



NEWSBRIEFS

Water grant

Becky Dean-Walker, Hudspeth County Judge, and James Irby, President of the Ft. Hancock Water Control and Improvement District, were on hand June 2 to receive the presentation of a ceremonial check from USDA Rural Development in the amount of \$978,140 to install a new lift station and force main, construct new aeration lagoons and make other improvements to the community's waste-water system. About 250 households will be served by the project.

Entertainment, free

The El Paso Convention & Performing Arts Center has announced the *Friday Night at the Movies* Film Series which will follow the successful "Alfresco! Fridays" Concert Series at approximately 7:45 p.m. Admission to the movies is free. Movie theater refreshments such as sodas, popcorn and hot dogs are available for purchase during the showing. Beginning this Friday, family-oriented movies will be shown inside the Abraham Chavez Theatre immediately after the "Alfresco!" concert performance on the following dates: June 17, June 24, July 8, July 15, July 22, Aug. 12, Aug. 19 and Aug. 26. "This is a perfect way for families to enjoy an evening out," said Bill Blaziek, General Manager of the El Paso Convention & Visitors Bureau. "First they can enjoy the music at the 'Alfresco! Fridays' concert; then they can stay over and catch a movie in the Abraham Chavez Theatre. And the best part is both events are free!" For more information call 534-0689.

Trash holdup

The County of El Paso this week delayed finalizing an exclusive contract with an trash collector for the Fabens and Tornillo area. Currently, several trash collectors contract individually with residents in the area, however, an exclusive contract for trash collection within the boundaries of the Fabens and Tornillo water districts is intended to lower the rates for customers within those service areas and provide stable and consistent trash pickup. Public Works Director Robert Rivera was asked to research possible vendors and commissioners are expected to address the matter again in two weeks.

In other news

■ A Master Gardener program, hosted by the Texas Cooperative Extension, will begin in August, with applications due by Aug. 1, for 14 sessions of intensive horticulture training on Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 859-7725, Ext. 221, for enrollment and other information.

■ Tara Black of Horizon City has been

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Education should include knowledge of what to do with it.

— Quips & Quotes



— Photo courtesy Barbara Perez

PLAY BALL — County Commissioner Barbara Perez believes El Paso could turn the eastside Sportspark into a first-rate facility with fields like this one in Chino Hills, CA.

Commissioner Perez says Sportspark could rival California counterpart

By Guadalupe Silva
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY — Dreams sometimes have a way of becoming a reality, said El Paso County Commissioner Barbara Perez, but they do require quite a bit of work and effort to make it happen.

Perez still believes the County's dream of converting the East Side's Sportspark into a regional athletic complex that would attract professional tournaments and tourism has a chance. She returned Sunday from a visit to similar sports complexes built and operated by the Big League Dreams firm in California. Piti Vasquez, the county's purchasing agent, and Wally Hardgove, its budgeting and financial manager, accompanied the

commissioner on her trip.

"I was really impressed with their facilities over there," Perez said, describing the Chino Hills, California Big League Dreams Park. "The ball fields were beautifully kept and so were their ball practicing cages. But more important, their management program and team organization appeared to be very effective. The park is completely booked with large tournaments for the next three years.

"If an agreement can be reached with this group to take over Sportspark, perhaps the dream can come true," she said.

Perez explained that members of the Big League Dreams organization have been to El Paso to see the 50-acre Sportspark and are interested. The park's 10 baseball, softball and

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Avoiding common mosquito bites helps prevent West Nile infections

EL PASO COUNTY — The name may sound exotic — West Nile virus — but it is the common backyard mosquito that is the troublemaker, the potential carrier of this and other infectious diseases. Most mosquitoes are simply an annoyance, but avoiding mosquito bites is the key to preventing illness.

"We do not know the extent to which West Nile infections or the other mosquito-borne illnesses will affect Texans this year," said Jim Schuermann, staff epidemiologist for vectorborne and zoonotic diseases with the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). "But we do know that mosquitoes are a problem in every part of the state every year. And there are steps people can take to protect themselves."

At the top of the list is to use an insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. According to a 2003 DSHS survey, 77 percent of the people who got the most serious forms of West Nile infection never used

repellent. This year the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention added picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus to the list of recommended repellent ingredients.

"People should read and follow the label instructions," Schuermann said.

DSHS offers the following additional recommendations:

- Drain standing water from around your home. Empty cans, buckets, tires, rain gutters, tree holes and saucers under potted plants regularly. Change the water in pet bowls, bird baths and wading pools several times a week. It only takes a thimble of water for mosquitoes to breed.
- Limit the amount of time outdoors between dusk and dawn when those mosquitoes likely to carry infections are most active.
- Dress appropriately when outside in mosquito-infested areas. Cover as much skin as

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County auditors are big award winners

By Guadalupe Silva
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY — Auditors for the county of El Paso have cornered the field in excellence awards during the last 15 years from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada.

County Auditor Edward Dion and his team were presented Monday, June 6, with a Certificate of Recognition for Budget Preparation for the eleventh consecutive year from the Government Finance Officers Association. Earlier this year, county auditors also were recognized by the same organization with a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the fifteenth consecutive year.

In both instances, Stephen J. Gauthier, the association's technical services director, praised such accomplishments by the county's auditors as the highest form of recognition in government budgeting and in financial reporting. Only eight out of 254 Texas Counties have earned such distinguished awards.

"The budget presentation award reflects the commitment of the governing body and staff to meeting the highest principles of government budgeting," Gauthier wrote in a letter advising the County of the award. "To receive this award the auditors had to satisfy national guidelines in four categories and be rated proficient in all of them."

To win the award, budget documents must serve as a policy document, a financial plan, an operations guide and a communications device.

Dion, who leads the auditor's team, recognized the dedicated effort of his staff in developing the County's award-winning budget. He mentioned Yvette Olivas, budget supervisor I; Myrna Naylor, CPA, accountant I; Hector Soto, accountant I; Wallace Hardgrove, budget and finance manager, and Rodney Olivas, administrative assistant III/web writer I.

Staff members responsible for developing the presentation that won the Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting earlier this year were Teresa Molinar, operations manager; James Utterback, cash management supervisor; Donna Teague, grants supervisor; Imelda Gaytan, payroll supervisor; Luis Martinez, treasury supervisor; Ana Zuñiga, internal audit supervisor; Irene Alvarado, executive secretary and Sarah Aguilar, accountant II.

"These individuals, among others in this office, unquestionably deserve a hearty congratulations and compliments for their praiseworthy teamwork, crucial in maintaining the highest level of professionalism," Dion said. He also thanked members of Commissioners Court and the Council of Judges for their "unfailing support."

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) is a nonprofit organization serving 14,000 professionals throughout North America. The GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards program is the only one of its kind in governmental budgeting.



One perspective

By Francis Shrum

How easily we are amused

You have to wonder about a society so easily amused. Or are we? You be the judge, no pun intended.

By now every global resident who was even remotely interested, and most of us who weren't, have been informed that Michael Jackson was found not guilty in his child molestation trial. A disturbingly large number of us were so easily amused as to find entertainment value in actually following the progression of the trial as it wound its pitiful and hopeless journey across the media screens of millions of households.

The rest of us were just placing bets on the outcome.

Not all of us, of course, but too

many for comfort, too many to ignore, too many to allow us to sleep peacefully at night.

The smart money won out: The insane world of internet betting had long passed judgment before the jurors ever spoke — they were already betting on acquittal. As long ago as May 25, journalist Alexandria Sage was reporting to Reuters out of Los Angeles that the majority of online speculators believed the likelihood of an acquittal was higher than Jackson's chances of being convicted.

Didn't we have anything better to do? Apparently not. Said the operator of one internet betting line in Sage's report: "There are definitely good theatrics in a trial that swings people back

and forth in their thinking. It's not unlike a sporting event... it's just a longer, more drawn out variation of it."

So which is it? Are we so easily amused that we will indulge our gambling instincts on the fate of one of the most pitiful human beings on the face of the earth — or are we so jaded that it takes something that low just to get us interested?

I think maybe it's a little of both. I don't watch television sit-coms anymore because I can't stand to watch a perfectly amusing scenario become disgusting and distorted by the twin demons of modern entertainment, perversion and profanity. Programmers are looking for an easy laugh and one way to get it is to titillate our already de-sensitized sense of humor.

When did we become so pseudo-sophisticated that our own families could no longer amuse us? When talking to our spouse or playing a game or eating a meal with our kids became such a dreary burden we would choose instead the artificial companionship of a lighted box filled with flickering images and meaningless dialogue?

If we paid half as much attention to the reality unfolding around us in our own homes as we do the so-called "reality shows" on TV, we would find a wealth of interest far more fulfilling, certainly more challenging.

But maybe that's the problem. Challenge and fulfillment aren't entertaining. They're scary.

The upsurge in so-called interactive media which allows us to artificially "participate" in some orchestrated electronic scenario indicates to me that people do recognize a need to take part in something beyond themselves. It's just a lot more comfortable to peer into and pass judgment on the affairs of others than it is to go hands-on with the flesh-and-blood people in our own lives.

Electronic interaction frees us from responsibility, suffering, pain, fear or anguish, or even honest concern about how it all turns out. Instead we can sit safely in our armchairs, entertained and untouched by the unfortunate antics of others. Hey, if we guess right, we could even make a little money on it. Beats the heck out of real family life, right?

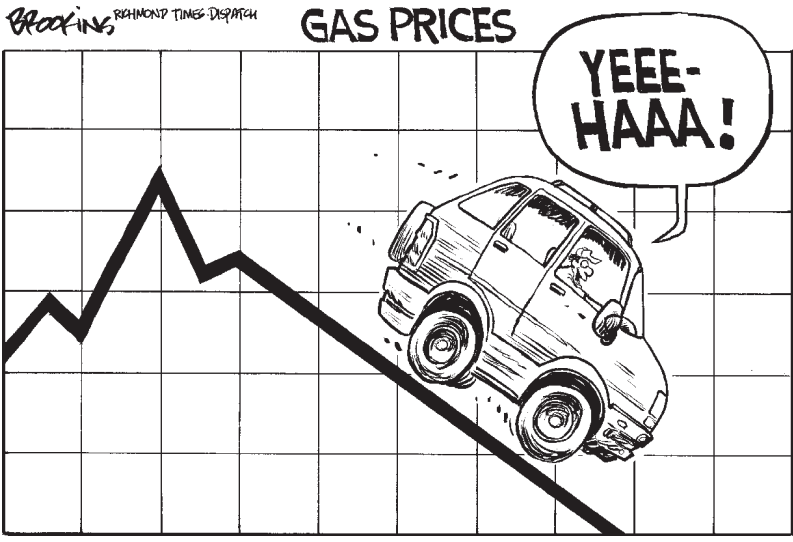
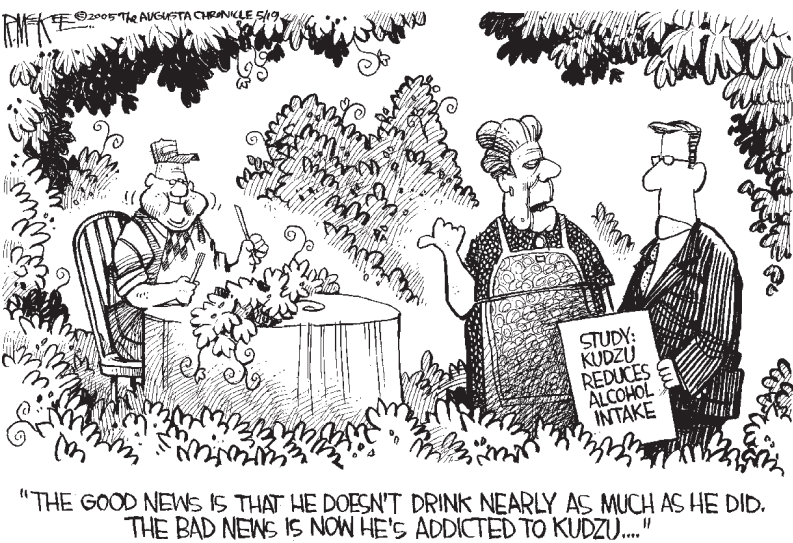
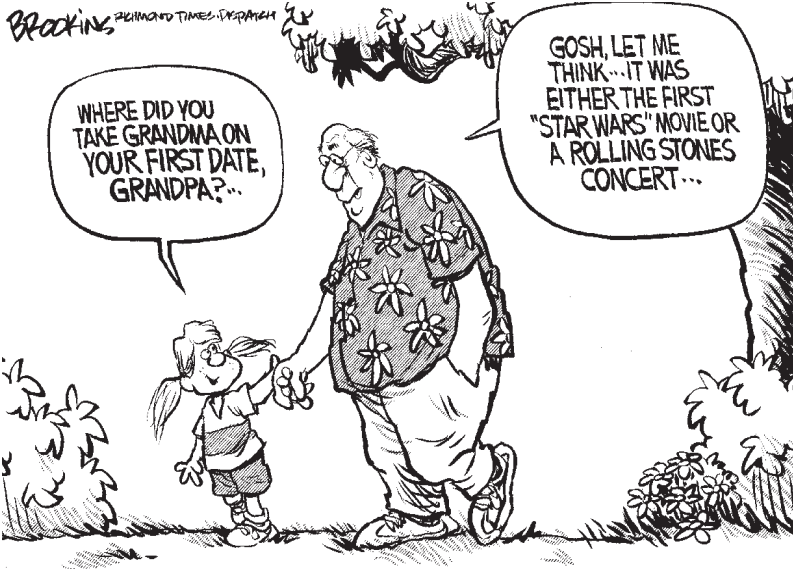
The Jackson saga is a sad illustration of how lacking we all are in humane and sane human conduct — from those who watched it to those unfolding the drama day in and day out.

I met a young woman recently who is dealing with some real heavy-duty issues, the kind of consequences that we tend to end up with when we treat life like it was a video game we can shut down and walk away from.

She's really smart and capable. She's realized now there is much more to her life than a peer-group that looks no further than the next fast-food chain for employment — the ones who, for entertainment, will do things like chug the un-diluted soft-drink syrup while the manager isn't looking just to see how much they can consume before it makes them sick or gives them a buzz.

So I'm standing with this young woman at a social gathering, watching a group of kids caper across the lawn behind a father dressed in a cut-up bedspread to look like an Arab adventurer. He is leading his followers on a treasure hunt for chocolate bars and bubble gum.

With a hint of yearning and from the depth of experience twice her age she utters: How easily we are amused...



True Texas by Roger T. Moore, June 16, 1838: John Quincy Adams began a 3 week filibuster in the House of Representatives against the annexation of Texas.



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Socorro ISD superintendent presents state of district to Chamber of Commerce

By Carlos A. Briano
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY — Socorro Independent School District Superintendent Dr. Robert J. Durón addressed a large group of business and civic leaders at the Third Annual Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce “State of District” address on Thursday, June 9. Durón discussed the progress of the district’s bond programs, the district’s financial integrity, as well as district’s current and future programs and academics. Among the distinguished guests were State Sen. Eliot Shapleigh, West Side City Rep.-Elect Ann Morgan Lilly, El Paso County Attorney Jose R. Rodriguez, El Paso County Tax

Assessor Collector Victor A. Flores, Ysleta ISD Superintendent Hector Montenegro and Clint ISD Superintendent Ricardo Estrada. Durón outlined how the district is handling its rapid growth. But he also discussed the district’s plan for the influx of troops to the area. “Socorro ISD will designate a liaison to make sure that all those families have one contact,” he said. “We want to open our arms and welcome those community members into our district.” Durón’s presentation outlined the district “Core Values:” Accountability, Commitment, Trust, Respect, Integrity, High Expectations and Teamwork. “Quite frankly, if you’re not lined up with these values, you won’t be a

good fit at Socorro Independent School District,” he said. The presentation was well received by those in the audience. “I thought Dr. Durón’s speech was excellent and to the point,” said Board member Charlie Garza. “It really touched everyone’s hearts. Talking about the teachers and the students and where we’re going, I truly believe we have great leadership in Dr. Durón.” But Durón was quick to give credit to the thousands of employees of the district. “I constantly remind our staff that being the district of choice is demanding and a challenge,” Durón said. “But being the district of choice is really our goal. And we will continue to strive to be the district of choice.”

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

Guard against skin cancer

Summer is a wonderful time of year. Whether you go to the beach or the lake, go fishing, hiking, or just enjoy a walk down the street, I hope you take advantage of the beautiful warm summer days. But, as you enjoy the summer, don’t forget the damage sun can cause if you don’t protect yourself from its harmful ultraviolet rays. I was shocked to recently learn that over 90 percent of all skin cancers are caused by sun exposure, yet fewer than 33 percent of adults, adolescents, and children use sun protection. Nothing beats fun in the sun, but we should use caution when we are outdoors. When you’re packing your bag for outdoor activities, don’t forget your sunscreen, hat, and sunglasses. Be especially careful between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., when the sun is at its brightest. If you

are out in the sun for long periods of time, sunscreen does not offer enough protection. Covering your skin with clothing and wearing a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses will protect your skin and help keep you cool. When planning for your summer days, you can find information about the strength of the sun’s UV rays by looking at the National Weather Service’s UV Index. Be extra cautious when the UV Index is five or higher. Remember that sun exposure can come from reflections off sand, water, and even concrete, and don’t be deceived by a cloudy day. The powerful sun can still cause skin damage. If you are planning a trip to the mountains, don’t forget UV radiation increases at higher elevations, and plan accordingly. According to the Skin Cancer

Foundation, more than a m i l l i o n people will be diagnosed with skin cancer this year. The statistics are startling, especially for a disease that we can potentially limit through preventative measures. Self-examinations can aid in the early detection of skin cancer. If any moles have irregular (asymmetric) borders, are larger than the size of a pencil eraser, or are multicolored you should see your dermatologist. Regular, thorough self examinations are easy and could be life saving. As we enter the long days of summer, remember your sunscreen and cover up as much as possible. Sun protection is not just cancer prevention — it also helps keep your skin looking healthy, young and wrinkle-free!



Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes

Veterans working for veterans

El Paso is home to nearly 60,000 veterans. All these veterans — and their dependents — deserve timely service and quality care when working with the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (VA). My office works with many of our veterans on their individual cases and as a member of the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee, I have long worked to improve veterans’ services and benefits. For example, I’m currently working to bring a field hearing to El Paso to investigate the hiring freeze and high turnover at the local El Paso VA facility. For the past eight years, the Veterans’ Citizen Advisory Panel (VetCAP), a group of El Paso veterans I organized when first elected to Congress, has played an important role assisting me in meeting the needs of El Paso’s veteran community. In fact, we are lucky to have many dedicated El Paso veterans who have taken the initiative to work on our veterans’ behalf. One of those is Ron Holmes, a co-chair of the VetCAP. Holmes, a veteran advocate and

former Marine, recently created the One-Stop Veterans Shop in Northeast El Paso. Through this office, Holmes and a small group of volunteers will aid veterans in obtaining benefits and short-term needs such as canes, walkers and wheelchairs. The One-Stop Veterans Shop will train Claims Service Officers to fill out forms for veterans and assist veterans in understanding the claims process. Volunteers include former Army Cpl. Joseph Hudson, a member of the 507th Maintenance Company from Fort Bliss who was held as a prisoner of war in Iraq, and retired Army Lt. Col. Olga Kalpakgian, an Army nurse. Contact the One-Stop Veterans Shop at 599-5295. Another community asset is the El Paso County Veterans Assistance Office, which aids veterans in applying for health care, education, and home loans as well as death and burial services. Michael Flores, manager of the assistance office, works closely with nursing homes and assisted living centers to promote various programs such as Aid and Attendance and the new Texas State Veterans Home that is scheduled to open July 19th. Flores holds an outreach program at the

Fabens Library the third Tuesday of every month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and can be reached at 759-7990. The Department of Veterans Affairs is responsible for providing veterans with information regarding benefits and the application process. Locally, Dave Mojica, supervisor of the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), provides veterans benefits information with his office’s outreach program that has been held four times a month for the past three years. Upon learning that only two of the 91 veterans residing on the Tigua Reservation received VA benefits, his office assisted the tribe in the claims process and currently 53 Native Americans from the tribe are drawing VBA benefits. If interested in scheduling a VA briefing for your organization, contact Dave Mojica at 564-7885. These local organizations have done an outstanding job aiding veterans. I commend Ron Holmes, Michael Flores, and Dave Mojica for their commitment to serving El Paso ‘s veterans. Their efforts not only improve the quality of life of our veterans, but help provide them with the service and care they have earned and deserve.

View from here By Bill Peacock

Litigation is the real source of cancer related to asbestos

Though opinions differ on its nature, everyone seems to be in agreement that Americans today face a crisis when it comes to asbestos. One side says America is in the midst of an “asbestos disease crisis,” with “approximately 5 million individuals every year” diagnosed with asbestos-related diseases, many of whom are “gravely ill” and not receiving just compensation. The other side claims we face an “asbestos litigation crisis,” built upon “frightening” medical and legal procedures which raise “red flags of fraud” and have needlessly cost Americans billions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of jobs. So which is it? There is no better place to look for answers than the Lone Star State . Approximately 40 percent of all U.S. asbestos lawsuits have been filed here. And Texas is also the home to many silica lawsuits, which use the same medical and legal methodology developed through years of asbestos litigation. U.S. District Judge Janis Graham Jack is currently presiding over 10,000 silica lawsuits which have been consolidated in her court for pretrial proceedings. Events in her Corpus Christi courtroom are enlightening: • One doctor testified that he diagnosed 860 people with silicosis in a 72-hour period without seeing any of them. Another doctor said he signed diagnoses without reading them. • A West Virginia radiologist testified he didn’t interview, conduct physical exams on or check the work records of 2,700 of the claimants. He had secretaries prepare the diagnoses and stamp his name on them.

Doctors recanted more than 4,000 of the 10,000 diagnoses when questioned under oath. • Many of the plaintiffs in the trial have previously filed lawsuits claiming to have asbestosis. Doctors acknowledged diagnosing the same patients with both asbestosis and silicosis, depending on the lawsuit. • The owner of a screening company that produced 6,500 of the plaintiffs said he set up his company after educating himself on how to run an X-ray machine and take a patient’s medical history. The use of mass screenings is symptomatic of both silica and asbestos litigation, with over 1 million workers screened for asbestosis in the past seventeen years. However, these are not medical screenings meant to identify patients with diseases needing treatment, but rather legal screenings seeking to identify potential litigants. When evaluating the x-rays and patient histories produced in these screenings, doctors generally make diagnoses that satisfy legal, not medical, standards. The result is most people meeting the legal standards to proceed in court do not meet the medical standards necessary to produce a correct diagnosis of illness or impairment. For example, one study using independent radiologists identified the presence of lung abnormalities in only 4.5 percent of x-rays used in asbestos litigation, in contrast to the doctors employed by trial lawyers who found abnormalities in 96 percent of the x-rays. Additionally, other studies estimate that up to 89 percent of all asbestos claims come from people who do not have

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WNV

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possible to reduce exposure to mosquito bites and use a recommended repellent on exposed skin. Mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing, so spray clothes with repellent containing either DEET or permethrin for extra protection. Studies show that permethrin sprayed on clothing lasts through several washings. Schuermann said it also is important to keep mosquitoes out of the house. “Be sure door, porch and window screens are in good condition,” he said. West Nile virus and other mosquito-borne infections can result in serious illness or death. “With West Nile virus, older people, especially those who already have medical problems, are most likely to develop the more serious forms of illness including encephalitis and meningitis,” Schuermann said. In 2004 West Nile was detected in 101 Texas counties. A total of 119 human cases of serious West Nile illnesses from 40 counties were reported, including eight deaths. West Nile infection is caused by the bite of an infected mosquito that gets the virus when feeding on infected

birds and other wild animals. It is not transmitted from person to person. The risk of exposure to West Nile virus is relatively small. Not all mosquito species are able to transmit the virus. Of the species that do, only one in 100 mosquitoes will be infected; and only a small number of people bitten by infected mosquitoes will become sick. In general, out of 100 people infected with the virus, only 20 will develop any illness at all. Symptoms usually appear from three to 14 days after a person is bitten. For most who do develop symptoms, the illness is relatively mild. The most common symptoms of mild infections include fever, headache, muscle aches and drowsiness. About one of 150 people infected with the virus will develop a severe form of the illness with symptoms that include intense headache, high fever, nausea, stiff neck, muscle tenderness, shivering and mental confusion. Convulsions, coma, and death may follow. For those who survive, recovery may take months. Other mosquito-borne illnesses include St. Louis encephalitis, eastern equine encephalitis, western equine encephalitis and dengue fever. There is no specific treatment for these infections. For more information visit the DSHS Web site: www.dshs.state.tx.us.

Briefs

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awarded a Presidential Transfer Scholarship from Texas Tech University. Black, a former student of El Paso Community College, will pursue a degree in multidisciplinary studies at Texas Tech. The scholarship pays \$2,500 per academic year for two years.

■ El Paso County’s swimming pools at Ascarate Park and the O’Donnell Park in Fabens are now open for the summer from noon to 5 p.m. Friday through Sunday. The pool at Gallegos Park on the West Side, however, will not open until June 17, because of maintenance problems. The Gallegos pool also will open from noon to 5 p.m. Friday through Sunday. Admission fees at the El Paso County pools are \$2 at Ascarate and \$1 for the O’Donnell pool in Fabens and the Gallegos pool. For more information on the pools call 772-5605.

■ For the twelfth consecutive year, the Town of Anthony will host its Annual 4th of July Parade and Celebration, this year with theme of “Pride in Our American Flag.” Entries are expected to be numerous this year and participants are encouraged to follow safety and organization

rules to prevent accidents and confusion. It is also important to supervise children, both on the floats and in the crowd, and to make sure everyone gets plenty to drink to prevent dehydration in the hot weather. The parade will follow the usual route starting in Anthony, N.M. going south on Main Street into Anthony, Texas and turn east on Franklin Street ending at the Anthony Municipal Park. The parade will start at 9:30 a.m. and this year’s parade marshal will be the men and women from Anthony and the surrounding areas that are serving in our armed forces. For information contact the Town of Anthony at 915-886-3944 or fax to 915-886-3115, send an email to francojay@aol.com.

■ Canutillo Elementary School was selected recently by the Beaumont Foundation of America (BFA) to receive a grant worth \$65,000 in technology equipment. The BFA grant will provide 30 laptop computers and accessories for the Canutillo Infusion Project (CIP), a campus-wide program designed to ensure that all CES students have access to the latest in technology equipment. “Through the CIP program, students will be able to use laptop computers on an ongoing basis, and we will incorporate parent participation through after school and weekend activities as we focus on student-centered activities,” said Hector Giron, CES principal. A tech fair will be held at year end to showcase the

projects. BFA, established in 2001, grants state-of-the-art technology equipment to schools and community groups serving low-income populations. “We believe computer and Internet technologies are essential tools for progress in the 21st century, and that given access to digital information, people will have a more equal opportunity to advance socially, economically, and intellectually,” said Daryl Ann Borel, BFA executive director of Grant Administration.

■ Children in the Clint area may take the Ramblin’ Road Trip Vacation Bible School being offered at the Clint First Baptist Church June 20-24 if they are between the grades of kinder through sixth. For information call 592-9081 or 851-1599.

■ Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe, Inc. (La Fe) will host the 12th Annual La Fe Father’s Day Community Health 5K Run/Walk on Father’s Day weekend beginning 7:30 a.m., Saturday, June 18, at the la Fe Cultural and Technology Center, 721 S. Ochoa (rear building) in El Paso’s historic Segundo Barrio District. The event is open to all ages. Proceeds will benefit special activities and educational programs for children. Advance registration is \$15; \$20 at the event. Registration forms can be picked up and filed in person at 608 S. St. Vrain, El Paso, TX 79901 as late as noon, Friday, June 17. Winners in the numerous male, female,

and overall race categories will receive medals or trophies. The first 200 entries will receive free, commemorative event T-shirts. The race — held annually on the Saturday before Father’s Day — will begin at the corner of Father Rahm and Virginia Streets. The run/walk will wind its way throughout the Segundo Barrio area on Ochoa, Delta, Cotton, Kansas, Campbell, Seventh, Park, Sixth, and Third Streets. The race will conclude at the entrance of the La Fe Cultural and Technology Center. For event information, contact Frank Varela at 545-7190.

■ A Neil Simon play is virtually a series of guaranteed laughs — and the master playwright’s *Rumors* is currently doing just that at the El Paso Playhouse, 2501 Montana Avenue. When Chris Gorman and her husband Ken arrive at a 10-year anniversary party for the Deputy Mayor of New York, they find things and situations in comic disarray. The cast includes Jim Daross, Stella Perry, Tom Ruiz, Marguerite Carruthers, Boris Sazhaev, Angel Herrera, Christine Jakuta, Dawn Hedgecock, Moises Hijonos and Maria Torres, all directed by the husband-and-wife team of Chet Frame and Jan Wolfe. Shows are scheduled through June 25, with show times at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Tickets are \$10 for adults; \$8, seniors; \$7 for stu-

dents and military. Call the Playhouse, 532-1317 for reservations, or book online at <http://www.elpasoplayhouse.com/reservations.asp>.

■ On Saturday, June 18, the Horizon City Kiwanis Club will meet at the Oz Glaze Senior Center, 13070 Veny Webb, at 8 a.m. to hear a Motivational Source speaker concerning building membership in a service organization. Information: 434-0033.

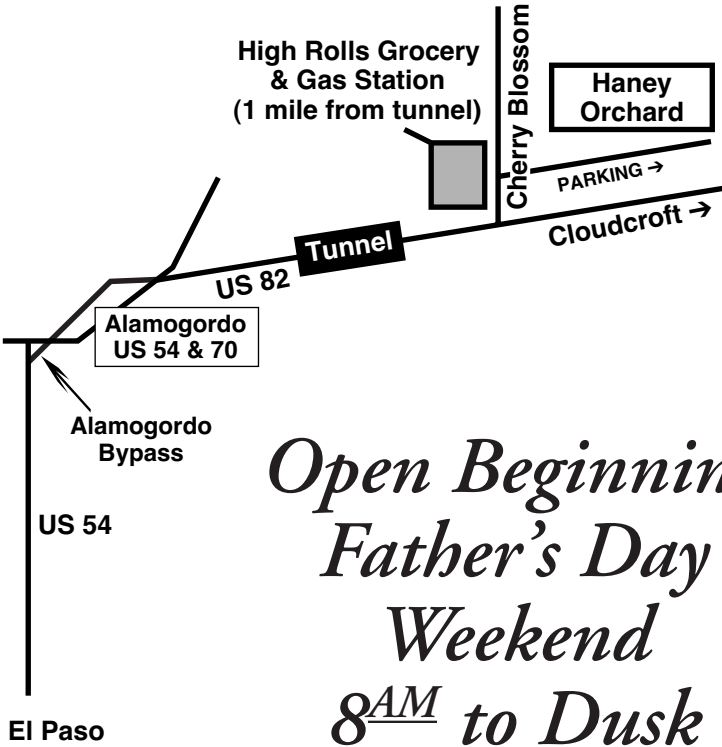
■ The USDA Farm Service Agency is offering a loan program for “socially disadvantaged” applicants including minorities and women who meet FSA loan eligibility requirements. For information log on to <http://www.usda.gov> or call (432) 336-5206, Ext. 2.

■ Brokers Logistics, Ltd. recently acquired the Old El Paso facility at 1200 S. Main in Anthony and will host a job fair from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Anthony Town Hall at 401 Wildcat Drive on Wednesday, June 22. Applications will be taken for experienced candidates for the following positions for customer service representatives, forklift operators and maintenance mechanics. Brokers Logistics, Ltd. is an organization formed to engage in public and contract warehousing and related logistics services. Call 886-3944 call for further information.

Come and get 'em!



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Understand what is in your well water

EL PASO COUNTY — About 47 percent of the United States’ population depends on ground water for their basic drinking water supply. Having a basic understanding about ground water quality is essential to those who utilize it.

Along with human activities, water quality is affected by a combination of natural processes. Most relate to chemical compositions underground. However, other factors such as biological, physical and radiological conditions can affect water quality as well.

The National Ground Water Association recommends that well owners have their wells checked and tested by a certified and/or licensed water well contractor every year to ensure water safety.

Following are some of the naturally occurring water contaminants:

• Hard water

The most common problem associated with ground water may be hardness, generally associated with an abundance of calcium and/or magnesium dissolved in the water. Hard water has not been shown to cause health problems, but can be a nuisance as it may cause soap curds and deposits to form on pipes and other plumbing fixtures. Over time this can reduce the diameter of the pipes.

Calcium and magnesium are found in ground water that has come in contact with certain rocks and minerals, especially limestone and gypsum. When these materials are dissolved, they release calcium and magnesium. Hard water is considered bad for your plumbing, but people with heart or circulatory problems may want to consult their physician before drinking softened water, because the softening process removes calcium and magnesium, and adds sodium to the water.

• Iron and manganese

A “rusty” or metallic taste in water is a result of iron, and sometimes manganese, in ground water. They not only create a bad taste, but they also can stain pipes and clothing. Iron and manganese are naturally occur-

ring, and most ground water has some amount of dissolved iron and manganese in it. It comes from contact with minerals that contain iron, such as pyrite.

There are several treatment methods. Installing a water softener may help if iron and manganese are present in low quantities and the softener is designed for their removal. Aeration (the addition of oxygen to the water), chlorination, and feeding ozone or hydrogen peroxide can aid in the precipitation of iron, which is removed from the water by filtration. Potassium permanganate feed with manganese greens and filters, and some recently designed synthetic media, will remove iron and manganese, as well.

• Nitrogen

Most nitrogen in ground water comes from the atmosphere. Some plants can “attach” nitrogen from the atmosphere onto their roots. The nitrogen not used by the plants is then released into the soil.

Nitrogen compounds also can work their way into ground water through fertilizers, manure, and urine from farm animals, sewage and landfills.

The most common forms in ground water are ammonia, nitrate, and nitrite. Nitrates can be especially toxic to children under six months of age. Exposure to ammonia also presents a health risk. It is toxic to aquatic life such as fish, and it interferes with water treatment.

There are a variety of treatment methods to correct this problem, including reverse osmosis systems with water softeners to remove nitrates and nitrites, and oxidation to remove small amounts of ammonia. However, treatment should be a last resort. Removing the source of contamination is the first priority. You should also be sure to protect the area around the wellhead from contamination by animals or fertilizers.

• Silica

Silica comes from the weathering of silicate minerals in the ground. It causes no harmful effects to humans, but large amounts can cause scaling

in pipes that impacts water flow, and it can interfere with iron and manganese removal.

• Sulfur

Sulfur can occur in ground water in two forms: sulfides and sulfates. Sulfides are naturally occurring in much of the United States in limestone containing organic materials; ground water affected by oil, gas, and coal deposits; in marshes and manure pits; and in the byproduct of well-established iron biofilms. Sulfates often come from the dissolving of minerals, such as gypsum and anhydrite.

A “rotten egg” smell coming from your water indicates the presence of hydrogen sulfide gas. Along with creating an unpleasant odor and taste, sulfides cause corrosion to plumbing and darken water.

There are several methods for treating sulfur. Aeration, ozone, hydrogen peroxide, and chlorine (best followed by filtration) are effective against dissolved hydrogen sulfide or gas. A reverse osmosis system, nanofiltration system, or a negative ion-exchanger also can be effective in reducing sulfates. Filtration is necessary in combating sulfur formation as a mineral or in biofilms.

• TDS

Total dissolved solids, or TDS, as it is commonly known, is the concentration of all dissolved minerals in water. It is the direct measurement of the interaction between minerals and ground water. TDS levels above 1000 mg/L will usually yield poor tasting water. Levels above 2000 mg/L are considered undrinkable due to taste, and levels more than 10,000 mg/L are defined as undrinkable. Water softeners with a reverse osmosis system are effective in lowering the TDS to satisfactory levels.

For more on your private water well, visit the National Ground Water Association’s (NGWA) Web site, www.wellowner.org. To find an NGWA-member contractor near you, go to the Web site and click on “Contractor Lookup.”

Canutillo High School student aspires to be a chef

By Kim Guzman
Special to the Courier

Norby Padilla, freshman student at Canutillo High School and Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) member, is aspiring to be a chef.

His classmates in the Foods and Nutrition classes taught by Angelina Bencomo rely on his knowledge, experience and expertise. Padilla was project coordinator for FCCLA and Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE) organizations when they catered the prom and has given demonstrations on cake decorating.

His contributions to these organizations include selling several FCCLA cookbooks, assisting with baking and selling cookies for FCCLA, grocery shopping for the Foods and Nutrition classes,

helped plan, organize and prepare a Thanksgiving lunch with TAFE members for the CHS teachers. Padilla attended the FCCLA State Conference in Corpus Christi recently and earned a third place in the Leadership Enhancement Opportunities for Students (LEOS). He also competed in the New Mexico FCCLA Regional Conference in Las Cruces, taking first place in the cake decorating competition.

“The judges were very impressed with his talent. One judge came to his class and met with him after school to give him more advise and instruction,” commented Bencomo. She added that Padilla’s culinary skills and knowledge are remarkable and she appreciates his maturity for being only 15 years old. “Ms. Bencomo has been very helpful and resourceful to me this year. It has also been a great blessing for me to work with her throughout the year,” said Padilla.



— Photo courtesy Canutillo ISD

Norby Padilla

Socorro Indepedent School District PUBLIC NOTICE / AVISO PUBLICO

Public Meeting to Review Federally Funded Programs Junta Pública para Examinar Programas de Fondos Federales

The Socorro Independent School District will conduct public information meetings to review the following SISD Programs funded by Federal and State compensatory funds: *El Distrito Escolar Independiente de Socorro llevará a cabo juntas públicas para examinar los siguientes programas de SISD de fondos compensatorios federales y estatales:*

- Title I, Parts A and D - Professional Development and Neglected Delinquent Youth;
Título I, Partes A y D - Desarrollo Profesional y Juventud Delincuente y Desatendida
- Title II, Parts A and D - Supplemental Education Services;
Título II, Partes A y D - Servicios Educativos Suplementarios;
- Title III, Part A and Title IV, Part A - Safe and Drug Free Schools;
Título III, Parte A y Título IV, Parte A - Escuelas Libres de Drogas y Seguras;
- Title V - Inovative Programs.
Título V - Programas Innovadores

The meetings will be held:
Las juntas se llevarán a cabo:

Tuesday, June 28, 2005
martes, 28 de junio 2005
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Public Review of the Federal Application for Educational Funding for Socorro ISD will be held on June 28, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in the Board Room of the Ed Center, 12300 Eastlake Drive.

Revisión Pública de la Solicitud Federal para Fondos Educativos para Socorro ISD se llevará a cabo el 28 de junio 2005 de las 9:00 a.m. a las 11:00 a.m. en salón de la mesa directiva en el Ed Center, 12300 Eastlake Drive.

Litigation

From Page 3

cancer and may not be ill or impaired at all.

Though tens of thousands of people have suffered from asbestos-related diseases, since 1974 asbestos exposure has been reduced to the point where today there is almost no occupational exposure to asbestos. Most of those who have been injured have had their day in court. For those remaining with legitimate medical claims, access to just compensation is being hindered by tens of thousands of meritless lawsuits. Today, these represent the vast majority of asbestos lawsuits, which have cost \$54 billion, driven 70 companies into bankruptcy and put as many as 700,000 Americans out of work.

Policymakers wanting to correct this problem ought to be sure they are focused on the true crisis. This is important if the courts are to acknowledge what the medical evidence shows — there is no asbestos disease crisis in our country. Policymakers must compel the courts to acknowledge medical standards, either by putting them into law or by establishing independent medical panels to review claims. Either approach will improve the health of the Texas judicial system and the economy.

Most importantly, it will allow those who have been truly harmed their day in court.

Bill Peacock is the Economic Freedom Policy Analyst at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, an Austin-based research institute.

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U.S. General Services Administration

‘Iron Mike’ Tyson just flesh and bones in his final bout

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Once he was known as the baddest man on the planet. Now the 38-year old Mike Tyson is just plain bad.

While the heavyweight division desperately searches for that one superstar fighter to come on the scene and save the sport, it was hoping that Tyson could fill the void with a solid performance against Joe Palooka last weekend.

Well, his name really isn’t Joe Palooka, but let’s face it, Kevin McBride didn’t exactly come into the fight highly regarded.

To tell you the truth, most people didn’t know who hit harder, Kevin McBride or Kevin Costner.

Many fans, always wanting to witness some Tyson histrionics, were disappointed Tyson didn’t face a better opponent. Even Tyson felt this guy wasn’t much more than an annoying obstacle in the way of another big payday or title bout.

At a press conference a couple days prior to the fight, McBride’s advisor Rich Cappiello got up and made some disparaging remarks against Tyson.

The former champ, who once gobbled up a portion of Evander Holyfield’s ear, was in his usual good mood, “You’re gonna get Kevin killed,” Tyson shouted at him. “Go sit down. I’m gonna gut him like a fish. He’s a tomato can.”

Too bad big words don’t make a big man.

In a rather fitting end (and let’s hope this really is the end) to Tyson’s career, just like any bully when stood up to, he quit. Tyson sat on his stool at the beginning of the seventh round and refused to get up — he quit.

All that was missing was the cry of “no mas, no mas.”

At one time considered one of the most feared fighters in the history of boxing, Tyson sat there — meek, inconsequential and smaller than life.

Not exactly the way a true warrior wants to go out.

But while he had the skills at one time, no one has ever accused Tyson of having the heart of a champion.

To his credit, Tyson, who I used to admire before his totally lost his mind, did sound remorseful after the fight admitting that he always stood for what was

bad in the world, and wanted to do some good now.

I don’t know if Tyson will ever figure out what’s good in the world. Maybe the guys around him all these years have sucked every ounce of decency, no matter how small, out of Iron Mike’s body and soul.

The fight game is not one for the timid or the moral. Tyson is just another of thousands of boxers who have been taken advantage of, used and abused, until the money ran out.

And then the leeches clasp onto the next victim until they suck him dry, and so on, and so on.

A part of me can’t help but be a little sorry for Mike Tyson. He always seemed like a guy who knew better but all the years in reform school and the lack of a real family unit was too much to overcome.

I’m afraid for Tyson now more than ever. I hope Tyson finds something else to do before he gets bored. Tyson and boredom could be a dangerous combination.

Miner defections

What’s going on with the UTEP basketball team? I know Doc Sadler has been saying all along that he’s always recruiting, but this is ridiculous.

I thought he wanted to recruit new players but it turns out now that he has to.

In the past month Gio St. Amant and Stanley Branch have left the program and that’s making many faithful fans around town a little nervous.

This is reminiscent of a dark time in UTEP’s past. Remember the summer of Rabedeaux? The year after then-coach Jason Rabedeaux got into his trouble at UTEP, coaches and players jumped ship during that summer and left new coach Billy Gillispie with almost nothing to work with.

The result was UTEP’s worst season in history, a 6-24 nightmare.

Miner fans are sleeping a little easier right now knowing the cupboard isn’t as bare as it was back then. But if another player decides to take off, someone’s going to start asking some very tough questions.

Like “what the heck is going on here?”

Summertime is for baseball. Let’s hope we don’t hear a peep out of the UTEP basketball program for at least another four months.



Kyle Anderson — Photo courtesy of Texas State University

EL PASO COUNTY — Kyle Anderson, a 2001 graduate of Socorro High School, has been drafted by the New York Yankees to play Major League Baseball. The Yankees selected the Texas State senior in the 10th round. Anson was promoted to varsity as a sophomore, during Socorro’s 1999 playoff run, according to his mother, Candy Anson, who is a homebound teacher for Socorro Independent School District. “I’m super excited,” she said. “This is a dream come true for Kyle. His father played college baseball for Andy Cohen. His brother played in College of the Southwest and is now an assistant coach at Community College. This is a family dream.” Anson was a two-time All-Southland Conference First-Team selection and this year led Texas State in batting average percentage (.353), RBI (55) and on-base percentage (.496). Anson holds several season records at El Paso Community College, including most runs (74), most singles (62) and highest season batting average (.456).

— Contributed by Carlos A. Briano

Classified Ads

LEGALS

FABENS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Invitation to Bid/Respond:

Sealed bids for Waste Disposal Service, Bid No. 063005, addressed to Mr. Gilbert Alarcon, Fabens Independent School District, 821 NE “G” Avenue or P.O. Box 697, Fabens, Texas 79838, will be received at the above address until 10 a.m., Thursday, June 30, 2005, at which time they will be publicly opened. Bid forms and specifications may be obtained by calling (915) 764-2025. WTCC-06/16/05, 06/23/05

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 - IFTWW32F8XEDI0745, 1999 Ford F-350 pickup, 4-door, white, New Mexico license G27 52 VIN - IC9TS4839MA329206, 1991 Countryside trailer, black, New Mexico license 76613 WTCC-06/16/05

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:

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2005

YEARBOOK CSP NO. 199-0622-0608 ACCEPTED UNTIL 10:30 A.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 and on the Socorro Independent School District’s website: www.sisd.net. WTCC-06/16/05

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:

TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2005

LINEN SUPPLIES CSP NO. 199-0621-0634 ACCEPTED UNTIL 10 A.M.

CAFETERIA SUPPLIES CSP NO.199-0621-0635 ACCEPTED UNTIL 10:30 A.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 and on the Socorro Independent School District’s website: www.sisd.net. WTCC-06/16/05

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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15 words - \$5 per week; 35 words - \$10 per week

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Please print.Send form and payment (no cash) to:

West Texas County Courier
14200 Ashford, Ste. C
Horizon City, TX 79928

Deadline: Mondays

Contact Information:

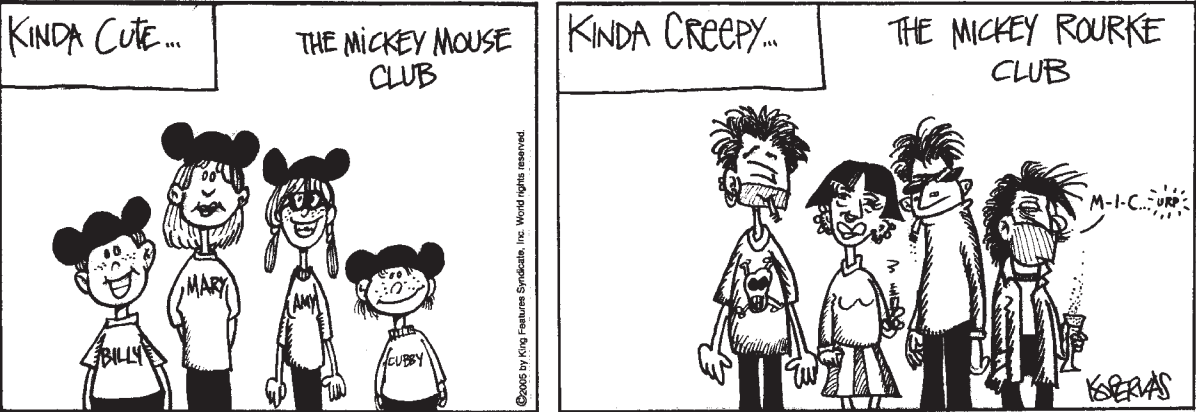
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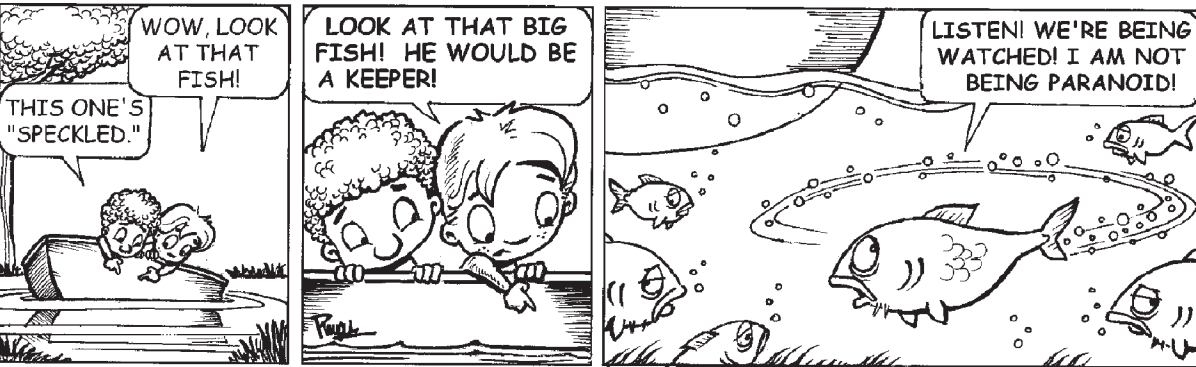


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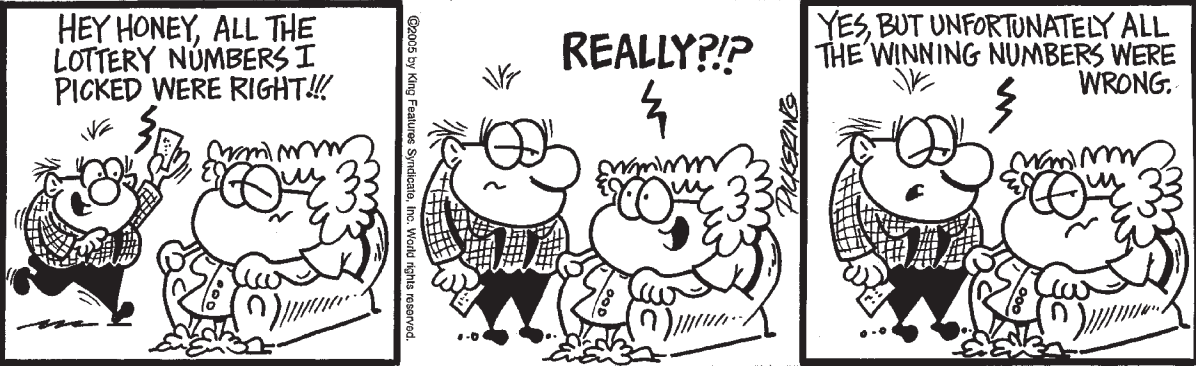
OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



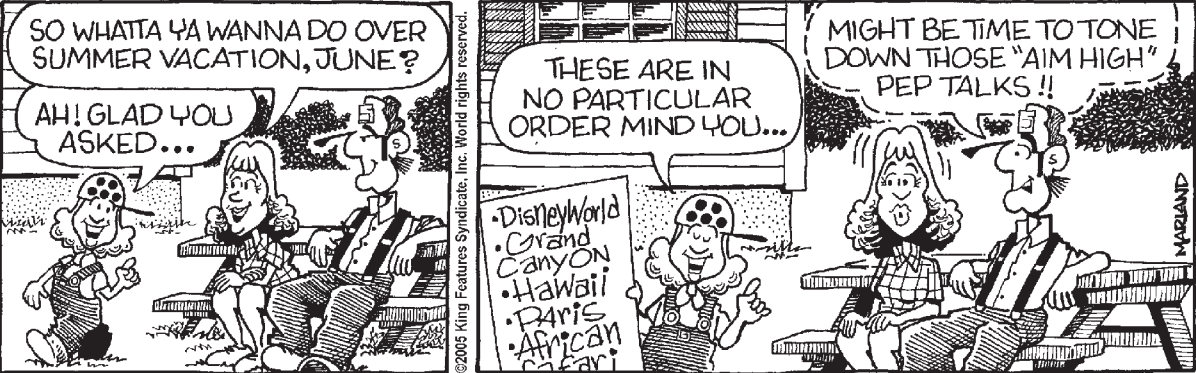
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Bring out the best in bloggers

By Don Flood

A recent story noted that a new blog (or web log) is created every seven seconds.

With 8.5 million blogs, up from 100,000 just two years ago, the blogging world is facing its greatest crisis in 5,000 years — soon there will be no one left to read the blogs!

To stem this eyeball shortage I am proposing what is, naturally, the perfect solution: the creation of a new career, the Professional Blog Reader (PBR), a person trained to offer writers the nurturing they need.

Do you have what it takes to be a PBR? The following is from an actual blog:

“Hi! ... right now i just created this bolging (sic) account so im trying everything out and this is a test but soon i will get this down!”

Sadly, this appears to be one of those one-hit wonders. The site concludes with that single posting.

Who knows what might have been?

Are we missing the next Emily Dickinson here? The next Shakespeare? Or, even more intriguing, the inane ramblings of a decaying fencepost brought magically to life?

This is where the PBR would step in, offering words of encouragement:

“I just finished reading your debut posting and may I say, Bravo! It is, without doubt, one of the most auspicious beginnings in blogger history. In fact, I am standing as I type this because your first foray into the world of online literature deserves nothing less than a standing ovation! BRAVO!”

Another certified real-life blog: *“Funny thing was, I didn’t even eat a sandwich that day. I think it*

was a hamburger. I had a tuna sandwich the day after ...”

The PBR response: “I was *extremely* moved to read your riveting account of daily menu selections. But I need to know more! Did you add mustard or ketchup? Both? How about on-ions?

“Now that I think about it, I don’t even know what meal you were enjoying. Lunch is the logical assumption, but the audacious nature of your narrative leads me to think you might be the kind of gastronomic adventurer who thinks nothing of having a hamburger for dinner or even, dare I say it, breakfast! “If I could but feast on your words all day long!”

From an actual blog: *“I always end up making a post that in some way is complaining about the state of my life. Of course, I’d like to think that the amount of complaining differs from post to post in both intensity, subtlety and humor. I’d like to think that sometimes you don’t know what it is that bugging me. Of course, you may think you know but that’s different ...”*

The PBR response: “My good man, you do yourself an injustice! You need not doubt your posts differ in subtlety and humor; in fact, the only thing that remains constant is the stratospheric level of brilliance you bring to your non-stop whining. I long to read about your every ache, defeat, setback, hangnail and bunion. More complaints, please!”

Discussion question: If a blogger in the woods wrote something and no one read it, would it still be as inane?

(c) 2005 King Features Synd., Inc.

King Super Crossword

FOREIGN FILMS

ACROSS

1 Voucher

5 Plane place

11 Big bargain

16 "Major Barbara" monogram

19 Clair or Coty

20 Swimmer

Gertrude

21 Garrulous

22 School subject

23 "Bus Stop" playwright

24 Peter O'Toole film

27 Medal material

29 Pine product

30 Incongruous state

31 Command to Fido

32 Eventually

37 Where the buoys are

39 Glaze

40 Judy Davis film

43 Jury member

46 Mr. Miyagi's forte

47 Emcee's site

48 Spigot

51 Kindred

54 Aussie rockers

55 Plant disease

56 What a feller needs

57 In-your-face item

58 Dancer Jose

60 Pamphlet

63 Floor covering

64 Hoarder

66 Taxing time?

68 "I Love a Parade" composer

69 Gregory Peck film

74 Jeweler's weight

76 Exodus figure

77 " _ Butterfly" ('66 hit)

80 Ken of "Hill Street Blues"

81 Conductor's concern

83 Endangered herbivore

85 Solidify

86 In error

87 Twisted

88 Way over yonder

90 Little laugh

92 Kyser or Starr

93 Rushes

95 Giza god

97 Raison d'_

98 Bob Hope film

102 On _ (doing great)

104 Down meas.

105 Clone

106 A Bobbsey twin

109 Intense

110 _ Claire, WI

112 "Blueberry Hill" singer

114 Jane Fonda film

122 Leave out

123 Fireworks reaction

124 Gives the green light

125 Pageant props

126 Misplace

127 Neighbor of Ger.

128 Actress Davis

129 Least conventional

130 _ -in-the-wool

DOWN

1 Corn holders

2 Matisse or Rousseau

3 Gold brick?

4 " _ Wolf" ('85 film)

5 Montana's capital

6 Periodontists' org.

7 Contemporary

8 "Don't touch my bone!"

9 Ginger _

10 Dollars for quarters

11 Audiophile's equipment

12 Eastern "Way"

13 Wee one

14 "America's Most Wanted" abbr.

15 Ira Gershwin, for one

16 Libreville's land

17 Escort

18 Command to Fido

25 Immobile class

26 "La Rondine" rendition

28 Energy

33 "For shame!"

34 Albeniz or Asimov

35 Peripatetic Polo

36 "Gracious me!"

38 Pitch in

39 Numskull

40 Onassis' nickname

41 Catchall abbr.

42 DEA officer

43 Theatrical Joseph

44 Literary pseudonym

45 Thrill

48 Motorcycle feature

49 Wagon part

50 Hammer head

52 Marsh sight

53 Olive _

59 Monty's milieu

60 '82 Jeff Bridges film

61 Volcano part

62 Clerical garb

63 Baseball's Speaker

65 Genghis _

66 Curly coif

67 Supportive of

68 Blue hue

70 Tasty tuber

71 Weaken

72 Agt.

73 Got off

74 Quiche creator

75 _ Romeo

78 Swerve

79 Gen. Robt. _

81 Experiment

82 Checked out

83 "Scent of a Woman" dance

84 Chilean pianist

87 Without reservation

88 Bonaparte's buddy

89 Ward (off)

91 Shoe width

94 Farm feature

95 Examine

96 PD alert

98 Coll. brass

99 Forsyth's "The _ File"

100 Firstborn

101 Rock's _ Speedwagon

102 Blessed sound?

103 Mercedes of "The Fisher King"

106 Shatner co-star

107 Absinthe ingredient

108 Famous

109 Perched on

111 Proverb

113 Shape

115 Turner or Pappas

116 Rob Roy's refusal

117 Writer Rand

118 " _ not!"

119 Math abbr.

120 Vein contents

121 Bell and Barker

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Answer Page 6

Perez

From Page 1

T-ball fields have been renovated and now feature night lighting. The stands and concession area also have been improved. More than 3,000 children, youths and adults participate in league ball playing every year, she said.

The County’s dream, however, has always been to expand the number of baseball and softball fields, to add soccer fields, basketball courts and other athletic facilities, Perez said. She added that the park in Chino Hills has a 20,000 square-foot indoor soccer stadium. Big League Dreams operates several sports complexes in California, including one in Cathedral City near Palm Springs and a recently inaugurated one in Houston.

“I’m hoping that in the future, if we can work out something that would be profitable for us and for Big League Dreams, we can have a well managed complex that will attract large regional tournaments and bring in tourism to fill our hotel rooms,” she said. “We have to look at this in a positive manner, as an opportunity to compete with other large cities in the country.”



— Photos courtesy Barbara Perez

EXTRAS — Other features of the California facility include, clockwise from top left, an outdoor play area for youngsters, an indoor soccer field, a spacious restaurant with windows overlooking the diamonds, and a pro shop.

Social Security Q&A

By Ray Vigil

Q: Will I receive a replacement Medicare Card which now states that I am covered for prescriptions?

A: There will not be any change in your Medicare card. Your Prescription Drug Provider will issue a prescription card upon your enrollment.

Q: Can anyone sign up for the new Prescription Drug Program?

A: Anyone covered under Medicare Part A and/or Part B will be eligible

to enroll under Part D of Medicare. This would normally be individuals 65 years of age and older and individuals who have been receiving Social Security Disability Benefits for 2 years and of course individuals entitled to Medicare due to End State Renal Disease and ALS.

Q: I have heard Medicare will now cover prescriptions. What is the effective date and when will I be able to enroll for this coverage? Will I be able to enroll at the Social Security

Office or electronically?

A: Medicare Prescription Drug Program does not go into effect until January 2006. All individuals wanting to take part of this new prescription coverage can enroll effective November 15, 2005 through May 15, 2006. Social Security will not be responsible for enrolling individuals under the Medicare Prescription Program. Individuals will have to enroll through a Prescription Drug Provider. A list of the Prescription Drug Providers will be available sometime after August 2005 on the Medicare website www.medicare.gov. Infor-

mation on the Part D Prescription Plan will be explained in detail in the 2005 issue of the Medicare Handbook which is scheduled to be delivered in October 2005.

Q: If I am already covered under an Employer Group Health Plan or a Medigap Plan which already covers prescriptions, will I have to sign up for Medicare Prescription Plan?

A: Remember that participation under this new coverage is voluntary. If you feel you have sufficient prescription coverage, the decision to enroll in Medicare Prescription Pro-

gram is yours. Your prescription drug provider will send you information as to how they will coordinate their program with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan. Some individuals might want to supplemental the prescription coverage they already have.

For more information visit your local Security office, see www.ssa.gov or call us at 1-800-772-1213. If you have any questions that you would like to have answered, please mail them to the Social Security Office, 1111 Gateway West, Attn: Ray Vigil, El Paso, Texas 79935.

WEATHER

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SEVEN-DAY FORECAST FOR EL PASO

THURSDAY	THUR. NIGHT	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Sunny to partly cloudy.	Mainly clear.	Sunshine.	Sunny to partly cloudy.	Mostly sunny.	Partial sunshine.	Mostly sunny.	Mostly sunny.
▲ 100°	▼ 72°	▲ 102° ▼ 74°	▲ 100° ▼ 72°	▲ 98° ▼ 70°	▲ 94° ▼ 66°	▲ 92° ▼ 64°	▲ 94° ▼ 66°

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	10	Very High
Sunday	10	Very High
Monday	10	Very High
Tuesday	10	Very High
Wednesday	10	Very High

REAL FEEL TEMP®

The exclusive AccuWeather composite index of effective temperature based on eight weather factors.

Thursday	102°
Friday	92°
Saturday	92°
Sunday	91°
Monday	89°
Tuesday	89°
Wednesday	93°

TEXAS WEATHER

Anthony	101	71
Canutillo	99	71
Clint	99	73
E. Montana	99	72
Fabens	99	73
Horizon	100	73
San Elizario	101	71
Socorro	101	72
Tornillo	99	73
Vinton	100	71

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	94/62/pc	92/64/s	92/62/s	92/64/s	92/60/pc
Atlanta	87/65/pc	84/63/s	82/62/s	81/63/t	81/61/t
Atlantic City	79/58/t	77/57/sh	72/56/pc	76/57/pc	78/59/s
Austin/San Antonio	96/70/s	97/72/s	94/68/pc	98/68/s	92/66/pc
Baltimore	81/60/pc	77/58/sh	77/58/pc	79/60/pc	80/61/pc
Boston	64/58/r	64/54/sh	65/54/sh	69/57/pc	76/60/c
Chicago	70/52/pc	70/54/s	74/56/s	76/60/s	80/62/s
Dallas/Ft. Worth	98/76/pc	97/73/pc	96/71/pc	95/72/pc	90/67/pc
Denver	84/56/pc	88/56/s	88/56/s	86/56/s	86/59/s
Flagstaff	84/44/s	82/46/s	80/42/s	80/44/s	82/44/s
Houston	96/74/pc	94/74/pc	94/74/pc	94/72/pc	94/72/t
Kansas City	82/62/s	82/62/s	86/65/s	87/64/c	90/63/c
Las Vegas	102/76/s	100/74/pc	96/74/pc	94/72/pc	96/74/s
Miami	90/76/t	90/76/t	90/78/t	88/76/t	88/76/t
Minneapolis	80/58/s	80/58/s	82/64/s	84/62/pc	93/66/pc
New Orleans	94/76/t	89/72/t	90/73/t	90/72/t	87/71/s
New York City	78/62/t	75/60/sh	74/60/pc	77/63/pc	80/63/pc
Philadelphia	80/60/t	76/60/sh	76/60/pc	80/62/pc	81/63/pc
Phoenix	106/82/s	108/82/s	108/80/s	106/78/s	107/79/s
Portland	66/54/r	64/52/sh	66/52/sh	68/52/sh	72/52/r
San Francisco	66/56/pc	66/54/sh	66/54/pc	67/53/pc	67/51/c
Seattle	66/52/r	62/50/r	64/50/sh	66/50/sh	69/51/c
Tucson	104/72/s	106/74/s	104/72/s	102/72/s	100/72/s
Washington, DC	80/62/pc	76/62/sh	76/62/pc	78/63/pc	80/64/c

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

AGRICULTURE

Excellent drying conditions on Thursday with plenty of sunshine and breezy conditions. Winds will be from the west-southwest at 10-20 mph. Dry, sunny and hot weather will continue Friday and Saturday with highs at or just above 100. Remaining sunny, hot and dry through early next week.

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