



NEWSBRIEFS

Drugs halted

Agents of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection at Ft. Hancock seized 979 pounds of marijuana on Jan. 21 and apprehended a suspected drug smuggler, 19-year-old Carlos Luis Ramos of El Paso, when they made a traffic stop of a 1995 Chevy Astro van traveling Farm Road 192 from the Rio Grande River. The bundles of marijuana, wrapped in white plastic sacks wrapped in brown tape, were clearly visible in the rear cargo area of the van, which agents said was traveling low to the ground. The drugs were valued at about \$783,000. Over the weekend of Jan. 17-18, Ft. Hancock agents seized another 511 pounds of marijuana and agents at Fabens, 478 pounds. During that same weekend, agents at the checkpoint at 1-25, north of Las Cruces, discovered some \$5 million in cocaine stashed beneath the cargo area of a Jeep Liberty, driven by a Kansas resident. To date, agents in the El Paso Border Patrol Sector have made 401 drug seizures, valued at over \$67 million.

Help with ADHD

Helping children cope with the effects of ADHA (Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) will be the subject of a seminar on Feb. 7, hosted by the El Paso Rehabilitation Center. Featured speakers in the fields of medicine, education and mental health will discuss preparation to terminate medication and/or transitioning into adulthood, working through frustration, anxiety and failure at school, and positive intervention in daily challenges. The seminar will be at 1101 East Schuster, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Registration forms are at the El Paso Rehabilitation Center, pre-registration fee is \$8, late fee after Feb. 4 is \$12. All interested persons are welcome, however, only adults should attend as childcare is not available at this time. Information: Lydia Hernandez at 544-8484.

In other news

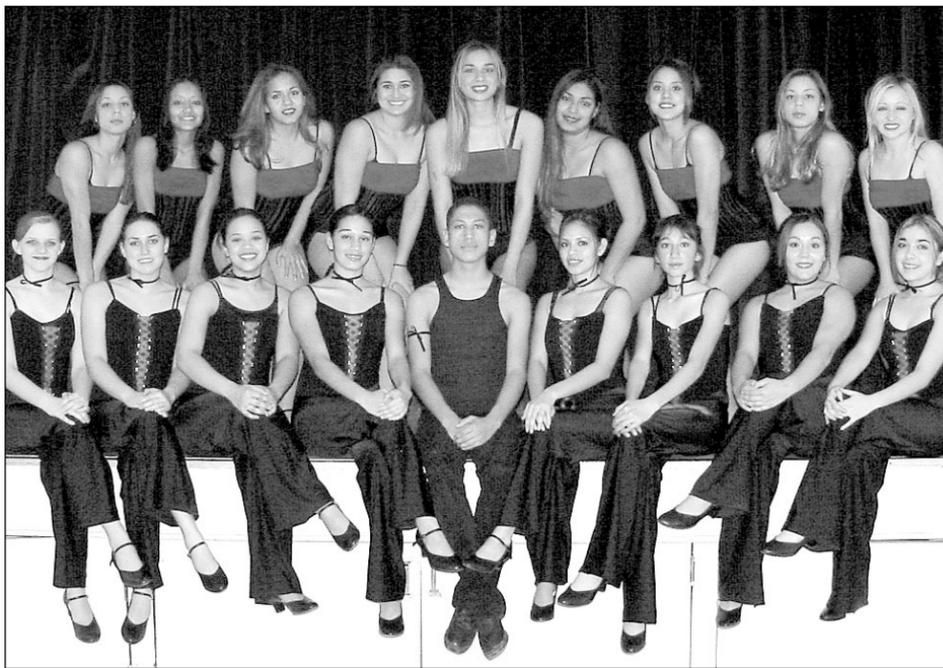
■ A landscaping seminar to assist those eligible for the El Paso Water Utilities "Turf Rebate" program will be held on Feb. 26, 28 and March 6. Course topics include how to remove turf-grass, choosing and planting water-smart plants and the basics of landscape design. The course will be held at the Texas Cooperative Extension, 1030 North Zaragoza, Suite A. Course participants may then schedule a 30-minute, one-on-one consultation on the evening of March 11. Course fee is \$35 per one set of course materials provided. Registration deadline is Feb. 23, class size is limited to 25. Further information on scheduling is available at 859-7725.

■ A family pet photo session for Valentine's Day by photographer Jessie

See BRIEFS, Page 4

Nobody can have too many friends, but one enemy may constitute a surplus.

— Quips & Quotes



MAKING SMOOTH MOVES — Canutillo High School performing dancers, shown sitting from left, are Kathleen Norris, Kellum Stephens, Asha Dane'el, Arianni Amaro, Andy Dozal, Lily Nuñez, Jomaira Rodriguez, Rosanne Alderete, Bernice Lucero; and back row, from left, is Dulce Torres, Christy Herrera, Kimberly Gonzalez, Ruby Palacios, Celene Arreola, Lisa Santillano, Patty Torres, Laura Torres, Marilyn Carrillo.

Canutillo High School dancers to take the stage in major event

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

UPPER VALLEY — Canutillo High School Modern Dance Class will be one of several performing dance groups from area high schools that will participate in the annual "Flashdance" production, beginning at 7 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 27 and 28, at the Chamizal National Memorial Theater.

"This is the biggest event in El Paso for high school modern dance students. The dancers look forward to this performance more than any other. They get to see all the creative things other schools have come up with, and we show them what we have created," said Laura Zweber,

Canutillo High School dance instructor.

CHS dance students will perform their dance interpretations to musical selections from the Broadway play "Chicago," and R&B album "Rhythm Nation." Zweber's dancers have been participating in "Flashdance" since its inception more than 18 years ago. She has been the dance instructor at CHS for the past 10 years — prior to that she taught at Austin High School.

"El Paso Parks and Recreation puts this production on so that students can get together and meet each other and have fun. It gives them a chance to perform professionally for a diverse crowd and to bond as a dance team," Zweber said.

In 1995, Zweber was named to the El Paso Parks & Recreation Dance Hall of Fame.

Echele ganas! they say at Desert Wind

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Balloons, music and dancing were part of the festive dedication on Jan. 16 of Socorro ISD's Desert Wind Elementary School, located at 11 Colina de Paz, northeast of I-10 at the Horizon Blvd. Exit, off Gateway Blvd. West.

The pre-K through 5th-grade campus opened this school year, and has enrolled more than 650 students during its first year. Students, parents, administrators and school board members gathered in the school cafeteria and library for the ceremony and reception welcomed by Principal David Solis.

Desert Wind students Francisco Tucker and Alejandra Calvo spoke of their pride in the school, and various student dance teams performed for the crowd. Superintendent Dr. Robert J. Duron, SISD Board of Trustees President Guillermo "Willie" Gandara and Trustees Brenda Castaneda and Ray Rodriguez joined dancing students on stage. SISD Trustee Craig Patton also attended.

Texas State Rep. Innocente "Chente" Quintanilla and his wife, El Paso Community College Trustee Gracie Quintanilla also attended the event — and danced on stage with the students.

Later, Dantex Construction Company Project Manager Tom Welch and the school's architect, Steve Franco of Carson, Franco and Associates, presented a special metal plaque commemorating the school's construction.

After the ceremony, refreshments and more entertainment were served up in the school library as Socorro High School's mariachi group performed and accompanied parent volunteer and vocalist Carla Gardea.

The school's celebrations, however, didn't end Jan. 16. The sight of 100 balloons rising over the red roof of school on Jan. 22 marked the first 100 days of classes. They also enjoyed a parade and a special guest speaker, a member of the Buffalo Soldier's Organization, to celebrate Black History Month.

SEISD senior willingly gives hair to bolster ill youngsters

By Phillip Cortez
Special to the Courier

SAN ELIZARIO — How many times have you rolled out of the rack in the mornings to a serious case of bed head, promising that if that cow lick doesn't go down you'll end up shaving your head so you won't have to deal with it anymore?

We should be so lucky.

That's what San Elizario High School senior Itza Beltran thought, at least. During the Christmas break, Beltran found herself alone one day, a teenager surfing the Internet. Amidst traffic congested cyberspace, Beltran found a site that would allow her to change more than her hairstyle. The senior class president clicked on www.locksoflove.com and found that by simply saving the strands of her soon-to-be snipped



CHOP-CHOP — Itza Beltran cut her hair to supply material for wigs being made for sick children.

locks, wigs could be made for sick children. "I've always had my hair long," Beltran said. "I figured that if I could change my look, others could have a new look, too."

"Locks of Love" is a non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children under age 18 suffering from long-term medical hair loss, according to the web site. The organization, located in Lake Worth, Florida, says that most of the children they help have lost their hair due to a medical condition called alopecia areata, which has no known cause or cure.

"The prostheses we provide help to restore their self-esteem and their confidence, enabling them to face the world and their peers," the web site reads. Needless to say Beltran's hairstylist was completely surprised by her request when she sat in his chair over the holidays. It might have

had something to do with the fact that it had been about two years since she significantly cut her hair and that roughly 20 inches of dark brown hair would be cut off.

"He asked me if I was sure I wanted to go through with it," Beltran said. "But he was impressed when I told him what I wanted to do."

So the mane that used to touch the small of her back now falls layered just below her neck but not quite down to her shoulders. By making her donation, Beltran says she got more than a new look for her final semester in high school.

"I feel proud of myself because, like me, a lot of girls really love their hair," she said. "But after reading through the web site I thought it was a cool thing to do."

In order for others to donate to Locks of Love, Beltran had to follow certain guidelines. The strands of cut hair needed to be placed in a braid or a ponytail and then sealed in a plastic bag for mailing.

Locks of love accepts donations from both men and women and the length of braided or tailed hair should be at least 10 inches long. Visit locksoflove.com for more information.



One perspective

By Francis Shrum

Not bad for a guy with a pony tail

There was a time when, if I heard the name of comedian George Carlin, it was an immediate tune-out. He didn't have anything to say that I wanted to hear.

After all, most of what came out of his mouth was meant simply for shock value and dirty words haven't ever had that effect on me. To my thinking, foul language usually just makes whatever that person said irrelevant.

But we are all human beings, endowed from the beginning of this age with the capacity for good as well as evil. It was in that context that I recently read a piece of writing attributed to Mr. Carlin, sent to me via e-mail from a good friend I do respect highly. That's the only reason I read it.

This piece was said to be written shortly after Carlin lost his wife of many years. I found it surprisingly touching, filled with insight from a man who has seen life from the bottom as well as from the top.

It would be irresponsible for me not to pass it along.

Too bad it took him this long to say it without turning it blue.

It bore no title other than that given it by the sender which was "A Wonderful Message."

"The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints.

"We spend more, but have less, we buy more, but enjoy less.

"We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time. We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but

less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness.

"We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom.

"We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often.

"We've learned how to make a living, but not a life. We've added years to life not life to years. We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbor.

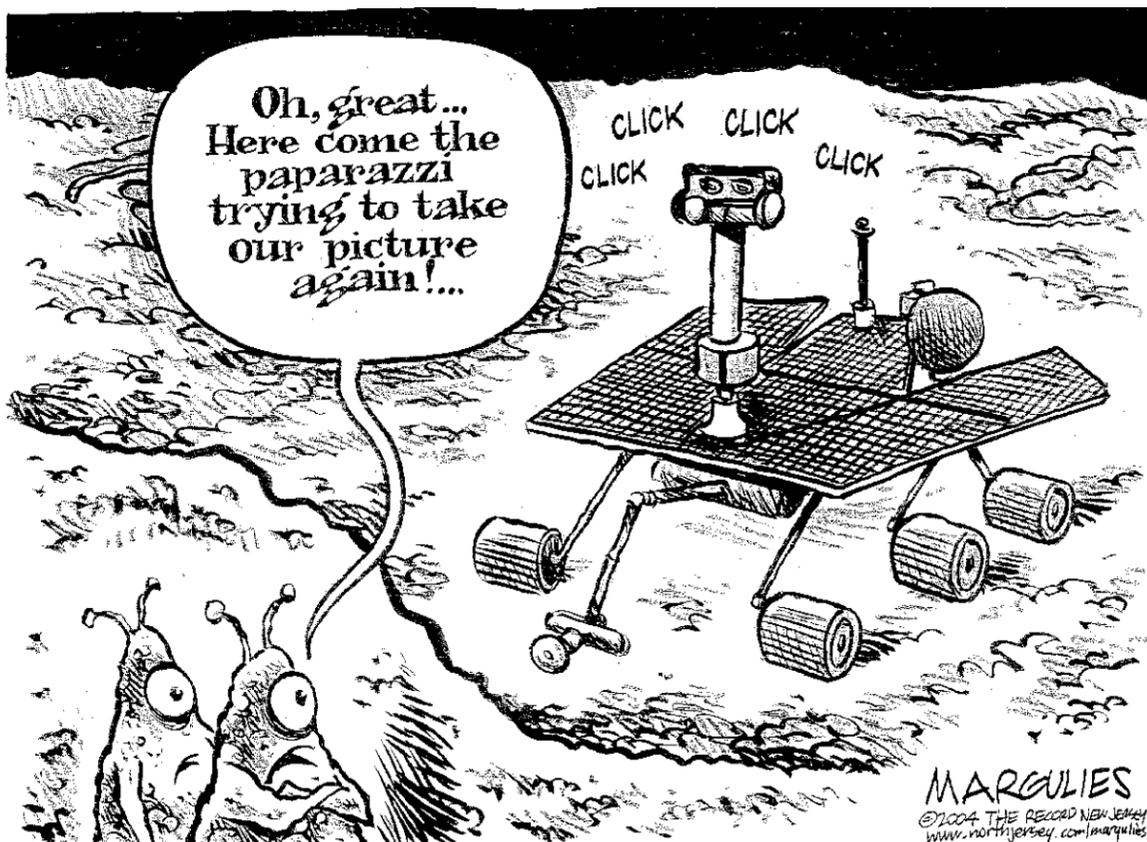
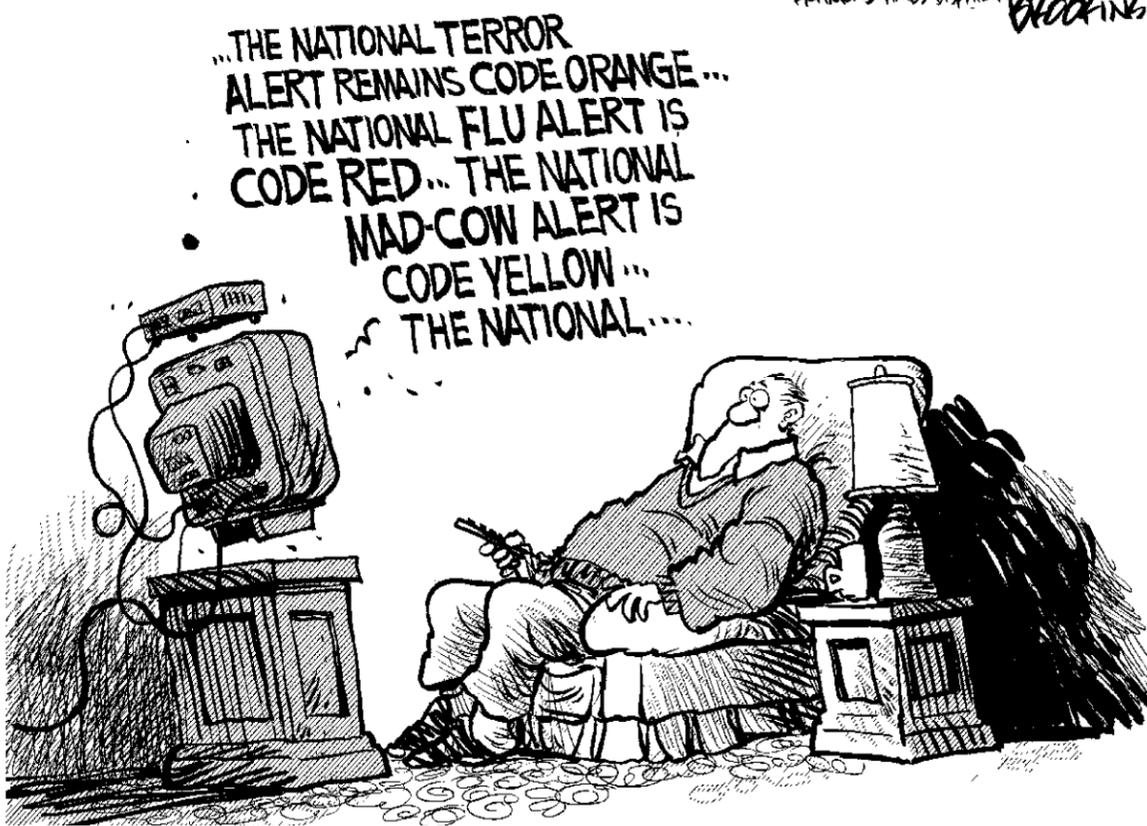
"We conquered outer space but not inner space. We've done larger things, but not better things.

"We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul. We've conquered the atom, but not our prejudice. We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less. We've learned to rush, but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less.

"These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits and shallow relationships. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throwaway morality, one night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer, to quiet, to kill. It is a time when there is much in the showroom

See PONY TAIL, Page 5

RAIMOND TIMES-DISPATCH BROOKING



WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

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

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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.

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Monday 4 p.m. for Thursday publication.

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

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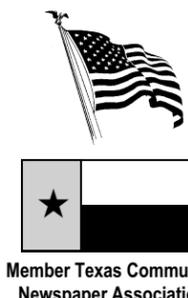
MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS:
52 issues for \$35. Delivery via 1st class mail.

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Est. 1973
News, Inc.



Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes



SBA funding essential to maintaining small business growth

Here in El Paso, local small businesses pump almost \$30 million into our economy and provide thousands of jobs each year. With small businesses making such a positive impact on our community, it is important to provide them with the means to reach their potential. A majority of El Paso's nearly 1,000 small businesses — and the 23 million small businesses across the country — benefit from the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program.

The \$9.4 billion program, which finances 40-percent of all SBA loans, is one of the SBA's most popular programs and is a lifeline for many minority and women-owned businesses.

While many small businesses do not qualify for traditional bank loans, the 7(a) program provides an avenue for small business owners to access the basic operating and expansion capital they need to survive and grow.

By utilizing this loan program, small businesses have more access to bank financing because the SBA guarantees 50-85 percent of the loan.

The news last month that the SBA suspended the 7(a) program understandably came as a shock to the small business community. During these times of high unemployment, why shut this door to opportunity for businesses that add about 75-percent of all new jobs to our economy each year?

Congress appropriates federal funding for the SBA each year. The House passed an omnibus appropriations bill that included fiscal year 2004 funding for the SBA and numerous other federal agencies this past December. The Senate passed the bill in January, which President Bush is expected to sign any day now. Until then, these agencies operate at fiscal year 2003 levels. Due to the popularity of the 7(a) program, the SBA could not keep up with the demand for these loans and was forced

to temporarily suspend the program.

The suspension came after the SBA made efforts to further preserve the program and reach more business owners by placing a \$750,000 cap on 7(a) loan amounts.

Fortunately, the SBA re-opened the program about a week after the suspension began. SBA Administrator Hector Barreto knew the critical importance of these loans and that it was important to get the program up and running as soon as possible.

Final passage in the Senate and the President's signature of the fiscal year 2004 Omnibus Appropriations Bill will provide funding for the 7(a) program this year. As Congress begins to work on next year's budget, we will work closely with Administrator Barreto to ensure that the SBA receives sufficient funding to keep the program functioning without difficulty. Already, Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez, the Ranking

See REYES, Page 5



Serving in Congress means serving you

As your elected representative in Congress, my highest priority is to serve the constituents of the 23rd District of Texas. Our district covers all or part of 23 counties, which account for approximately 22 percent of the total square miles of our great state. The 23rd District of Texas spans two time zones, three climates and is 55,662 square miles.



By U.S. Rep. Henry Bonilla

Eye on D.C.

But no matter where you reside within the 23rd District, my offices are there for you. The members of my staff are trained to provide a variety of constituent services. These services range from assisting people as they navigate their way through the layers of the federal bureaucracy, to helping families and schools with tours of Washington, D.C., to providing input on pending legislation, to expediting passport approvals. And that is just the beginning!

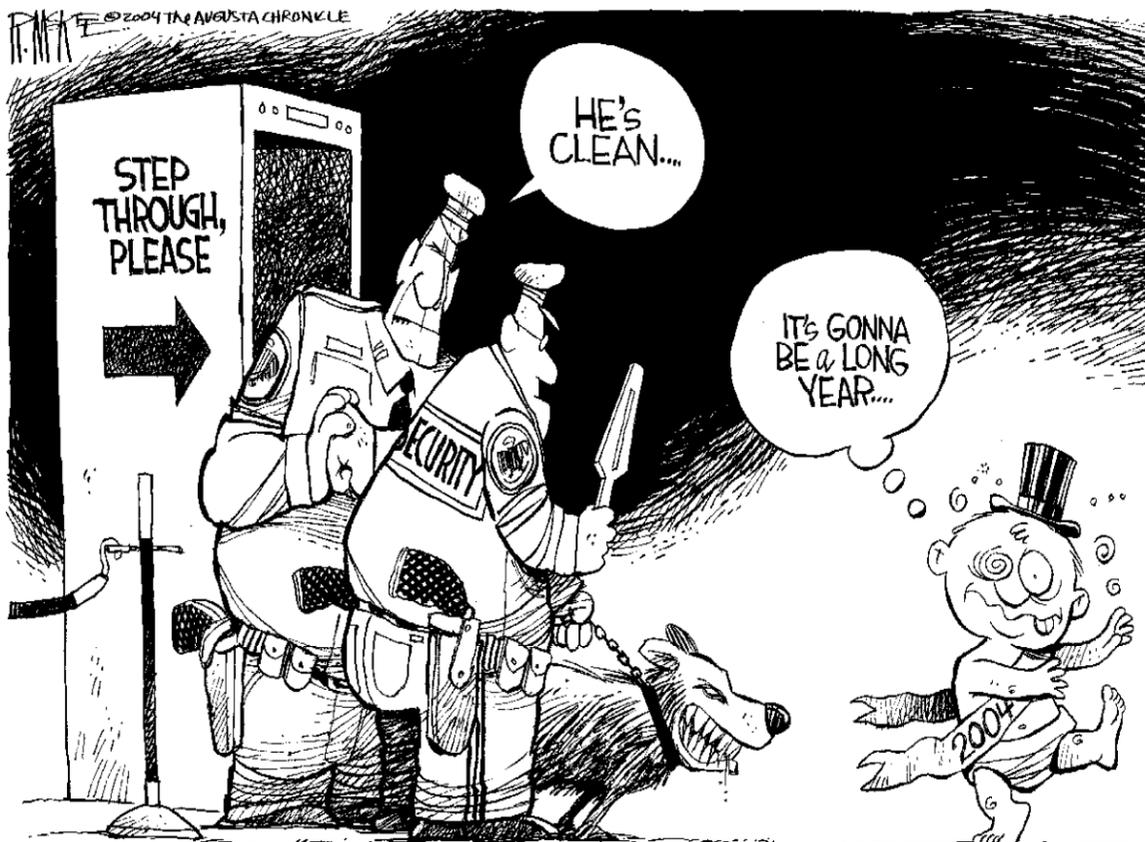
constituents requesting information about bills pending in Congress, federal laws and regulations, and state issues. Some excellent resources that we use and can be accessed by the public include: www.loc.gov/thomas, a website where constituents can look up information on pending legislation and laws; and www.congress.org, a website that can be used to search for federal officials, other Congressional offices, the White House and federal agencies. Our Website, www.house.gov/bonilla, provides information about Washington, D.C. tourist attractions, how to contact our offices, legislative updates, and instructions about how to order a U.S. flag that has been flown over the Capitol building.

And, of course, if you ever have a question, an opinion, or a point of view about a current issue or a specific piece of legislation, I want to hear from you. Call my office or send a letter or email.

The federal government is an enormous bureaucracy. And, too often, people who deal with the government run up against confusing, complicated and even conflicting rules and regulations. I can help you cut through the red tape. Some of the most common problems arise from Social Security and Medicare benefits; immigration issues; the armed services; veterans' services and benefits; and regulatory agencies. If you need assistance with these matters, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff at any of my district offices.

While my office cannot fix every problem related to the federal government, or fulfill every constituent request, we will always try our best to help. And we can always explore the options and serve as a source of reliable information. I believe I have no higher priority than providing good constituent service to the people of Texas' 23rd District. If you or someone in your family ever thinks my office can help, I hope you will not hesitate to contact us.

TRUE TEXAS FACTS by Roger Moore, 1881, the Abilene Reporter News becomes the 1st daily newspaper to refuse to run whiskey ads.



Por la Gente By State Rep. Chente Quintanilla



Trip to Rogelio Sanchez facility reveals need for further education

On a recent trip to the Rogelio Sanchez State Jail Facility — during which I spoke to inmates who were receiving their General Equivalency Diplomas (GED), I was astounded at the intelligence that some of these men exhibited. For one reason or another, these guys fell through the proverbial cracks, and landed in jail. This is a true tragedy.

I was taken aback to realize that one reason so many Mexican Americans turn to crime is that they lack a solid education. Without an education, their options for making a living are severely limited. Thus, they turn to a life of crime, which includes larceny, drug dealing, and other nefarious activities.

Before becoming a state representative I was an Associate Superintendent for the Socorro Independent School District. Therefore, I realized that the most important thing a young man or woman can do is to become educated. I was reminded of this, as I gazed at the young men who had obtained their GED — a first step in a long process, but a vitally important one. I told these young men that anything is possible, as long as they work hard to attain their goals, and as long as they keep those goals in mind.

Being a member of this GED graduating class is a great thing for these young people. But, it shouldn't have to stop there. For those young men who are still jailed at that facility, it doesn't mean that they can't pursue their dreams even if they're limited in their movements. The Facility offers them the opportunity to further their education.

garnered. The fact that they were able to concentrate and focus on obtaining their GED is a true measure of their abilities. The ability they showed in completing their studies shows that they are not beyond hope. They struggled, they worked hard, and they did it.

This accomplishment wasn't easy. But, they did it. My message is that it shouldn't stop there. Other members of our society who have had the misfortune of running afoul of the law should realize that getting an education is the only way they're ever going to make their way out of the mire which entraps them. And, yes, today is a new day for those men who accomplished their dream.

These men strive for that higher purpose which awaits them. I hope and trust that they make higher education their main goal in life. Here's hoping that these young people learn from their mistakes, and that they keep growing and moving forward. The last message

As a life-long educator, I am the first one to say that obtaining a good education is of the utmost importance. I wouldn't be where I am today — as a Texas State Representative — if I hadn't pursued that edu-

I am very proud of the great accomplishment that these men have



that I conveyed to them was that you can lose your freedom, your personal property, your loved ones but no one can take away the education and knowledge you have gained in your lifetime.

For these men, an important first

step has been completed. But, it's really up to them to decide how far they want to go. Life is a challenge, but these men have proved that they're up to that challenge. Good luck, and God bless you, from your friend, Chente for la gente

El Paso Academy is an example of Texas' answer to voucher education

EL PASO COUNTY — Striving to provide the time, talent, resources and room to individualize every child's high school experience, El Paso Academy, a local, privately run, non-profit, tuition free public charter high school is paying \$1000 each to its qualified students for college. A state-sponsored, early high school graduation incentive program promising \$1000 in college tuition proved so popular that combined with subsequent budget shortfalls, the state ran out of funds and the program was discontinued.

EPA, rather than discourage its college-bound students, now contributes the same funds to its students to help them realize the dream of a college education. Students who graduate in 36 months or less receive the funds for an in-state institution of higher learning, which includes a Texas university, community college or business school.

"So many kids do fall through the cracks, we feared this might lead to even more of them foregoing attempts to attend college," said

Katherine Reid, superintendent and founder of the Academy, which is a two-campus, non-sectarian, fully accredited school adhering to the Texas Education Agency's requirements for graduation.

In addition, the 525-student school provides dual-credit programs complete with instructors, college level books and assigned student mentors to further help qualified students get a head-start on courses when entering community college.

"This attracts not only our core students, but advanced, honor students who take advantage of our gifted and talented program and are committed to college," said Reid. "With this curriculum, we can accommodate their drive to continue their education."

All Academy programs are self-paced, with students receiving 60 hours of contact time with instructors in six-week runs. Two credits or more are achieved within six weeks, but advanced students and those working toward early graduation can meet it in as little as two or three weeks. Classes structured within

three tracks—morning, mid-day and afternoon—help students who work maintain a flexible schedule.

"Children learn, discover and create at their own pace," said Reid, a remedial reading specialist who previously operated Quick Study Learning Centers and spent decades teaching in public schools. "We work with every student to help them determine their own level of comfort and advancement while introducing them to a myriad of educational opportunities."

Amidst very small teacher/student ratios, every Academy instructor holds at least a bachelors' degree, while many have masters or PhDs. Students derive from public high school referrals, parent inquiries and interested students themselves. All students must pass an assessment test, sign a code of conduct with their parents, and wear uniforms.

From "back-to-basics" programs to "expeditionary learning," the Academy's curriculum allows students to work at their own pace, develop strong academic skills, learn

individually or in small groups, have access to state-of-the-art technology and computer science and use educational software to enhance their learning.

"El Paso Academy flexes its muscles everyday to give students the best education, counseling and social work," said Reid. "They're never more than a few feet away from a teacher, counselor, social worker, therapist or staff worker who cares about them with genuine, loving, supportive, personal attention."

Charter schools like the Academy have become Texas' answer to voucher programs, which the state doesn't utilize. They were created in the early 1990s and date in Texas to 1995. El Paso Academy opened its doors in 2000 as a strong alternative for students who have difficulty finding their way in traditional learning environments.

Funded by the Texas Education Agency like all public schools, they receive about 60% of the per student fees received by traditional high schools, an average per-pupil rate of

\$4507 vs. \$7000. Since charters don't receive facility funding or property tax money, they must rely on grants and community donations to operate. El Paso County's nine school districts are all operated on funds derived from individual district property taxes.

For more information about El Paso Academy, its \$1000 scholarship program or dual credit community college courses, call Katherine Reid at (915) 590-8589.



"I tell ya, one of these days, someone is gonna invent a device where we won't have to do all this pointin' and clickin'."

Pony tail

From Page 2

window and nothing in the stock-room. A time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete.

"Remember, spend some time with your loved ones, because they are not going to be around forever. Remember, say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe, because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side. Remember, to give a warm hug to the one next to you, be-

cause that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent.

"Remember, to say, 'I love you' to your life's partner and your loved ones, but most of all mean it. A kiss and an embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside of you. Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment for someday that person will not be there again.

"Give time to love, give time to speak, and give time to share the precious thoughts in your mind."

You just never know what's going on in somebody's head. Not bad for a guy with a pony tail.

Reyes

From Page 2

Member on the House Small Business Committee, is organizing a hearing to review the shutdown of the popular program.

Over the past three years, the 7(a) program has provided financing to more than 40,000 new small businesses and 99,000 existing small businesses. SBA officials, banks and

lenders alike praise the program as one of the most efficient and effective programs available to small businesses. Here in El Paso, our chambers of commerce and local lending institutions exist to help you understand and utilize these government loans.

Small businesses build community and jobs, and in the year ahead, I will work to ensure that 7(a) funding is available for these businesses to continue their important contributions to our economy and quality of life.

NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS

Cora Viescas, Executive Director/Chief Appraiser, El Paso Central Appraisal District, is currently accepting application(s) for the following:

RENDITIONS

1. Personal Property (**mandatory beginning 2004 — failure to file a business rendition will result in a 10% penalty**).
2. Real Estate

DEADLINE FOR FILING OF RENDITIONS, PROPERTY INFORMATION REPORTS, AND REPORTS OF DECREASED VALUE IS THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2004. A filing extension will be allowed for business renditions upon receipt of a written request received by the April 15, 2004 filing deadline.

EXEMPTIONS*

1. Residential Homestead Exemption
2. Over-65 Exemption**
3. Over 55 Surviving Spouse of a person who received the Over-65 Exemption
4. Medical Disability Exemption
5. Veteran's Disability Exemption
6. Widow of Disabled Veteran Exemption

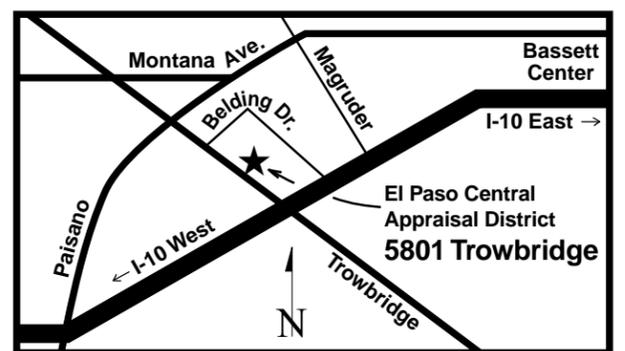
*If you received a Homestead and/or an Over-65 Exemption, or an Over-55 Surviving Spouse of a person who received the Over-65 Exemption, a Disability Exemption, or a Disabled Veteran's Exemption in 2003, it is not necessary for you to file again this year.

**The Over-65 School Homestead Exemption can be transported to another home within Texas on a percentage basis. (Please contact the Appraisal District for forms and explanation.)

SPECIAL USE EVALUATIONS

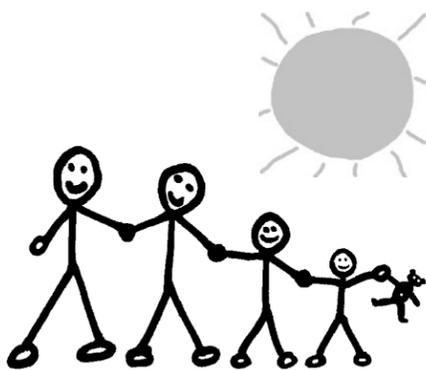
Agricultural Valuation - Applications are being accepted for Ad Valorem Tax purposes as provided under Article III, Section 1-d and 1-d-1 of the Texas State Constitution. Properties qualifying under these Amendments are valued on the basis of Agricultural Productivity rather than their market value. The tax that would be levied on market value is deferred. Information on agricultural use valuation is available in the State Comptroller's Publication, *Taxpayers' Rights, Remedies & Responsibilities*. Copies are available at the Appraisal District Office.

DEADLINE FOR FILING FOR EXEMPTIONS AND APPLYING FOR SPECIAL USE VALUATIONS IS APRIL 30, 2004, FOR ALL TAXING JURISDICTIONS. ALL OF THE ABOVE APPLICATIONS MUST BE FILED EITHER IN PERSON OR BY MAIL AT THE EL PASO CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT, 5801 TROWBRIDGE, EL PASO, TEXAS 79925. FOR APPLICATIONS OR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT THE APPRAISAL DISTRICT AT (915) 780-2131.



NO FEE IS REQUIRED FOR FILING ANY OF THE ABOVE RENDITIONS, EXEMPTIONS OR SPECIAL USE VALUATIONS

Carlisle Navidomskis
M.Ed., LPC, RPT
Family Counselor



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Price, Ebell bring hope to UTEP

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

It's surely no secret that, over the years, UTEP has been forced to recruit football players that the major programs around the nation didn't consider worthy.

The Miners were always left the scraps the big-name schools left behind.

And to say that the Miners have done a pretty lousy job with their choices over the years

would be the understatement of the last three decades.

But it appears those days may, and I emphasize the word "may," be over.

And it's all because of new coach and savior Mike Price.

Because of, and only because of Price, the UTEP football team made national news last week. And unlike the norm, the news was good.

Seems even one of the most sought after running backs in the nation knows about Mike

Price. Tyler Ebell was considered the top high running back in the nation three years ago coming out of high school when he signed with UCLA.

In two seasons at UCLA, Ebell gained 1,495 yards, scored 12 touchdowns and averaged 4.3 yards per carry.

But after those two years, Ebell, because of a coaching change, decided that he didn't like things there and wanted a change of scenery. Ebell considered the Florida Gators and the San Diego State Aztecs but chose UTEP.

He chose UTEP! That puts UTEP on the credibility map.

Ebell's decision to come to El Paso, in a way, tells other recruits that it's okay to come to El Paso. It says something great is about to happen here.

Let's see what Ebell, who rushed for 994 yards as a freshman, did at UCLA in 2002 against those big-time PAC-10 opponents.

In one six-game span he rushed for 203 yards and a touchdown at Oregon State, 119 against Oregon, 102 and a touchdown at California, 160 and a touchdown against Stanford, 102 and three touchdowns at Washington and 124 and two touchdowns at Arizona.

Three of those six teams (Oregon State, Oregon and Washington) went on to bowl games that season.

So let's put it this way, I think it's safe to say that Ebell can compete against WAC competition.

ESPN, CNN/Sports Illustrated, The Sporting News, everybody had the news of Ebell's transfer to UTEP. It made news and that's what Mike Price promised when he took over the program.

Don't be surprised to see other big name athletes sign to play football with the Miners in the next few years.

The status quo has failed miserably for 30 years at UTEP. Say hello to a new era of UTEP football. And let's say

goodbye to the past... hopefully for good.

Pats or Panthers?

This Sunday is one of the most special days of the year — Super Bowl Sunday.

And though this year's game lacks superstar status (no Marshall Faulk, no Peyton Manning, no Randy Moss, no Priest Holmes, no Brett Favre), it's still an intriguing matchup.

The New England Patriots, super bowl champs of just two years ago take on the Carolina Panthers, the new guys on the championship-game block.

The Patriots began the season as one of the favorites to get here while absolutely no one was talking about the Carolina Panthers.

New England is the favorite and they have an emerging superstar in quarterback Tom Brady. Carolina's quarterback is Jake Delhomme, a guy most fans had never heard of.

Both teams have very good defenses but there is one glaring difference that I think will make all the difference in this one... the running game.

Carolina's Stephen Davis (1,444) and DeShaun Foster (429) combined for 1,873 yards on the ground and averaged 4.1 yards per carry while New England's Antowain Smith (642) and Kevin Faulk (638) combined for just 1,280 yards and a weak 3.5 yard per carry average.

But in the playoffs, Carolina's duo of Davis and Foster have been even more impressive gaining 419 yards (140 per game) while the Patriots' Smith and Faulk have managed just 199 yards in two games (99.5 avg.).

So I say Carolina will eke out an overtime 27-24 win in one of the best Super Bowl games ever. Oh, and the commercials should be pretty good, too.

Start a football team

Well, now you can — and at a rock bottom price.

If you're looking for some football equipment you might want to make a call to East Tennessee State University, which is sitting on a bunch of football shoes, shoulder pads, jerseys, game pants, practice shorts, practice shirts, face masks, tackling dummies, sleds and coaches' communication systems since the school dropped football last year.

Starting Feb. 5, the university will begin auctioning off the equipment and the proceeds will go to fund other school sports.

School officials say they have received plenty of inquiries about the football stuff so you better act fast.

I'm sure the Dallas Cowboys are wondering if they have any quarterbacks for sale.

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TRICKY BUSINESS

- ACROSS**
1 Dollops
5 Russian ruler
9 '87 Peace Prize winner
14 Incur, as bills
19 "Thanks _!"
20 Dingy digs
21 Jargon
22 Crop up
23 Clothing store?
25 Gary Cooper in "High Noon"?
27 Asian nation
28 Jab
30 Genetic info
31 Poetic preposition
32 Stoltz or Severeid
34 Actress Perlman
38 Brazier bits
41 Seats picked up in the Senate?
45 Bank (on)
46 Tai _ (martial art)
47 Recruit-to-be
48 Baseball's Sammy
50 Coaxed
54 Plane place
57 Bedroom furniture
59 Elbow _
60 Available
61 Photo finish
62 Bright
64 Part of MST
65 Mediocre
67 Mason's need
68 Any

- 69 Deplores
70 Scandinavian computer?
73 Puts another worm on the hook?
75 Composer Janacek
76 Chip off Woody's block
78 Archaeological site
81 Class ring?
82 Galley feature
83 Absolutely adored
84 " _ Gay"
86 Socialite Perle
90 Anti-knock stuff
92 Glisten
94 Chaos
95 Puppeteer Lewis
96 Israeli dance
97 Counterfeit
99 States, for short
100 Mighty mite
103 Marina statistics?
107 Corelli composition
109 Macpherson of "Sirens"
110 Word form for "minute"
111 Salon request
112 La-la lead-in
114 Castle material
117 Contaminate
121 NBA handicappers?
127 "One really thick steak, please?"
129 Simpson of fashion
130 Paul of "American

- Graffiti"
131 Currier's partner
132 Siegmeyer or Wiesel
133 Greek sandwiches
134 Atlanta campus
135 AMEX rival
136 Take-out order?
DOWN
1 Stare stupidly
2 Dairy-case purchase
3 Piglet's papa
4 Meryl of "Marvin's Room"
5 Even if, informally
6 Trace
7 As well
8 Stink
9 " _ of You" ('84 hit)
10 _ Branco, Brazil
11 Caravansary
12 Like fine wine
13 Tulsa type
14 Brit. fliers
15 Psychic Geller
16 More congenial
17 PC enthusiasts
18 Parisian papa
24 Mata _
26 Singer Georgie
29 Significant years
33 "Take _ leave it!"
35 Sounded like a serpent
36 Seth's son
37 Evaluate

- 39 Divulge, with "out"
40 Bronte heroine
41 Detective Charlie
42 Nonstandard contraction
43 A swan was her swain
44 Country star Brooks
46 Comic Margaret
49 Strong suit
51 Entire range
52 Senator Kefauver
53 Cozy rooms
55 Pants
56 Each
58 Monty's milieu
59 Loon's relative
61 Demi or Dudley
63 It multiplies by dividing
66 Declare
69 Bendix role
70 TV host Robin
71 Major artery
72 Swanky
74 Soprano Gluck
75 See 83 Down
77 Block
78 Go off track
79 Print-shop supply
80 Emulates O'Meara
83 With 75 Down, "Gigi" author
85 Turn pages
87 Andrew of "Melrose Place"
88 "Guarding _" ('94 film)

- 89 Flock o' docs
91 Irish island group
93 Inland sea
94 Big beginning
98 Ignites
101 Conductor Klemperer
102 Christie sleuth
104 Bandleader Brown
105 Till
106 Laughed loudly
107 Disreputable
108 Aquatic animal
111 Unexpected obstacle
113 "Excuse me"
115 Exiled dictator
116 Dark blue
118 Run in neutral
119 Sedaka or Simon
120 Dendrologist's concern
122 Ararat's grp.
123 Part of USAR
124 Funnymen Philips
125 Prepare to feather?
126 Farm feature
128 Nationality suffix

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Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Get your children acquainted with crocs

By Don Flood

Poor Steve Irwin. Irwin, the world's leading Celebrity Crocodile Professional, had no idea of the controversy he would stir up by feeding a 13-foot crocodile while also clasping his 1-month-old son.

Ever since the broadcast, parents have been asking, "What is the proper age for taking my child into a cage of hungry crocodiles?"

The experts themselves disagree. While some childcare experts say 1 month is a proper age to expose your child to the jaws of a large, carnivorous reptile, others insist there is no hurry, that it's OK to wait two or even three months.

The key is to not wait too long. As Irwin himself said, "I would be considered a bad parent if I didn't teach my children to be croc-savvy." (Certified actual quote.)

So true, especially since other parents — and non-parents too — can be so cruel.

"Their child wouldn't know a croc from an alligator if one bit him on the nose," is a typical example of what they'll whisper behind the back of parents whose children lack basic crocodile interaction skills.

But it's not merely a question of what the neighbors think. Parents should ask themselves, would my 2-month-old infant know how to handle a crocodile?

Don't think you're safe just because you live in a large city. As everyone knows, New York City's sewers are loaded with crocodiles, some of which moonlight as cab drivers.

There's also the intrinsic educational value of the encounter, as was pointed out by Irwin's wife,

Terri.

Following the feeding, she said of her son, "He was smiling, and it was a wonderful sensory experience for him. He dug it." (Another certified actual quote, including the "dug" part.)

Yes, I'm sure it was a wonderful sensory experience, and Irwin deserves credit for that.

By comparison, when Michael Jackson dangled his son over the railing of a fourth floor balcony, he placed a cloth over the boy's head, thus denying him a full sensory experience.

Some may question if a 1-month-old child is too young to learn from a personal encounter with a crocodile, even one who appears to really "dig" it.

Absolutely not. In fact, with the latest technology, babies still in the womb are now able to begin studying for their SATs.

Some fetuses have even taken the SAT's, albeit with mixed results.

Said one mother who was distraught over her unborn child's score of 1470, "I know he could have done better than that! I was up late the night before; I probably kept him up. And all I ate was junk food, so I'm sure he didn't have a very good breakfast and..." (The end of the quote was lost as the woman was dragged away.)

So don't put off your crocodile encounter. Before you know it, your child will be 4 months old.

And if there are no crocodiles in your area, try the next best thing, such as a visit to an aquarium shark tank, or your local junior-high cafeteria.

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Classified Ads

LEGAL

NOTICE TO PUBLIC HORIZON PALMS

Tropicana Building Corporation is making an application for Housing Tax Credits with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs for the Horizon Palms development, located in the Horizon City's ETJ off Darrington Rd, El Paso, Texas 79928. This new development is a four-plex community comprised of 76 units of which 61% will be for tenants with incomes less than 60% of the AMGI, 17% will be for tenants with incomes less than 50% of the AMGI, 13% will be for ten-

ants with incomes less than 40% of the AMGI, and 9% will be for tenants with incomes less than 30% of the AMGI. Income levels range between \$8,650 to \$28,680 for families with sizes 1-6 household members. The total restricted income percentage of the Development is 100%. The number of units and proposed rents (less utility allowances) for the subject property's tax credit units are:

- 24 - 1 Bedroom Units for \$159-\$237
- 36 - 2 Bedroom Units for \$380-\$437
- 16 - 3 Bedroom Units for \$546

If awarded credits,

this development would be ready for occupancy by December 2005. For more information on this notice, please contact Tropicana Building Corporation, Bobby Bowling IV, 4655 Cohen Ave, El Paso, Texas 79924, (915) 821-3550. For more information, see www.tdhca.state.tx.us. WTCC: 01/29/04; 02/05/04

NOTICE TO PUBLIC SOCORRO PALMS

Tropicana Building Corporation is making an application for Housing Tax Credits with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs for the

Socorro Palms development, located on the 10200 Block of Alameda Ave, Socorro, Texas 79927. This new development is a four-plex community comprised of 36 units of which 61% will be for tenants with incomes less than 60% of the AMGI, 17% will be for tenants with incomes less than 50% of the AMGI, 11% will be for tenants with incomes less than 40% of the AMGI, and 11% will be for tenants with incomes less than 30% of the AMGI. Income levels range between \$8,650 to \$28,680 for families with sizes 1-6 household members. The total restricted income percentage of the Development is

100%. The number of units and proposed rents (less utility allowances) for the subject property's tax credit units are:

- 8 - 1 Bedroom Units for \$159-\$237
- 16 - 2 Bedroom Units for \$380-\$437
- 12 - 3 Bedroom Units for \$546

If awarded credits, this development would be ready for occupancy by December 2005. For more information on this notice, please contact Tropicana Building Corporation, Bobby Bowling IV, 4655 Cohen Ave, El Paso, Texas 79924, (915) 821-3550. For more information, see www.tdhca.state.tx.us. WTCC: 01/29/04; 02/05/04

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RENTAL

FOR RENT in Clint, 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 142 Jeff Jones. Call 851-1546. TFN

SELF-HELP

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

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

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Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Q: I think I might qualify for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments, except for one problem. A couple of years ago my father died and left me a Lincoln Continental. I was told I cannot own a so-called "luxury car" and get SSI. Is this true?

A: You normally can own one car and still get SSI. The law allows us to automatically exclude the value of a car worth less than \$4,500. If the car

is worth more, we might be able to exclude its value if you can show you use it to get medical treatment or for other vital transportation needs. Talk to your local Social Security representatives about this..

Q: Can a widow get her own Social Security retirement benefit in addition to widow's benefits?

A: Yes, but the rules about the relationship between retirement benefits

and widow(er)'s benefits, and when we pay those benefits, can be complicated. You should call 1-800-772-1213 or visit your local Social Security office for more information about your particular situation.

Q: I am in prison and will soon be released. I was told I will automatically qualify for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) once I get out. Is this true?

A: No. The Supplemental Security Income program makes monthly payments to low income people who are

65 or older, blind or disabled. If you are over 65, or have a disability that will prevent you from working, and if you have little or no income and few assets, you can file for SSI once you are released from prison. But no one "automatically" gets SSI payments.

Q: If government pensions are used to offset Social Security checks, why doesn't a military pension, which is one form of a government pension, offset a Social Security check?

A: Offsets apply only to pensions

from work not covered by Social Security. Many government employees, including members of the military, pay into Social Security. Their government pensions are designed to supplement Social Security, not replace it

For more information visit your local Security office, see www.ssa.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.

WEATHER

AccuWeather.com

SEVEN-DAY FORECAST FOR EL PASO

THURSDAY	THUR. NIGHT	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Plenty of sunshine.	Mainly clear.	A good deal of sunshine.	Mostly sunny and windy.	Abundant sunshine.	Brilliant sunshine.	A good deal of sunshine.	Sunshine with a few clouds.
▲ 60°	▼ 36°	▲ 64° ▼ 38°	▲ 62° ▼ 36°	▲ 64° ▼ 34°	▲ 66° ▼ 32°	▲ 58° ▼ 30°	▲ 58° ▼ 32°

UV INDEX Statistics for noon.

The higher the UV Index, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

Thursday	5	Moderate
Friday	5	Moderate
Saturday	5	Moderate
Sunday	5	Moderate
Monday	5	Moderate
Tuesday	5	Moderate
Wednesday	5	Moderate

REAL FEEL TEMP™

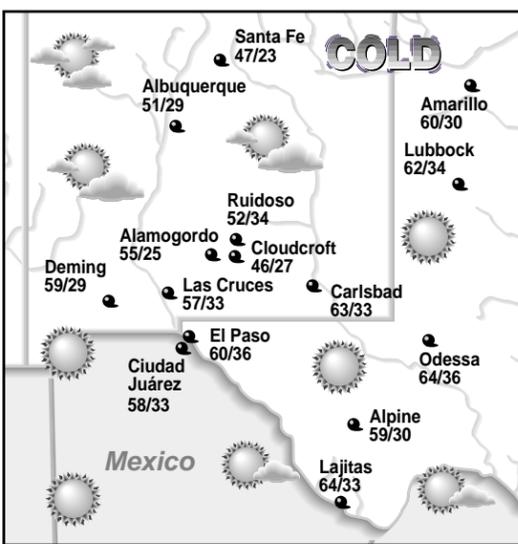
The exclusive AccuWeather composite of the effects of temperature, wind, humidity, sunshine, precipitation, and elevation on the human body.

Thursday	59°
Friday	51°
Saturday	48°
Sunday	51°
Monday	56°
Tuesday	57°
Wednesday	48°

TEXAS WEATHER

Anthony	60	36
Canutillo	59	36
Clint	59	37
E. Montana	58	36
Fabens	58	37
Horizon	59	37
San Elizario	58	34
Socorro	57	35
Tornillo	58	37
Vinton	59	36

Shown is Thursday's weather. Temperatures are Thursday's highs and Thursday night's lows.



TRAVELERS CITIES

City	Thur. Hi/Lo/W	Fri. Hi/Lo/W	Sat. Hi/Lo/W	Sun. Hi/Lo/W	Mon. Hi/Lo/W
Albuquerque	51/29/s	55/32/pc	53/25/pc	49/25/pc	51/23/s
Atlanta	52/34/pc	52/38/pc	46/27/s	46/36/c	51/30/pc
Atlantic City	40/26/s	39/24/c	29/22/pc	29/25/pc	43/18/c
Austin/San Antonio	62/40/c	67/41/s	67/42/s	61/36/s	57/33/c
Baltimore	40/25/pc	43/25/c	32/20/pc	30/18/pc	44/19/pc
Boston	34/24/pc	34/20/pc	28/18/sn	26/16/pc	37/20/c
Chicago	28/12/sf	20/6/pc	18/10/c	24/14/c	22/10/pc
Dallas/Ft. Worth	58/40/pc	63/41/s	63/39/pc	55/35/s	51/31/c
Denver	54/26/pc	54/20/pc	38/15/pc	38/17/pc	46/12/c
Flagstaff	44/20/s	46/22/pc	44/16/pc	46/14/s	45/18/s
Houston	64/46/c	66/46/s	68/48/pc	62/38/c	56/36/c
Kansas City	37/29/c	44/28/c	39/20/c	29/15/s	30/14/c
Las Vegas	61/41/pc	63/41/pc	58/37/pc	60/37/s	60/37/pc
Miami	73/61/s	77/64/c	78/63/c	79/62/pc	77/59/pc
Minneapolis	7/-10/c	-1/-11/c	4/-3/c	7/-5/c	14/-1/c
New Orleans	63/51/c	66/45/s	68/49/pc	63/42/c	58/38/s
New York City	35/30/pc	36/28/c	30/23/pc	27/27/pc	38/22/c
Philadelphia	38/26/pc	38/22/c	30/18/pc	30/18/pc	39/20/c
Phoenix	66/45/s	70/47/pc	72/45/s	70/43/s	70/45/s
Portland	54/44/r	48/38/sh	48/38/c	50/37/pc	49/37/c
San Francisco	58/46/pc	56/44/c	56/46/pc	56/47/c	58/43/pc
Seattle	48/42/r	46/38/sh	44/38/c	48/37/pc	48/37/c
Tucson	63/39/s	70/41/s	68/41/s	68/39/s	68/41/s
Washington, DC	41/26/pc	46/26/c	34/24/pc	32/24/pc	46/23/pc

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.

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