



NEWSBRIEFS

Walk yourself well

Canutillo Independent School District Wellness Program will host its Ninth Annual Wellness Run/Walk, from 7 to 11 a.m., Saturday, April 24, at the Franklin Mountain State Park. The event is an open run/walk activity to promote wellness and healthy living throughout the Canutillo community. The walk is an open event that allows all participants to begin their walking/running exercises any time during the scheduled event. Free door prizes, water bottles, and healthy food snacks will be available. The wellness walk is free and open to the public. T-shirts will be presented to the first 300 participants. For more information, call 877-7433.

Special projects show

Students who have spent the last year working with professional mentors in the community will present their completed projects in a special event on April 21-22 at the Emerald Springs Conference Center, 16000 Ashford in Horizon City, 8:30-11:30 a.m. The event is part of a state-sponsored pilot project at Montwood High School. Among projects are a water reclamation project, a student-designed test for dyslexia, and a fashion show in which the student designed the clothing, supervised production of the pieces, chose the models and produced the show. The public is invited to attend. For information, contact Lynn DeLeon, 937-0527.

In other news

■ The San Elizario school district will recognize individuals named as its 2004 Secondary and Elementary Teachers of the Year and the 2004 Employee of the Year on Thursday, May 20. The event will be held at the annual Star Awards Banquet, to be celebrated at Mission Valley Ballroom, 10600 North Loop, Suite H in Socorro. The district named the top teachers and employees at individual campuses last week. In the following listing, the campus Teacher of the Year is first, followed by Employee of the Year: Jose Olivas and Eva Dearo - SEHS; Corina Reza and Alex Dominguez - SEMS; Elizabeth Garcia and Maria Baxley - Excell Academy; Virginia Solis and Flor Reza - Sambrano Elementary; Guadalupe Flores and Martha Ortega - Alarcón Elementary; Celia Aguilar and Joaquina Mendoza - Borrego Elementary; Nancy Jacquez and Lourdes De Leon - Loya Primary.

■ The El Paso County Tornillo Water Improvement District will host a Wastewater Project Groundbreaking Ceremony on Saturday, April 17, at 19211 Cobb Street, Rivas Hall, in Tornillo, from 9 to 11 a.m. Area dignitaries are expected to attend and the public is invited. For more information contact Francelia Vega at 764-2966.

See BRIEFS, Page 4

At no time is it easier to keep your mouth shut than during an audit of your income-tax return.

— Quips & Quotes



CLEANING UP THE ENVIRONMENT — Village of Vinton Public Works holds training session on new wood chipper. Shown from left is Perry Duby, Juvencia Rios Ontiveros, Margarita Payan, Antonio Castro, Phil Seward, Aureliano Ruiz, Jose Luis Alarcon, Perfecto Valdez, Mario Castellano, and Jesus Zamarripa.

Village of Vinton awarded TCEQ grant to provide useful mulch

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

UPPER VALLEY — The Village of Vinton was awarded recently a grant by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) that will help reduce solid waste going to landfills and instead will provide free mulch to Vinton residents.

As part of TCEQ's Municipal Solid Waste Plan for Far West Texas and with the assistance of the Rio Grande Council of Governments, the Village of Vinton received a \$32,600 grant that is designed to address environmental concerns.

"I want to thank Jake Brisbin, executive officer, and Evaristo Cruz, Solid Waste program coordinator, of West Texas Rio Grande Council of Governments, for their assistance in securing this grant," said Antonio Castro, Village of Vinton mayor.

During the December Town Council meeting, Vinton alderpersons voted unanimously to use the grant funds to purchase a mobile Brush Bandit Model 250 Wood Chipper and its various blades and to repair the town's dump truck.

"The wood chipper will be used to minimize yard and arroyo waste that is transported to the landfill, by providing free mulch to the citi-

zens of Vinton," stated Castro. "We are also planning to make the chipper available to surrounding communities and governmental agencies through inter-local agreements."

A training session on proper operating procedures for the new chipper machinery was held recently for Village of Vinton Public Works employees and representatives from local governmental agencies including Canutillo ISD, La Tuna Federal Prison, and El Paso County.

"Plans are to also provide information on how to convert the shredded wood chips into compost," said Jose Luis Alarcon, Village of Vinton Council member. "By using the compost throughout our community, we hope to help conserve water."

According to Vinton Public Works Director Margarita Payan, the town's Public Works personnel will be in charge of the wood chipper operation and maintenance. Payan said that the dump truck is already being worked on and should be back in service soon.

Any grant monies remaining will be used to develop brochures and other operating procedure manuals to help inform town employees and the public on how to convert the wood chips into compost and how to properly use the equipment, added Castro.

Voters asked to amend Charter in May election

Socorro city elections delayed until at least September

By Arleen Beard
Special to the Courier

SOCORRO — The controversial issue of delaying the City of Socorro's council elections continues to draw extensive attention during council meetings, and the last meeting was no exception.

The current City Council has been called upon to rearrange voting districts within the city to better represent population growth and distribution in recent years, and until this takes place, elections cannot be held.

In past meetings, several community members have voiced their opinion favoring the new district map to include addition of a fifth district versus the redrawing boundaries of the current districts and simply adding an "at-large" seat. Council representatives, however, followed the lead of City Rep. Gary Gandara, and voted to add the at-large seat, and many concerned citizens attending the meeting were vocally disappointed with their decision.

Redrawing the districts will require amending the City Charter, however, and approval to do so must be granted by the voters in an election. The opportunity for Socorrans to vote on this issue will take place on May 15, 2004. A public workshop will be held on April 15, 2004 to redraw the voting district map. Following the May 15, 2004 Charter Amendment election, the City of Socorro will submit the rearranged map for approval by the Department of Justice.

If everything goes according to schedule, the next city council election will take place in September of 2004. Mayor Irma Sanchez has expressed her concern that the council will effectively be unable to conduct business for over a month before the next council election under what the political term "lame."

"If they become 'lame' within the 45 days prior to the scheduled September election, then how will they be able to hold any meetings to conduct much-needed business?" asked Mayor Sanchez.

In other business, council approved the first reading of an ordinance authorizing the issuance and sale of combination tax and museum revenue certificate of obligation. Council has sought the revenue bonds to

See SOCORRO, Page 4

Fabulous is word used to describe Bellegarde's work at Canutillo test kitchen

By Don Woodyard
Courier Staff Writer

CANUTILLO — It is said that an army travels on its stomach.

And an army of hungry kids, numbering about 4,400, travels to school cafeterias daily in the Canutillo ISD to fuel their academic march.

To better feed that army, the school district recently unveiled its new test kitchen and introduced Chef Paul Bellegarde, who will use the new facility to provide on-the-job training for district food service employees.

The purpose of the test kitchen, according to a district brochure, "is to provide meals for central office personnel," (and) to expand program catering operations."

The new facility, approved by the Texas Education Agency as a learning tool, not only provides meals, but also expands catering operations to complement the universal free lunch program in the schools.

Adele Balesh is Food Services director for the district, a job she has held since she came from the Ysleta school district in 1992. Her staff of 69 prepares nutritionally-balanced breakfasts, lunches and snacks in the district's

six cafeterias.

She says the money for the expansion of the kitchen comes through surpluses derived from "wise management" of her Food Service budget and revenue generated from district catering services. (Balesh says her department is a vendor that provides catering to various district functions.)

The kitchen augments the district's child nutrition program that provides free or reduced-priced meals for many of CISD's 4,700 students.

In a "fun way" for the kids, Balesh says, she

See KITCHEN, Page 5



One perspective

By Francis Shrum

Let well enough alone

Everybody knows you ought to let sleeping dogs lie, but we don't seem to get the message.

Anybody who ever had a baby in the house also knows that the worst thing you can possibly do to irritate the tender creature is to upset its sleep cycle.

So why on earth do we keep doing it?

Twice a year, our government perpetrates a terrible injustice on its people and "changes" the time.

Now, whoever said it was within the realm of governmental authority to change the clock ought to have their heads examined. It is simply against nature for someone to arbitrarily say that one whole hour will somehow disappear, only to magically reappear roughly one-half year later. Odd how I grew up thinking that people were subject to time, not time to people.

They call it "daylight savings time." How on earth they came up with that one is beyond me. You can't "save time." You can't put it in a bottle, or a bank. You can't see it, touch it or smell it. It passes by as intangibly and unseen as the wind. And like the wind, the only way we know it actually exists is when we see the effects it leaves behind.

Dust in the air, gray in the hair.

But on top of the futility of trying to harness such an intangible force, the effects of "changing" the time are not positive. In fact, it is my experience that all it leaves behind is havoc and chaos.

It turns an entire nation of working people into a mass of cranky babies who have had their nap time changed. As if there wasn't enough road rage already. Have you been on

the street lately during rush hour? Take that tension and multiply it by all the thousands of poor souls who forgot to reset their alarms and are a whole hour late instead of the usual 15 minutes.

Not a pretty picture.

If the cyclical changing of time were supposed to occur, nature would know it, right? So how come the dog still thinks the school bus is supposed to arrive at the exact same time it did yesterday? Why will the birds start singing tomorrow morning at the precise hour they did today? And, better yet, if we're seeking a natural sign, why doesn't the sun simply start coming up an hour earlier or later?

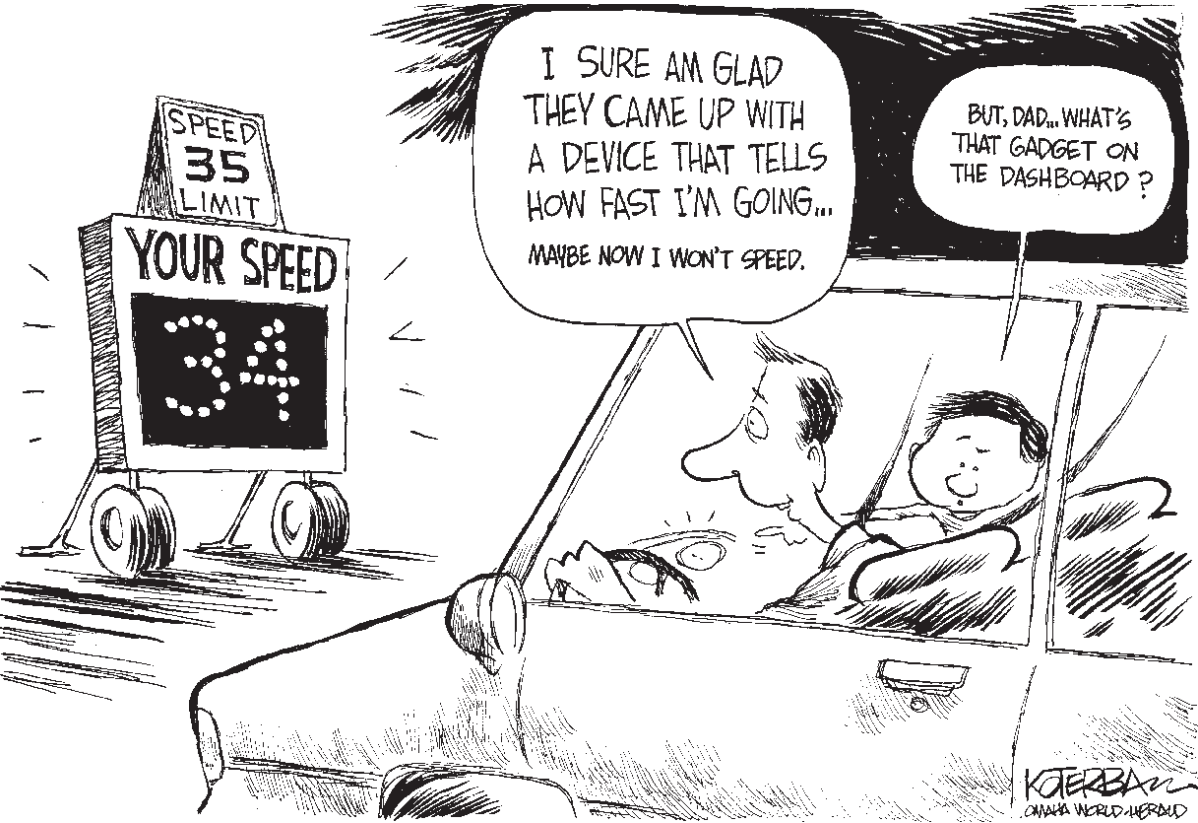
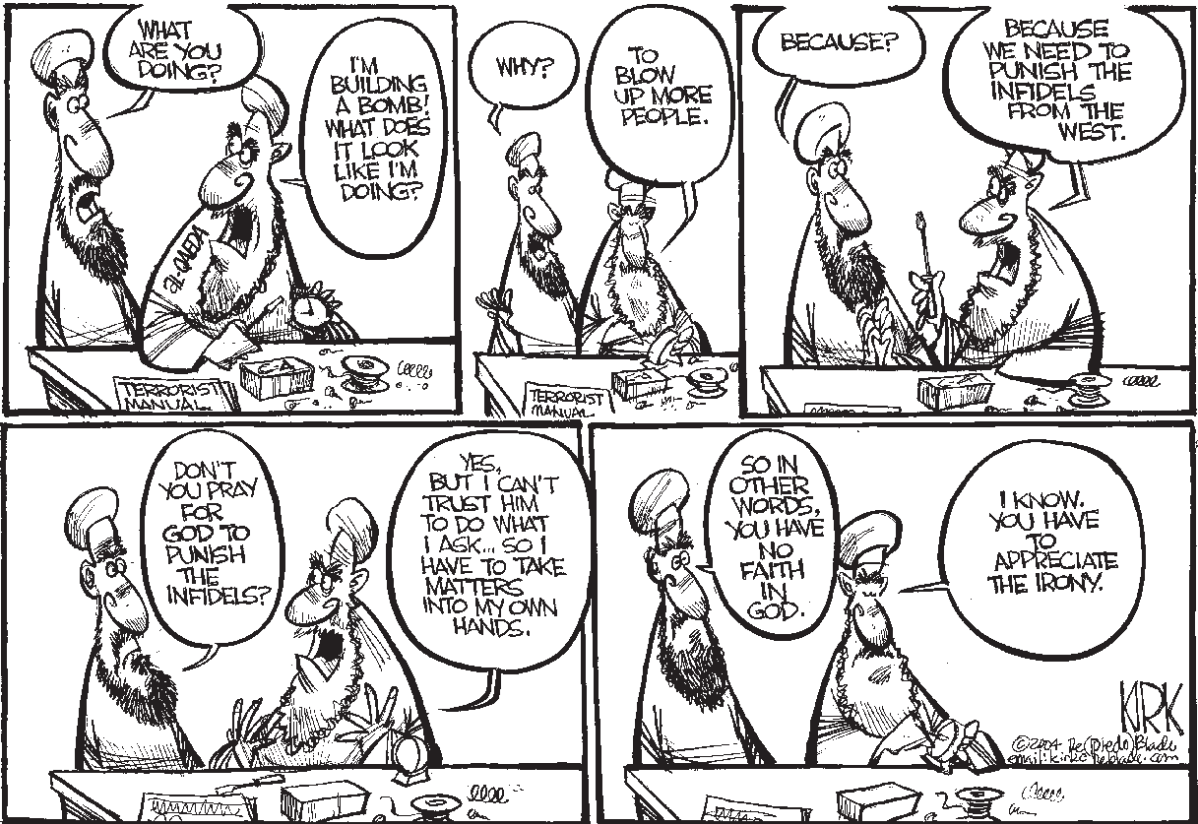
Well, because it's all the sun's fault anyway. If the seasons wouldn't change and this poor, old defective earth didn't sit on this odd, off-kilter axis, we wouldn't be inconvenienced by these irritating fluctuations in the amount of daylight and darkness that keep getting us off-schedule, so that we have to take matters into our own hands and "change" the clock.

In reality, all we are engaging in is a hopeless attempt to "fix" nature.

Those folks in Alaska should really put in a complaint with the time cycle department of nature. Talk about inconvenience — months and months of complete darkness, no matter how many times they reset their clocks.

Which is the whole point. You don't actually change time by resetting the clock. All you do is upset the existing cycle of sleeping and wakefulness of thousands upon thousands of people who must function by the clock.

There are some folks who like it



when the clock springs forward — they are early risers anyway. Some breath a sign of relief when it falls back in the fall and they luxuriate an extra hour in the warm sack before hitting the bricks. But all they are doing is exhibiting the natural order of things — why don't early risers just arrange to be the ones to open up shop and the late risers close

See TIME, Page 7



WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

SERVING ANTHONY VINTON, CASARELLO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORO, CLINT, FARMER, SAN ELIZABO AND TORNILLO

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Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes

Disparities in health conditons on border demand action

Nearly 13 percent of El Pasoans suffer from diabetes, compared to six percent of Americans nationwide. El Pasoans also suffer from disproportionately high levels of other diseases, including TB, hepatitis, and cancer.

These sobering statistics reflect El Paso's huge health care needs. As a border community, we lack many of the fundamentals that promote healthy lifestyles. We confront environmental health hazards including a lack of adequate drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. We have shortages of nurses, doctors, and other health practitioners. El Paso also shoulders the burden of providing health care services to large numbers of uninsured, under-insured, and the undocumented.

El Paso is fortunate to have Texas Tech University, UTEP, El Paso Community College, the Border Health Institute (BHI), Pan American Health Organization, La Fe, Project Vida, Project ARRIBA, Fort Bliss, area hos-

pitals and clinics, and individual doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals at work for our community. We are also looking forward to the new Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center four-year medical school that is scheduled to open its doors in El Paso around 2006, attracting many more students and healthcare professionals to our community.

I worked hard to locate the Border Health Commission (BHC) in El Paso, and helped secure over \$11 million for the BHC in the past several years. Through the BHC and by working with Mexican legislators, I am focusing on health-related issues in the border region on a binational basis. I also helped obtain federal funding for other important healthcare assets in our community, including over \$700,000 for the Migrant Health Project administered by Texas Tech and UTEP, \$667,000 for the La Fe Clinic, and \$1,350,000 for El Paso's Regional Medical Complex, which will be home to the four-year medical school.

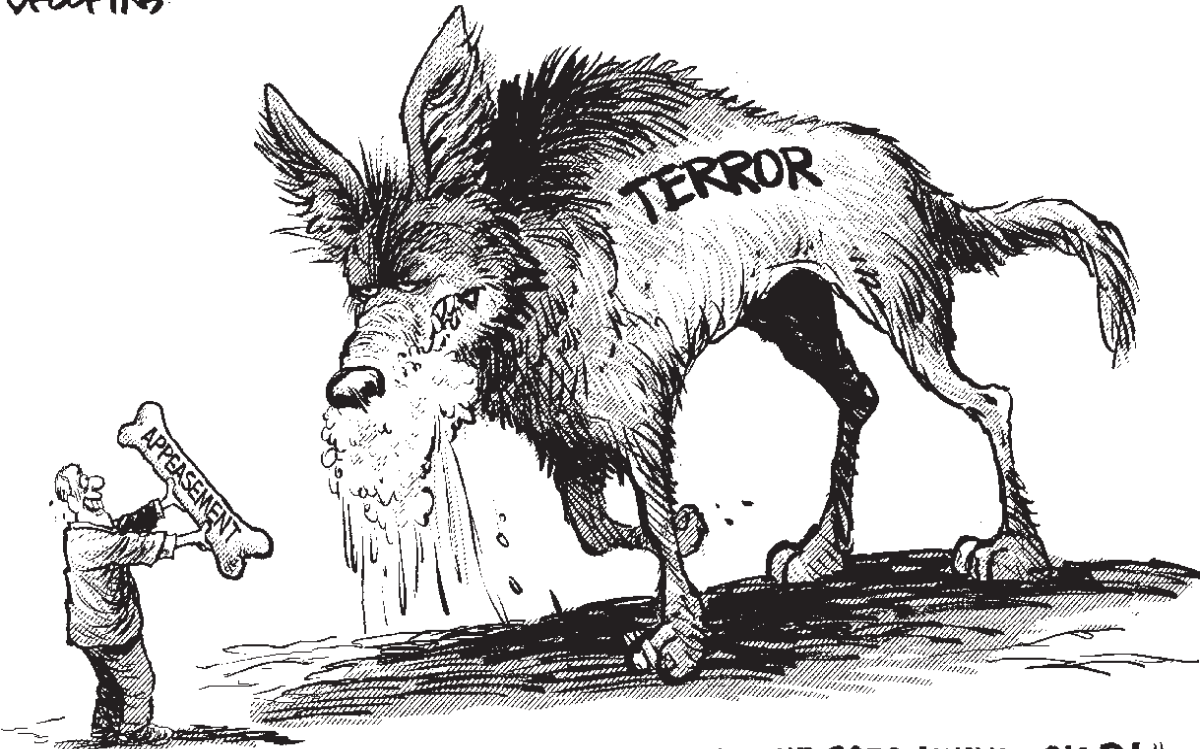
Unfortunately, the health care disparities that El Paso suffers are present throughout the Hispanic community as a whole. Twelve million Hispanics in America are uninsured, including 68-percent of those who work full time and Hispanics between the ages of 45 to 59 have more than triple the risk of having a stroke than whites.

To overcome these challenges, Hispanics in El Paso and across the country need better access to quality care, culturally and linguistically appropriate care, and improved minority health data collection. I am a co-sponsor of the Health Care Equality and Affordability Act, a bill that addresses the significant health disparities minorities face and proposes measures to improve care. I will work this year to move this bill through Congress and improve minority health needs in El Paso and across the country.

El Paso's health needs are directly

See REYES, Page 7

Brookings RICHMOND TIMES DISPATCH



"GOOD BOY! ... SEE, I GIVE NICE DOGGIE A BONE AND HE GOES AWAY! ... OK?!"



Por la Gente By State Rep. Chente Quintanilla

The real agenda behind the school finance proposal

Hola mi gente — The Joint Select Committee on Public School Education finally released its report two weeks ago on public school finance; only it fails to propose any specific solutions to the funding crisis. Wasn't that the reason for the committee in the first place? That minor point doesn't seem to bother the Republican leadership, who called the report a "road map" to build consensus for a final plan. From what I read, this "road map" is going to take Texans on a road to the edge of a cliff.

The Democratic members of the committee rightly refused to sign-off on the report, which doesn't even address the need to maintain equity. Instead it tells us that all our public school problems will be solved if we just treat teachers like nannies.

The following analysis provided by Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA) walks through the major recommendations of the report and decodes the real agenda to eliminate two decades of progress in our public schools.

- Provide districts more flexibility to convert to a campus charter model - This proposal would allow school districts to become home rule districts thereby becoming exempt from the standards currently in law. Campus charters are exempt from current standards such as 1-22 class size limits in early grades, teacher salary schedules and contracts, duty free lunch, teacher planning periods, etc. Campus charters are not mandated to hire teachers with a college degree. This one provision would give school boards the right to ignore virtually everything in state law based solely on a majority vote of the board.
- Simplify the existing teacher salary schedule to provide for greater flexibility - Opponents of the state minimum salary schedule, primarily the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), have long sought to eliminate it thus giving them the freedom to pay teachers whatever they choose. Currently, Texas has a 20-step minimum salary schedule that districts must follow. The intent of

the minimum schedule is to ensure that there is a floor below which no teacher will be paid. Districts may choose to pay above the minimum, which many do, but may not pay below. Elimination of the state minimum salary schedule would harm teachers in the rural, poor districts. It could also have a devastating effect on all career teachers as districts could choose to give substantial raises to newer teachers in hopes of keeping them, while ignoring the career teachers.

- Individual teacher performance incentives - To be eligible for a performance incentive, a teacher must be in the top 15% of eligible teachers in the district. In other words, 85% of the teachers in the district will not be eligible for a monetary incentive and would receive no salary increase. And, we believe, the monetary incentive would be for one year only. To be eligible, a teacher must show that he or she has added value to students' performance on mandated state tests. The top 5% of teachers based on TAKS rankings would get a \$10,000 bonus and those in the 10% of TAKS test scores would get a \$5,000 bonus. And, there is no mention of bonuses or incentives for librarians, counselors, physical education teachers, art and music teachers or any other teachers who do not teach the core subjects.

The House Select Committee on School Finance, in its draft recommendations, added another twist, called the Professional Contract, under which a teacher, in order to be eligible for the monetary incentives, would need to agree work as an at-will employee who could be fired with no due process rights.

- Campus performance incentives - Teachers on campuses identified by ranking based on value-added growth would receive monetary incentives or bonuses. The largest bonuses would go to the highest-rated campuses that comprise 20% of the state's students. Teachers on these campuses would receive from \$3000-\$5000. Campuses rated in the next 20% would receive \$1000-\$2000. Sixty percent of the teachers in the state would not be eligible for a monetary incentive

or bonus. And, the incentives would be in lieu of a salary or step increase because the state minimum salary schedule would be eliminated or "simplified."

- Value-added performance component - The "value added" performance component would be based on test scores. In order for teachers to earn a bonus or incentive, their students' performance on state mandated tests must increase, thus showing the teacher added "value" in his/her job.
- Convert current class size limits to district-wide averages for grades K-4 - This proposal eliminates the 1-22 class size limits in early grades and replaces it with a district-wide average which would allow districts a lot of latitude in increasing class size well above the 22 now in law.
- Move notice of non-renewal until after the end of the school year - Currently, teachers whose contracts are not being renewed must be given notice 45 calendar days before the last day of instruction, typically April 15. This gives them time to appeal the non-renewal, of which a very few do, or to seek employment in another district. Most districts begin hiring for the following year in the spring. By moving the timeline to the end of the school year, teachers would lose the opportunity to apply in other districts until after most positions were filled.
- Make it less costly and time consuming to dismiss teachers with a history of low performance - This merely means that due process protections would be eliminated. Teachers would have no recourse to appeal to the school board a non-renewal. Currently, teachers have the right to appeal to their school board. If they lose their appeal they have the right to appeal only on the record to the commissioner. A miniscule number ever appeal to the commissioner.

Unfortunately, the Joint Select Committee on Public School Finance released report offers no comprehensive solution to the education crisis in Texas. It is not surprising that no vote was taken and no Democrat signed the report. Until then, I remain, Chente for La Gente.

A taxing time of year

The week is finally upon us. By the time you read this column, you will have finished filing your taxes or filing for an extension. As we dove into the pamphlets, filled out the forms and contacted our accountants, many of us were wondering, "how much worse can it get?" The answer: much, much worse.

Would you believe that some members of Congress would like to do away with the tax relief that is putting money back in the



By U.S. Rep. Henry Bonilla

Eye on D.C.

money that is taken from us each year to pay our taxes.

- Americans pay more in taxes than for food, clothing and shelter combined.
- The IRS sends out 8 billion pages of forms and instructions every year. Laid end to end, they would circle the globe 28 times.
- Taxes eat up over 38 percent of the average family's income.
- The average American worked until May 7 last year just to pay his or her share of federal, state and local taxes. That's the first 128 days of your year.
- This year nearly 60 percent of Americans will be forced to pay a tax professional to help them with their taxes.
- Almost the entire second income of a two-income family goes to pay taxes.
- Instructions for the 1040EZ, the easiest personal income tax form, are 33 pages long.

These are just a few reasons why this Congress is working hard to reduce your tax burden. We made great strides last year, but we still have a long way to go.

Families in Texas should not have to pay so much of their hard earned money in taxes or be hassled by a burdensome tax code. You deserve to keep more of what you earn so you can do more for your families, churches and communities. After all, it is your money.

- Master Licensed Plumber #M18624
- Bonded and Insured
- Senior Citizens Discount

- Sewer and Drain Cleaning
- Faucet and Sprinkler Repair
- Appliance Installation
- Evaporative Cooler Service

Horizon Plumbing

852-1079

TRUE TEXAS FACTS by Roger T. Moore, April 19, 1685, the La Salle Expedition records the first surgery in Texas. The victim was bitten by a rattle snake and died.



Socorro

From Page 1

finance improvements in city infrastructure such as roads.

Prior to the approval, City Rep. Joseph Bowling asked Financial Attorney Leroy Grawunder if there was any illegality in regards to pledging museum revenue, when in fact, there

is no actual museum producing any revenue.

Grawunder advised Bowling that the city tax is what is actually being looked at for approval of the bonds. Mayor Sanchez also expressed her concern on the pledging of “museum revenue when there is no actual museum in place producing any revenue.”

Mayor Sanchez also asked if the city tax is what is being looked at for approval of the certificates of obli-

gation, then why could they not exclude the museum revenue from the pledge. Grawunder informed council this would delay the sale of the bonds even further if they had to redo the ordinance.

In another agenda item, considerable discussion took place in regards to contracting with employment consultants to conduct candidate searches to fill several vacant positions within the City of Socorro. City Rep. Gloria

Rodriguez said City Attorney Chris Borunda can conduct the search and fill the needed vacancies and save the City of Socorro the expense of paying the consultants fee.

Mayor Sanchez quickly rebutted on the saving of money since Attorney Borunda would be billing the City of Socorro \$140 per hour for her services. She also added that Borunda is only hired to advise council on legal issues and not to hire em-

ployees. Council subsequently approved to contract employment consultants to conduct the candidate search for the vacant positions.

City Council also approved the selection of a committee to review proposals submitted from accounting firms to conduct an internal audit. Rodriguez requested that Interim City Manager Reyes Fierro and Interim City Clerk Yolanda Rodela spearhead the committee.

Briefs

From Page 1

■ More than 600 parent and community volunteers will be honored by the Socorro schools during the “Volunteers Are a Treasure” Awards luncheon at 11:30 a.m., April 16, in the Mission Valley Ballroom and Convention Center, 10600 North Loop Road in Socorro. Volunteer Coordinator Rachel Tarango said individuals to be honored will have contributed at least 100 hours each in tutoring, organizing, and fundraising activities. “This year we have two new categories, including Intergenerational Volunteer and Youth Volunteer of the year, in addition to the Volunteer of the Year from each of the 33 campuses; the Top 10 Volunteer groups, the Spirit Award and the Superintendent’s Award,” to be presented by SISD Supt. Dr. Robert J. Duron, she said. Others to be honored include PTA and PTO officers, the El Paso Police Department’s Youth Initiative Program, Judge Oscar G. Gabaldon of the 65th District’s Children’s Court and the Rio

Grande Safe Communities organization and Sukie Ramos of Texas Senator Eliot Shapleigh’s office. For more information, call Tarango, 937-0334.

■ The Tornillo Junior High School track team competed last weekend in Van Horn in the district track meet. Edgar Pineda won first in two running events, Jesus Gomez took a second and Pamela Navarette a third. The team is coached by Luis A. Esparza.

■ Twenty Socorro ISD employees have been honored by acceptance into the District’s Administrative Internship Program. Candidates for the program must have completed at least 12 semester hours in educational administration and have at least three years’ teaching experience. Candidates must possess or be pursuing their principal’s certificate and be working in the program through March, 2005.

■ The Dancers’ Company, a theatrical dance group presented by the BYU Alumni Association and Hueco Elementary School, will perform in the Socorro High School Theatre for one performance only on April 28, 7:30

p.m. Reserve tickets are \$6, call 852-2156 or 937-7600 and ask for Keith McClellan.

■ In the Oriental style, it’s the “Year of The Teacher” in the Socorro schools as the district honors all of its instructors with the annual Teacher of the Year Banquet April 22 in the Camino Real Hotel’s ballroom. Six finalists have been selected from the 33 campus candidates for the titles of Socorro ISD’s 2004 Elementary and Secondary Teacher of the Year. The elementary finalists are: Angela Gabaldon, Elfida P. Chavez Elementary School; Virginia Rocha, Myrtle Cooper Elementary School; Yolanda Nieto, Robert R. Rojas Elementary School. In the category of secondary schools, the finalists are: Catherine Morrel, El Dorado High School; Patricia Arellano, Montwood High School; and Michelle Romero, William D. Slider Middle School. Those selected will compete for Region 19 Teacher of the Year honors later this year. The ceremony will be hosted by the District’s 2003 Teachers of the Year, Sue Moriel of Escontrias Elementary School and Paul Harrington of Socorro High School. Entertain-

ment will be provided by dancers from the University of Texas International Ambassadors Program and the Asian Studies Program’s Chinese Language Academy.

■ Montwood High School’s Navy Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps battalion took top honors from the 18th Annual Golden Spread Drill Meet in Amarillo April 3. The Rams competed against 15 teams from Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma during the invitational meet, placing first overall for the second consecutive year. Air rifleman Thomas Gray won two first and two second places in the Air Rifle competition and the Air Rifle team of Adrian Carlos, Gray, Robert Vasquez and Chris Sosa and Matt Urteaga was awarded three first, two seconds and a third plus the first place award for overall performance. During the Armed Drill Team competition, Montwood drill team captain Jose Ortiz was judged as the outstanding team captain. The Unarmed Drill team brought back the event’s sweepstakes award after winning three first places. The Unarmed Drill team is commanded by Cadet Ruby

Molina. Lt. Col. Mike Stewart is the senior military instructor at Montwood.

■ El Paso Mayor Joe Wardy is expected to attend the annual awards ceremony of Socorro High School’s Navy Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps battalion April 21. The 6 p.m. ceremony will honor the groups graduating senior students and recognize those who have excelled in military skills and leadership. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Gerald Mangrum (ret.) is the senior military instructor at Socorro High, assisted by Marine Sgt, Major Robert Way.

■ Premier Signs, Inc., located at 10700 Robin Rd. wants to assure the public and its customers that the sign shown blown over in Horizon City by a windstorm in the April 1 issue of the *Courier* was not installed by their company.

■ Oscar Arrieta of Horizon City has achieved the “Honor Ring” award from his company, Allstate, for outstanding achievement in selling auto, property, business and life insurance, besides retaining his customers and showing profit.

MINER FOOTBALL FIESTA



**APRIL 24TH
BEGINNING
@
4:30 PM**



ORANGE & BLUE GAME

•**UTEP TAILGATE GRILL-OFF: REGISTER TO
WIN A TRIP TO SEASON OPENER VS ARIZONA ST.!!**

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•**T-SHIRTS & ICE CREAM SANDWICHES TO 1ST 2000 FANS**

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Public Notice Town of Anthony, Texas

FAIR HOUSING, IT’S THE LAW

The Town of Anthony hereby declares its support of fair housing practices. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the locality to bring about, through fair, orderly, and lawful procedures, the opportunity of each person to obtain housing without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental handicap, martial status, parenthood, or age.

It is further declared that such policy is established upon a recognition of the inalienable rights of each individual to obtain housing and, further, that denial of such rights is detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the locality and constitutes an unjust denial or deprivation of such inalienable rights which is within the power and the proper responsibility of government to prevent.

The Town of Anthony has a Fair Housing Policy that may be examined and copied by interested groups or individuals at the Anthony Town Hall between the hours of 8:30 A.M. and 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday. The Town of Anthony is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer.

Art Franco, Mayor

WTCC: 04/15/04

www.wtccourier.com



WHAT’S COOKING? — Chef Paul Bellegarde and Food Service Director Adele Balesh display sample trays of Canutillo’s Child Nutrition Program during the Test Kitchen grand opening.

Kitchen

From Page 1

wants to provide better quality food that is “comfortable” for them.

“The kids are happy with what they eat,” she adds. “We want the food to be more like Mommy’s — with choices.

“We want to make it the very best we can; we want to incorporate the newest food rages,” she adds.

How is this philosophy carried out and reflected in the district?

According to a display at the grand opening, the “latest rage (at the middle school) is a breakfast burrito bar — choose your own fixings.”

Another display: “At the high school, one can pack their own breakfast and go.”

A third display: “Start your day at breakfast with Mom and Dad.”

“Adele made me an offer I couldn’t refuse,” Bellegarde said at the grand opening last week of the facility located in the main administration building on Artercraft Road.

“This was a nice opportunity at the right time, an opportunity to get back into the kitchen,” says Bellegarde who joined the district in February. “I like working with my hands.”

To Balesh, “he’s fabulous.”

He says he has been in the cooking profession since 1976, choosing that career over one in microbiology. He comes to Canutillo from the Paso del Norte Health Foundation where he was a consultant with the Que Sabrosa Vida Initiative for nutrition awareness since 2000.

He came to the Westin Paso del Norte in 1986 and became head chef. Bellegarde, 44, also served for seven and a half years as head chef at Providence Memorial Hospital.

He has high praise for the district staff.

“Everybody is working in harmony; the people are open to change.” He defines his work as chef trainer as a “marriage” of his experience and the experience of others — students, cafeteria managers and cooks. Each of these people “brings something to the pot” to make what he describes as a “grand soup. They bring out something great.”

The district opens its doors for the public to share some of the “grand soup.” According to the district brochure, “we welcome you to dine at any cafeteria at anytime. Come see us!”

SISD okays new nine-week calendar

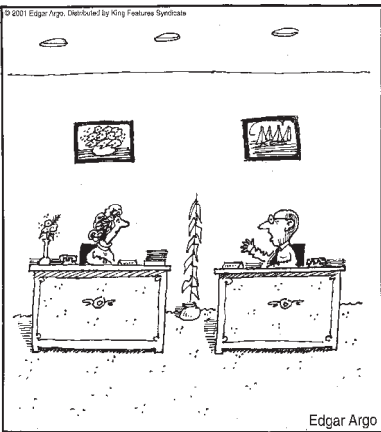
EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Trustees of the Socorro ISD approved a new attendance calendar for the 2004-2005 school year April 6. The new calendar shows the next school year starting date as July 26, with the first nine-week period ending Sept. 24. Students will return to school Oct. 11 and continue studies until the Thanksgiving break of Nov. 25-26. After that, classes will start Nov. 29 and continue until the winter break, Dec. 20.

Starting in 2005, classes will begin Jan. 4 and continue through March 4, the start of the third nine-week period. The intersession break, including the Easter holidays will last through March 28. Classes will resume March 29 and continue through last day of school year, May 30. Early release dates are planned for Sept. 15, Nov.24 and Dec.17, 2004.

“The nine-week grading plan actually goes hand-in-hand with the new calendar,” says Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Antonio Baca. “The reason we wanted to do a nine-week grading period is that teachers will have a longer period of time to do different types of assessments of their students. A certain amount of classroom time is lost to reviewing for tests, and

the longer period allowed us to work in more staff development days for teachers.” Baca added that football and other sports schedules will not be affected by the change because the University Interscholastic League has language addressing eligibility for both six-week and nine-week grading periods.

The new calendar meets the requirement of 177 instructional days for the school year, and is available for printing from the District’s web site: www.sisd.net.



Town of Clint, Texas Notice of Municipal Election *Aviso de Eleccion Municipal*

To the registered voters of the Town of Clint, Texas:
A los votantes registrados del Pueblo de Clint, Texas:

Notice is hereby given that the polling places listed below will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, May 15, 2004 for voting in a Municipal election, to elect one (1) Mayor and two (2) Aldermen for full two-year terms.

Notifiquese, por presente, que las casillas electorales sitadas abajo se abriran desde las 7 de la mañana hasta las 7 de la tarde el sábado 15 de mayo de 2004 para votar en la elección para elegir un (1) Alcalde y dos (2) Regidores para el término completo de dos años.

Location of polling places
Localidades de las casillas electorales

Clint Middle School
13100 Alameda Avenue, Clint, Texas

Early voting by personal appearance will be conducted each weekday at:

La votación en ausencia en persona se llevará a cabo de lunes a viernes en:

Clint Middle School
13100 Alameda Avenue, Clint, Texas

between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. beginning on the April 28, 2004 and ending on May 11, 2004.

entre las 8 de la mañana y las 5 de la tarde empezando el día 28 de abril de 2004, y terminando el día 11 de mayo de 2004.

Early voting by personal appearance will be conducted at all locations within El Paso County, at which Early Voting is conducted by the County Elections Department beginning on the April 28, 2004 and ending on May 11, 2004.

La votacion anticipo en persona se llevara a cabo en todos locaciones en el Condado de El Paso, en donde se lleva a cabo votaciones tempranas manejadas por el Departamento de Elecciones del condado empezando el día 28 de abril de 2004, y terminando el día 11 de mayo de 2004.

Applications for ballot by mail shall be mailed to:

Las solicitudes para boletas para votar en ausencia por correo deberan enviarse a:

Helen Jamison
500 E. San Antonio, Rm. 402
El Paso, Texas 79901

Applications for ballots by mail must be received no later than the close of business on the 7th day of May, 2004.

Las solicitudes para boletas para votar en ausencia por correo deberan recibirse para el fin de las horas de negocio el día 7 de mayo de 2004.

Issued this 3rd day of February, 2004.
Emitada esta 3 día de febrero de 2004.

Charles E. Gonzalez, Mayor

WTCC: 04/15/04

Fabens Independent School District Notice of Board Election *Aviso de Eleccion Regentes*

To the Registered Voters of Fabens Independent School District:

A los votantes registrados del distrito independiente escolar de Fabens:

Notice is hereby given that the polling places listed below will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, May 15, 2004 for voting in a School Board Trustee election, to elect Trustees, Places 3 and 4.

Notifiquese, por presente, que las casillas electorales sitadas abajo se abrirán desde las 7 a.m. hasta las 7 p.m. de el sabado 15 de mayo de 2004 para votar en la elección para Regentes, Lugar 3 y 4.

LOCATION OF POLLING PLACES
DIRECCION(ES) DE LAS CASILLAS ELECTORALES

Rio Valle Woman’s Club
521 Mike Maros St., Fabens, Texas 79838

Early voting by personal appearance will be conducted each weekday at:

La votación en aadelantada en persona se llevará a cabo de lunes a viernes en:

Rogelio Sanchez Center
1331 N. Fabens St., Fabens, Texas 79838

between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. beginning on the April 28, 2004 and ending on May 11, 2004.

entre las 9:00 de la mañana y las 4:00 de la tarde empezando el día 28 de abril de 2004, y terminando el día 11 de mayo de 2004.

Early voting by personal appearance will be conducted at all locations within El Paso County, at which Early Voting is conducted by the County Elections Department beginning on the April 28, 2004 and ending on May 11, 2004.

La votacion anticipo en persona se llevara a cabo en todos locaciones en el Condado de El Paso, en donde se lleva a cabo votaciones tempranas manejadas por el Departamento de Elecciones del condado empezando el día 28 de abril de 2004, y terminando el día 11 de mayo de 2004.

Applications for ballot by mail shall be mailed to:

Las solicitudes para boletas que se votaran en ausencia por correo deberán enviarse a:

Helen Jamison, Office of the County Elections
500 E. San Antonio
El Paso, Texas 79901

Applications for ballots by mail must be received no later than the close of business on the 7th day of May, 2004.

Las solicitudes para boletas que se votarán en ausencia por correo deberán recibirse para el fin de las horas de negocio el día 7 de mayo de 2004.

Issued this 15th day of February, 2004.
Emitada esta 15 día de febrero de 2004.

Maureen Graham
Presiding Officer/*Oficial que Preside*

WTCC: 04/15/04

Mickelson goes 1-47 in majors — good enough to wear green

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

The old adage states that good things will eventually come to those who wait.

I just didn't think I'd have to wait through 47 PGA major tournaments to finally see Phil "Lefty" Mickelson raise the winner's trophy but finally, finally it happened last Sunday at the Masters.

Mickelson started the day in the last group, tied for the lead at six under par. However, a shaky front nine for Mickelson and a couple of eagles by South Africa's Ernie Els put Lefty down by two strokes. The "questions" began to surface.

By the 18th hole, Mickelson had shot his way back into a tie with Els at eight under par. His birdie putt — the last putt of the tournament, on the last hole — pushed him to nine under par and victory. It earned him the right to wear the coveted green jacket from Augusta.

After years and years of having to hear the same questions and comments about being a good but not great golfer, Mickelson must have felt like the weight of every golf course in America has been lifted from his backswing.

And the most remarkable thing of all had been his demeanor through it all. Mickelson always addressed the media and never lost his cool when being confronted about being the best golfer in the world having not won a ma-

jor tournament.

I've seen lesser athletes crack for much less. But to his credit, Phil Mickelson accomplished what the Cubs and Red Sox could not last season — he got the monkey off his back.

Now all he has to is slay a Tiger.

NBA playoffs

The experts say the cream always rises to the top, and heading toward the end of this NBA season it appears to be the case.

The Sacramento Kings, the San Antonio Spurs and the Minnesota Timberwolves look ready in the west, but another team will make it interesting.

It didn't look very promising a month ago, but through all the injuries, bickering, egos, and legal court dates, the Los Angeles Lakers appear to be reaching their stride at just the right time.

After struggling through Karl Malone's knee, Gary Payton's dissatisfaction, Shaquille O'Neal's questioning of coach Phil Jackson and Jackson's questioning the heart of the entire team, the Lakers are playing as well as anyone. Oh, and have I even mentioned the distraction of Kobe Bryant's rape case yet?

The Lakers found themselves five games behind the Sacramento Kings for the best record in the Western Conference just a few weeks ago but have closed well and have re-established themselves as a co-favorite to win it all.

The great experiment that had joined four

future Hall-of-Famers had failed miserably, or so it appeared.

Since the all-star break, through last Sunday, the Lakers have been the hottest team in the league having won 23 games while losing only six.

As much as I am not Kobe Bryant fan, I have to admit that he is probably playing the best basketball of his career right now. It is remarkable that he can play the way he has with his freedom, literally, in the balance.

Will the Lakers win it all? The way they're playing right now it appears they very well could. And they have to — Kobe will try to make the Clippers the "new" team to watch in L.A., when he signs with them next year.

RoboBonds?

There have been a lot of allegations being thrown around Major League Baseball this pre-season. The hottest topic, unfortunately, has not been the upcoming play on the field, but the steroid consumption off the field.

The talk surrounding Barry Bonds' personal trainer has got everyone believing that the San Francisco Giants' outfielder has bulked up in a most unnatural way via the use of illegal steroids.

And if this is proven, what happens to all his impending home run records? What happens to his MVP trophies? What happens to his baseball-playing reputation?

Everyone knows Bonds' personal reputation has been shot for years. Bonds has never been

known as one of the most accessible players in the world by the fans, media, or teammates.

But the toughest thing about knowing whether Bonds actually took steroids while he was banging out all those home runs was any kind of a drug test. You can test him now but you can't go back in time and test him a year ago — or can you?

Seems it might be able to tell whether Bonds was doping after all.

A story this week by the San Francisco Chronicle stated that the actual urine samples taken from seven professional athletes, which were thought to be destroyed, have not been and can be retested.

One of those urine samples belongs to Barry Bonds. The investigators can now check to see if Bonds as taking THG, a performance enhancing drug which was allegedly given to athletes by the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative. And don't forget that it was Bonds' personal trainer, Greg Anderson, who was among four men indicted last month on charges of illegally supplying performance-enhancing drugs from BALCO.

So it appears we will soon have definitive proof whether Bonds took the illegal drugs. And if it is proven, baseball will have to make some pretty tough choices.

And looking at the way pro baseball has been policing its players so far — Bonds will surely either get a stern talking to, or maybe he'll be sent to bed without touching any of his millions.



One hall of fame not enough for SHS baseball coach

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — One hall of fame wasn't enough for Socorro High School baseball coach Chris Forbes. After May 5 he'll be a member of two.

During 1999 he made the El Paso Baseball Hall of Fame, and next it's the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame. "I had to win a couple more championships," he quips. Forbes will be inducted into the organization on that date.

Forbes has been working at Socorro High School for 23 years 20 of them as head baseball coach. He also teaches four classes in weightlifting at Socorro High, and says staying at that school has been an easy decision.

"The kids are good, real dedicated and they work hard. We have a strong baseball tradition here, and our overall record is strong," says Forbes, adding that he may be the second high school coach in El Paso's sports history to achieve more than 400 career wins. A number of his former students, including Omar Quintanilla, are playing professional ball.

Tickets for the lunch meal and ceremony at the Tomas Rivera Conference Room, Student Union Building at UTEP, are \$30 each and available from teacher Margarito Bañales at Socorro High School, Room 3114. For ticket information, call 937-2146.

King Super Crossword

SOUNDS TOUGH!
ACROSS

1 Big _
4 "Stop, sailor!"
9 James of "Misery"
13 Swashbuckling
novelist
18 Grand _ Opry
19 Actress Berger
20 Mournful music
21 "F Troop" corporal
22 Start of a remark
by Milton Berle
24 Mid_size band
25 "Andrea _"
26 Costa _
27 "Family Feud" host
29 Division word
31 Aachen article
32 Basilica feature
34 Part 2 of remark
38 TV's "General _"
42 Like some sheep
43 Part of HOMES
44 Inclined
45 Senator Thurmond
47 "Waking _ Devine"
(98 film)
49 Wee serving
52 Composer Schiffrin
54 Circus performer
57 Put on a pedestal
61 Soft tissue
63 Tangle
64 Damage
65 Actress Ward
66 Baseball's
Boudreau

68 Enchilada
alternative
70 "Trinity" author
72 Neighbor of Wyo.
73 Obeys the dentist
77 Part 3 of remark
78 '80s Joe Penny
series
80 Crank's comment
81 Skater Lipinski
82 Noun suffix
84 Sundown, to
Shelley
85 Actor Arkin
87 See 106 Across
88 "Love Train" group
91 Thick of things
95 Denizen
97 Geological
phenomenon
99 The Chipmunks,
e.g.
100 Comic Carvey
101 Galena, for one
103 _ski party
105 Priest's robe
106 With 87 Across,
type of liqueur
109 Merit
112 _ blanket
114 Part 4 of remark
118 Well-informed
119 "So that's your
game!"
120 Nonflowering plant
121 "The Addams
Family" uncle
125 Does Little work

128 Croc's kin
131 Chateau valley
133 End of remark
135 Wear away
136 Computer key
137 "The Lady _" (79
film)
138 Child welfare org.
139 Rock's Meisner
140 Stocking stuffers?
141 Dispositions
142 "The Bells"
monogram

DOWN

1 Physicist Niels
Machine" people
3 English port
4 Simile center
5 Feud
6 Novelist Seton
7 Pack
8 Homeric
characters
9 Pres. Clinton, e.g.
10 Performer
11 Actor's actor?
12 Irritate
13 Rigoletto, to Gilda
14 Actor Tognazzi
15 _ Gras
16 Sharon of Israel
17 Trap
20 "Tiny Bubbles"
singer
23 Comics' "Andy _"
28 He gives a hoot

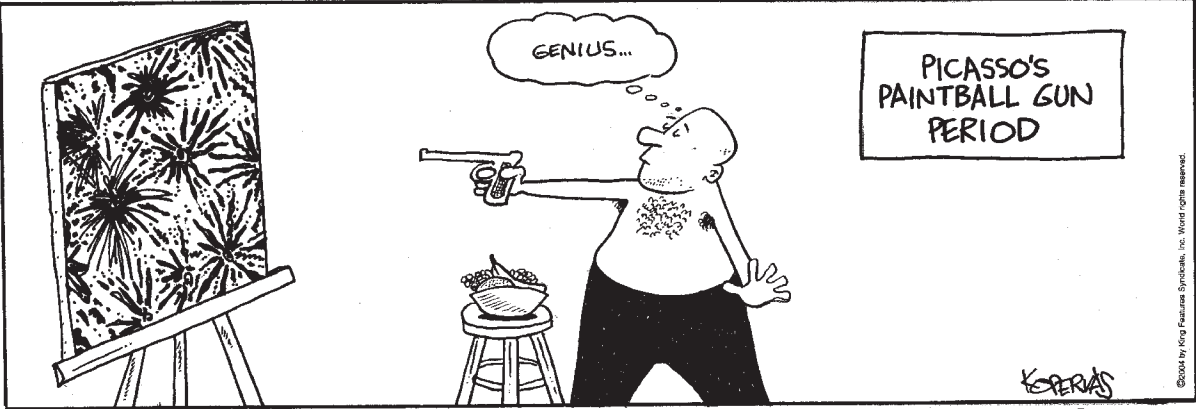
30 " _ the fields we
go..."
33 Slangy sib
35 Ain't right?
36 Extensive
37 Toast start
38 Grapefruit serving
39 October birthstone
40 Curved lines
41 Forsaken
46 Ditch under a
drawbridge
48 Object
50 Change for the
better
51 Brawl
53 Sonja Henie's
birthplace
55 Acts like an ass?
56 Spirits
58 Amritsar attire
59 Nonsense
60 Smidgen
62 Throw a party
67 Custom
69 Message board?
71 Goblet part
73 Lost luster
74 _ apso
75 Gray or Moran
76 _ Domingo
79 "What's _ for me?"
80 Candy quantity
83 Spotted rodent
86 Belarusian city
89 Puppy protests
90 Withered
92 Downspout

93 Bank deposit?
94 "Twelfth Night"
role
96 Spanish surrealist
97 Equipment
98 Happened again
102 Heal a rift
104 Eat in the evening
107 Right _ the bat
108 A hole near the
sole
110 Allude (to)
111 Dundee denial
113 Loud laugh
114 Bet
115 "Pal Joey" author
116 Boca _, FL
117 Maine town
122 Willowy
123 Baseball's
Martinez
124 Spanish river
126 "I could _ horse!"
127 Break suddenly
129 Eccentric
130 Curious George's
creator
132 Musical syllables
134 Pitches

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Comix

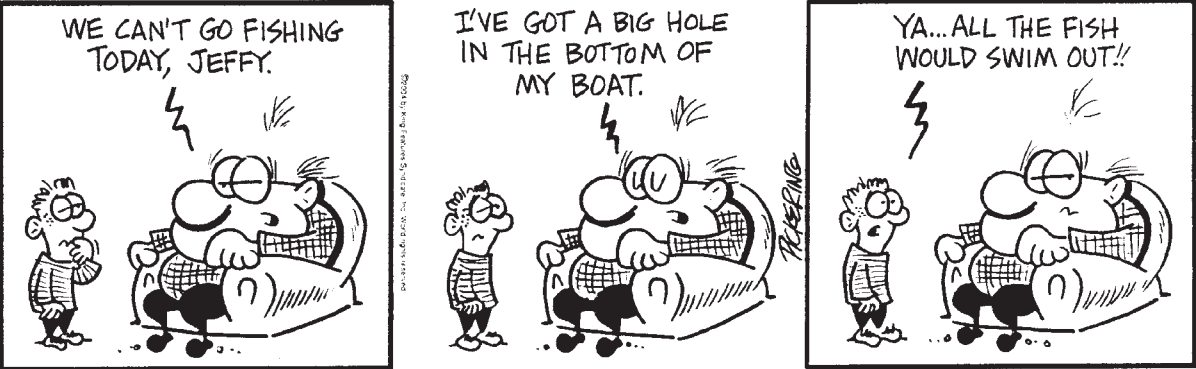
OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Election gets down and dirty — fast

By Don Flood

We all knew this year’s election was going to be ugly.

We just didn’t know this ugly, this soon.

Read what Commerce Secretary Donald L. Evans recently said about Sen. John Kerry: He’s a “fellow of a different political stripe *who looks French.*”

Whoa!

Here we are, still early in the campaign, and already one camp is accusing the other candidate of *looking French!*

There’s more. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay reportedly begins speeches by saying, “Good afternoon, or, as John Kerry might say, *‘Bonjour.’*”

Ouch!

It’ll be even worse by the time we get to the debates:

INTERVIEWER: Why should Americans vote to keep you as president of the United States?

BUSH: Make no mistake, my opponent is a very fine man, and I respect him, but when people step into the voting booth, they have to ask themselves one question, “Do I want a cheese-eating surrender monkey as my president?” I think that’s the real issue here.

KERRY: I am shocked that a president of the United States would use such language

BUSH: Isn’t it true, Mr. Kerry, that if elected president, you plan to offer those little sissy French cigarettes at White House functions?

KERRY: That’s ridiculous!

BUSH: And isn’t also true that for your first meal you are planning to serve — what do you call them — crap suzettes?

KERRY: That’s crêpe suzette!

BUSH: See, he admits it! Americans have a choice this election. We can have a White House where French poodle dogs run about with berets, smoking little cigarettes, or

we can have a real American White House where we never have — and never will — serve quiche.

Kerry, on his part, didn’t help matters when he made comments about being the presidential candidate favored by foreign leaders.

As the foreign vote isn’t expected to play a large role in this year’s U.S. presidential campaign — except perhaps in Florida — that may have been politically unwise.

But covering the foreign vote would give the 24-hour news channels something else to talk about:

WOLF BLITZER: This just in. Based on early returns and exit polls, CNN is now projecting that John Kerry is going to be the winner in Kazakhstan! For an in-depth analysis of what this means to the Bush campaign, we turn now to Jeff Greenfield.

GREENFIELD: Well, actually Wolf, it doesn’t mean beans.

WOLF: But wasn’t Kazakhstan considered a safe ‘red’ state for Bush?

GREENFIELD: It’s interesting that you say that, but after countless interviews and hours of research we have discovered that, in fact, Kazakhstan has no electoral votes.

WOLF: Wow, that is a shocking development! For more on this we turn now to Candy Crowely, who is on location in France, where polls will be closing soon in what is anticipated to be a huge landslide for Kerry. Candy, tell us about Kerry’s big win there.

CROWELY: Well, um, Kerry didn’t win here, Wolf.

WOLF: You’ve just heard it, folks! Bush, in what must be one of the greatest political comebacks in history, has just won France!

Oui, oui, folks, it’s going to be a long election.

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Classified Ads

LEGAL

SOCORRO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Invitation to Bid/Respond:

Sealed bids/proposals/CSP to furnish the District with the following products and/or services will be accepted at the following times:

CAFETERIA SUPPLIES
CSP NO. 199-0427-0472
APRIL 27, 2004, UNTIL 2 P.M

ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDIT
CSP NO. 199-0427-0473
APRIL 27, 2004, UNTIL 2:30 P.M

VOLUNTARY EMPLOYEE SUPPLEMENTAL LIFE, CANCER, DENTAL, DISABILITY, LEGAL AND VISION INSURANCE COVERAGE
RFP NO. 199-0430-0469
APRIL 30, 2004, UNTIL 2 P.M

Proposals will be received at Business Services Dept., 12300 Eastlake Drive, El Paso, Texas 79928 until the specified times. Detailed specifications are available from the above office between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. WTCC-04/15/04

BARGAINS

For Sale: pair of matching love seats, w/throw pillows. Great condition. \$100 or will sell singly. 852-4817.

GARAGE SALES

The First Baptist Church of Horizon City, 17018 Darrington, is sponsoring a yard sale on Saturday, April 24, beginning at 7 a.m. to fund activities for local youth. A large variety of items will be available for sale. 4/15

SELF-HELP

Persons who have

a problem with alcohol are offered a free source of help locally. Alcoholics Anonymous - call 562-4081.

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

AMERICAS DEFENSIVE DRIVING
Ticket Dismissal & Insurance Discounts
English y Español \$25
(915) 630-8474

AV CONSTRUCTION
Additions & Remodeling
Kitchen & Bathrooms
Garage Conver-

sions
Extend Any Room of Your House
Deck & Porches for Mobile Homes
Replace Existing Windows
FREE ESTIMATES
433-4102

WINDOW TINT
Office • Home • Car
Free Estimates
(915) 549-5774

“Windshield Ding — Gimme a Ring” JIFFY GLASS REPAIR
Windshield Repair Specialists
By appt. at your home or office: (No repairs within Horizon City)
R.V. Dick

Harshberger
915-852-9082

BERT’S AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR
Domestic and Foreign
852-3523
1558 Oxbow, Horizon City

HORIZON CITY PLUMBING 852-1079
•Electric rooter service for sewers and drains
•Appliance installation
•Many other plumbing services
Licensed, bonded and insured for your protection.

West Texas County Courier 852-3235

Time

From Page 2

things down in the evening when they are more functional?

There is no such thing as an efficient one-size-fits-all time change. Messing around with the clock does nothing other than aggravate a populace already on edge from having to deal with bad daycare, inept government servants, unfair taxation, self-serve checkout lines, telephone answering systems, computer viruses, poor customer service, bad drivers and road construction.

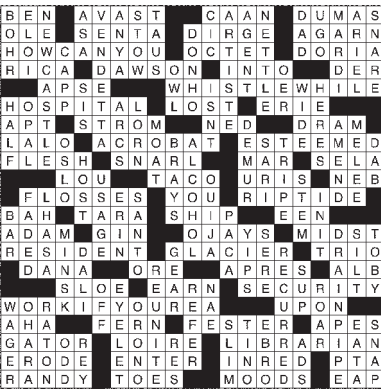
Looks like our government would learn to let well enough alone instead of throwing everything into chaos twice a year so we never really get our bearings.

But, then again, maybe that’s the whole point. As long as we are sleep-deprived, late for work, and time-confused we won’t be able to focus long enough to look very closely at anything we’re being forced to do.

Reyes

From Page 2

related to our economy, culture and infrastructure. Through joint partnerships on the local, state and federal level, we are fighting for increased resources for our healthcare providers, we are fighting the poverty that afflicts our area and addressing our unique public health needs on the U.S.-Mexico border. Through these comprehensive efforts, El Pasoans will receive the healthcare they need and deserve.



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Social Security Q&A

By Ray Vigil

New legislation affects amount of government pension for some

EL PASO COUNTY — Recently HR 743, “Social Security Protection Act of 2003,” was passed by Congress on Feb. 11, 2004 and signed into law by President George W. Bush on March 2, 2004. Public Law 108-203 contains a provision that eliminates the “last day covered employment exemption” to the Government Pension Offset provision.

As we have stated in previous articles, this provision reduces the amount of a spouse’s social security benefit by two-thirds of the amount of a person’s government pension if that person was employed by any government entity that does not pay into social security.

Previously an individual could retire from a federal, state or local gov-

ernment entity; be exempted from Government Pension Offset and still receive social security benefits if their last day of employment was covered under their retirement system and social security. Under Public Law 108-203, the new requirement is that an individual work five consecutive years (60 months) in a position within the same government entity that pays into both social security and entity’s retirement plan.

The new law also provides a transition for individuals whose last day of government employment occurs within five years after the date of enactment (between June 30, 2004

and before March 2, 2009). For these individuals the 60 consecutive month requirement of covered employment will be reduced (but not to less than one month) by the number of months in total that the worker had in covered government service under the same retirement system before the date of enactment. If the 60 month requirement is reduced, the remaining months of service needed to fulfill the requirement must be performed after March 2, 2004.

Also, those who had filed for and were entitled to receive social security benefits prior to April 1, 2004, they can work their last day of covered employ-









ment by both Social Security and the pension plan and qualify for the last day exemption regardless of how far in the future their retirement occurs. For individuals not yet eligible for social security benefits and whose last day of covered employment is before July 1, 2004, they too can also avoid Government Pension Offset.

For all other individuals, if they switch to government employment covered under social security and pension plan after June 30, 2004, they would have to work for the entire final 60 month period of their government employment in order to avoid the Government Pension Offset.

WEATHER

AccuWeather.com

SEVEN-DAY FORECAST FOR EL PASO

THURSDAY	THUR. NIGHT	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
							
Mostly sunny and warm.	Mainly clear.	Sunny to partly cloudy and warm.	Clouds and sun, chance for a thunderstorm.	Plenty of sunshine.	Several hours of sunshine.	Turning cloudy with a chance of showers.	Times of clouds and sun.
▲ 84°	▼ 55°	▲ 83° ▼ 56°	▲ 85° ▼ 54°	▲ 80° ▼ 52°	▲ 81° ▼ 45°	▲ 72° ▼ 43°	▲ 72° ▼ 42°

UV INDEX

Statistics for noon.

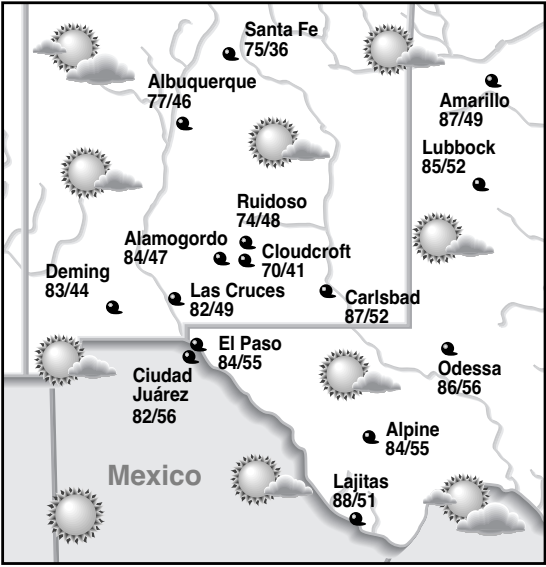
The higher the UV Index, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

Thursday	10	Very High
Friday	10	Very High
Saturday	9	Very High
Sunday	10	Very High
Monday	10	Very High
Tuesday	4	Low
Wednesday	10	Very High

TEXAS WEATHER

Anthony	85	53
Canutillo	85	54
Clint	85	55
E. Montana	84	55
Fabens	85	55
Horizon	85	56
San Elizario	81	53
Socorro	83	54
Tornillo	85	55
Vinton	85	54

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



TRAVELERS CITIES

City	Thur. Hi/Low/W	Fri. Hi/Low/W	Sat. Hi/Low/W	Sun. Hi/Low/W	Mon. Hi/Low/W
Albuquerque	77/46/s	74/45/s	73/42/pc	69/44/s	74/41/s
Atlanta	70/50/s	74/52/s	76/54/s	76/56/s	74/54/pc
Atlantic City	58/37/sh	56/38/pc	60/45/s	67/50/s	66/49/pc
Austin/San Antonio	79/56/pc	80/60/pc	86/65/pc	80/61/pc	82/57/c
Baltimore	62/40/sh	64/44/pc	72/48/s	74/52/s	71/51/pc
Boston	52/38/sh	48/38/c	52/45/pc	61/48/pc	61/49/c
Chicago	70/48/s	75/52/pc	72/52/sh	68/46/sh	62/44/c
Dallas/Ft. Worth	77/56/pc	83/58/pc	82/60/pc	77/59/pc	79/56/c
Denver	71/38/s	70/37/s	63/36/pc	59/33/s	62/33/c
Flagstaff	63/33/pc	60/33/pc	51/24/pc	55/24/c	58/21/c
Houston	78/58/s	82/64/pc	86/66/pc	84/66/pc	82/66/t
Kansas City	75/54/pc	75/55/pc	78/51/pc	67/48/sh	66/47/c
Las Vegas	81/55/pc	74/54/pc	67/49/c	71/53/s	75/48/pc
Miami	77/60/s	79/64/pc	80/67/s	82/69/pc	82/66/pc
Minneapolis	70/47/sh	66/46/sh	60/46/sh	54/40/r	59/38/c
New Orleans	74/54/s	76/58/s	80/61/s	80/62/s	80/58/r
New York City	55/42/sh	54/45/pc	61/50/pc	69/51/pc	67/52/c
Philadelphia	60/42/sh	62/44/pc	70/48/s	72/52/pc	69/53/pc
Phoenix	90/62/s	86/59/s	78/56/pc	80/56/s	82/50/s
Portland	58/42/sh	58/44/sh	60/44/pc	58/43/sh	60/38/pc
San Francisco	58/48/pc	58/46/sh	60/48/pc	60/50/sh	60/44/r
Seattle	54/41/sh	56/40/sh	56/42/pc	57/43/c	56/37/c
Tucson	86/54/s	85/53/s	78/48/pc	79/51/s	84/43/s
Washington, DC	62/42/sh	64/48/pc	72/54/s	75/56/s	71/55/c

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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***Cub Cadet will provide an extended limited warranty for a period of 5 years or 500 hours, whichever occurs first, for the frame and pivoting cast-iron front axle on all new Cub Cadet Series 1000 tractors retailed after December 1, 2003. Cub Cadet will provide an extended limited warranty for a period of 5 years or 500 hours, whichever occurs first, for the frame, pivoting cast-iron front axle and drive shaft on all new Cub Cadet Series 2000, 2500, and 3000 tractors purchased after July 31, 1998. This additional limited warranty is available only to residential users and not commercial users. For complete details on 2-year and 5-year limited warranties see your Cub Cadet retailer. C11135-04-55080-1

