



NEWSBRIEFS

Unpaid student loans

Outstanding student loan debt is a bane for recent grads, but it is on the rise at an alarming rate among the nation's senior citizens, according to the Association of Mature American Citizens. The Government Accountability Office reports that student loan debt among seniors has risen by more than 600% since 2005. Older Americans owed \$2.8 billion in unpaid school loans in 2005, last year the amount of debt had increased to more than \$18 billion. Twenty percent of those loans were understandably taken out to pay for their children's education. But, the bulk of the debt, 80%, is the result of the failure of seniors to pay back the money they borrowed decades ago for their own schooling. Now it is having a negative impact on the retirement plans for many of them, particularly those on fixed incomes, as the government sets out to recoup the funds.

— John Grimaldi

Risk of tax ID theft

Texas ranks eighth in nation in ID theft complaints. To coincide with Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week, the AARP Fraud Watch Network is launching an education effort to help people protect themselves from tax scams, releasing a new video, a tip sheet and encouraging people to take advantage of AARP's free tax preparation services. Many taxpayers are putting themselves at greater risk of tax identity theft, according to a recent national study (<http://bit.ly/1yWrOYM>) released by the AARP Fraud Watch Network in conjunction with the education campaign to help prevent scammers from stealing Texans hard-earned money. According to the Federal Trade Commission (<http://1.usa.gov/1ynuOrX>), Texas ranks eighth in ID theft complaints. In this identity theft scheme, scammers electronically file a tax return under someone else's name to collect their tax refund. All they need is a birthdate and Social Security number, and many taxpayers make their personal information easy pickings by:

- Failing to lock their mailbox. Almost six in ten (59%) Americans do not regularly lock their mailbox, which leaves them open to a criminal stealing bills, tax forms and other documents that contain personal information.

See BRIEFS, Page 4

There are two reasons why we don't trust people: one, because we don't know them; and the other, because we do.

— Quips & Quotes



— Photo courtesy of Big Bend National Park Service

AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE – Even an isolated region as big, rugged and remote as Big Bend National Park, above, is subject to the ecological stresses and strains of modern development when park service managers consider catering “to the whims of concessionaires and public officials” and start thinking more about visitation counts rather than preservation of the park's natural and cultural resources. Big Bend Park is about 300 miles southeast of El Paso.

Environmentalists oppose building project at Big Bend National Park

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

Environmentalists from throughout the country are weighing-in on the recent announcement from the National Park Service (NPS) that it plans to build a large facility to house a proposed fossil discovery exhibit at Big Bend National Park (BBNP).

NPS Intermountain Regional Director Sue E. Masica approved this fall a BBNP finding on how building a new Fossil Discovery Exhibit in the Tornillo Flat area of the park would have no significant impact.

As word of the proposed project spreads, however, wilderness and national park advocates are expressing their opinions emphatically; most think it is a bad idea. Opponents of the exhibit facility plans have taken to social media to promote their message against the project by initiating a petition on the change.org website, and already supporters of the petition are coming from El Paso, the largest city near the park, and other Texas cities and areas of the country including California, New Mexico, Wisconsin and Oklahoma.

Marshall Carter-Tripp, past director of University of Texas at El Paso's (UTEP) Centennial Museum said that a smartphone trail could be constructed for very little, and would have only a tiny portion of the impact that this huge display will have. “No one is impressed by fake fossils anymore! We go to Big Bend to get away

from our over-built world. Please leave Big Bend as it is,” he commented.

Diane Devine, wife of former Park Ranger Bob Devine and a former teacher at San Vicente School at Panther Junction Park Headquarters, stated, “BBNP already

has visitor centers capable of housing displays; current staffing patterns will be stressed to cover additional exhibits, but lack of staffing could create safety issues.

See BIG BEND, Page 5

San Elizario ISD administrator nominated for state honor

By Cynthia P. Marentes
Special to the Courier

SAN
ELIZARIO
— Michael

Rodriguez, Career and Technology Education Coordinator with the San Elizario Independent School District (SEISD), has been nominated to the Career and Technical Association of Texas – Career and Technology Education Administrator of the Year award competition. Rodriguez will represent Area 11 at the 2015 Texas Career Education Winter Conference to be held in Austin during the first week of February where the winner will be announced.

Career and technology education (CTE) directors from many school districts in Area 11, which includes both El Paso and Hudspeth counties, nominated Rodriguez.

“It is an honor to be nominated by these individuals, some of whom have been in education for almost 30 years, and who feel that what I have done has made an impact and helped them in their contributions to CTE and their students,” Rodriguez said.

In order to be nominated for the Career and Technical Association of Texas



Michael Rodriguez

See RODRIGUEZ, Page 8

Finances By Jason Alderman

Financial literacy and U.S. teens: Global study offers path for improvement

A first-time global financial literacy study shows that the keys to successful personal finance education are student perseverance and an openness to problem solving.

That's one of the main findings in the inaugural financial literacy portion of the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) test (<http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-volume-vi.htm>), which evaluated the skills and knowledge of 29,000 15-year-olds in 18 countries and economies in 2012. Final results were released in September, and PISA officials announced that the assessment of financial literacy will be offered as an optional component in 2015 testing.

PISA was launched in 2000 by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which promotes policies that support economic and social well-being around the world.

U.S. students earned an average score of 492 out of a possible 700, which ranks those teens between eighth and twelfth place among all 18 participating countries and economies, according to the PISA study. Other findings from the U.S. results:

- **About one in 10 U.S. students is a top performer – 9.4 percent, compared with 9.7 percent across OECD**

countries. The report said this means they can “look ahead to solve financial problems or make the kinds of financial decisions that will be only relevant to them in the future.” It added that top performers “can take into account features of financial documents that are significant but unstated or not immediately evident, such as transaction costs, and can describe the potential outcomes of financial decisions.”

- **More than one in six U.S. students – 17.8 percent, compared with 15.3 percent across OECD countries – do not reach the “baseline level of proficiency in financial literacy.”** The report explained that “at best, these students can recognize the difference between needs and wants, can make simple decisions on everyday spending and can recognize the purpose of everyday financial documents such as an invoice.”

- **About 50 percent of all U.S. 15-year-olds said they had a bank account and were found to perform better than those who did not.** But the report said the performance gap vanished after accounting for socioeconomic status; only 32 percent of students in the lowest quartile of socioeconomic status had accounts, while 70 percent of those in the highest quartile did.

Countries with students who

scored better than their U.S. counterparts seem dedicated to a nationwide, mandatory personal finance curriculum, though most programs have not been in place for very long.

The top scorer, Shanghai-China, has a history of placing financial education topics in its national curriculum that dates back to the 1970s, according to the report. It added that beginning in 2009, the Shanghai-China system has introduced “regular training on finance” throughout its “primary and lower secondary schools.”

In the Czech Republic, a working group for the nation’s ministry of finance developed financial literacy standards in 2007, defining lesson content and outcomes for education in topics ranging from “money and household budget management to financial products and consumer rights.”

Furthermore, in Australia, the nation’s education authorities “have endorsed three iterations” of the country’s National Consumer and Financial Literacy Framework since 2005. According to the PISA report, Australia’s framework helps structure consumer and financial education throughout the country’s educational system and the program has worked with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission to

create MoneySmart Teaching could improve their financial a resource portal for K-12 literacy if states chose to require educators.

In America, more teens **See FINANCES, Page 8**

Veterans Post By Freddy Groves

Wheelchair games

The 35th annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games is now taking applications for the world’s largest wheelchair sports event for disabled veterans. The games will be held in Dallas from June 21-26. Registration closes in April.

The games, run jointly by Paralyzed Veterans of American and the Department of Veterans Affairs, are a great way for disabled veterans with amputations, spinal-cord injuries or neurological injuries to live active lives through wheelchair sports. If a veteran is eligible for care from the VA, he or she is eligible to participate.

Register early, because spaces fill quickly. Call your VA therapist, if you have one, or the local chapter representative for Paralyzed Veterans.

If you’re not ready to compete this year, hook up with VA Rehabilitation Programs and Paralyzed Veterans of America in your area to get involved in sports and recreation. They can help guide you on what your next steps might be.

If you don’t know how to get started, contact Dave Tostenrude, NVWG director for the VA, at 202-560-7352 or by

email at David.Tostenrude@va.gov. Or you can contact Tom Brown, Paralyzed Veterans sports consultant, at 817-673-2812 or send email to tombrown@pva.org.

Participating in a sport at the games isn’t the only way you can get involved. Be a volunteer – 3,000 will be needed in a multitude of capacities.

To sign up or get more information, go online to www.wheelchairgames.org or call one of the contacts above. You’ll find links to local sports clubs and adaptive sports opportunities – such as billiards, bowling, bass tour, shooting sports and handcycling – through Paralyzed Veterans. Through the VA, you can get involved in winter sports clinics, golden-age games, summer sports clinics and more.

Make the call. It could make a big difference in your life.

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) 2015 King Features Synd., Inc.

UTEP MEN'S BASKETBALL
TICKETS: 747-5234

THURSDAY	
JAN. 29	VS UAB / 7 PM at&t
SATURDAY	
JAN. 31	VS MIDDLE TENNESSEE / 7 PM Coca-Cola

1973 42 Years 2015 WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER
SERVING ANTHONY, VINTON, CANTILELO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORRO, CLINT, FAHNS, SAN ELIZABO AND TORNILLO

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

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

COPYRIGHT: Entire contents © 2015 Homesteader News, Inc. Individual authors retain all rights. Pictures, drawings and written material appearing in the West Texas County Courier may not be used or reproduced without written permission of Homesteader News, Inc.

CLASSIFIED RATES \$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.

DISPLAY RATES: Open rate – \$25 per column inch. Call for more information or to set an appointment. The Courier reserves the right not to print advertising it considers inappropriate.

MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS: Minimum 50 issues for \$45. Delivery via 1st class mail.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: 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.

MAIL: 15344 Werling Ct. Horizon City, TX 79928

Phone: 852-3235
Fax: 852-0123
E-mail: wtcc@wtcc.com
Website: wtcc.com

Publisher Rick Shrum
Contributors Alfredo Vasquez, Don Woodyard, Steve Escajeda

Member Texas Community Newspaper Association

Homesteader News, Inc.
 Est. 1973



— Photo courtesy Clint ISD

STARTING OUT ON THE RIGHT TRACK – Mr. and Mrs. Mark Martinez and their new baby girl received a bag of books, a baby tee with “Future Clint ISD Graduate” printed on it and other information about reading to babies. Clint ISD Superintendent Juan I. Martinez presented the family with the teaching tools.

Clint ISD launches baby reading program for parents

By Laura Cade
Special to the Courier

Read to your baby every day! This is what the Clint ISD Cradle to College initiative encourages parents in the District to do, to help their child prepare for school and future success.

“Our goal is to assist parents with their child’s education from birth to high school graduation so they will be ready to enter college and succeed,” said Superintendent, Juan I. Martinez.

The initiative promotes early literacy for infants by encouraging parents to read to their infant during this critical developmental stage of the brain. The simple act of enjoying books together every day beginning at birth establishes essential reading skills while building warm relationships.

Fabiola Vasquez, mother to 6-month-old Elias Vasquez, future student at Red Sands

Elementary, was one of eight parents to receive a package the day of the launch in early December. She said the books and information have come in handy and will create a culture of reading in her home.

“I think the program Cradle to College is very special,” said Vasquez. “It shows the district is interested in the education and development of our children even at an early age.”

According to the Children’s Reading Foundation, reading each day not only builds vocabulary, language, and pre-literacy skills, it provides an opportunity to build social and emotional skills that are just as important to school success.

New parents with an infant one year old or younger and who live in the District may receive books appropriate for an infant along with additional information to assist the parent with reading to their baby. To refer a new parent to this program, contact Clint ISD Public Relations at (915) 926-4058.

Workshops to help families fill out FAFSA

By Paula Diaz
Special to the Courier

One of the most important applications a high school student can fill out is the FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Throughout February the Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce, Education Division, will assist with these financial aid workshops in every school district in El Paso County. Trained bilingual volunteers will be available to help as well.

Socorro ISD (SISD) will host FAFSA Nights to help students and parents apply at each high school from 4:30 to 7 p.m. in the high school’s computer labs.

The SISD workshop schedule is Feb. 2, Americas High; Feb. 4, Montwood High; Feb. 11, Eastlake High; Feb. 19, Socorro High; and Feb. 26, El Dorado High.

Students or parents in other districts should check their individual high school for dates and times.

Students can also fill out the FAFSA at www.fafsa.gov. For information, call (800) 433-3243 or (319) 337-5665; visit StudentAid.gov/resources or www.elpaso.org, go to the Divisions tab and “FAFSA Nights;” or contact your high school counselor.

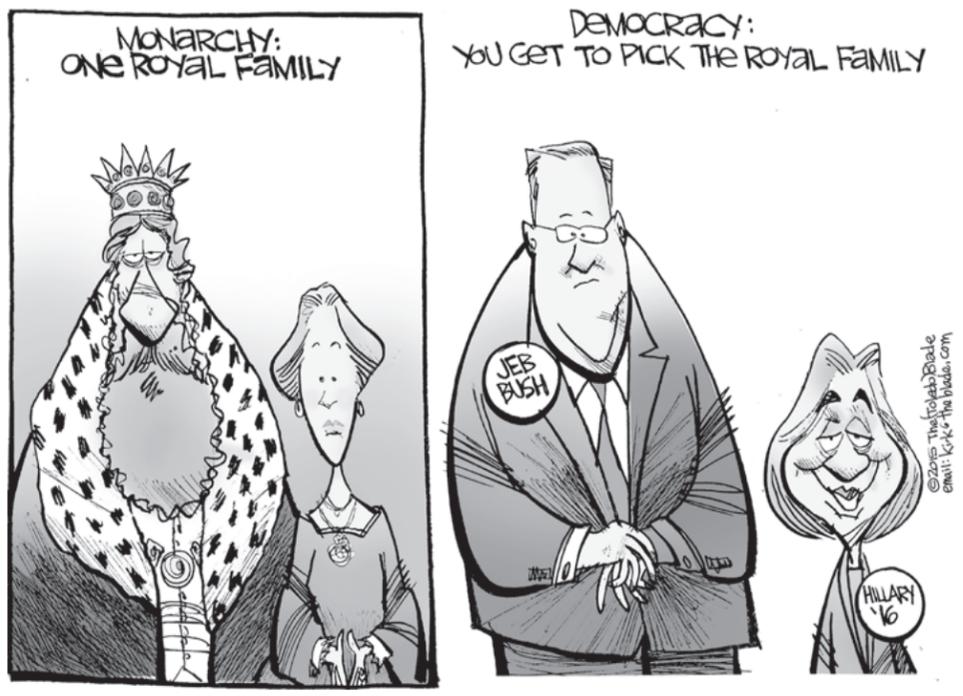
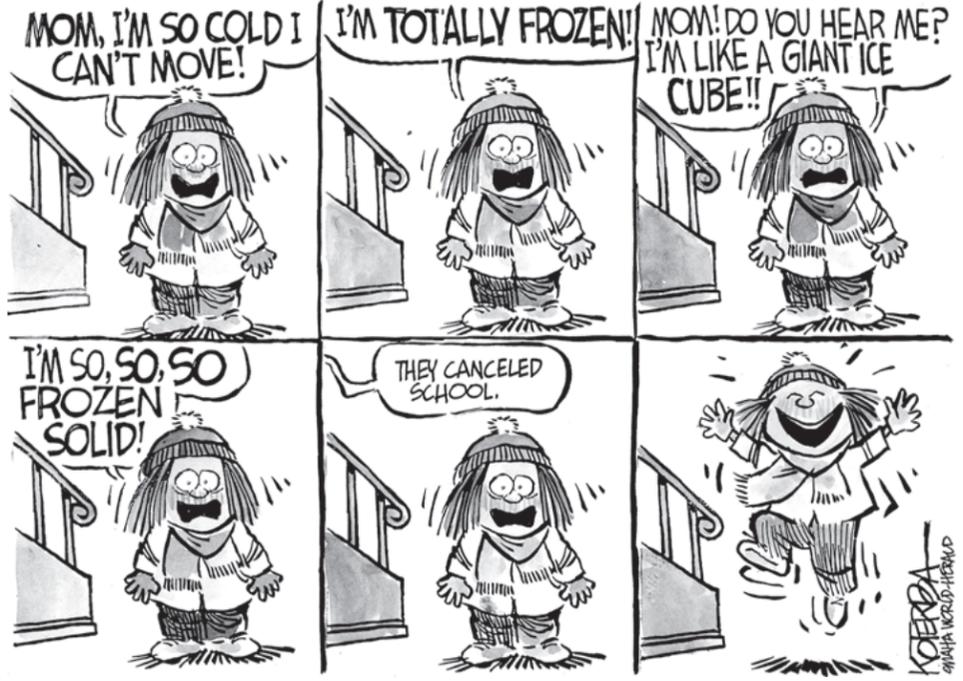
SISD high school counselors have a goal to get 100 percent senior students to Apply Texas. That means students apply once to all Texas public universities and colleges, as well as to participating community and private colleges for free, said Dianna L. Enriquez, SISD’s counselor in Guidance & Counseling Services. The numbers increase every year, but this year SISD wants every senior to take advantage of Apply Texas, she said. Students can apply at www.applytexas.org.

Team SISD educators encourage all seniors to fill out FAFSA. Don’t let misconceptions about financial aid stop you from applying for the monetary aid you deserve to attend college.

Five myths about FAFSA

Myth: My parents make too much money, so I won’t qualify for aid.

Reality: There is no income cut-off to qualify for federal student aid. Many factors besides income – from the size of your family to the age of your older



parent – are taken into account. Your eligibility is determined by a mathematical formula, not by your parents’ income alone.

Myth: There isn’t enough financial aid for everyone.

Reality: The amount of aid for college students increases almost every year. According to the College Board: More than \$185 billion in financial aid was distributed to undergraduates during the 2012-2013 academic year in the form of aid from all sources, including grants, work-study, loans, and tax credits and deductions.

Myth: Only students with good grades get financial help.

Reality: While a high grade point average will help a student get into a good school and may help with academic scholarships, most of the federal student aid programs do not take a student’s grades into consideration. Provided a student maintains satisfactory academic progress in his or her program of study, federal student aid will help a student with an average academic record complete

his or her education.

Myth: Only minority ethnic groups of students are eligible for financial aid.

Reality: The overwhelming bulk of federal, state, institutional, and private aid is not tied to ethnicity. Some private scholarships target deserving students with particular ethnic backgrounds, but most do not take ethnicity into account. FAFSA, the most common financial aid application, doesn’t even ask about your ethnicity.

Myth: The form is too hard to fill out.

Reality: The FAFSA is easier than ever, especially if you fill it out online at www.fafsa.gov. There are detailed instructions for every question, and the form walks you through step by step, asking only the questions that apply to you. If you need help, you can access real-time, private online chat with a customer service representative. If you’re filling out the paper FAFSA, you can get help from a high school counselor, the financial aid office at the school you plan to attend or our toll-free number: (800) 433-3243. And remember, FAFSA and all these sources of advice are free.

Briefs

From Page 1

- Leaving valuables exposed: Over half (54%) of Americans 18-49 have left at least one valuable personal item in their car in the last week (e.g., a purse/wallet, paystub, laptop) that could be used to steal their identity.
- Failing to destroy personal information: More than one in five (21%) Americans say they never shred any of the personal documents that could be used to steal their identity. Tips on how to protect yourself and your family from tax identity theft include:
- Mail tax returns as early

in the tax season as possible before the cons beat you to it.

- Don't give out personal information unless you know who's asking for it and why they need it.
- Shred personal and financial documents.
- Know your tax preparer.

Texans are also encouraged to visit aarp.org/taxaide (1-888-227-7669) for information about AARP Foundation Tax Aide, the nation's largest free, volunteer-run tax preparation program. Each tax season, Tax Aide helps millions of low- to moderate-income taxpayers – especially those 60 and older – get the credits and deductions they deserve. For these and other fraud prevention tips, visit aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork. For

additional help, contact the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit at 800-908-4490 and visit irs.gov/identitytheft.

– Kim Loop

Don't be scammed

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) warns Texans' seeking unemployment benefits to be aware of third-party vendors offering assistance. Unemployment insurance (UI) claims should be filed through the TWC website or by phone, and never through a third-party. Individuals in Texas have reported receiving emails soliciting personal information from a third-party vendor who is not affiliated with TWC called the Unemployment

Advisory Department, with an email address support@us-benefits.org. Emails stated the claimant's initial benefits application was received, but not complete, and provided links to complete the filing process. TWC advises claimants to ignore these emails. TWC does not send these types of emails and would never require confidential information be shared with a third-party to obtain unemployment benefits. Claimants should be wary of online third-party UI benefits resource centers who usually charge a fee for providing advice and job services to applicants in

See BRIEFS, Page 8

STRANGE BUT TRUE
By Samantha Weaver

- It was German author and statesman Johann Wolfgang von Goethe who made the following sage observation: "When ideas fail, words come in very handy."

- Unless you're a local, you've probably never heard of the town of Rugby, North Dakota, but if you ever set out to find the geographical center of the continent of North America, that's where you'll end up.

- In 1936, in the final match of the men's table tennis world championship, the two competitors volleyed for two hours and 12 minutes on the opening serve alone.

- Before modern English there was Middle English, used during a time when men of the church were supposed to remain humble. This is why these men were called "ministers" – it means "lowly person" in Middle English.

- Those who study such things say that if you spend an hour listening to the radio, you'll hear approximately 11,000 words.

- Dr. L. Forbes Winslow, perhaps best known for his relentless (and fruitless) attempts to identify the person behind London's Jack the Ripper murders, also was a well-known psychiatrist. Among his many notes on his practice was the report of a heartbroken man who requested that, after his death, his body should be boiled down to extract the fat. That fat would be used to make a candle which, along with a letter from the deceased, would be delivered to the woman who jilted him. He even specified that the items should be delivered at night, so the woman would read the letter by the light of the "corpse candle."

- If you were living in the newly christened United States in 1776 and earned \$4,000 per year, you would be considered wealthy.

Thought for the Day: "I am not young enough to know everything."
– Oscar Wilde

(c) 2015 King Features Synd., Inc.

**Anthony Independent School District
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance
Governmental Funds
For the Year Ended August 31, 2014**

Data Control Codes	General Fund	Capitol Projects	Other Funds	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES:				
5700 Total Local and Intermediate Sources	\$ 1,905,141	\$ 4,146	\$ 287,094	\$ 2,196,381
5800 State Program Revenues	5,489,144	–	245,979	5,735,123
5900 Federal Program Revenues	786,028	–	1,012,331	1,798,359
5020 Total Revenues	8,180,313	4,146	1,545,404	9,729,863
EXPENDITURES:				
Current:				
0011 Instruction	3,792,849	–	505,718	4,298,567
0012 Instructional Resources and Media Services	211,859	–	–	211,859
0013 Curriculum and Instructional Staff Development	205,734	–	37,388	243,122
0021 Instructional Leadership	94,591	–	1,253	95,844
0023 School Leadership	452,113	–	9,445	461,558
0031 Guidance, Counseling and Evaluation Services	224,548	–	95,959	320,507
0033 Health Services	117,230	–	–	117,230
0034 Student (Pupil) Transportation	137,395	–	–	137,395
0035 Food Services	749,324	–	397,039	1,146,363
0036 Extracurricular Activities	438,916	–	705	439,621
0041 General Administration	614,205	–	–	614,205
0051 Facilities Maintenance and Operations	902,091	–	33,016	935,107
0052 Security and Monitoring Services	58,645	–	–	58,645
0053 Data Processing Services	262,938	–	–	262,938
0061 Community Services	292	–	39,408	39,700
Debt Service:				
0071 Debt Service - Principal on Long Term Debt	–	–	5,868	5,868
0072 Debt Service - Interest on Long Term Debt	–	–	362,643	362,643
Capital Outlay:				
0081 Facilities Acquisition and Construction	–	214,945	–	214,945
Intergovernmental:				
0093 Payments to Fiscal Agent/Member Districts of SSA	–	–	6,962	6,962
0099 Other Intergovernmental Charges	26,117	–	–	26,117
6030 Total Expenditures	8,288,847	214,945	1,495,404	9,999,196
1200 Net Change in Fund Balances	(108,534)	(210,799)	50,000	(269,333)
0100 Fund Balance – September 1 (Beginning)	2,699,129	3,001,382	18,323	5,718,834
3000 Fund Balance – August 31 (Ending)	\$ 2,590,595	2,790,583	\$ 68,323	\$ 5,449,501

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

L	A	C	E	D					
I			N						
D	I	R	T		P	L	Y		
				A					
				I					
	R	U	L	E	R				
	A					C	A	L	M
	S	I	M	P	E	R			
	P								

A	C	C	O	S	T		M	O	A	N		S	P	O	I	L	A	G	E			
I	R	O	N		A	T	R	I	P		A	A	I	R	T	I	M	E	S			
D	O	M	E	S	T	I	C	H	E	L	P	L	A	K	E	B	A	S	S			
S	W	A	B		T	H	E	N		E	R	I	N		T	S	E					
				C	U	L	T	U	R	A	L	R	E	V	O	L	U	T	I	O	N	
P	B	S		G	E	O		I	S	L	A	M	I	Z	E							
I	M	P	A	L	A		E	T	T	E		A	S	I	A	T	I	C				
P	O	U	R	I	N	G	D	O	W	N	R	A	I	N	S	U	N	Y				
E	C	R	U		S	O	U	S	A		E	N	D	W	E	L	L	S				
				B	A	I	T			A	M	N	E	S	I	A		S	A	T		
I	W	A	S	N	T	B	O	R	N		Y	E	S	T	E	R	D	A	Y			
A	S	T		S	T	A	R	R	E	D		E	T	T								
D	O	E	S	T	O		O	B	I		S	C	R	A	P		C	L	I	O		
A	L	L				T	W	E	N	T		Y	S	O	M	E	T	H	I	N	G	
M	A	D	D	A	S	H				E	D	I	T		P	S	I	C	H	O		
				O	R	I	E	N	T	A	L		A	S	A		E	D	D			
R	E	D	W	I	N	G	E	D		B	L	A	C	K		B	I	R	D			
E	R	A				R	A	S	A		M	A	I	L		R	E	A	P			
C	A	R	E	S	S	E	R			B	E	A	T		L	E	S	S	O	N	G	S
A	T									Y	E	N	T	L		H	A	L	L	O	E	S
P	O	L	A	R	I	T				R	A	Y	S			H	A	L	L	S	E	T

CryptoQuip Answer

If the puppet Howdy Doody were to wed actress Funicello, would a marionette mary Annette?

2	-	1	x	7	7
+		+		-	
4	+	8	-	5	7
÷		÷		x	
6	÷	3	+	4	6
1		3		8	

Big Bend

From Page 1

Have use statistics justified a need for a new exhibit?"

Mark Kirtley, who has worked as a volunteer at the park for many years, summed up much of the opposition to the exhibit when he said, "I've listened to thousands of visitors talk about why they love Big Bend. They often speak of a peace engendered by the wide-open spaces, a quality that the Park Service normally fiercely protects and a quality that buildings impact. Driving the gravel Old Ore Road or even the paved park road from Persimmon Gap to Panther Junction can feel like paradise, but a large exhibit at Fossil Bone, even a lovely one, would somewhat spoil the experience. Doesn't the Organic Act mandate that we preserve the scenery? And cannot education at a national park occur without compromising its beauty? Visitors do like wayside exhibits, but my impression is that they prefer the intimate and personal feel of the small ones, like the one at Anna Hanford's grave."

"Many people who have fought against development project proposals in the park in the past believe that the park's staff was able to gain support for the project by focusing solely on financial support from the friends group. Unlike environmental groups that are willing to be critical of park management actions, historically most National Park Friends Groups and Cooperating Associations support nearly everything that parks want them to. I saw this first hand when

I worked for two of them over a 14-year period," stated Rick LoBello, an environmentalist from El Paso.

"You would think that park staff would demonstrate a greater passion for conserving the park by focusing more on protecting park resources and working on plans to reintroduce extirpated species like the gray wolf and desert bighorn. I understand that there are also problems with exotic species like European wild boars and exotic plants species," LoBello stated.

Opponents of the project contend that there was very little effort by the park to alert the public to the proposal and to seek input from wilderness advocate groups like the Sierra Club. Big Bend Sierra Club member Roger Siglin, a former BBNP ranger who lives in Alpine TX, said that the "building design and size is totally inappropriate for the current location and would be out of place anywhere else in Big Bend NP. My experiences in Big Bend go back to 1966 when I was a ranger there. The existing exhibit is a disgrace and should be removed. I was therefore pleased when I heard the park was planning a new one. But the proposed structure to house exhibits is ugly beyond anything I might have imagined. I have frequently hiked in the hills across Tornillo Creek and this structure will impact the wilderness experience because it will be highly visible for hiking off of the Old Ore Road."

LoBello said that when he visited the park in the fall he decided to make a YouTube video of the area where the proposed exhibit will be located to help



— Photo courtesy of Big Bend National Park Service

ROCKING IT – One of the many beautiful sights in Big Bend National Park.

people better understand the project and what the NPS has planned.

"Unfortunately the park did a very poor job in spreading the word about the new exhibit when an Environmental Assessment (EA) process was announced. What was shown and described in the EA documents did little to help the general public truly understand the big picture of the project," LoBello claimed.

According to the park's geologist Don Corrick, the project will have a potential footprint of 4,000 square feet. Corrick

stated that the project will be fully funded by donations gathered by the Friends of Big Bend National Park, and that the project will not proceed until the fundraising is complete, so a timeline is not available.

LoBello is urging interested individuals to watch his YouTube video and to voice their concern about protecting the wilderness experience at BBNP by contacting their elected state and federal representatives as well as by signing the petition at iloveparks.com.

Archives: www.wtxcc.com

Are you uninsured?

Join the millions who found affordable health coverage.
Visit our **Enrollment Assistance Center**.

Already have a plan?
It's time to renew –
or find one that's better
for you.



Most people qualify for financial assistance. Get free in-person help signing up for a health plan that fits you, your family, and your budget.

Where: El Paso Enrollment Assistance Center
221 N. Kansas Street, Suite 700
El Paso, TX 79901

When: Scheduled appointments Mon-Fri 8:30am-6:30pm
Walk-ins Mon-Fri 9:00am-4:00pm
By appointment only Sat 9:00am-2:00pm

To learn more, call 915-242-2170
Text SUBSCRIBE to 467873 to sign up for text message alerts. Standard text messaging rates apply.

Open Enrollment ends February 15, 2015.

HealthCare.gov



Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Hay representantes que hablan español.

If the Super Bowl is as good as the controversy...

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

It's finally here. The Super Bowl, the biggest game of the year is upon us and fans all over the world are getting ready.

The Seattle Seahawks and the New England Patriots will battle it out this Sunday in Arizona to claim NFL bragging rights for an entire year.

Oh yeah, there's a whole bunch of money at stake too.

There's always a ton of anticipation heading into the contest.

How will the players play? How will the coaches coach? Who will be the unsung hero? Who will be the goat?

Those questions get answered every year and the results live on for eternity.

But the anticipation isn't always associated with what happens on the field.

There are questions concerning what kind of a halftime show Katy Perry will put on. Fans are wondering whether this week's commercials will compare favorably to Super Bowl commercials of the past.

Of course it wouldn't be a Super

Bowl without a touch of controversy. And this year's championship game has generated so much controversy that nobody has spent any time talking about New England's offensive tendencies or Seattle's relentless defense.

All the talk surrounding this Super Bowl, as all of you know, has been famously labeled as "Deflategate."

The question is whether the Patriots deliberately deflated the footballs illegally in their playoff game against the Indianapolis Colts. The answer is a very simple one – of course they did!

Because the Patriots won 45-7, many fans are saying that the deflated balls didn't give the team an advantage.

But that's not the question. The question is whether the Patriots tried to gain a slight advantage by letting a little bit of the air out.

And Patriots' quarterback Tom Brady is on record saying, a few years ago, that he liked his footballs a little more deflated than the norm.

With Russian forces on the move again in the Ukraine, with ISIS thugs terrorizing somebody somewhere and with free speech under attack in France – deflating a few footballs may seem pretty trivial.

But remember that this is not the first time Bill Belichick and his Patriots have been caught cheating. Back in 2007, Belichick was caught and admitted to videotaping New York Jets practices to steal signals and familiarize themselves with Jets plays.

That was a clear violation of NFL rules and Belichick was fined \$500,000 for the "mistake," as he called it.

If nothing else the Patriots are certainly societal trendsetters. They are the first team in professional sports to have two separate "gate" controversies attributed to them.

Those sneaky camera sessions back in 2007 resulted in Spycgate. And now we have Deflategate.

Of course Belichick and Brady have both denied knowing how in the world 11 of the 12 balls they used were under-inflated, which gives anyone a better grip. They had no clue how all of the Colts' balls had the proper inflation and theirs didn't.

My father-in-law told me a long time ago that he was born at night – but not last night!

But the fun doesn't end there.

When I mentioned earlier that every

Super Bowl brings with it a touch of controversy, I meant it – literally.

The other controversy involves Seahawks running back Marshawn Lynch and the "touch" is his unusual need to grab his crotch after a touchdown.

Lynch is known for being one of the most brutal runners in the history of the league. He's also known for collecting fines from the league for not meeting his obligations to talk to the media after games.

Lynch is also known for being arrested on gun charges, assault, hit and run, theft and driving under the influence.

There's been rumors flying around that the Seahawks organization has grown weary of Lynch's troublesome antics and will consider trading him after the Super Bowl.

It remains to be seen whether Seattle will do that and it also remains to be seen whether Lynch will give another vulgar salute to the fans if he scores.

Oh, I almost forgot, there will be a game this Sunday.

It turns out that the most important question of all is whether the actual game will come anywhere close to as exciting as all the pregame hype has been.

A sporting view By Mark Vasto

The crack of the bat

Each year the selections are scrutinized and the parameters are parsed, the voters are vetoed by the viewers at home, and those who make it to the hallowed haven beckon their brethren to the celestial confines known to one and all as the Hall... of Fame, that is, the one in Cooperstown, New York. For baseball fans, discussing the baseball Hall of Fame is the closest thing to nicotine or crack cocaine – we know it leads to addiction, and you are never satisfied, but you still keep going back for more, knowing that punishment

awaits.

This year's HOF inductees – Randy Johnson, Pedro Martinez, John Smoltz and Craig Biggio – were all players that I actively stumped for. My remaining six choices – Mike Piazza, Alan Trammell, Curt Schilling, Tim Lincecum, Lee Smith and Don Mattingly – did not fare as well, but it appears that Piazza, Schilling and Raines are trending in the right direction and one day will be enshrined.

Piazza, the greatest hitting catcher of all-time, which is really saying something when

you consider Johnny Bench, Yogi Berra, Carlton Fisk, Gary Carter, Roy Campanella, Thurman Munson and Rick Cerone all played the game too, will more than likely make the cut next year. Schilling, every bit as dominant as Glavine, Martinez, Maddux and Johnson in his own way, saw a big bump in votes this year, and it appears he will be taking the meandering Bert Blyeleven route to Cooperstown. Raines will end up in the Hall, if not voted in proper, he will be brought in by the veterans committee. The same fate likely will await Trammell.

Jeff Bagwell and first-timer Gary Sheffield did not make the cut, and Bagwell did not show any great movement from last

year's vote. Both are tarred with the suspicion of PED use. This also is why I left both off my ballot. Piazza, too, has had to dodge this question, but I chose to look the other way. Why? I am a hypocrite, I guess. Maybe it's because he's Catholic, or Italian, or because he was clutch. Maybe because he didn't show signs of 'roid rage when Roger Clemens threw a baseball at his head and a bat at his feet at the turn of the century. Just spitballin' here.

I wouldn't give up on Bagwell or Sheff, particularly if Sheffield can mount an eloquent defense of his offensive marks. That he was a loudmouth and considered to be a clubhouse cancer should have little bearing on his Hall chances. While

he was outspoken, he was not necessarily a detriment to any team. Selfish? Perhaps. But who cares? He could flat-out hit. Bagwell and Edgar Martinez will benefit by having this class going to bat for them. Johnson and Biggio already have started their campaigns in earnest, and their voices will be considered.

The lost cause in all of this is Don Mattingly. After all of these years, all of the statistics, I have to know when to kick the habit. You can't say I didn't go to bat for you, Hitman. If there was a Hall of Very, Very Good, though, you'd be my first inductee.

Mark Vasto is a veteran sportswriter who lives in Kansas City. (c) 2015 King Features Synd., Inc.

SISD Board Trustees approve school bus stop-arm camera system resolution

By Christina Flores-Jones
Special to the Courier

Socorro ISD Board of Trustees approved a resolution in support of a district-wide camera system on school buses to catch bus stop-arm violators and ensure safer streets in the Team SISD community. The resolution was presented at the Jan. 20 regular Board of Trustees meeting.

The board approved the contract for the state-of-the-art camera system and for district staff to move forward in implementing the program district-wide at the December 2014 board meeting. The cameras take images of vehicles that ignore and pass buses with the

stop-arm out.

Team SISD tested the bus camera system on 10 of the district's school buses last spring semester. The cameras will assist the district in fulfilling its top priority of providing a safe and secure environment for all students.

A recent national news story reported the Department of Transportation says that 23 million children ride a school bus every day and according to the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Information Services, vehicles pass stopped school buses more than 70,000 times a day, even though passing one with its lights flashing is illegal in all 50 states.

SISD transports about 12,000 students daily to and from schools district-wide.



"IN MY PHIL'S CASE, HOWEVER, IT WON'T MATTER IF HE SEES HIS SHADOW WHEN HE EMERGES... FOOTBALL SEASON WILL BE OVER."

To Advertise Call 852-3235

MOORE TEXAS

by Roger Todd Moore

There is a Texas law that prohibits a crime from being committed without 24 hour's notice by the alleged criminal.



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		7
+		+		-	
	+		-		7
÷		÷		x	
	÷		+		6
1		3		8	

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 2 3 4 4 5 6 7 8

Answer Page 4

© 2015 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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!

© 2015 King Features Synd., Inc.

Briefs

From Page 4

the U.S. Websites typically request personal identifiers and credit card information that could be used for identity theft. These websites are not associated with TWC or any other state workforce agency. In a related incident, one Texas claimant was asked to purchase a credit report and to get a health insurance quote before filing a claim. TWC does not require individuals to purchase anything or pay a fee to file for

unemployment benefits. These websites are selling information and services provided for free by TWC and other state agencies. Individuals having attempted to apply for UI benefits using a third-party website need to contact TWC at 800-939-6631 or 512-463-2236 to submit their claim. Confidential information given to a third-party website could be used for identity theft. An online Identity Theft Information Guide from the Texas Department of Public Safety provides useful tips, if you believe you are a victim of identity theft. TWC administers

UI benefits to workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own and are actively seeking work. To file a claim or to find out more about unemployment benefits go to www.texasworkforce.org/unemploymentbenefits. To avoid becoming a victim of scams, visit the Texas Office of the Attorney General online at www.oag.state.tx.us/consumer/scams.shtml or www.onguardonline.gov, managed by the Federal Trade Commission, for more information.

- Lisa Givens

Rodriguez

From Page 1

(CTAT) state award an individual must have demonstrated contributions to the success of CTE through the quality of their work and involvement in the CTE community. Some of Rodriguez' accomplishments have included setting up distance meetings with outlying school districts; establishing new partnerships to close gaps between business and industry; hosting regional CTE conferences, creating the

district's first K-12 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Expo; adding a robotics course for all students in 5th and 6th grades; proposing engineering courses for middle and high school students; designing the new STEM building which was part of the district's bond election; and increasing the number of SEISD students participating in CTE competitions.

Rodriguez has been the CTE Coordinator for SEISD since October 2013. Previously he served as the Region 19 CTE

Specialist from 2011 to 2013 and Tech-Prep Director from 1998-2011. He is a graduate of University of Phoenix and holds an MBA with an emphasis in Business and Technology Management.

The CTE program at SEISD currently offers 10, two-year pathways for students in different industries such as advertising and graphic design, CISCO, automotive technology, building trades, etc.

CTAT is an organization of professionals with the common goal of preparing students for the high-tech, high-skill careers of the 21st century. The purpose of the CTAT Awards is to promote excellence in career and technical education and to spotlight individuals who have made meaningful and long-lasting contributions to CTE.

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: M equals P

KU JGL MOMMLJ GIQZV ZIIZV

QLWL JI QLZ SBJWLYY

UOPKBLCCI, QIOCZ S NSWKIPLJLL

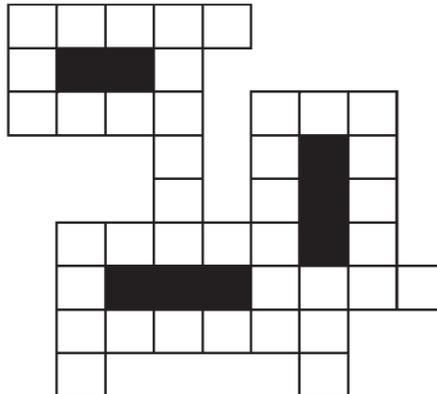
NSWWV SPPLJLL?

Answer Page 4

© 2015 King Features Synd., Inc.



- LYP
- ♥ CREEPI
- DYLEO
- ♥ PRAS
- LATINE
- DIL
- ♥ MACL
- URREL
- ♥ REA
- ♥ REMPIS
- ♥ CADLE
- RITD



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.

NEW! 30 Fear Knot puzzles \$3.50 • Six Volumes • Order at rbmamall.com

© 2015 King Features Syndicate. All rights reserved.

Finances

From Page 2

mandatory personal finance training as a requirement for high school graduation. The Council for Economic Education reported that as of 2014, only 17 states required students to take a high school course in personal finance or that personal finance be included in an economics or civics course as a graduation requirement (<http://www.councilforeconed.org/news-information/survey-of-the-states/>). That's compared to 13 states in 2011. However, only six states (Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Missouri, Michigan and Texas) required testing of that material last year. The Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy reported that only four states (Missouri, Tennessee, Utah and Virginia) require at least a one-semester course devoted to personal finance.

Bottom line: The results from the first-ever global high school financial literacy test show that organized and systemwide personal finance training helps students excel at money management.

Jason Alderman directs Visa's financial education programs.