

NEWSBRIEFS

Pick it up

Horizon City and the Village of Vinton, in conjunction with Don't Mess With Texas, will both be holding a trash-off this week. The towns are still seeking more volunteers. Horizon will clean up on both Friday, April 4 and Saturday, April 5. Horizon volunteers can call 852-1046 for times and locations. There will be a Volunteer Appreciation Pizza Party on Saturday around 2:00 p.m. Vinton will pick up on Saturday, April 5 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Vinton volunteers can contact Jessica Garza or Rachel Llovet at 886-5104 to find out how to participate. For more information on the Don't Mess with Texas Trash-Off, visit their website at www.ktb.org. The annual Trash-Off is now in its 22nd year.

Clint pets go online

Second Chance Rescue Farm, Clint, recently has joined other animal welfare organizations in the area who list their homeless pets on Petfinder.com, the oldest and largest database of adoptable animals on the Internet. The site currently has about 250,000 homeless pets listed, and it is updated continuously. More than 11,500 animal welfare organizations in the U.S., Canada, and beyond post their pets on Petfinder.com. The adoptable pets at Second Chance Rescue Farm can be viewed at <http://www.petfinder.com/shelters/TX1165>. Once visitors to the site find a pet they are interested in, they contact the organization where the pet is housed. Each animal placement group has its own policies and handles its own adoptions. Petfinder.com is an online database of pets that need homes in over 11,500 animal placement organizations in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. The site has facilitated over 11 million adoptions in the 11 years since it launched. Thanks to its sponsors, Petfinder.com is free to both visitors and to its animal placement organization members.

Food bank grant

West Texas Food Bank received \$20,000 from the Charity Projects Entertainment Fund to combat child hunger in El Paso Colonias. The grant will be used for the "Para Los Niños De Las Colonias" initiative. The initiative will consist of providing over 600 (40 lbs) emergency boxes to children of El Paso Colonias on a monthly basis for 6 months. The first distribution will be held on Wednesday, April 9 at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. at the El Paso County Self-Help Center and Alianza para el Desarrollo Comunitario. In El Paso, the West Texas Food Bank provides food to more than 40,000 people living at risk of hunger. "This grant will help WTFB and other food banks across the country continue to ensure that these children do not go to bed hungry or wonder where their

See BRIEFS, Page 4

One thing about the school of experience is that it will repeat the lesson if you flunk it the first time.

— Quips & Quotes

Paso del Norte teaches students to be prepared

Backpacks help keep students occupied during emergencies

By Irma Flores
Special to the Courier

Among all the backpacks in Lynda Melendez' classroom there is one that will help her and her students through any emergency. Developed by the Paso Del Norte school safety committee, each of the school's 85 classrooms is equipped with a red backpack that will serve students and teachers during fire drills or any other evacuation situation. Filled with crayons, pencils and activity books to keep students occupied, the backpacks also hold first aid kits and a class roster.

"We used it during the last fire drill. In case of a real emergency, our students know its there and they are familiar with the items inside," said Melendez, a second grade teacher at Paso Del Norte.

"This project helps prepare our students and our teachers in case of any emergency. The students are being brought into the process and learning to be responsible for one another," said SISD Superintendent Dr. Sylvia P. Atkinson.

Paso Del Norte Assistant Principal Pat Bonilla has worked on this project for two years and was supported by teachers, administrators and the community.

"We had parents go out to businesses ask-



— Photo by Stacy Kendrick/Socorro ISD

THEY'RE PREPARED — Paso Del Norte second graders Bianca Hereda and Matthew Tristan with teacher Lynda Melendez show off some of the contents of their emergency backpack.

ing for the items we needed," said Bonilla. "We would like to thank Sports World for the donation of backpacks that will have first aid kits, flashlights, gloves, masks and more. Our teachers are happy to have these backpacks ready to go."

Bonilla explained all the teachers know to take the backpacks with them in case of bus evacuations, fire and Code Blue drills. The

school is still looking for items such as masks, flashlights, batteries, and 80 water bottles.

"The school has done a wonderful job of getting these backpacks and filling them with items teachers and students would need. Administrators have recognized the need to be ready to respond to future needs at any given time," said SISD Board President Charles E. Garcia.

Clint ISD trumpet player one of Texas' best

By Laura Cade
Special to the Courier

Ernie Villalobos, a senior at Mountain View High School, has certainly proven himself to be one of the best high school trumpet musicians in Texas. Earlier in the school year, Villalobos earned the First Chair trumpet position in the All-Region Band for 4A and 5A schools. This allowed him to advance to area 5A competition where he also earned the coveted first chair seat and qualified for the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) All-state competition in February.

During the TMEA All-State competition Villalobos auditioned once again for seat position. He competed in San Antonio among the finest trumpet players in the state for a spot on one of the All-State Concert Bands or Orchestras. Most high school musicians strive to gain a spot on the All-State Symphony Orchestra. Villalobos earned one of these prestigious spots. He was among seven of the top trumpet players in the state. He was one of only four El Paso area high school musicians to make the 137 member Orchestra.

With only three days to prepare, Villalobos and his fellow All-State Symphony Orchestra members had the privilege of performing under the direction of Yoichi Udagawa for the 2008 TMEA Convention. Udagawa, music director and conductor of three symphony orchestras, is on the faculty of the Boston Con-



— Photo courtesy Clint ISD

TOP TRUMPET — Ernie Villalobos says practice is the key to his musical success.

servatory where he teaches conducting. In addition, he is the cover conductor for the Boston Pops Orchestra.

"Practice, practice, practice," said Villalobos when asked about his success thus far. Along with music instruction at Mountain View High School, he also takes private lessons. His goal for now is to pursue a doctorate in Music Education. Villalobos would like to become a music teacher.



— Photo courtesy Milken Family Foundation

Cande Barragan, a teacher at El Dorado High School in Socorro ISD, received \$25,000 from Milken Family Foundation Chairman Lowell Milken at the 2008 Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference in Los Angeles, California, on March 30, 2008. Barragan among 75 outstanding educators from across the nation who were presented with a Milken Educator Award check of \$25,000 during a spectacular gala hailed as the "Oscars of Teaching" by Teacher Magazine.

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

AD DEADLINE:
 Monday 4 p.m. for Thursday publication.

CLASSIFIED RATES
 \$5 for 15 words, \$10 for 35 words. Ad must be in writing and pre-paid. The Courier reserves the right not to print classified advertising it considers inappropriate.

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

MAIL:
 15344 Werling Ct.
 Horizon City, TX 79928

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Homesteader
 Est. 1973
News, Inc.



Member Texas Community Newspaper Association



Por la Gente By State Rep. Chente Quintanilla

Seek house help early

Hola, mi gente. Within the next ten years, east El Paso county will have thousands of new houses built in areas that today are nothing more than deserts. And of course, as these new houses are built, new families will move in to start their family homes. It is exciting to think about the future in that area.

Over the past ten years, that same process created thousands of family homes in once desolate areas. Our housing market facilitated the mortgaging of those homes so that young families could start their own journey toward the American dream. Unfortunately for too many, that dream has resulted in foreclosure, bankruptcy or premature sale of the home that hasn't even been lived in five years. Throughout the new neighborhoods close to Loop 375, for sale signs have sprung up at locations that were barely built.

As we go forward into the future, I hope that realtors, appraisers, and

mortgage companies take a serious look at what has happened. The quick and easy sale of homes in a market where property values were shooting upward led to a market that is barely alive; more alive here in El Paso than in other communities.

The Mortgage Bankers Association reports that nationwide one out every two hundred homes will be foreclosed upon. That is a terrible cancer on the vitality of our communities and nation. But worst of all, it is a dagger in the hearts of good American families.

It is difficult for many El Pasoans to keep their finances current. They have to deal with rising taxes, rising gas prices, residual price increases because of the gas prices, and, in the worst cases, increasing mortgage payments due to variable mortgage rates.

Too many families face these pressures by thinking they can handle them. Unfortunately, juggling the books only makes matters worse. Then comes the emotional stress and the stress on the familial unit. Even the children understand that the

household is in trouble. Many students attend school daily with the dreaded thought that tonight may be their last night in their home. That is a terrible burden.

The best way to handle this situation is to seek help at the earliest possible moment. Like a cancer, the earlier the diagnosis and treatment, the better chance there is for a cure.

My chief of staff attended a press conference on March 26 given by the Department of Housing and Community Affairs. The purpose was to make the citizens of El Paso aware of the Foreclosure Prevention Task Force; an entity created by the public and private sector to help families get through a financial crisis.

If you, or people you know, are at the beginning of difficulties that may result in home foreclosure, contact my office at 859-3111 and we will direct you to the task force for assistance.

Let us all work together to save our homes.

Gracias, mi gente, and I remain your friend and public servant, Chente for la gente.



Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes

World Tuberculosis Day

On March 18, I had the opportunity to participate with other local health leaders in an important discussion regarding tuberculosis awareness. This year's panel was hosted by La Fe Health Clinic Technology Center in honor of the "World TB Day" campaign. The forum was titled "Let's Talk About Tuberculosis: TB does not know borders" and included health officials from Juarez, New Mexico, and El Paso.

This year's World TB Day was about celebrating the lives and stories of people affected by TB: women, men and children; nurses; doctors; researchers; community workers — anyone who has contributed toward the global and local fight against TB.

I was proud to be part of this national effort to build more awareness of this prevalent disease. With El Paso one of the largest border cities in the nation, it is more susceptible to such an airborne disease and needs to remain to be at the forefront of

building awareness.

Over one-third of the world's population has been exposed to TB at one time or another and new infections occur at a rate of one per second. Tuberculosis is a treatable disease and that's why it is up to us to make people aware of the symptoms.

I strongly encourage El Pasoans to be a part of the nationwide Stop TB campaign and inform themselves and others on how this disease directly affects them.

You can inform yourself about TB prevention awareness by going to the following website: www.stoptb.org.

Economic Stimulus Package

I was pleased to visit the Hilos De Plata Senior Center on March 19. I had the opportunity to talk to 100 seniors about the upcoming 2008 economic stimulus package passed by Congress in early February 2008.

I had a candid conversation about the stimulus package and what it means for them as senior citizens. I also warned them about the possibility of identity theft during tax season so that they can be vigilant about who helps them with their tax filing prepa-

ration. The IRS has identified the existence of phone scams pushing the rebates, e-mails offering early refunds, and e-mails notifying recipients they are being audited. All phone calls and e-mails requesting personal account information over the phone on behalf of the IRS should be verified first before releasing any of your information.

I expressed the importance of filing cautiously so that they may receive their rebate. To receive a payment, taxpayers must have a valid Social Security number, \$3,000 of income and file a 2007 federal tax return. The IRS will take care of the rest. Eligible people will receive up to \$600 (\$1,200 for married couples), and parents will receive an additional \$300 for each eligible child younger than 17. Millions of retirees, disabled veterans and low-wage workers who usually are exempt from filing a tax return must do so this year in order to receive a stimulus payment.

Again, if El Pasoans have any questions I urge you to call my office at (915) 534-4400 or visit the IRS website at www.irs.gov.

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TMA survey shows Medicare cut will force Texas physicians to limit patients

By Brent Annear
Special to the Courier

If the planned 10.5-percent Medicare cut to physician payments occurs on July 1, physicians will be forced to limit the number of Medicare patients they treat, the Texas Medical Association (TMA) announced today in Houston. TMA unveiled this and other sobering results of a new physician-member survey at Senior's Place, a senior citizen activity center. Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) explained how his new legislation, Ensuring the Future Workforce of Physicians Act of 2008 (S 2729) would stop the cut and reverse this dangerous trend.

ists, who are on the front lines providing primary care to patients on Medicare, the situation is even bleaker. More than 45 percent say they have cut back on new Medicare patients in the past three years.

- Texas physicians will not refuse their current Medicare patients. Nearly 70 percent say that is something they will not do.
- But, more than 45 percent are considering accepting no new Medicare patients.
- Charity care may be an early casualty of the Medicare funding crisis. One-fourth of physicians say they already have reduced the amount of charity care they give. An additional 17 percent say they will make that change. Looking to the future, another 28 percent say they are considering reductions in charity care.

Senator Cornyn's bill, which is receiving strong support from TMA, repairs the flawed formula Congress uses to calculate physician reimbursements, and saves seniors' health care. And, not a moment too soon, physicians say.

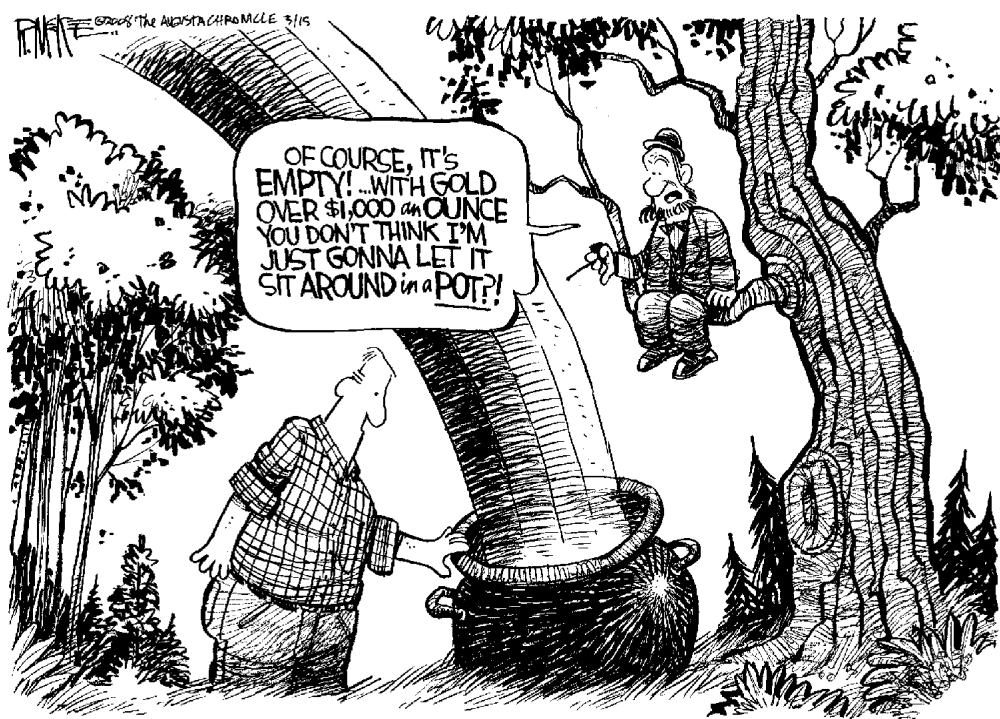
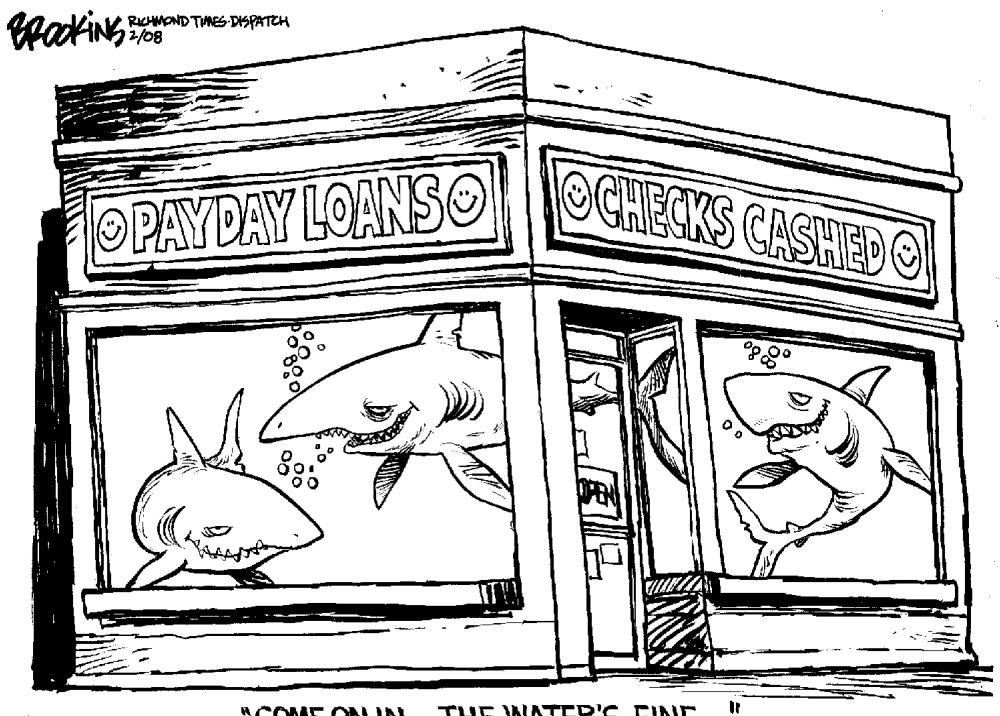
"With no real increase in Medicare payments to physicians in five years, and with constant drama and uncertainty over possible cuts in those payments, we're out on the edge of the cliff," noted Dr. Garcia, a Houston cardiologist. "And the fall will be a steep and painful one."

"I wish I could report to you that all is well, that one thing Medicare recipients don't have to worry about is finding a physician to care for them," A. Tomas Garcia, MD, member of TMA's Board of Trustees and president of the Harris County Medical Society, said. "But that is not the case."

While physicians face annual cuts, the other key Medicare providers — hospitals, nursing homes, pharmaceutical companies — receive annual cost-of-living increases because their pay is calculated differently from physicians' reimbursements. Physicians received between zero- and two-percent increases over the last four years, and they face significant cuts in 2008. But Senator Cornyn's bill reverses that, fixing the flawed physician reimbursement formula, called the Sustainable Growth Rate formula. TMA physicians urge Congress to support Senator Cornyn's new legislation to reverse the dangerous trend so that Medicare-covered patients are not left without physicians to care for them.

Last week's TMA physician survey shows these sobering results:

- The percentage of physicians who accept all new Medicare patients has declined to an all-time low of 58.1 percent.
- Nearly one-third of physicians have decided to accept fewer new Medicare patients in the past three years. Only 4 percent are accepting more.
- For internists and family medicine special-





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Eight Socorro ISD schools receive counseling award

By Irma Flores
Special to the Courier

Eight Socorro Independent School District schools were selected as CREST winners for 2007. Counseling teams from Americas High School, El Dorado High School, Bill Sybert School, Ernesto Serna School, John Drugan School, Jane A. Hambric School, Paso del Norte School, and Socorro High School were recognized by the Texas School Counselor Associa-

tion for the work they do in preparing students for the next level. The eight schools are among 15 across Texas selected by the TSCA to receive the CREST, which stands for Counselors Reinforcing Excellence for Students in Texas.

"When people ask, 'what does a school counselor do?' the many things they do would be impossible to list. Counselors help students grow, learn, and excel. Counselors provide a wealth of information on academic, personal and social, and career issues that affect students. A counselor's day is filled with lessons delivered in the classroom, counseling students on personal issues, giving scholarship and college information, and more," said Hilda Lopez, Director of Guidance and Counseling.

CREST is a continuous improvement document that gives a school counseling program an opportunity to demonstrate effective communica-

tion and a commitment to getting results. CREST helps counselors to evaluate their counseling programs, promote their programs to the stakeholders in their districts, demonstrate the effectiveness of their guidance and counseling programs through empirical means, and to implement the Texas and National models for School Counseling Programs.

"Schools receiving CREST awards have demonstrated a commitment in using the school guidance and counseling program to improve the lives and achievement of students in academic, career, and personal areas," said SISD Superintendent Dr. Sylvia P. Atkinson. "We are proud of our counselors. We see their impact on students and on families every day."

"It's gratifying to have our counselors recognized for all their dedication and commitment to our students," said SISD Board President

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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.

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. You are entitled to one postponement of your ARB hearing for any reason, if you are not represented by an agent. You may receive additional postponements if you have reasonable cause. All requests for postponements must be made to the ARB before the date of the hearing.

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 the 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 the 125th day after you receive written notice of taxes due on the property. The ARB will decide whether you were due a notice and if the notice was mailed to you.

Contact the Appraisal District for more information.

Briefs

From Page 1

next meal will come from," said Executive Director Hyta Folsom.

Club fundraiser

The Sun-Up Optimist Club is holding their 5th Annual Fundraiser "Blast from the Past" Dinner & Dance on Saturday, April 26, 2008 in the Signature Showroom, Sunland Park Casino. Doors open at 6 p.m. for the cash bar, with dinner at 6:30 p.m. and the event ending at 11:30 p.m. Music provided by Rhythm Katz featuring Sonny Powell and Master of Ceremonies is Mike Guerrero. The event along with the silent auction proceeds helps to support Sun-Up Optimist Club's local children, education & community programs. Tickets are \$25 per person, in advance. For your tickets, please contact Katherine Montoya at 877-2446 or Al Avila at 584-1996.

In the Navy

Navy Seaman Apprentices Walter Soto-Ruiz and Paul R. Wickenheiser recently completed U.S. Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill. During the eight-week program, Soto-Ruiz and Wickenheiser completed a variety of training which included classroom study and practical instruction on naval customs, first aid, firefighting, water safety and survival, and shipboard and aircraft safety. An emphasis was also placed on physical fitness. Soto-Ruiz is a 2005 graduate of Americas High School. Wickenheiser's parents are Kendra Redden of Socorro and Mark R. Wickenheiser of El Paso.

Red Cross ready

The College of Health Sciences' Department of Health Promotion, in partnership with the American Red Cross El Paso Area Chapter, has created the "Be Red Cross Ready with UTEP Community Outreach Project" to help El Paso

be better prepared for man-made or natural disasters. Made up of 25 students, the project is part of a health promotion course which helps train community health education students. The students will provide emergency and disaster education in underserved communities throughout the region. For more information about the "Be Red Cross Ready" project, visit www.redcross.org/beredcrossready.

Chemistry grant

UTEP chemistry professor Keith Pannell has received a 2008 Special Grant in Chemical Sciences from the Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation. The \$15,000 award will support Pannell's weekly radio show "Science Studio." Pannell is one of 26 special grant award recipients. "Science Studio," which airs on KTEP (88.5 FM) at 7 p.m. on Sundays, brings current science, environmental and health issues to listeners.

Crime Stoppers

Crime Stoppers of El Paso is helping the El Paso Police Department locate an offender responsible for a Burglary Of Business, making this the "Crime of the Week." On Friday, March 7, at 3 a.m., the unidentified suspect arrived at the El Paso Bakery located at 5901 Ybarra. The suspect took a rock and threw it through a window of the business, making entry. The suspect then took money from the business and fled. It is believed that this same suspect is also responsible for other similar burglaries. The suspect is described as an Hispanic male in his 30s or 40s, with a medium build and flat-top style haircut, wearing a light green jacket and shirt, dark pants, white athletic shoes and black gloves. Anyone having information about the identify of this suspect is asked to call Crime Stoppers of El Paso at 566-TIPS (8477) or submit your tip online at www.crimestoppersofelpaso.org. You will remain anonymous and, if your tip leads to an arrest, you may earn a cash reward up to \$1,000.

Americas High School to hold silent auction

Americas High School will be having its 4th Annual Special Education Silent Auction. The Silent Auction will help raise money for Americas Special Education Students to attend the prom. The community is invited to Americas High School (Rotunda) from April 9 to 11 to bid on their favorite items. The Silent Auction is open from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. to view and bid on items. The Auction will end on April 11 at 3:00 p.m.

Some of the items donated to date are:

- Gourmet Dinner for 4 by our Chef Extraordinaire David Dean;
- El Paso Symphony Orchestra — Two Friday Season Tickets (\$300 value);
- UTEP Dinner Theater — Two tickets for April 12, 25th Anniversary with songs from Tim Rice (\$110 value);
- Insights Museum & El Paso Zoo — One-Year Family Memberships;
- Adventure Zone, Bounce U, and Bob O's — Party Packages;
- UTEP Memorabilia;
- Hal Marcus Print;
- Tom Lea book from the Adair Margo Gallery;
- Wet n' Wild Tickets;
- Helen of Troy products;
- Achillies Studio — One 16x20 canvas (up to 20 people, \$410 value);
- Glen Holbrook Photography — Family Session (\$100 value)
- Lowe's — Paint & Garden equipment;
- Cookie Lee Jewelry;
- Gift Certificates from: Shangri La, Bennigan's, Gabriel's, Cheddar's, B.J.'s Restaurant, Olive Garden, Track One Restaurant, Lancer's Club, Pelican's Restaurant, Wal-Mart, Alamo Auto Supply, Turning Point Dance Academy, Daw's Home Furnishings, and Salone Trevizzo;
- Art Pieces from Americas High School students and faculty;
- Floral arrangement — Carol Subia; and
- Black Jack Table donated by Mr. Dominguez and Mr. Gomez.

There will be more items at the auction. If you have any questions or would like to make a donation, please contact Nancy Lujan Hernandez or Elizabeth Placencia at 937-2888.

Award

From Page 4

Charles E. Garcia. "SISD's Guidance and Counseling program continues to provide innovative programs that help each child succeed."

Among the new schools to receive the award are Jane A. Hambric and John Drugan schools. Hambric Counselors Iris Parra, Ronald Reeves, and Karina Cataldi continually bring in diverse groups to introduce students to the variety of services and programs available to them.

"Some of the programs and activities we implement include; parenting classes, mother-daughter meetings,

bullying, conflict resolutions, career day, and school-sponsored Boy Scouts. In addition to offering individual and group counseling, we get them involved with Ft. Bliss," said Reeves.

Drugan Counselors Myra Ortega and Linda Miskei work with more than 700 students at the PreK-8 campus.

"We are very happy and proud of receiving this award to say the least," said Ortega. "Mrs. Miskei and I are able to mesh our ideas together to better serve our students. We both share the same vision for this campus."

CREST looks at the counseling program in 10 areas: Principal's Support, Guidance and Counseling Team, School Climate and Safety,

Student Results, Major Achievements, Measurements, Community Partnerships and Resources, Volunteer Involvement, Focus for Improvement, and Communication. The guidance support team prepares a document that highlights these areas and communicates just what the counseling program is doing to help students succeed. These documents are judged according to pre-set standards of excellence.

This is the third year for El Dorado High School and Socorro High School. This will be the second year for Americas HS, Ernesto Serna K-8, Paso Del Norte K-8, and Bill Sybert K-8 Schools. This is the first year for John Drugan and Jane A. Hambric schools.

PUBLIC NOTICE VILLAGE OF VINTON, TEXAS

FAIR HOUSING STATEMENT

The Village of Vinton hereby declares its support of fair housing practices. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the locality to bring about, through fair, orderly, and lawful procedures, the opportunity of each person to obtain housing without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental handicap, marital status, parenthood, or age.

It is further declared that such policy is established upon the recognition of the inalienable rights of each individual to obtain housing and further, that denial of such rights is detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the locality and constitutes an unjust denial or deprivation of such inalienable rights which is within the power and the proper responsibility of government to prevent.

The locality has a Fair Housing Policy that may be examined and copied by interested groups or individuals during office hours. The month of April has been proclaimed "Fair Housing Month"; copies of the official proclamation are available at the Vinton City Hall between the hours of 8:30 A.M. and 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday.

POLICY STATEMENT ESTABLISHING NONDISCRIMINATION BASED ON HANDICAPPED CONDITIONS

The Village of Vinton announces that it has adopted a policy of nondiscrimination based on handicapped conditions concerning access, participation, and benefit of programs and activities operated or conducted by the locality. This policy is in compliance with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 24 CFR, Part 8, "Non-discrimination Based on Handicap in Federally-Assisted Programs and Activities of HUD," dated June 2, 1988. Interested individuals or groups may obtain copies of this policy statement by calling the City Clerk, who has been assigned to coordinate compliance with this policy and may be contacted at (915) 886-5104.

POLICY STATEMENT ON PROHIBITING THE USE OF EXCESSIVE FORCE BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The Village of Vinton announces that it has adopted a policy prohibiting the use of excessive force by law enforcement personnel within its jurisdiction against an individual engaged in non-violent civil rights demonstrations. This policy is in compliance with Section 519 of Public Law 101-44, 1990, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Act. Copies of this policy statement may be obtained by calling the City Clerk at (915) 886-5104.

COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

In order to comply with the requirements of the Texas Community Development Program (TCDP) and of 10 T.A.C. Section 178.1 and Section 178.2, the locality has citizen complaint procedures intended to provide a timely written response to all complaints made against its proposed or completed TCDP efforts. Responses to complaints will be made within no more than ten (10) working days. A copy of the complaint procedures can be obtained upon request at (915) 886-5104. The established complaint procedures are an element of the local Citizen Participation Plan, and meet the requirements of USHUD Section 504 (24 CFR) concerning nondiscrimination based on handicapped conditions.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT

The Village of Vinton is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer.

Madeleine Praino
Mayor

West Texas County Courier
April 3, 2008

Town of Anthony PUBLIC NOTICE

A PUBLIC HEARING will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 8, 2008 during the Regular Town Council Meeting at Anthony Town Hall, 401 Wildcat Dr., Anthony, Texas. Purpose of the public hearing is to allow any interested person to appear and testify at the hearing regarding the following proposed ordinance(s), second reading:

- 1) Ordinance No. 450. An ordinance adopting a HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX for the Town of Anthony, Texas.

Ordinances are too extensive to print. Ordinances are always available for viewing or copying upon request from the Town Clerk at the above address. Those that are unable to attend may submit their written comments to the Town of Anthony, P.O. Box 1269, Anthony, Texas 79821. Persons in need of assistance to attend are encouraged to contact the Town Clerk at 886-3944.

Myriam P. Uribe
Town Clerk

WTCC: 04-03-08

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Call 852-3235**

Baseball is a warm weather game

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Is it just me or does it seem like the Major League Baseball season starts earlier and earlier each year?

The big leaguers started the season this past week. I thought this was supposed to be a warm-weather game.

Did you see the crowds in New York, Chicago and Detroit? It looked more like they were getting ready to enjoy the Giants, Bears and Lions instead of the Yankees, Cubs and Tigers.

The temperatures were in the 40s and 50s during the day everywhere with overcast skies and chilly breezes. In fact, it snowed about five inches in Minneapolis.

Nice weather if your first name happens to be Frosty.

I keep saying that the baseball season should start in the middle of April and conclude at the end of August. Now they start during the last week in March and finish the World Series in early November.

How can a pitcher get warmed up when his teeth are still chattering? How can a hitter swing the bat when all he can think about is the electric-like jolt he'll get when the bat meets the ball?

Don't get me wrong, I love the game of baseball, and unlike many sports fans, I love to watch it on TV. But let's let the boys of summer display their wares in short-sleeve weather.

Football players hate wearing all those pads in 100-degree heat. Baseball players aren't exactly dressed like they're about to walk onto the frozen tundra at Lambeau Field.

Besides, the song says "buy me some peanuts and cracker jacks," not "buy me some hot chocolate and an electric blanket."

Spring fever

Mike Price and the UTEP Miners opened spring practice this week at the college's practice field.

The Miners have 47 players returning from last season's 4-8 squad but the big news surrounding the team are the new faces among the assistant coaches.

Price will have five new assistants on the sidelines this week with the emphasis on the defensive side of the football.

It's no secret that UTEP hasn't had the strongest defense the last couple years.

Let's put the Miners' defense in perspective. Out of the 119 division-1 schools in the United States, they were rated 117th. You can't get much worse than that.

That's why the Miners have three new defensive coaches. We all know the Miners can score, now they're going to try to do something they did very little of last season — tackle opponents.

UTEP will host the biggest game they've had at the Sun Bowl in years in September. The Texas Longhorns will run out of the Sun Bowl tunnel in the Miners' season opener and the big question is whether the orange and blue can compete with the burnt orange and white.

The Miners return quarterback Trevor Vittatoe, who set a freshman record by throwing for over 3,100 yards and 25 touchdowns. Also back is another freshman from a year ago, wide receiver Jeff Moturi, who caught 65 passes for 691 yards and 13 touchdowns.

Gone though is running back Marcus Thomas. The Miners hope that one of a number of runners will separate himself from the pack.

I don't know if the Miners are going to get clobbered by the Longhorns, or whether UTEP will pull off one of the biggest upsets of the season. But the great thing is that El Pasoans will fill the Sun Bowl in anticipation of the kind of evening only fans at the major colleges usually enjoy.

Spring practice is the Miners' first step toward what could be season to remember. But the team will be introduced to new schemes on both offense and defense.

It'll be like the first day in school for many of the players. Let's hope they're quick learners.

The four best

It's never happened before but all four top seeds have made it to the final four of the NCAA Tournament.

UCLA, North Carolina, Kansas and Memphis will go at it this weekend and the obvious question is what team will prevail?

UCLA will take on Memphis and North Carolina and meet Kansas. Who would I like to see in the title game? There's no doubt about it, I'd love to see North Carolina and Memphis.

I picked UCLA to beat North Carolina in my bracket, but the way the Tar Heels and the Tigers have looked so far, how can I choose any other matchup.

Who do I now predict will win? The champion will be Conference USA's Memphis of course.

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 SAAR BARRIS ASA ADELE
 HPLOVECRRAFT VSNATIPAU
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 ITALY ECO TELSTAR
 EPIC LEE SKIP LATH
 TEL SAGAS RAE SARAH
 CSLEWIS HGWELLS SEGAL
 HOYLE ANA MIA HEAVY
 BLAS LARA EDT ION
 JDSALINGER DHLAWRENCE
 ARA MAR LAMA TOUR
 VAULT RAT LIZ MEATS
 AGLOW EBWHITE AAMILNE
 STREW SAO LINDY FUR
 NEAT STAB TEE TATA
 HEADSET EDO OWNER
 PAL PERILOUS TOPAZ
 EMFORSTER PGWODEHOUSE
 EMILY EVA THATIS PRES
 LYNDE RIN TBONE SEAT

LEGALS

PUBLIC NOTICE

As per Article V, Sec. 5.05(a), all owners and lienholders have ten (10) days from this date to reclaim their vehicles at Southwest Wrecker, 1401 Darrington Rd., 855-1900, 851-2091-fax, or it will be sold at public auction for charges: VIN - JH4KA464XC004269, 1988 Honda Acura, blue, paper license plate tags WTCC- 04/03/08

Town of Horizon City

PUBLIC NOTICE

A PUBLIC HEARING will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 8, 2008 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)/ amendment(s):

1) Ordinance No. 0163 — 2nd reading — Amendment No. 008 — Amending the Budget Ordinance to transfer \$8,580.00 as follows:

From : Budget Item #502818, Contingency Funds

To: Budget Item # 5036057, Engineering Fees

Explanation: To pay engineering fees to Huitt-Zollers to create a plan for Clint ISD's submittal to Safe Routes to School

2) Ordinance No. 0102 — 2nd reading — Amendment No. 023 — Establishing height limits for cellular communication towers.

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. Karen Ellefson City Clerk WTCC: 04-03-08

FABENS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Invitation to Bid/Respond:

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

WEDNESDAY APRIL 23, 2008

MILK/DAIRY, BEVERAGE/ SNACK, MEXICAN FOOD, BAKERY, FULL LINE FOODS BID NO. 042308-035 ACCEPTED UNTIL 10:00 A.M.

NON-FOOD ITEMS BID NO. 042308-035 ACCEPTED UNTIL 11:00 A.M.

Proposals will be received at Fabens Independent School District, 821 NE "G" Avenue or P O Box 697, Fabens, Texas 79838 until the specified times. Detailed specifications are available from the above office between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. WTCC-03/27/08 04/03/08

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HELP WANTED

El Paso County ESD #1 (Horizon Fire Dept.) is now accepting resumes for the position of Administrative Assistant. The position will be part to full time. Applicants must have good communication skills, clerical and computer skills. Send resumes to: El Paso County ESD #1 PMB 103 125 N. Kenazo Horizon City, TX 79928 For more information contact: Ron

COUNSELING SERVICES

D A M I A N MAUREIRA, LCSW - Professional Counseling/ Therapy: Youth, Adults, Marital,

Family, Health insurance and FEE SCALE ACCEPTED. Medicare, Medicaid and CHIP. 657 Winn Rd. in Socorro, Texas. Call 858-3857 for appointment.

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HELP WANTED

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COUNSELING SERVICES

D A M I A N MAUREIRA, LCSW - Professional Counseling/ Therapy: Youth, Adults, Marital,

Larson, 852-3204 or 820-8640.

HOUSES

Houses for sale. No down, low interest, financing available. Carlos Aguilar, Broker, Realtor. 857-3374 or 269-1251.

PERSONAL

Thank you St. Jude and Sacred Heart of Jesus for favor received, Rosy.

PUPPIES

Puppies for sale. Border Collie/Akita mix, \$20. German Shepherd/Akita mix, \$30. 858-4481 or 851-6827.

SELF-HELP

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

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

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AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Take me out to the opera house

By Don Flood

Baseball club owners have discovered that the way to a fan's heart — and more important, to his wallet — is through his ever-growing stomach.

The latest gimmick to get people to the ballpark: all-you-can-eat seats, where you can pile on all the hot dogs, pretzels, nachos and soda you can guzzle.

Some parks, for an extra amount, add in beer, desserts and candy — so that every major food group is included.

Baseball execs know how it is. You try to watch what you eat to maintain your high cholesterol/blood pressure levels, but in the rush of daily life it's sometimes difficult to consume all the fat/salty foods required.

Too often, it's easier just to pick up a quick salad or some fruit and be on your way. With the "all-you-can-eat" plan, you can load up on enough fat and salt to last a whole year, or maybe a lifetime, especially if you keel over in the eighth inning.

Dan: Earl, did you see Bob get up for the seventh-inning stretch? He's just sitting there not eating.

Earl: (Glub, glub.)
Dan: Yeah, we better check on him after the game.

The great part about the plan is that it combines two of America's favorite pastimes — eating to excess and gluttony.

It also allows the parks to follow one of the basic rules of successful American restaurants — serve bad food and lots of it.

And for those so inclined, it also offers baseball — a relaxing sport that doesn't get in the way of eating (though they may want to replace the seventh-inning stretch with the third-, fifth- and seventh-inning belches).

Since it works for baseball, there's no reason the "all-you-can-eat" plan can't work for other institutions that are struggling to lure visitors.

Opera houses — Opera is perfect because it already includes lots

of singing fat people, the kind who don't make you feel guilty about indulging in that 15th hot dog.

And as everybody knows, "It ain't over till the fat lady sings," and having the fat lady gorging on some cheese-drenched nachos while aiming for the high notes would add untold entertainment value.

Art museums — Visiting an art museum can be a painful experience, especially if it's open and there happens to be a special exhibit.

It's virtually impossible to figure out what the artist is trying to say and, besides, you're not allowed to eat or drink. And they supposedly want people to come see the paintings? Hel-lo!

But we could see a renaissance of art appreciation if only the hoity-toity highbrow curators would have the sense to combine a Matisse exhibit with an all-you-can-eat baby back rib 'n' beer night. Attendees, of course, would be asked to refrain from touching the artworks until they had carefully licked their fingers clean.

Ballet — Admittedly, dance is a tough sell. Having all those obviously undernourished people prancing about onstage isn't conducive to relaxing evening of stuffing your pie hole. If nothing else, people in the audience might feel they had to offer the dancers a drumstick.

To make the theme work, it might be necessary to offer "dance-free" performances where dancers are prohibited from appearing. Also, if enough free beer were provided, it might be possible to have the audience members themselves get up and dance, though the wearing of tights would be strictly forbidden.

With sound marketing plans, there's no reason you won't soon hear people say, "You know, hot dogs always taste better at the opera house (burp)."

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King Super Crossword

MEN OF LETTERS

- ACROSS**
- 1 Pay to play
 - 5 "Forever _" ('47 film)
 - 10 "Go, team!"
 - 13 Window parts
 - 18 German river
 - 19 "The Gong Show" guy
 - 21 Fit _ fiddle
 - 22 Jergens or Astaire
 - 23 "The Shadow over Innsmouth" author
 - 25 "In a Free State" author
 - 27 "Big Three" site
 - 28 Most loathsome
 - 30 Ring official
 - 31 Po land
 - 35 Word form for "environment"
 - 36 '62 Tornadoes smash
 - 39 "The Nibelungenlied," e.g.
 - 42 Golfer Trevino
 - 43 Omit
 - 45 Wooden strip
 - 46 _ Aviv
 - 47 Adventure stories
 - 49 _ Dawn Chong
 - 51 Singer Vaughan
 - 54 "Perelandra" author
 - 56 "The Time Machine" author
 - 60 Writer Erich

- 62 Game fellow?
- 63 Actress Alicia
- 64 "Cara _" ('65 song)
- 65 Hard to lift
- 66 Lesage's "Gil _"
- 69 Zhivago's love
- 71 CT hours
- 73 Charged atom
- 74 "The Catcher in the Rye" author
- 78 "Women in Love" author
- 82 Southern constellation
- 83 Cal. page
- 84 Tibetan monk
- 86 Do Europe
- 87 Gymnastics event
- 90 Scoundrel
- 92 Columnist Smith
- 93 Lamb and pork
- 97 Shining
- 98 "Charlotte's Web" author
- 100 "Winnie-the-Pooh" author
- 102 Broadcast
- 104 _ Tome
- 105 Jitterbug dance
- 107 Mink's coat
- 108 Spruce
- 110 Use a poniard
- 113 Fairway accessory
- 114 "Cheerio!"
- 115 Earphones
- 118 Maestro de Waart
- 119 Proprietor

- 121 Chum
 - 122 Fraught with danger
 - 125 Fall birthstone
 - 129 "A Passage to India" author
 - 132 "The Code of the Woosters" author
 - 136 Post or Bronte
 - 137 Zsa Zsa's sister
 - 138 Explanatory phrase
 - 139 Corporate VIP
 - 140 Panelist Paul
 - 141 _ Tin Tin
 - 142 Steakhouse order
 - 143 Pants part
- DOWN**
- 1 Pale
 - 2 Wine valley
 - 3 Hard to believe
 - 4 Amatory
 - 5 Vigoda or Burrows
 - 6 Rock's Fleetwood _
 - 7 "I'm freezing!"
 - 8 Ages
 - 9 "100 _" ('69 film)
 - 10 Sitarist Shankar
 - 11 Selling point
 - 12 Crumby kid?
 - 13 With 32 Down, court sport
 - 14 Business dept.
 - 15 Anne of "The Daytrippers"
 - 16 More morose
 - 17 Egotist's darling

- 20 _ shift
- 24 Tub
- 26 Hold-up man?
- 29 Fancy fabric
- 32 See 13 Down
- 33 Triangle parts
- 34 Indeed
- 37 Squirrel away
- 38 Stoooge count
- 39 Emulate
- Rembrandt
- 40 Chihuahua dough
- 41 Poorly
- 44 Reading matter?
- 47 Bulge
- 48 Sedimentary rock
- 50 Architect Saarinen
- 52 Once more
- 53 Devastation
- 55 Isle near Corsica
- 57 Knot
- 58 Combat
- 59 Egyptian Nobelist
- 61 Director Adrian
- 67 Objective
- 68 _ drum
- 70 Come clean
- 72 Terrible age?
- 74 Part of Indonesia
- 75 Races a jalopy
- 76 _ Sainte Marie, MI
- 77 Up for _ (available)
- 79 Eye color
- 80 Card game
- 81 "... saw Elba"
- 85 Mohammed _
- Jinnah

- 88 Actress Luft
- 89 Jacket material
- 91 "_ brillig ..."
- 94 _ Romeo
- 95 Hardware item
- 96 Blood components
- 99 "Heartbreak _" ('56 hit)
- 100 From the top
- 101 Mideastern gulf
- 103 Hornets
- 106 Skater Midori
- 109 Wobble
- 111 Take on
- 112 Purchased
- 114 Girl Scout units
- 115 Overdramatic
- 116 Puckish
- 117 Roman fountain
- 120 Numerical suffix
- 121 Role for Rigg
- 123 Persia, today
- 124 Medicine cabinet item
- 126 Immaculate
- 127 On a whale watch, perhaps
- 128 Gusto
- 130 Time-honored
- 131 Deli loaf
- 133 Oklahoma native
- 134 Uproar
- 135 Nationality suffix

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Answer Page 6

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— Photos courtesy San Elizario ISD

SIGN ME UP — Esteban Reyes has signed to play for New Mexico Highlands University, left, with his parents Sylvia Vasquez and Arturo Reyes.

San Elizario HS students sign to play college football

By **Cynthia P. Marentes**
Special to the Courier

Friends, family, and school district personnel filled a large meeting room inside the San Elizario High School Library to witness a momentous occasion on March 20. As the large crowd of supporters and fellow students watched, seniors Esteban Reyes and Emmanuel Jacquez, with their parents seated beside them, each signed a letter of award to play football at New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, New Mexico. By accepting to play college football, Reyes and Jacquez helped the San Elizario High School's football program reach a rare milestone, enabling student athletes to sign scholarship letters as seniors.

Head coach Alfredo Gurrola assisted Reyes and Jacquez in finding an opportunity to play at the collegiate level by preparing portfolios for the students, contacting recruiters and coaches and showing them videos of his star players in action. Gurrola who has only been coaching the San Elizario High School team for two years noticed something special about Reyes and Jacquez early on as he initiated his practice sessions.

"They welcomed me with open arms. When they played they never quit and Steven (Reyes) even played a whole year without an ACL. They are fantastic players," Gurrola said.

During the 2007 football season, Reyes who played the position of quarterback completed 1,652 yards passing, 12 touchdowns, 20 interceptions, rushed for 210 yards and three scores. Jacquez who served on the team's defense finished the season with 49 tackles, a fumble recovery, and a blocked field goal.

Describing what it means to the school's football program to have two players sign scholarship letters their senior years, Gurrola said, "It makes it believable, and makes it possible for others."

Reyes on the other hand was at a loss for words to express what he felt about receiving the scholarship from New Mexico Highlands University. "I'm speechless. I don't know what to say."

Gurrola continues talking with recruiters, hoping to finalize award packages for other students to go on to play football in colleges in Texas, Kansas, and New Mexico. For Gurrola, the signing ceremony held for Reyes and Jacquez is only the beginning of much more and better things to come for the San Elizario High School football program.



SIGN ME UP, TOO — Emmanuel Jacquez, right, with his parents Guadalupe and Elvira Jacquez. Jacquez will also play for New Mexico Highlands University.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Challenging
★★★ HOO BOY!

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