



## NEWSBRIEFS

### The SO is watching

Anticipated increase of vehicular traffic during the New Year holiday, Dec. 31 through Jan. 1, will bring El Paso County Sheriff's Office Traffic Section units out in higher numbers to enforce drunk driving laws as well as other traffic regulations. Units will be working this enforcement program throughout El Paso County. Some of the areas of coverage include Loop 375, Interstate 10, Socorro Rd., Doniphan Dr., Alameda Ave., Horizon Blvd., and Highway 62-180.

### Crisis Center gala

The Second Annual Mission Valley Ballroom and Lijuro Inc. Charity Gala Benefit for the Child Crisis Center has been set for Jan. 15, 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the Ballroom, 10600 North Loop Rd. in Socorro. The formal event will include dinner, fashion show, dance and guaranteed good time. Admission is \$20 per person, to help make the life of a child better. Information and ticket reservation are available at 829-3774 or 821-0496.

### Prison's children

January has been dedicated as National Mentoring Month, and Community Solutions of El Paso has developed a unique and specialized mentoring program dedicated specifically to addressing the unique needs of El Paso area children who have one or more of their parents in prison. In attempting to cope with the trauma related to this situation, these children often turn to gangs for support and affiliation, to violence to express their outrage, and chemical substances to ease emotional pain. More than 5,000 such children live in the El Paso area — national statistics indicate that as many as 70 percent of these kids will ultimately become prisoners themselves. The Connections program provides trained volunteers to serve as positive role models, providing encouragement and healthy diversion to children of prisoners during this very difficult and critical time. To become a volunteer or to learn more, call Carolyn Esparza, Executive Director, at 861-7733.

### In other news

■ Gov. Rick Perry has announced that Texas will receive \$12.9 million in federal funding to help feed and shelter hungry and homeless Texans in 2005. The funding was made available by the U.S. Congress to support social service agencies in more than 2,500 cities and counties across the country. "This funding will greatly assist our volunteer and faith-based organizations in Texas as they carry out their missions to assist Texans in need," Perry said. "Our dedicated Texas volunteers can use the funds in a variety of ways

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## Unusual view of umbrella earns top award for novice photographer

By Phillip Cortez  
Special to the Courier

SAN ELIZARIO — According to Michael Lafferty, an art teacher at San Elizario High School, Nancy Garcia and the rest of his class had only been taking digital photos for roughly six weeks before entering their work in the El Paso Community College Art Competition, a competition that has become one of the biggest showcases for artists and photographers in the area.

Six weeks, you say? No problem. Not only did Lafferty's students produce outstanding work, but Garcia, only a sophomore, took first place overall in Division IV, where students from grades 9-12 competed.

"For a sophomore to do that with only six weeks worth of taking photos is remarkable," Lafferty said. "San Elizario had 16 entries in the competition and every student who entered, entered a winner."

The competition is open to all students in the El Paso area and entries are broken into four categories: Pre-K, grades 1-5, 6-8, and the high school division. Lafferty said that there were about 300 entries in the high school division alone and roughly 700 entries in the whole competition. A committee of five people that

followed a points system chose Garcia's work among a variety of entry type, whether it was painting, photography, or other forms of art.

Garcia received a trophy, certificate, and a scholarship to continue taking art lessons through El Paso Community College. Her en-



— Photo courtesy San Elizario ISD

**AND THE WINNER IS — Nancy Garcia's photograph of an umbrella was awarded first place in its division at the El Paso Community College Art Competition.**

try, titled *Red is for Rain*, a close-up of a red cocktail umbrella placed on a cafeteria table, contrast between red and blue-gray table top, giving the piece a sense of balance and appeal to the eye. But these words do the piece no justice; you'll have to see it to truly appreciate it, which is why the piece will soon be on display in the San Elizario ISD administrative building.

According to Garcia, winning was the last thing on her mind when she submitted her entry.

"I've never won anything in my life," she said. "This is all so new to me but I'm very excited and proud to win this award."

## Anthony casino agreement approved after pros outweigh cons

Courier Staff Reports

UPPER VALLEY — The Doña Ana County Commission approved an agreement worth \$540,000 annually, between the county and the Pueblo of Jemez and a group of developers operating as Circle P Investments, during their regular commission meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 14. The agreement helps clear the way for the construction of a gambling casino in Anthony.

This Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) defines the responsibilities of the Pueblo and the developers, and specifies what the casino will bring to the community. The approved agreement is expected to provide millions of dollars to the county, and locks in promised benefits such as employee health care and training.

Approval comes on the heels of the results of a telephone survey announced Dec. 13, which showed 74 percent of Anthony citizens support the casino, along with 58 percent of the area residents. The poll, conducted by Sanderoff Research and Polling, Inc., also found that 63 percent of Anthony residents

would like to work at the casino. In addition, 11,054 Doña Ana County residents have signed a petition in support of the project. The poll recorded a sample size of 500 at a 95 percent confidence level, providing a maximum margin of error of approximately plus or minus 4.6 percent.

While Anthony, N.M. itself is not incorporated, the Dept. of the Interior — in placing 78 acres of vacant land for the site into trust for the Jemez Pueblo — had requested an assessment of local community support from the Anthony-Berino Economic Development Corporation in lieu of an elected city council. In a five to one vote on Oct. 28, the group passed a resolution in support of the casino during a 20-minute session attended by an audience of about 50. The resolution cited improved quality of life and economic opportunities in the Anthony community. Minutes record that no opposing viewpoint was offered from the public. Secretary Rose Garcia cast the lone dissenting vote.

Meanwhile, the proposed casino has been wholeheartedly endorsed by the city council of neighboring Anthony, Texas, and its Mayor



**WHO'S WHO — Tennis coach Frank Tapia of Americas High School is one of six coaches in the nation to be given the Eve Kraft Community Service Award.**

## Tapia tapped for national recognition

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Americas High School Tennis Coach Robert Tapia is one of six tennis coaches in the nation to be awarded the United States Tennis Association's Eve Kraft Community Service Award.

Tapia will pick up his award Feb. 4-7 during ceremonies in Destin, Florida.

Americas High principal Mary Ross says Tapia is receiving the award for "demonstrating his ability to create, organize and carry out community tennis programs for people of all ages, ability levels and backgrounds."

"I have a lot of local tournaments, adult and junior tournaments throughout the year, all over El Paso. I'm in charge of the whole program in El Paso," Tapia says.

The award will also send him to "high-performance tennis academy" in Carson, California, Jan. 27-28.

"I love teaching beginning tennis to little kids who have never touched a racket before and — all of a sudden — they learn to play tennis," Tapia says.

The award is named in honor of Princeton, New Jersey tennis coach Eve Kraft, who is credited with introducing thousands of young people to tennis, especially those in disadvantaged communities.

Art Franco, who have written letters of support to the *Las Cruces Bulletin* and the *Las Cruces Sun-News*. Franco, writing to the *Bulletin* in October, said the proposed casino would "provide the much-needed boost to our local economies that would transfer into a higher quality of life for the people. It is hard for the local government entities to provide the services needed when raising taxes is not an option... there are some negative drawbacks that come with the casino, but the positive impact... far outweighs them by far."

A joint letter from five of the Anthony, Texas city council members, also in October, to the *Sun-News*, said the most important factor was whether the people of Anthony want the establishment, and, in their opinion, they do. Primary in their estimation was the improvement in the economic status of the community.

The proposal has had its detractors, however, some citing a reverse view of the Anthony community's primarily low income status. Concerns have included that those who can least afford to spend money gambling will be tempted to do so due to proximity to the establishment, leading to an increase in bankruptcies. A

See CASINO, Page 4

*America needs a car that can't go any faster than the driver can think.*

— Quips & Quotes



# One perspective

By Francis Shrum

## Good old words

Back before bling-bling and yo, we used some really good words.

They had edge, power, and sometimes you had to really work at pronouncing them, which gave you a sense of accomplishment. Words like caterwaul, catenation, even pettifogger.

Who even knows what these words mean anymore? We've become so lazy that all our young people can do now is make up words that sound like something my two year old babies said before learning to make complete sentences. Or, worse yet, something they called their pacifiers.

I kept hearing the expression bling-bling for a long time — about two weeks which is a considerable lifespan for words of this type — before I bothered to ask some young people what it meant.

After scratching their heads, shuffling their feet, rolling their eyes and making several attempts to describe what it meant, I was able to decipher this much: it has something to do with expensive, gaudy and generally distasteful jewelry.

Those were not the words they used, of course. One girl's description included the phrase "pimped up deco," at which point I looked real close at her eyes to make sure she wasn't joking or just trying to shock me. She wasn't.

Not one of the kids I asked could give me a coherent definition of what yo actually means, either, other than it is a sort of all-purpose greeting, expression of good will or acknowledgment.

In other words, it is too hard to say hello, how are you today, it's good to see you or even, what's happening? All these greetings are made up of words using less than three syl-

lables, except happening, which could conceivably be shortened to hap-nin, which is how I pronounce it anyway, and still be understood by the general population.

Instead, you're likely to be asked, whaaazzz up? To which I feel compelled to reply that the sun is, unless, of course, it's dark outside, to which I feel compelled to reply that I still am.

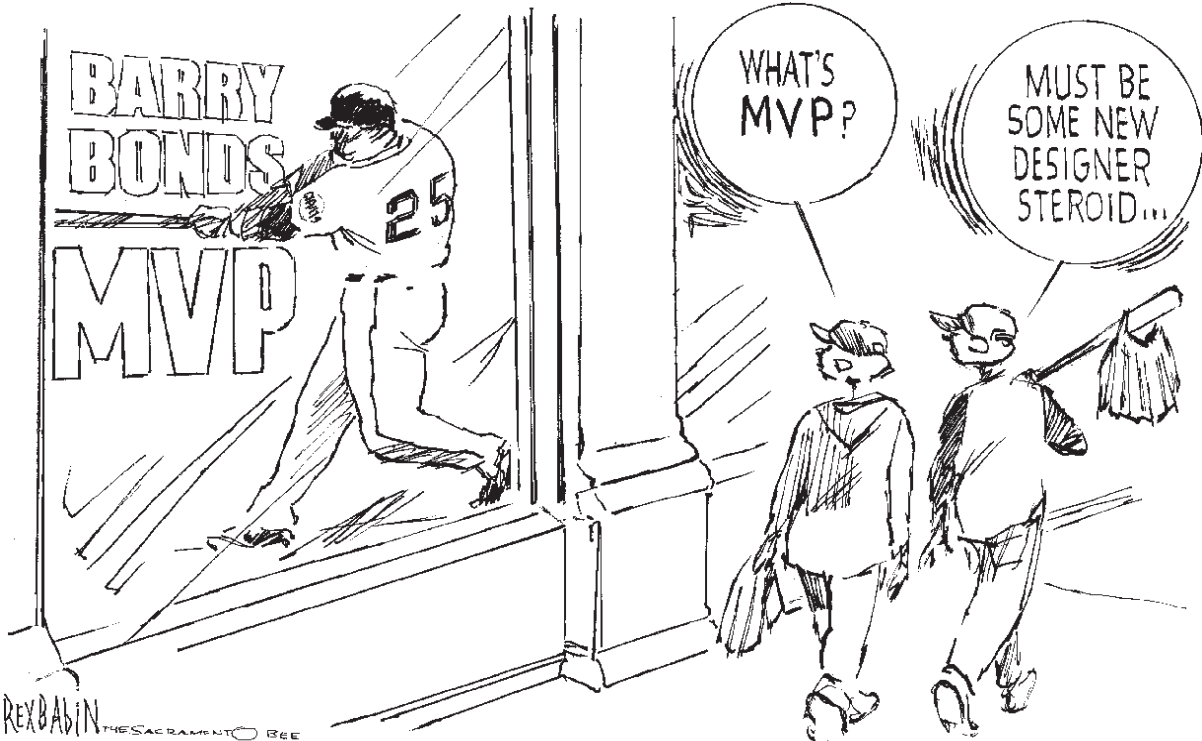
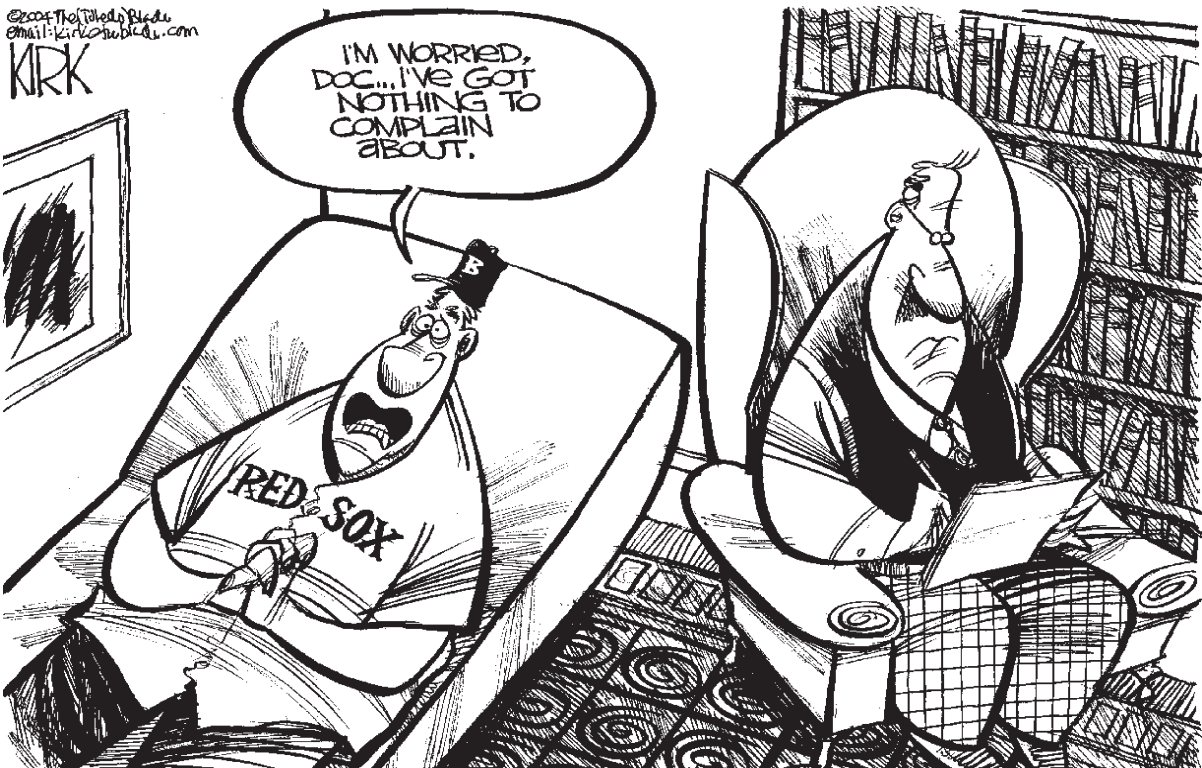
Anyway, my point is that I feel sorry for our youngsters who don't get to use all those good old words that are not only descriptive but are, in fact, pretty fun.

If I weren't a gray-haired old lady, I could really start a trend here. I mean, how much fun would it be to watch your friend's face if you turned to them and said something like: Did you hear the caterwauling in the principal's office over the altercation on the portico last period?

Just imagine the ride Roget's Thesaurus and Webster's Dictionary would experience on the national best-seller's list if young folks realized that, instead of digressing off into monkey-speak which they somehow consider original, they could start utilizing the vast treasury of words already catalogued in alphabetical order — words so long unused that other young people would think they were newly created.

Still, I'm not holding out much hope for a revival of our fading language, since what few interesting words our youngsters do catch onto they give their own meanings rather than use them as they were originally intended, and it's usually in a way you don't want to know about.

It's also a little disheartening to include a word you understood way back in grade school in an essay you compose on the computer and the spell checker program doesn't even recognize the word, let alone have a suggestion for an alternate spelling.



I try to always run the spell check but I sure don't depend on it.

A shortage of creative words afflicts even our media, which you would expect to be a bastion of word-lovers. Their lack of creativity is reflected in how quickly they latch onto a pseudo-new word and use it over and over. Remember when President Clinton used the word parse? It was the instant subject of talk shows, and every reporter in the free world — and some in captivity — started spouting sentences crafted specifically to include it.

Then somebody used the word embedded to describe reporters assigned to accompany military units in Iraq, and the race was on to see who could say that word the most times in one sentence. I'm still puzzling over that one.

I was called on the carpet once by a young man who protested my paraphrasing in a news report I wrote about a presentation he made to a local taxing entity. I referred to the taxes his company paid as going into city coffers. I never used the word coffers, he said heatedly.

Looking into his smooth, indignant young face, I had to admit that, no, at his age, he probably never had.

31  
YEARS  
OF  
PUBLICATION

# WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

SERVING ANTHONY VINTON, CASARELLO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORRO, CLINT, FARENS, SAN ELLIZARIO AND TORNILLO

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

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## Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes

### Reforms will impact border



As a member of the House Intelligence Committee and the House Armed Services Committee, I have worked hard for the past two years to ensure that any intelligence bill passed by the House of Representatives address the unique needs of border communities like El Paso.

In fact, the border security provisions in the recently-passed intelligence reform bill reflect those in the Secure Borders Act I unveiled with my colleague Congressman Jim Turner in El Paso earlier this year.

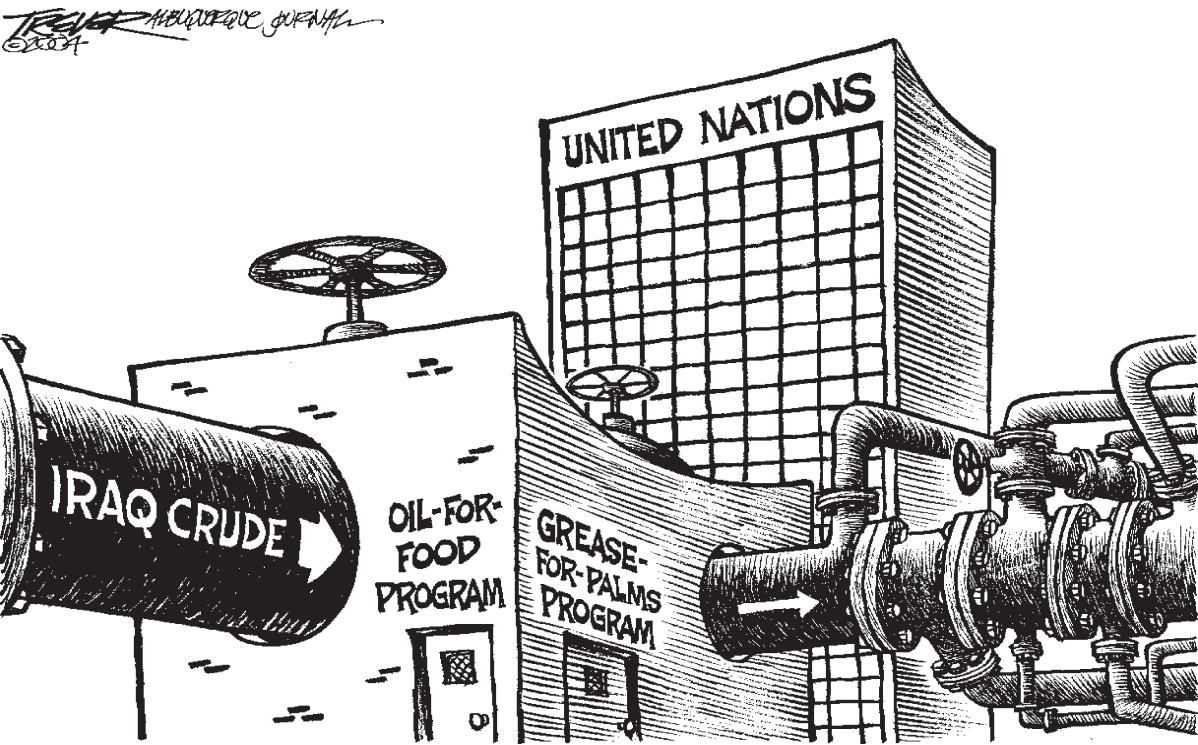
Through this bill, we will:

- Increase the number of Border Patrol agents and Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel;
- Improve infrastructure at our ports of entry;
- Improve monitoring technology along the border; and
- Fight human smuggling rings.

This bill also establishes a strong Director of National Intelligence who will oversee all 15 agencies of the U.S. intelligence community. While not a Cabinet-level position, this director will have the budget and personnel authority necessary to coordinate all national intelligence efforts. This past April, my Democratic colleagues and I on the House Intelligence Committee introduced the Intelligence Transformation Act, which included similar provisions. We fought to ensure that the new director will have the necessary authorities to succeed and I am pleased they were incorporated into the final legislation.

I do have a word of caution about the investigatory, surveillance, and information-sharing provisions we are enacting in the name of homeland security, however. Prior to coming to Congress, I served for 26 and a half years in the Border Patrol, so I know firsthand about the effort to protect our borders and keep America secure. While I strongly believe in giving government and law enforcement the tools they need to keep us safe, I also know that it is absolutely imperative that we have an effective system of checks and balances to protect our rights as Americans. As this new bill is implemented, we will have to be vigilant in protecting these rights.

The families of the 9/11 victims, the 9/11 Commission and my colleagues and I in Washington worked hard for over two years to create this important legislation. Our work will continue, though, as this bill is only the beginning of our efforts to protect our country. As we move forward, I will work to guarantee that these new security measures both ensure our safety and protect our way of life.



Watch out for bogus check scam

EL PASO COUNTY — During the past three holiday seasons, several bogus checks have been presented for payment at various stores in the county or at money exchange houses. These checks are limited strictly to the Bond Inmate Trust Section (BITS) of the El Paso County Sheriff's Office.

This is the money returned to an inmate from his or her account when the inmate is released from the County Jail.

Individuals in the past have attempted to cash fraudulent checks that bear the Sheriff's Office logo. The Sheriff's

Office bank accounts are secured from this type of fraud.

If you doubt the authenticity of a check issued by the El Paso County Sheriff's Office (BITS) you can contact the Bond and Inmate Trust Office at 546-2293 and have the check verified.

In 2002, approximately 50 bogus checks turned up in El Paso County. This scam was traced to group of people from New Jersey. On Jan. 10, 2003, an El Paso man was arrested for forgery as he allegedly attempted to pass a forged check at the Melek Service Center at 306 E. Paisano, in south-central El Paso.

Eye on D.C. By U.S. Rep. Henry Bonilla

A New Year's resolution

The new year is upon us and once again I find myself wondering where time has gone. It seems just days ago I sat on my couch, watching football and regretting my second-helping of pecan pie on Thanksgiving. The holiday season seems to pass so quickly. It's already time to consider New Year's resolutions. So much has changed in the last two years. I find myself contemplating what New Year's really means.

Unlike many of our traditional holidays, the meaning of New Year's is unclear. Although it is the world's most celebrated holiday, it lacks a single central theme. It is a collection of good intentions. Perhaps, New Year's is simply a yearly detour on the road to self-improvement, enlightenment and finding happiness. A new beginning we are allowed each year.

This year, New Year's finds us at our absolute greatest. Americans

have bound together to show their pride and patriotism for our amazing country. Let's ring in this New Year's with an unconquerable will. Let's continue to support our servicemen and women; let's boast our unwavering patriotism; and let's continue to proclaim confidence in our President.

Here are a few suggestions to keep your New Year's resolution on track:

- Don't try everything at once. Odds are in your favor, if you begin small. Consider sending an encouraging message to troops deployed away from home. Or perhaps scheduling more frequent phone calls to friends and family.
- Be flexible. Allow your resolution to grow with you throughout the year. Don't make a specific resolution, that does not allow for change. Less specific wording such as "this year I will express my patriotism," provides room to challenge yourself to be creative with your resolution

throughout the year.

- Make a plan. Search for ways you can volunteer. Help by filling-in roles left behind by those deployed away from home. Devote a specific amount of time to any causes you choose. And ask friends and family to join in the act.

There's no reason why we shouldn't continue to make the traditional resolutions to lose weight and get organized. But it is my hope that we will also focus our resolutions on developing the true spirit of America. Remember to smile and laugh every chance you get. The soul needs to be balanced, as well as the scale. Don't pass up an opportunity to make a difference in someone's life. And most importantly, don't leave anything unsaid. Let's ring 2004 as a nation united together.



Canutillo talks turf, San Elizario looks to incentives

By Don Woodyard  
Courier Staff Writer

EL PASO COUNTY — Here are highlights of December board of trustees meetings in the Canutillo and San Elizario school districts.

There was turf talk in the Canutillo ISD meeting on Dec. 14.

Discussion was initiated on proposed teacher incentives at the Dec. 8 meeting of the San Elizario ISD.

Canutillo ISD

The school board is looking for cost comparisons of natural versus artificial turf for athletic areas around the new high school, explained Alfredo Vasquez, public information officer for the district. Original plans called for natural grass surfaces, but the board is looking to see if it might be cheaper in the long run to install artificial surfaces for athletic fields.

Special surfacing materials are under consideration for the basketball courts, tennis courts and track as well as artificial turf for the football field. Board member Sergio Coronado, who is also chairman of the Facilities and Finance Committee, reported he is looking into financial options for installing artificial turf on the football field.

The full board did not take action

on the issue and asked for more information on comparative costs.

High school construction passed the mid-point. Fred Siebert, project manager for Banes General Contractors, said it was 60 percent complete and on schedule.

San Elizario

Board member Roberto Garcia proposed offering teacher incentives for student achievement. No formal action was taken on the proposal other than turning it over the district's administration that would research the issue and report back to the board about possible future implementation.

Board president Antonio Araujo later pointed out that no action could be taken for the current school year because the budget is already set.

"We have to make sure that we treat everybody fairly and equally," said Superintendent Dr. Mike Quatrini.

High school student Nancy Garcia, who had been taking pictures for only six weeks, was honored for taking first place with her photographs in the recent El Paso County Art Contest.

Employee of the Month was Juanita Hernandez, a cafeteria worker at Loya Primary.

Mike Lafferty, art teacher at the high school, was named Teacher of the Month.

County posts foreclosure sales online

EL PASO COUNTY — As of Dec. 15, all foreclosure sales from the El Paso County Clerk's office will be posted on the County's web page.

Waldo Alarcon, El Paso County Clerk, described the new publication method as consistent with the County's policy of providing the community with the information they need in the comfort of their home. Up to now all foreclosure sales notices have been posted in the Court-house Lobby, with people having to drive Downtown and waiting in line for the documents.

"I've wanted to provide this kind of public service to the community for a long time," Alarcon said. "Now thanks to the Information Technology Department, it has become a reality. People will now be able to check what foreclosure sales are

available without having to leave their homes or offices."

Alarcon explained that all foreclosure sales still will be conducted the first Tuesday of every month as stipulated by statute, and that those sales will take place in the County Courthouse as directed by Commissioners Court. The closing date for trustees to file those foreclosure sales with the County Clerk is still 21 days prior to the sale.

Foreclosure sales relate to property, either homes or businesses that has been foreclosed as a result of unpaid taxes, unpaid mortgages, a lost lawsuit or other.

To reach the foreclosure sale documents, access the County's web page on [epcounty.com](http://epcounty.com) and link on to the Records site.

— Contributed by Guadalupe Silva

TRUE TEXAS FACTS by Roger T. Moore, Dec. 31 1842: Angelina Eberly fires a cannon to thwart Sam Houston's attempt to move the State archives from Austin to Houston.



# New technology can help age-old problem of hearing loss

By Linda Anderson  
Special to the Courier

TEXAS — Loss of hearing is a common complaint among older people.

“About 10 percent of Americans have hearing loss; about half of them are age 65 and older, making this one of the most common disabilities in older adults,” said Andrew B. Crocker, Texas Cooperative Extension gerontology and health specialist in Amarillo.

But just because it’s a common complaint doesn’t mean it can’t be treated, he said. New technology may be able to help.

The two most common forms of hearing loss are:

- Sensorineural hearing loss, which is caused by reduced sensitivity of the inner ear’s nerves and nerve fibers. Loud noises (including rock concerts, even those of more than 30 years ago), high fevers and certain medications are some of its causes.
- Conductive hearing loss is caused by some kind of obstruction in the

outer or middle ear. A buildup of ear wax, ruptured eardrum, middle ear infection and certain medical conditions can contribute to this condition.

“Some persons who experience hearing loss may suffer from both types,” Crocker said.

Finding out the cause of the hearing loss is the first step in treating the condition, he said. That’s why medical screening is so important. But too many older people don’t seek the help they need.

“Often hearing loss is hidden or ignored because it is equated with old age or is an embarrassment to the older adult,” Crocker said.

And that’s too bad because many forms of hearing loss can be successfully treated, he said.

“Your health provider can evaluate for hearing loss, including determining which type you may have, what may be causing it and which type of therapy may be best for you,” he said. “Some remedies for hearing loss include surgery followed by assistive hearing devices and hearing therapy.”

But the most common therapy is hearing aids, he said, which are available in three types:

- Analog: The most common and least expensive, these hearing aids amplify sound without too much filtering of background noise.
- Digitally programmable: A combination of analog technology and digital control gives these units the ability to amplify sound and filter out some background noises.
- Digital: The most technologically advanced — and expensive — hearing aids, these units amplify sound, reduce background noise, have feedback control and maintain comfortable listening levels.

Like the people who wear them, hearing aids come in different styles too, Crocker said. Some are worn in the ear, some are worn deeper inside the ear canal, and some two-piece models are worn both inside and behind the ear.

Although the most common form of therapy for hearing loss, these products aren’t the only choice. “If

you and your health provider determine that a hearing aid is not right for you, there are still options for hearing assistance,” Crocker said.

For example, those who have difficulty using the telephone could attach an inexpensive amplifier or adjust the volume on the receiver. An attachment that flashes lights inside the house can solve the problem of not hearing the doorbell.

“Consider what problems you are having with hearing and then talk to your health provider about possible solutions,” Crocker advised.

For more information on hearing loss, visit Web site of the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders at: <http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/index.asp> or contact an Extension agent.

For more information on this and other issues affecting older people, visit Extension’s Family and Consumer Science Web site at <http://fcs.tamu.edu/> and click on the link to Family Life.

## Canutillo grad helps protect homeland

By R. David Valdez  
Special to the Courier

COAST GUARD STATION CAPE CHARLES, VA — Homeland defense is a term that has become synonymous with anti-terrorism. However, a closer look at the phrase “homeland security” may reveal more. While the global war on terrorism is at the front of the national stage, homeland defense also encompasses law enforcement, counter-drug operations and public safety.

The men and women of U.S. Coast Guard Station Cape Charles contribute in this manner in their patrol of the waters near the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, which spans across Virginia’s Chesapeake Bay.

Chief Petty Officer Carlos Hernandez, son of Rosendo and Julia Hernandez of El Paso, is one of the Coast Guardsmen at Cape Charles who helps ensure public safety.

“As the officer in charge, I am the senior person in command of a multi-mission small boat station,” he said.

A Coast Guardsman, like any other member of the Armed Forces, has reasons for serving his or her country. Hernandez is no different.

“I had the desire to help people in need and to participate in law enforcement and drug interdiction, regardless of whether the country is at war or peace,” said the 1983 graduate of Canutillo High School in Canutillo.

While “all hands” contribute to the success of the mission, Hernandez is a boatswain’s mate, which has a unique set of challenges.

“Managing personnel from every kind of background and from all over the country to operate together as one, is a challenge I face every day,” he said.

The Coast Guard’s shift from being a part of the Department of Transportation to being a part of the Department of Homeland Security caused an expansion of the Coast Guard’s mission for all its units and commands.

“Our focus has changed 100 percent,” he said. “We are much more focused on structure and intelligence because our enemy is always unknown.”

## Casino

From Page 1

potential increase in crime was also cited, including drunk driving and thefts by those attempting to support a gambling addiction. Stress placed on local infrastructure including streets, emergency and police services, and schools, was predicted by opponents of the casino, citing property tax loss because the casino site would be removed from tax roles.

Apparently there exists considerable anti-casino gambling sentiment nationwide, as well. One internet search engine alone, under the single entry of “anti-casino,” brought up 1,600,000 hits ranging from editorials to elected officials’ websites to a multitude of studies from across the nation.

In an editorial endorsement by the *El Paso Times* on Nov. 10, a *Times/KVIA-ABC 7* poll was said to have found 53 percent of El Pasoans in favor of the Anthony casino. The casino was termed as a potential “mini-jackpot” for El Paso: “A casino north of El Paso, right on the interstate,

could persuade a lot of people to spend a little time and money in El Paso while they’re in the area.”

The agreement approved by the Doña Ana County Commission last month memorializes the local hiring preference, the “Buy Doña Ana County” goods and services promise, the Mesilla Valley products show case commitment, and an information desk to direct casino patrons to local restaurants, hotels, shops and tourist attractions. The agreement also provides for additional police, fire, ambulance and other emergency services.

Under the approved Intergovernmental Agreement, the developers have agreed to:

- Provide \$185,000 for improvements and equipment to the Anthony fire station, \$100,000 per year for operating costs and equipment for the Anthony Fire Department initially, growing to \$200,000 per year once the permanent casino has been in operation for a year.
- Initially pay \$90,000 per year for Emergency Medical Service (EMS) costs prior to the opening the permanent casino, and \$160,000 annually beginning six months after the permanent casino is built. The casino

will also provide a garage for an ambulance and a clinic for the EMS staff at the casino site.

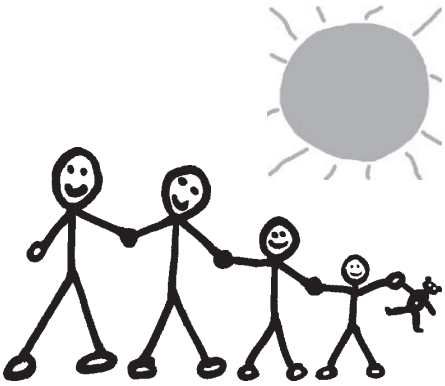
- Provide salaries and benefits for two full-time sheriff’s deputies;
- Pay \$250 per police call to the casino or casino related event;
- Pay \$10,000 annually for one police car’s depreciation;
- Invest \$1 million in worker training, with a local hiring preference;
- Provide sick leave, life insurance, paid annual leave, dental insurance, and pay 100 percent of medical insurance costs for employees. Establish employee grievance procedures, unemployment insurance and worker’s compensation benefits.

A Pueblo of Jemez spokesman said the casino means an enormous positive economic impact for Anthony and the surrounding area. Once approved, the \$55 million construction project is expected to bring approximately 570 construction-related jobs to the area, with \$16 million in construction payroll. Upon completion, the casino will require approximately 950 employees, with an annual payroll in excess of \$28 million. The casino is expected to spend approximately \$30 million annually on local purchases, the spokesman said.

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# Animal health officials instituting electronic tracking of operations and animals

Ranchers and other livestock facility owners from every facet of the Texas livestock and poultry industry can now sign up for a unique “premises identification number” for their livestock facilities.

The premises identification number will identify the location of specific livestock operations in the state. It is the first step in implementing a national system for quickly tracing livestock and poultry for disease investigations or during a disease outbreak or animal health emergency.

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) also is launching a year-long pilot project with a number of ranches, feedlots, livestock markets, slaughter plants and other facilities to test the durability and reliability of electronic ear tags, related equipment and databases for identifying and tracking individual animals.

“The national premises and animal identification system has been under development for several years, with input and ideas from nearly 70 federal and state animal health agencies and livestock industry associations,” said Dr. Bob Hillman, a member of the Secretary’s Advisory Subcommittee on the National Animal Identification System. He serves as Texas’ state veterinarian and heads the TAHC, the state’s livestock and poultry health regulatory agency.

“The U.S. must have a reliable and efficient method for tracking and finding livestock and poultry during an animal disease investigation or when an animal health emergency occurs,” Dr. Hillman said. He noted that producers and organizations have discussed at great length the need for this information to remain confidential. To protect data in regards to premises and animal identi-

fication, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state-level agencies, such as the TAHC, and livestock organizations and associations are seeking national and state legislation to protect the data from public release or access.

“Regulatory agencies do not need or want access to production data, but specific information, such as the age and class of animal, as well as movement information, is critical for finding potentially infected or exposed animals during a disease situation,” he said.

Today, it can take days to track the movement of livestock, to ensure that all exposed or diseased animals have been detected, Dr. Hillman pointed out. He predicted that, by 2008, when the national system is fully implemented and mandatory, tracking livestock movements could be streamlined, greatly enhancing disease eradication efforts. He stressed that the ability to rapidly identify animals and trace livestock or poultry movements is crucial to an effective animal disease response.

Dr. Hillman explained that the national animal identification system, also called “NAIS,” has two major components. The first, he said, is the unique premises — or facility — identification, which identifies the location of livestock operations. This seven-character alphabetic and numerical ‘address’ is to be assigned to ranches and other sites where livestock or poultry are maintained or moved. Premises information will reside on a database, managed by each state and accessible only by animal health officials. Dr. Hillman said facility owners can obtain a premises identification number now by calling the TAHC’s headquarters in Austin at 1-800-550-8242. By late January,

ranchers and facility owners in Texas also may register online through the TAHC’s web page at <http://www.tahc.state.tx.us>

“The second component of the national system — animal identification — is ready for ‘field-testing.’ This involves the unique identification of each head of livestock moved from its original herd. For cattle, sheep, goats, cervidae (deer) and some other species of livestock, the identification device will be an electronic ear tag, also called a radio frequency (RFID) identification device. For other species, such as swine and poultry, the number can be applied to groups of animals, if they spend their entire production life together as a group or unit,” he said.

Dr. Hillman explained that the TAHC, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry; and the Osage Nation in Oklahoma are working cooperatively on a year-long pilot project, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), to test various aspects of the premises and animal identification. Field tests also are being conducted in at least 20 other states, to ensure the system will function well when it is fully implemented, said Dr. Hillman.

“In Texas, we will work with specified ranches and livestock facilities, equipment suppliers and computer data service providers to test the effectiveness, durability and compatibility of equipment and databases for identifying and tracking individual animals,” said Dr. Hillman.

“As many as 80,000 individually numbered electronic tags will be used by the pilot project participants, so cattle, sheep, goats or domestic deer can be identified prior to change of ownership or commingling with ani-

mals owned by other ranchers or farmers. The tags may be applied to animals before they leave the farm and ranch, or upon arrival at feedlots or order buyers’ facilities, at livestock markets or other livestock sites. This will give facility owners and managers an opportunity to evaluate the system and calculate the costs and time involved with tagging animals, and collecting and reporting animal movement data. Implantable electronic devices will be used for identifying and tracking horses.


Unless a tag is broken or lost, an animal is to receive only one during its lifetime. The unique 15-digit number on each electronic ear tag or implantable device can be ‘read and recorded’ with a hand-held or stationary tag reader. Ear tags also are imprinted with the number, so the information can be accessed, even if readers are unavailable or out of service.

When identified animals are sold, moved or harvested, project participants will report the event to third-party data service providers by computer, fax or mail, Dr. Hillman explained. Animal tag numbers will be

correlated in the database to premises identification ‘addresses.’

A major aspect of the project will involve determining problems that occur when integrating information from several data collection systems into a central or common database. Ultimately, when an animal’s number is queried, a report should list all the premise numbers where the animal had been maintained. Likewise, when a premise number is queried, the list of related animal identification numbers should appear. When an animal is harvested, its number will be retired.

“With the ‘roll-out’ for the premises identification system, and field trials underway for animal identification, we are much closer to the goal of fighting disease more efficiently and effectively,” said Dr. Hillman. “Once the field trials are completed across the U.S., improvements can be made before the animal identification system is launched nationally. By that time, we hope to have confidentiality issues, and any equipment and database compatibility problems evaluated, addressed and resolved.”

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## Briefs

From Page 1

to help our residents.” Emergency Food and Shelter (EFS) Program funds totaling \$153 million will be distributed nationwide for fiscal year 2005, and can be used for such activities as mass shelter, food distribution through food pantries and food banks, utility payments, and mortgage assistance to prevent evictions or to assist people leaving shelters to establish stable living conditions. Member agencies of the national board include the American Red Cross; Catholic Charities, USA; United Jewish Communities; the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.; The Salvation Army; and United Way. El Paso County will receive \$494,529.

■ The El Paso 4-H Club has been selected by Youth Service America to serve as Lead Agency for the 17th Annual National Youth Service Day events, April 15-17. Fifty Lead Agencies have been designated across the nation to coordinate local, regional or statewide celebrations by promoting projects and events, volunteer recruitment, and media outreach. The event is a public awareness and education campaign that highlights the amazing contributions young people make to their

communities throughout the year in areas of literacy, environment, healthcare, hunger and care for the elderly. Jimmy Rodgers, El Paso 4-H Agent with the Texas Cooperative Extension, said his program participants are “thrilled to have again been chosen as a Lead Agency.” He said more information on how to become involved and local event specifics are on-line at [www.nysdelpaso.com](http://www.nysdelpaso.com) or by phone at 859-7725, ext. 250.

■ The K1 International Event Management, an affiliate of USSSA Sports, is sponsoring a tour stop of the USSSA 5 on 5 Youth Basketball Tour in El Paso, Jan. 28-30, open to all youth grades 3-8, in both competitive and recreational divisions. Winners will qualify for the 2005 USSSA National Tournament in Ft. Wayne Indiana. Registration and further information is available at [www.k1events.com](http://www.k1events.com) or by calling 817-557-3301.

■ The Richard Burges Library, 9600 Dyer, will present a free piano recital by noted pianist Elizabeth Anne Holt on Sunday, Jan. 9 at 3 p.m. Ms. Holt will play music by Bach, Chopin, Rachmaninoff and others. The Friends of the Northeast Library are sponsoring the recital. For more information call 759-2400 or visit [www.elpasolibrary.org](http://www.elpasolibrary.org).

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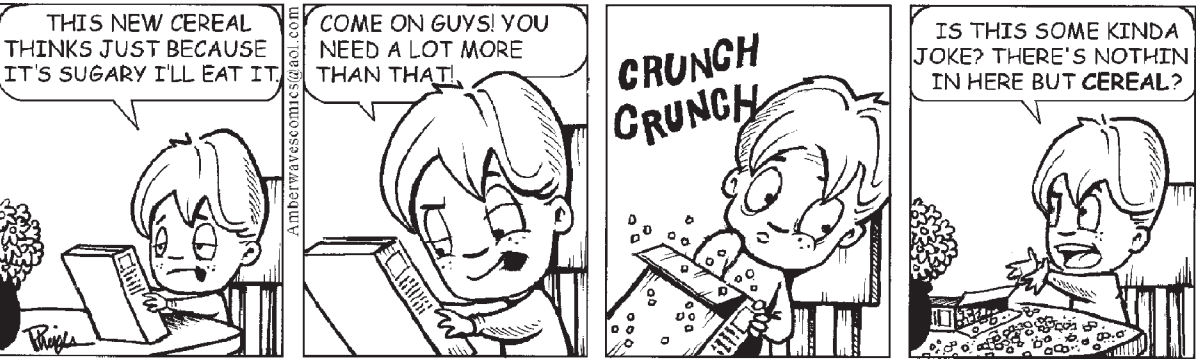
OUT ON A LIMB

By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES

By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS

By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D.

By Mike Marland



Classified Ads

LEGAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

As per Article V, Sec. 5.05(a), all owners and lienholders have ten (10) days from this date to reclaim their vehicles at South West Wrecker, 1401 Darrington Rd., 855-1900, 851-2091-fax, or it will be sold at public auction for charges: VIN - IB4GH54ROPX586176, 1993 Dodge Caravan, white, 4-door, New Mexico, FCR 140 WTCC-12/30/04

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12/30

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BY OWNER, in Fabens, to be moved, good 1996 mobile home, 4 bedroom, 2 bath, CH/A, \$12,800. (817) 579-5965. 1/6/05

REAL ESTATE

V A L L E Y RANCHITOS, Socorro, Clint, Fabens, Tornillo. Adobe Homes: four bedroom, 3/4 acre; three bedroom, 1 acre. APODACA LAND CO., 859-5472. Commercial land. 1/6

RENTALS

Fairway Townhouse, Horizon City, view 18th

hole, Emerald Springs. Two bedroom, two bath, available. 755-1730, 494-3054. 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.

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Don't give up the ghost!

By Don Flood

Do you believe in ghosts? Of course you do. EVERYBODY IN AMERICA NOW BELIEVES IN GHOSTS! That, of course, is because a woman recently sold her father's ghost for \$65,000. (At first it sounded like an outrageous sum, but then it was revealed that the online casino that bought the ghost — the same one that bought the Virgin Mary grilled cheese sandwich — had also received the dead man's cane as part of the deal.) The woman had decided on this course of action because her son was afraid of his grandfather's ghost. In the old days, a mother might reassure a child that there were so such things. But that was B.E., Before eBay. Now people are wondering, how can I turn the extra ghosts around my house into cold hard cash? And if you're lucky enough to have a celebrity ghost, such as Marilyn Monroe, you're set for life, especially if she's wearing the dress she was poured into when she sang "Happy Birthday" to President Kennedy. But before you get started, you need to assess your own ghost's selling points. Not every ghost is going to sell for \$65,000. Is he a quiet ghost or does he moan and rattle chains all night? Is he amenable to light house-keeping or babysitting? Does he appear regularly or only on special occasions? Does he have an interesting feature, such as a hatchet sticking out of his head? Be honest about bad points too. If, for example, your ghost comes equipped with a portal to the

Gates of Hell, as sometimes happens with the ghosts you see in horror movies, be sure to include that in your advertisement. (If you don't what know what to write, consider a ghostwriter — HA!) Otherwise you may find yourself in the awkward position of having your ghost returned. On the plus side, a hell portal may be attractive to some buyers. According to home heating experts, a few blasts of hellfire can cut energy bills by as much as 30 percent, more if the home lacks proper insulation. Other problems may arise after you've made the sale. While it is legal to sell ghosts and transport them across state lines, it can be difficult to evict an unwilling ghost. Because of manpower shortages, few police agencies respond to calls dealing with reluctant ghosts, though you may have more success if you are represented by a reputable attorney. (Don't bother looking in the phonebook for The Ghostbusters. That was just a movie.) Scientists of the paranormal, who have been studying the matter by watching cartoons, have concluded that the best method for capturing reluctant ghosts is to suck them up in a vacuum cleaner. Once at the new house, simply put the vacuum cleaner in reverse — this always works in cartoons — and the ghost will be spewed out in his new home. It's also important to remember that some people still aren't used to online specter-shopping. So if your ghost doesn't generate much interest on eBay, try having a yard sale.

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Recounting snowball fights wins first place for essay writer

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — For

looks forward to each year. She's an only child, she says, and getting together with cousins, uncles and aunts means so much. "It's basically how my family spends time, and the whole family gets together," she says. Joe Ramirez, program coordinator, says the Solis essay "brings in a lot of creativity and told me exactly what Christmas means to her giving instead of receiving."



Alicia Solis

“About 50 or more of us go to Ruidoso, New Mexico on Christmas Eve, choose teams, and have a snowball fight,” she says. Ruidoso is roughly 130 miles north and east of El Paso in the southern Rocky Mountains. “Some of them don’t actually play, but we’ve been doing it for a long time,” Solis says. The family outing started when she was three years old. She’s 10 now and it’s a tradition she

|          |          |          |        |
|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| DART     | BALI     | BAD      | FAT    |
| ENIAC    | HOGANS   | ALI      | ILLY   |
| FOOD     | ANDWHINE | READ     | BOOK   |
| TNT      | PILLAR   | VON      | LEAGUE |
| GEL      | DER      | TEED     |        |
| ABATED   | BEA      | AIRCRAFT |        |
| PHOTO    | DALAI    | TAUT     | NARC   |
| EEN      | WEEDERS  | DIGEST   | MAH    |
| PAEANS   | ASP      | ROO      | ASIDE  |
| EDAM     | TOMS     | JAN      | SIMPLE |
| POWERS   | JAB      | MISERY   |        |
| UPRISE   | SEW      | BONA     | ICON   |
| KNEES    | EW       | ERN      | ARGYLE |
| ACT      | POPLAR   | SCIENCE  | CCE    |
| TAIL     | VAST     | ERATO    | SALAD  |
| STAGESET | RUN      | MITTEN   |        |
| TART     | ELF      | OLE      |        |
| ASSORT   | EDO      | AVENUE   | FRO    |
| PLAYBUOY | BUSINESS | SWEAK    |        |
| SAGA     | RUR      | ELICIT   | SATYR  |
| OWE      | ETE      | MAID     | NASA   |

Social Security Q&A

By Ray Vigil

*Q: My son was born with a severe disability that has caused physical, emotional and financial burdens for our family. Can Social Security help?*

A: If your family's income is low, your son may be eligible for monthly Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability benefits. SSI is a benefit program run by Social Security for people who are aged blind or disabled and have low income and few resources. This includes children. Also, if your family does not have medical

insurance, your son could possibly qualify for Medicaid. For more information on the SSI program, visit our website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), call us at 1-800-772-1213, or visit your local Social Security office. For more information on the Medicaid program, visit the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services at [www.cms.hhs.gov/](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/).

*Q: I know a guy who has never worked and gets Social Security dis-*

*ability benefits. How is this possible?*

A: The likelihood is that this individual is getting Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits and not Social Security disability insurance benefits. SSI is also a program run by Social Security, but the money used to fund the program does not come out of Social Security funds and benefits are not based on an individual's work history. SSI is funded by general revenue taxes, and is an assistance program for aged, blind or disabled individuals with little income and few resources. For more information about SSI

and Social Security disability benefits, visit our website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), or call us at 1-800-772-1213.

*Q: My husband died several years ago and, as his widow, I receive part of his company pension. I am about to turn 60 and plan to apply for Social Security widow's benefits. Will those benefits be reduced because I also get widow's benefits from this company pension?*

A: No. The fact that you are due benefits through your husband's company pension plan will not affect your









Social Security widow's benefits in any way. However, you might want to check with the people who administer the company pension to find out if your eligibility for widow's benefits from Social Security impacts the benefits you receive from them.

For more information visit your local Security office, see [www.ssa.gov](http://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   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Morning clouds, then afternoon sunshine.   | Mainly clear and breezy.  | Partly sunny.   | Periods of clouds and sunshine.   | Partly sunny.   | Sunshine and some clouds.   | Mostly sunny.   | Partly sunny.   |
| ▲ 62°  | ▼ 34°   | ▲ 60° ▼ 32°   | ▲ 62° ▼ 36°   | ▲ 60° ▼ 34°   | ▲ 58° ▼ 34°   | ▲ 56° ▼ 32°   | ▲ 56° ▼ 30°   |

UV INDEX

Statistics for noon.

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

|           |   |     |
|-----------|---|-----|
| Thursday  | 3 | Low |
| Friday    | 4 | Low |
| Saturday  | 4 | Low |
| Sunday    | 4 | Low |
| Monday    | 4 | Low |
| Tuesday   | 4 | Low |
| Wednesday | 4 | Low |

TEXAS WEATHER

|              |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|
| Anthony      | 61 | 34 |
| Canutillo    | 62 | 35 |
| Clint        | 61 | 36 |
| E. Montana   | 62 | 34 |
| Fabens       | 61 | 36 |
| Horizon      | 63 | 36 |
| San Elizario | 60 | 33 |
| Socorro      | 61 | 34 |
| Tornillo     | 62 | 36 |
| Vinton       | 61 | 34 |

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

TRAVELERS CITIES

| City               | Thur.<br>Hi/Low/W | Fri.<br>Hi/Low/W | Sat.<br>Hi/Low/W | Sun.<br>Hi/Low/W | Mon.<br>Hi/Low/W |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Albuquerque        | 52/28/pc          | 50/27/pc         | 50/27/pc         | 50/27/pc         | 50/21/c          |
| Atlanta            | 62/47/pc          | 66/50/pc         | 60/47/sh         | 58/45/r          | 59/44/r          |
| Atlantic City      | 49/37/c           | 59/43/sh         | 58/38/pc         | 50/28/r          | 41/25/sn         |
| Austin/San Antonio | 72/55/t           | 72/51/sh         | 72/52/sh         | 69/50/r          | 65/45/sh         |
| Baltimore          | 52/36/pc          | 60/42/sh         | 62/39/pc         | 54/38/sh         | 39/26/i          |
| Boston             | 43/37/pc          | 48/40/sh         | 52/34/pc         | 40/23/c          | 33/23/pc         |
| Chicago            | 54/40/r           | 48/30/pc         | 46/30/pc         | 38/20/sn         | 28/14/c          |
| Dallas/Ft. Worth   | 70/52/t           | 69/48/pc         | 65/48/sh         | 61/45/r          | 55/38/c          |
| Denver             | 48/24/pc          | 45/22/pc         | 43/20/pc         | 37/9/pc          | 27/4/sn          |
| Flagstaff          | 38/26/sf          | 40/20/sf         | 42/18/sf         | 40/19/c          | 39/11/pc         |
| Houston            | 76/60/sh          | 74/60/sh         | 74/60/t          | 72/58/t          | 64/48/r          |
| Kansas City        | 62/41/r           | 52/33/pc         | 48/25/pc         | 36/20/sn         | 30/13/c          |
| Las Vegas          | 54/40/sh          | 56/38/sh         | 54/38/c          | 56/38/pc         | 56/36/sh         |
| Miami              | 77/67/sh          | 77/67/sh         | 79/67/pc         | 79/67/pc         | 79/67/pc         |
| Minneapolis        | 40/30/r           | 32/14/pc         | 21/7/c           | 12/4/c           | 16/-1/c          |
| New Orleans        | 74/57/pc          | 74/58/sh         | 71/56/sh         | 71/55/sh         | 70/52/sh         |
| New York City      | 47/39/c           | 52/44/sh         | 54/37/pc         | 44/31/sh         | 36/29/sn         |
| Philadelphia       | 50/36/pc          | 57/44/sh         | 60/40/pc         | 52/38/sh         | 40/27/i          |
| Phoenix            | 62/42/pc          | 63/44/pc         | 63/44/pc         | 63/44/pc         | 63/37/pc         |
| Portland           | 46/38/sh          | 46/36/sh         | 44/34/sh         | 44/32/pc         | 44/34/c          |
| San Francisco      | 55/47/r           | 55/46/sh         | 54/45/c          | 53/44/r          | 55/39/pc         |
| Seattle            | 46/38/sh          | 46/36/sh         | 44/34/pc         | 41/33/c          | 39/25/c          |
| Tucson             | 61/37/sh          | 63/37/pc         | 61/37/pc         | 65/39/pc         | 65/39/pc         |
| Washington, DC     | 52/38/pc          | 62/42/sh         | 62/40/pc         | 58/33/c          | 42/31/r          |

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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