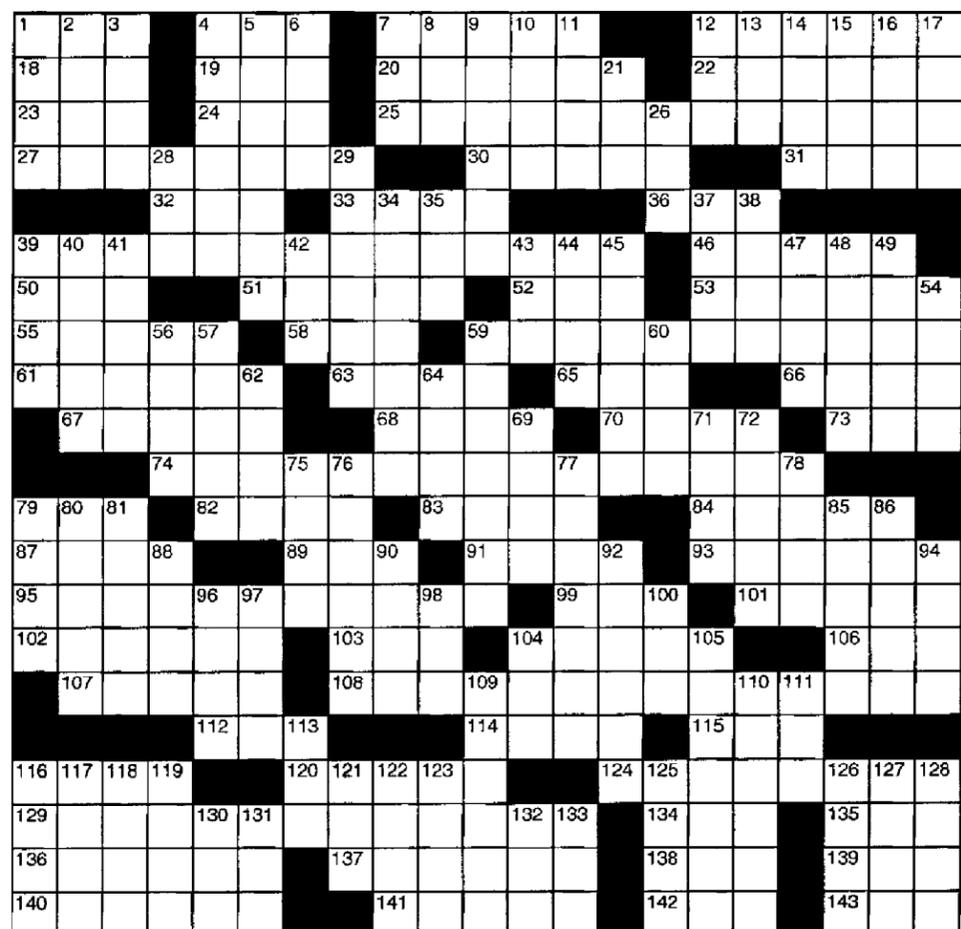
WITNESS: ... then I would say they may well have been the Greatest Pair of Pants in History! I dare say they will turn up some day on the black market for rare pants, and some collector will pay \$150 million for them and count himself a lucky man.

But even with 63 witnesses he might wind up losing, in which I imagine he'll join an upscale nudist camp.

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King Super Crossword

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| BELONGINGS | 65 Word with stop or bull | 129 Saul Bellow novel | 34 "ChiPs" star | 88 Impact sound |
| ACROSS | 66 Bodybuilder's pride | 134 Pirate's quaff | 35 Cow or sow | 90 Comice kin |
| 1 Use a calculator | 67 Musty | 135 Hubbub | 37 Norwegian saint | 92 Symbol |
| 4 Cartographer's creation | 68 Unlikely to enthral | 136 Estefan or Estevez | 38 Prima donna | 94 Exemplar of redness |
| 7 Actress Sonia | 70 Hoopster | 137 Painted poorly | 39 Actress Nielsen | 96 Puppy protests |
| 12 " _ Dancing" (78 smash) | Archibald | 138 Slangy suffix | 40 Fishhook parts | 97 _ gin fizz |
| 18 Payable | 73 Pinky or Peggy | 139 Brink | 41 Sluggish | 98 Presidential monogram |
| 19 Bristol brew | 74 Massachusetts resort | 140 Just | 42 Milne creature | 100 Placekicker's prop |
| 20 Abuse | 79 Comrade | 141 Philharmonic section | 43 _ roll | 104 Wildebeest |
| 22 Puget Sound city | 82 "Dies _" | 142 Opera's Merriman | 44 Airhead | 105 Blood count? |
| 23 Mimic | 83 Present | 143 Essential | 45 May or Stritch | 109 Exercise the elbow |
| 24 Tub | 84 High spirits | DOWN | 47 Siren | 110 Witch doctor |
| 25 Sarah Miles movie | 87 Profess | 1 Eliot's " _ Bede" | 48 Architect Saarinen | 111 Frankfurter's field |
| 27 Ruehl of "The Fisher King" | 89 University deg. | 2 Con | 49 "La _ Vita" (60 film) | 113 Marry |
| 30 Muldoon's partner | 91 Uncommon | 3 "Bambi" extras | 54 AMEX rival | 116 Noah's eldest |
| 31 Itches | 93 Amulet motif | 4 Experts | 56 Linguist Chomsky | 117 Scottish philosopher |
| 32 Remnant | 95 Everly Brothers hit | 5 Lamp lad | 57 _ Lama | 118 Kuwaiti ruler |
| 33 Southwestern sight | 99 CPR provider | 6 "Our Gang" canine | 59 _ Hill (Civil War site) | 119 Competent |
| 36 Start to snooze | 101 Jenny Lind, for one | 7 "It's freezing!" | 60 Corset part | 121 Part of EST |
| 39 Anne Nichols play | 102 Involve | 8 Bandleader Alvino | 62 Earl - Biggers | 122 Peter or Ivan |
| 46 Existed | 103 City in Kyrgyzstan | 9 Incarnation | 64 Spurt | 123 Malarial fever |
| 50 Japanese | 104 Scoffed at | 10 Marchetti of football | 69 Benito's bread | 125 Rock's _ Butterfly |
| honorific | 106 "Run to Him" singer | 11 In addition | 71 Flat hats | 126 Conifer covering |
| 51 Nick of 130 Down | 107 Conductor's concern | 12 R-V hookup? | 72 Idle and Severeid | 127 Singer Adams |
| 52 Zilch | 108 Liam Neeson film | 13 Crone | 75 After-bath powder | 128 Actress Schneider |
| 53 '90 Barry Levinson film | 112 Make a muumuu | 14 " _ Breaky Heart" (92 hit) | 76 "Gimme five!" and "Aloha!" | 130 "Lorenzo's _" (92 film) |
| 55 Style | 114 Ruminate | 15 Make too much of | 77 Mythological swimmers | 131 Powell co-star |
| 58 " _ the fields we go..." | 115 "The truth at last!" | 16 Portent | 78 Sketch | 132 Nourished |
| 59 Vicki Lawrence sitcom | 116 New York stadium | 17 Fights | 79 Wear out the carpet | 133 QB's stats |
| 61 Overseas | 120 Cornerstone abbr. | 21 "Kookie" Byrnes | 80 _ garde | |
| 63 Icelandic epic | 124 "David Copperfield" character | 26 Writer Rand | 81 Lenya or Lehmann | |
| | | 28 Artichoke heart? | 85 Roman fountain | |
| | | 29 Shows one's teeth | 86 Underworld | |



Answer Page 6

Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Q: Now that my own kids are grown, I plan to start working full time as a babysitter. Can I get Social Security coverage for work in another person's household?

A: Yes. If you are a household worker, your wages are covered under Social Security as long as you earn \$1,500 or more in a calendar year (including cash for transportation expenses) unless you were under age 18 during any part of the year and household work is not your main job. Household workers include

babysitters, maids, cooks, laundry workers, butlers, gardeners, chauffeurs, people who do housecleaning or repair work or anyone employed in or around someone else's home. To learn more, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call us toll-free at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778)

Q: I lost my husband thirty-one years ago. He was twenty-nine years of age at the time. I am going to be fifty-nine years of age. I am presently working for a school district as an

Aide. Will I be eligible to receive social security benefits on my deceased husband's record at the age of 60?

A: A surviving spouse is eligible to receive social security benefits on a deceased spouse's record as early as 60 years of age provided the deceased number holder earned the required credits of coverage. If the surviving spouse is still working, they would be subject to the social security retirement test. If a person earns over the allowable amount of \$12,960 a year, their benefits would be subject to adjustment. In your situation, there's a second provision of the law which needs to be addressed, Government Pension Offset; which states

that if a spouse is entitled to a government pension from employment not covered under social security, 2/3 of the amount of the gross pension will be offset against any possible benefits you are eligible to receive on your deceased spouse's social security record. There is an exemption to this provision which states that if your position is covered under both Social Security and Teachers Retirement System during the last 5 years of your employment, your pension would not be offset against your social security surviving spouse's benefits. The provision changed in July 2004 and there are other factors that need to be considered in determining if you are exempted from the 5-

year requirement. To learn more about Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset, visit our [website at www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), or call us toll-free at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

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.

What's up, doc? By Albert Balesh, M.D.

House of cards

We build them up meticulously, with tender loving care, only to watch them come tumbling down just when we are convinced of their firm foundation and stable armament, and least expect it. We want to believe in our medical institutions. We want to believe in their quality of care. Wishful thinking may abound here, however, as horror stories continue to mount and testimony comes out of the closet. The predomi-

nant question remains unanswered. Are our hospitals safe?

The cards have been dealt. Read them and weep. Hospital-acquired infections amount to 2 million each year, with one in 20 hospitalized patients falling victim. With more and more bacteria becoming resistant to our dwindling arsenal of antibiotics, it comes as no surprise that hospital infections are the eighth-leading cause of death in the U.S. The numbers are staggering. Every year

90,000 Americans die of infections contracted during hospital stays for other causes. Those who manage to dodge the infectious bullet are plain fortunate. Those who take a "flesh wound" curse the hospital, their caregivers, and they day they were born, as weeks of intravenous antibiotics and major surgery to remove necrotic tissue are their compensation for attempting to keep their organism in tiptop shape in the first place.

We as a society must ask ourselves the questions, do we feel lucky? Are hospital-acquired infections inevitable? Does pro-action really work?

While the answers to our queries may be sobering, they will nonetheless reap rewards in the future. Currently, it has been estimated that more than 60 percent of staphylococcal germs are resistant to antibiotics. With those cards stacked against us, we must seek to prevent rather than treat infections. To do that, patient education and caregiver attention to detail must become first and foremost, as is usually the case. Hands must be washed on a regular and repetitive basis (as bacteria are largely spread through touch), blood pressure cuffs and other instruments must be cleaned for every patient, an-

tibiotics must be administered before surgery, and overuse of catheters and intravenous lines must become a "no-no." What good are latex gloves, if the hands they house are dirty! And let's not forget our doctors' neckties. In a recent study conducted on those silk status symbols, 20 of 43 neckties tested harbored bacteria and other creepy crawlers in them. While demanding that your physician remove his necktie and wash his hands might be an exaggeration, it might not be such a bad idea, after all, before physical examination or instrumentation.

Hospital infections, when care trumps lip service, should be no more common in the old and immuno-compromised than in average patients on the hospital ward. Common sense should reign. Doorknobs, curtains, cabinets, blood pressure cuffs, writing implements, charts, and other extraneous paraphernalia should not be touched once our fearless men and women in white have scrubbed or gloved. Now, that might sound redundant and go without saying, but our modern-day reliance on antibiotics has clouded good old conventional wisdom.

Currently, hospital infection rates in the U.S. hover around a wound infection for one of every 24 surgical patients, and a urinary tract infection for up to 25 percent of patients requiring a catheter for a week or longer. While those are national averages, we can certainly do better. Focused infection prevention will not only save lives, but will pay dividends of \$1.2 million or more to an average hospital over a two-year period. With the average charge for an infection case reaching \$185,260, compared with \$31,389 for a non-infection case, the time has come to "debug" the health care system before the roof comes down and costs become unsustainable.

Now that you know the problem, what can you, the health care consumer, do? Or are you just a small fish in an underworld of card sharks? Some simple rules to follow will call their bluffs. Wash your hands frequently, and ask your caregivers to wash theirs. Sometimes easier said than done! Lose weight and stop smoking before surgery to cut down on the chances of infection. Make sure your physician prescribes an antibiotic before surgery, and don't allow the doctor to shave the surgical site. Hair clippers are less infection-provoking than razors. If your friends are ill, tell them to stay away from the hospital. Finally, when IVs and catheters become loose, call for help.

If all else fails, there is always Russian roulette.

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