



NEWSBRIEFS

Hot checks

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal reported that 445 individuals took advantage of the 2011 Hot Check Amnesty. Since Jan. 28 when the amnesty was announced, County Attorney's Office received payment of 517 hot checks that represent more than \$116,500 for local merchants. During the amnesty period, persons who paid their outstanding balances avoided payment of various charges, such as court costs, attorney fees, and the cost of posting a bond after arrest. Individuals who did not take advantage of the amnesty period will be targeted during upcoming county-wide warrant round-ups being coordinated by the County Attorney's Office with the assistance of the El Paso Sheriff's Office, and Constables from Precincts 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7.

— Elhiu Dominguez

Clint ISD

The Clint ISD Board of Trustees has approved the District Calendar for the 2011-2012 school year. District staff that had the opportunity to vote on one of two calendars earlier this semester selected the calendar presented to the board. The calendar is the same format as the current calendar with a school start date of August 22, 2011 and an end date of June 1, 2012. The 2011-2012 school year is composed of 178 instructional days and 9 staff development days. For more details on the calendar, please visit www.clintweb.net.

— Laura Cade

Crime Stoppers

Crime Stoppers of El Paso is assisting the El Paso Police Department in identifying and locating the persons responsible for a series of aggravated robberies from Cricket wireless stores in various parts of the city, making this the "Crime of the Week." On Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010, a black man and a Hispanic man entered the store at 11675 Montwood just before 3:00 p.m. and appeared to be browsing for a cell phone. One then pulled out a gun and took cash from the register. Both men fled on foot. One week later, on Wednesday, Dec. 22, about 6:00 p.m., the same black man went into the store at 3285 N. Yarbrough and again acted as if he were going to purchase a phone. Once at the cash register he pulled out a gun and demanded money. A clerk struggled with the suspect, who ran from the store with a cell phone. On Friday, Jan. 14, 2011, about 2:30 p.m., the black man walked into the store at 1452 N. Zaragoza Road and began to look at and ask about several cell phones. At the counter, he pulled out a gun and took money from the register before fleeing on foot. On Monday, Jan.

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Prejudice is an unwillingness to be confused with facts.

— Quips & Quotes

County Clerk's Office finds ways to improve services

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Despite a hiring freeze, shortage of personnel, and budget constraints, the El Paso County Clerk's Office has managed to generate about \$10 million annually for the past two years; that's more than double its annual budget.

But, the looming State budget cuts pose a major challenge for the local clerk's office. "The proposed State budget cuts will affect El Paso County government in its assistance to the criminal justice system and the county medical healthcare, but the exact dollar figure is still unknown," stated Delia Briones, El Paso County Clerk.

The Clerk's Office annual budget in 2009 was \$4.9 million; and in 2010, it was \$4.6 million. However, the Clerk's office generated \$9,104,699 in 2009 and \$10,718,751 in 2010, with the Vitals Department generating the most, \$1,428,678.

In addition, the recently implemented Scofflaw process, i.e. having residents pay delinquent county fines and taxes before being issued license plates, increased the collections of revenue by \$350,000 in two and a half months that it has been in existence.

Also, use of electronic resources and services by the public has helped streamline the clerk's office and cut operational costs.

According to Briones, vital records can be ordered through Vital Check which is available on the El Paso County, County Clerk's Vital Department website. "For fast, affordable service, individuals should order through Texas.gov, the official eGovernment site for the State of Texas," she stated. "Texas.gov allows online ordering of certain vital records: birth certificates and death certificates, birth-verification and death-verification letters, and marriage-verification and divorce-verification letters."

"My commitment and dedication remains as intense as it was the day I first took over the County Clerk's Office. My desire is to continuously improve the electronic resources and services offered to the general public on a daily basis," said Briones.

Briones has been the elected County Clerk for El Paso since January 2007. She oversees 92 employees and reports to the El Paso County Commissioners and the Texas Office of Court Administration.

The County Clerk works with the El Paso County Commissioners Court as the recorder for the County. The county clerk's office records and keeps records pertaining to the county courts, real and personal property, and personal records. Other responsibilities include recording vital statistics; issuing marriage licenses; and administering other miscellaneous licensing and recording

requirements.

The County Clerk is also the Records Manager for El Paso County. This function is accomplished with the help of the archives staff. In addition, the County Clerk is responsible for the collection of misdemeanor

See CLERK, Page 8



— Photo courtesy El Paso County

DEDICATION – Delia Briones said that her qualifications for holding the County Clerk's position are her desire, motivation, and commitment to serve the general public and her belief that a difference can be made by one's contribution to society by dedicating one's life to the position. Briones' educational background consists of two years attendance at the University of Texas at El Paso, and her professional background consists of several years of job experience within the County Judicial System and District Clerk's Office, as well as countless years of volunteer work within the public education system.

Canutillo voters to decide on school funding

By Gustavo Reveles
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO – The Canutillo Independent School District Board of Trustees has announced that it plans to hold elections on two resolutions: a Bond Election that that would use \$43.95 million to build one new school and renovate existing facilities; and a Tax Ratification Election that would assist the operational, staffing and instructional budget.

The board voted unanimously to place both resolutions on the ballot for the May 14 election.

"Our school district is growing and the challenges that face our community are great," said Dr. Damon Murphy, Superintendent of the Canutillo Independent School District. "These two propositions could assist our district in meeting the needs of every child, and further aid our organization in providing top-notch services to our employees and taxpayers."

The \$43.95 million Bond Program would provide the needed funding to build a new

Pre-K-to-Eighth-Grade school on the east side of the district, enhance both existing middle school campuses, build a new gym at Canutillo High School and upgrade the wastewater systems that serve schools in the older part of the district.

Funds would also be used to install refrigerated air units at all campuses, make energy-efficiency improvements, upgrade technology at existing and new campuses and address all deficiencies in accessibility and playgrounds.

The Tax Ratification Election (TRE) will allow the Board of Trustees to set the maintenance tax rate at \$1.17 in order to access more than \$3 million in local and state funds. The funds will help CISD maintain its current programs and staffing levels, in spite of a looming threat of state budgetary cuts. CISD's current maintenance tax rate is \$1.04.

In 2010, CISD cut 9 percent of its overall operating budget in order to maintain a balanced budget. The district cut 66 positions, gave 6-day furloughs and cut student and community programs. With the looming state cuts, failure to successfully pass the proposed TRE would equal a "second round" of severe

cuts to the district.

If both measures are approved, CISD's tax rate will peak at \$1.58 per \$100 from the current \$1.29. On the average CISD home, worth \$136,000, that means a maximum school tax increase of \$29 a month.

CISD officials, though, have designed a tax relief system into the Bond program that would help delay the impact of the Bond to the taxpayer for three years.

Although the TRE tax impact would become effective on Jan. 1, 2012, the 16-cent tax impact from the Bond would not hit property owners until Jan. 1, 2013. Even then, it would only be half of the required increase for that year. It won't be until Jan. 1, 2014 that taxpayers will pay the full amount required by the sale of bonds.

"We realize that taxes are a difficult topic, but we hope that the Canutillo community will see this stair-stepped tax relief as a sign that the district is trying to do everything it can to respond to the concerns of our parents and taxpayers," said Sergio Coronado, CISD Board President. "The 30-month tax relief will allow our tax base to expand and the economy to grow and recover."

Veterans Post By Freddy Groves

Caregiver help delayed

The Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act was signed in May 2010 to give much more assistance to the caregivers of wounded post-9/11 veterans. The program was to be fully up and running by the end of January 2011.

Included in the bill was a monthly stipend equal to the cost of home health assistance, mental health support, training, respite and health insurance for the caregiver. The goal of the act was to keep wounded veterans at home and out of care facilities.

Now the January deadline has passed and all of the program isn't in place yet. Two weeks after it was to be fully operational, a Department of Veterans Affairs contingent went to Congress with a plan in hand to get it going. They issued a press release that says, in part, "Many of the other significant newly enacted benefits will require the issuance of regulations. ... The law requires detailed regulations for determining eligibility, designating and approving caregivers. ..."

The VA wants to approve the caregivers who have already been

doing the work, without any help, many giving up their jobs and health insurance?

One major disappointment is that only 10 percent of the seriously wounded are covered – a mere 800 veterans.

There is a bit of help now: the VA's toll-free Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274.

Go to www.caregiver.va.gov and look around. You'll find information on home equipment and modifications, caregiver resources and contacts. If nothing else, click on VACaregiverServices and scroll through the services. Ask the support coordinator which ones you can get now.

Bookmark the site and check it frequently. That's where you'll discover what parts of the program have been activated and which services are available. Or talk to a social worker at your VA medical center.

Write to Freddy Groves in care of King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or send e-mail to columnreply@gmail.com. (c) 2011 King Features Synd., Inc.

Por la Gente By State Rep. Chente Quintanilla

Census good for El Paso County

Hola mi gente. When the Census numbers were finally released, I published this advisory to all of the print and news media in the county. Since none informed the constituents of District 75 of my statement, I decided to share it with you.

"I am very pleased with the numbers provided to us by the Census. Since the fall of 2009, I have repeatedly expressed my concerns to the Census that we must have an accurate count. My office met with federal employees several times and offered assistance in finding isolated communities, in setting up community meetings for the purpose of recruiting local residents to do the enumeration and in motivating our constituents to be counted.

Statistics from the Census show that District 75 grew at a tremendous rate with a 30.88% population increase. The bulk of that growth was in the municipalities and unincorporated areas outside of the City of El Paso. In contrast to previous census numbers, our community can have the confidence that, for once, the areas outside of

the City of El Paso were accurately counted.

In August of 2010, I sent a letter to Mr. Gabriel Sanchez, Regional Director of the United States Census Bureau, strongly letting him know that I was very concerned with the progress in the count. I questioned the decision by the Census to exclude Socorro, San Elizario, Clint and Homestead Meadows North (potentially 50,000 residents) from the first phase in April. I asked Mr. Sanchez for specific proof that the manpower could overcome that exclusion. He never provided a satisfactory answer. But, the actual count indicates my concerns were addressed.

I am very appreciative of the efforts by so many in District 75 to get the word out and to participate in the Census. My staff, District Director Nina Serna and Chief of Staff Robert Grijalva, also deserve commendations for their hard and diligent efforts in getting the count right.

My biggest fear was that the census count would result in less representation in the House. I am

especially pleased that the county population count will preserve a House seat in El Paso County."

While the message might seem self serving, it should be obvious that there were many people in the unincorporated areas who worked hard to make sure of an accurate census count. This would include my staff members.

No other elected official did as much as my office; but it had to be that way. In the past, it was a consistent process for the count in the unincorporated areas to be apparently low. Not on this census.

Because the residents in colonias were finally counted, El Paso County will still have five house members living in the county. When you look at the counts in areas around San Elizario and Agua Dulce colonias, you can see where the census workers had never counted in the past.

We should be proud of the participation in the census by East El Paso County residents.

I remain your friend and public servant, Chente por la gente.

View from here By Tom Pauken

Men are big losers in economic downturn

Long-term trends in the labor market have been particularly brutal for men, but our Washington policymakers appear to be either unaware of such trends, or to have ignored them for the most part. Over the past decade, the total number of jobs for women went up by close to a million. Meanwhile, men lost more than 3 million jobs. From 1960 to 2008, the average unemployment rate for men 25 years and older was 4.2 percent. In the last two years, it has more than doubled, shooting up to 8.9 percent. By contrast, unemployment for women of the same age and for the same period of time went from 4.7 percent to 7.2 percent, an increase of 52 percent. The disparity is more striking if one considers that women's rate of participation in the workforce has risen sharply since 1960 while the percentage of men in the job market has been shrinking.

One reason that men's employment rate lags behind is that there has been negative growth in the types of jobs men historically have occupied. In the last ten years, 5.5 million manufacturing jobs were lost. That's one-third of our U.S. manufacturing base in an industry where men make up 70 percent of the workforce. In construction, where 87 percent of positions are filled by men, more than 1.4 million jobs went away during that timeframe. Approximately 4.4 million jobs have been added in the education and healthcare sector, but women dominate this growing field as they make up 77 percent of the workforce.

It's working-class men, not those who occupy elite positions in finance and government, who are suffering. The hemorrhaging of manufacturing and other good paying jobs in America means that a rising number of young American

men face dwindling prospects for earning a middle-class wage in the future. Young male unemployment is at 19 percent. More than 15 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans (most of whom are male) were unemployed in January 2011. African-American males also have been hit hard. Ten years ago, both African-American men and women had the same unemployment rate of 8.2 percent. Since then, the men's rate has more than doubled and now is almost four points higher than the unemployment rate for women. Similarly, Hispanic men now have a 1.7 percent higher unemployment rate than Hispanic women, whom they historically have outperformed.

With growing numbers of out-of-work young men comes a volatile mix of negative social outcomes: they are less likely to marry, less likely to be a stable parental force for the children they father, and more likely to engage in violent behavior.

One would think that Washington policymakers would see these developments as a cause for concern. Nonetheless for more than a decade, they have looked the other way as good American jobs have been shipped overseas, outsourced, or simply gone away. Ironically, our business tax system incentivizes our companies to export jobs and prosperity overseas. Also, our government welfare system all but discourages an intact family of a father and mother by the way it distributes the money.

All levels of government now have special programs designed to make sure that women and minority-owned businesses receive preferences in landing government contracts. Under our

own Historically Underutilized Business program here in Texas, a Pakistani-owned business or a Sri Lankan-owned business have a built-in advantage over white male-owned businesses in competing for government contracts.

Virtually every group seems to qualify for a preference in these set-aside programs except for white males. This is the case even with white males who have had their own educational and class barriers to overcome.

Pointing this out has long been off limits in polite company, but Sen. Jim Webb recently broke the taboo. In an opinion piece published in the Wall Street Journal, the Virginia Democrat called for an end to the government's preferential treatment programs with the exception of those programs designed to assist African-Americans. Sen. Webb noted the especially galling practice of making recent immigrants the beneficiaries of these diversity programs. In other words, not only are we shipping good jobs overseas but we giving preferential treatment to those moving here from overseas.

I agree with Sen. Webb's conclusion: "Our government should be in the business of enabling opportunity for all, not in picking winners. It can do so by ensuring that artificial distinctions such as race do not determine outcomes."

As for the loss of male-driven manufacturing jobs, there is a common-sense solution to this problem. It is known as the Hartman Plan and it replaces our onerous corporate tax system, with its 35 percent tax rate and its 6.2 percent employer portion of the payroll tax, with a revenue-neutral, 8 percent

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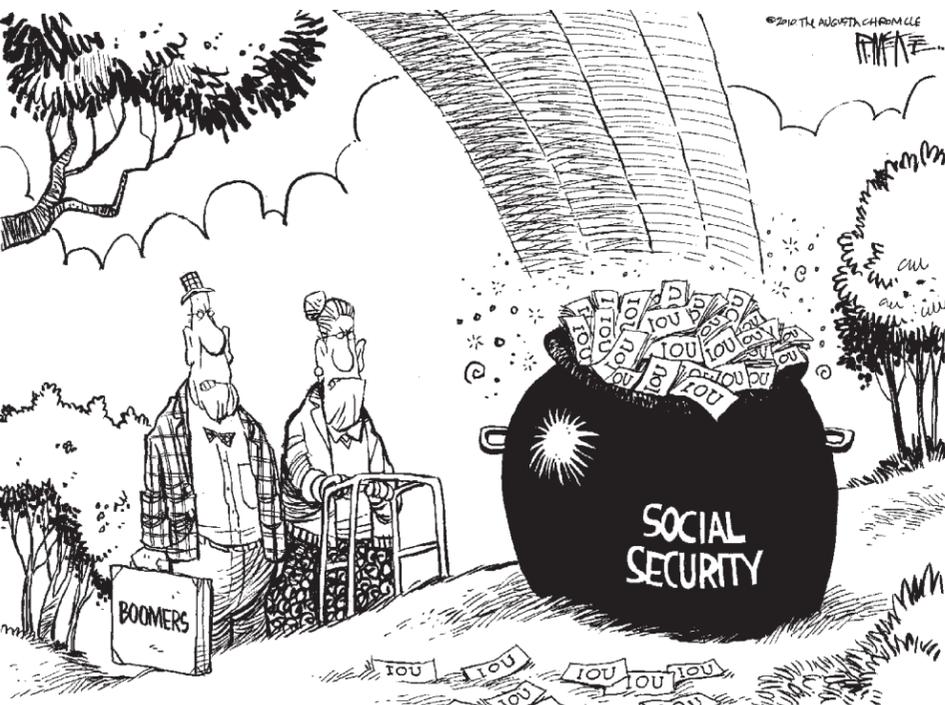
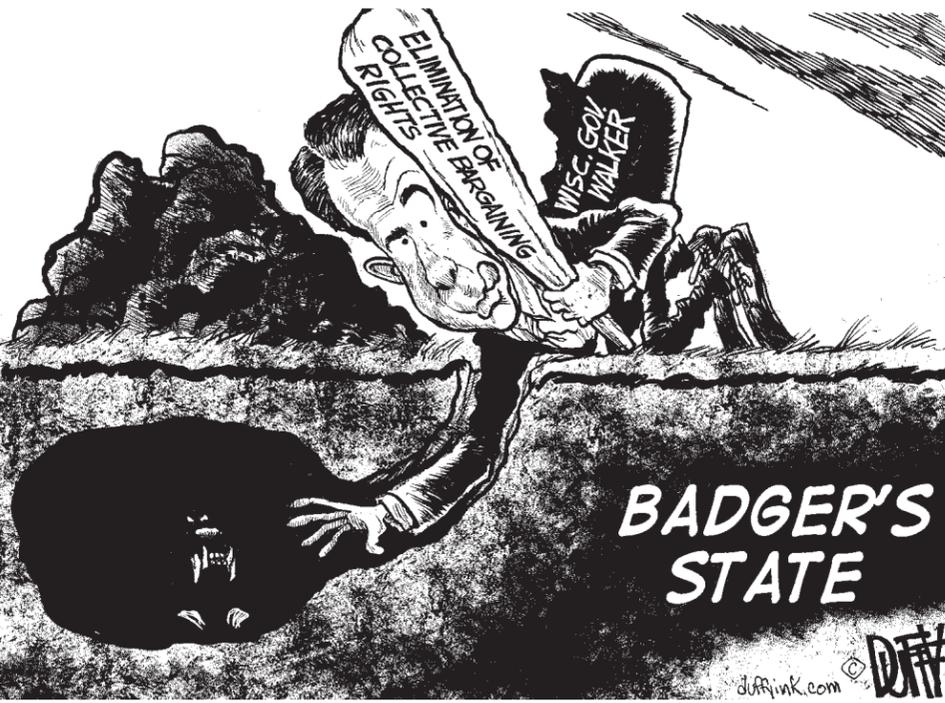
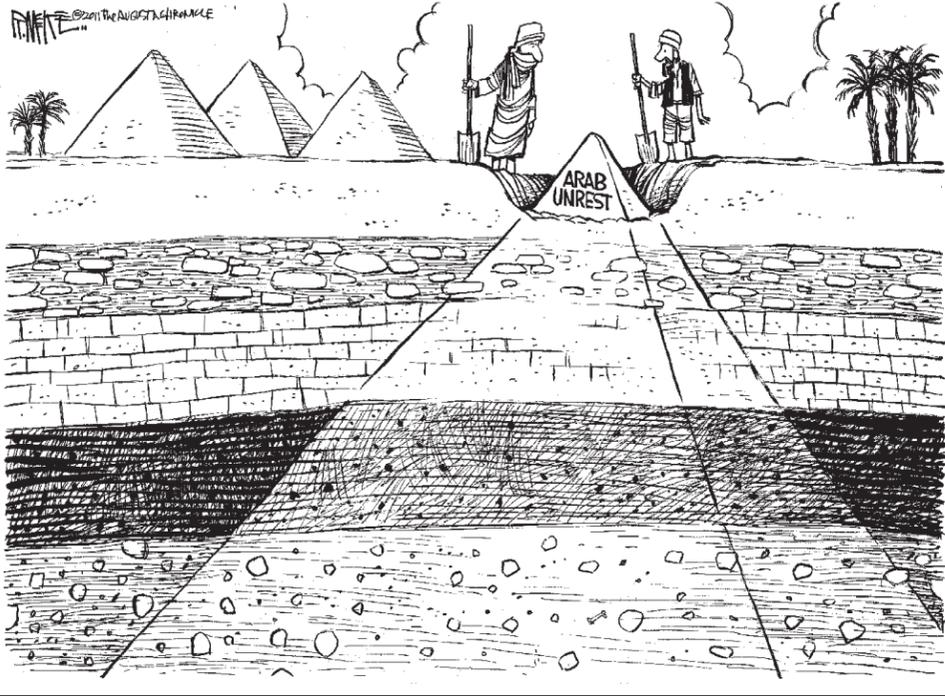
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What's up doc? By Albert Balesh, M.D.

Hospital-ity

There you have it! Go in with something, come out with something else, or not at all. The game of Russian roulette has begun, in a casino called a hospital, with dealers dressed in white, all in the name of "hospital-ity." This game is different, however. Lives are at stake, and you, the crap shooter, not the house, are in control of your own destiny. With 98,000 people dying each year in hospitals due to medical mistakes, the stakes are quite high. The cards are stacked against you, and unless you play with something up your sleeve, namely, the trump card of information, you are destined to see your pile of chips dwindle, as the lack of hospital electronic medical records, the longer working hours of physicians and nurses, and the lack of simple precautionary measures like handwashing all contribute to a nasty stay or your ultimate demise.

Even in a best case scenario and in topnotch hospitals, hospital-ity is at a premium, with 18 percent of patients hurt as a result of a medical procedure, medication, infection, or other cause, a euphemism for "blunder." While counting cards is prohibited, some numbers simply cannot be overlooked. The lion's share of hospital harm, over 63 percent by some estimates, can be prevented, and the name of the game, pure and simple, to do this is getting educated. Whether a patient is hospitalized for diabetes or surgery, the rules for maximum patient satisfaction and pay-out are similar, as are the consequences for failure to abide by them. How many times have we heard horror stories about wrong limbs being amputated, wrong operations being performed, patients going into hypoglycemic shock, and antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria having free reign in hospital wards? In most cases, a throw of the dice is just that, when an ounce of prevention would have most certainly yielded a seven or eleven. And you say you're not a gambler?

So, what can be done to turn the tide on the house, and stack the deck in favor of the bird to be plucked, namely, the patient? First of all, stay informed. Don't be intimidated by your surroundings or by the air of importance generated by your health dealers in white. They are there to serve you, and not vice versa. The more questions you ask and the more informed you are, the smoother your treatment will be. You can take that to the bank!

Secondly, don't hide cards up your sleeve, when it comes to allergies, alcohol use, sexual activity, medications

and supplements, and any other piece of relevant medical information that you consider too personal or too embarrassing to reveal. Remember, anything your doctor or nurse doesn't know can kill you! Another bit of information to carry with you to the cash-out cage or discharge desk is a full understanding of any prescription your physician has written for you. Doctor's scrawl is akin to hieroglyphics, and don't expect your friendly neighborhood pharmacist to possess the Rosetta Stone or read your physician's mind. Whether it be the name of a drug, the dose, its frequency, side effects, the availability of a generic version over a brand name, or any special instructions, make sure you cut the cards openly and cut your losses, too, by holding both your doctor and your pharmacist to the letter of the label. Pills, capsules, and tablets are like colored poker chips. Sometimes they get lost in the heat of the shuffle or the intensity of play. So, be sure on that score.

It goes without saying that you should move around the hospital as if it were a casino, and as if you were looking for just the right slot machine. Bedsores, blood clots, and infections have a tendency to make losers of the immobile. It is a no-brainer, therefore, to at least take that walk down the hall once a day. Don't be afraid to speak up either, if you happen to run into your doctor or nurse, and wish to ask a question, get something off your chest, or obtain clarification on some aspect of your care. That's what they're there for, and the worst they can do is ban you from the casino for life, in which case you'll choose a future hospital with better health care providers, management teams, educators, dietitians, and ancillary staff.

You hold the four aces as a consumer, and it is up to the pit boss and hospital administration to retain your health care dollar and your health care business. Something as apparently inconsequential as a caregiver failing to wash his or her hands, and then subsequently not complying with your gentle germophobic reproach and reminder to them to do so, is a serious matter and grounds for changing the table you are playing at.

Taking your personal health matters into your own hands will not only cut down on iatrogenic errors and unintentional cheating by the "whitecoats," but will guarantee a pay-out measured in numerous disease-free years and improved quality of life. Don't get taken to the cleaners by failing to do so!

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Moore Texas by Roger Moore Mar 2, 1836: It's Sam Houston's birthday and a crowd gathers at Washington on the Brazos...not for Sam but to declare Texas' independence.



Classified Ads

LEGALS

CITY OF SOCORRO, TX PUBLIC NOTICE

ORDINANCE NO. 284

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOCORRO, TEXAS, PROPOSING AMENDMENT TO THE CITY CHARTER; CALLING AN ELECTION ON SAID ISSUE; PROVIDING FOR PUBLIC NOTICE AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND OTHER MATTERS GERMANE THERETO.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Socorro hereby calls a special election to allow the voters to determine whether the Socorro City Charter should be changed as hereinafter set out; and

WHEREAS, Article IX of the Socorro City Charter and Section 9.004 of the Local Government code provide that a charter election shall be held not less than thirty (30) days after the passage of this Ordinance calling for Charter Amendment; and

WHEREAS, Section 41.001(1) of the Election Code provides that the next earliest time for a Charter election is the second Saturday in May (May 14, 2011); now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF SOCORRO, TEXAS, THAT:

SECTION I

That a special election is hereby ordered to be held within the jurisdiction of the City of Socorro, Texas, on the 14th day of May, 2011, pursuant to the laws of the State of Texas and the Charter of the City of Socorro, Texas. Said election shall be held for the purpose of amending the Socorro City Charter.

SECTION II

That said special election shall be held in conjunction with the other elections scheduled on said date.

SECTION III

That the following proposed Charter changes be submitted for vote on May 14, 2011:

Proposition No. 1

Article II, The City Council, Ordinances in General, Section 3.05, shall be amended and shall now read:

The Mayor shall receive fifteen thousand dollars per year, and each of the City Council members shall receive ten thousand dollars per year as compensation for their services, and any increase of salary shall be through a Charter Amendment only; and they shall be entitled to all necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties or officially representing the City, and benefits provided to full time employees of the City when such expenses and benefits are authorized and approved by a majority vote of the members of the City Council at a meeting of the City Council.

"The Mayor shall receive fifteen thousand dollars per year, and each of the City Council members shall receive ten thousand dollars per year as compensation for their services, and any increase of salary shall be through a Charter Amendment only; and they shall be entitled to all necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties or officially representing the City, and benefits provided to full time employees of the City when such expenses and benefits are authorized and approved by a majority vote of the members of the City Council."

Proposition No. 2

Article II, The City Council, Ordinances in General, Section 3.14(A)(4), shall be amended and shall now read:

The initial draft of any ordinance which repeals or amends an existing ordinance or a part of a City code, shall set out in full the ordinance, sections, or

subsections to be repealed or amended, and shall indicate the matter to be omitted by enclosing it in brackets or by strike out type, and shall indicate new matter by underscoring or by italics. Each page of the new ordinance shall be identified at the bottom of the page with the latest revision by date.

"The initial draft of any ordinance which repeals or amends an existing ordinance or a part of a City code, shall set out in full the ordinance, sections, or subsections to be repealed or amended, and shall indicate the matter to be omitted by enclosing it in brackets or by strike out type, and shall indicate new matter by underscoring or by italics. Each page of the new ordinance shall be identified at the bottom of the page with the latest revision by date. The final recorded ordinance is not required to include omitted and new matter as provided herein."

Proposition No. 3

Article VII, Initiative, Referendum and Recall, Section 7.01(B), shall be amended and shall now read:

Any initiated ordinance may be submitted to the City Council by a petition signed by registered or qualified voters of the City equal in number to at least twenty five (25%) percent of the number of registered voters, or three hundred (300), whichever is greater.

"Any initiated ordinance may be submitted to the City Council by a petition signed by registered or qualified voters of the City equal in number to at least twenty five (25%) percent of the number of registered voters, or three hundred (300), whichever is greater."

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subsections to be repealed or amended, and shall indicate the matter to be omitted by enclosing it in brackets or by strike out type, and shall indicate new matter by underscoring or by italics. Each page of the new ordinance shall be identified at the bottom of the page with the latest revision by date.

Petitions shall contain, or have attached to them, an accurate legible copy of the ordinance proposed or sought to be reconsidered. The signatures to the Initiative Referendum or Recall need not all be appended to one paper, but signers shall sign their names in ink and shall add their printed names, place of residence by street and number, date of birth, voter registration number and date of signing. The circulators of each petition page shall make an affidavit stating they personally circulated the page of the petition, and that each signature is the genuine signature of the person as written, and further, that no signature shall have been placed there more than forty-five (45) days after the issuance of the appropriate forms to the petitioner's committee."

Proposition No. 5

Article VII, Initiative, Referendum and Recall, Section 7.08(A), shall be amended and shall now read:

Ballot forms and Results of Elections. The ballot used in voting upon an initiated or referred ordinance shall state the caption of the ordinance and below the caption shall set forth on separate lines the words "For the Ordinance" and "Against the Ordinance." Any number of ordinances may be voted upon at the same election in accordance with the provisions of this Charter. Any ordinance submitted and receiving an affirmative majority of the votes cast shall then become effective as an ordinance of the City. An ordinance so adopted may be repealed or amended at any time after the expiration of two (2) years by an affirmative vote of three (3) or more of the City Council members. A referred ordinance that is rejected by a majority of the voters is repealed.

"Any five (5) registered voters may begin Initiative, Referendum or Recall proceedings by filing with the City Secretary, an affidavit stating they constitute the petitioners' committee and will be responsible for circulating the petition and filing it in a proper form, stating their names and addresses, and setting out in full the proposed Initiative ordinance, ordinance to be reconsidered or official(s) to be recalled."

Proposition No. 4

Article VII, Initiative, Referendum and Recall, Section 7.03, shall be amended and shall now read:

Any five (5) registered voters may begin Initiative, Referendum or Recall proceedings by filing with the

City Secretary, an affidavit stating they constitute the petitioners' committee and will be responsible for circulating the petition and filing it in a proper form, stating their names and addresses, and setting out in full the proposed Initiative ordinance, ordinance to be reconsidered or official(s) to be recalled.

Proposition No. 6

Article VII, Initiative, Referendum and Recall, Section 7.09(C), shall be amended and shall now read:

A majority vote to reject a referred ordinance shall result in the repeal of said referred ordinance.

Proposition No. 7

Article VII, Initiative, Referendum and Recall, Section 7.12(A), shall be amended and shall now read:

The voters of this City shall have the power to recall any member of the City Council, including the Mayor, and may only exercise such power by filing with the City Secretary, a petition, which shall be signed by the registered and qualified voters of the City as specified below, and verified by the City Secretary. The recall petition must state the reason for the removal of the elected official. All members of recall committee must be qualified voters in the district of officer proposed to be recalled.

1. for a position elected from the City-at-large, by a number of such voters equal to at least 30% percent, of the number of registered voters in the district, or 500, whichever is greater; or

2. for a position elected from a district, by a number of such voters equal to at least 30% percent of the number of registered voters in the district or 500, whichever is

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Proposition No. 8

Article VII, Initiative, Referendum and Recall, Section 7.13, shall be amended and shall now read:

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by filing a supplementary petition, and the same procedures shall then be followed by the City Secretary and Council as in the case of an original petition.

"An Initiative, Referendum, or Recall petition may be amended at any time within fifteen (15) days after the notice of insufficiency has been sent by the City Secretary, by filing a supplementary petition, and the same procedures shall then be followed by the City Secretary and Council as in the case of an original petition."

SECTION IV

That said proposed amendments be presented for "yes" or "no" vote in the following form:

Proposition No. _____
Sworn and subscribed to before me this _____ day of _____, _____.

Notary Public in and for El Paso County, Texas"

Proposition No. 9

Article VII, Initiative, Referendum and Recall, Section 7.18, shall be amended and shall now read:

No recall petition shall be initiated against an officer within nine (9) months after he or she takes office, within nine (9) months after an insufficient recall petition is finally declined by the City Secretary or nine months after an election for such officer's recall.

Proposition No. 8

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El Paso basketball fans need to support tournament

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Throughout the ages man has established many different ways of trying to convey the urgency of the moment.

Man has come up with many different little sayings for gearing himself up for the next challenge.

Some guys like to say, "it's go time," or "it's time for separating the men from the boys, or the contenders from the pretenders," or "it's crunch time," or "it's time to put it all on the line."

Those are all pretty good ways of telling someone it's time to "Cowboy Up."

Personally, I think it's time for the city of El Paso to put up or shut up.

For years, sports fans around the city have been complaining about the fact that the Conference USA Basketball Tournament was always held in Memphis.

Fans were saying that it wasn't fair that El Paso didn't get a shot at hosting the tournament. They were saying that if only El Paso got the chance – the people would all rise

to the occasion and flock to the ticket center to support the event.

Well El Paso got what it wanted. The Sun City will host its first C-USA tournament beginning on March 9.

The only problem is that El Pasoans are not flocking to buy tickets to the event.

We all know that El Paso fans are notorious for waiting until the last possible second to buy tickets to anything.

But it's getting closer and closer to "crunch time" and sales have slumped to date.

Now we could look at things from only one direction and blame the El Paso sports fan for being apathetic. But UTEP and some city leaders have to take a little bite for this one as well.

First of all, people don't even know where to buy tickets.

The first thing any major event ticket-buyer believes is that he can easily purchase his precious passes at any Ticketmaster location.

Guess what, tournament tickets are not available at Ticketmaster.

Tickets are only available through the UTEP ticket office. There's talk that single tickets

could be made available through Ticketmaster, but why wait until the last minute?

A couple years ago the City, the County and the El Paso Sports Commission gave Conference USA a \$1 million guarantee to host the tournament.

That, of course, means that the league is expecting at least a million bucks once the four-day event is over.

If fans don't come out and buy the tickets, El Paso must reach deep in the old pockets to make up the difference.

One thing I can't understand is that with a commitment like that, one would think El Paso leaders would do everything in their power to make it easy for fans to buy tickets.

I figured they would sell this event like crazy to ensure it does well and comes back.

But besides the occasional billboard, it's being hyped about as much as any fairly well attended local high school basketball tournament.

Now because El Pasoans are always late to the show, there could be a last-second run on tickets. But at \$80 for an all-access pass, fans could shy away – vying instead to fill their tanks with gas.

The tournament itself should be interesting in that it is totally up for grabs. Teams like UTEP, Memphis, UAB, Southern Miss, Tulsa and SMU are all within a game of each other and very evenly matched.

That means the tournament could be a great one with so many games going down to the wire. The only question is whether there will be any fans in the stands to witness them.

It's time for El Paso to put its money where its mouth is.

If you are going to cry and complain about not being respected as a city, then the people of this town have to respond when given the opportunity to prove the critics wrong.

If the city does not come through, they have no right to complain in the future.

The next time El Paso is passed up for a big event the locals should just shrug their shoulders and not blame the organization for going to San Antonio, Phoenix or Tucson instead.

But everything can be turned around so quickly if the locals can step up and come through.

After all, it is El Paso's "time to shine."

A sporting view By Mark Vasto

Disbelief at the Blarney Stone

There are 11 million people right outside the door, but at the Blarney Stone – a bar hidden in plain sight in the shadows of Madison Square Garden – you'd never really know it. It's a crowded happy hour, commuters mixing with the longtime regulars at the bar before fighting the subway crowds. Some are literally stuck there, unable to get a taxi during the city's infamous 4 p.m. shift change, and some will

tell you they have been stuck there for years.

New York is, of course, a town brimming with media – five major daily newspapers, two 24-hour news radio stations and various local television affiliates – but the news here is delivered by the bartender, who glances at the television behind the bar and makes the announcement.

"Knicks got Anthony."

The news is greeted with little emotion.

"Oh yeah?"

"Yeah. \$65 million. Believe 'dat?"

"Yeah."

The Knicks haven't made the playoffs since 2004, one year after Anthony took the Syracuse Orangemen to the NCAA championship. That would be the last time this state has had a championship team on a basketball court, in fact, but nobody at the Blarney Stone cares. Syracuse might as well be Canada. The Garden hasn't raised

a championship banner since Mark Messier led the Rangers to the Stanley Cup in 1994. The Knicks? Aside from some old-timers at the end of the bar, few remember their early '70s NBA championships – some in the bar weren't even born yet.

To be sure, Carmelo Anthony is a star, but the Knicks have had plenty of those over the years. With the exception of Patrick Ewing, few have ever really made good on their promise. There was Bernard King in the '80s, and, of course, there was the Stephon Marbury debacle earlier this decade.

Like Anthony, who clawed his way out of the Red Hook projects in Brooklyn, Marbury was touted as the local boy who would fulfill his childhood dream on the hardcourts of the Garden. It didn't take long for "Starbury" to fade. Anthony, who was part of the now infamous Knicks-Nuggets brawl

and has been arrested multiple times for marijuana and sobriety offenses, wouldn't surprise many if he fizzled out, too.

But for now, Anthony is on the back page of every newspaper, his arrival heralded at the top of every newscast, and repeated every 22 minutes on the radio. Carnegie Deli has already named a sandwich for him: "Melo," a monstrosity consisting of bacon, salami, corned beef, pastrami, tomato and Russian dressing between two slices of rye.

In fact, the sandwich is met with the same level of excitement as the trade at the Blarney Stone.

"\$21.95 for a sandwich. Believe 'dat?"

"Yeah."

Mark Vasto is a veteran sportswriter and publisher of The Kansas City Luminary. (c) 2011 King Features Synd., Inc.

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Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Your good health By Paul G. Donahue, M.D.

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: When he was 20, my son came down with hepatitis C. He's never said how he got it, but he was running around with a very wild bunch then. He still has the virus at age 27. Should he be treated? He never was. I wonder what's in store for him, and if he can marry and have a family. Can he? – C.S.

He should completely abstain from alcohol. Drinking puts his liver in further jeopardy.

The booklet on hepatitis A, B and C explains these common infections in detail. Readers can obtain a copy by writing: Dr. Donahue – No. 503W, Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Enclose a check or money order (no cash) for \$4.75 U.S./\$6 Can. with the recipient's printed name and address. Please allow four weeks for delivery.

Worldwide, 175 million people are infected with the hepatitis C virus. In the U.S., 4 million carry it. Between 70 percent and 80 percent of infected people will harbor the virus for life. Of that number, around 20 percent develop liver cirrhosis in 20 years, and a smaller number are stricken with liver cancer. Hepatitis C is the most common reason for a liver transplant.

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: How does someone with AIDS die? How long does one live after being diagnosed with AIDS? Can a person with AIDS cook for his or her family without fear of giving the virus to loved ones? – D.R.

People catch the virus in a number of ways. Sharing needles to inject drugs is one way. Health-care workers can get it from an accidental stick with a needle used on an infected person. Before 1992, blood transfusion was a major source of infection. Tattooing or body piercing by unlicensed practitioners or those who do not adhere to sterile techniques is another route of transmission. Sex with multiple partners is a possible way of contracting the illness. Sex with a single partner who has the virus is not a common route of passage. Your son can marry and possibly but not likely infect his wife, and will not infect his children.

AIDS kills in a number of ways. It so weakens the immune system that an infection brings death. Or the weakened immune system allows the growth of a cancer that proves fatal. AIDS also can interfere with the production of proteins and other body materials needed for life, and the person wastes away.

The incredible progress made in the treatment of AIDS allows most infected people to live 30 to 40 years after the diagnosis is made, very close to a normal life span. This is possible in countries where people have ready access to the many AIDS medicines.

This young man has to establish himself with a doctor. Lab tests will show if his liver is suffering any damage, and blood tests give a reliable estimate of how great a number of viruses is circulating in his blood. Treatment will hinge on that information. A liver biopsy might be necessary. Some doctors feel all who show evidence of current infection ought to undergo treatment.

People with AIDS can cook for their family without any fear of transmitting the virus.

Dr. Donahue regrets that he is unable to answer individual letters, but he will incorporate them in his column whenever possible. Readers may write him or request an order form of available health newsletters at P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. (c) 2011 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Super Crossword

- PURCHASING POWER ACROSS**
- 1 "Kon-Tiki," for one
- 5 Relay length
- 9 Lawyers' org.
- 12 Pontificate
- 18 Grasso or Raines
- 19 Prownd
- 20 Daring
- 22 European peninsula
- 23 "Giselle" composer
- 24 Sour fruit
- 25 Cupid
- 26 Elect
- 27 Start of a remark by Evan Esar
- 31 "Nightmare" street
- 32 Party potable
- 33 Likely to last?
- 37 Chemical compound
- 41 Gangster's gun
- 43 Kafka character
- 46 Bother
- 47 Homer's field
- 48 Pen pals?
- 50 Govt. notes
- 52 Duty
- 53 Part 2 of remark
- 55 Steel support
- 56 Ryan's "Love Story" co-star
- 57 Travel agcy.?
- 59 Salad veggie
- 61 Football's Herber
- 63 Christine of "Housekeeping"
- 66 Actor Brynner
- 67 Penny _
- 69 Seoul man?
- 70 Grass' "The Tin _"
- 74 Part 3 of remark
- 77 Philanthropist Cornell
- 78 Creche figure
- 80 Whelan or Sorkin
- 81 Tear
- 83 Brawl
- 84 Made like Mata Hari
- 85 Chicken feed
- 90 Doctrine
- 91 Canine grp.
- 92 Cry of regret
- 94 Part 4 of remark
- 95 Rocker Morrison
- 97 _ piece
- 100 Easily digested
- 102 See 75 Down
- 103 Skater Midori
- 104 _ Carlo
- 105 "- been had!"
- 106 Like Mister Ed?
- 108 Neanderthals
- 111 Remind one's spouse?
- 113 Part of a crane
- 114 End of remark
- 123 Candles
- 126 Enrages
- 127 Monthly expense
- 128 Vegetate
- 129 Go to extremes
- 130 Wonka's creator
- 131 Inland sea
- 132 Tun throwaways
- 133 With 17 Down, TV chef
- 134 Comedian Louis
- 135 Ruminant
- 136 New Mexico resort
- DOWN**
- 1 Paper quantity
- 2 Filmom's Ray
- 3 Custard of Castile
- 4 Docile
- 5 Brawn
- 6 Cairo creed
- 7 Uris or Trotsky
- 8 Churchill's successor
- 9 Diminish
- 10 Gasconade
- 11 Baseball family name
- 12 Important
- 13 Superior to
- 14 With 72 Down, "Spartacus" actor
- 15 Exist
- 16 102, to Tacitus
- 17 See 133 Across
- 21 Thirsty
- 28 Craving electronically
- 29 Weasel relative
- 30 Uggams or Caron
- 34 Mississippi port
- 35 Nabokov novel
- 36 Deli delicacy
- 37 Neuwirth of "Cheers"
- 38 Artistic output
- 39 Coll. cadets
- 40 Qatar's continent
- 41 Sarcastic remark
- 42 Santa _, CA
- 44 Desert
- 45 Sphere
- 49 Novelist Cather
- 51 Rural sight
- 54 Attempt
- 58 Attention
- 60 "That hurts!"
- 61 Put on
- 62 Martha of "Jumbo"
- 64 Coal by-product
- 65 Claire or Balin
- 67 Fuzzy fruit
- 68 Govern
- 69 Mend, as a bone
- 70 Record players?
- 71 Caviar
- 72 See 14 Down
- 73 New York team
- 75 With 102 Across, table accessory
- 76 From Cork
- 79 Splendor
- 82 Child welfare org.
- 84 Island outfit
- 85 Summon electronically
- 86 Taj town
- 87 Film _
- 88 Takes in
- 89 Add fringe
- 92 Position correctly
- 93 Actress Tyler
- 95 Morrow or Dana
- 96 _ standstill
- 98 "The Sage of Concord"
- 99 Loman portrayer
- 101 Prickly plant
- 107 Broad sash
- 109 Film critic Roger
- 110 _ Gras
- 112 Bridal path?
- 113 Doctor Salk
- 115 Pitch in
- 116 Where to speak Farsi
- 117 Metric weight
- 118 Neighbor of Brazil
- 119 Lean
- 120 Concept
- 121 Toast topper
- 122 Stack role
- 123 Poult's papa
- 124 Palindromic name
- 125 _ diem

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Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Clerk

From Page 1

Q: Is it illegal to laminate your Social Security card?

A: No, it is not illegal, but we discourage it. It's best not to laminate your card. Laminated cards make it difficult, sometimes even impossible, to detect important security features and an employer may refuse to accept them. The Social Security Act requires the Commissioner of Social Security to issue cards that cannot be counterfeited. We incorporate many features that protect the card's integrity. They include highly specialized paper and printing techniques – some visible to the naked eye and some not. Keep your Social Security card in a safe place with your other important papers. Do not carry it with you. Learn more at www.socialsecurity.gov.

A: No. SSI payments are not subject to Federal taxes so you will not receive an annual form SSA-1099. However, if you also receive Social Security retirement or disability benefits, those payments may be subject to income taxes. Learn more about SSI by reading the publication What You Need To Know When You Get Supplemental Security Income (SSI) at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/11011.html.

Q: How does a blind or visually impaired person choose how Social Security communicates with them about changes or important information?

A: If you are blind or visually impaired, you have choices for receiving information from Social Security. To sign up or change these notice options, contact us through

one of the following ways:

- Go to our page, If You Are Blind Or Visually Impaired – Your Choices For Receiving Information from Social Security at www.socialsecurity.gov/notices;
- Call us toll-free at 1-877-708-1776 (TTY 1-800-325-0778);
- Contact your local Social Security office; or
- Contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate if you live outside the United States.

The fastest and easiest way to learn about and sign up for these options is at www.socialsecurity.gov/notices.

Q: I understand that by 2013 I will not be able to continue receiving my Social Security payments by paper check. What are the benefits of using direct deposit?

A: The benefits of using direct deposit are:

- It's safe;
- It's secure;
- It's convenient;
- There are no checks to be lost;
- You are in control of your money; and
- You will get your benefits on time, even if you're out of town, sick, or unable to get to the bank.

You choose the account where your Social Security payment is deposited. If you don't have a bank account, you can use the Direct Express prepaid debit card to receive Social Security,

Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and other Federal benefit payments. With this card, you can make purchases, pay bills, and get cash at thousands of locations nationwide. Learn more about direct deposit and Direct Express at www.godirect.gov.

Q: How do I show proof of my Social Security benefit amount?

A: Here are four ways:

- You can use your SSA-1099 form as proof of your income if you receive Social Security benefits;
- You can use your annual notice that tells you your benefit amount for the year as verification of your current benefits;
- The fastest, easiest, and most convenient way is to go online and request a Proof of Income Letter at www.socialsecurity.gov/bene; and
- You may call Social Security's toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778), between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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.

criminal court costs and fines. This is accomplished through the Criminal Fee Collections Department.

"My office's main functions are to secure, preserve, and generate public and vital records, by upholding the highest standards of integrity as public servants, maximizing the use of technology and e-government services, while providing the utmost accurate, professional and efficient service to our community," said Briones.

Q: Is Supplemental Security Income

GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	x		-		26
-		x		x	
	x		-		25
x		+		x	
	x		-		26
25		30			28

DIFFICULTY: ★

- ★ Moderate
- ★★ Difficult
- ★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 3 4 4 5 6 7 8 9

Answer Page 5

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

8			6			2	7	
	5	3		2				8
		1	3		7	9		
4			5				6	9
	8	2		9				1
	1		4	6	7			
		6			8		2	5
1	4			6		3		
3			1	9			8	

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

Answer Page 5

★★★ HOO BOY!

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CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: V equals E

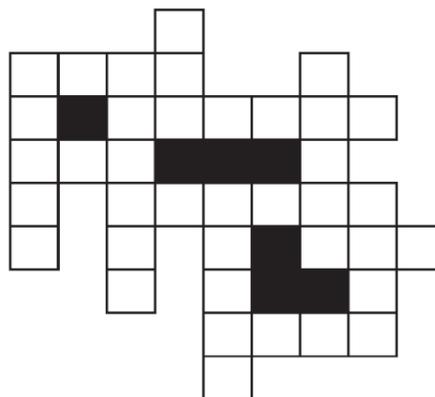
WY UTH XETKWTA ZRA FVLV KR
 LESV U BRETCLH, W FRESZ BUSS
 KXUK U LVWAT RY KVLLWVL.

Answer Page 5

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- ENY
- GUTGEN
- PYCTR
- ♥NIRG
- GUNLOC
- ♥DDA
- RAPI
- DYCOE
- ♥UNG
- CUNDIE
- ♥SNAGH
- ♥AGRE



Answer Page 5

Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. HAGNEC becomes CHANGE). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥RATHE becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

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Briefs

From Page 1

24, both the black and Hispanic man entered the store at 8500 Dyer and waited for customers to leave before going to the counter and demanding money. The black suspect is described as being in his early 20s, 6' to 6'2", weighing approximately 150 pounds and having crooked upper teeth. The Hispanic suspect was also in his early 20s, approximately 5-foot-6, and weighing about 160 pounds. If you have any information at all about the identity of these suspects, please call Crime Stoppers of El Paso immediately 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.

— James Klaes

Economics

From Page 2

business-consumption tax that would be border adjusted.

This new approach to taxing business would raise just as much in revenues, if not more, than the current system of taxation. All goods and services coming into the U.S. would pay the 8 percent tax while all exports would receive a comparable tax credit or tax abatement as an offset to its company's business consumption tax. Suddenly, the U.S. would become competitive again with our trading partners. And we would bring jobs home to America, particularly in industries where male unemployment is so high.

The disparity in job opportunities for men in America has both economic and societal consequences. It is a lot more difficult to be a responsible head of a household and help in the creation of a stable family environment if the father has lost his job or finds himself unable to make a living wage for the support of his family. That is why economic policies to help rebuild our hollowed-out manufacturing sector and the phase out of government preference programs that put men at a disadvantage in finding jobs or starting businesses need to be part of an overall strategy to put America back to work.

Tom Pauken is the chairman of the Texas Workforce Commission and author of Bringing America Home.