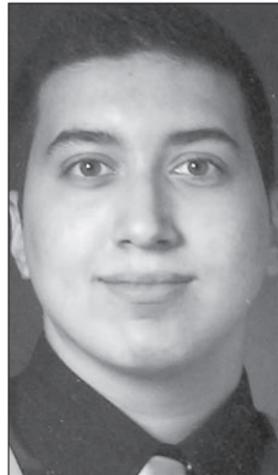




NEWSBRIEFS

Lubbock bound

Justin Fawcett of Fabens is heading to the University Interscholastic League (UIL) Academic Regional Finals competition on May 3 in Lubbock, TX. He is competing in Editorial Writing. Fawcett is a Fabens High School senior and vice president of their chapter of the National Honor Society.



— Richie Quesada

Crime Stoppers

Two men hold up a west El Paso convenience store at gunpoint and are caught on video. Detectives from the Westside Regional Command Center are asking for your help in identifying them through the Crime Stoppers "Crime of the Week." The armed robbery took place in the early morning hours of Monday, March 3, 2014. The suspects in this case walked into the Howdy's located at 6990 North Desert, just minutes after 4:00 a.m. Once inside the suspects confronted the clerk and demanded money. One of the suspects was armed with a small handgun and threatened the employee. One of the men grabbed the money, while the other took several boxes of Marlboro cigarettes. The suspects fled the scene together with the money and cigarettes in a gold colored Dodge Intrepid or Stratus. The first suspect is described as a Hispanic male, 5'9" in height, was wearing a dark colored hoodie with a white Ecko logo on the front, blue jeans, red gloves and white tennis shoes. The second suspect is described as also Hispanic about 5'6" in height, and was wearing a dark hoodie, dark pants and white tennis shoes. They were last seen fleeing towards North Desert Blvd. These suspects are believed, to be involved in other similar robberies. Anyone with any information on this case is asked to call Crime Stoppers of El Paso immediately at 566-8477(TIPS), on-line at www.crimestoppersofelpaso.org or you can send a text message by entering the key word "CRIME1" (no space and include the quotation marks) plus your tip information, and text it to CRIMES (274637). You will remain anonymous, and if your tip leads to an arrest, you can qualify for a cash reward.

— Javier Sambrano

A bargain is something you can't use at a price you can't resist.

— Quips & Quotes



— Photo courtesy of Carson & Barnes Circus

A BIG SHOW – The Carson & Barnes Big Top Circus is coming to Anthony, TX. It will be a real circus with everything patrons expect to see under the big top – clowns, acrobats, aerial daredevils, pageantry and a cast of performing animals led by the Carson & Barnes Asian elephants (shown above).

Big top circus coming to Anthony

By **Alfredo Vasquez**
Special to the Courier

ANTHONY – Recall the excitement, fun, and laughter of a small town circus when you relive the anticipation of the performances, the challenge of the games, and the taste of buttery popcorn and sweet cotton candy at the Carson & Barnes Circus, Thursday, April 10, in Anthony TX.

The Carson & Barnes Circus is the world's

biggest big top show with two hours of fun, excitement and pageantry for children of all ages, according to circus promoters. Elephants, horses, ponies and dogs will perform amazing tricks in the center ring. And, the circus's extraordinary performers, who are from around the world, will entertain the audience with death defying acts and exquisite artistry, promoters stated, with the audience just feet from the action.

The Carson and Barnes Circus will hold performances beginning at 4:30 and 7:30

p.m., Thursday, at Anthony TX's Enrique Miramontes Memorial Park soccer fields off Richard White Street, according to Hector Giron, Anthony Lions Club treasurer/secretary.

"For more than 75 years our family has brought the excitement and magic of the circus to people in towns of all sizes," third-generation owner Barbara Miller-Byrd said in a news release. "There is no bigger entertainment opportunity or better value for the dollar than this year's show under the big top."

Debuting in 1937, the circus, self-proclaimed as the "World's Biggest Big Top Show," travels to more than 200 towns each season, most of which have a population of less than 30,000 people, according to the release.

The circus travels with nearly 200 crew members, more than 40 vehicles and "enough animals to fill a zoo," commented Marcus Vela, Carson and Barnes director of media relations.

Promoters pointed out that the midway (sneak preview) will open one hour before show time with a free petting zoo, plus elephant and camel rides.

Tickets will be available in advance and can be purchased from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, March 29-30 and April 5-6, at Lowes La Feria and Big 8 Store supermarkets in Anthony TX. Tickets purchased in advance cost \$12 for adults or \$6 for children 11 years old and younger.

The circus's coming to Anthony is made possible by the coordinated efforts of the Anthony Lions Club, the Knights of Columbus of the Catholic churches in Anthony, Berino, and Chaparral NM, and the City of Anthony TX, stated Giron.

Call (505) 469-0293 for more information.

Ceiba performs musical journey through Latin America

Música con Raíz e Historia

By **Alfredo Vasquez**
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Families with children ages six years and up are invited to participate in a creative interactive

workshop on the music and art inspired by ancient and modern Latin America from México to the Andes.

Led by the El Paso musical group Ceiba, the workshop (in English and Spanish) will take participants on a musical journey through Latin America. The free session will be held from 2 to 4 p.m., Saturday, April 5, at the El Paso Museum of Archaeology (4301 Transmountain Road).

Using small discussion groups, the presenters will provide adults and children with the opportunity to listen to music and create art in response to the music they heard, stated Marilyn Guida, education curator for the museum.

According to Guida, the Ceiba musicians will perform using a variety of instruments from indigenous cultures of Latin America,



This poster of Musical Journey through Latin America event was designed by Lorenzo Guel.

See MUSIC, Page 4

Veterans Post By Freddy Groves

Chronic pain management

Fully 50 percent of veterans in the Department of Veterans Affairs health-care system suffer from chronic pain, according to testimony before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. That's above the national average.

The treatment method for serious pain typically has been through the use of prescription opioids, which are habit-forming. In at-risk patients, use of these drugs can lead to abuse of the medications and "diversion," which means they're sold to others. Other patients are at risk just because of long-term use.

The methods to help at-risk veterans start before the drugs are even handed out – by improving the training of those who prescribe the drugs and by participation in state-level prescription monitoring programs.

The greatest effort has gone into determining when these opioids are appropriately prescribed when there are multiple medical conditions – physical as well as psychological – along with the risks for overdose because of a combination of the two.

One of the VA's drug programs is showing great signs of success. The

Opioid Safety Initiative – tested at eight sites in Minnesota – has been shown to reduce the dependency on habit-forming opioids.

This is accomplished via education, monitoring, other non-habit-forming drugs and alternative methods such as acupuncture and behavior therapy, as well as using a multi-disciplinary medical team. Patients were offered a trial of non-opioid drugs to test lower doses for pain management. The result: Dependency on high-dose opioids use was reduced by 50 percent.

Also in development is a pain-management app for cellphones – the self-management VA Pain Coach. The app includes the veteran's health library, a management toolkit and assessments. To learn more about the cellphone app, go online to mobilehealth.va.gov/content/pain-coach-app.

Freddy Groves regrets that he cannot personally answer reader questions, but will incorporate them into his column whenever possible. Send email to columnreply2@gmail.com. (c) 2014 King Features Synd., Inc.

Finances By Jason Alderman

Resist the urge to tap retirement plans early

I have yet to meet anyone who thinks they're saving too much money for retirement. On the contrary, most people admit they're probably setting aside too little. Retirement accounts must compete with daily expenses, saving up for a home, college and unexpected emergencies for every precious dollar.

If taking money out of your IRA, 401(k) or other tax-sheltered plan is your best or only option, you should be aware of the possible impacts on your taxes and long-term savings objectives before raiding your nest egg:

401(k) loans. Many 401(k) plans allow participants to borrow from their account to buy a home, pay for education, medical expenses or other special circumstances. Generally, you may be allowed to borrow up to half your vested balance up to a maximum of \$50,000 – or a reduced amount if you have other outstanding plan loans.

Loans usually must be repaid within five years, although you may have longer if you're using the loan to purchase your primary residence.

Potential drawbacks to 401(k) loans include:

- If you leave your job, even involuntarily, you must pay off the loan immediately (usually within 30 to 90 days) or you'll owe income tax on the remainder – as well as a 10 percent early distribution penalty if you're

under age 59-½.

- Loans cannot be rolled over into a new account.
- Some plans don't allow new contributions until outstanding loans are repaid.

- Many people, faced with a monthly loan payment, reduce their 401(k) contributions, thereby significantly reducing their potential long-term account balance and earnings.

- Your account value will be lower while repaying your loan, which means you'll miss out on market upswings.

401(k) and IRA withdrawals. Many plans allow hardship withdrawals to pay for certain medical or higher education expenses, funerals, buying or repairing your home or to prevent eviction or foreclosure. You'll owe income tax on the withdrawal – plus an additional 10 percent penalty if you're younger than 59-½, in most cases.

Traditional IRAs allow withdrawals at any time for any reason. However, you'll pay income tax on the withdrawal – plus the 10 percent penalty as well, with certain exceptions. With Roth IRAs, you can withdraw contributions at any time, since they've already been

See PLANS, Page 4

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND PARTIES:

El Paso County Water Control and Improvement District No. 4, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for renewal of Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Permit No. WQ0010166001 (EPA I.D. No. TX0065013), which would authorize continued operation of the domestic wastewater treatment facility located at 17270 Alameda Avenue, Fabens, in El Paso County, TX 79838. Additional information concerning this application is contained in the public notice section of this newspaper.

WTCC: 03-27-14



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Letter must not be more than 250 words in length. They should be dated, must be signed and have an address and daytime phone number. Only the name and city will be printed with the letter. The Courier reserves the right not to print letters to the editor or other submitted materials it considers inappropriate.

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

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\$10 for 25 words, \$15 for 40 words. Ad must be in writing and pre-paid. The Courier reserves the right not to print classified advertising it considers inappropriate.

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An estimated 1 in every 5 vehicles on our Texas roads has no automobile insurance, but that's about to change. • TexasSure Vehicle Insurance Verification matches vehicle registration information to insurance policy data to immediately tell law enforcement officers and tax assessor-collectors who's driving without insurance. • So, if you're not covered, better get insured! • To learn more, visit: www.TexasSure.com

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Saskia, 39, quit for good on the 7th try.

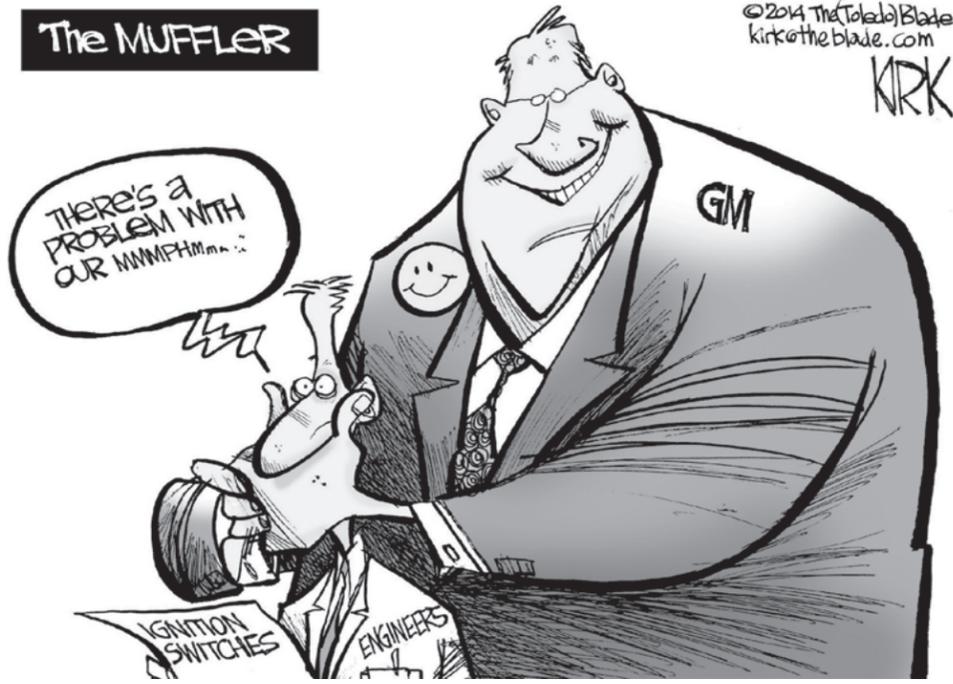
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The MUFFLER



Countdown to health care coverage

Most have this week to buy health insurance for 2014

By Emmanuel Winston
Special to the Courier

TEXAS – American consumers have only one week remaining in the current calendar year to enroll for and purchase health insurance before the Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) March 31, 2014, deadline for enrollment. Failure to purchase by the deadline may result in a tax penalty as well as potentially devastating medical costs due to the lack of coverage for the remainder of the year. As the deadline approaches, experienced benefit professionals are available to assist individuals and families – a service that does not add to the cost of a policy.

Using a benefit professional to assist is a service that most do not realize is available with no cost to the consumer. Fees paid for the services of professional benefit advisers are built into the cost of an insurance premium and paid for by insurers, meaning the cost of purchasing a policy will be the same for a consumer who uses a benefit adviser as one who does not.

“Many people have delayed making a decision about their coverage, perhaps feeling that health insurance is too complex,” said Mark Bellman, president of the Texas Association of Health Underwriters. “But the time for decision-making is now. Fortunately, health insurance agents can simplify the issue. They will sit down and help customize coverage to meet each person’s medical, financial and family needs.”

“Benefit professionals offer the same service to business owners,” he said.

When the six-month open enrollment period concludes at the end of this month, there will

be no more opportunities to purchase ACA-compliant coverage for the rest of 2014.

The only exception to get coverage this year will be for someone experiencing a “qualifying” life event, such as marriage or divorce, birth or adoption of a child, or loss of employment. Bellman noted, “At this point the federal government has given no indication there will be an extension for the 2014 enrollment period.”

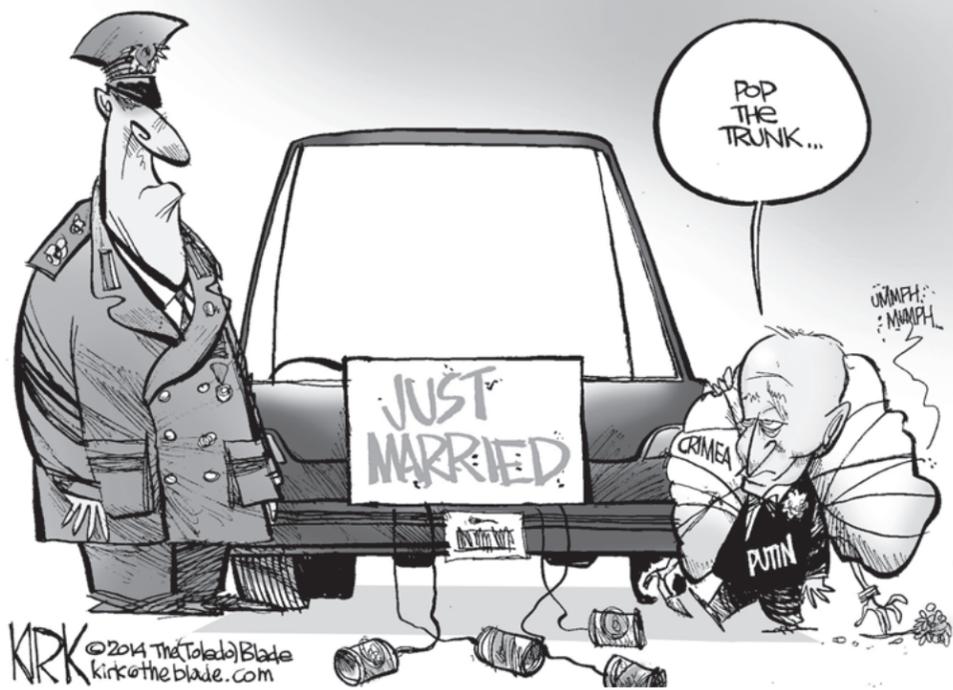
Anyone who can afford health insurance and does not obtain coverage will face a penalty of \$95 or up to 1 percent of household income, whichever is higher. The next enrollment period, beginning in November, will be for coverage in 2015.

“The six months of open enrollment have had their share of obstacles,” Bellman said. “First, the federal health care computer system faltered when enrollment opened Oct. 1. Also, many consumers say they lack sufficient information about the ACA to make major decisions. So it’s not surprising that some consumers have taken their time, he said, or found it difficult to understand all the components of the new health care program.”

Benefit professionals throughout Texas can explain all the options, he said. “Our members are licensed, well-trained and experienced at helping consumers make informed choices. The decisions made this last week of enrollment might determine how well individuals deal with a future injury or illness.”

Staying healthy is vital, he said, because an injury as common as a broken arm can cost thousands of dollars in medical bills. Treating a serious illness such as cancer easily tops \$100,000. Beyond cost savings, another advantage is that ACA-compliant coverage now covers preexisting health conditions.

To find a professional benefit adviser in any locale, visit www.tahu.org.



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Cash or Checks only
Box Office: 6:00 pm evening shows and 12:30 pm Sunday matinees

April 4, 5, 11 & 12 @ 8:00 pm
April 6 & 13 @ 2:30 pm

Children under 6 will not be admitted.
Call 831-5056 for info/reservations

The Best Place to Start

In cooperation with EPCC Salute to the Arts

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Martinez heads to national wrestling tournament

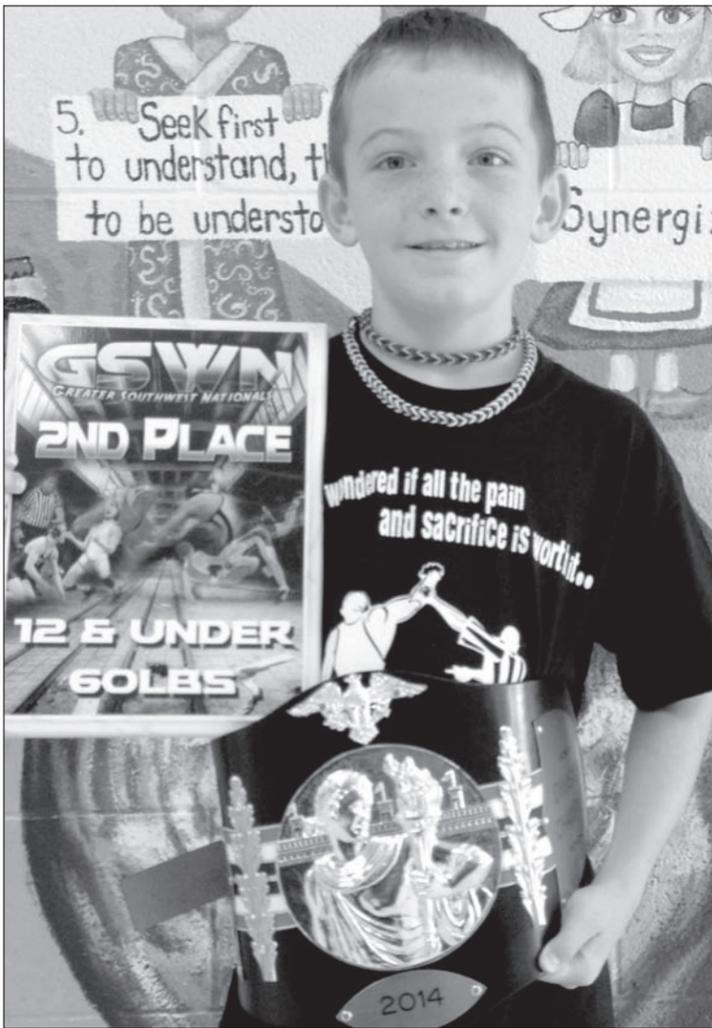
By Gustavo Reveles Acosta
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO – Christopher Martinez is only a fifth-grader at Jose Damian Elementary School in the Canutillo Independent School District, but he's already one of the top Greco-Roman wrestlers in Texas.

Christopher's talents on the mat have earned him a spot in the Texas National All-Star Team that will travel to Iowa to participate in a national wrestling tournament to compete against teams from the other 49 states.

"We are very proud of Christopher's accomplishments. They speak well of his character and dedication to the sport of wrestling," said Damian Principal Sandra Valdez. "Part of our goal is to provide a wholesome education environment that doesn't just meet the academic goals of our students, but also the mental and physical goals that will help them develop into healthy members of our society."

Christopher qualified for the Texas National All Star Team by winning the Greater Southwest National Champion title earlier this month. He also won first place at the Iron Soldier Open, El Paso Invitational, Edge of Texas Nationals, Heart of Texas Nationals and Far West Regional Championships.



– Photo courtesy Canutillo ISD

GOING TO PIN YOU – Christopher Martinez will go to Iowa to participate in a national wrestling tournament.

Music

From Page 1

such as the charango, rain stick, various flutes of wood, ceramic, bamboo, and percussion instruments made of turtle shells or gourds, as well as a variety of other percussion and stringed instruments such as the jarana, guitarra de golpe, vihuela, tiple, cuatro, and guitar.

Ceiba members will play a variety of musical pieces and ask participants to respond to questions

such as, What did you hear? Where did you go in your mind while listening? What did you feel? And how would you draw that music? "Participants will also be able to take their artworks with them," explained Guida.

The free workshop is sponsored by the City of El Paso Museums and Cultural Affairs Department and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

For more information and to reserve a seat, call Guida, at 755-4332, or send email to guidamr@elpasotexas.gov.

Plans

From Page 2

taxed. However, to withdraw earnings without penalty you must be at least 59 1/2 and the funds must have been in the account for at least five years.

To learn more about how the IRS treats 401(k) and IRA loans and withdrawals, visit www.irs.gov.

Further financial implications. With 401(k) and traditional IRA withdrawals, the money is added to your taxable income, which could bump you into a higher tax bracket or even jeopardize certain tax credits, deductions and exemptions that are tied to your adjusted gross income. All told, you could end up paying half or more of your withdrawal in taxes, penalties and lost or reduced

tax benefits.

Losing compound earnings. Finally, if you borrow or withdraw your retirement savings, you'll sacrifice the power of compounding, where interest earned on your savings is reinvested and in turn generates more earnings. You'll forfeit any gains those funds would have earned for you, which over a couple of decades could add up to tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost income.

Bottom line: Carefully consider the potential downsides before tapping your retirement savings for anything other than retirement itself. If that's your only recourse, consult a financial professional about the tax implications.

Jason Alderman directs Visa's financial education programs.

Classified Ads

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION AND INTENT TO OBTAIN WATER QUALITY PERMIT RENEWAL

PERMIT NO.
WQ0010166001

APPLICATION

El Paso County Water Control and Improvement District No. 4, P.O. Box 3880, Fabens, Texas 79838, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to renew Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Permit No. WQ0010166001 (EPA I.D. No. TX0065013) to authorize the discharge of treated wastewater at a volume not

to exceed an annual average flow of 1,200,000 gallons per day. The domestic wastewater treatment facility is located at 17270 Alameda Avenue, Fabens, in El Paso County, Texas 79838. The discharge route is from the plant site to Fabens Waste Canal; thence to a series of ditches; thence to Rio Grande Below Riverside Diversion Dam. TCEQ received this application on January 31, 2014. The permit application is available for viewing and copying at El Paso County Water Control and Improvement District No. 4, 117 East Main Street, Fabens, Texas. This link to an electronic map of the site or facility's general location is provided as a public courtesy and not part of the application or notice. For exact location, refer to application.

<http://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/hb610/index.html?lat=31.483055&lng=-106.145&zoom=13&type=r>

ADDITIONAL NOTICE

TCEQ's Executive Director has determined the application is administratively complete and will conduct a technical review of the application. After technical review is complete, the Executive Director may prepare a draft permit and will issue a preliminary decision on the application. **Notice of the Application and Preliminary Decision will be published and mailed to those who are on the county-wide mailing list and to those who are on the mailing list for this application. That notice will contain the deadline for submitting public comments.**

PUBLIC COMMENT/ PUBLIC

MEETING

You may submit public comments or request a public meeting on this application. The purpose of a public meeting is to provide the opportunity to submit comments or to ask questions about the application. TCEQ will hold a public meeting if the Executive Director determines that there is a significant degree of public interest in the application or if requested by a local legislator. A public meeting is not a contested case hearing.

OPPORTUNITY FOR A CONTESTED CASE HEARING

After the deadline for submitting public comments, the Executive Director will consider all timely comments and prepare a response to all relevant and material, or significant public comments. **Unless the application is directly referred for a contested case hearing,**

the response to comments, and the Executive Director's decision on the application, will be mailed to everyone who submitted public comments and to those persons who are on the mailing list for this application. If comments are received, the mailing will also provide instructions for requesting reconsideration of the Executive Director's decision and for requesting a contested case hearing. A contested case hearing is a legal proceeding similar to a civil trial in state district court.

TO REQUEST A CONTESTED CASE HEARING, YOU MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN YOUR REQUEST: your name, address, phone number; applicant's name and proposed permit number; the location and distance of

your property/activities relative to the proposed facility; a specific description of how you would be adversely affected by the facility in a way not common to the general public; and, the statement "[I/we] request a contested case hearing." If the request for contested case hearing is filed on behalf of a group or association, the request must designate the group's representative for receiving future correspondence; identify an individual member of the group who would be adversely affected by the proposed facility or activity; provide the information discussed above regarding the affected member's location and distance from the facility or activity; explain how and why the member would be affected; and explain how the interests

the group seeks to protect are relevant to the group's purpose.

Following the close of all applicable comment and request periods, the Executive Director will forward the application and any requests for reconsideration or for a contested case hearing to the TCEQ Commissioners for their consideration at a scheduled Commission meeting.

The Commission will only grant a contested case hearing on disputed issues of fact that are relevant and material to the Commission's decision on the application. Further, the Commission will only grant a hearing on issues that were raised in timely filed comments that were not subsequently withdrawn. **TCEQ may act on an application to renew a permit for discharge of wastewater without providing**

an opportunity for a contested case hearing if certain criteria are met.

MAILING LIST

If you submit public comments, a request for a contested case hearing or a reconsideration of the Executive Director's decision, you will be added to the mailing list for this specific application to receive future public notices mailed by the Office of the Chief Clerk. In addition, you may request to be placed on: (1) the permanent mailing list for a specific applicant name and permit number; and/or (2) the mailing list for a specific county. If you wish to be placed on the permanent and/or the county mailing list, clearly specify which list(s) and send your request to TCEQ Office of the Chief Clerk at the address below.

AGENCY CONTACTS AND INFORMATION. All written public comments and

requests must be submitted to the Office of the Chief Clerk, MC 105, TCEQ, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087 or electronically at www.tceq.state.tx.us/about/comments.html. If you need more information about this permit application or the permitting process, please call TCEQ Public Education Program, Toll Free, at 1-800-687-4040. Si desea información en Español, puede llamar al 1-800-687-4040. General information about TCEQ can be found at our web site at www.tceq.texas.gov.

Further information may also be obtained from El Paso County Water Control and Improvement District No. 4 at the address stated above or by calling Mr. Mike Terrazas, General Manager, at (915) 764-2212.

Issuance Date: March 13, 2014

WTCC: 03-27-14

**El Paso County
Tornillo Water
Improvement
District**

**United States
Department
of Agriculture
Rural
Development**

This is a notice that the El Paso County Tornillo Water Improvement District intends to seek funding from the United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development to design and construct wastewater collection infrastructure in seven subdivisions in Tornillo, TX. For any questions regarding this application, please contact Francelia Vega at 915-764-2966.

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**West Texas
County Courier**

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CryptoQuip Answer

When a rifleman is really hoping something will happen, you might say he's gunning for it.

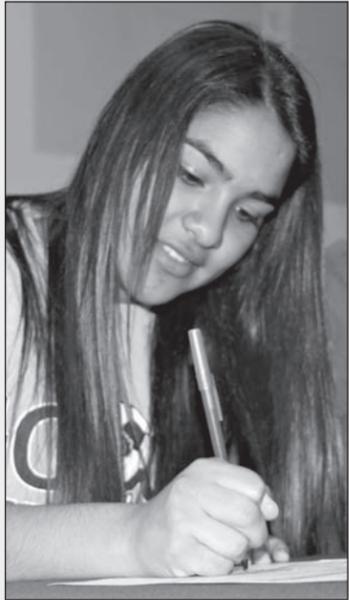
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Cordova signs with Kansas

By **Gustavo Reveles Acosta**
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO – Canutillo High School standout Lupe Cordova’s soccer career will continue in college with a full scholarship, becoming the latest Lady Eagle to continue her fútbol career in the collegiate level.

Cordova signed her letter of intent to play with the Garden City Community College in Garden City, KS on March 20.



– Photo courtesy Canutillo ISD

PEN IN HAND – Canutillo High School Senior Lupe Cordova signs her letter of intent to play soccer at Garden City Community College in Kansas.

The Broncbusters play in the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference.

“This is a great opportunity for me to continue my education and my soccer career,” said Cordova in front of her teammates, coaches and parents. “I love soccer, so I feel so lucky that I have been given this opportunity to keep doing what I love while I get an education.”

CHS Girls Soccer Coach Jessica Gonzales-Woodruff called Cordova a true student of the game and an all-around student.

“Lupe has played varsity since her freshman year and she has had a tremendous impact on the team,” she said. “I could not be prouder to see her sign this letter of intent and know that she will be able to use soccer as a way to earn a college degree.”

Cordova is the captain of the varsity team and was the Lady Eagles’ lead scorer. As a junior she earned All-District First Team honors, and she is expected to repeat that feat this year. During her freshmen and sophomore year, she earned All-District Second Team honors.

This is the second year that a Canutillo High School student receives a scholarship to play college soccer. Last year, six Lady Eagles earned scholarships to play at Ranger College in Ranger, Texas.

‘Butterflies’ is last show for Serrano

By **Jim Heiney**
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Community College (EPCC) Theater Ensemble finishes off its 2013-14 season with *Butterflies Are Free*. This production will be the final play for retiring EPCC Professor and Director, Hector Serrano.

Serrano began at EPCC in 1980 and is well known in the local, regional and national theater community. He was instrumental in the founding of *Viva El Paso!* in 1978 and directed it for 25 years. Serrano directed over 50 plays at EPCC and 200 community, academic and professional theater productions.

Performances of *Butterflies Are*

Free will be Friday and Saturday evenings, April 4, 5, 11 and 12 at 8:00 p.m. There will be two Sunday matinees, April 6 and 13 at 2:30 p.m.

The EPCC Theater Ensemble performs at the EPCC Transmountain Campus Forum Theater, 9570 Gateway North. General Admission is \$15, Non-EPCC students and military are \$10 and EPCC students and staff and senior citizens are \$7. Tickets are available at the door. The box office opens two hours before each performance.

Butterflies Are Free was written by Leonard Gershe. A comedy, it tells the story of a blind young man seeking independence while creating problems with his mother and his new roommate as he struggles to become self-reliant.



Hector Serrano

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Big league ball goes big time wrong down under

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

There are some things in Major League Baseball that are totally necessary.

A player stepping into the batters box with a protective helmet is totally necessary.

Taking the players off the field when a lightning storm is brewing overhead is totally necessary.

Aggressively voicing your opinions about the umpire's apparent visual disorder is totally necessary. In fact, I think that one may be a law.

However, traveling half way around the world to play two games to open the season two weeks before every other team is totally unnecessary.

In another example of executives spending way too much time thinking, MLB came up with the idea that the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Arizona Diamondbacks get their season underway... way underway... like in Australia.

The Dodgers and D-Backs opened the season last week with a couple games in Sydney.

Why in the world would two teams, in the middle of spring training, stop everything, pack their bags and fly to Australia for just two games and then fly back?

And I thought the US government was the great waster of money.

Amazingly, after officially starting the regular season, both the Dodgers and D-Backs are now back in the states playing exhibition games again.

What good did that trip accomplish? How many of you even knew that the two regular season games were going on?

Just when you thought professional baseball was finally getting it right by adding video replay to its arsenal to get calls right, they go off and do something that defies common sense.

And it wasn't just the timing of the games that was a disaster – the entire experience was a complete fiasco.

First of all, many of the players voiced their anger at having to travel that far this early for two games.

Then there was the venue that looked more like Churchill Downs than a baseball stadium. They actually played on a cricket field. The whole surrounding looked just

plain weird.

To make matters even more surreal, the bus carrying the Diamondbacks to the first game encountered a flat tire on the way to the stadium. It took a while for crews to come to the rescue so some of the players just walked the last half-mile to the stadium.

Even Mother Nature got into the act. There were a series of thunderstorms that delayed the start of the first game. Things were so bad that the weather knocked out all of the pre-game festivities.

I guess you could say that our good friend Murphy was there to make sure all of his laws were followed.

The "real" opening night of baseball is this Sunday, when the San Diego Padres take on – guess who – the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Hasn't this team suffered enough?

But the baseball bosses aren't the only ones who come up with dumb ideas. The NFL has been considering the idea of creating an NFL franchise in England.

Why? They can't even get a group together to put a franchise in Los Angeles.

Just like the NFL, professional franchises and sports leagues sometimes forget the

old adage that if something ain't broke don't fix it.

But too often, people in authority often feel the need to flaunt their authority by making what they think is a provocative move or announcement that will get them some badly needed notoriety.

Sometimes oversized and overused egos have to be massaged.

Baseball in America is a tradition that takes us back to a time when we were young, unassuming and could actually bend over to pick up a ball without gasping for air.

Baseball in America marks the change in the season. It means summer is here and the earth around us comes alive again after the winter hibernation.

Baseball in America reminds us of a time when we were closest to our fathers, playing catch for the first time. Dad teaching us to follow through on our swing, using both hands when we catch a fly ball and how to throw a curveball.

Sometimes change is good, like using replay to get calls correct.

Sometimes change is bad, like putting the Dodgers and D-Backs through that useless Australian debacle.

A sporting view By Mark Vasto

There can be only one No. 2

The New York Yankees got their start in an area of north Manhattan affectionately called Hilltop Park. It was a dump. Built in just six weeks, it could seat only 16,000 and left 10,000 people stranded in the wind some 600 feet from home plate in its fence-less outfield.

The Yankees were then called The Highlanders, and their star was "Wee" Willie Keeler, the nimble outfielder who coined the famous baseball cliché "hit 'em where they ain't." Keeler did

that often. He hit .341 for his career, and his name still pops up with semi-regularity. It took Joe DiMaggio to break his hitting-streak record nearly a half-century later; Ichiro broke his singles hit in a season record (209) nearly a century later.

But if we know anything about the Highlanders and the Yankees in general, it's that there can be only one. The Yankees moved to the House that Ruth Built, became the only game in town, won a bunch of

championships, set lots of records, moved to the House that Jeter Built, and immediately drenched the place in nostalgia by virtue of retiring legends Mariano Rivera and Derek Jeter.

Mariano Rivera's farewell tour was a heartwarming affair, and he was gifted from park to park and regaled everywhere he went. His number was retired while still an active player. Jeter is still a player too... in every sense of the word. And since he is pretty cagey with the press and with fans, you can bet his farewell tour will be low on the sap factor. His number will be retired on Derek Jeter Day, and

he will have a monument put in Monument Park, and as time goes on, he will pass this vale of tears and serve as one of the ghosts, no doubt.

But if you go into the park (it is open to the public before every game), you won't find any mention of Wee Willie Keeler or any of the Hall of Famers from the Yankees that aren't featured in the monument section. Players like Earle Combs, the first No. 1, leadoff hitter for the famed 1927 Yankees. You won't find No. 5 Tony Lazzeri, either. He also wore No. 6, and perhaps because he shared that number with Yankee great Rick Cerone, the matter is contentious.

But there is one thing for certain, when Jeter's monument is unveiled, the number never to be worn by

another Yankee player, many of the tens of thousands on hand will be thinking of the other No. 2 they saw play Yankee baseball during the 1970s and early 1980s, the de facto leader of the team after Thurman Munson's death, and successor to Mickey Mantle, the great Bobby Murcer.

Murcer didn't have a Hall of Fame career, but for the Yankees he was memorable enough to warrant mention on that day. He lost his battle with brain cancer in 2008, and while we know that there is only space in the park for one No. 2, what's wrong with marking off a little spot for Murcer, too.

Mark Vasto is a veteran sportswriter who lives in Kansas City. (c) 2014 King Features Synd., Inc.

Morales is new AD for San Eli ISD

By Cynthia P. Marentes
Special to the Courier

SAN ELIZARIO – In his initial week as the new Athletic Director for the San Elizario Independent School District (SEISD) Peter C. Morales has hit the ground running. Morales has already been busy working late into the evening meeting with coaches, attending games and board



– Photo courtesy San Elizario ISD
Peter C. Morales

meetings, and hiring a new football coach.

Morales was previously the head basketball coach at Coronado High School in the El Paso Independent School District where he had several successful seasons with the team. He comes to SEISD with a total of 12 years experience in education and coaching. Morales who has spent the past 9 years of his career working as a head basketball coach also aspired to become an Athletic Director and knew that he could not miss the opportunity to work at SEISD.

"I am fortunate to start in a great district. Its amazing the support that I have received from everyone this past week," Morales said.

As he begins his new role, Morales is focused on getting accustomed to the district and laying the groundwork for his long-term goals. He wants to bring in quality coaches that are dedicated to the students and the community. Already he was actively involved in hiring the new varsity football coach at San Elizario High School.

Morales believes that SEISD is rich in committed individuals who want to make positive changes in the community. Along with having students that are respectful

and hungry to succeed, Morales is confident that he can effectively support SEISD athletic programs and secure the resources the teams need to get everybody on the same page especially since some programs are already excelling.

Morales knows that some of the challenges facing the district will be increasing and maintaining the number of students in different athletic programs.

"All challenges start from the top but if we are consistent, doing the right thing everyday and giving students the skills they need, I think everything else will fall into place," Morales said. Morales added that some of those strategies include making sure athletes know why they are in sports and finding coaches that want to be here for the kids.

Morales was introduced as the latest Athletic Director for SEISD at the school board meeting on March 19. He received his bachelor's degree from New Mexico Highlands University in physical education with a minor in secondary education and a master's degree in athletic administration from Sul Ross State University. He is married to Michelle Morales who also works in education as a counselor and they have two children, Olivia 7, and Joshua, 4.

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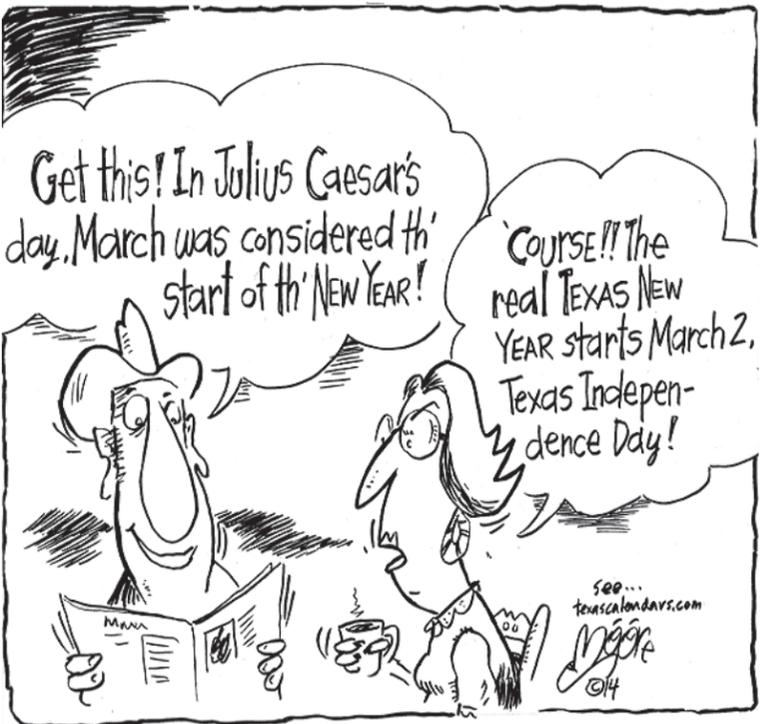
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MOORE TEXAS

by Roger Todd Moore

In the Roman calendar, March was generally considered the first month of the New Year. Caesar must've been a Texan.



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.

	÷		+		12
×		×		-	
	-		×		15
-		+		+	
	+		+		23
12		10			12

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 9

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Answer Page 4

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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 4

★★★ HOO BOY!

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Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Q: If both my spouse and I are entitled to Social Security benefits based on our own work records, is there any reduction in our payments because we are married?

A: No. We independently calculate each person's Social Security benefit amount. Each spouse receives a monthly benefit amount based on his or her own earnings. Couples are not penalized simply because they are married. If one member of the couple earned low wages or did not earn enough Social Security credits to be eligible for retirement benefits, he or she may be eligible to receive benefits as a spouse. Learn more about Social Security at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Q: Can I apply online for retirement benefits?

A: Yes. In fact, almost half of all individuals apply for retirement benefits online. Join the millions of Americans who have saved a trip to a Social Security office and applied the quickest and easiest way—online. In as little as 15 minutes you can submit your application electronically. In most cases, once you've submitted your application, you're done and there are no forms to sign or documents to send in.

If we do need more information to process your application, a representative will contact you. For more information about applying online, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call us toll-free at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

Q: Who can get Extra Help with Medicare prescription drug coverage?

A: If you receive Medicare and have limited income and resources, you may be eligible for Extra Help – Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage – to pay for the costs (monthly premiums, annual deductibles, and prescription co-payments) related to a Medicare prescription drug plan. To qualify for Extra Help, you must reside in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia. Your resources must be limited to \$13,300 for an individual or \$26,580 for a married couple living together. Resources include such things as bank accounts, stocks, and bonds. We do not count your house and car as resources. Your annual income must be limited to \$17,235 for an individual or \$23,265 for a married couple living together. Even if your annual income is higher, you still may be able to

get some help. Learn more at www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp.

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.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

• It was 19th-century British author and social reformer John Ruskin who made the following sage observation: "In order that people may be happy in their work, these three things are needed: they must be fit for it; they must not do too much of it; and they must have a sense of success in it."

• Before the element helium was known to exist on Earth, scientists discovered that it existed on the sun. The newly discovered element was therefore named helium after the Greek god of the sun, Helios.

• If you suffer from odontophobia, you're afraid of teeth.

• If you have ever been pregnant (or known someone who has), you might be familiar with a condition sometimes known as "momnesia" or "prego-brain." It seems pretty common for pregnant women to forget names, misplace keys and sometimes even make it to work while still wearing their fuzzy slippers. You might be surprised to learn that there is science to support the existence of this phenomenon: Brain scans show that during pregnancy, some of the blood flow in a woman's brain shifts from the forebrain, responsible for short-term memory and multitasking, to the hindbrain, which takes care of the basics of survival. So the next time you see a pregnant woman in the grocery store wearing bunny slippers, give her a break; she's building a new person.

• A cow was once purchased at auction for \$1.3 million.

• If you are like the average adult, you will be cheated on one time before you find the person you settle down with. Also, at some point during your dating life you'll be the cheater.

Thought for the Day: "A person usually has two reasons for doing something: a good reason and the real reason."

– Thomas Carlyle

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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: W equals S

DIHO E FGMSHXEO GW FHSSN

ILQGOT WLXHUIGOT DGSS

IEQQHO, NLP XGTIU WEN IH'W

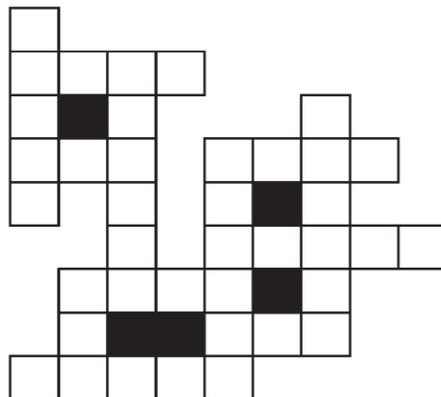
TPOOGOT MLF GU.

Answer Page 4

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- GGA
- LEGFED
- TRAGF
- ♥ IDLS
- ♥ GURTSN
- IXF
- ♥ TUSR
- DEEUX
- RIS
- USELAX
- ♥ DARGE
- ♥ EFTA



Answer Page 4

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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