



– Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

TOWERING PROJECT – The large structure, above, is being built in the heart of downtown Ciudad Juarez. It is about a mile away from the City of El Paso’s downtown skyline. The building can be seen from miles away by borderland residents and visitors to the region.

Tower in Ciudad Juarez aims to monitor, secure border

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

CIUDAD JUAREZ, MX – Rising in the midst of a bustling downtown border city is a monolith of concrete and steel that stretches into the desert

sky like a beacon standing watch over the El Paso-Juarez region.

The enormous structure, clearly visible for miles around, is being referred to as the Sentinel Tower and once completed will be the tallest building in the Paso del Norte area.

The imposing tower is designed to function as

a surveillance platform for the Chihuahua State Police, as the agency is in the process of moving its public safety headquarters to Ciudad Juarez.

According to Mexican officials, the data gathered by the tower’s reconnaissance will be used to track

See TOWER, Page 3



– Photo courtesy El Paso Community College

MOTIVATED LADY – Dr. Minerva Rodriguez displays her Dual Credit certificate and Associate of Arts degree, both from EPCC.

Rodriguez turns Dual Credit education into doctorate

By Beau Bagley
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Community College (EPCC) celebrated one of its own in May as Minerva Rodriguez, an EPCC Adjunct Instructor of Psychology walked the stage at the University of Texas at El Paso’s (UTEP) Doctoral Commencement Ceremony. She received her Ph.D. in Psychology with a concentration in Behavioral Neuroscience – an impressive milestone for someone not yet 30.

Rodriguez’s journey began at EPCC as a Dual Credit student attending Irvin High School. She graduated in 2014 and went on to complete her Associate’s, Bachelor’s, Master’s, and now Doctorate, becoming one of a little over 300 former EPCC Dual Credit students to receive their Doctorate before turning the age of 30.

Reflecting on her Dual Credit experience, Rodriguez says, “It was definitely an exciting opportunity that I believe played

a major role in shaping my academic path. In hindsight, I am glad I chose the dual credit route – it taught me early on how to navigate college-level coursework and set the foundation for my future success in higher education.”

Raised in a low-income household, Rodriguez was determined to create opportunities for herself and others. “As a first-generation college student, my family and I saw Dual Credit as an opportunity to break generational barriers,” she said. “Every step, from my associate’s to my doctorate, has been about creating more possibilities for myself and those who come after me.”

Rodriguez is not only an accomplished scholar but also an award-winning research scientist with published work focusing on stress and mental health. Despite the demands of doctoral research, she remained committed to teaching. “Balancing teaching and graduate studies have definitely been

See RODRIGUEZ, Page 5

The on-again, off-again trade war

Never mind.

President Trump’s 145% tariffs on China ran smack into Stein’s law, the late economist Herb Stein’s famous axiom that “if something cannot go on forever, it will stop.”

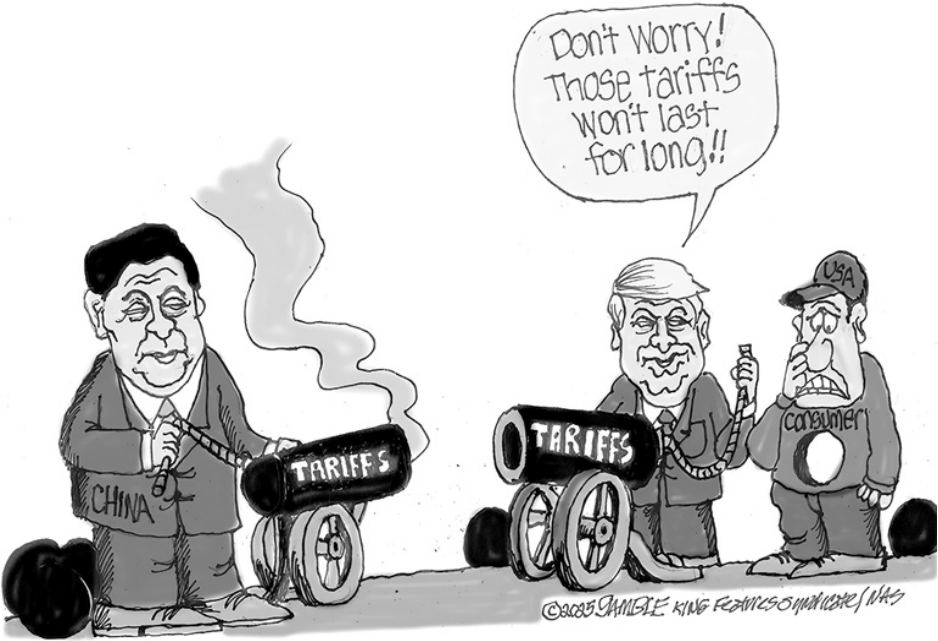
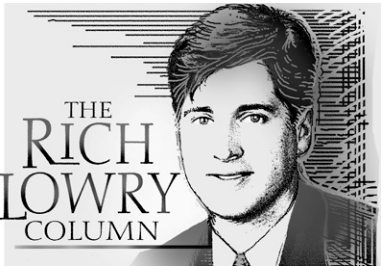
What was effectively an instant embargo on the biggest importer into the United States wasn’t sustainable, and sure enough, it’s not going to be sustained. The U.S. and China have mutually agreed to back off a tit-for-tat trade war that quickly

The problem with tariffs is that they are a way of harming a foreign trade partner via imposing pain on your own businesses and consumers. The 145% tariff was hitting Beijing hard but also was due to impose severe costs on U.S. concerns dependent on Chinese manufacturing.

Small businesses were looking at potential extinction and retailers warning of empty store shelves. When the president of the United States is musing about little girls having to do with fewer dolls, it’s not a reassuring signal about the direction of U.S. economic policy.

We’ve imposed embargoes on foreign countries before – for instance, the so-called ABCD encirclement that cut Japan off from raw materials during the early stages of World War II. But we were about to go to war with Imperial Japan, whereas one hopes we won’t be engaged in active hostilities with China any time soon.

While markets are relieved that the 145% tariffs



Food for thought

By Dr. Glenn Mollette

Community college: Think about it

Parents and high school seniors should seriously talk about community college or even a trade school. Community college is not an exciting exotic choice but can be the better choice in the long run.

The national average in-state tuition for community college is \$4,847 per year. Costs vary a bit depending on classes and textbooks. Some states are lower, some are higher.

The national average in-state public university tuition is \$11,610 which does not include room, board and supplies. The average cost

including room and board is \$25,055 per year. If you choose to go out of state the average cost jumps to \$36,797 per year. The national average cost of in-state private colleges including room and board is \$53,949! If you have to go to a private college, spending your first two years at a community college makes even more sense – cents!

Typically, the first two years of college are about meeting the institution’s general requirements. These are the classes you may not be that interested in but are required by the institution. Why pay big

money to take classes you are not interested in taking? You can do this at the community college level for a lot less money.

After two years of community college, you can then go to almost any university you can afford. If you have a full scholarship ride to a four-year school then that’s different. Today, many schools offer a lot of partial scholarships to lure students. Many will dangle a scholarship of a few hundred to even several thousand. The idea is to entice you to their school because you still will have to pay them thousands of dollars each year. So, it’s still a big win for the university.

A college President at a private college said they offered many athletes half of the tuition cost to come to their

school but they still had to pay the other half. Financially, the school still came out ahead with that kind of deal.

If you go to community college and it costs you \$5,000 a year then you could put the other \$5,000 in a Roth IRA. If you have \$10,000 in a Roth IRA by the time you are 21 then that \$10,000 will be worth about \$728,00 at age 66. This is assuming a ten percent average interest rate over those 45 years. Even at eight percent over 45 years, your total cash at age 66 could be about \$309,000. This is just for cramming \$10,000 into a Roth IRA by age 21 and then not touching it for 45 years.

The average American doesn’t even start trying to save money until the age of 31. Starting late means the same \$10,000 at age 66 will be worth about \$147,000 at an eight percent average rate.

Thus, if you can go to community college from 18-20 or 21, work some and invest your savings at a young age, then you won’t have to work or worry quite as much at age 66 or 67.

Think about it. You can go to the famed state university or even private school your junior and senior years and still have a degree from that school. Plus, you’ll be a little older, smarter, more mature and even have a chunk of your financial future already secured.

Think about it.

Glenn Mollette is a graduate of numerous schools including Georgetown College, Southern and Lexington Seminaries in Kentucky. He is the author of “Uncommon Sense” and 12 other books. His column is published weekly in over 600 publications in all 50 states. Learn more at www.glenmmollette.com or www.facebook.com/glenmmollette.

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Tower

From Page 1

commercial vehicles, like cargo trucks, from the time they leave their industrial park factory in Juarez until they cross the ports of entry into the United States.

Additionally, the building will serve as the nerve center for monitoring criminal activity throughout the Mexican border city neighborhoods where drug cartels and notorious gangs are known to operate, officials acknowledged.

“The idea is for trained police officers to monitor computer screens linked to thousands of security cameras, license plate readers, Bluetooth scanners, and face-recognition software being placed in the Sentinel Tower,” explained Gilbert Loya, Chihuahua Public Safety Director.

“As we build this platform, we also are installing arches (with security technology) over every major highway coming in and out of the state and its 13 largest cities,” stated Loya during a recent tour of the structure. “This tower will be our command center,” he added.

The technology’s effectiveness was proven recently, Loya related, when the state police rescued several businesspersons abducted for ransom by tracking the vehicles used in the crimes. “This is the result of using technology so the police can respond with more efficiency and with more information,” he pointed out.

Luis Aguirre, chief of staff for the Chihuahua police, stated that the operators at the Sentinel Tower will be sharing information – about the events they witness, the vehicles and people they identify – with municipal police officers, medical first responders, and other government agencies such as the military.

The police chief of staff asserted that the monitoring component will facilitate crime prevention, and the quick apprehension of suspects will serve as a deterrent for future criminal activity. He noted that prosecutors will now be able to use security camera videos and face-recognition technology to build cases against perpetrators, and the facial AI component and Bluetooth scanners will help authorities locate fugitives.

The tower will be part of the Chihuahua state surveillance technology program that will utilize an array of technology including 1,791 license plate reading cameras; 74 drones; 3,065 pan-tilt-zoom cameras; 4,800 fixed cameras; 102 security arches; and 807 workstations, as well as a helicopter pad planned atop the 20-floor structure, according to official reports.

Also, plans call for a direct link to El Paso’s 911 command center so that when U.S. citizens who are in Juarez dial the number, Mexican authorities are looped into the call.

State of Texas officials were informed of Mexico’s \$200 million surveillance program initiative in 2022 in a memorandum of understanding from Chihuahua Governor Maru Campos to Texas Gov. Greg Abbott.

King Crossword

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14 Linguist Chomsky

15 Magnificence

17 Leslie Caron role

18 Next in line

19 Business goal

21 Poetic contraction

22 Feudal laborer

23 Rx writers

26 Actor McKellen

28 Cardio-boxing
- routine

31 Nest egg choices

33 Vat

35 Foolproof

36 Picture puzzle

38 Diner order

40 "Awesome, dude!"

41 Muscat's land

43 Summer mo.

45 Spud

47 Scan again

51 Help a hood

52 French title

54 Go sightseeing

55 " _ you sleeping?"

56 Mrs. Nick Charles

57 Antitoxins

58 Susan of "L.A. Law"

59 "Shoo!"
- DOWN

1 Golden Fleece ship

2 "Wild" actress Laura

3 "That's not _ idea"

4 "Olympia" painter Edouard

5 Views slyly

6 French vineyard

7 Infield covers

8 Long-haired cats

9 Hairdresser

10 Creche trio

11 Send forth

16 Roman 602

20 Pensioned (Abbr.) station

24 Dad on "Black-ish"

25 1942 Hitchcock
- thriller

27 Gist

29 Bikini half

30 British ref. work

32 Java neighbor

34 Total nonsense

37 Perched

39 Calendar abbr.

42 Wanderer

44 Big smiles

45 Bits of butter

46 Reed instrument

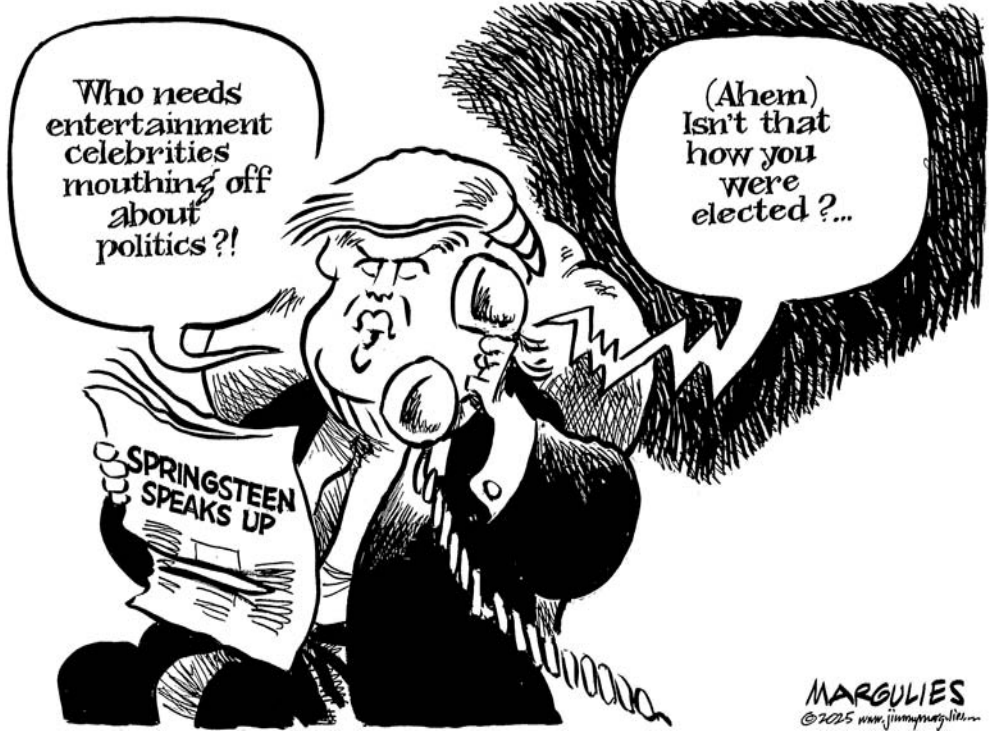
48 Fair-hiring org.

49 Mystique

50 "Phooey!"

53 Mine material

Answer Page 5



Galaviz’s retirement accepted

By Gustavo Reveles
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO – The Canutillo Independent School District Board of Trustees on Tuesday, May 20, officially accepted the retirement notice of Superintendent Dr. Pedro Galaviz, effective December 31, 2025.

Galaviz will continue serving as Superintendent of Schools through July 31, 2025. Beginning August 1, he will transition into the role of Superintendent Emeritus, during which he will advise, train, and support an interim superintendent and collaborate with the Board of Trustees through the end of the calendar year. From January through

June 2026, Galaviz will remain available to the district on an as-needed basis to support its leadership team.

Board President Armando Rodriguez issued the following statement:

“The Board of Trustees is grateful for the 13 years Dr. Galaviz has dedicated to improving the lives of students in Canutillo ISD. Under his leadership, the district has transformed from a low-performing system into one of the top suburban school districts in Texas.

Dr. Galaviz has consistently demonstrated responsible stewardship of the District’s well-being and has never

requested a pay increase that wasn’t also extended to all staff. We look forward to continuing to have his leadership and insight as we begin the transition to an interim superintendent and begin the search for a permanent leader.

We wish him all the best in his retirement and look forward to his continued involvement in our community.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the transition plans and authorized legal counsel, along with President Rodriguez, to work with Galaviz on finalizing the details of his retirement agreement.

The Board also unanimously approved beginning the process of selecting a search firm to assist in identifying and hiring a new permanent superintendent.



Dr. Pedro Galaviz

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Benjamin Franklin never actually lobbied for the turkey to become the national bird, but he did write that the bald eagle was a fowl of “bad moral character” and that the turkey was “a much more respectable bird.”
- The world’s largest chocolate bar weighed 12,000 pounds.
- While digging up stones to build a house in 1885, Australian miner George Harrison found gold ore near Johannesburg, beginning the South African gold rush.

Villalobos, Rubio, named to 2025 Bezos Scholars Program

By Christy Fores-Jones
Special to the Courier

SOCORRO – Socorro High School student Isabella Villalobos and educator Javier Rubio have been named to the Bezos Scholars Program 2025 Scholars cohort. The Bezos Scholars Program inspires and challenges young people and educators from their schools to address issues they are passionate about in their communities.

Villalobos is among twelve student scholars who represent seven states this year. Scholars were chosen from a competitive applicant pool and based on commitment to their education, demonstrated leadership abilities, willingness to embrace challenges, and the desire to create positive change in their communities.

The program is a year-long leadership development program spanning the U.S. and Africa – one that not only delivers specific and measurable learning outcomes—but also amplifies

Bezos Scholars Program

The Bezos Scholars Program is a year-long leadership development program for rising high school seniors and educators from across the United States and Africa. It begins with an opportunity to attend the Aspen Ideas Festival and continues through the following school year when Bezos Scholars return home, participate in virtual trainings, and launch sustainable community change projects that transform their schools and communities. For 21 years, Scholar teams have mobilized communities around various critical issues. To see full Scholar biographies and photos, please visit the Meet the Scholars (www.bezosscholars.org/scholars) page on the BSP website.

youth voice and action by supporting scholars as they produce real-world projects aimed at positive change. The 12 U.S. scholars and students in the African Leadership Academy will participate in virtual sessions, a weeklong experience at the Aspen Ideas Festival and work on Community Change projects.

Villalobos is in the fire tech program at Socorro High School, where she teaches young students the importance of fire safety and how to protect themselves in dangerous situations. She is also a gymnastics coach and wildlife advocate. As a Bezos Student Scholar, she is eager to learn from

diverse changemakers, hone her leadership, and create a project that keeps her community and our planet thriving.

“I am very grateful to have been selected for the Bezos Scholarship program,” Villalobos said. “It is an amazing opportunity to help out my community in issues I am passionate about. I’m excited to learn from young leaders all over the country, and from the African Leadership Academy.”

Rubio was chosen as a Bezos Educator Scholar in support of Villalobos. As an instructor in the Socorro High School fire tech program, he guides teens toward careers in firefighting, law enforcement, and emergency medical

services. As a Bezos Scholar, he looks forward to sharpening leadership tools he can pass to students and boosting their confidence to help shape how their communities can protect, heal, and thrive.

“The Bezos Scholarship is a well-deserved recognition for Isabella,” Rubio said. “Her hard work, leadership, and her generous spirit make her the perfect fit.”

The Community Change Projects are as diverse as the scholars themselves and are designed to align scholars’ passions with an existing community need. Many projects address the climate crisis, education, financial literacy and lack of access to opportunities. Since the program’s inception, scholars have launched 218 projects; there are more than 527 alums in the network.

“These student leaders and educator advocates are exactly who the world needs right now. We are honored to support and learn from such a brilliant, energized cohort,” said Molly Pencke, Senior Program Manager at the Bezos Family Foundation.

- In terms of galactic years, the sun is around 20.5 years old.
- Victorian floriography, the practice of assigning codes to flowers to send messages via bouquets and arrangements, associated basil with hatred! The curious link came from the ancient Greeks, who felt basil leaves resembled the opening jaws of a basilisk.
- In the 1800s, ducks were called “arsefeet,” as their feet are so close to their posteriors.
- Painting designs and pictures on fingernails isn’t just a modern trend. It was a familiar practice with the Incas, many of whom sported eagle motifs on their nails.
- One percent of people are born with a 13th rib.
- To preserve the quality of the U.S. Constitution, on display in the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C., its protective cases contain argon gas and are kept at 67 Fahrenheit with a relative humidity of 40%.
- In the U.K., fish and chips were traditionally wrapped in old newspapers, giving the meal a unique newspaper ink flavor. The practice eventually ended for health reasons.

- During the 1904 Summer Olympic Games, American athlete George Eyser won six medals in a single day, including three gold and two silver, in the vault, parallel bars and rope climbing competitions... with a wooden prosthetic left leg.

Thought for the Day: “Try to be a rainbow in someone else’s cloud.”


– Maya Angelou

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CryptoQuip Answer

Hoping it would be lucky enough to be planted by a Dakota tribe member, the seed exclaimed, “Sioux sow me!”

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Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On June 2, 1997, U.S. Army veteran Timothy McVeigh was convicted on 15 counts of murder and conspiracy for his role two years earlier in the terrorist bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. He was executed by lethal injection on June 11, 2001.

• On June 3, 1956, authorities in Santa Cruz, California, put the city in the national spotlight by declaring a complete ban on rock and roll at public gatherings, labeling the music “detrimental to both the health and morals of our youth and community” after a policeman at a dance party the night before described the teen crowd as “engaged in suggestive, stimulating and tantalizing motions induced by the provocative rhythms of an all-negro band.”

• On June 4, 1940, 22-year-old Carson McCullers’ debut novel, “The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter,” about misfits in a Georgia mill town, was published to widespread acclaim.

• On June 5, 1888, President Grover Cleveland vetoed a bill that would have given a widow’s pension to Johanna Loewinger, whose husband had passed away 14 years after being discharged from

the army. Because he died by suicide and not from a disability caused by his military service, her request was denied.

• On June 6, 2002, a high-energy upper atmosphere explosion now known as the Eastern Mediterranean Event, similar in power to a small atomic bomb, occurred over the Mediterranean Sea between Libya and Crete when a small, undetected asteroid disintegrated while approaching Earth. There were concerns that if the explosion had occurred closer to Pakistan or India, it could have sparked a nuclear war between the countries, as they were engaged in a standoff at the time.

• On June 7, 1968, just two days after the assassination of Democratic presidential hopeful Robert F. Kennedy, Fred Rogers, the popular host of the children’s public television show “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood,” dedicated an episode to explaining the tragedy to his young audience.

• On June 8, 1191, King Richard I of England arrived in Acre, Israel, beginning the Third Crusade, an attempt co-led by France’s King Philip II and Emperor Frederick Barbarossa to reconquer the Holy Land following Jerusalem’s capture by the Ayyubid sultan Saladin in 1187.

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Rodriguez

From Page 1

a challenge, but my passion for teaching kept me motivated,” she shared.

Her teaching excellence has not gone unnoticed. EPCC Rio Grande campus Dean of Arts, Communication, CTE, and Social Science Brian Kirby, praised Rodriguez’s accomplishments. “I’m incredibly impressed with Minerva navigating ECHS to receiving her Ph.D. Maintaining momentum in higher education is a component often overlooked. The fact that she did a lot of her college-level work during a global pandemic is also remarkable. Dr. Rodriguez’s CV brims with accomplishments, and her teaching background stands out. She demonstrates the high levels of autonomy and responsibility it takes to be a leader in higher education.”

EPCC Psychology Professor Shanan Valles echoed those sentiments. “Minerva is so smart and kind, and to already have so many publications at such a young age is truly remarkable. Her work on stress makes a valuable contribution to the urgently needed research on mental health. She’s relatable and an amazing role model for our students.”

Though her family may not fully grasp the nuances of her research, Rodriguez says their pride and support have fueled her drive:

“My family is extremely proud of me. Even though they may not fully understand the specifics of my research, they recognize the significance of this achievement and have supported me every step of the way.”



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The San Elizario Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 5:30 P.M. on Tuesday, June 18, 2025 in the SEISD Administrative Office, 1050 Chicken Ranch Rd., San Elizario, Texas. **The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district’s budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.**

The tax rate that is ultimately adopted at this meeting or at a separate meeting at a later date may not exceed the proposed tax rate shown below unless the district publishes a revised notice containing the same information and comparisons set out below and holds another public meeting to discuss the revised notice.

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Maintenance Tax | \$0.715600/\$100 (Proposed rate for maintenance and operations) |
| School Debt Service Tax | |
| Approved by Local Voters | \$0.169700/\$100 (Proposed rate to pay bonded indebtedness) |

Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year’s Budget

The applicable percentage increase or decrease (or difference) in the amount budgeted in the preceding fiscal year and the amount budgeted for the fiscal year that begins during the current tax year is indicated for each of the following expenditure categories:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Maintenance and Operations | 3.85% | Decrease |
| Debt Service | 6.38% | Increase |
| Total Expenditures | 3.50% | Decrease |

Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value (as calculated under Section 26.04, Tax Code)

| | Preceding Tax Year | Current Tax Year |
|--|--------------------|------------------|
| Total appraised value* of all property | \$ 699,131,065 | \$ 723,757,389 |
| Total appraised value* of new property** | \$ 8,749,519 | \$ 9,200,329 |
| Total taxable value*** of all property | \$ 328,620,870 | \$ 364,995,814 |
| Total taxable value*** of new property** | \$ 8,353,707 | \$ 8,553,066 |

* “Appraised value” is the amount shown on the appraisal roll and defined by Section 1.04(8), Tax Code.
** “New property” is defined by Section 26.012(17), Tax Code.
*** “Taxable value” is defined by Section 1.04(10), Tax Code.

Bonded Indebtedness

Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness* \$22,845,000

* Outstanding principal.

Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year’s Rates

| | Maintenance & Operations | Interest & Sinking Fund* | Total | Local Revenue Per Student | State Revenue Per Student |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Last Year’s Rate | \$ 0.715600 | \$ 0.169700* | \$ 0.885300 | \$ 1,070 | \$ 11,089 |
| Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service | \$ 0.707000 | \$ 0.169700* | \$ 0.876700 | \$ 1,129 | \$ 11,408 |
| Proposed Rate | \$ 0.715600 | \$ 0.169700* | \$ 0.885300 | \$ 1,141 | \$ 11,461 |

*The Interest & Sinking Fund tax revenue is used to pay for bonded indebtedness on construction, equipment, or both.
The bonds, and the tax rate necessary to pay those bonds, were approved by the voters of this district.

Comparison of Proposed Levy with Last Year’s Levy on Average Residence

| | Last Year | This Year |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Average Market Value of Residences | \$ 155,435 | \$ 160,191 |
| Average Taxable Value of Residences | \$ 23,724 | \$ 38,295 |
| Last Year’s Rate Versus | | |
| Proposed Rate per \$100 Value | \$ 0.885300 | \$ 0.885300 |
| Taxes Due on Average Residence | \$ 210.00 | \$ 339.00 |
| Increase (Decrease) in Taxes | | \$ 129.00 |

Under state law, the dollar amount of school taxes imposed on the residence homestead of a person 65 years of age or older or of the surviving spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse was 55 years of age or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of changes in the tax rate or property value.

Notice of Voter-Approval Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is \$0.885300. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of \$0.885300.

Fund Balances

The following estimated balances will remain at the end of the current fiscal year and are not encumbered with or by a corresponding debt obligation, less estimated funds necessary for operating the district before receipt of the first state aid payment:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Maintenance and Operations Fund Balance(s) | \$ 12,377,152 |
| Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s) | \$ 425,919 |

A school district may not increase the district’s maintenance and operations tax rate to create a surplus in maintenance and operations tax revenue for the purpose of paying the district’s debt service.

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.texas.gov/PropertyTaxes) to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the State.

UTEP should be optimistic about 2025 football schedule

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

The upcoming UTEP football season is still nearly four months away but with the release of its schedule, let’s take a look at how they’ll do this season.

It’s no secret that coach Scotty Walden and the Miners have had the top Conference USA recruiting class the last two years. Now it’s time to see whether they’ll prove it on the field.

The Miners kickoff the 2025 season at Utah State on Saturday, Aug. 30 at 5:30 p.m. The Aggies, who will be leaving the Mountain West Conference as soon as UTEP arrives in 2026, were just 4-8 a year ago. The game can be seen on the CBS Sports Network.

Week two sees UTEP opening its home schedule against Tennessee-Martin on Sept. 6 at 7 p.m. UTM was 9-5 last season and knocked off Conference USA member Kennesaw St. 24-13.

UTEP finds the going considerably tougher when it travels to Austin to take on Arch Manning and the Texas Longhorns on Saturday, Sept. 13 at 2:15 p.m. The game will be televised on the SEC Network.

The Miners get a break after the Texas contest, by having their next three games at the Sun Bowl.

On Saturday, Sept. 20, the Miners host Louisiana-Monroe at 7 p.m. The Warhawks were 5-7 last year and ended the season on a 6-game losing streak.

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UTEP opens CUSA action on Saturday, Sept. 27 against Louisiana Tech at 7 p.m. The Bulldogs were 5-8 a year ago but beat UTEP 14-10 in a tough battle.

Their third straight Sun Bowl encounter is one of those weird Wednesday night games on Oct. 8 against Liberty at 6 p.m. The Flames were 8-4 last season and handled the Miners 28-10. This will be their second CUSA game of the season and the fact that their first two league games are at home gives the Miners a great opportunity to get off to a great start.

On week seven, the Miners’ return to the road on Wednesday, Oct. 15 at Sam Houston at 5 p.m. Sam Houston was 10-3 last year and pounded the Miners 41-21. The game can be watched on CBS Sports Network.

Week eight sees the Miners at Kennesaw State on Tuesday, Oct. 28 at 5 p.m. The Owls were just 2-10 last year and lost to the Miners 43-35 in 2 overtimes. Fans can watch the game

on ESPU.

And by the way, I’m so glad we will be getting away from these dumb Tuesday and Wednesday games once we leave CUSA.

Anyway, on week nine the Miners are back in the Sun Bowl to take on Jacksonville St. on Saturday, Nov. 8 at 1 p.m. The Gamecocks were 9-5 a year ago and won the CUSA title with a 7-1 league record.

UTEP will travel to new CUSA member Missouri State on Saturday, Nov. 15 at 1 p.m. The Bears were 8-4 last year and are moving up to the top tier of college football for the first time. You can catch the game on ESPN.

On week 11, the Miners will play their final home game of the season, and their final CUSA game ever, against an old pal when New Mexico State comes to the Sun Bowl on Saturday, Nov. 22 at 1 p.m. The Aggies were just 3-9 last year but scared the heck out of Miners before losing to UTEP 42-35.

The Miners close out the regular season far from home when they travel to Delaware on Saturday, Nov. 29 at 11 a.m. Another new member of CUSA, the Blue Hens were 9-2 last season. This game can be watched on ESPN.

So now that we know who the Miners are playing, when they’ll play and how they can be watched, let’s determine how many games they’ll win.

Let’s start with the games they’ll probably lose.

Texas will be too much, but I also believe it’ll be tough for the Miners to keep up with Utah St., Liberty and Sam Houston.

The good news is that I think the Miners can beat everyone else on their schedule.

So, the new-and-improved Miners should finish with an 8-4 record.

That would lead to two things, the Miners would go to a bowl game, and they’d start talking about giving Walden a big contract extension.

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Retirement: Now what?

Some of us are new to retirement and the questions quickly become: Now what? What do I do with my days? Do I continue to set the alarm for the same time in the mornings?

If you planned in detail for your retirement and have a long list of things you intend to do, you know where to begin.

But the questions about what to do with our retired days can be poignant for those who perhaps didn’t have a choice about retirement. Maybe there were health considerations. Maybe there were expectations of retirement upon reaching a certain age in a certain career. But for whatever reason, here’s retirement, ready or not. Now what?

Start with a piece of paper and a pen. Make a list, the longer the better, of every interest you have. Ideally, somewhere on that list are the makings of worthwhile activities that are physical, social and mental.

Here are some random possibilities: explore

photography, teach swimming at the YMCA, write a novel, knit or crochet hats and mittens for the local Santa fund next winter, create a family scrapbook with genealogy information and photos for the next generation, play pickleball at the rec center, become a Citizen Scientist (see CitizenScience.gov), join a walking group, take a pottery class with a grandchild.

Then there are the all-important brain-stretcher activities: learn to play piano or guitar (or brush up on old skills), take a college course, play chess online, take a computer class to upgrade your skills, learn a language online (see Duolingo.com), read a book a week or start a book club.

My personal list includes dogs at the animal shelter. There are lots of dogs who need to be taken on adventure walking afternoons to pick up their spirits. I can do that a few times a week.

Have you started your list?

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Super Crossword

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
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| 23 | | | | | | | 24 | | | | | | | | | 25 | | | | |
| 26 | | | | | | 27 | | | 28 | | | | | 29 | 30 | | | | | |
| 31 | | | | 32 | 33 | | 34 | | 35 | | | | 36 | 37 | | | | | | |
| | | | | 38 | | 39 | | | | | | | 40 | | | | | | | |
| 41 | 42 | 43 | | | | | | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | | | | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 |
| 54 | | | | | | | 55 | 56 | | | | | | 57 | | 58 | | | | |
| 59 | | | | | | | | | 60 | | | | | 61 | 62 | | | | | |
| 63 | | | | | | | 64 | | 65 | | 66 | | 67 | | 68 | | | | | |
| | | | | 69 | 70 | 71 | | | 72 | | | | 73 | | | | | | | |
| 74 | 75 | 76 | | | | | | 77 | | | | 78 | | | | | | 79 | 80 | 81 |
| 82 | | | | | | | | 83 | | 84 | | 85 | | 86 | | 87 | 88 | 89 | | |
| 90 | | | | | | | | 91 | | 92 | | | 93 | | | | | | | |
| 94 | | | | | | 95 | | 96 | | | | | | | 97 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | 98 | 99 | | | | | | 100 | 101 | 102 | | | | | |
| 103 | 104 | 105 | 106 | 107 | | | | | 108 | 109 | 110 | | | | | 111 | | 112 | 113 | 114 |
| 115 | | | | | | | | | 116 | | | | 117 | | 118 | | | 119 | | |
| 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 124 | | | 125 | 126 | | | |
| 127 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 129 | | | | | |
| 130 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 132 | | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| DISCRETE CHARACTERS ACROSS | 64 Doc bloc | composer Lin-Manuel | 35 Novelist Uris | entree) |
| 1 Broken stone for paving | 66 Shoveled | 129 City grid parts | 36 " _ get it!" ("Oh, makes sense!") | 85 Sleuth: Abbr. |
| 8 Big petroleum company of the past | 68 Boots out | 130 Lace snarls | 37 Sacred song | 87 Purse part |
| 15 Actress Talia | 69 Hardware pieces for attaching shelves to walls | 131 Ends of sonnets | 39 Violinist Hilary | 88 Nitrate, e.g. |
| 20 Erstwhile empress of Russia | 74 Wrinkly-faced dog | 132 Phrase with no repeated letters (like each of this puzzle's seven longest answers) | 41 Kind of ski lift | 89 Ration |
| 21 Very narrow, as a road | 77 Wallach or Manning | | 42 Very impolite | 92 Pick-_ (refresher) |
| 22 Got the lead out? | 78 Outlaw | DOWN | 43 2012 hit for Flo Rida | 93 Bygone bird |
| 23 Decision to award Eris' apple to Aphrodite | 79 Similar to | 1 Dead-end work position | 45 Calif. air hub | 95 Verb before "thou," perhaps |
| 25 Blah feeling | 82 Diner offering | 2 Sky-blue hue | 46 Advertising leaflets | 99 Words after man or sergeant |
| 26 NHLer Bobby | 84 Ancient | 3 Corps core | 47 Stevie Wonder's "My Cherie _" | 101 With, to Luc |
| 27 Upset infant's sound | 86 Sits to appear on the cover of, say | 4 Uru. neighbor | 49 "Stop!," asea | 102 House speaker after Ryan |
| 28 "Look, mice!" | 90 Pest control company | 5 Not well lit | 50 Stags, e.g. | 103 Metallic sound |
| 29 Least severe | 91 Hovel | 6 Over again | 51 Film director Kazan | 104 Novarro of silent films |
| 31 Stein drinks | 94 Shredded, as Parmesan | 7 Take care of | 52 Intense desire | 105 H.S. science class for college credit |
| 34 Original lion-logo film studio | 96 Takes care of | 8 Oozy gunk | 53 "For" votes | 106 Roster of least-sought-after celebs |
| 38 Arriver's declaration | 97 1980s game consoles | 9 Lacking in nourishment | 55 Doing Atkins, say | 107 "Eleni" director Peter |
| 40 _ buco | 98 Honolulu site | 10 Skunk Pepe of cartoons | 56 Do-fa linkup | 108 "_ your disposal" |
| 41 A Nixon daughter | 100 Snazzily dressed rom-com | 11 Like crumbly piecrusts | 57 "Get what I'm saying?" | 109 Group trying to sack a QB |
| 44 City northeast of Toronto | 103 2011 Steve Carell | 12 Rowing blade | 62 Atlanta-to-Akron dir. | 110 Swiss chocolatier |
| 48 To wit | 104 2011 Steve Carell | 13 Reggae's _ | 65 Suffix with pent- | 112 Like _ in headlights |
| 54 Cascara and red ash are members of it | 111 Sphere | 14 Best Musical before "Phantom" | 67 Chitchat | 113 Ton of, informally |
| 58 Deem worthy | 115 Port near Buenos Aires | 15 Silvery fish | 69 Apple or pear | 114 Bette Midler's "Divine" stage persona |
| 59 Poet Rich or actress Barbeau | 116 "Louisville Lip" of boxing | 16 Dharma follower | 70 Offer a view | 118 Alibis, e.g. |
| 60 "Yang Yang" singer Yoko | 117 Jeff Lynne's rock gp. | 17 Private | 71 Permit | 122 Go quickly |
| 61 Painting in the Louvre | 119 "Is that true about me?" | 18 Recycle | 72 Sphere | 123 Divs. of eras |
| 63 San Luis _ | 120 Scope of influence | 19 Fixes up text | 73 Mafia bigwig | 124 Propane, e.g. |
| | 121 The "AA" and "BB" of an AABB scheme | 24 Son of Odin | 74 Hazy air stuff | 125 In favor of |
| | 127 Din | 30 Holy relic | 75 Mister, in Muenster | 126 Knee's place |
| | 128 "Hamilton" | 32 Lake of TV talk | 76 "Lonely Boy" singer Paul | |
| | | 33 Hit hard, biblical-style | 79 At a distance | |
| | | | 80 Sets of points, in math | |
| | | | 81 Torah holders | |
| | | | 83 _ pork (Chinese | |

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



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Moore Texas by Roger MOORE
June 4, 1827: Some members of Stephen Austin’s colony receive land titles to build future homes in Texas.

CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: T equals X

ONAESV EZ HNGFC LB FGUQD
BSNGVO ZN LB AFXSZBC LD X
CXQNZX ZPELB JBJLBP, ZOB RBBC
BTUFXEJBC “RENGT RNH JB!”

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 6 | | 8 | 7 | 4 | 1 |
| 7 | 9 | | 3 | | | | | 6 |
| | | 1 | | 5 | | | | 9 |
| | 1 | 3 | 9 | 6 | | | | 8 |
| 4 | | 6 | | 8 | 7 | | | |
| 9 | 8 | 7 | 4 | | 3 | 6 | | |
| 6 | | | | | 5 | | 2 | |
| | 5 | 9 | | 4 | 6 | | | 7 |
| 1 | | | 8 | 7 | | | | |

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging

Answer Page 5

♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Changes at the VA



by Freddy Groves

Under the new presidential administration, and under the guidance of the new VA Secretary Doug Collins, the Department of Veterans Affairs has made several significant changes. The core mission: providing the best possible care and services to veterans, families, caregivers and survivors. As Secretary Collins said, “We have already stripped away many of the costly distractions that were coming between VA beneficiaries and the benefits they have earned.”

Here are a few examples:

What Collins called “DEI and gender ideology” has been taken off the table, saying that the “VA should not be in the business of helping people try to change their sex.” That’s going to save the VA \$14 million.

Working from home is a no-no now, with a schedule being created to get everyone back in the office by summer.

No more “phoning it in from home,” per Collins. And I have to agree – service on the phone is much better when employees are in the office within earshot of colleagues.

When it comes to duplicate and unnecessary contracts, so far the VA has identified “hundreds of millions of dollars” that they can divert back to services for veterans. They’ll continue to take a look at the 130,000 VA contracts to see what further dollars they can save.

The modernization of the electronic health record program was something that stalled over the last two years, but already, just since March, they’ve worked to be able to bring nine more medical facilities online by next year and all of them by 2031.

In his opinion piece and video, Collins addresses the pushback he’s gotten from various sources that only want the VA to keep going as before. Not going to happen, per Collins. His job is to work to put veterans first, and that’s what he intends to do.

The video Secretary Collins made can be found on his X (formerly known as Twitter) account. Or if you prefer to read it, search for his opinion piece “First 100 Days at VA: Putting Veterans First” at DCJournal.com.

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• It’s barbecue time, and here’s a fun, festive idea for your next backyard shindig: For each guest, stuff a mason jar with a clean bandanna (for a napkin) and a set of silverware. Write the name on the jar with a silver paint pen made to stay on glassware. Cute, functional and a keepsake! Here’s more to get your grilling season started.

• “You know what works really well to keep hot casseroles hot when waiting for other sides to finish? A cooler. Line it with a towel and set your casseroles inside. Then, when they are on the table, stick the cooler back in the kitchen. You can throw the casserole dishes back in dirty after you pack away leftovers. Add some warm soapy water and they can even wait until the next day to get cleaned.” – M.B. in Georgia

• “Bring a distinctive towel to a pool party so that you will know where your towel is. You can make an extra-large towel by sewing two smaller towels together, too.” – U.A. in New York

• “For a really fun take on kebabs, use fruit instead of meat. The kids especially love fruit on a stick. If you have some neat cookie cutters, you can score planks of watermelon and make shapes.” – M.M. in Michigan

• To keep ants from invading your patio, draw a thick line of chalk as a boundary. The ants will not like to cross the chalk line and will leave your patio party alone.

• Use a muffin tin on the table to serve condiments from. For larger portions (like lettuce, onion slices, maybe pickle spears) you can set a cup down in the muffin well.

Send your tips to Now Here’s a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. ©2025 King Features Synd., Inc.

GO FIGURE!

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

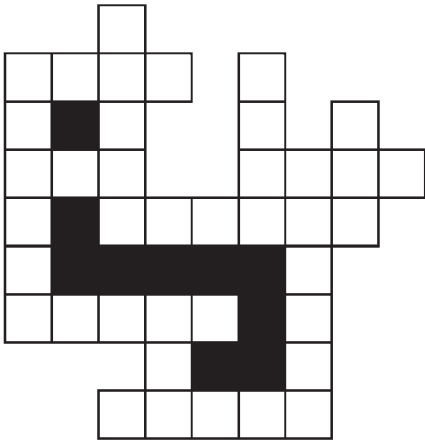
Answer Page 4

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| | | | | | | | | |
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TEO
HOSEND
♥ELHAS
LTGU
TYNGLE
NSA
LULN
♥DYTUS
YEH
♥TESHLU
GLOAN
♥EUDS



Answer Page 4

Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. HAGNEC becomes CHANGE). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥RATHE becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART). Fit each string’s word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

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