



— Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

ORANGE BARRELS FOR AWHILE – Heavy equipment and materials are in place, above, as work has begun on the concrete pillars for the bridges that stretch over the I-10 and Artcraft/Ord Gary Highway interchange. The roadway reconstruction is expected to help alleviate the current traffic problems in the area.

Construction work begins on I-10/ Artcraft project

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – The highway interchange that switches from Artcraft/Ord Gary on the west side of Interstate-10 to Paseo Del Norte Boulevard on the east side of I-10 is about to get a major makeover.

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) officials recently disclosed their \$244 million project that they said will help alleviate the traffic congestion that keeps getting worse as new business developments in the area increase.

The West Towne Marketplace shopping center and adjacent retail development continue to expand. Also, an Amazon delivery facility is under construction across Paseo Del Norte from the retail center. Additionally, the booming Santa Teresa industrial companies – with the port of entry to Mexico a few miles away – extensively use Artcraft/Ord Gary Highway, which turns into Pete Domenici Highway in New Mexico.

Besides all the businesses that have moved into the area, the Artcraft/Ord Gary highway interchange has become an integral part of the Santa Teresa, New Mexico port of entry traffic flow for commercial trucking enterprises. Hundreds of large cargo trucks use the I-10/Artcraft interchange on a weekly basis.

To address the traffic congestion in the area, TxDOT officials stated that work has begun on a project which will include four flyover bridges over the I-10/Artcraft/Ord Gary and Paseo Del Norte interchange. The flyover bridges will turn the three-mile stretch of Artcraft/Ord Gary roadway from I-10 to the New Mexico state line into an extensive highway thoroughfare.

To complete the project, TxDOT's plans call for

acquisition of about 30 properties on the west side of the interchange. A schematic drawing for the project, which was provided by TxDOT, indicated that some 13 commercial properties, including nine buildings, will be acquired near the I-10/Artcraft/Ord Gary interchange. The acquisitions appear to include buildings where certain businesses are currently located, such as Rudy's Bar-B-Q, Jack in the Box, Carl's Jr., Wing Daddy's Express, and the Speedway convenience store and gas station.

According to TxDOT officials, the construction project will include four large flyover bridges that will span across the Artcraft/I-10 interchange.

Officials explained that the flyovers will be designed to provide quick connections from I-10 to Artcraft in both directions, thus allowing motorists to bypass the Artcraft/Ord Gary and Paseo Del Norte intersection, which should help reduce the traffic congestion.

Other aspects of the project that will be incorporated are two turnaround bridges that will be built across I-10 from Artcraft to Paseo Del Norte to allow vehicles to more easily turn onto North Desert and South Desert boulevards and additional

See PROJECT, Page 3

Donations sought

Food banks filling the SNAP gap

By Wesley Story
Special to the Courier

TEXAS – For more than six decades, SNAP has served as the nation's largest and most effective anti-hunger program. It has fed millions, lifted families out of poverty, and served as a lifeline during times of crisis. For the first time in its history, on November 1, SNAP benefits were not issued by the federal government due to a shutdown.

"[On November 1], for the first time in the program's proud and proven history, SNAP recipients

face a lapse in benefits because of a government shutdown. This is a reality no American should accept, and it should trouble us all to our core. More than 3.5 million Texans rely on SNAP each month

SNAP

On August 31, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Food Stamp Act into law, launching what we now know as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). It was a cornerstone of Johnson's "War on Poverty," designed to improve nutrition for low-income Americans and support the agricultural economy.

to feed their families, and the vast majority of participants are children, seniors, and people with disabilities. Kids, grandparents, and our hardworking neighbors – that is who will be impacted by this pause in critical food aid," said Celia Cole.

Cole is CEO of Feeding Texas, the Texas' association of food banks. She adds, "To those affected: you are not alone. Food banks are here for you. Food banks across Texas are mobilizing, just as they always do in times of crisis. And this is a crisis, one that rivals even the most

See FOOD, Page 5

Mamdani’s Islamophobia canard

Zohran Mamdani has a hard time keeping it together when he thinks about Sept. 11 and its aftermath.

Not – judging by his performance the other day – when he contemplates the impact of two screaming jetliners on the Twin Towers; nor when he remembers the sacrifice of hundreds of courageous firefighters that day; nor when he thinks about the toxic, smoldering ruins where there had once been a thriving commercial center.

No, the front-running candidate for New York City mayor loses it when he recalls how someone may have looked askance at his hijab-wearing aunt.

Or so he would have us believe. In giving remarks about supposedly rampant Islamophobia in the closing days of the race, Mamdani paused

– seemingly overcome with emotion – when he recalled that his aunt gave up riding the train after Sept. 11 for fear of her safety. Mamdani has clarified that the woman was really his dad’s cousin, not his aunt, but the narrative is more important than the facts.

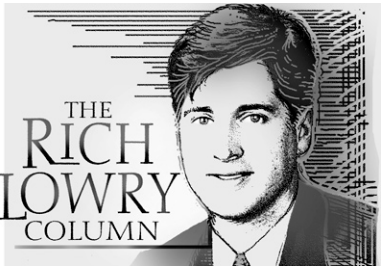
The candidate is attempting to end his campaign as a victim, both as a shield against charges that he’s an antisemite and as a way to discredit his opponents and press his case that America is a racist society.

It’s extraordinary that more than 20 years later, New York City is about to go from a mayor, in Rudy Giuliani, who warned of the dire threat of Islamic terrorism, to a mayor, in Zohran Mamdani, who warns of the dire threat of Islamophobia. The city is about to go from a mayor who understood the stakes

of a civilizational battle to a mayor who thinks the civilizational battle is all about addressing our own perfidy and hatred. One mayor saw his career revived by a crisis, while the other will – if he delivers on his agenda – create a crisis.

There was, of course, ignorance and malice directed at Muslims after Sept. 11, but FBI statistics showed that in the decade after the attacks, Muslims suffered hate crimes at a lower rate than black people, gays or Jews.

The idea that, as Mamdani said in his remarks,



See LOWRY, Page 7

Food for thought By Dr. Glenn Mollette

Is Congress’ behavior hypocritical?

The American government shutdown impacts about 1.4 million federal workers, with roughly 700,000 furloughed and another 700,000 deemed essential continuing to work without pay. This number doesn’t include the 42 million Americans who rely on SNAP benefits.

About 13,000 air traffic controllers and about 50,000 TSA officers are currently working without pay. Once the government shutdown ends they will receive their pay. Most Americans live paycheck to paycheck so this is a tough time.

The shutdown is expected to shave 0.1 to 0.2 percentage points of annualized inflation-GDP growth per week. It’s also delaying the release of economic data, which could make it harder for the Federal Reserve to make informed

decisions on interest and monetary policy. However, many economists believe the negative effects will be temporary and will be recovered when normal operations resume.

The major holdup is that Democrats want a spending plan that includes an extension of Covid-19 pandemic-era enhanced Obamacare subsidies. Republicans want a spending bill first, and then they’ll talk about the extension of those subsidies.

During the government shutdown, the average US congressman makes around \$14,500 per month. Their annual salary is \$174,000. They will also receive government health insurance. They will receive their ongoing matching contributions paid into their retirement plan by the government, paid time

off, free gym membership and other perks.

US Congress members still receive salaries during a shutdown because the 27th Amendment to the Constitution prevents congressional pay raises or decreases during their current term. Their salaries come from a permanent appropriation that isn’t tied to annual spending bills. They are considered essential workers, even though they’re not directly affected by the

shutdown like other federal workers.

Most Americans think it’s unfair for Congress to get paid during a shutdown while federal workers don’t. Many argue it’s hypocritical and unjust. However, there are several members of Congress who reportedly have chosen to not receive their pay until the shutdown is resolved.

During the shutdown, Americans can contact their representatives to express concerns. Donate to charities helping furloughed workers. Participate in peaceful protests/rallies. Support local

businesses and national parks. Volunteer for organizations helping federal workers. Stay informed through credible news sources. Reach out to neighbors who are federal workers to offer help. Vote at the upcoming election.

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.glennmollette.com or www.facebook.com/glennmollette.



– Photo courtesy El Paso Community College

SO MANY CHOICES – El Paso Community College (EPCC) students and other attendees visit the various tables at the 17th Annual Literary Fiesta on October 29 at EPCC’s Valle Verde campus.

Students turn out for EPCC Literary Fiesta

By Beau Bagley
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Community College (EPCC) held the 17th annual Literary Fiesta on October 29 at the Valle Verde Campus. The annual fiesta celebrates literature, music, and the arts in the El Paso community. It features free book giveaways, presentations by award winning authors, workshops, activities for kids, food, drinks, and was free and open to not just students, but also the general public.

“We are really hoping to get students

interested in the arts and literature, reading, music, and community service,” EPCC Northwest Librarian and Literary Fiesta co-coordinator Lorely Ambriz said. “Our literacy levels in El Paso are very low, so promoting reading and getting interested in the arts and building those skills at an early age is important.”

Included in this year’s Fiesta were books from El Paso bookstore ‘Books Are Gems’, gifts from the El Paso Public Library, and a poetry contest full of EPCC students’ written work

See FIESTA, Page 3

1973

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Years

2025

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Fiesta

From Page 2

over the last few months. The EPCC New Art Student Society provided henna tattoos, and students read poems or short stories they had cultivated in their classes.

The Fiesta also awarded local author Luis Jaramillo with the Literary Legacy Award. Jaramillo’s parents grew up in El Paso. He attended first grade at Polk Elementary and then moved around quite a bit.

Jaramillo is the award-winning author of *The Witches of El Paso* and *The Doctor’s Wife*. He is an assistant



Luis Jaramillo

– Photos courtesy EPCC

professor of creative writing at The New School in New York City.

“This book is a love letter to El Paso, so I guess I’m getting a little of the love coming back,” Jaramillo said. “I’ve been so happy to visit and write about El Paso. And El Paso is a place with so many stories, and I hope this inspires more people to write about the Borderland.”

Tocando, a division of the El Paso Symphony, was announced as the Community Spirit Award winner. Tocando is a free after school music program for children in elementary, middle, and high school. It provides music learning, musical instruments and performing opportunities to students in the

Segundo Barrio neighborhood of El Paso.

Project

From Page 1

turn lanes from Paseo Del Norte to North Desert Boulevard.

To complement the I-10/ Artcraft/Ord Gary interchange reconstruction, the North and South Desert boulevard access roads will also be expanded to allow for a smoother traffic flow, according to TxDOT officials.

To address the eastbound and westbound traffic situation on the intersecting roads of Upper Valley Road and Westside Drive, four new overpasses – with entrance and exit ramps – will be built over the Artcraft/

Ord Gary Highway.

The extensive highway interchange project is in its beginning stage with equipment, supplies, and materials being brought to the site, and initial work has started on the concrete pillars for the bridges.

Meanwhile, TxDOT work continues on the still unfinished Redd Road and Thorn Road overpass expansion projects that are in the same area. TxDOT officials stated that plans are to complete these overpasses and their I-10 lane widening projects by early 2026.

As for the I-10/Artcraft/Ord Gary/Paseo Del Norte interchange renovation project, its completion date is estimated to be about four to five years down the road.

King Crossword

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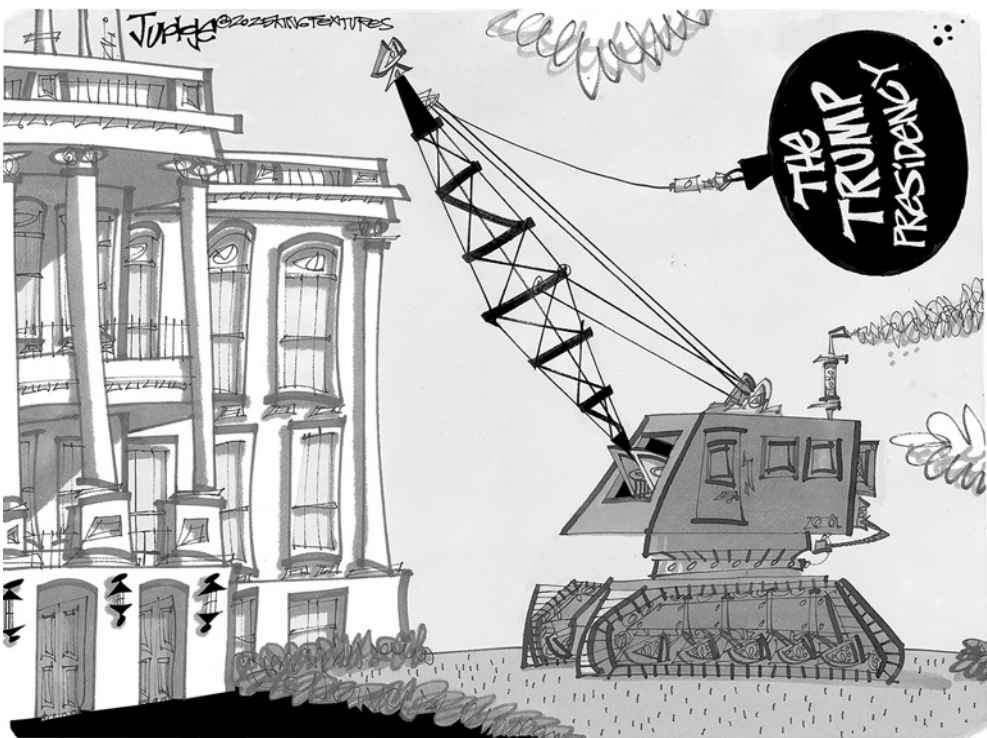
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7 Writings by Kate Chopin
8 Comics cry
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10 Secret-protecting doc.
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23 Mother's Day month

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30 Tolkien villains
31 Up-to-date
35 Pink Floyd's Barrett
38 Society newbie
40 Court divider
42 Hosiery shade
45 Gym site, for short
47 Ship's jail
48 Austen novel
49 Knocks
50 Family
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52 Allow
54 Calif. clock setting

Answer Page 4





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SNAP

& GOVERNMENT ESSENTIAL WORKER

RELIEF FUND

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- It took more than 200 spacewalks to assemble the International Space Station.
- The average freediver can hold their breath for approximately 10 minutes, much longer than the average healthy, fit human but well short of the Guinness World Record time of 22 minutes.
- During the Middle Ages, the majority of western maps placed east rather than north at the top.
- Diamonds are the only gem made of a single element, at nearly 99.95% carbon, the most commonly found element on Earth.
- After the axle, the first wheels did not appear on any mode of transportation, but on a child's toy. Scholars estimate that it took another three centuries after wheels were used in pottery and toymaking for them to be applied to transportation.
- The Great Pyramid at Giza has over 2 million stone blocks, each with an average weight of more than 2 tons.
- For centuries, the word "topaz" was used to refer to any yellow gemstone, despite the fact that natural topaz is colorless.
- Two days after Alexander Graham Bell died at his summer home in Nova Scotia on Aug. 2, 1922, all telephone service in the United States and Canada was suspended for a full minute at the precise moment when he was lowered into his grave.
- Just 10% of an incandescent light bulb's energy produces light. The remaining 90% produces heat.
- At the 2007 French Open, Venus Williams' serve sent the ball flying at 129 miles per hour, the second fastest serve by a woman ever recorded. It was also the fastest recorded in a main draw match at that time.
- Most people think you gain 5 to 10 pounds over Thanksgiving, but you'll be glad to know the average amount is really just a single pound.

Archives: www.wtxcc.com

1973
51
Years
2024

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CryptoQuip
Answer

Small cartoon superhero who reaches his most powerful form in the fall season: Autumn Ant.

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• On Nov. 3, 1883, California bandit and stagecoach robber Black Bart, born Charles E. Boles and famous for his daring as well as his habit of occasionally leaving short poems at the scenes of his crimes, held up his last stagecoach. While he initially made a quick getaway, he was done in by the handkerchief with a laundry mark he'd inadvertently dropped and spent four years in San Quentin prison.

• On Nov. 4, 1928, Arnold Rothstein, a legendary New York gambler with a fortune estimated at about \$50 million, was shot during a poker game at Manhattan's Park Central Hotel. He died in the hospital two days later without revealing the name of his assassin, though the fellow gambler who'd invited him to the game was tried for the crime, and acquitted.

• On Nov. 5, 2024, former President Donald Trump was elected to a second term in office, becoming the first president to serve nonconsecutive terms since 1892.

• On Nov. 6, 1977, the Toccoa Falls Dam in Georgia collapsed just hours after a volunteer fireman inspected it and found everything in order, with 39 people dying in the resulting flood.

• On Nov. 7, 1943, Roberta Joan Anderson, now known to the world as Joni Mitchell and dubbed the greatest female guitarist of all time by Rolling Stone magazine, was born in Fort MacLEOd, Alberta, Canada. She cemented her status in the music world as a composer rather than performer, with David Geffen of Geffen Records noting in 1994 that, "Even though we lost money on every one of her records, we always treated Joni as one of the most important artists in the world."

• On Nov. 8, 1970, Tom Dempsey, a professional football kicker, though he was born with no toes on his right foot, launched a 63-yard field goal in his custom shoe and set a new NFL record, beating the previous record by seven yards.

• On Nov. 9, 1956, French philosopher and author Jean-Paul Sartre, a long-time admirer of the Soviet Union, denounced both the USSR and its communist system following the Soviet invasion of Hungary.

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Food
From Page 1

devastating disasters our state has faced. The 20 food banks in the Feeding Texas network, alongside thousands of local partners – churches, pantries, and everyday Texans – are stepping up to ensure no one is left behind. Together, we are a lifeline. And together, we will continue to show up for our neighbors with food, compassion, and resolve.”

There is no telling how long the lapse in payments will take to sort out. Two federal judges in Rhode Island and Massachusetts have ordered the Trump administration to use emergency contingency funds to fund SNAP. The administration believes it is illegal to use the targeted funds and was to respond by Monday the 3rd on its course of action. As of going to press on Monday afternoon there was no firm

- 1) **Donation pages:** Support from the community helps food banks respond quickly and compassionately to families facing unexpected hardship. While food donations are always welcome, monetary donations go further. Food banks can purchase in bulk at discounted rates, allowing them to stretch every dollar. Financial contributions also help cover transportation, storage, and staffing costs, especially as food banks ramp up emergency distributions in response to the SNAP pause.
- If Texans do want to donate food, shelf-stable, nutritious foods are especially helpful during times of crisis. Though the shutdown is a different type of crisis, items like canned proteins, vegetables and fruits, dried beans, rice, pasta, cereal, peanut butter are helpful. These foods have a long shelf life and are simple to store, distribute, and use, especially for families facing sudden disruptions in SNAP benefits.
- Highly needed items include:**

plan in place – the administration saying partial funding could take months.

Meanwhile, food banks are stepping up their efforts to fill the void and are asking for donations across the country. Cole continues, “We expect politicians to have disagreements, but everyone can agree that no American should go hungry. Feeding people is not a partisan cause – it is the human response.

“Food banks trade in hope – it’s our superpower. It fuels our work and lifts our spirits when days are long and the challenges are great. As we enter the holiday season, we hold onto hope that solutions will come swiftly to end this crisis. But until those solutions arrive, we remain steadfast in our mission to end hunger.”

She acknowledges that this may take time to resolve saying, “Ongoing lawsuits are not a swift solution. Even if contingency funds are released, they

- Ways To Share**
- Proteins: Canned chicken, tuna, salmon, and dried or canned beans/lentils
 - Grains: Brown rice, pasta, oatmeal, and whole-grain cereals
 - Canned Goods: Vegetables, fruits, soups, and stews
 - Pantry Staples: Peanut butter, shelf-stable milk, crackers
 - Baby Essentials: Infant formula and baby food are in especially high demand
 - Items Suitable for Dietary Restrictions: Low-sodium, gluten-free, etc.
- Most food banks have dedicated webpages with details on how to donate food. Every contribution makes a meaningful impact and helps food banks respond swiftly to the needs of their communities.
- 2) **Government Shutdown Resource Page:** Our public-facing landing page provides up-to-

represent only partial relief – and the administration has indicated it could take weeks to calculate and distribute them. Congress must fully fund SNAP to avoid confusion and reduced benefits for participants. In the meantime, food banks remain on the frontlines, serving Texans in urgent need. Unfortunately, as of now, this crisis is far from over.”

Cole is reaching out. “Today, we ask all Texans to follow the lead of their food banks. Share hope. Spread kindness. Donate what you can. Volunteer. Tell your neighbors where to find help. Sit down and share a meal. These are the acts that will carry us through.

“Food banks cannot do this alone. This is a moment for all of us to stand together to support our fellow Texans. Because no child should go hungry. No family should struggle to put food on the table. And no senior should have to wonder where their next meal will come from,” she said.

date information on how the shutdown is affecting hunger and benefit programs, how to find local food assistance, and ways to support hunger relief efforts in Texas.

3) **Finding a food bank:** Texans can locate their nearest food bank by entering their zip code, county, or browsing a full list. Each listing includes links to food bank websites, volunteer opportunities, donation pages, and a “Find Food Now” button that shows the food bank’s food distributions. (El Paso: epcf.org/snaprelieffund or elpasoansfightinghunger.org)

Things to know:

Texans can still apply for benefits and manage their cases at YourTexasBenefits.com. While November SNAP benefits are paused, unused benefits issued prior to November remain valid. WIC also remains operational.

Calling 2-1-1 and selecting Option 1 connects callers to local food assistance programs, including pantries and meal sites.

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

The Anthony Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 6:00 P.M. on Wednesday, November 19, 2025 in the Anthony ISD Board Room, 813 Sixth Street, Anthony, Texas 79821.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss Anthony Independent School District’s rating on the State’s Financial Accountability Rating System.

WTCC: 11-06-25

Notice of Public Meeting To Discuss San Elizario Independent School District’s State Financial Accountability Rating (FIRST)

The San Elizario Independent School District will hold a public hearing at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 12, 2025 in the boardroom of the San Elizario ISD Administration Building, 1050 Chicken Ranch Road, San Elizario, Texas.

The purpose of this hearing is to discuss San Elizario Independent School District’s rating on the state’s financial accountability system. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the scheduled board of Trustees’ Meeting.

WTCC: 11-06-25

Notice of Public Meeting To Discuss Socorro Independent School District’s State Financial Accountability Rating (FIRST)

The Socorro Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, November 19, 2025 in the District Service Center Board Room, 12440 Rojas Dr. El Paso TX 79928.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss Socorro Independent School District’s rating under the state’s financial accountability system. Public participation in the discussion is invited.

WTCC: 11/06/25

Notice of Public Hearing to Discuss Tornillo Independent School District’s State Financial Accountability Rating (FIRST)

Tornillo Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 5:30 PM, Thursday, November 19, 2025, in the boardroom of the W.E. Neill Service Center, at 19210 Cobb Ave., Tornillo, Texas 79853.

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

WTCC: 11/06/25

El Paso football saying goodbye to some great talent

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Every season seems to go faster than the one before. This coming weekend is the final weekend for El Paso high school football action.

Most of the playoff teams have already been decided, but there will be a few teams that can still get in there this Thursday and Friday.

The one thing that we know for sure is that El Paso will be saying goodbye to one of the best senior classes it’s had in a while.

There are four young men who have had outstanding careers and for all of them, they’ll keep playing football – only they’ll be playing on Saturdays now.

The four are Del Valle quarterback Jake Fette, who is going to ASU; Franklin running back Ernie Powers, who hasn’t chosen a college yet, but he’s being perused heavily; El Dorado running back Ryan Estrada, who is going to the U of Minesota; and Chapin quarterback Daveon Singleton, who will continue his career at UTEP.

Fette and his Del Valle Conquistadores have won 28 of the 31 games he’s started going back to his sophomore season.

He played his final regular-season game last week, beating Burges 65-19, giving Del Valle a 9-1 record.

Fette has the kind of quarterback talent you see in El Paso about once every 20-30 years. In his career, he’s thrown for 81 touchdowns and just eight interceptions. He also ran for 1,805 yards and another 38

touchdowns.

I remember covering him in a game when he was a sophomore. I’d never heard of him and wasn’t even sure how to pronounce Fette. But I remember leaving the game thinking that I’d just seen the best quarterback in the city.

I didn’t know it at the time, but I was right.

Ryan Estrada still has one regular-season game left in his career when he and the El Dorado Aztecs take on the Parkland Matadors this Thursday.

Estrada has rushed for 2,232 yards this season and is averaging 248 yards a game, to go with his 31 touchdowns.

For his two-season career, Estrada has gained 4,656 yards and scored 63 rushing touchdowns, 67 altogether. In his 20 varsity starts, he has averaged 232.8 yards rushing per game.

His over 2,400 rushing yards in 2024, ranked him 6th in the state.

In sports, whenever someone is called a Swiss army knife, it means he can do a little bit of everything. That certainly describes Chapin

quarterback/running back/receiver Daveon Singleton.

Though he’s been used primarily as a quarterback this season, Singleton has been used as a running back and receiver over the years, depending on what kind of team Chapin had and where they needed him the most.

Not only has Singleton always done what they wanted, but he’s been outstanding wherever he’s played.

In his four-year varsity career, this human Swiss army knife has thrown for 2,190 yards and 23 touchdowns; he’s rushed for 3,558 yards and scored 46 touchdowns; and he’s caught 80 passes for 1,272 yards and another 20 touchdowns.

That means that Singleton has been responsible for 7,020 yards and 89 touchdowns while at Chapin.

It’s hard to say where he’ll play at UTEP, but wherever it is, they’re getting a good one.

Franklin running back Ernie Powers always had the potential to be great, but nagging injuries always seemed to

get in the way.

But this year he’s been healthy and able to show off his stuff. This year, Powers is the leading rusher in the state with 3.063 yards. He also leads the state in touchdowns with 49.

He leads all others by over 200 rushing yards and five touchdowns.

For his career, Powers has gained 5,291 rushing yards and scored 70 touchdowns. If you count his catches, that’s 73 total touchdowns in just 20 games.

It’s too bad that Fette (ASU) and Estrada (Minnesota) are leaving El Paso. Just like what happened to Aaron Jones, the hope was that they’d stay and help the Miners.

But Singleton is staying home, and Powers is still undecided.

But whatever the case, El Paso is starting to put out some top talent that is recruited by big programs.

And with the number of freshmen and sophomores having great seasons this year, El Paso football is only going to get better.

Senior moment

By Matilda Charles

Food recalls

It’s impossible to say exactly what’s going on, but lately there are problems with our food supply, one after the other. Listeria and salmonella are at the top of the list.

Listeria shows up in water, waste and the soil and ends up in our meat, fresh produce and dairy products.

Some say the rising number of cases of listeria are because we’re eager to grab ready-to-eat foods like deli meats. Others point to better detection methods that find listeria during inspections. One big concern, however, is that cold doesn’t kill listeria. Even if it’s stored in the cold (or even frozen), it doesn’t die.

When it comes to salmonella, expert fingers want to point to climate change because warm temperatures help salmonella grow. But there is also the problem of large farming facilities where a single sick animal can infect the rest.

But no matter the reason for the increases and their sources, we seniors need to be especially careful. A bad

case of listeria or salmonella can put us in the hospital.

What can we do to avoid problems with food contamination?

With salmonella, wash your fruit and vegetables. Cook foods to the correct temperature, especially eggs, meat and poultry. Invest in a thermometer to keep an eye on the temperature in the refrigerator.

Listeria is tougher. Unfortunately, hygiene is part of the problem. The contamination can start at the location where the food is produced – and spread around the deli counter if slicers aren’t washed correctly. Once we have that lunch meat at home, we need to heat it to a high enough temperature. Which means it’s not safe to just grab a few slices of cold lunch meat to make a sandwich.

Besides being cautious, pay attention to food recalls. You can sign up for email alerts at www.FoodSafety.gov, www.recalls.gov, www.fda.gov and www.fsis.usda.gov.

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THE NIGHT BEFORE

- ACROSS**
- 1 For the stock issue price
- 6 Low voices
- 12 Test version
- 16 Aykroyd of "Coneheads"
- 19 Small wine or oil container
- 20 "Fighting" NCAA team
- 21 Epochs
- 22 Logging tool
- 23 * Fourth-day gifts in a Yuletide song
- 25 * Warming Yuletide drink
- 27 Earthen cooking pot
- 28 Bedazzled
- 29 Suffix with art
- 31 President Reagan
- 32 * Flying Yuletide team
- 34 * Leafy Yuletide door decoration
- 37 Tooth: Prefix
- 38 Fashion flair
- 40 Shared by us
- 41 Soften
- 45 Fed, e.g.
- 47 High trains
- 48 Ill. neighbor
- 49 Religious branches
- 50 Figure skater Dorothy
- 54 Some toy batteries
- 55 * Much-anticipated Yuletide visitor
- 57 * Yuletide tinsel,
- ornaments and lights
- 59 Wray of "King Kong"
- 60 Circular square dance maneuver
- 61 Actress Reid
- 62 Keeps pelting
- 64 Eat away (at)
- 66 Backup strategy
- 68 * Plant hung up for Yuletide
- 70 Jessica of "King Kong"
- 75 Roaring cat
- 77 Bombardier's attack
- 79 Paper pack
- 80 Quality evoking pity
- 84 In time past
- 85 * Phrase from the Yuletide carol "Silent Night"
- 87 * What "it's lovely weather for" in a Yuletide tune
- 90 NFL scores
- 91 To a huge degree
- 92 Church cries
- 93 Nav. leader
- 94 Be litigious
- 95 Buddy
- 96 Zesty taste
- 97 Intl. 1940s conflict
- 98 Misstep
- 100 Edge along
- 105* Yuletide tree, e.g.
- 108* Time off for Yuletide, say
- 110 "Scram!"
- 113 Office tel. add-on

- 114 _ fire under (stirred up)
- 115 Make _ for it (try fleeing)
- 116 * Scrooge in a Yuletide classic
- 122 Spock's spelled out by the first letters of the answers to the starred clues
- 123 Toon frames
- 124 Tough trial
- 125 Capital of Ghana
- 126 Seeded loaf
- 127 Jenner of reality TV
- 128 Subtle distinction
- 129 Detested

DOWN

- 1 Honda model
- 2 Seat of Ireland's County Kerry
- 3 Arrive at a stop, as a bus
- 4 Tilted
- 5 Camping gear
- 6 Conference for UC Davis
- 7 Einstein or Camus
- 8 Lost traction
- 9 Knightly title
- 10 Alternatives to escalators
- 11 Spacek of "Carrie"
- 12 Scrooge's cry
- 13 Vanity
- 14 "Neon" fishes
- 15 Chichi scarf
- 16 Father, to a wee tot
- 17 Skating jump
- 18 "Adorkable" sort, perhaps
- 24 Scot's denial
- 26 Wearing stilettos, say
- 30 Involving give-and-take
- 33 " _ for Murder" (Hitchcock film)
- 34 Troubles
- 35 Totally spoil
- 36 Word before while
- 39 Brewing fungi
- 42 Brazilian juice berry
- 43 Kind of poker
- 44 Canadian gas station name
- 46 Smooth but unconvincing
- 49 Meanie's look
- 50 URL opener
- 51 Asia's _ Sea
- 52 Actress Sorvino
- 53 One-named supermodel
- 54 Once more
- 55 More reasonable
- 56 Oral health org.
- 58 Pixar title fish
- 59 Book leaf
- 63 Rocket part
- 64 Targets
- 65 Astrophysicist _ deGrasse Tyson
- 67 Online journals
- 69 Wall Street worker
- 71 Circle parts
- 72 In tidy order
- 73 Chutzpah

- 74 TV trophy
- 76 "Sorta"
- 78 Opera queen
- 80 Jr.'s exam
- 81 _ mater
- 82 Adolescent
- 83 Be determined by
- 84 Be a fan of
- 86 Chip topper
- 88 Texters' playful growl
- 89 "Yeah, dude"
- 90 Rotate
- 94 Transparent, informally
- 95 Empty talk
- 97 "Buddy Holly" rock band
- 99 Egg-holding capsule
- 101 Lake that feeds the Mississippi
- 102 Fortright
- 103 Paris art museum
- 104 Group of nine
- 106 Sweater type
- 107 Parolee, e.g.
- 109 Vid recorder
- 110 Bar brew
- 111 Auction site
- 112 Richard of "First Knight"
- 114 Legal claim
- 117 Roth of horror films
- 118 Web feed format inits.
- 120 Dietary std.
- 121 Sigh of relief

Answer Page 4

Super Crossword

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11		12	13	14	15		16	17	18	
19						20							21					22			
23					24								25				26				
27					28				29		30				31						
32				33					34				35	36							
37						38		39				40					41	42	43	44	
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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	
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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				121				
122						123					124						125				
126						127					128						129				

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



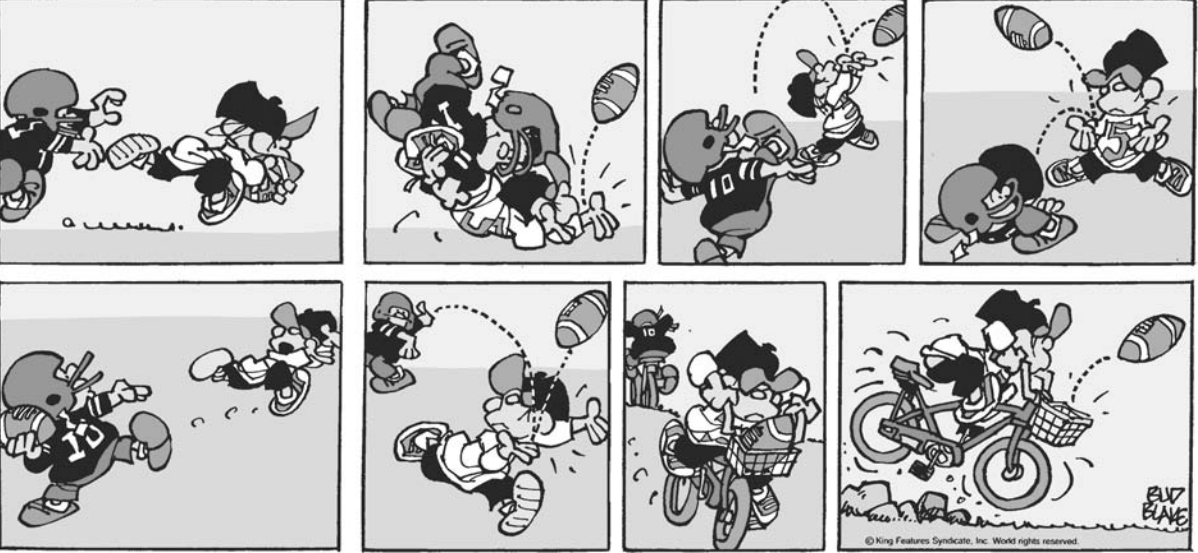
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

Muslims have to live in the shadows in New York City, or that Islamophobia is just part of the background noise of our political life, or that he himself has been abashed about his status as a Muslim man is absurd.

You have to look pretty hard to find any residual effects of Islamophobia on the son of a Columbia University professor and Oscar-nominated filmmaker, who graduated from the prestigious Bronx High School of Science and the elite Bowdoin College, before becoming a state assemblyman at age 29 and the Democratic nominee for New York City mayor at age 33.

If this is what Islamophobia looks like, everyone should welcome having some sectarian hatred directed their way.

Mamdani complains of the harsh attacks by his opponents. What else, though, should be expected at the end of a high-stakes campaign? The rhetorical sallies against Mamdani are fundamentally driven by his extremist statements and radical associations, rather

than his faith.

Does Mamdani really believe that a Christian candidate who didn't accept the existence of Israel as a Jewish state, who smeared Israel's conduct of the Gaza war and who refused to condemn the phrase "globalize the intifada" would skate? Certainly, Marjorie Taylor Greene comes in for heavy criticism for her anti-Israel views, and no one can claim that it's anti-Muslim sentiment at work.

At the end of the day, one of the most glaring problems with Zohran Mamdani is that, ideology aside, he is light as a feather. His callow and self-dramatizing Islamophobia speech, full of faux eloquence and stirring resolve over nothing, is a case in point.

Ed Koch, a different kind of mayor in a different time, said after he lost a re-election bid, "The people have spoken... and they must be punished." In turning to Zohran Mamdani, New Yorkers are preparing to reacquaint themselves with Koch's wisdom.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. ©2025 by King Features Synd., Inc.

Throat problem not linked to weight loss

DEAR DR. ROACH: I was recently diagnosed with diabetes and immediately changed my diet and exercise regimen. I was able to lose 17 pounds in about two months but have started to experience a feeling of something being stuck in my throat. Could the sudden weight loss have brought this on? I was sent to get an ultrasound on my thyroid, and it came back negative. – V.J.



to
Your
good
health
WITH
Dr. Keith
Roach

A sensation of something stuck in the throat is common in clinical practice and can have many causes. It is referred to as a “globus” sensation. An ultrasound is a very reasonable test as a large thyroid mass (goiter) can cause a mechanical effect on the esophagus, which then leads to this sensation. Similarly, abnormalities in the esophagus, oropharynx and larynx may also lead to this sensation. Most experts recommend an evaluation with an endoscopy and a laryngoscopy for people with a persistent globus sensation.

Unintentional weight loss is a red flag in people with a globus sensation because if the cause behind the globus sensation is also leading people to lose weight, this means that it is more likely to be something serious. But this is not the case with you, so I can't think of how losing weight could have been the cause behind your globus sensation.

If the sensation of something in your throat continues, I recommend further evaluation by an ENT physician.

DEAR DR. ROACH: My in-laws are being evaluated for infertility, and my brother-in-law has a varicocele. They say that he needs an operation. Is this necessary in order for them to have children? – C.F.

A varicocele is a common enlargement of the veins in the male scrotum. There is some evidence that a large varicocele could reduce fertility in men. However, the repair of a varicocele is usually indicated for fertility only when both the varicocele is large and the man has an abnormal semen analysis.

The benefit in fertility is thought to be small; it is estimated that 17 men need to be operated on to produce one pregnancy, so there's roughly a 6% chance that the operation will help the couple conceive.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have high liver enzymes and bilirubin, most likely due to Gilbert syndrome. I've had elevated numbers since at least 2006 when I started to track them. I was recently prescribed a low-dose statin after receiving a slightly elevated coronary calcium score (49). The statin did great at lowering my cholesterol but seriously elevated my AST and ALT numbers. (My AST and ALT levels were 12 and 20 U/L respectively before treatment, then 41 and 32 U/L while on the statin. Normal is less than 35 U/L.) So, I discontinued its use. Are there any options other than statins to help reduce cholesterol? – S.M.

Gilbert syndrome is a relatively common liver condition caused by abnormal bilirubin metabolism. People with this condition can get recurrent jaundice and high bilirubin levels.

Statin drugs are generally considered to be safe in people with Gilbert syndrome. Many people (with and without Gilbert's) will have elevations in their liver enzymes (ALT and AST levels) due to statin drugs. Most authorities recommend reducing the dose or stopping the statin treatment if the liver enzymes go over three times the upper limit of normal – above about 100 U/L – which yours didn't get close to.

Since the risk to your liver from a statin is small, and the benefit of a statin in a person with even modest coronary calcium is relatively large, there is more benefit than harm for most people in your situation.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu. ©2025 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.



Moore Texas by Roger Moore
November 6, 1528: Cabeza de Vaca, shipwrecked, begins white man's first exploration of 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: M equals S

MYVTT PVZGJJQ MOSRZWRZJ
EWJ ZRVPWRM WAM YJMG
SJERZHOT HJZY AQ GWR HVTT
MRVMJQ: VOGOYQ VQG.

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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 4

♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Claims error rate: 61%



by Freddy Groves

It's one thing to have a medical condition that neatly slots into the VA's presumptive chart of toxic exposure-related illnesses. If you served at a location at a certain time, your illness is presumed to have been caused by that service under TERA, a toxic exposure risk activity. As the list of presumptives grows (courtesy of the PACT Act), so do the number of veterans who qualify automatically. Disability benefits soon follow – if all goes well.

But what if you were there, at a certain time, and your toxic exposure illness isn't on the list?

In 2022 when the PACT Act added so many presumptives, veterans submitted their claims, the how-to claims manual increased in size and things became complicated. For one thing, those veterans without a presumptive

(listed) illness were required to get a medical exam and a medical opinion. The claims people had to do extra work and request the specific exam as well as the opinion to verify that the veteran did have that illness, and that the exposure did indeed cause that illness.

And there the problems began with the denial of claims.

The VA's Office of Inspector General stepped in and conducted a very long review to investigate whether processors handled those denials correctly.

The results of that investigation showed that 61% of denials for nonpresumptive TERA-related claims had processing errors. In some cases, there was no request for a medical exam and opinion. In other cases there was no research into whether the veteran participated in a toxic exposure activity.

It's not surprising so many mistakes were made. Besides the standard 82-page how-to manual, processors needed to wade through eight policy documents, nine general

information documents and 94 webpages of frequently asked questions.

The OIG's recommendations, if followed by the VA, should ease the difficulties in accurately processing the exposure claims. We can only hope they're listening.

Veterans, if you believe your illness was caused by toxic exposure, insist on a TERA exam and medical opinion to bolster your claim.

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• “Here’s a fun game to help kids learn their sight words. BINGO! Make your own bingo cards with sight words in all the spaces. Use flash cards to call out the words, and the kids can mark them off as they hear them. We tape the bingo card to a small magnetic dry erase board, and the kids use refrigerator magnets to cover the words. We can use the boards over and over, really reinforcing the lesson. And it’s fun!” – A.J. in Florida

• “Use purified water in your coffeemaker to lengthen its life. Water deposits build up and affect both the flavor and function of your machine. They can be cleaned, but it’s much better if you use purified drinking water from a jug. It’s very easy to fill the machine, too.” – M.E. in Wyoming

• If you need to pick up small shards of glass, you can use a cotton ball that’s been moistened, or a slice of white bread (insides only) wadded up.

• “That time of the year is almost here for us. You know, the time when running the heater gives the whole house the zaps. To keep our carpets from giving us static shock, we fill a water spray bottle with one part laundry softener and four parts water. Give the air and carpet a spritz, and it kills the zaps.” – A.O. in Canada

• When you are frying up ground beef, add a tablespoon or two of water. It will help the excess grease pull away from the meat, making it easier to drain off.

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.

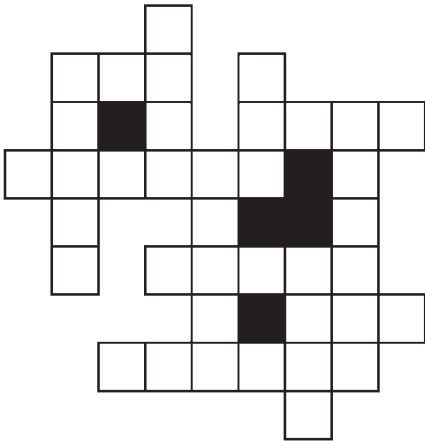
Answer Page 4

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	+		+		=13			
+		+		+				
	+		×		=72			
÷		×		×				
	+		÷		= 4			
=		=		=				
2		21		51				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9



IEH
FONGAL
KAPRA
♥ENPO
♥NEPTIC
OHR
♥THSO
♥NERSI
♥OTP
PNINKA
KIFSR
LHEO



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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