



NEWSBRIEFS

Closed

The West Texas County Courier is closed. It will open again on Monday, Oct. 8, 2007.

New club

An Optimist Club is being organized in Clint. More members are needed to meet chartering requirements. There are presently 18 Optimist clubs in the El Paso area. They are affiliated with Optimist International. These clubs have as their motto: "friend of youth." Optimist clubs provide youth-oriented activities such as oratorical and essay contests, baseball, football and basketball leagues as well as a Respect for Law program. If you are interested in working with youth in the new Clint Optimist Club, contact Police Chief Alex Sanchez at 637-4020 or town clerk Fabiola Ochoa at 851-3146.

Honor a Vet

Their goal: 2,500 live wreaths. Their purpose: To honor veterans by placing a wreath on their grave at Fort Bliss National Cemetery. Time is short and they would like your help. The El Paso Composite Squadron, part of the Civil Air Patrol is asking El Pasoans to donate \$15 per wreath — for as many as they care to sponsor — by Nov. 1. The wreaths will be placed on the graves in December but orders must be in by Nov. 1 to allow time for production and delivery. All donations are tax deductible. El Paso's Composite Squadron is also seeking volunteers to help distribute the wreaths on Dec. 14. A formal ceremony will take place Dec. 15 at 10 a.m., coinciding with the national ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. For more information contact elpasowreaths@yahoo.com or call 595-1946 — press 1 at the prompt — and leave your contact information. For information on the Civil Air Patrol you can visit www.cap.com on the web.

A burning question

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has released a revision to Outdoor Burning in Texas, a guide which helps summarize and explain Title 30, Texas Administrative Code, sections 111.201-22, the state's burning regulations. The Outdoor Burning Rule prohibits outdoor burning anywhere in Texas, however it allows for exceptions in which burning is necessary. The 19-page document provides answers to the most often asked questions, including:

- Do I need a permit to burn my garbage?
- Do I have to get my neighbor's approval before I can legally burn?
- How do I report someone who is illegally burning outdoors?

The document is available free of charge, on the publications page at http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/rg/rg-049.html on the TCEQ Web site.

A good salesman can talk you to debt.
— Quips & Quotes

Socorro ISD student takes the stage at Kennedy Center

By Irma Flores
Special to the Courier

From the stage at Socorro High School to the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, Diego Maureira's talent landed him in the national spotlight. Diego spent a month working with fellow theater students from the US and Canada. This group of aspiring thespians was part of the Cappies International Theater which staged three shows including "Senioritis" which was performed at the Kennedy Center in early August.

"It was a coming of age experience for me," says Diego who returned to El Paso on August 14. "The independence I had when I was over there was incredible. From a theatrical point of view, I learned so much and grew in so many ways. I met some dedicated and wonderful people. I've never seen talent like that before."

The Socorro senior was chosen for this program after winning Lead Actor in a Musical at this year's El Paso Chapter "Cappies" Award Ceremony. The 17-year-old won for his performance of "Teyva" in Socorro High School's presentation of "Fiddler on the Roof."

"We knew that this award was his link to the next step," says his mother Magda Maureira who works at the Freshman Center at Socorro

High School. "He is learning so much and they are keeping him busy. This is expanding his experience."

Diego has been involved in the Socorro theater program since he was a student at Socorro Middle School. Teatristas (Theatre Production) director, Troy Herbort, remembers Diego as a 7th grader who filled in for roles.



Diego Maureira

"This is an incredible opportunity for him to work with the cream of the crop," says Herbort. "We are all excited for him and proud of our program. We all are there with him when he's on that stage. Diego knows this is an honor for Socorro High School as well."

The Socorro senior along with two dozen theater arts students spent four weeks at the Cappies International Theater Boot Camp in Virginia. The summer program brings students from various high schools together to present shows featuring works of teenage composers, lyricists and playwrights.

"For any aspiring actor still in high school and willing to work up to this level, it is worth it. The journey to becoming an actor is possible if you want it and work hard," he says.

He and other Cappie winners for Lead Actress and Actor in the Play and Musical

See STAGE, Page 6

Surratt students learn to be respectful, responsible and safe

By Laura Cade
Special to the Courier



— Photo courtesy Clint ISD

A REMINDER — Surratt students are urged to be respectful, responsible and safe each time they pass by this, and other, large signs in their hallways.

Who better to learn from than your peers? This is what students at W.D. Surratt Elementary are doing. All students in the school were given lessons by their fellow classmates during the first few weeks on how to be respectful, responsible and safe while in the halls, library, playground, cafeteria and offices.

As part of a new initiative, Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Program, all faculty and staff attended trainings during the past year to learn how to correctly implement this program. With the belief that students can best serve as role models and trainers for their peers, Surratt held a two day training for a select group of students to serve as the PBS trainers for the campus.

"Surratt's PBS program is aimed at improving the safety and social behavior of our students, and it will also have a positive effect on educational services," says Gloria Padilla, Surratt Counselor.

During the lessons, peer trainers modeled inappropriate and appropriate behavior for the students and discussed the importance of being respectful, responsible and safe. The peer trainers

See STUDENTS, Page 5

Preparing for the unexpected

By Janie Harris
Special to the Courier

COLLEGE STATION — Disaster can strike at any place, any time, to anybody. One look at television news coverage of any of the weather related emergencies over the past few months proves that, according to a Texas Cooperative Extension expert.

That's why Extension and the Texas Department of State Health Services have a new publication, "Preparing for the Unexpected."

Disasters can have natural causes, such as flooding during hurricanes. Then there are disasters caused by accidents or terrorists.

Whatever the cause, being prepared can help lessen the effects of the crisis, said Janie Harris, Extension housing and environment specialist.

"Although we can't prevent disasters, we can reduce the risk of injury and even death by becoming informed," she said.

First, she said, each family should establish its own plan, which includes:

- Escape routes: Know how to escape from each room of the house as well as from the neighborhood.
- Family communication: Know how to contact each other in case of separation, and have a designated contact out of state whom everybody knows to call.
- Communication with emergency personnel: Know who to call and keep their numbers near each telephone and cell phone.
- Utility shutoff and safety: Know how to disconnect the home's utilities in case of gas leak or fire.
- Insurance and other important records: Keep copies of valuable personal papers in a safe place and a remote location.
- Special needs: Know what extra steps to take for family members who are very young, very old or ill.
- Safety skills: Learn how to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid.
- Pet care: Have a plan for emergency pet care.

Second, each family member should keep a disaster supply kit within easy reach, Harris said. Each kit should contain such items as:

- Water: enough for at least three days and at least one gallon of water per person per day.
- Food: items that require no refrigeration or preparation, such as peanut butter, nuts, dried fruits and protein bars.
- Clean air items: nose and mouth protection masks with N-95 rating, plastic sheets and duct tape.
- Extra clothing: at least one change of clothes per person, plus shoes and blanket.
- First aid kit: sterile gloves and gauze, soap, antibiotic ointment and towelettes, burn ointment, thermometer, and any required prescription medications and supplies.
- Emergency items: flashlight and extra batteries, battery-operated radio, whistle, shovel and basic tools, baby wipes, toilet paper, plastic garbage bags and maps.
- Special needs items if necessary: baby food and formula, diapers, powdered milk, baby wipes, medications and diaper rash ointment for babies; prescription

See PREPARE, Page 4



One perspective

By Francis Shrum

Ultimate souvenir

People collect stuff. I don't know what the attraction is but we all seem to have an odd gathering instinct that causes us to pick up, buy or otherwise acquire, and wag home all kinds of the strangest things.

I know people who have kept items that were surgically removed from their bodies, like gall stones. In fact, the hospitals will sometimes save and offer these things to post-operative patients.

Parents will sometimes pay their kids for their baby teeth when they

fall out.

I heard about one kid in Oregon this spring who kept hearing popping noises in his ears. When they took him to the doctor, they flushed out his ears and guess what? He had two spiders nesting in there. They didn't survive their eviction and they became — what else? — souvenirs for him and his mother to carry to school and work to show off.

Go figure.

For me, it's rocks of various sizes and colors, and other bits of nature. On one trip up to the coast of North-

ern California, we stopped beside a river. There were trees with leaves on them that were bigger than my head. So I got one and carefully pressed it using two magazines. Of course, once it dried out it shrank down to about the size of my hand — not nearly so impressive.

Other people collect guns and weaponry, cars, coins, art and antiques, memorabilia, toys, books, hats, jewelry and almost any other mentionable there is. In fact, our society dedicates huge buildings and sums of money to preserve souvenirs.

We call these places museums and people called curators actually go to school to learn how to various kinds of souvenirs in tip top condition. They get paid quite well.

I've got friends who have bought and stored toys associated with big entertainment draws, including Star Wars, Lord of the Rings, Barbies themed on Disney Classics and more. They keep them carefully preserved in their original packages in climate controlled condition. Seems like a big waste to have a toy you can't play with, but then I collect rocks, so what do I know?

Now, there is also a multi-billion dollar industry in the collection and marketing of items that belonged to celebrities. It doesn't have to be anything spectacular either. A sweaty cap or T-shirt worn by a rock musician, a purse or dress owned by a movie star, a pair of sunglasses or shoes that once graced the face or foot of a famous person can fetch a tidy sum.

Especially big in the collection business is sports memorabilia, which rivals in dollars and popularity any other genre of collectable. In fact, some people are so obsessed with sports memorabilia they will risk life in prison to obtain it — and, in one case, the person risking it all happens to be the reason it is so valuable.

I'm talking, of course, about the arrest of O.J. Simpson this week — one more bizarre chapter in the life of a man who once had it all and is now risking whatever was left to retrieve a few material reminders of his former life.

The former football great was arrested in Las Vegas on Monday and formally charged on Tuesday with an impressive array of felonies including armed robbery and kidnapping. He allegedly went to the hotel room of a sports memorabilia collector to retrieve items that once belonged to him. He took along some really big guys and, allegedly, at least one gun.

Not smart. Especially when that act alone contributed to the making of an audio tape of the altercation, recorded by yet another dealer, who subsequently sold it to a gossip web site.

Since the horrifying events of the early 1990s when Simpson's wife and her friend were brutally slashed to death, and his subsequent acquittal, Simpson has served his country as the man we all love to hate. What makes his possessions so valuable is a mystery unless it involves some sort of macabre fascination.

I don't know that there are many fans left who idolize Simpson as millions did during his early successes. Though he was acquitted of the double murder, he was subsequently found liable in a wrongful death lawsuit to the tune of \$33 million-plus, and has been involved in a struggle with his ex-wife's family over any assets he still retains.

Still, the market continues to grow for sports memorabilia — souvenirs of great moments by gifted players who did impressive things. Baseballs and footballs with signatures, bats, gloves, jerseys and caps, trophies and autographed photos — it's all available if you have lots of money and a willingness to spend it on someone else's used goods.

However, the arrest of Simpson raises the possibility that there may be one more collectable on the horizon, a rare and elusive creature safely preserved in a cage.

O.J. in jail — the ultimate souvenir.

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Por la Gente

By State Rep. Chente Quintanilla



Pay attention to ballot

Hola, mi gente,

On November 6th, you will be voting on sixteen different amendments to the state constitution. As in past elections of this type, there will be propositions authorizing the use of general obligation bonds; five to be exact.

These bonds use the state's full faith and credit to finance certain projects and guarantee that the principal and interest will be paid. Because the state is prohibited from incurring most forms of debt, it is necessary for the voters to approve or disapprove of these general obligation bonds.

One of the bonds in this election is a self supporting bond; that is the principal and interest is paid for by the program itself. Proposition Two authorizes the Higher Education Coordinating Board to issue a maximum of \$500 million to finance additional college and university student loans. Since the students are responsible for the loans, no general revenue appropriations; in short, the taxpayers take very little risk in approving this type of bond.

Supporters of this proposition point out the need to accommodate the growing number of new students in Texas. The proposition would also authorize enhancement agreement (already used by other state agencies) to reduce the cost of the bonds.

Opponents point out that the state has considerable debt in place now and it makes no sense to add to it. Also, the loans generated by the bonds compete with private sector loan institutions which is contrary to open markets.

Proposition Fifteen, in contrast to Proposition Two, is not a self supporting bond. It authorizes the establishment of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRI) which can issue up to \$3 billion in bonds. These bonds would go for cancer research grants.

Proponents of this proposition are certain that Texas would become the premier cancer research state. The bonds available, up to \$300 million per year until depleted, would act as a magnet attracting additional private funds. Research from the CPRI would enhance the survival rates for the thousands of Texans afflicted with cancer annually.

Opponents once again insist that cancer research is the responsibility of the private sector. The National Cancer Institute is the ideal funding mechanism for cancer research.

Other opponents want the state to take a more serious stand and fund the research from the general appropriations bill. In this manner, the full intent of the state is behind the research and the funding is determined by the elected members of the state legislature.

Election day is Tuesday November 6th. These are issues that call for all of the voters in El Paso County to consider. I strongly encourage all of you to vote.

Gracias, mi gente, and I remain your friend and public servant,
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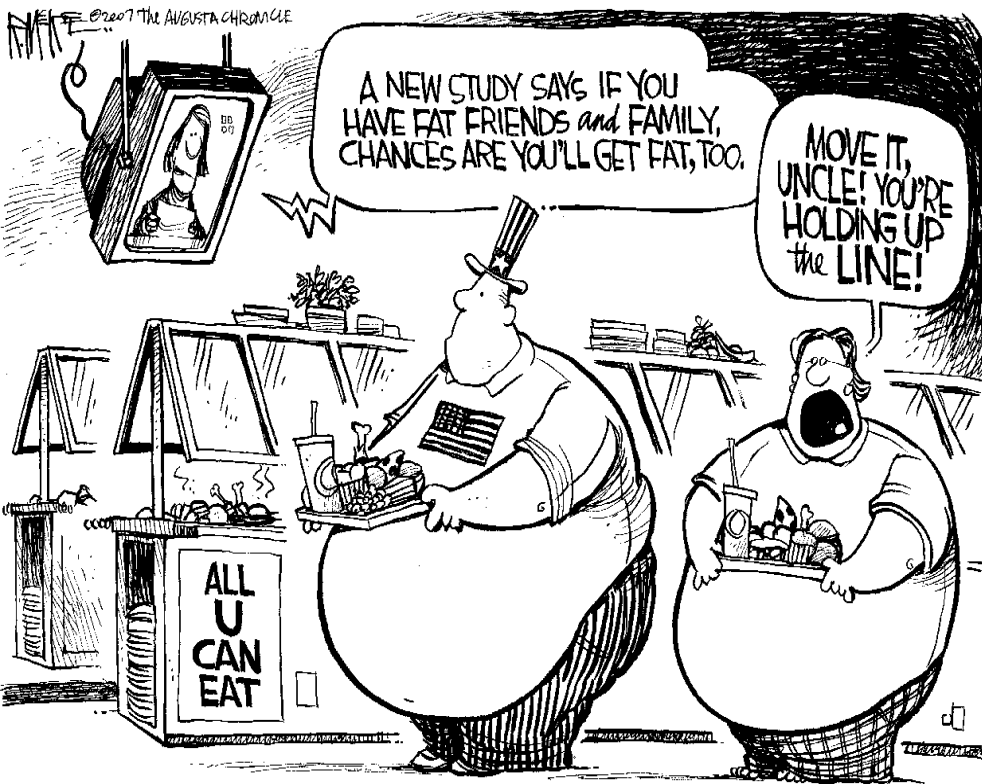
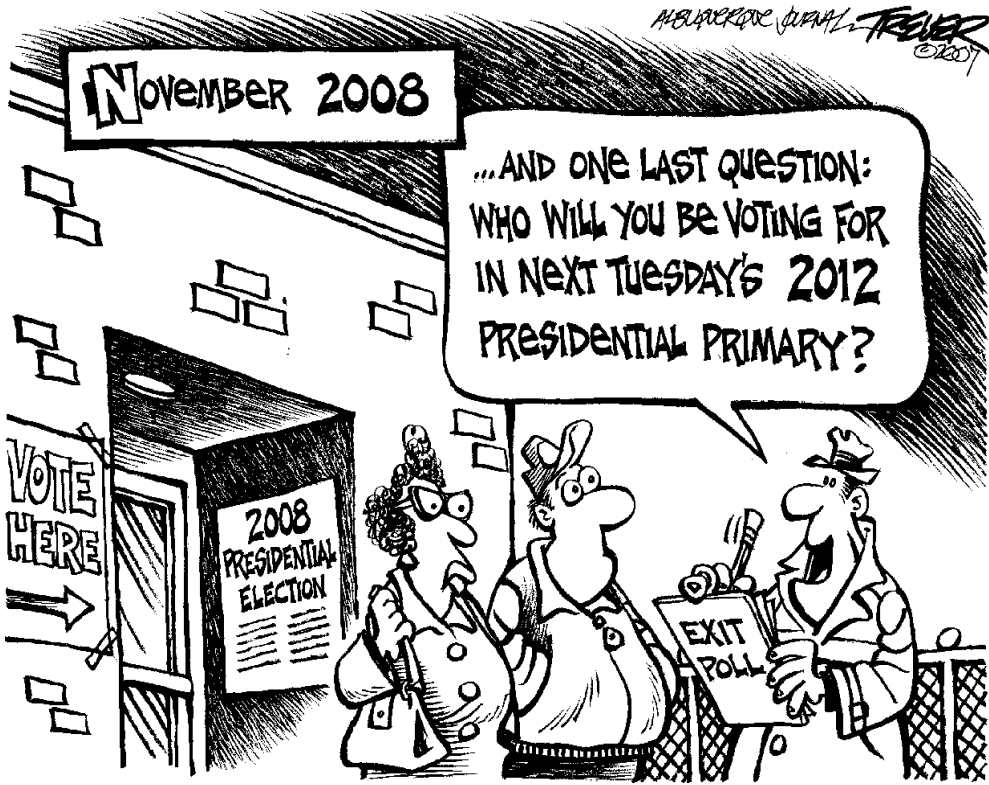
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View from here

By Peter Pitts

Tainted toothpaste and dangerous drugs

Counterfeit Colgate toothpaste containing diethylene glycol, a poisonous chemical used in antifreeze, recently turned up in discount grocery stores all over the East Coast.

This dangerous chemical has long been used by chemical companies in China as a substitute for more expensive glycerin, an ingredient necessary for toothpaste, soap, and other cosmetics and drugs. In 1997, for example, fever syrup laced with diethylene glycol traced to China killed dozens of Haitian children. After years of assurances that the Chinese government had cracked down on the practice, the same fate later befell 100 young Panamanians. Mass poison-

ings from diethylene glycol have also been reported in Bangladesh, Argentina, Nigeria, and India.

Previously only a problem in the developing world, the toxin now threatens U.S. consumers. If even toothpaste is susceptible to contamination by unregulated foreign companies, imagine the potential for disaster in something as lucrative as fake drugs.

Several members of Congress have introduced legislation to allow the importation of pharmaceuticals from abroad, promising that imports will be closely scrutinized and only permitted from certain countries.

But the reality is not so simple.

First, obtaining drugs from nations like Britain and France offers little protection, because chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and other goods move freely among the 27 European Union (E.U.) member states through a system called “parallel trade.” And because the E.U. does not require drug importers to record product information like batch numbers, it’s quite common for goods to travel outside official distribution channels. Therefore, drugs purchased from “safe” countries may well have originated in Latvia, Cyprus, or elsewhere in the E.U., where there are ample opportunities for counterfeits to enter the legitimate supply chain.

Canada is no safer. Most large Canadian internet pharmacies admit to purchasing many of their drugs from the European Union. So even Canadian drugs are exposed to the risks of European trade.

Indeed, the World Health Organization estimates that up to 10 percent of globally traded drugs are counterfeit. Most originate in Asia and Latin America, where technology is making production cheaper and safety regulations are poorly enforced — perfect conditions for manufacturing and distributing fake drugs.

Making matters even more worrisome, penalties for counterfeiters are relatively slight. In South America, selling cocaine will land a person in jail for 15 years, but making and selling fake medicine gets the perpetrator six months. These small risks — especially when combined with the potential financial rewards — have contributed to the rapid growth of counterfeiting.

By 2010, it’s estimated that global counterfeit drug sales will total \$75 billion.

According to the federal Joint Terrorism Task Force, terrorists have also proven adept at exploiting weakened chains of pharmaceutical custody in North America. In a recent report, the task force revealed that a terrorist ring with

ties to Hezbollah has been importing counterfeit drugs into the U.S. through Canada.

In other words, contrary to what advocates of importation declare, simply mandating safety by legislative fiat will not make imports safer. Without fundamental regulatory reforms in the countries where counterfeits are produced, the FDA’s efforts will be futile.

Allowing the importation of pharmaceuticals with the ostensible purpose of saving consumers a few bucks is a dangerous response to high drug prices. Congress has a responsibility to protect Americans from overseas threats, not expose them to those hazards.

Unfortunately, Congress seems not to have learned from America’s recent ordeal with tainted toothpaste.

Peter J. Pitts is President of the Center for Medicine in the Public Interest and a former Associate Commissioner of the FDA.

Prepare

From Page 1

medications and supplies for dentures and/or contact lenses for adults.

“Maintain your kit,” Harris warned. “Replace batteries every six months and replace food items according to expiration dates.”

Some disasters mean evacuating to a safe place. Each family should predetermine their options in that situation, Harris said.

However, she warned, “If local officials ask you to evacuate, do so immediately. The authorities will not ask you to leave unless they determine that lives may be in danger.”

In Texas, help can be just a phone call away. Harris advised keeping these numbers close to each phone, including cell phones:

- Emergency 911, the universal emergency telephone number in the U.S.;
- 211 Texas First Call For Help, for non-emergency information and referrals;
- Texas Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222.

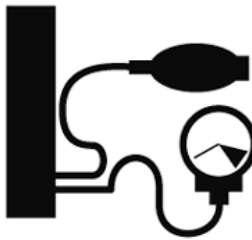
In addition, the Texas Department of State Health Services provides current information on emergency preparedness at its website: www.dshs.state.tx.us/comprep.

The publication, “Preparing for the Unexpected,” (B-6178) can be ordered on Extension’s online Bookstore at <http://tcebookstore.org>.

It’s never too early to start preparing for unexpected events, Harris said, adding that these steps might mean the difference between life and death.



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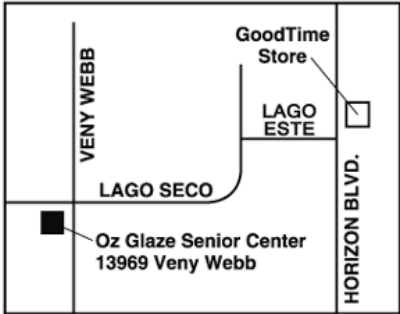
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Inflammatory breast cancer requires additional vigilance

By Linda Anderson
Special to the Courier

COLLEGE STATION — Not all breast cancers start with a lump, said Courtney Schoessow, Texas Cooperative Extension program specialist for health education and development.

Inflammatory breast cancer “is an extremely rare, fast-growing and lethal form of breast cancer,” she said.

Only about one to five percent of breast cancer cases in the U.S. are diagnosed as inflammatory, Schoessow said, but this form of cancer tends to occur more often in younger women, especially younger African-American women.

According to the National Cancer Institute, inflammatory breast cancer may cause redness, warmth and swelling in the breast, or even the appearance of bruising. Other symptoms may include heaviness, burning, tenderness, pitted or ridged skin, and an inverted nipple. Lymph nodes under the arm or above the collarbone — or both — may be swollen.

“It (inflammatory breast cancer) is not usually detected by mammograms

or ultrasounds unless there is a defined lump,” Schoessow said.

Any of the symptoms listed require prompt diagnosis and treatment, she said.

Even if you think you have a rash or infection, it is important for your health care provider to determine the best course of action.

If antibiotics are prescribed for symptoms such as rash or infection but the condition doesn’t clear up in a week, Schoessow said, The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation recommends you insist that your doctor do a biopsy to see if cancer cells are present.

Because this form of breast cancer is rare, a second opinion might be necessary, she added.

Schoessow advised: “Remember that breast cancer can strike men and women at any time. Any change in your breasts should be investigated without delay.”

The good news is: Not everything said to cause breast cancer actually does, Schoessow said.

“Have you heard the rumor about antiperspirants or deodorants causing breast cancer?” she said. “Don’t worry — it’s not true. Researchers

from both the National Cancer Institute and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration say ‘there is no conclusive evidence linking the use of underarm antiperspirants or deodorants and the subsequent development of breast cancer,’” she said.

Women are asked to remove their antiperspirant or deodorant when they are having a mammogram. But according to the American Cancer Society, that’s because these products might contain aluminum, which can affect the results of the screening, she added.

If you are concerned about breast cancer, talk with your doctor, nurse or health care provider about your risk, Schoessow said.

You can reduce your risk of developing or dying from breast cancer by avoiding or limiting the use of hormone replacement therapies, maintaining a healthy weight, exercising regularly, avoiding excessive alcohol consumption, and getting regular mammograms and clinical breast exams. For more information on this and other health issues, visit Extension’s Family and Consumer Sciences Web site at <http://fcs.tamu.edu/> and click on the link to Health.



— Photo courtesy Clint ISD

COACHES — Surratt students, from left, Cesar Garcia, Marcus Valverde and Rod Chavez gave students lessons on how to be respectful, responsible and safe while on the playground.

Students

From Page 1

were aided by school staff during the lessons.

Students are rewarded for their behavior throughout the year with tickets. Each teacher is given a certain amount of tickets to distribute

to praise students for good behavior instead of harping on the bad behavior. As the students accumulate these tickets they can exchange them for prizes.

“Our school personnel will be able to make meaningful changes in school practices in a one to three year period with a relative inexpensive investment in time and expense,” adds Padilla.

Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Clint Independent School District’s State Financial Accountability Rating

Clint Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 5:30 PM, Wednesday, October 17, 2007, in the Board Room of the Clint Central Administration Building, 14521 Horizon Blvd., El Paso, Texas 79928.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss Clint Independent School District’s rating on the state’s financial accountability system.

WTCC: 09/27/07 & 10/04/07

Notice of Public Meeting To Discuss Fabens Independent School District’s State Financial Accountability Rating

The Fabens Independent School District will hold a public hearing at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 17, 2007 in the boardroom of the Fabens ISD Administration Building, 821 NE “G” Avenue, Fabens, Texas.

The purpose of this hearing is to discuss Fabens Independent School District’s rating on the state’s financial accountability system.

WTCC: 09/27/07 & 10/04/07

Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Anthony Independent School District’s State Financial Accountability Rating

The Anthony Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 6:30 P.M. on Tuesday, October 16, 2007 in the Board Room, Anthony Middle School Cafeteria, 610 Sixth Street, Anthony, Texas.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and distribute a financial management report that explains the district’s performance under each of the 21 indicators and the resultant District’s Financial Accountability Rating.

WTCC: 09/27/07 and 10/04/07

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Barbee, UTEP Miners have tough basketball schedule ahead

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

The UTEP basketball Miners released their schedule a couple weeks ago and I have to say that I am excited about the improvement in the quality of their opponents.

Oh the Miners will still have a number of cupcakes on the schedule, especially during the pre-conference campaign. UTEP fans, and us media types, will have to endure the games against the likes of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, Southeast Louisiana and Texas Southern twice.

But that’s about it, the rest of the schedule is loaded with upper-level teams, rivals and national powers.

In fact, the Miners may have as many as seven games against teams that competed in last year’s NCAA Tournament.

UTEP will kick the season off with a couple of exhibition games on Nov. 1 and 5 against Western New Mexico and Sul Ross State respectively. Then it’s a season-opener against Arkansas-Pine Bluff.

This is when the Miners go on their wild ride of games against teams that can easily make the postseason tournaments at season’s end.

Tony Barbee and his troops start the fun in

College Station for the opening round of the preseason NIT Tournament. UTEP opens the tourney against Texas A&M Corpus Christi.

Now before you stamp this one an instant win for the Miners, don’t forget that A&M Corpus Christi advanced to the NCAA Tournament a year ago.

This game will be a tough one for the inexperienced Miners. Let’s not forget that UTEP will field seven new players this season, including six freshmen.

If the Miners can get by Corpus Christi there’s a good chance they’ll have Texas A&M waiting for them. We all know how far Billy Gillispie took the Aggies last season, before bolting for Kentucky.

By the way, I wonder how long it will take Gillispie to leave Kentucky for the NBA?

Any way, UTEP’s next opponents will depend on how well they do in the tournament.

After the grueling tournament, the Miners tangle with another set of Aggies, the dreaded New Mexico State Aggies at the Don Haskins Center on Nov. 27.

Again, we all know how far Reggie Theus took the Aggies a year ago, before bolting for the NBA. NMSU has enough talent back to win the WAC and maybe surprise a team or team in the NCAA Tournament.

Things don’t get any easier for the Miners, in fact, they get considerably tougher.

UTEP then travels to Las Vegas to take on UNLV on Dec. 1. The Runnin’ Rebels may not play that helter skelter Jerry Tarkanian-kind of basketball anymore, but they participated in the Big Dance last year and are loaded again this season.

Will the Miners get a chance to rest now? No way. UTEP will then travel to Las Cruces for their return engagement with NMSU on Dec. 8.

After some much-needed days off and a home game against Southeast Louisiana on Dec. 19, the Miners are back at it in the State Farm Sun Bowl Basketball Tournament. Though the schedule was still open at the time of this writing, the Miners can expect a couple nights of tough competition against quality opponents.

Now usually the Sun Bowl Tournament is UTEP’s final big test before entering conference after the start of the new year. But the Miners aren’t even close to being finished.

Barbee and the boys then have a home game against another tough rival, the New Mexico Lobos on Jan. 2. You know the “Don” will be rocking that night. Having the Lobos in here is as exciting as any conference game the Miners will play.

Then just when you thought things couldn’t get any more difficult for the Miners, three days later the team will be in Lubbock to challenge Bobby Knight and his Texas Tech Red Raiders.

Of course, the Red Raiders were in the NCAA Tournament last season and are a fixture in the tourney every season.

After all that, the Miners start conference play on Jan. 9, at home against SMU. It’s as if the conference schedule will be a much-needed break from that monster pre-conference schedule.

Barbee said upon arriving in El Paso that he would take on all comers and that his team could only be the best if it played the best.

And looking at the schedule, the one thing I’ll say is that, Barbee is certainly a man of his word.

Value of family caregiving in Texas estimated at \$24 billion

AARP: Nationwide
caregiving valued at
\$350 billion

By Rafael Ayuso
Special to the Courier

AUSTIN — Millions of family caregivers provide billions of dollars worth of care to loved ones each year according to a new AARP study released today. AARP estimates the economic value of family caregiving at \$350 billion in 2006. In Texas, the estimated value of this care is \$24 billion.

“Family caregivers play a vital role and are the backbone of long-term care in our state,” said Robert A. Jackson, AARP-Texas state director. “While the care they provide often goes unnoticed, their contributions often delay or prevent more costly nursing home care, and that can have a positive impact on our state Medicaid budget.”

Most family caregivers are women who are employed full or part-time and nearly one-fifth of all U.S. workers are caregivers (19%). As family caregivers are forced to take time off and work partial days to care for their loved ones, they face lower wages, reduced job security, and loss of employment benefits like health insurance, retirement savings and Social Security. Since the responsibilities fall disproportionately on women, it leads to less certain futures for women with less savings and income, and with their time away from the workforce resulting in reduced retirement benefits. These losses come at a difficult time when

income and benefits are critical for the caregiver and their family. U.S. businesses also feel the impact; productivity losses associated with caregiving are estimated as high as \$33 billion a year.

The AARP Public Policy Institute study, “Valuing the Invaluable: A New Look at the Economic Value of Family Caregiving,” shows that of those with the most intense level of caregiving responsibility, 92% report major changes in their working patterns — 83% arrive late, leave early or take time off during the day; 41% report taking a leave of absence; and 37% report going from full-time to part-time to adjust for their caregiving responsibilities. Additionally, the caregivers’ own health is often at risk as they are more likely to suffer chronic health conditions and incur medical debt than non-caregivers.

In Texas, AARP is working to ensure that more people can receive the care in the setting of their choice. With leadership of Senator Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and in partnership with advocates for the disabled community, AARP-Texas succeeded during the 2007 Texas legislative session in getting an additional \$107 million in general revenue added to the state’s budget to reduce the waiting list for home and community-based services by 10%. This was viewed as a significant victory because going into budget conference negotiations, the Senate had budgeted for a 10% reduction while the House had not budgeted any funds for the CBA waiting list reduction,” concluded Jackson.

Visit http://www.aarp.org/research/housing-mobility/caregiving/ib82_caregiving.html for the complete study.

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Stage

From Page 1

categories made up the cast of Cappies” International Theater which presented three shows: “Starz!”, “Playz!”, and the brand new student-written musical “Senioritis”.

“We had good direction and I’m extremely surprised on what we pulled off in the limited time we had. Everything went smoothly because of the commitment and hard work put in by all of us,” says Diego, who plans on using this experience for his future pursuits.

“Acting was a thought in the back of my mind, now I want to learn more. I want to go to Roosevelt University in Chicago because it’s

a great place to start.”

“Senioritis” is a high school musical about the stresses of senior year, the college admission process, and the anxieties of teenage ambition. A CD will be recorded, and a feature-length movie will be filmed. This is the second year the Cappies have produced a student-written musical.

El Paso “Cappies” is the second oldest chapter in the organization in the world after the Washington DC chapter. El Paso Cappies was founded by Socorro High School and Eastwood High School. To learn more about the Cappies International Theater, please log onto www.cappies.com/cit/.

A complete list of El Paso area “Cappie” winners can be found at <http://www.cappies.com/elp/>.

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB

By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES

By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS

By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D.

By Mike Marland



Important issue weighs down Americans

By Don Flood

It's become of those times in your life when you'll always remember what you were doing and where you were when you first heard the news: Britney Spears looked fat while performing in bikini underwear on MTV.

Surfing through various Web sites, I noticed story after story with words like "fat" and "lard" and "paunch."

The tone of the articles suggested MTV might have been better served opening its show with a performance by Marjorie the Grossly Overweight Manatee — except, of course, the manatee would have been a better dancer.

How bad was it?

According to one story, "Britney performed like she was sloshing blindfolded through mud at MTV's Video Music Awards."

That article — with the headline "Was Media Unfair to Call Britney Fat?" — was actually *defending* Britney.

But here are some other significant assessments you may have missed:

- Pope Benedict XVI called Britney's performance "shameful," drawing particular attention to her "poorly toned abs."
- "If this is the caliber of entertainment to be expected at the VMAs," the pontiff said in a prepared statement, "you better believe that next year I won't be watching."
- Speaking before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Gen. David Petraus, U.S. commander in Iraq, said, "Britney's appearance at the Video Music Awards program was clearly a step backward for our troops. In addition, if Spears is unable to bring stability to her lip synching performances, then we will be forced to begin drawing troops out of the

bases around the world out of sheer embarrassment."

- Newt Gingrich, the former Speaker of the House, added his usual historical perspective, citing Britney's appearance as the "most significant event to rock the Western World since the Black Death," which during the 14th century is believed to have killed as much as two thirds of the population of Europe.
- Health experts, however, were more optimistic, saying the body count from Britney's performance is expected to be "far lower."
- Fred Thompson, the candidate for president that people were more excited about before he became a candidate, announced that as district attorney Arthur Branch, the character he played on TV's "Law & Order," he would "personally" investigate Britney's VMA appearance.

(His aides later corrected that statement, saying that Mr. Thompson "almost never" confuses his political and acting roles and that he would be appointing "the CIA, the FBI or whoever" to do the investigation.)

- Rudy Giuliani, speaking before a crowd of supporters, vowed that if Britney were to schedule a performance at next year's awards show, he would launch a pre-emptive strike to "blow the MTV studio to smithereens — otherwise the terrorists will have won." (He declined afterward, however, to explain what "smithereens" were.)

Americans now face two burning questions that may or may not be addressed in next year's election: 1) Can Britney rediscover her once-fabulous abs and revive her failing career? and 2) Will Americans ever regain their sanity?

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dflood287@comcast.net.

King Super Crossword

- STROKES OF GENIUS ACROSS

1 In addition

5 Throw out

10 Spoil

13 Deadly

18 Soprano Mitchell

20 Country home

21 _ trip

22 Actress Eleniak

23 Start of a remark

by Kirk Kirkpatrick

25 Of interest to Byrd

27 "The Woman _"

('84 film)

28 Football's Luckman

29 Beg

30 Can't stand

31 Like sale merchandise

33 Bath, e.g.

35 Sunflower support

37 Aye opponent

38 _ year

41 Close

44 Baseball's Mel

46 Marge in the fridge

48 Every last bit

49 Singer McKee

50 Part 2 of remark

55 Taco topping

57 Makeup removers

59 Braga or Sanchez

60 That's no bull!

61 Petite pie
- 62 Wages

65 Menuhin's teacher

67 Rounded roof

70 Language suffix

71 Boy king

72 Part 3 of remark

77 Heifer or hen

80 Ipanema's locale

81 Warty one

82 Porthos' pal

85 Faraway place

88 Director Reitman

90 Detection device

92 Violinist Mischa

93 Arizona town

97 Northern hemisphere?

98 Part 4 of remark

101 '39 Wimbledon winner

104 Santa __, CA

105 Sojourn

106 "Ben- _" ('59 film)

107 Neighbor of Java

108 Rock's Stefani

109 Brit. fliers

112 Jazzman Zoot

114 Female elephant

116 Mythological

118 Pennsylvania port

120 Bite

122 Charles S. Dutton sitcom

125 Spanish dramatist

128 A Dead End Kid

130 End of remark

133 Subside
- 134 Jack of "Flower Drum Song"

135 Cosmetician

Lauder

136 New Archangel, now

137 Made a bundle?

138 Big bang letters

139 Yarn

140 For fear that

DOWN

1 Urban transport

2 Utah city

3 Any time now

4 Swaddle

5 Little rocker?

6 Lively dances

7 Morlocks' prey

8 Oafs

9 Smidgen

10 It should be square

11 Bronte's " _ Grey"

12 Type of muscle

13 _ -de-lance

14 Shoe part

15 Big guy

16 Japanese dog

17 Cagney's partner

19 Leon of "Mister Ed"

24 Minnesota city

26 Writer Rogers St. Johns

29 Couturier Jean

32 Round Table title

34 Handshakers
- 36 The Brainy Bunch?

38 Glasgow girl

39 Gladden

40 Writer Drury

42 "Bhagavad- _"

43 Beehive or bouffant

45 Poetic monogram

47 Smell

49 Jean of "Upstairs, Downstairs"

51 Ruhr Valley city

52 "What's _ for me?"

53 Place

54 Queue tip?

56 Takes in

58 Portly

61 Namely

63 City on the Nile

64 Annealing oven

66 Irish county

68 Hua's predecessor

69 Monitor message

73 Mormon leader

74 Infinitive splitter, often

75 Desert refuge

76 Downtown miasma

77 Dance maneuver

78 Boot -

79 Poet Lazarus

83 Downy downside?

84 Fowry river

86 Salutes the moon?

87 Components

89 - Minor
- 91 Colt color

94 Fireworks reaction

95 "Alceste" composer

96 Curly coif

99 Chan portrayer

100 She'll flip for you

102 Day- _

103 Tenor Beniamino

108 Little pet

109 Change for the better

110 Oranjestad's locale

111 Ultimate

113 Drawing room

115 Pulse place

117 "Friends" role

119 Ending for leather

121 Thicken

123 Nobelist Stern

124 "Dark Lady" singer

126 Sheep shed

127 Interrogates

129 Oxford omega

130 Craven or Unseld

131 " _ Paula" ('63 song)

132 Tended a tot

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Social Security Q&A

By Ray Vigil

Can you afford retirement?

Do you sometimes wonder whether you'll be able to afford retirement? It's a common concern among workers, especially members of the baby-boom generation. The oldest of the boomers will be 62 in

just a few months — in January 2008. But even the most anxious of this group should be able to relieve at least some concerns about retirement income by understanding just how much money is needed, and then planning a way to reach that goal.

Most financial advisors say that you will need at least 70 to 80 percent of your pre-retirement income to enjoy a comfortable retirement. Other advisors say that you may need an even higher percentage of pre-retirement income. So where will it come from?

The truth is that today Social Security is the largest source of income for most older Americans. For the average wage-earner, Social Security will replace about 40 percent of pre-retirement earnings. But Social Security was

never intended to be your only source of income when you retire, and to reach the 70-80 percent replacement income goal you also will need other savings, investments or pension income, or part-time work.

As Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, has noted, "Saving and investing wisely are important not only for you and your family, but for the entire country. If you want to learn more about how and why to save, you should visit www.mymoney.gov, a federal government website dedicated to teaching all Americans the basics of financial management."

The topics discussed at this website include paying for an education, starting a small business and, of course, retirement planning.

The retirement planning link takes you to more than a dozen other links with valuable financial information. There is, for example, "A Special Guide for Seniors and Families" from the FDIC; "Top 10 Ways To Prepare For Retirement" from the Department of Labor; "Tax Information for Retirement Plan Participants" from the IRS; and several links to Social Security sites, including Social Security retirement benefit calculators, special guides for women and retirement planners.

So if you are concerned about being able to afford retirement, just remember that knowledge is power. Get valuable information from Social Security at www.socialsecurity.gov, or from the federal website for financial literacy at www.mymoney.gov.

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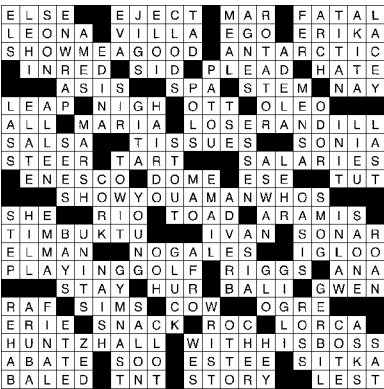
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"I told you I'm having trouble adjusting to retirement. Didn't you get my memo?"



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PUBLIC NOTICE

Texas Gas Service Company (the "Company") hereby gives notice that on August 31, 2007 it filed a Statement of Intent to Increase Rates in the Cities of El Paso, Anthony, Clint, Horizon City, Socorro and Vinton, which together with the environs areas comprise the Company's El Paso Service Area ("EPSA"). The Company seeks to implement a new schedule of natural gas service rates and terms and conditions of service for all classes of customers. If approved, the proposed changes will affect approximately 183,494 residential, 11,872 commercial, 47 industrial, 764 public authority, 34 transportation and 2 stand by customers within these Cities.

The Company's proposed rate schedules will increase base rate revenues by \$4,724,571 for the EPSA. Additionally, the Company requests recovery of revenue-related taxes as a line-item on the bill rather than recovering these taxes as part of base rates as previously done. This change will produce additional revenue of \$725,689, for a total annual revenue increase for the entire EPSA of \$5,450,250. The proposed change in rates does not constitute a "major change" as that term is defined by Section 104.101 of the Texas Utilities Code. In addition, the Company requests reimbursement of all Company and City rate case expenses as allowed by law. The exact amount will not be known until the case is completed.

Based on the proposed rate design, the system-wide average monthly bill for each customer class will increase by the amount and percent shown in the table below:

Customer Class	Amount	Percent
Residential	\$1.49 to \$1.62	3.6% to 3.9%
Commercial	(\$5.13) to (\$4.84)	-2.5% to -2.4%
Commercial A/C	\$9.56	10.2% to 10.3%
Industrial	\$140 to \$145	4.5% to 4.8%
Public Authority	(\$15) to (\$5)	-1.8% to -0.6%
Public Authority A/C	(\$13)	-1.2%
Municipal Water Pumping	\$21	0.3%
Standard Transport – Commercial	(\$48) to (\$39)	-1.8% to -1.9%
Standard Transport – Industrial	(\$12) to (\$2)	-0.3% to -0.1%
Standard Transport – Public Authority	(\$87) to (\$79)	-5.7% to -6.4%
Standard Transport – Cogeneration	0	0
Stand By	\$100	6.3%
Note: Bill impact ranges are due to varying tax rates among the Cities in EPSA.		

The following tables show the number of customers by class located within each of the Cities and the environs that together comprise the EPSA, along with each City's allocated portion of the requested revenue increase (allocation based on bills).

Jurisdiction	Revenue Increase \$	Rev. Incr. %	Res. Custs	Comm. Custs	Pub. Auth. Custs	Ind. Custs	Stand By Custs	Transp. Custs
El Paso	4,773,855	16.2%	171,463	11,362	711	42	2	31
Anthony	25,053	18.4%	745	91	10	1	0	2
Clint	7,339	16.5%	257	14	5	1	0	0
Horizon City	117,021	17.4%	4,038	122	13	1	0	1
Socorro	202,184	18.4%	6,573	247	24	0	0	0
Vinton	14,223	19.3%	418	36	1	2	0	1
Environs	310,585	14.0%	13,245	447	89	10	0	2

Other proposed tariff changes include revisions to the Rules of Service, including new or increased service charges. Also, the Company proposes changes to the Cost of Gas Clause to provide for recovery of uncollectible gas costs through the Cost of Gas rather than through base rates. The Company also proposes a new Transportation Schedule, T-1, and revisions to the Transportation General Charges and Provisions. This change addresses commodity imbalance provisions and upstream pipeline balancing service costs. In addition, the Company proposes a new Cost of Service adjustment clause, Rate Schedule COSA, to provide for an annual review by the Cities of the Company's expenses, revenues and plant investment and a corresponding adjustment to the Company's rates to reflect annual changes (increases or decreases) in these categories. Finally, TGS proposes a gas conservation program and tariff to authorize the program.

Complete copies of the filed Statement of Intent, including all proposed rates and schedule changes, are available for inspection at the Company's business office located at 4600 Pollard Street, El Paso, Texas, 79930. Persons with specific questions or desiring additional information about this filing may contact the Company at 915-680-7204.