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On immigration, momentum shifts away from Arizona

A year ago, a revolution on immigration enforcement seemed underway, with legislators in at least 20 states vowing to follow the lead of Arizona's tough new law targeting illegal immigrants.

These days, the momentum has shifted.

In at least six states, the proposals have been voted down or have simply died. Many of the other proposals have not even made it past one legislative chamber.

The most-discussed provision in the Arizona law requires police to investigate the status of people they legally stop whom they also suspect are illegal immigrants.

But even in Arizona, several tough immigration proposals have been stalled in the Senate, with business leaders and some Republicans arguing that the state does not need more controversy.

The one state whose Legislature has passed an Arizona-style law, Utah, only approved a diluted bill accompanied by another measure that goes in a dramatically different direction.

The Utah Legislature on Friday voted to create ID cards for "guest workers" and their families, provided they pay a fine and don't commit serious crimes. Immigrants who entered the country illegally would be fined up to \$2,500. Im-

migrants who entered the country legally but were not complying with federal immigration law would be fined \$1,000.

"Why not put something in place where, in five years, we can say we did something, rather than sending a few people home?" said state Rep. Bill Wright, who wrote the law. "Sending a few people home will not solve our problems."

Utah's measure is essentially a state version of the comprehensive immigration reform that many backers of the Arizona approach deride as amnesty.

Muzaffar Chishti of the Migration Policy Institute said the momentum behind Arizona's law was similar to the motivations driving Republican campaigns during the 2010 election and a bevy of new "tea party"-backed legislators eager to make their mark.

"There was a strong newcomer's enthusiasm for this," Chishti said. "Now I think reality has set in."

The main factor behind the retreat is skittishness about costs, said Ann Morse, who tracks immigration legislation for the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Arizona was sued by the Obama administration, which secured an injunction against most of the law.

That ruling is under appeal and expected to reach the Supreme Court, costing millions in legal fees.



Arizona was also hit by boycotts and canceled conventions.

"Most states are looking at where to cut money, not where to spend money," Morse said.

There's still time for the dynamic to change. Laws partly modeled on Arizona's SB 1070 have made their way out of one of the two chambers in legislatures in Indiana, Kentucky and Georgia.

But the situation in Georgia symbolizes why it has been difficult to pass Arizona-style laws. Gov. Nathan Deal, a Republican, campaigned on bringing such legisla-

tion to Georgia, but allies accuse him of equivocating because he hasn't vowed to sign the proposal



that passed the state House of Representatives on Thursday.

Mark Krikorian of the Center for Immigration Studies in Washington said it's not surprising that efforts to replicate SB 1070 face uphill battles. Such laws spark fierce opposition from businesses, police and immigration advocates.

The issue gained traction in Arizona, Krikorian said, because illegal immigration was viewed as such a serious problem there. But elsewhere, "there's no business

with full-time employees trying to get immigration laws enforced. In fact, the opposite is true."

"Any progress at all surprises me," he added.

In Nebraska, state Sen. Charlie Janssen's SB 1070-style bill is stuck in the Legislature's judiciary committee, where he says six of the eight members are cool to the idea.

"When you talk to Main Street, Nebraska, they say, 'Go do it,'" Janssen said. "But when you get down here, the advocacy groups get to all the individual senators."

In Florida, a measure modeled on SB 1070 is unlikely to pass, but the Republican-controlled Legislature will still consider requiring that all people booked into jail be checked for immigration violations.

"What's encouraging is they're backing away from the blatant anti-immigrant sentiment in Arizona," said Subhash Kateel of the Florida Immigration Coalition. "But there's politicians who campaigned on doing Arizona-style stuff, and now they have to do something."

In Arizona itself, SB 1070 helped propel Republicans to record margins in both chambers of the Legislature and to a clean sweep of statewide elected offices during the

November election. Polls show the measure is very popular in the state and nationwide.

But its author, Senate President Russell Pearce, has been unable to replicate the measure's smooth passage with the latest batch of immigration laws. He did not respond to requests for comment.

Proposals to require that hospitals check patients' immigration status, that teachers and social workers refer suspected illegal immigrants to the federal government and that U.S.-born children of illegal immigrants be denied citizenship have all squeaked through state Senate committees. They have yet to face a vote in the full Senate. It's possible the measures will ultimately pass, but many political observers in the state are surprised there has been Republican opposition to them.

"We have other more important issues and this distracts us from them," said Sen. John McComish, a Republican who voted for SB 1070.

The biggest shift in dynamics is in Utah, where, the day SB 1070 was signed last year, a legislator vowed to bring the same law to the Beehive State. In response, business and community groups issued a statement of principles

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La inseguridad laboral ataca a los latinos

Pese al crecimiento "significativo" de empleos en sectores con alta representación hispana, los latinos afrontan más inseguridad laboral, según un informe divulgado ayer por el Consejo Nacional de La Raza (NCLR).

"Los latinos están haciendo contribuciones importantes a las industrias que están ayudando a impulsar la recuperación económica. Sin embargo, los trabajadores latinos permanecen en una posición precaria respecto a la conservación de sus empleos y su avance en el mercado laboral", dijo en un comunicado Eric Rodríguez, un representante de NCLR. Según el análisis de NCLR,



basado en datos del Departamento del Trabajo, el sector de servicios contribuyó a la mayoría de los 192,000 empleos creados entre enero y febrero pasados, especialmente en áreas de alta representación latina como servicios administrativos y de desperdicios, enfermería y cuidado residencial, y transporte por camiones.

La gran mayoría de empleos creados en febrero fue en el sector de servicios. De los 152,000 nuevos empleos en ese sector, 47,000 fueron en el área de servicios profesionales y de negocios; 40,000 en salud y educación, y 22,000 en servicios de transporte y almace-

namiento.

Aunque, en general, los latinos no están sobrerrepresentados en estos sectores, sí conforman una parte "significativa" de "subindustrias" que impulsan el crecimiento de empleos y, por lo tanto, lo más probable es que los latinos se hayan beneficiado de ese aumento, indicó el documento.

En 2010, los hispanos conformaron el 17% de la fuerza laboral en el área de cuidados de salud a domicilio, y el 15% de enfermería y cuidado residencial.

Asimismo, fueron el 29% en servicios de almacenamiento; el 21% de "actividades de apoyo de

transporte", y el 16% del sector de transporte por camiones.

Sin embargo, febrero fue el tercer mes consecutivo en que los latinos abandonaron por completo la fuerza laboral, lo que probablemente contribuyó a que su tasa de desempleo bajase levemente a 11.6% en febrero, en comparación con el 11.9% el mes anterior.

Según NCLR, las encuestas demuestran que la falta de empleos bien remunerados está provocando que muchos latinos dejen de buscar trabajo. Entre enero y febrero, 187,000 latinos abandonaron la fuerza

laboral por completo al no hallar empleo.

Una encuesta conjunta del diario Washington Post, la Fundación Kaiser Family y la Universidad Harvard señaló que un 33% de los latinos expresó "ansiedad" por inseguridad laboral, en comparación con el 22% de los negros y el 20% de los blancos.

NCLR recomendó que el Gobierno adopte medidas para mejorar la cantidad y calidad de empleos en comunidades pobres, donde la falta de educación formal y capacitación laboral es más patente.

US 'heartland' near historic shift from Midwest

America's population center is edging away from the Midwest, pulled by Hispanic growth in the Southwest, according to census figures. The historic shift is changing the nation's politics and even the traditional notion of the country's heartland long the symbol of mainstream American beliefs and culture.

The West is now home to the four fastest-growing states Nevada, Arizona, Utah and Idaho and has surpassed the Midwest in population, according to 2010 figures. California and Texas added to the southwestern population tilt, making up more than one-fourth of the nation's total gains since 2000.

When the Census Bureau announces a new mean center of population next month, geographers believe it will be placed in or around Texas County, Mo., southwest of the present location in Phelps County, Mo. That would put it on a path to leave the region by midcentury.

"The geography is clearly shifting, with the West beginning to emerge as America's new heartland," said Robert Lang, a sociology professor at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas who regularly crunches data to determine the nation's center. "It's a pace-setting region that is dominant in population growth but also as a swing point in American politics."

The last time the U.S. center fell outside the Midwest was 1850, in the eastern territory now known as West Virginia. Its later move to the Midwest bolstered the region as the nation's cultural heartland in the 20th century, central to U.S. farming and Rust Belt manufacturing sites.

was a common phrase that coincided with the U.S. center's location in Illinois. It was a measure of whether a politician or consumer product could appeal to mainstream Americans with traits associated with Midwesterners, such as stability and caution.

But over the last decade, the Phoenix suburb of Peoria, Ariz., soared past its namesake Peoria, Ill., in population size. Democrat Barack Obama in 2008 successfully made the Republican-leaning Mountain West a key component to winning elections, with Colorado, Nevada and New Mexico now considered swing states.

With Arizona on track to surpass Ohio in electoral votes by midcentury, based on projected growth, issues important to the West, such as Arizona's sharp debate over immigration, gain in political significance.

The Census Bureau calculates the mean U.S. center every 10 years based on its national head count. The center represents the middle point of the nation's population distribution the geographic point at which the country would balance if each of its 308.7 million residents weighed the same.

The latest 2010 figures show a loss of House seats for states including Missouri and some of those east of it, primarily in the Midwest's declining Rust Belt. Eight of the 12 pickups in House seats occur in states west of Missouri, with Florida (with 2 new seats), Georgia and South Carolina in the Southeast being the exceptions.

The fastest U.S. growth is occurring in the Mountain West, which includes Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Ne-

vada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. As California's growth slows, many of the Mountain state arrivals are Hispanic immigrants seeking jobs and affordable family living. Hispanics tend to lean Democratic when voting.

Among census findings: In Arizona, which gains a House seat, Hispanics accounted for roughly half of the state's population increase since 2000, according to census estimates.

Arizona has picked up at least one House seat every decade since 1950; its total seats could outnumber Ohio's as early as 2040 so long as anti-immigration sentiment and recent mortgage foreclosures don't curtail its long-term growth.

In seven of the eight Mountain states, Hispanics accounted for nearly 50 percent or more of the population gains among children under 18. Montana, which had a population loss of children, was the exception.

The Western U.S. grew 13.8 percent from 2000 to 71.9 million people, surpassing the Midwest as the second most populous region. The Midwest rose 3.9 percent and the Northeast gained 3.2 percent. The West's growth rate is nearly equal to the South's, which rose 14.3 percent to 114.6 million on the Sun Belt strength of Texas and Florida.

California, which failed to add a House seat for the first time in its history, would have lost population if it weren't for growth among Hispanics and other minorities, according to 2010 figures released Tuesday. Los Angeles posted a gain over the past decade of just under 100,000 people, its smallest numerical growth since 1890-1900, as many of its Hispanic residents moved elsewhere.

The state, the nation's largest with 37.3 million, continues to grow primarily from immigration and births.

"Instead of serving as the migration magnet of the West, California has become the anchor for an expanding Western region," said William Frey, a demographer at Brookings Institution who reviewed the census numbers. "The old phrase, 'Go West, young man' has now turned to 'Eastward ho' for California's young residents, recent immigrants and retirees as they spill into neighboring states. It may never again gain another congressional seat."

Historically, the first center of population in 1790 resided in Kent County, Md., 23 miles east of Baltimore, the fulcrum between Pennsylvania and New York in the North and slave states in the South. It moved west through West Virginia amid the rise of steamboat travel and development of the nation's first railroads in the 1820s.

The U.S. center stayed put in Indiana from 1890-1940, largely stilled by a wave of European immigrants to the Northeast and then the Great Depression. It made big strides in Illinois in the 1950s as California boomed and Alaska and Hawaii gained statehood, before taking on a southwesterly path.

Missouri has been at the U.S. center since 1980.

State officials are tentatively planning for a commemorative marker in Texas County or its vicinity. Texas County boasts 26,000 residents, with whites making up 92 percent of the population, compared with roughly 65 percent for the country. Blacks make up 3.3 percent and Hispanics 1.6 percent.

U.S. Jobless Rate Dips to 8.9 Percent, Nearly 2-year Low

The U.S. unemployment rate edged down to 8.9 per cent in February as 192,000 jobs were added by employers to the economy, the Labour Department reported Friday.

It marked the first time the jobless rate fell below 9 per cent since April 2009. It dropped from 9 per cent in January and is down from 9.8 per cent in November, a sign that the world's largest economy is beginning to show signs of a turnaround.

The data were roughly in line with economists' expectations, and the February gains were led by sectors that have suffered since the 2008-09 US recession, including manufacturing and construction.

Yet policymakers have been cautious about predicting a quick strengthening of the job market. The Federal Reserve has forecast that the unemployment rate will remain near its current level for the remainder of 2011.

Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke has warned it will be "several years" until the jobless rate returns to the 4-6 per cent levels seen before the 2008 financial crisis plunged the world into its worst recession in generations.



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ENTRANDO AL COLLAGE

José de la Isla
Hispanic Link News Service
(Primera de dos partes)

Martín Umanzor es un adolescente quien probablemente entre a la universidad, pero sólo porque su madrastra Lizete le contó a su jefa, Anabel, de él. A Anabel le parecía un buen paso que dar para esta familia centroamericana.

Lizete proviene de una zona donde imperaban los movimientos guerrilleros en la década de los 80. Su esposo había pertenecido a los contra. Llegaron a los Estados Unidos como refugiados – sin importar quién estaba de qué lado del conflicto. La historia rara vez captura la verdad detrás de las personas que sufren cuando de la guerra y la violencia se trata.

Además, aquellos conflictos ocurrieron hace mucho tiempo – las guerras civiles, las intervenciones extranjeras, lo de Irán-Contra, problemas económicos, narcopandillas.

También dejaron atrás el desastre ocasionado por un huracán.

Hace dos años Martín se volvió a unir con su padre y su nueva madrastra aquí en Houston. Rápidamente dominó el inglés, las ciencias y las matemáticas, manteniendo un sólido promedio de B y una buena actitud. Dejó la escuela pública para matricularse en una escuela charter con una notable reputación.

Pero cuando Anabel le preguntó a Lizete si Martín ya había postulado a la universidad local, aprendió que Lizete desconocía lo de las fechas límites. Tampoco estaba al día la consejera de la escuela en cuanto al proceso de admisiones cuando Anabel la llamó para averiguarlo. Se le dijo que aquella era una responsabilidad individual.

Dos estudiantes de la Rice University concuerdan en que así es como funciona el proceso.

Jessica Faber, de 20 años, y Luz Rocha, de 18, sirven de voluntarias para ayudar a orientar a los estudiantes de la escuela Raúl Yzaguirre School for Success, una escuela charter cerca de la de Martín.

Los estudiantes estaban en el recinto universitario aprendiendo de los talleres que revelan cómo entrar a la universidad.

Allí, un comité de los estudiantes de secundaria, participantes en el programa del Consejo Nacional de La Raza, reportaron sobre una evaluación de requerimientos que habían realizado. Recomiendan que se ofrezcan talleres después de clases a aquellos estudiantes que necesitan orientación.

Hay que entrenar a estudiantes asesores para ayudar a los consejeros, para reducir la consagrada alta ansiedad a la vez que demuestran los pasos que dar para postular a la universidad. El comité expresó inquietud referente a los estudiantes meritorios que se quedan rezagados. También hay que educar a los padres, dijeron, y los estudiantes deben empezar a pensar con tiempo de las profesiones, los campos de estudio y de las fuentes de becas y asistencia financiera.

Su evaluación de requerimientos se presentará en marzo antes un congreso juvenil en Washington, D.C.

Los estudiantes de Rice quienes ayudaron al comité dicen que están preparando un proyecto con base en la red que asistirá con el proceso de postulación. De manera similar, el director de la escuela Yzaguirre, David Ward, tiene pensado implementar un programa para que los estudiantes y sus padres puedan comenzar a planificar con suficiente tiempo para la universidad.

Dado el impulso a nivel nacional por animar la matrícula universitaria, se pensaría que alguien habría ofrecido esta orientación hace tiempo ya, para

que el proceso sea calmado y no como una búsqueda de descubrimiento, como la de Anabel y Lizete, quienes rápidamente matricularon a Martín en un programa de preparación. El laberinto de solicitudes y fechas límites parecía abrumador en un principio, pero su determinación no hizo caso de los obstáculos, que parecían más bien un collage, que orientación hacia la universidad.

Había que tomar la decisión si el examen del SAT o del ACT era el que valía, luego hubo una práctica para el ensayo personal para cada solicitud. Estudiante de Rice, Plácido Gómez, ofreció una presentación PowerPoint durante el programa de orientación que aconsejaba que el ensayo fuera donde enamoran a la universidad, como si fuera candidata a ser el novio o la novia, con demostrar confianza en sí mismo, las fuerzas y la originalidad de uno. Después estaban todas esas fechas límites con las que cumplir, incluyendo para la asistencia financiera y las becas. Ninguna parte de este largo proceso se presta a realizarlo a la volada.

Lizete y Anabel, campeo-

nas de la causa de Martín, ahora están esperando saber los resultados de admisión a la universidad y las becas. Pero no todo el mundo tiene a dos mujeres persistentes de su lado, no importa lo mucho que se las merezca.

El tema de mayor impacto es el que identificaron los estudiantes de secundaria y de la Rice University. Al menos que haya quién vele por ellos, el postular a la universidad puede parecer hasta como un operativo de cubierta para los postulantes que provienen de familias sin una tradición universitaria.

(A continuación: **¿ES TAN GRANDE EL PROBLEMA UNIVERSITARIO COMO SE QUIERE DAR A ENTENDER?**)

(José de la Isla, columnista de distribución nacional con los servicios de noticias Hispanic Link y Scripps Howard, ha sido reconocido durante dos años consecutivos por New America Media. Como analista de políticas públicas y negocios, fue consultor del Tejano Center for Community Concerns en Houston. El título de su próximo libro a publicarse es: "Our Man on the Ground". Sus libros previos incluyen, "DAY NIGHT LIFE DEATH HOPE" (2009) y "The Rise of Hispanic Political Power" (2003), disponibles en joseisla2@yahoo.com). ©2011

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An Open Forum Where Readers Express their Views and Opinions
Submitted to eleditor@sbcglobal.net

"The People Have Spoken, and I agree!"
The Time Has Come to Use the Rainy Day Fund In Addressing the State Budget...
It is Raining - Use it NOW !!

...Says Rep. Alonzo
OPINION EDITORIAL
by
Texas State Representative Roberto R. Alonzo
District 104 - Dallas

If ever there was a moment when educators, medical professionals, hard-working families, and students needed the support of Texas lawmakers, that moment is now. Instead, as we approach the midway point of the 82nd legislative session, with precious time quickly running out on us, those same folks are left scratching their heads at what they've seen thus far. Moreover, taking the limelight and consuming much of our valuable time has been governor-sponsored and leadership-supported emergency legislation such as voter ID, sonograms, coupled with other unnecessary proposals to cut many much-needed programs for education and healthcare, as well as a series of anti-friendly immigration measures intended to cause Texas taxpayers more money, rather than save programs and improve the quality of life for all Texans.

As I sift through the various arguments against using the Economic Stabilization Fund, better known to the millions that will be affected by proposed budget cuts as the Rainy Day Fund, I can't help but join my fellow Texans in stunned amazement. In fact, it would be amusing if one could separate themselves from the very real pain that is soon to be inflicted on the state's residents. Currently with a balance of more than \$9 billion dollars that legislators set aside as a savings when the good times were rolling, the time has now come; use it NOW! According to the state comptroller, not only is the state facing a shortfall of up to \$27 billion during the next two years, the state's current budget faces not a shortfall but an actual deficit of \$4.3 billion this year. According to the Texas Constitution the end of the fiscal year is Aug. 31, 2011, so again, if ever there was a time to use this fund, the time is NOW! Governor Perry has been making the rounds with the leadership in recent days in an attempt to slow the momentum that has been building on tapping the Fund, preferring instead that lawmakers "scrub the excess" from the budget. I invite the reader to keep that comment in the back of their mind as they skim through their local papers, replete with stories of school districts closing campuses and laying off their teachers and neighbors. They should take solace in knowing the nursing home that houses their parents is deemed excessive by the Governor and must be closed. But most importantly, the reader should know that the Rainy Day Fund is meant exclusively for Governor Perry's business allies, not their struggling community.

A glimmer of hope is on the horizon, however, and it makes sense to listen to what House Appropriations Committee Chairman Jim Pitts of Waxahachie has indicated in his willingness to push for tapping of the Fund, and a nascent spirit of bipartisanship is forming in the Capitol. This style of bridge-building and bipartisan camaraderie is typical of this lawmaker from North Texas who has a long history bringing lawmakers together during the toughest of economic times.

Even the staunchest fiscal conservatives are now coming to grips with the magnitude of the cuts they so jubilantly championed last November. While I hope and pray that Governor Perry comes around alongside his peers, and listens to what Chairman Pitts has to say, I also know this fight belongs in the legislature. Budget hawks, perhaps the biggest one being Gov. Perry, currently insist the budget be balanced through cuts without adding new taxes or drawing from the Rainy Day Fund. Perry said Thursday he is opposed to tapping the fund because it would only delay tough decisions and leave us unprepared to handle bigger emergencies in the future.

Rep. Alonzo who represents House District 104 in the southwest Dallas area is also a member of the House Higher Education Committee, Redistricting Committee, and the House Committee on Border & Intergovernmental Affairs.

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Getting Into Collage (cq)

By José de la Isla
Hispanic Link News Service
(First of two parts)

Martín Umanzor is a teenager who will probably get into college, but only because his stepmother Lizete told her employer Anabel about it. That sounded to Anabel like a good next step for this Central American family.

Lizete came from an area when guerrilla movements were rampant in the 1980s. Her husband had been a Contra. They found their way to the United States as refugees – never mind who was on which side of the conflict. History rarely captures the real story about people in hard struggles where war and violence are involved.

Besides, those conflicts were long ago – the civil wars, the foreign interventions, Iran-Contra, economic troubles, drug gangs.

They also left a hurricane disaster behind.

Two years ago Martín was reunited with his father and new stepmother here in Houston. He quickly dominated English, science and math, maintaining a solid B average and a good attitude. He left his public school to enroll in a charter school with a fine reputation.

But when Anabel asked Lizete whether Martín had already applied to the local university, she learned Lizete was unaware of deadlines. Nor was the school's counselor up to the minute on the admissions process when Anabel called her to find out. That was basically an individual responsibility, she was told.

Two Rice University undergraduates agree that's how it works. Jessica Faber, 20, and Luz Rocha, 18, are serving as volunteers to help orient students to the Raúl Yzaguirre School for Success, a charter school neighboring Martín's. The students were at Rice learning tips from workshops on how to get accepted into

college.

There, a committee of the high-school students, part of the National Council of La Raza's Lideres program, reported on a needs assessment study they had conducted. They recommend that after-school workshops should be given to students needing direction. Student assistants could be trained to help counselors in order to take the prevalent high anxiety pressure off to college admission. The committee expressed concern about deserving students getting left behind. Parents too need to be educated, they said, and students should begin early- thinking about career paths, fields of study and about scholarship and financial-aid sources.

Their needs assessment will be presented in March to a youth congress in Washington, D.C.

The Rice students who helped them say they have a web-based project in the works to assist with the application process. Similarly, the Yzaguirre school's principal, David Ward, plans to implement a program so that students and parents can plan well ahead for college.

With the national push to encourage college enrollments, you would think someone would have provided guidelines long ago to make it a smooth process instead of a discovery quest, like that of Anabel and Lizete, who quickly enrolled Martín in a college-admissions program. The labyrinth of applications and deadlines seemed overwhelming at first but their determination overlooked the obstacles, which seemed like a collage instead of a direction to college.

There was a decision to make about whether the SAT or ACT college boards was appropriate, followed by a personal essay practice for each application. Rice student Plácido Gómez's PowerPoint presentation

advised at the orientation that an essay is the place to romance the college, as if it were a candidate boyfriend or girlfriend, by showing confidence, strengths and originality. Then there were all the deadlines to meet, including for financial aid and scholarships. None of this lengthy process can be done on the fly.

Lizete and Anabel, championing Martín's cause, are now waiting to hear about the college admission and scholarship results. But not everyone has two persistent women on their side, no matter how deserving. The bigger issue juggernaut is the one the high-school and

Rice students had identified. Unless someone champions their cause, college admission can seem almost like a covert operation for applicants coming from families without a college tradition.

(Next: **IS THE HIGHER ED PROBLEM AS BIG AS IT'S MADE TO SEEM?**)

(José de la Isla, nationally syndicated columnist for Hispanic Link and Scripps Howard news services, has been recognized for two consecutive years for his commentaries by New America Media. As a public-policy and business analyst he was remunerated by the Tejano Center for Community Concerns in Houston. His forthcoming book is "Our Man on the Ground." His previous books include "DAY NIGHT LIFE DEATH HOPE" (2009) and "The Rise of Hispanic Political Power" (2003). Available at joseisla3@yahoo.com) ©2011

-----The real power to choose-----

Keep the power on or buy groceries for the week?

This is the very real decision that many Texans, already paying too much for electricity, must face.

For five and a half million Texas households in deregulated areas of the state - including thousands of households in Midland - making an informed choice about electricity is increasingly difficult. More than 50 retail electric providers offer more than 250 different plans. As if that wasn't overwhelming enough, fine print and increasingly common "gotcha" fees further complicate decision making.

"I should run my AC, but it takes too much electricity," Wanda Boush of the McAllen area recently told us. "I can only run it at night." Wanda is 88 years old and living on a fixed income. Like many older Texans, electricity is one of her biggest expenses. For some, it's only second to medication costs.

That's why AARP is urging the Texas Legislature to establish basic protections to

assist Texans - from Houston to San Angelo, from Dallas to Harlingen, from Sherman to Odessa - struggling to find the best deal on electricity.

AARP supports legislation requiring electric companies in deregulated areas to offer one standardized plan, which would vary between companies only on price. These plans would all last 12 months, have a standard format and only include the fees required by law. Electric providers would retain the right to offer as many additional plans - existing or new - as they would like.

Barbara Gordon from Dallas was recently trying to select a new electric provider and could have benefited from a standardized plan.

"The comparison process is cumbersome as the fine print makes a great deal of difference," she said. "I was on a three-year plan with [a company] and ended up paying an average of 14 cents per kilowatt hour due to lower monthly usage than the minimum."

The rate was around 50 percent more than the residential average. AARP believes Texans deserve better.

To make informed choices, Texans need quality information that is easy to use. Resources offered by the Public Utility Commission to help with choosing a new electricity plan - a website and a toll-free phone number - fail to address the fundamental problem. The complex plans that result in customers overpaying are just as confusing over the phone or on the web as they are on paper.

"It is too difficult to make intelligent comparisons using the current system," Ann Mitchell from Fort Worth told us.

"We're having to set our thermostats so high that the air conditioning does very little good. As a retiree, these high rates are detrimental to the quality of life for people on fixed incomes," said Roger Joubert from Richardson.

Choosing a plan with a higher rate can also impact a Texans' health when it becomes too expensive to keep using electricity or, worse, when homes are disconnected because they can no longer pay their bills. Disconnection can mean life or death as we reach extremely high temperatures in our sweltering summers. Let's not make the eldest

Texans "sweat it out." It's time to fix this.

By requiring a standardized plan in addition to electric companies' other plans, legislators would help protect Texas consumers in a way that has already been successful in other industries. Texans purchasing homeowner's insurance today greatly benefit from standardized policies. Nationally standardized Medigap (Medicare supplemental insurance) policies in the 1990s successfully lowered bills.

The time for action is now. We call upon our elected officials in Austin to take a stand to protect Texas consumers by instituting a standardized electricity plan in deregulated areas. Together, we can help Texans of all ages keep the lights and air conditioning on, ensuring a bright and cool future for all.

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On immigration, momentum shifts away from Arizona

from front page

known as the Utah Compact to fight the measure. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which is growing rapidly overseas and in immigrant communities in the United States, endorsed the compact.

When the Utah Legislature acted on immigration last week, it moved in contradictory directions, trying to satisfy activists who want a tough approach to illegal immigration and business and religious leaders who urge flexibility and compassion for working families.

The Legislature weakened the Arizona-style law, which would now only require immigration checks of people arrested for felonies and serious misdemeanors. Still, the measure easily passed both houses. The guest-worker ID program also won easy approval.

The guest-worker bill depends on a federal waiver, and there are many who are skeptical the

federal government would grant it. "It sends a bad message, that Utah wants its own amnesty program," said Ronald Mortensen, a Utah-based activist against illegal immigration. "I think there's going to be a lot of upset people."

Critics call Utah's guest-worker effort an unconstitutional attempt to create a state-level immigration policy just to send a message to a deadlocked Washington. That was also a central criticism of Arizona's law.

On Friday, as the heavily conservative state Senate debated the issue, senator after senator said the measure was a needed warning for a Washington they see as out of touch on taxes and regulation. State Sen. Howard Stephenson compared the move to the opening shots of the Revolutionary War.

"We are in a sense firing a shot and saying we are going to do it right," Stephenson said, "and set a pattern for Congress and the rest of the nation to follow."

EEUU confisca \$67 millones en la frontera

Las autoridades de EEUU han confiscado alrededor de \$67 millones en efectivo entre



marzo de 2009 y el pasado 22 de febrero, casi todo en la frontera del suroeste de EEUU, informó hoy la Oficina de Supervisión del Gobierno (GAO).

Durante una audiencia en el Senado, Richard Stana, director de asuntos de seguridad nacional de la GAO, ofreció un informe actualizado de la cantidad de dinero confiscada en la frontera con México, como parte de la lucha contra el tráfico de armas y dinero que nutren la "narcoviolencia" en ese país.

Aunque su testimonio ante el grupo legislativo para el control de drogas del Senado se basó en un informe emitido en octubre de 2010, Stana explicó que los nuevos datos reflejan las confiscaciones realizadas hasta el pasado 22 de febrero.

Según Stana, el 97% de la cantidad confiscada se produjo a lo largo de la frontera del suroeste.

El total de las confiscaciones conforma un "pequeño porcentaje" de la cantidad de dinero al

contado que fluye de forma ilícita hacia México cada año, que se calcula entre \$18,000 millones y \$39,000 millones, señaló Stana.

Aunque la Oficina de Aduanas y Protección Fronteriza (CBP) estableció el mes pasado un mecanismo para medir la eficacia de su programa contra el tráfico de armas y dinero, Stana consideró que esa medida es insuficiente porque "no mide hasta dónde es que el programa es eficaz para frenar el flujo de dinero al contado, armas, y otros bienes derivados de actividades criminales".

La senadora demócrata Dianne Feinstein, que preside el comité, reiteró que EEUU tiene la responsabilidad de frenar el contrabando de dinero porque si no se reduce ese tráfico ilícito "será difícil hacer un progreso significativo en el desmantelamiento de las organizaciones del tráfico de drogas mexicanas".

El copresidente del grupo legislativo, el republicano Charles Grassley, dijo que presentará en un "futuro cercano" un proyecto de ley para mejorar el combate al lavado de dinero.

El flujo anual de dinero en efectivo que se calcula llega a México no refleja otras formas de lavado de dinero, tales como transferencias electrónicas.

"En su conjunto, el lavado de dinero y el contrabando de dinero al contado representan una enorme vulnerabilidad para todas las naciones, y una bendición para las organizaciones criminales, de narcotráfico y terroristas", afirmó Grassley

¿Que Pasa?

MARCH 28 SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE FOR TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Texas high school seniors have until March 28 to apply for the Don't Mess with Texas scholarship.

The 8th annual scholarship is sponsored by Dow Chemical Company in partnership with Keep Texas Beautiful. The first-place winner will receive \$3,000. The second- and third-place winners will receive \$1,000 each. Don't Mess with Texas is the litter prevention campaign of the Texas Department of Transportation.

The scholarship is one of TxDOT's efforts to generate more youth involvement in Don't Mess with Texas, since research shows that age is the number-one predictor of littering behavior, with Texans ages 16-34 littering the most.

Any Texas high school senior who will attend a two- or four-year Texas college or university can apply. For the essay prompt, application, rules, and background information, visit <http://dontmesswithtexas.org/programs/scholarship/>. Winners will be notified in April.

2011 marks the 25th anniversary of the Don't Mess with Texas campaign.

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A WILDFIRE

Before the Fire Confine your pets to one room to help find them if you need to leave; Arrange temporary housing outside of the threatened area; Listen to the local media and government for updated emergency information.

Reducing the Chance of Fire Shut off gas to your home.

Close all doors and windows inside your home; Remove brush, trash, and other combustible items from around the yard; Place sprinklers on your roof and wet the roof.

Evacuating During a Wildfire Leave as quickly as possible; Lock your home; You cannot outrun a fire. Evacuate immediately if asked.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

The City of Lubbock Emergency Operations Center has been partially activated due to the extreme fire danger today created by strong winds.

Please take extra care during these conditions and follow these common sense steps:

- Do not start open flame fires
- Properly dispose of cigarettes; Do not toss cigarette butts out of vehicle windows or drop on the ground
- Avoid using outdoor power tools like welding equipment and cutting torches that can create sparks
- Remove grass, brush, trash, and other flammable materials from around your home

Also, Lubbock City and County officials have established a joint information center to better serve residents with needed emergency information.

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT

Enjoy an evening out without worry, as St John Neumann Venture Crew #159 provides an evening of activities for kids - potty trained through 12 years old. Crew is Red Cross certified. Rates vary depending on number of children. St John Neumann gym, 6-11 p.m. on Fridays: February 18, March 18, April 15 & May 20. For more information pick up activity/rate sheet at SJN or beatriceperez@gmail.com

LIGHTS...CAMERA...HOPE

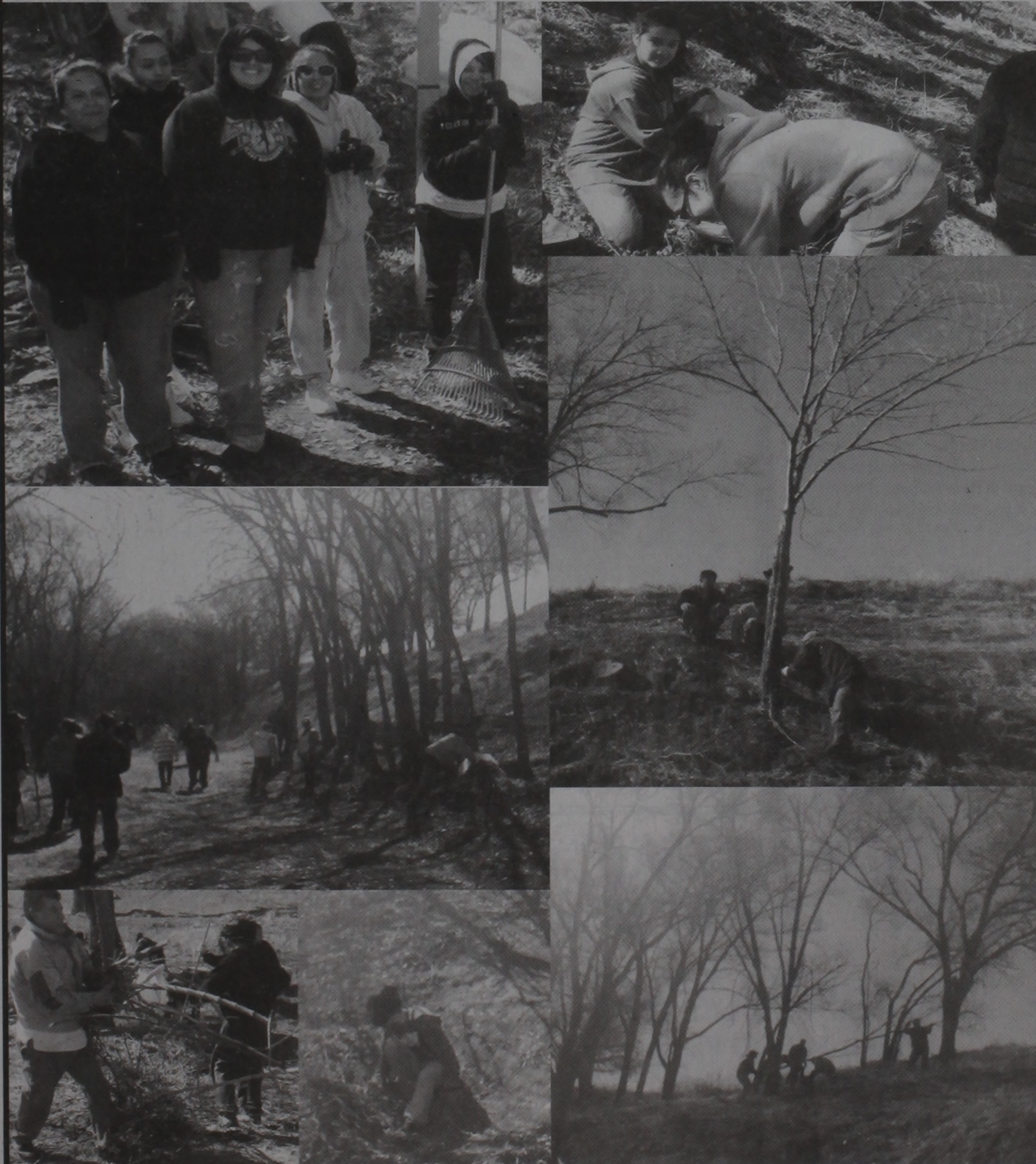
Three women will share their journey from victim to survivor on a local runway, along with upcoming fashions. We invite the community to join Fashion In Action, Wednesday, April 20th at 10:30am at the Lubbock Scottish Rite. This unique style show with heart will offer designs by Dillard's, a champagne brunch and an opportunity for women to join together to fight against domestic violence. What makes this event special is that former clients will model upcoming trends and share their stories of hope. Tickets starting at \$50.

In 2009, 111 women were murdered in Texas by their partners, of those 27 cases occurred where one or more children witnessed the death of their mother. This April we challenge Lubbock to go purple and strive for a community where no woman is killed by a husband, partner, or boyfriend.

For sponsorship/ticket information please contact Megan Graham at 806-762-2335 or grahamm@nts-online.net.

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Thank you for your help! "El Arroyo" is clean!



The Guadalupe Neighborhood Association invited volunteers this past Saturday in a community effort to clean-up Canyon Lakes #3, known by Guadalupe Barrios residents as "El Arroyo". The response was tremendous. People of all age groups showed up and supported the clean-up.

For almost 4 years Barrios residents and volunteers have worked hard to clear the areas to the North of Aztlán Park. Trimming trees, cutting weeds, racking up debris and doing anything to make the area more beautiful for all to enjoy was the outcome of the clean-up.

"It was through efforts and consideration that this clean up was successful", said Carlos Quirino, chairman of the Guadalupe Neighborhood Association. Breakfast and lunch were provided to the volunteers that day. "Special thanks to the sponsors that were recruited need to be recognized for this effort," said Lile Medina Quirino who is a strong advocate toward this project. Sponsors that assisted were Atmos Energy, Amigos United Supermarkets, Wal-Mart stores, & EL EDITOR newspapers. photos by Marisol Aguero-El Editor



AVISO FEDERAL DE LIFELINE

Los clientes de Verizon Wireless podrían ser elegibles para recibir tarifas reducidas en el servicio de telecomunicaciones conforme a los programas federales Lifeline y Link Up.

Los clientes que califiquen ahorrarán al menos \$8.25 al mes. Los cargos por activación de servicio también podrían ser anulados si usted califica para la asistencia Link Up. Hay descuentos adicionales disponibles para residentes elegibles de territorios tribales.

Usted podría ser elegible para la asistencia Lifeline y Link Up si participa actualmente en un programa de asistencia pública calificado o cumple con los requisitos de ingreso federal. Estos requisitos podrían variar según el estado.

Para recibir más información sobre los programas Lifeline y Link Up, llame a Verizon Wireless al 800-924-0585 o visite verizonwireless.com/lifeline.

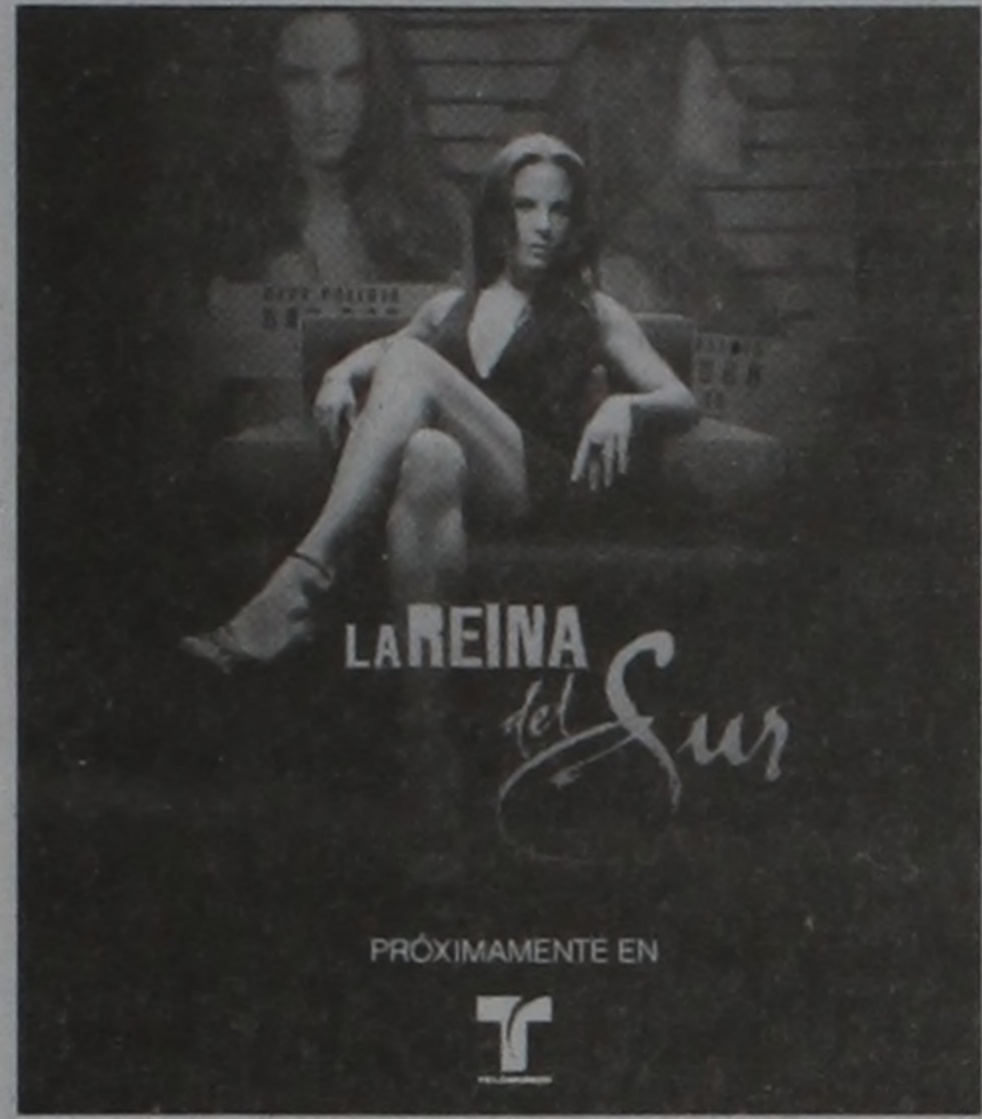
Verizon Wireless sólo ofrece asistencia Lifeline/Link Up en áreas donde la compañía ha sido designada como un proveedor de servicio de telecomunicaciones elegible.

Todos los planes de Verizon Wireless en las áreas designadas incluyen lo siguiente: acceso de voz a PSTN, uso local, señalización multifrecuencia bitoral o un equivalente funcional, servicio individual, acceso a servicios de emergencia, servicios de operador(a), servicio de intercambio y servicio de información, conexión incluida. Los impuestos, recargos y cargos, como E911 y cargos por facturación en bruto, varían por mercado y podrían agregar entre 11% - 28% a su factura; 83¢ cargo administrativo/línea/mes no es un impuesto, no es prorrateado y está sujeto a cambios.

INFORMACIÓN IMPORTANTE AL CONSUMIDOR: Sujeto al acuerdo con el cliente de mes a mes y plan de llamadas, 45¢/min. después de la asignación. Los clientes elegibles para la asistencia Link Up recibirán un 50% de descuento en el cargo de activación, y Verizon Wireless no aplicará el resto del cargo de activación. Oferta por tiempo limitado. La oferta no está disponible en todas las áreas. Podrían aplicar restricciones. Detalles sobre la red en verizonwireless.com/espanol © 2011 Verizon Wireless.

La Reina del Sur Breaks Viewership Records in the US

The blockbuster television production La Reina del Sur, based on the novel by best-selling author Arturo Perez-Reverte, has become the highest-



rated premiere in the history of Telemundo, with an audience of 2.4 million viewers.

On its second night, this record was surpassed by 19%, beating Univision's Aquí y Ahora and Telefuturo's India in every demographic with nearly three million total viewers (2,841,000), according to Nielsen Media Research. It was also the #2 program among all broadcast networks at 10pm in adults 18-34 and men 18-34, regardless of language.

For the grand premiere, Spanish-language editorial Alfaguara has published a special edition book featuring the poster of the series. This new edition is available at bookstores throughout the country.

The series follows Teresa Mendoza from her humble origins as the girlfriend of El "Guero" Davila, a pilot for the Juarez Cartel, to her glory days as the queen of the drug world in Mexico. Filmed on location throughout four continents, La Reina del Sur is broadcast on Telemundo, Monday thru Friday from 10:00 to 11:00 PM.

La Reina del Sur is one of Arturo Perez-Reverte's most popular works. It has been translated to 30 languages and published in 50 countries. "It is one of those works that leaves the reader breathless," raved the anonymously rave the critics.

Arturo Perez-Reverte's works have long sparked the interest of movie makers, and many of his works have been adapted for the big screen: El maestro de esgrima (directed by Pedro Olea), La tabla de Flandes (Uncovered, directed by Jim McBride), La carta esferica (directed by Imanol Uribe), Cachito

(directed by Enrique Urbizu), Territorio Comanche (directed by Gerardo Herrero), El club Dumas (The Ninth Gate, directed by Roman Polanski), the script for Gitano (directed by Manuel Palacios) and Alatraste (directed by Agustin Diaz Yanes).

Arturo Perez-Reverte (Cartagena, Spain, 1951) is now exclusively writing literature, after working 21 years (1973-1994) as a reporter for press, radio and television, covering informatively the international conflicts for that period. His novels include El husar, El maestro de esgrima, La tabla de Flandes, El club Dumas, Territorio Comanche, La piel del tambor, La carta esferica, La Reina del Sur, Cabo Trafalgar; Un dia de colera, El Asedio and the Historical series Las aventuras del capitán Alatraste. He is a member of the Royal Spanish Academy. With over fifteen million copies sold worldwide and translations available in 34 languages, Arturo Perez-Reverte is one of the leading authors of contemporary literature.

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Sofía Vergara, la latina de moda

Si hay una latina de moda en Hollywood, esa es sin duda alguna la colombiana Sofía Vergara, la actriz cuyo papel en la serie "Modern Family" le ha reportado candidaturas al Emmy y al Globo de Oro, aunque, según dijo, sólo pensaba en ganarse la vida con esta profesión. "Nunca soñé con ganar premios, para mí ya lo es estar nominada", dijo Vergara, de 38 años. "Cuando comencé a actuar nunca pensé que a la gente le iba a gustar tanto lo que yo pudiera hacer. Sólo pensaba en ganarme la vida, no en obtener premios ni candidaturas. Todo esto es una gran sorpresa", añadió.

Precisamente el pasado viernes, la Asociación Nacional para el Progreso de la Gente de Color (NAACP, por sus siglas en inglés) la distinguió con el premio a la mejor actriz de reparto en una serie de comedia por su labor en "Modern Family".

"Me siento dichosa, muy contenta", afirmó. "No preparé un discurso ni nada porque no pensé que iba a ganar, pero me siento feliz de estar ahí. El premio es superimportante para mí, pero yo le quiero dar las gracias a (el canal) ABC, a (la productora) Fox y a la serie, por darme esta oportunidad", agregó.

Vergara interpreta el rol de Gloria Pritchett, la esposa del protagonista Jay, encarnado por Ed O'Neill. Gloria, una colombiana de pura cepa como la actriz, pasa por ser uno de los personajes más cómicos de la serie, ya que no se detiene a la hora de decir lo que se le pasa por la cabeza.

"La cadena y la productora no dudaron en dar el papel a una persona con un acento fuerte como el mío. Me siento privilegiada por tener un papel tan específicamente latino en una serie tan importante que se emite en máxima audiencia", explicó la actriz, que estará presente en la tercera temporada del show.

"Nos dan los guiones cuatro días antes de rodar y siempre resultan una sorpresa para nosotros. Para el futuro habrá más locuras familiares, queriéndose y perdonándose. Creo que Gloria va a tener un perro más adelante", dijo entre risas la intérprete, que durante este año estrenará tres películas con mucho potencial comercial.

Es el caso de "Los pitufos", "Rompiendo el hielo 2" y "New Year's Eve".

"Los pitufos", que llegará a las carteleras de EE.UU. en agosto, lleva a la gran pantalla las aventuras de los pitufos en Nueva York, quienes, acechados por el malvado Gargamel, deben encontrar la manera de regresar a su aldea mágica.

"Ahí tengo un papel importante, el de dueña de una compañía grande de maquillaje. Y me encanta, porque pude trabajar con uno de mis actores favoritos de comedia, Hank Azaria", comentó la intérprete, nacida en Barranquilla.

Después del turno de "Rompiendo el hielo 2", de George Miller, la secuela del éxito en taquilla que llegará en noviembre y donde dará vida a una pingüina latina. "Mi personaje se enamora del pingüino protagonista, con la voz de Robin Williams", aseguró.

Y por último verá la luz "New Year's Eve", un filme de Garry Marshall con un elenco estelar que incluye a Robert De Niro, Michelle Pfeiffer, Halle Berry, Ashton Kutcher, Sarah Jessica Parker, Jessica Biel, Zac Efron y Hilary Swank.

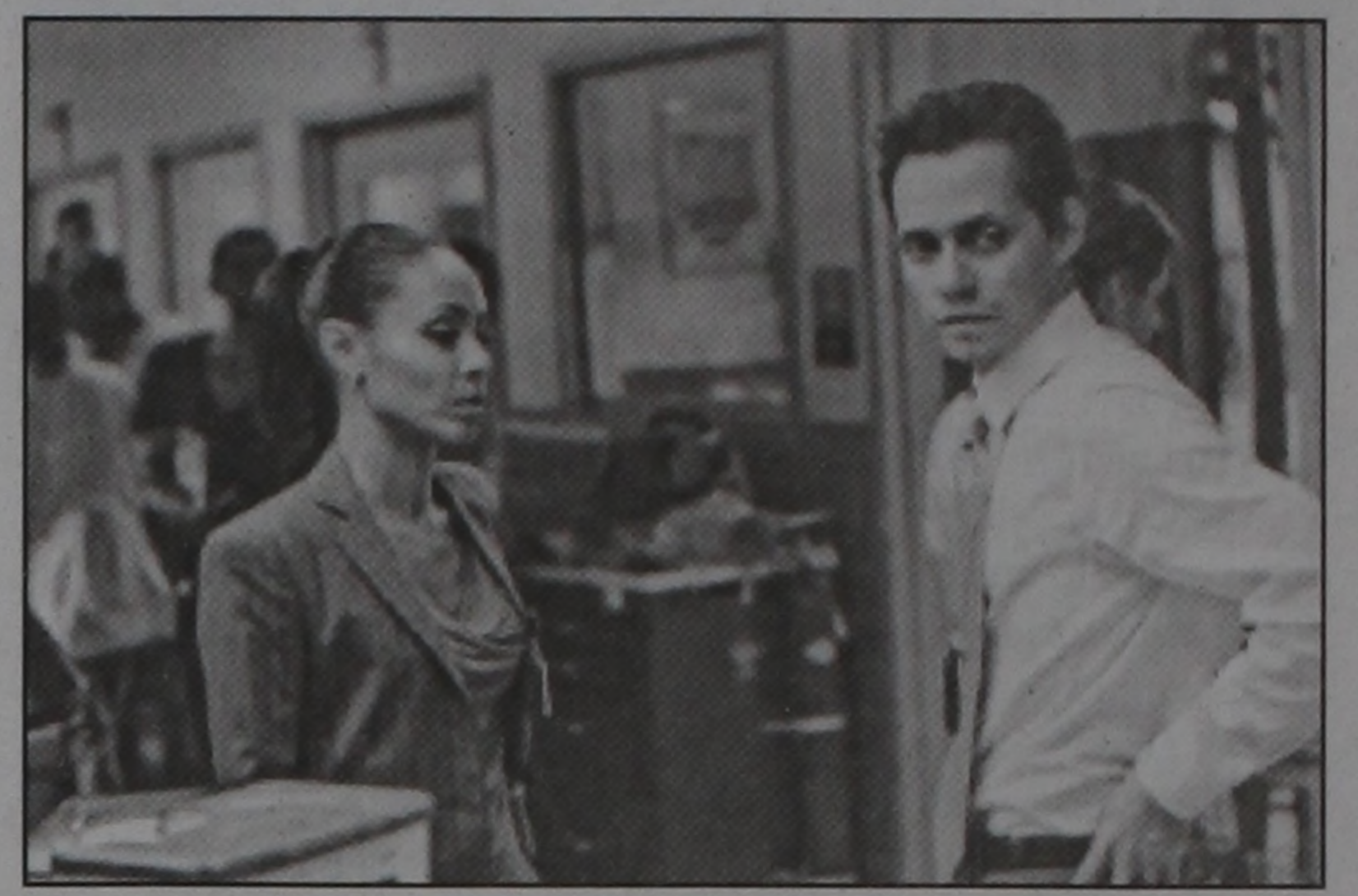
La historia narra cómo es la última noche del año en la vida de varias parejas. "Tengo un papel pequeño pero divertidísimo junto a Katherine Heigl y Jon Bon Jovi. Rodé durante una semana en Nueva York y me encantó formar parte de un elenco tan espectacular", sostuvo la actriz.

Grammy Winner Marc Anthony joins cast of Hawthorne

Grammy®-winning recording artist and actor Marc Anthony has joined the cast of TNT's Hawthorne, the TNT drama series starring and executive-produced by Jada Pinkett Smith (The Women, The Matrix trilogy). Anthony will reprise the newly expanded role of Police Detective Nick Renata, the character he introduced as a guest star in two episodes last season. Hawthorne is scheduled to return for its third season this June.

Anthony joins Hawthorne as a series regular just as Pinkett Smith's Christina Hawthorne, Chief Nursing Officer of James River Hospital, struggles with news that she is pregnant. The two developed a strong bond last season while Renata investigated a pair of criminal cases involving the hospital. But Christina, whose on-again, off-again romance with Dr. Tom Wakefield (Michael Vartan - Alias) has been a mess of mixed signals and bad timing, told Nick she was not ready to jump into a new relationship.

As a recording artist, Anthony has sold more than 12 million albums worldwide, making him the top-selling salsa artist of all time. He has been awarded numerous gold and platinum record certifications from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). His Gram-



my accolades began with a 1998 Grammy for Best Tropical Latin Performance for "Contra La Corriente," followed with a 1999 Latin Grammy for Song of the Year for "Dimelo." In 2004, he earned a Grammy for Best Latin Pop Album for Amar Sin Mentiras and a Latin Grammy for Best Salsa Album for Valió la Pena. He won his third Latin Grammy for the 2008 album El Cantante. Last summer, the Miami Dolphins minority owner released his latest album, Iconos, an all-Spanish ballad collection produced with Julio Reyes. The platinum album held the #1 spot on the Billboard charts for six consecutive weeks and earned him his 12th Latin Grammy nomination.

Anthony's acting career includes roles in Martin Scors-

ese's Bringing Out the Dead and Tony Scott's >I>Man on Fire. Starring opposite wife Jennifer Lopez, Anthony played Puerto Rican salsa pioneer Héctor Lavoe in Leon Ichaso's biopic El Cantante. He also starred opposite Salma Hayak in the television film In the Time of the Butterflies. In 1997, Anthony made his Broadway debut in Paul Simon's musical The Capeman.

Hawthorne is produced by Sony Pictures Television in association with Pinkett Smith's Overbrook Entertainment and Jamie Tarses' FanFare Productions. Hawthorne's executive-produced by Pinkett Smith; Jamie Tarses (Franklin & Bash); John Tinker (Judging Amy, St. Elsewhere); and Miguel Mendez (The Human Contract).

Maná adelanta un poco de 'Drama y Luz'

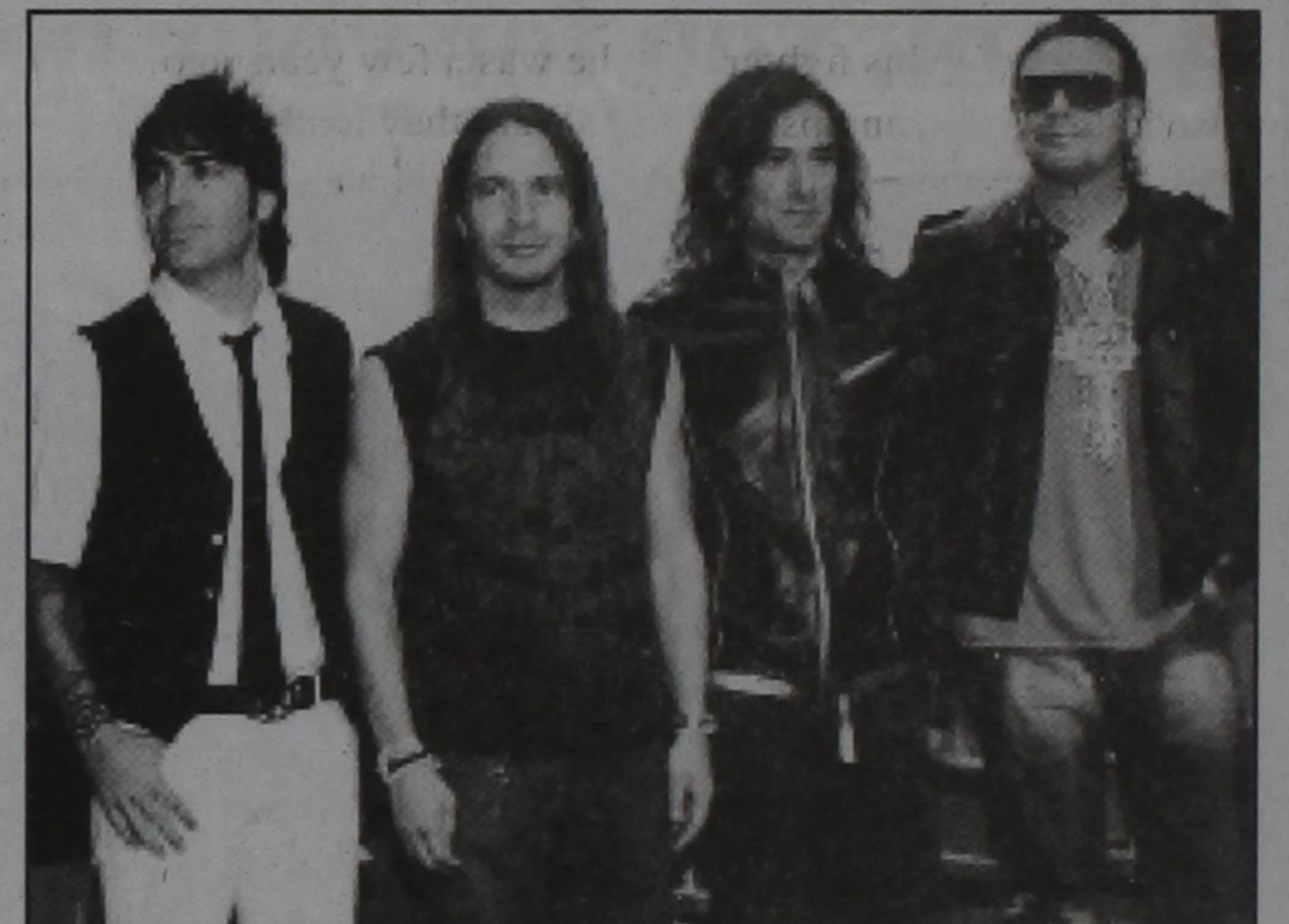
El grupo mexicano de rock Maná adelantará el material de su próximo disco "Drama y Luz" del que se desprende el sencillo "Lluvia al corazón" que se escuchará en las radios de Latinoamérica y EEUU la próxima semana, se informó ayer.

El grupo, que sacará un disco después de cinco años, tiene previsto presentar sus próximo álbum el 12 de abril, aunque la versión digital de su primer sencillo estará disponible el día 15 de marzo.

"Lluvia al corazón" es un tema escrito por dos miembros del grupo, Fher Olvera y

Sergio Vallín. "Drama y Luz" fue grabado en Estados Unidos, Brasil y México y con esta nueva producción Maná presenta

"una propuesta donde muestran nuevamente evolución, calidad y constante renovación", informó su casa discográfica Warner Music.



Comedian Paul Rodriguez Returns With Second Season of 'Mis Videos Locos'

Tr3s:MTV, Musica y Mas, the bilingual/bicultural network for the US Latino audience, picks up another season of the wild and funny home video show "Mis Videos Locos with Paul Rodriguez". Season two delivers even more outrageous footage of dumb criminals, mad DUI stops, police dash-cams and wild chases, outlandish conduct on surveillance, stupid human tricks and animals antics, rarely seen local commercials and plenty of party bloopers. New episodes of "Mis Videos Locos with Paul Rodriguez" will premiere every Sunday starting March 13 at 10pm (ET/PST) on Tr3s.

"I have a lot of fun taping 'Mis Videos' and I'm grate-

ful that after 20+ years in the business, my fans still love me and that good thing, 'viral' is actually a good thing," commented Rodriguez.

Hosted by the trailblazing Latino comedian, "Mis Videos Locos with Paul Rodriguez", features never-before-seen footage from people around the world caught on tape engaging in the weirdest, wildest and often the stupidest behavior imaginable! It's a fast-paced mixture of cooler-talk video clips, and hip, hysterical commentary by the sharp-tongued Mr. Rodriguez. Viewers will be caught off-guard with the lunacy that's coming around every corner, as they are pummeled with one incredibly bizarre clip after another.

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Miguel Cotto vs. Ricardo Mayorga: 10 Things You Need to Know About the Fight

Saturday night, Miguel Cotto takes on Ricardo "I am insane and you are a woman" Mayorga on Showtime pay-per-view. It's the boxer against the puncher, the quiet one against the bombastic one, the respectful against the irreverent.

For Cotto, it marks his second fight at junior middleweight, and a chance to further his status among boxing's elite.

For Mayorga, the fight is one more moment on the big stage, and one more attempt to chop down a significant fighter.

Here, we take a look at 10 key aspects of the fight.

While Cotto will be into just his second fight at 154, Mayorga has been there for some time.

Mayorga was about 170 the night he fought Shane Mosley, and it would seem like a good bet that he'll be around the same weight Saturday.

Mosley seemed to struggle with Mayorga's size for much of the night, and Cotto will have the same issues trying to handle the bigger fighter.

Can Cotto handle a stronger fighter if the fight goes into the late rounds? Mayorga doesn't think so.

Then again, Mayorga apparently thinks very little of Cotto. Shocking.

Cotto hired Steward before his fight with Yuri Foreman, so they're relatively new to each other.

Steward will undoubtedly have his fighter working behind the jab and fighting on the inside to neutralize Mayorga's windmill punching.

There may come a point, though, when Mayorga forces Cotto to brawl. That works completely in Mayorga's favor, but Cotto is a warrior, and he's completely willing to trade bombs.

This is where Steward has to step in and keep his fighter focused; otherwise, an upset

He's been hammered into the canvas by Tito Trinidad, vaporized by Oscar De La Hoya and decapitated by Shane Mosley. He hasn't beaten an elite fighter in years.

You could argue that he's a one-hit wonder, as many had Vernon Forrest winning their

rematch or at the very least had the fight scored evenly.

Mayorga can call fighters horrible names and insult their mothers, sisters, wives, children and deceased relatives, but at some point, he's got to back up the vitriol by actually winning one of these bouts.

He hasn't even been able to remain upright, let alone snag a victory.

This is his last shot at remaining relevant, so he's desperate, and desperate fighters are certainly dangerous ones.

That's especially true when the desperate fighter also hap-

pen to toss bombs with the subtlety of an overgrown toddler on crystal meth.

As we mentioned before, Mayorga has the distinction of being wrecked by three future Hall of Famers.

Cotto needs to be the fourth to put him to sleep.

A decision win doesn't do much at all for him, especially when he's trying to keep his elite status intact.

There's no shame in being knocked out by Pacquiao, but Cotto needs to prove he's beyond it, and that he can hang with anyone at 147-154.

That requires knocking out Mayorga, who is obviously dangerous but far from the fighter he was a few years ago.

Were they loaded? You can imagine that question bothering Cotto ever since that night in 2009 when Antonio Margarito got busted and then pounded by Shane Mosley.

Whether or not you believe Margarito had loaded wraps when he and Cotto fought is irrelevant, what you need to

know is that Miguel Cotto ABSOLUTELY believes he did. A big win here sets Cotto up for his rematch with Margarito, one that would bring a ton of interest and one that would bring a great deal of resolution for Cotto should he succeed.

For Mayorga, his options go from very limited to suddenly wide open. While it is extremely unlikely he'd get a shot at Manny Pacquiao (and that's a very good thing for Mayorga), he would more than likely get a shot at one of the big names anywhere from 160 to 147.

Both fighters have plenty of

dent that chin, especially if he can catch Cotto with something he doesn't see coming. His odds aren't great, but he's a bomber with enough left to at least make for some iffy moments for the favorite.

The fight will most likely end with Cotto in full control. It's hard to see Mayorga throwing bombs and attacking at will late in the fight.

In the early rounds, however, this thing could be a shootout. Mayorga will probably come out guns blazing, and unless Cotto can catch him with something huge early, he'll most likely be landing some of those wild shots.

Best case, we get an unexpectedly even war, but even worst case, we should see fireworks for at least the first couple of rounds.

The assumption is that Cotto will take out Mayorga at some point, probably in the mid-to-late rounds.

Shane Mosley had more difficulty than expected before icking the Nicaraguan in the last seconds, so it's safe to think Cotto may need some rounds as well.

Cotto is a much better boxer, and while he isn't quite the same fighter he was just a couple of years ago, (meeting Manny Pacquiao and getting a face full of plaster for 11 rounds will take something from you) he's still much fresher than Mayorga.

Expect a fun fight and a late stoppage for Miguel Cotto.

With Nonito Donaire's spectacular knockout of Fernando Montiel last Saturday, every boxing pound-for-pound list was forced to rearrange the top spots.

It was the same kind of performance Sergio Martinez put on late last year over Paul Williams, which catapulted him near the top of the sport as well.

Boxing can use a few more stars, especially with Floyd Mayweather Jr. only fighting every couple years, and they have gotten two more in the last six months.

There are plenty of high-quality fighters that fall just short of the list, but you have to draw the line somewhere.



Serena: Health problems 'scariest moment in my life'

NEW YORK -- Serena Williams still has blood clots in her lung but hopes to return to tennis this summer after recovering from a pulmonary

of a large hematoma on her stomach. The gathering of blood under the skin grew from a "golf ball" to the size of "a grapefruit."

"I apparently must of hit something," said Williams, who was injecting herself twice a day. [The doctors said] 'We can't drain this, we have to surgically remove it.'"

Her absence from tennis could stretch to almost a year since she won the Wimbledon title last July. Williams has had two surgeries on her right foot since cutting it on glass at a restaurant shortly after Wimbledon.

Her comeback has been delayed repeatedly by complications from the injury.

The second surgery was in late October, and she said she spent 10 weeks in a cast and 10 weeks in a walking boot.

On Wednesday night, Williams took to Twitter to reassure her fans: "Hey guys! I am better each day. I'm so in love with my fans and friends! My family too! I'm beyond blessed to have so much love around me! S"

Surgery is among the risk factors for blood clots, as are prolonged periods of inactivity and long airline flights.

Williams said she wasn't "moving and not doing as much as I normally do. I started flying a lot ... thinking I was OK. And obviously, I wasn't."

The 29-year-old Williams realizes it was a dangerous situation.

"Mine went from my leg to my lung and it traveled fast," Williams said. "I still have several clots in my lung. They're just there, and they have to eventually dissolve. So I'm just taking it one day at a time. Just on the road to recovery."

"I said I wanted to return this summer, and I was hoping to return way sooner than that. Being so close to ... the scariest moment in my life, I really just want to come back and be able to do well."



embolism, which she called the "scariest moment in my life."

The 13-time Grand Slam champion spoke on NBC's Today show Wednesday from Los Angeles, saying she hasn't left her house much since going to the hospital nearly three weeks ago.

"I had a lot of swelling in my leg, which really is a telltale sign of an embolism, and I could not breathe," Williams said.

Serena Williams has been away from the WTA Tour since winning Wimbledon last July.

She said doctors couldn't find anything in her leg and then ordered a CAT scan of her lungs.

"That's when they found several blood clots," Williams said. "They told me that they had to check me in immediately or else ... it wasn't going to be a good result."

Treating the blood clots required Williams to inject herself with a blood thinner, she said. Feeling a need to get out, she didn't let her condition deter her from attending several Oscar parties.

"I had been through so much in the past eight months," she said. "Just really kind of low on energy, but I was like 'I've got to do something, kind of just to get my spirits up.'"

Then she wound up back in the hospital on Feb. 28 because

Rangers report

The Neftali Feliz experiment appears to be short-lived.

Manager Ron Washington indicated Tuesday that Feliz will be the closer this season. He is scheduled to pitch three innings Wednesday, which sounds more like what a closer would do. It wasn't clear why the Rangers would want Feliz to pitch three innings in spring training if he's going to be the closer, but Washington said he's being used that long just so he can throw all of his pitches.

Feliz, who set an MLB rookie record with 40 saves in 2010, was a starter until shortly before his promotion to the majors in 2009. It wasn't clear whether his declaration Monday that he'd rather be the closer was a factor in the decision.

Left-hander C.J. Wilson and right-hander Colby Lewis are the only starters who are guaranteed rotation spots. There are seven candidates for the other three spots: Alexi Ogando, Matt Harrison, Dave Bush, Tommy Hunter, Derek Holland, Tanner Schepper and Michael Kirkman. Two other possible candidates, Brandon Webb and Scott Feldman, are injured.

--GM Jon Daniels, the AL Executive of the Year in 2010, got his reward -- a four-year contract extension -- for helping the Rangers reach the World Series for the first time in history. Daniels already was signed through 2011, so the extension will carry through 2015. If he serves through the full length of the contract, he would tie Tom Grieve (1984-94) as having the most tenure in the GM's chair in the franchise's history. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

--3B Adrian Beltre will apparently miss more time than originally expected because of a calf injury. Beltre suffered a strained calf while running on a treadmill at home shortly before spring training. He tried to work through it at camp but aggravated the injury at the end of February, and the club estimated he'd need another 10-14 days to get ready. It's looking more and more as if he might need three weeks. Club officials insist, however, that Opening Day is not in jeopardy. He was scheduled to take batting practice and do some light drills on

March 6.

--LHP C.J. Wilson, the Rangers' Opening Day starter, is already proud to be a little weird. Now he wants to be even more like a freak. In particular: "The Freak."

After watching Tim "The Freak" Lincecum pitch during the postseason last year, Wilson decided he wanted to better master the changeup and has worked hard to use it more often this spring. "After watching the way Lincecum pitched in the playoffs and seeing how he can take over a whole game with his changeup, I figured I'd like to do that, too," Wilson said. "If I can throw that for a two-strike pitch, all of a sudden I've got five different pitches I can go to."

--RHP Brandon Webb, trying to return to the majors after missing the last two seasons because of shoulder problems, has strengthened his arm to the point where he can get on a mound and throw bullpen sessions, but not to the point where he is ready to face hitters. After three bullpen sessions in five days, the Rangers decided to put an extra day in between his every-other-day schedule to allow him to do more long-tossing as he builds up arm strength. While the Rangers have made no announcement, it seems certain Webb will open the season on the DL. Late April might be the earliest possible time for him to return to the majors.

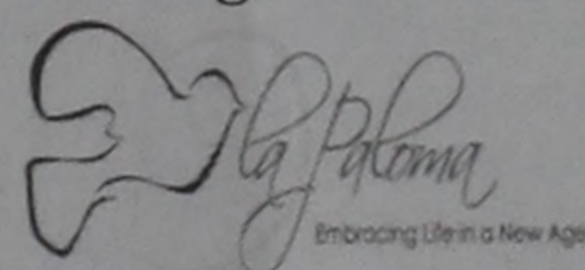
--RHP Tanner Scheppers, considered the top pitching prospect in the big-league camp, complained of a stiff back after allowing five hits and two walks in two-thirds of an innings against the Chicago Cubs. He underwent an MRI exam on March 4 and was to be re-evaluated.

QUOTE TO NOTE

"I think I'm a little underrated as a catcher. I'm a better catcher than what people put out there. But that's for me to prove now. I'm working and doing everything I can to be the best catcher I can." -- C-DH-1B Mike Napoli on his catching skills. Napoli compiled a 4.47 catcher's ERA during his five seasons with the Los Angeles Angels and was used more at other positions in 2010 than behind the plate.

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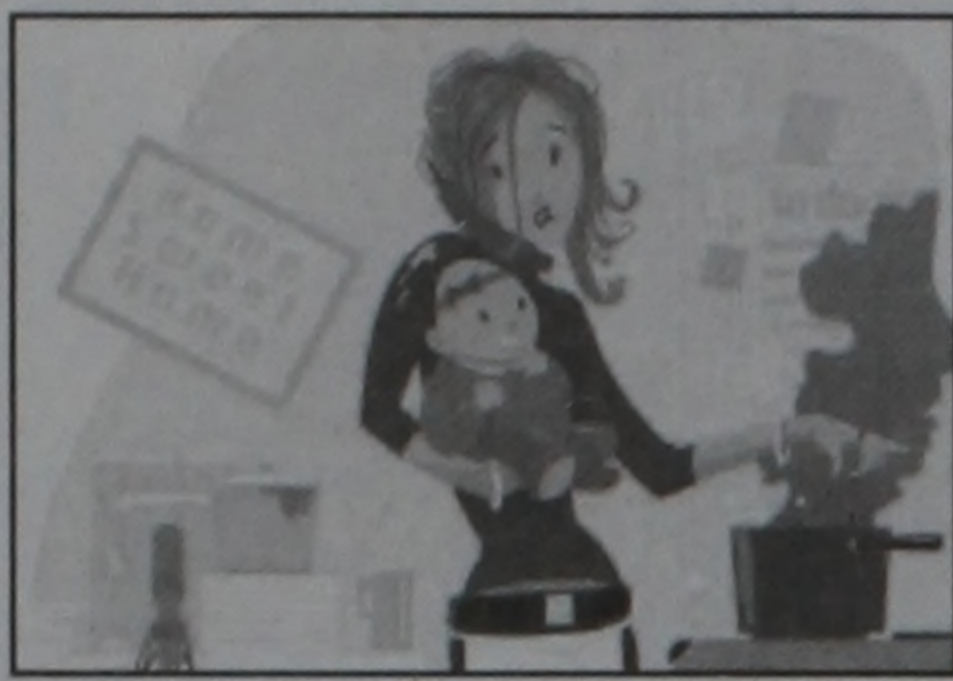
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Ese ritmo de vida te puede matar

Aconsejan a las mujeres latinas que tomen tiempo para cuidar de su salud

Hoy en día las mujeres latinas, aparte de ser madres, esposas, amas de casa y cabezas de familia, también trabajan, estudian y tienen una participación muy activa en todos los aspectos de la sociedad moderna.

Este estilo y ritmo de vida tan acelerado y activo, les deja poco



En este sentido, la experta aconseja acudir regularmente al médico para realizarse chequeos preventivos. "Aunque nos sintamos bien, es importante ir a visitar a un proveedor de salud, y si existe una condición crónica, que nos diga qué podemos hacer para mantenernos lo más saludable posible".

"Muchas veces, las latinas tenemos un médico para nuestros niños, pero no tenemos uno para nosotras, para que nos vea y nos diga si estamos bien o si necesitamos ayuda", enfatiza.

Para las que son inmigrantes, que tienen dos trabajos, y que aseguran que no tienen tiempo para visitar a un doctor, Delgado les dice que si tienen tiempo para llevar a sus niños a chequeos, también deben conseguir tiempo para ellas. "Hay clínicas que están abiertas hasta ciertas horas que son diferentes y pueden encontrar esos lugares cerca de su casa".

tiempo para ellas mismas, lo cual incide negativamente en su estado de salud y bienestar general.

Por ello, expertos aconsejan a las hispanas hacer una pausa en sus actividades diarias y pensar en ellas mismas. Deben cuidar su cuerpo y mente y tomar control de sus propias vidas.

Con motivo de ser marzo el Mes Nacional de la Historia de la Mujer, hablamos con la doctora Jane Delgado, directora ejecutiva de la Alianza Nacional para la Salud de los Hispanos (NAHH, en inglés), quien es toda una autoridad en tema de la salud femenina.

Delgado coincide con la mayoría de los expertos al señalar que las mujeres así como cuidan al resto de la familia, también deben cuidarse a sí mismas.

"En la comunidad hispana la familia es muy importante, y la cabeza de esa familia es la mujer (...). Pero no por el hecho de que ella cuida a la familia se va a descuidar a ella misma. Es importante que nos cuidemos porque si no estamos allí ¿quién va a cuidar a la familia?", dice delgado.

"Tenemos que tener un balance entre las dos cosas: el cuidar a las familias y el cuidarnos a nosotras, y esa es una de las grandes dificultades que tenemos en nuestra cultura", agrega.

Según la doctora, que ha publicado varios libros sobre la salud de los latinos, la prevención es la clave para no sufrir enfermedades que pueden afectar seriamente a la mujer e incluso causarle la muerte.

Delgado señala que los principales problemas de salud que afectan a las hispanas en EE.UU., son la diabetes, depresión, artritis y la presión alta. Otra gran preocupación es el tema sexual. "Muchas jóvenes hacen preguntas sobre la sexualidad y qué significa eso; qué son los condones. Las muchas más jóvenes quieren saber sobre las enfermedades que se transmiten sexualmente. Es muy difícil para los jóvenes comprender, porque muchas veces no hay síntomas, y no saben que tienen que ir a sus médicos", dice Delgado.

Delgado asegura que aunque no se tenga seguro médico, existen lugares donde se presta atención gratuita o a bajo costo.

Además de visitar a un médico rutinariamente, la doctora aconseja llevar un estilo de vida saludable, que incluya hacer ejercicios, ingerir comida sana y beber mucha agua.

"Las mujeres debemos respetarnos a nosotras mismas, eso es cuidarnos, queremos; saber que la salud es esencial, y eso significa poner atención. Sin salud no hay nada", enfatiza Delgado.

Nelsen: I Will Fight to Keep Mexican American Studies at UTPA

University of Texas-Pan American President Robert Nelsen says he will fight to keep the Mexican American Studies program going on campus.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is threatening to take away the program's accreditation, meaning it would no longer be able to offer a Major degree.

In an exclusive interview with the Guardian at the state Capitol, Nelsen said he is discussions with THECB to keep Major degrees in place. He said he also wants to create a Mexican American Studies Center at UTPA.

"I want the Center there because of where we are," Nelsen said. "We are in the Valley. This is us talking about the Valley. It is about our history; our heritage. It is about who we are. We are determined to keep things strong and moving forward."

THECB placed MAS on the chopping block because in previous years it had underperformed. However, Nelsen said UTPA has a plan in place to revive its fortunes.

"I cannot guarantee that the degree program will continue. That is in the hands of the Coordinating Board. I will fight for it with the Coordinating Board to keep it alive but we will have to see," Nelsen said.

"What we are working to do right now is try to work with the Coordinating Board to make certain we can keep the Major but it is on the list of low producing programs at this point. According to the Coordinating Board, we have not graduated the requisite number of students."

Nelsen said that in response, UTPA is developing a plan to improve the education of students under the MAS program. "We have an action plan that has benchmarks. We will tell them (THECB), here's what we will do each step of the way," Nelsen said.

The plan to build a Mexican American Studies Center will continue regardless, Nelsen said. "We are going to create a Mexican American Studies Centers so even if the Major was not to be there we would still have the Center. It is something that is important for us," he said.

Four years ago, five junior faculty Latinas - Stephanie Alvarez, Emmy Perez, Sonia Hernandez, Jennifer Mata, Edna Ochoa - came together to revitalize Mexican American Studies at UTPA by re-designing the Major and Minor degrees, and getting the name changed from Mexican American Heritage to Mexican American Studies. Later, Mata left the board and Marci McMahon and Petra Guerra joined.

In an e-mail alert to MAS supporters, Alvarez said that the group has created a graduate certificate, increased the Majors from one to ten in less than two years, and helped form a coalition of almost 40 MAS faculty from across five different colleges.

"This coalition of faculty has proven to be critical in us moving forward and we are grateful that so many outstanding faculty at UTPA are engaged and supportive of MAS," Alvarez said.

"We also gained very welcomed mentoring from senior faculty members Velma

Menchaca and, in particular, Francisco Guajardo. Students also formed the Mexican American Studies Club that has played a vital role in recruiting students and raising awareness about issues pertaining to Mexican American Studies."

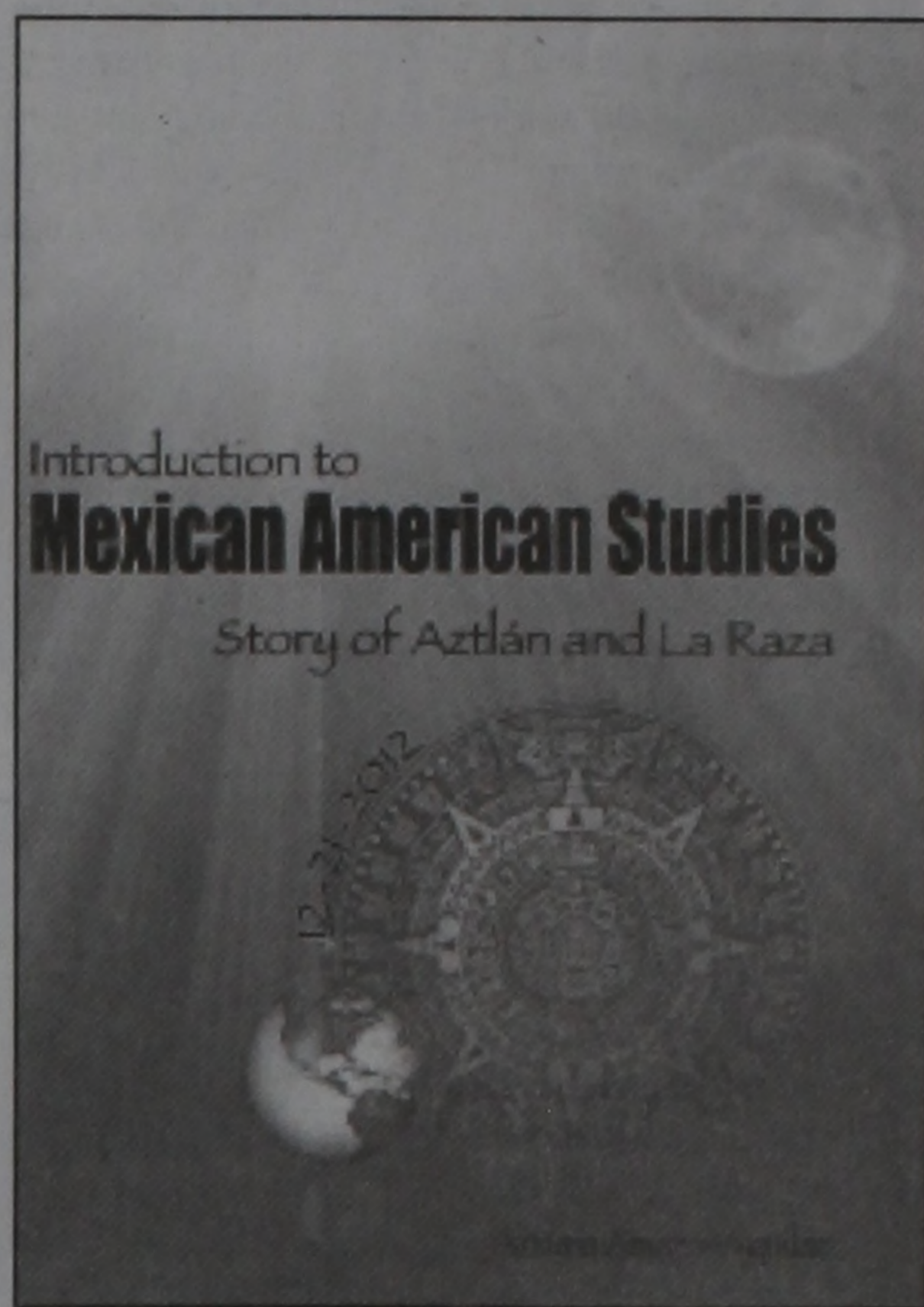
Alvarez said she and Menchaca met with Nelsen, UTPA Provost Havidan Rodriguez, and UTPA Chief of Staff Lisa Prieto last Sunday. At the meeting, Alvarez said, Nelsen gave

the green light on creation of a Center for Mexican American Studies. She said a proposal for the Center still has to go through the approval process. However, once approved, Nelsen has committed to providing seed money for the Center from the President's Circle Fund to the tune of \$10,000 a year for the first couple of years, Alvarez said.

"We have been working on this for almost four years now and think this is fantastic news and are very excited about the possibilities this will provide for our students, faculty, University, and the entire Valley," Alvarez said.

"We applaud President Nelsen

for seeing the value and need for MAS on campus. We also thank those administrators and



staff - Lisa Prieto, Ana Maria Rodriguez, Havidan Rodriguez, Dahlia Guerra, Cynthia Brown, among others - who supported the President in making MAS a priority at UTPA."

Alvarez added that she and others are very grateful for the "passion" Nelsen has demonstrated "to not just service the students and community, but really transform the lives of both and the role UTPA and its faculty can play in creating positive change."

"Certainly his support of Mexican American Studies at UTPA is a clear indication of that," Alvarez said.



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As elderly Hispanic population booms, a rush to boost awareness of Alzheimer's disease

William Gonzalez's world collapsed when his wife of more than 50 years was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease four years ago. The 78-year-old Cuban immigrant knew little about the scourge that was gradually robbing his wife of a lifetime of memories.

Today, the Air Force veteran struggles to run his home in Davie, Fla., while serving as sole caretaker for his 74-year-old wife Ida.

In increasing numbers, Hispanics are facing the wrenching prospect of helping a loved one battle the most common form of dementia. The population of elderly Hispanics is projected to grow the fastest of all U.S. racial and ethnic groups in coming years, from just under 3 million in 2008 to 17.5 million in 2050, according to the Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics.

That has Alzheimer's groups pushing to raise awareness among Hispanics who are living longer, into the decades when the risk of Alzheimer's rises dramatically. The Alzheimer's Association "Know the 10 Signs" workshop in Spanish is being offered at the more than 70 chapters nationwide.

A support group started by The Latino Alzheimer's & Memory Disorders now meets twice monthly in different Chicago locations. In Milwaukee, the Latino Geriatric Center provides screenings for memory loss and support groups.

Complications from Alzheimer's is the sixth-leading cause of death for non-Hispanics and 12th-leading cause of death among Hispanics, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. Yet the nation's largest, private nonprofit funder of Alzheimer's research - the Alzheimer's Association - warns that the number

of older Hispanics with Alzheimer's and related dementias could rise more than sixfold from fewer than 200,000 cases today to as many as 1.3 million by 2050, based on rates of population growth.

"We want to make sure we increase concern and awareness as much as we can and extend our services and support," said Janis Robinson, an association official.

Experts say some Hispanics are reluctant to make medical appointments, which can create long delays from when symptoms are first noticed until a neurologist is seen. When they do decide to see a doctor, it can be a challenge finding one fluent in Spanish.

Add to that the stigma often attached to mental illness - the Spanish word for dementia is "demencia," which roughly translates as "crazy" - and Hispanics face daunting barriers to frank discussion about such diseases.

"I look at it as what cancer was 10 or 15 years ago. People never talked about it or the c-word," said Serge Morales, a 72-year-old retiree of Mexican descent in Agoura Hills, Calif.

He and his wife, Susan, knew little about dementia until she was diagnosed at 58 with early onset Alzheimer's. Susan Morales, who has a nursing degree, has made Los Angeles-area speaking appearances to raise awareness about a disease normally associated with the elderly.

"She's very young-looking and we just want to make sure that people understand that it can happen to you at a young age," Sergio Morales said.

Dr. Elizabeth Crocco, an Alzheimer's expert at the University of Miami School of Medicine, recalls one patient who was living in Puerto

Rico and whose siblings hid her disease from her grown children in Miami. When her son discovered his mother had problems driving and paying the bills, he moved her to Florida for treatment.

"They got angry at him for taking her away," Crocco says of the older siblings. "It was the professional younger son against the older generation."

Arturo Flores, a 38-year-old technician, is the youngest of four children and lives with his parents in Culver City, Calif. His Mexican father, Ricardo, has Alzheimer's. Flores, who is single, said caring for his father has affected his life more than he expected but he feels a duty to the father who raised him.

"I can't really talk to him about certain things in my life I wish I could," said Flores, who has cried many times since his father's diagnosis. "He can't get his ideas out anymore. I see him more as my son now."

In South Florida, Gonzalez's wife was diagnosed four years ago after someone noticed she was speaking English to a Spanish-speaking friend. Now he's struggling with the toll of coping with her disease, vexed when she barely noticed the Christmas ornaments he put up at their home for the holidays.

"That's kind of frustrating, but it's not her. It's the disease," said Gonzalez, who sought relief at weekly support meetings with others who care for Alzheimer's patients.

Fighting back tears, he recalled how he asked his three grown children for their support shouldering the load his wife's disease has placed on him: "You better keep me alive, or try to. Because if I'm OK and here, I can take care of her," he said.

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