

Y2K nothing to worry about... unless unexpected happens

Readiness stats for state agencies planned for release

EL PASO COUNTY — A recent release from the Texas Division of Emergency Management says Y2K and the year 2000 are nothing to worry about — unless the unexpected happens.

Tom Millwee, Y2K state coordinator, says state agencies and universities are working together to address Y2K concerns.

Key agencies have met twice this month to review their levels of readiness for potential Y2K problems," says Shannon Porterfield, El Paso Y2K project director.

The result of all the cross-coordinating "increases a heightened state of readiness, as well as work to assemble a multi-agency information packet of materials. Local officials, citizens and news media can turn to the packets for information about consumer, utility, financial and emergency preparedness issues," said Porterfield. No word on when the kits will be available.

Citizens seem most concerned about emergency services, electric service and finances. They also ask questions about the impact of potential computer glitches will have upon things they own and the people with whom they do business," the Porterfield said.

Will there be a disruption of police, fire or

EMS services as a result of projected Year 2000 (Y2K) problems? What about water, gas and electrical services? How does the public prepare for possible interruption of these essential public services?

El Pasoans who want to know more are invited to attend a special community meeting Monday, Feb. 22 from 7-8:30 p.m. at Holy Spirit Episcopal Church, 10500 Kenworthy in El Paso where answers to these and other Y2K-related questions will be discussed.

On hand to address public concerns will be Chief Ray Apodaca of the city's Office of Emergency Management and representatives from Emergency Medical Services and the Police Department. A representative from the American Red Cross will also be available to answer questions on emergency preparedness. For more information, call Holy Spirit Church at 821-1362 or Don Woodyard at 751-1400.

Water and utility companies are continuing to make preparations that will prohibit an interruption in service, many by contracting with outside firms.

The El Paso Water Utilities Public Service Board, which provides water to many of the

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Meso-american group uses ancient cultural ideals to address very modern problems

SOCORRO — *Kalpulli Tlalteca* in the original Mexican language of *Nahuatl* can be translated as "People of the Earth Community."

The *Kalpulli* organization in Socorro is opening its doors today (Thursday), intent on celebrating the deep cultural riches of the past to combat the many ills of the present.

An open house, set for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the group's headquarters in one of Socorro's historic structures at 10300 Socorro Road, will introduce the community to the goals and objectives of *Kalpulli*. The group will also announce a grant of \$68,270 from the Levi Foundation to further those objectives.

The meso-american cultural concept of "People of the Earth Community" consists of people with different experiences and talents in different fields — including teachers, artists, administrators, social workers and students — putting those various talents to use to benefit the community. The skills of each are shared with the group as a whole, contributing

Candidates seeking school board seats can file now

EL PASO COUNTY — January was school board appreciation month but February is the month to sign up to run for a position on one.

On Feb. 15, applications become available in the central administration offices of the county's nine school districts for concerned residents to become candidates for school board — a position that pays nothing and consumes an average of 20 hours a week.

Key responsibilities of school board members sound simple but seldom turn out that way:

- Hiring a superintendent to run the district
- Setting goals for the district
- Adopting policies consistent with those goals
- Approving an annual budget

State law also requires that board members receive training: the first year requires 10 hours of training on governance in addition to an orientation session.

County school districts serving the satellite communities of El Paso will have the follow-



— Photo courtesy Horizon City

Officer David Ortiz

Horizon officer commended for professionalism in situation of extreme danger

HORIZON — The evening turned out to be anything but routine late last month when Horizon City Officer David Ortiz when he received a complaint of unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. To complete the report, he was required to leave Horizon city limits and drive to a nearby community — unaware that he would encounter the vehicle in question of the way.

Ortiz was equally unaware that the suspects — all juveniles — would be armed with two handguns and alcoholic beverages.

On sight of the vehicle in question, Ortiz gave chase which eventually resulted in the abandoning of the vehicle by the suspect and Ortiz himself being threatened with a firearm.

Responding in a professional manner, Ortiz didn't lose his head. Instead he followed sound law enforcement procedures that resulted in the capture of all three suspects — one by Ortiz himself the following day.

In a letter of commendation, his actions were thus described:

"Officer Ortiz is to be commended for his professionalism under extreme circumstances and his use of good judgment when faced with a potentially deadly confrontation."

It is signed by Horizon City Mayor Walter C. Lee, Horizon Police Chief Gregory Lucas Sr., and Horizon Sgt. Gregory DeLong.