

el Saltillo

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Texas Seen Mexico as Potential Natural Gas Buyer Now, & Supplier In Future

Texas will be looking to Mexico in the future for natural gas, and is keen to help its southern neighbor produce it, the Lone Star state's oil and gas regulator said.

Texas Railroad Commissioner Charles Matthews led a 100-member trade delegation to Mexico this week to focus on the energy sector. The three-day event ended Friday.

Texas sees Mexico as an attractive market for selling natural gas in the near term, and in the long run as a key potential supplier, Matthews said in an interview.

With annual production of 5.7 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas, or about 15 billion cubic feet a day, Texas provides 30% of U.S. output, exporting around 1.8 Tcf a year to the midwest and the northeast, Matthews said.

Texan producers compete with Canada, which has been rapidly increasing its exports to

the U.S. and now supplies about 18% of the country's gas.

"Our producers are looking for opportunities. If they can get the same price for their gas in Mexico as they can get in Chicago and New York, they are interested in selling the gas here because their transportation costs are less," Matthews said.

Mexico's natural gas imports have been expanding rapidly in recent years. From less than 300 million cubic feet a day in 2001, state oil monopoly Petroleos Mexicanos, or Pemex, imported more than 70 million cubic feet a day in June this year.

But as Mexico aims to raise production to around 7 billion cubic feet a day from the current 4.5 billion, in the future the gas could start going the other way.

"The idea is that, and no one knows when this will happen,

but five years out, maybe 10 years out, things will turn," Matthews said. "Texas is going to need natural gas from Mexico."

While Texan natural gas production has remained flat, overall U.S. output has been declining and Canada has warned it can't continue to increase exports at the current rate.

"We should encourage the U.S. domestic oil and gas industry. And it seems to me to be a natural extension - to be in favor of helping encourage Mexico and Pemex to develop these gas fields," he added.

The Texan delegation, which included representatives of at least 40 companies, came as Pemex tenders multiple service contracts to raise natural gas production in the Burgos basin of northeastern Mexico.

"People capable of doing multibillion dollar deals are

down here," Matthews said.

Under the 20-year multiple service contracts, which some legislators charge violate a constitutional ban on oil and gas concessions in the nationalized industry, Pemex hopes to double output at Burgos to 2 billion cubic feet a day by 2006.

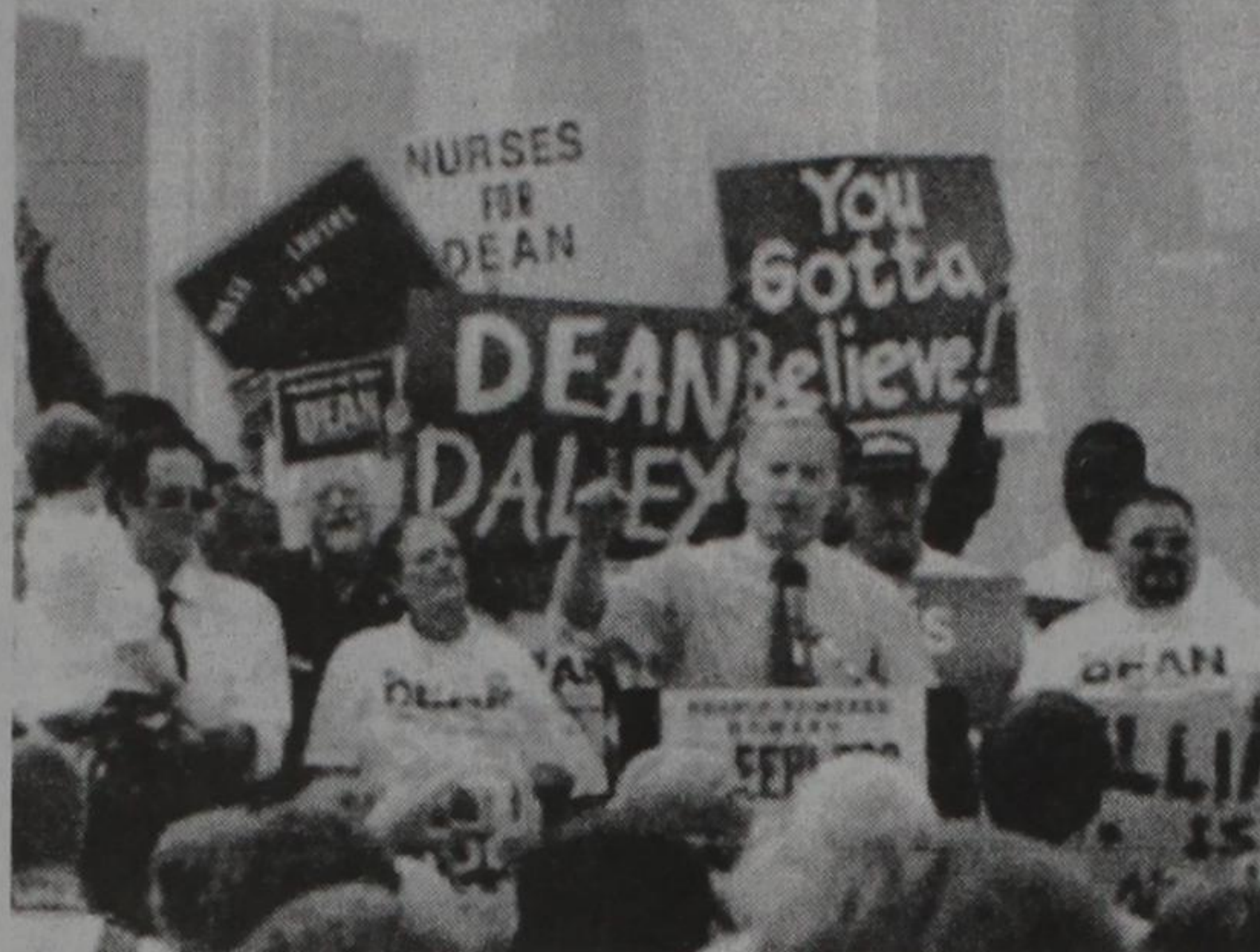
The Burgos deposits stretch out under the U.S.-Mexico border, and the Mexican side is across from the most productive gas fields in the U.S.

"Most of our guys are very familiar with the gas fields here in Mexico," Matthews said.

He stressed the technical expertise and the "large sums of capital" that Texans could bring to Mexico.

"It's difficult to find an oilfield in the world that there wasn't a Texan involved in some way," he said.

El Editor
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Poll: 2004 Profile of Hispanic Voters Begins to Emerge

By Fresia Rodriguez-Cavard

A Hispanic voter portrait is taking shape for the 2004 presidential election. At the National Press Club release this month of his organization's latest findings on Hispanic political and social attitudes, Latino Coalition president Roberto de Posada told reporters that it's happening.

"You are seeing a community that, politically, is completely up for grabs," de Posada said. However, he added, when dealing with Latino priorities, "All the surveys show a consistency in policy and politics."

Conducted in conjunction with the Hispanic Business Roundtable, the poll was taken Aug. 11-16. It surveyed 1,000 Hispanics and offered a language response preference. Sixty percent chose to have the interviews conducted in Spanish.

De Posada and Honorio Padrón, HBR president, issued a public warning to candidates -- both Democrats and Republicans -- that if they ignore Latino concerns on such issues as immigration and health care, it will be at their own peril. The poll also included questions on California politics. Here by subject area are where Hispanic interests are directed:

IMMIGRATION

Nearly nine out of 10 (86.7 percent) felt that the federal government should normalize the status of undocumented workers living in the United States who have clean police records. The vast majority of all national origin groups with roots throughout Latin America agreed. "That is a pattern that I have seen for a long time working with other (Latino) national organizations. That is the one issue that unites us," said Alicia Diaz, director of the Washington, D.C., office of the Cuban American National Council.

HEALTH CARE

Almost one-third (32 percent) said that affordable health care is the most important health issue. "In this survey, health care emerged as an important issue to Latinos," de Posada cautioned. Thirty-five percent of respondents reported that they were uninsured.

POLITICS

While 40 percent said they generally approved of the job Republican members of Congress were doing, half said they approved of the Democrats' performance. A New York Times poll released in early August found that despite a 52

percent approval rating for President Bush, 49 percent of Hispanics felt that Democrats cared more about the needs of Hispanics. Only 12 percent felt that way about Republicans.

Six out of 10 Hispanics reported that if the primaries were held now, they would be undecided as to which candidate to vote for -- although "any Democrat" would receive 42.6 percent of the vote compared to Bush's 31.4 percent. None of the nine announced Democratic presidential candidates gained more than single-digit percentage support.

JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

Jobs ranked as the most important issue.

Six out of 10 felt that the economy would improve in their local area in the next 12 months; 15.2 percent said they expect it to worsen.

In the Times poll, 72 percent of Hispanics were concerned about losing their jobs next year.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Nearly half (49.1 percent) rated their local schools either fair or poor; 33.2 percent called them good, and 13.1 percent rated them excellent. Those who scored the quality of education as positive increased from 39 percent in 2002 to 46 percent this year.

"Obviously the support for public education is terrific," Darryl Figueroa, spokesperson for the National Education Association, told Hispanic Link. She said the data was in line with other polls.

The only surprise she saw were the findings on school vouchers. "Whenever Latinos have had an opportunity to vote on vouchers, they have been among the strongest opponents." In the Latino Coalition survey, 56.3 percent supported vouchers, while 35.3 percent opposed them.

CALIFORNIA ISSUES

Fifty-eight percent said that if the gubernatorial election were today, they would vote for Democratic Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante over Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger, who received 24.1 percent of the vote. Thirty-eight percent said they'd vote for incumbent Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer if the 2004 U.S. Senate election were to take place today; while 37.1 percent supported former U.S. Treasurer Rosario Marin.

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La Oficina de Presupuesto del Congreso de Estados Unidos (CBO, por sus siglas en inglés) pronosticó ayer un déficit fiscal federal de \$480,000 millones en el 2004, un monto récord que podría causar problemas a la reelección del presidente George W. Bush.

En su panorama presupuestario y económico bianual, la oficina, una agencia no partidista, también confirmó la proyección previa de un déficit de \$401,000 millones para el 2003, y pronosticó un déficit presupuestario acumulado apenas por debajo de \$1.4 billones para la próxima década.

El informe que presentó la oficina encargada del análisis de las cuentas públicas es el golpe más reciente en una serie de malas noticias en el frente fiscal, que han puesto al gobierno de Bush a la defensiva en ese tema.

El mes pasado, la Casa Blanca proyectó que el déficit presupuestario federal subiría a \$455,000 millones este año y a \$475,000 millones en el 2004, muy por encima del récord previo de \$290,000 millones alcanzado en 1992.

Las cifras de los déficit pronosticados por la Casa Blanca

no incluyen el creciente costo de la presencia estadounidense en Irak.

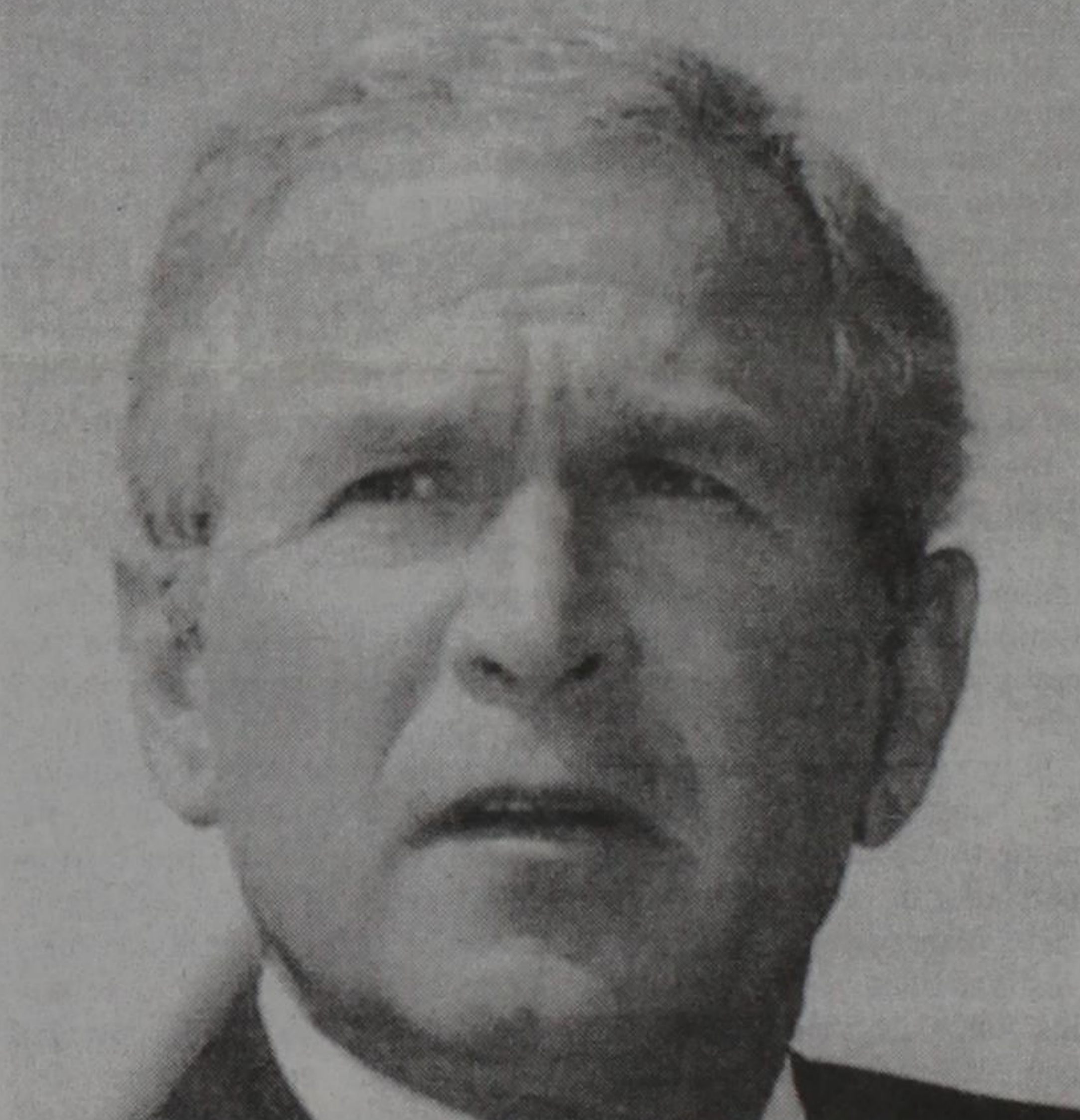
La CBO anticipó un déficit más pequeño para el año fiscal en curso, que termina el 30 de septiembre, principalmente porque supuso que los fondos que se habían asignado para Irak se gastarían más lentamente.

Pero tanto los analistas del Partido Republicano como del Partido Demócrata coinciden en que el déficit real del 2004 podría resultar superior a los estimados de la agencia, posiblemente superando \$500,000 millones, una vez que se incluyan posibles nuevos pedidos para Irak.

Los demócratas sostienen que la culpa del empeoramiento de la situación fiscal del gobierno la tienen los recortes de impuestos que impulsó Bush. En el 2000, Estados Unidos tuvo un superávit récord de \$236,000 millones.

En cambio, los republicanos argumentan que los recortes de impuestos han favorecido el crecimiento económico, y observan que los déficit proyectados siguen por debajo de los niveles vistos en la década del 80 como porcentaje del Pro-

En Crisis Las Arcas Federales



ducto Interno Bruto (PIB).

"El plan de la administración para recortar el déficit a la mitad es una combinación de crecimiento económico fuerte y control del gasto. La economía parece estar ganando impulso y ahora deberíamos enfocarnos en mantener el gasto bajo control", aseguró Trent Duffy, portavoz de la Oficina de Administración y Presupuesto de

la Casa Blanca.

La CBO pronosticó que el crecimiento económico se acelerará considerablemente el próximo año, cuando, según sus datos, el PIB real crecería a un ritmo de 3.8 por ciento, superior al 2.2 por ciento del 2003.

El Editor

Anti-Immigrant Group Claims Authenticity of FAIR's "Study" is Questioned

An anti-immigrant group says in a new report that Texas spends \$1.03 billion a year educating school-age children who are illegally in the country, but the Texas Education Agency said it has no way to determine those costs.

The report issued by Federation for American Immigration Reform on Wednesday said the country spent \$7.4 billion a year educating school-age illegal immigrant children. Dan Stein, the executive director of Federation for Immigration Reform, said the money could instead be used to address education needs of citizen and legal immigrant children.

"This report shows the victims are our own kids who are in overcrowded classrooms in severely stressed financial conditions," he said.

Suzanne Middlebrook, a TEA spokeswoman, said the state agency doesn't collect information on illegal immigrant children because school districts cannot require children to submit information showing they are legally in the country. Officials at the Ysleta Inde-

pendent School District in El Paso aren't allowed to ask about immigration status, said district spokesman Larry Trejo.

"We don't feel it's a significant impact on us," Trejo said. "It's our responsibility to educate any child who lives in our district. As long as they show proof that they reside here, we will provide them with the best education we possibly can."

FAIR used an Immigration and Naturalization state-by-state breakdown of the overall illegal immigrant population and assumed the undocumented child population was similarly distributed.

"That assumption really isn't examined" in the report, said Walter Ewing, research associate with the Immigration Policy Center of American Immigration Law Foundation in Washington.

Additionally, he said the report suffers from a "very bad case of tunnel vision."

"They are trying to tie undocumented children to the state budget crises ... Does

that mean we can credit immigrant children for the budget surpluses of 2000, if now they are to blame for the budget crisis of 2003?"

Stein said his group did the report because momentum is growing to re-examine U.S. law that guarantees education to all children regardless of their citizenship status. "In our view, the issue is very quickly assuming the trajectory it asserted in 1994-95," Stein said, referring to California's Proposition 187 movement. The California proposition, ultimately ruled unconstitutional, denied benefits to illegal immigrants.

But Steve Camarota, research director of the Center for Immigration Studies, a group that supports immigration limits, agrees that educating illegal immigrant schoolchildren is costing billions. But he disagreed that barring them from public education is the solution.

"Administratively, it requires school districts to identify those kids and that's a huge challenge. It also would re-

quire, politically, a willingness to kick these kids out of school or tell their parents you've got to pay. Children are a sympathetic population, so it's not going to happen," Camarota said.

Frank Sharry, National Immigration Forum executive director, agreed that the political climate has changed.

He cited the Arizona 2004 ballot initiative to cut off services to immigrants. Last month, eight Arizona Republicans in Congress issued a statement opposing the measure.

"The fact is these kids are here," Sharry said. "Is it better that they go to school or they be on street corners? The answer is obvious."

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Colorblindness Blinds What Needs to be Seen

Por Quien Soy Es Que Hago Lo Que Hago

By Marisa Treviño
 Have you heard about the latest California crusade? It's called Proposition 54, and it's based on the utopian ideal that race doesn't matter. The proposition stipulates that state and local officials can't collect or use information regarding someone's race, ethnicity, color or national origin for the purpose of public education, public contracting, public employment or other government operations. The mastermind behind Proposition 54 is a mild-mannered man by the name of Ward Connerly. He also happens to be African American. But people are warned not to use that term in his presence. As Mr. Connerly sees it, race isn't real. Well, in a society where skin color still segregates, and languages other than English intimidate, race is very real and cannot yet be ignored. If we did ignore race, then it would never have been known that a disproportionate number of people of color were being singled out for police stops and searches, or that children of color constituted the major-

ity of school dropouts and teenage pregnancies. We'd never know just how much more difficult it was for African Americans and Hispanics to get bank loans or home mortgages, or that a visit to the doctor by people of color didn't automatically result in the same quality of care. And we wouldn't have known that in some cities where "minorities" constitute a substantial portion of the population, candidates of color never seem to get enough votes to win an election. Yet in spite of these examples as to why we need to pay attention to race, there exists an even more compelling reason: medical genetics. Neil Risch, a Stanford University population geneticist, argues that the medical community should not be in such a hurry to whitewash folks. For too long, clinical drug trials were performed with few people of color as test subjects. The consequence has been a surprise to researchers when certain racial and ethnic groups have had unforeseen reactions to FDA-approved drugs. By not taking our differences

into account, important medical discoveries are missed, helping to explain why certain diseases or drug reactions are more prevalent among one ethnic group than another. Already it's been discovered that certain groups within our population metabolize drugs differently, experience distinct side effects, develop disease for different reasons and have adverse reactions to medical procedures. For example, it's been found that pain medications, such as codeine, metabolize differently in East Asians than in Caucasians. Whereas two tablets of codeine may do the trick to help Caucasian patients rest comfortably, the same dosage wouldn't bring any relief to East Asian pain sufferers. Even simple procedures like placing a breathing tube down a patient's windpipe call to keep in mind the ethnicity of the patient. Anesthesiologists realize that black patients salivate more heavily than other patients, causing complications in the airway. Overmedication can be a problem, too. Doctors now know that Latinos with schizo-

phrenia don't need as much antipsychotic medication as Caucasians to achieve the same drug levels in the bloodstream. And the latest research published in the August issue of the Archives of Ophthalmology reveals that a child's ethnicity determines the chances of developing common eye disorders. In other circles, targeting these racial differences would be considered politically incorrect and probably referred to as racial profiling. There is even an ongoing debate in the medical community on whether to use race as a variable in medical research. However, unlike other situations where people of color are targeted unfairly because of their skin color or accent, racial profiling in medical matters must not be seen through colorblind eyes. Especially, when it boils down to a race between life and death. (c) 2003, Hispanic Link News Service. Distributed by Tribune Media Services International

Por Victor Landa
 Hay una razón de por qué hago lo que hago. Literalmente me crié al pie del río que separa a los Estados Unidos de México. Nadaba en ese río por pura diversión, aún después de severas reprimendas de mi madre para que me mantuviera lejos de las traicioneras aguas. Crecí a caballo entre dos países, dos culturas y dos idiomas, con tal facilidad que parecía la forma más natural de vivir. Con todo, de cierta forma, es una existencia esquizoide. Hay un yo americano estadounidense y un yo mexicano, y está el yo que se pasa negociando continuamente entre los dos. En esta era post-9/11 de patriotismo extremo (en una nación formada por el conglomerado de todas las naciones del planeta, realmente se trata de nacionalismo), el negociador que hay en mí trabaja más de la cuenta. Esa es la razón de por qué veo las cosas como las veo. El yo que se encuentra posado en el puente entre dos naciones no da nada por sentado. Es posible que vea a México con los ojos de un estadounidense y a los Estados Unidos con los ojos de un mexicano. Las diferencias en la forma de ver el mundo, los matices e idiosincrasias de cada uno me hacen sentir como en casa. Hay una tensión que es repulsión y atracción a la vez, un incesante dar y recibir, que al igual que el mismo río divisor, cambia continuamente. Ahí es que vivo, en una constante consideración del otro. En una conversación informal la otra semana, una mujer me habló de su travesía a su vida actual. Comenzó en el estado de Durango, México y terminó en la parte sur de San Antonio. En Nuevo Laredo se armó de valor para cruzar el Río Bravo, llegando sin documentos, a donde su misma existencia se consideraría un crimen, y entonces anduvo por nueve días en el desierto. Luego de cuatro días, el pequeño grupo con el que viajaba se quedó sin alimentos, el agua escaseaba y el agotamiento era abrumador. El hecho que ella pudiera contar la historia era el único testimonio de que había sobrevivido la travesía. Cuando yo era niño, podía escuchar susurros a través de una ventana en mi habitación. A menos de 45 metros de nuestra casa, había un enorme árbol que servía de refugio a

los inmigrantes que esperaban la oscuridad de la noche bajo sus ramas, antes de hacer su viaje por el río. A medida que el sueño me vencía, los escuchaba susurrar, a veces reír. En la mañana, todo lo que quedaba eran los residuos de la fogata de la noche anterior. Años más tarde, cuando apenas comenzaba como reportero en Laredo, Texas, frecuentemente me asignaban cubrir historias sobre los "flotantes" que terminaban enredados en la paja acumulada en las riberas del río. Le llamábamos "flotante" a los cuerpos que aparecían con frecuencia a orillas del río. Nunca tenían identificación. Pensábamos que eran inmigrantes que se habían escurrido bajo la corriente, o quizás eran contrabandistas que habían salido perdiendo una discusión. Rara vez alguien reclamaba los cuerpos. Muchos de ellos iban a parar a unas miserables fosas en una esquinilla del cementerio. En ocasiones recuerdo los rostros de los hombres y mujeres que tocaban a nuestra puerta pidiendo un taco para acallar el rugido de sus estómagos. Parecían aterrizados; olían a leña quemada; llevaban algo más que esperanza. No hace mucho, sentado en un restaurante de Times Square en Nueva York, observé a un hombre que atendía las mesas rápida y silenciosamente. Sus ojos estaban fijos en su trabajo, evadiendo la mirada de los clientes a su alrededor. Se sobresaltó cuando le dije "buenas tardes". Creo que era lo último que esperaba escuchar en ese lugar, en ese momento. Encontré mi mirada, sonrió, asintió levemente y devolvió un simple, "buenas". No es que no sea patriótico, ni que quepa en el conveniente esquema de tendencias políticas de otra gente. Es que posado aquí, balanceándome por tanto tiempo entre escribir en inglés, hacer televisión en español, balanceándome entre culturas y países, me es difícil ver las cosas en términos estrictamente blanco y negro. Es como veo las cosas. Dios, en su infinita sabiduría, me puso en este lugar y me siento obligado a informar lo que veo. (c) 2003, Hispanic Link News Service. Distributed by Tribune Media Services International

Al Obviar El Prejuicio Racial, Se Oculta lo Que Hay Que Ver

Por Marisa Treviño
 ¿Ha escuchado algo acerca de la última Cruzada de California? Se llama Propuesta 54 y parte del ideal utópico que la raza no importa. La propuesta estipula que los funcionarios estatales y locales no pueden recopilar o utilizar información respecto a la raza, etnia, color o nación de origen para fines de educación pública, contratos o empleos en el sector público, u otras funciones gubernamentales. El cerebro detrás de la Propuesta 54 es un apacible hombre llamado Ward Connerly. Resulta que Connerly es de ascendencia afro-americana, término que, se advierte, no debe utilizarse en su presencia. Según Connerly, eso de la raza no es algo real. En una sociedad donde el color de la piel todavía divide a la gente y cualquier otro idioma que no sea inglés es intimidante, la raza es algo muy real y no debe pasarse por alto aun. Si ignoráramos la raza, nunca se hubiera sabido que un número desproporcionado de personas de color estaban siendo blanco de arrestos o investigaciones policíacas, o que los niños de color representaban una mayoría de los desertores escolares y los embarazos entre adolescentes. Nunca hubiéramos sabido cuanto más difícil era para los afro-americanos e hispanos el obtener préstamos bancarios o hipotecarios, o el hecho que una persona de color visitara a un médico no redundaba automáticamente en que recibiera la misma calidad de atención. Y tampoco hubiéramos sabido que en algunas ciudades donde las minorías constituyen una porción sustancial de la población, los candidatos de color aparentemente nunca obtenían suficientes votos como para ganar una elección.

Aún así, a pesar de estos ejemplos que evidencian el por qué necesitamos prestar atención a la raza, existe una razón mucho más convincente: la genética médica. Neil Risch, geneticista poblacional de Stanford University, argumenta que la comunidad médica no debería tener tanta urgencia en blanquear a la gente. Por mucho tiempo, las pruebas clínicas de fármacos se llevaban a cabo incluyendo a muy pocas personas de color como parte de la muestra. La consecuencia de esto ha sido una sorpresa para los investigadores, (particularmente) cuando ciertas razas y grupos étnicos han reaccionado de forma imprevista a fármacos aprobados por la FDA (Administración Federal de Fármacos). Al no tomar en cuenta nuestras diferencias, se pierden importantes descubrimientos médicos. Ello contribuye a explicar el por qué ciertas enfermedades o reacciones a fármacos son más comunes en un grupo étnico que en otro. Ya se ha descubierto que ciertos grupos dentro de nuestra población metabolizan los fármacos de forma diferente, sufren distintos efectos secundarios, desarrollan enfermedades debido a diferentes razones y reaccionan adversamente a procedimientos médicos. Por ejemplo, se ha encontrado que los asiáticos y los caucásicos metabolizan los medicamentos para el dolor, tales como codeína, de forma diferente. Mientras que dos tabletas de codeína pueden ayudar a los pacientes caucásicos a descansar cómodamente, la misma dosis no aliviará el dolor a los pacientes asiáticos. Aún cuando se trata de procedimientos simples, como el colocar un tubo respiratorio por la tráquea, requiere tener en mente la etnia del paciente. Los anestesiólogos se dan

cuenta que los pacientes de raza negra salivan más que otros pacientes, causándoles complicaciones en los conductos respiratorios. La medicación excesiva puede también ser un problema. Los médicos saben ahora que los latinos que padecen de esquizofrenia no necesitan tanto medicamento antisicótico como los caucásicos para lograr los mismos niveles del fármaco en la corriente sanguínea. Y la más reciente investigación publicada en la edición de agosto de la revista Archives of Ophthalmology (Anales de Oftalmología), revela que la etnia de un niño determina sus probabilidades de desarrollar enfermedades comunes del ojo. En otros grupos, el señalar estas diferencias raciales sería

considerado políticamente incorrecto, y probablemente se hubiera tildado de "perfilamiento racial". Incluso hay un debate en la comunidad médica con respecto a si se debe utilizar la raza como variable en la investigación médica. No obstante, contrario a otras situaciones donde se ataca injustamente a las personas debido al color de su piel o a su acento, desde la perspectiva médica, el analizar a la gente de acuerdo a su raza debe verse con buenos ojos. Especialmente cuando se trata de una carrera entre la vida y la muerte. (c) 2003, Hispanic Link News Service. Distributed by Tribune Media Services International

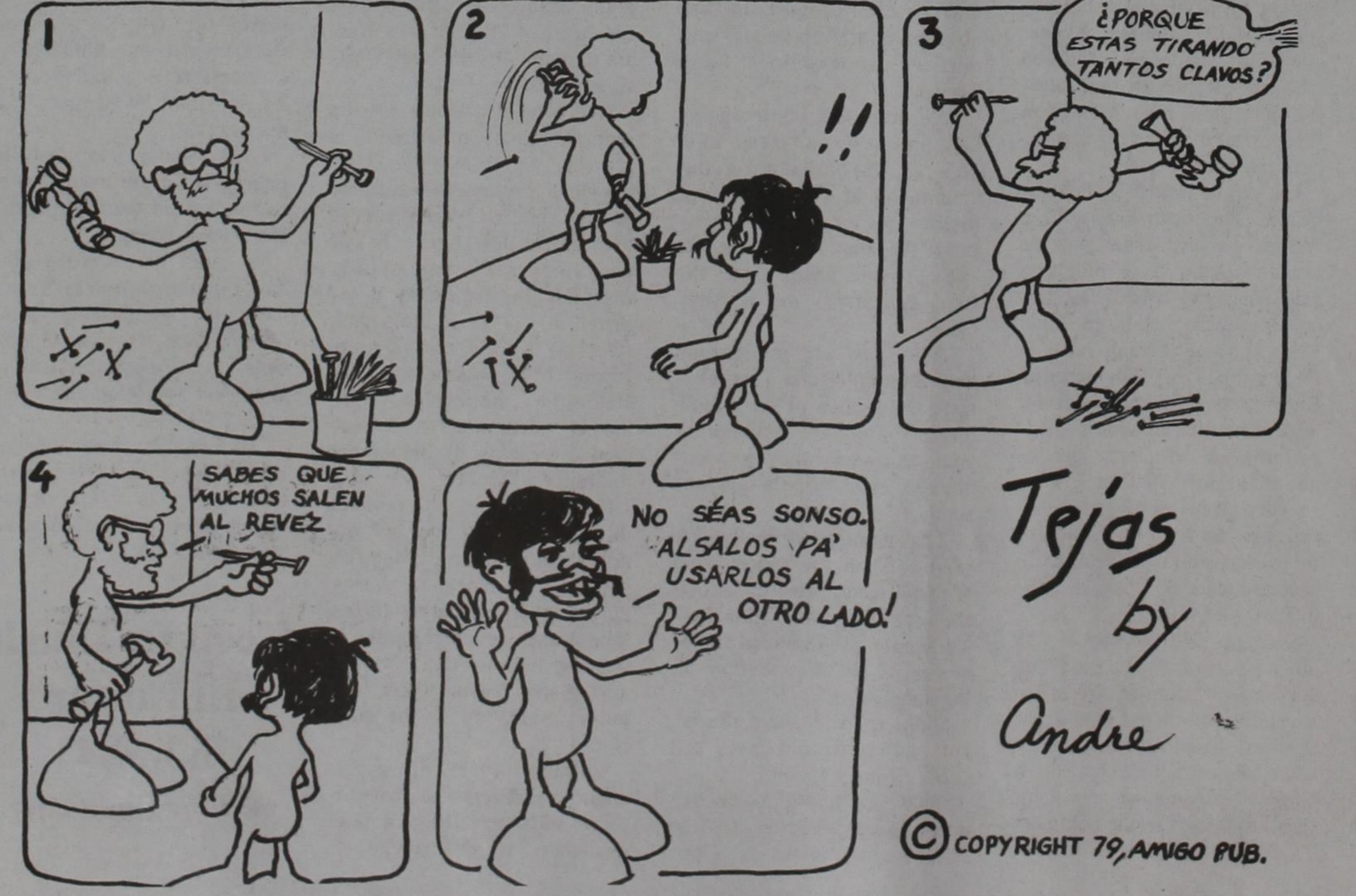
I Do What I Do Because Who I Am Tells Me To

By Victor Landa
 There is a reason I do what I do. I was raised, literally, within a stone's throw of the river that separates the United States from Mexico. I swam in that river for fun, even after stern admonitions from my mother to stay away from the treacherous water. I grew up straddling two countries, two cultures and two languages with such ease that it seemed the most natural way to live. Yet it is, in a way, a schizoid existence. There is a U.S. American me, and there is a Mexican me, and there is the me that's in constant negotiation between the two. In this post-9/11 era of extreme patriotism (nationalism, really, in a nation that is a conglomerate of all the nations of the planet) the negotiator works overtime.

There is a reason I see the way I see. The me that is perched on the bridge between two nations takes nothing for granted. It is possible for me to see Mexico through the eyes of an American and to see the United States through the eyes of a Mexican. The differences in world views, the nuances and idiosyncrasies of each, are home to me. There is a tension there that is at once repulsion and attraction, a constant give and take that, like the dividing river itself, is in constant flux. This is where I live, in constant consideration of the other. In a casual conversation the other week, a woman told me of her journey to her present life. It began in the state of Durango, Mexico, and ended on the south side of San Anto-

nio. In Nuevo Laredo, she braved the water of the Rio Grande, crossing over to where, with no documents, her existence would be regarded as a crime, and then walked for nine days in the desert. After four days, the small group she traveled with ran out of food, the water was scarce, and the exhaustion was overwhelming. The fact that she could recount the story was the only testament that she had survived the trek. When I was a boy, I could hear whispers through a window in my bedroom. Less than 50 yards from our house an enormous tree stood, serving as shelter for immigrants who lay in wait under its branches for the deepest dark of night before making their way to the river. As I slipped into sleep, I could hear them whispering, laughing sometimes. In the morning all that would be left were the smoldering embers of the nightly campfire. Years later, as a cub reporter in Laredo, Texas, I was often called on to cover the "floaters" that wound up tangled in the rushes on the banks of the river. A "floater" is what we called the corpses that appeared regularly on the river's edge. They never had identification. We figured they were immigrants who may have slipped under the current, or maybe smugglers who had ended up on the losing side of an argu-

ment. The bodies were seldom claimed. Most ended in paupers' graves in a far corner of the cemetery. I remember sometimes the faces of the men and women who would come to our door asking for a taco to quiet the rumbling of their stomachs. They looked scared; they smelled of firewood, carried little more than hope. Not too long ago, sitting in a restaurant in New York City's Times Square, I noticed a man quickly and quietly bussing tables. His eyes were intent on his work, averting a direct gaze from the patrons around him. My *buenas tardes* startled him. I think it was the last thing he expected at that place, at that time. He met my gaze, smiled and nodded slightly and returned a simple *buenas*. It's not that I'm unpatriotic, nor is it that I fit anyone's convenient scheme of political tendency. It's just that sitting as long as I have on my perch, writing in English, doing TV in Spanish, straddling cultures and countries, I find it hard to see things in terms of strict black and white. It's just how I see things. God, in his infinite wisdom, plopped me on this perch. And I am compelled to report what I see. (c) 2003, Hispanic Link News Service. Distributed by Tribune Media Services International



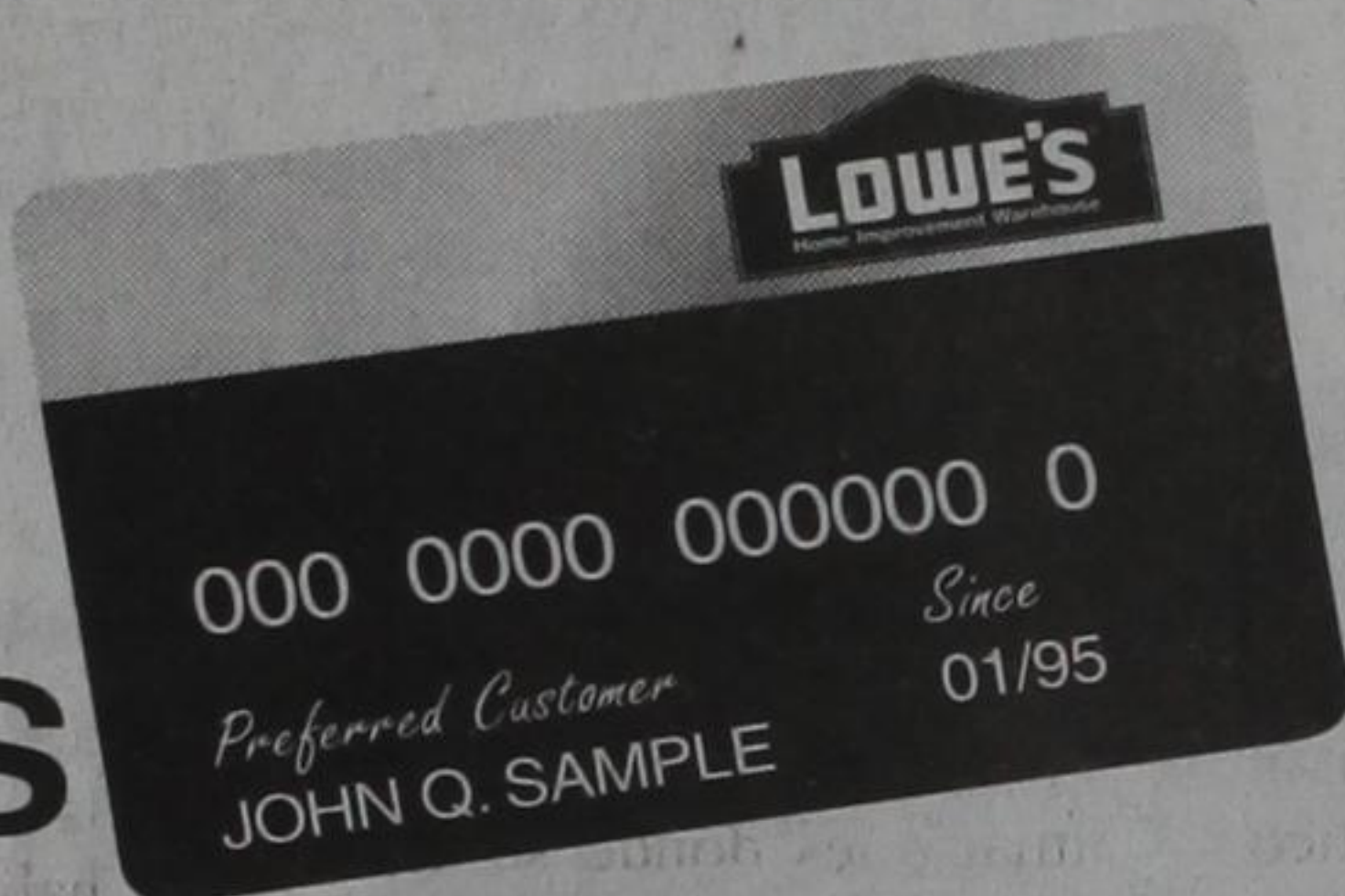
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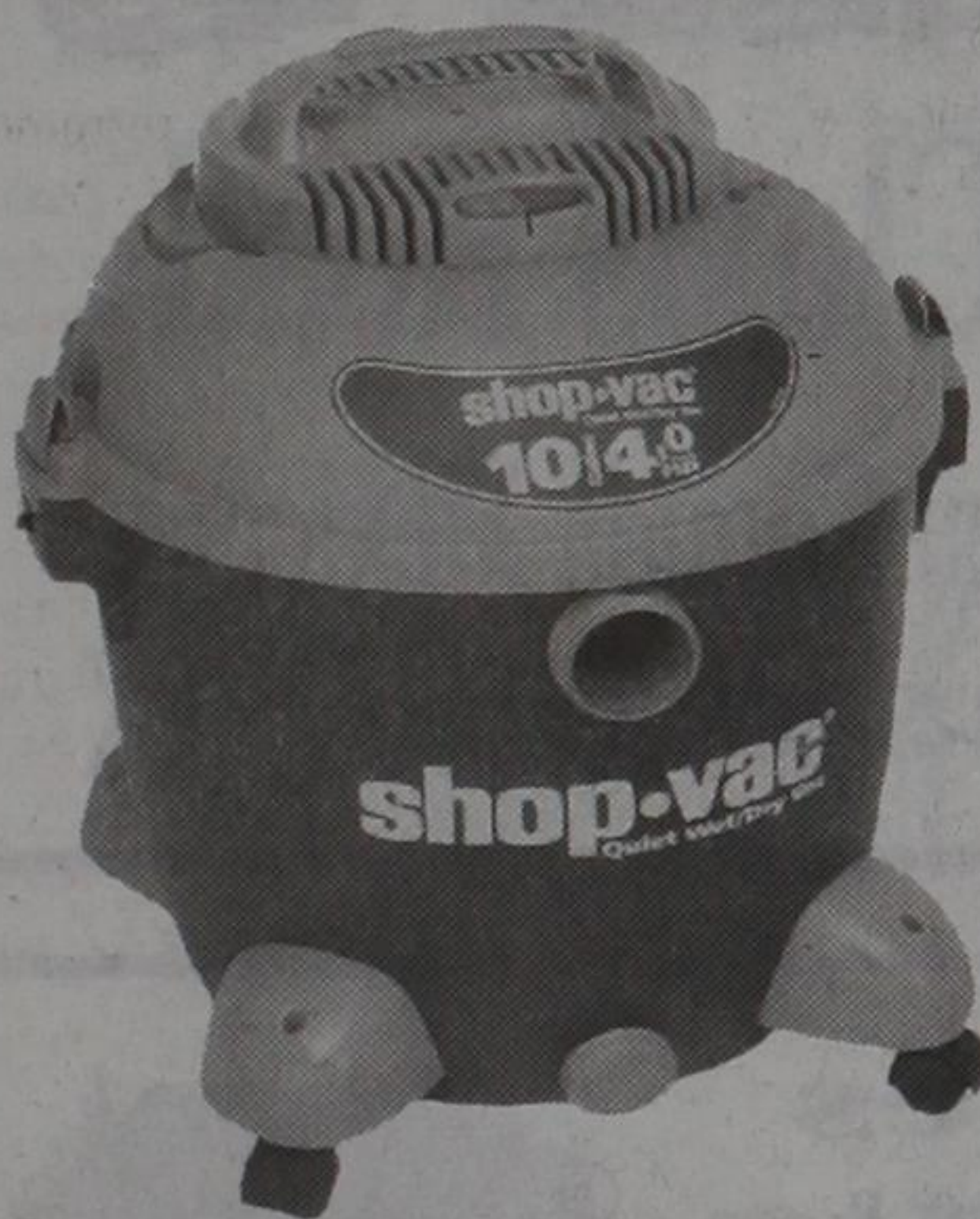
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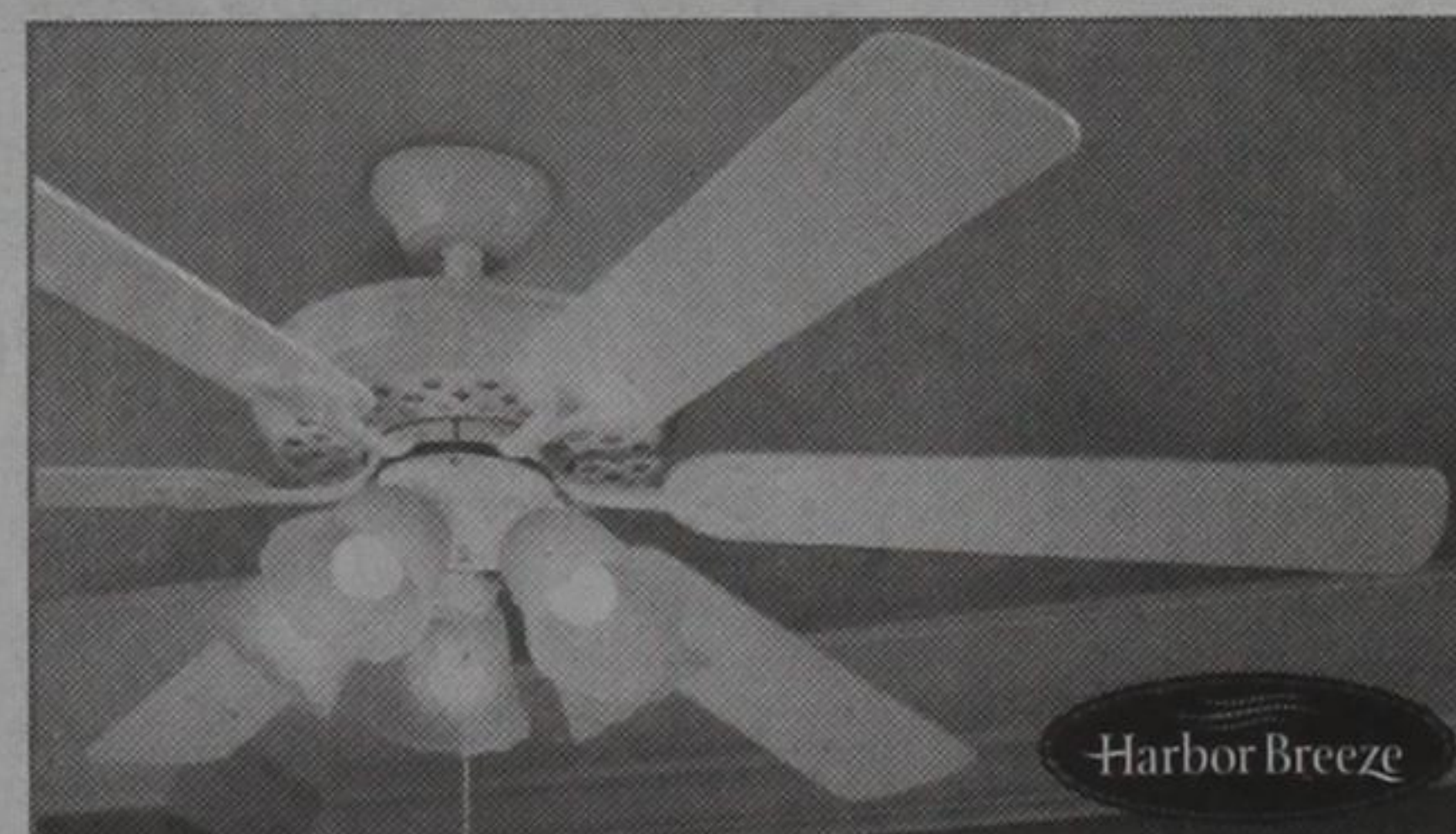


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Sólo les falta el 'millón'

Los integrantes de Bacilos están contentos por las nominaciones al Grammy Latino, pero más porque tocarán en Miami

La Meca de la Hispanidad, Miami, unió las pasiones musicales de un puertorriqueño, un colombiano y un brasileño para embarcarse en lo que sería el viaje más fructífero de sus vidas: Bacilos.

El grupo está nominado a tres premios Grammy Latino, incluyendo las importantes categorías de Album del Año (por Caraluna) y Disco del Año (Mi primer millón). Los orígenes de este exitoso trio se remontan a la Universidad de Miami, donde Jorge Villamizar y André López, estudiantes de negocio, y José Javier "JJ" Freire, estudiante de cine, juntaron su amor por la música y comenzaron una agrupación al estilo de Dave Matthews Band.

"Hubo un tiempo en que no hicimos nada; era muy deprimente y frustrante porque no había escena. Básicamente, empezamos la escena de rock latino en la playa", dijo el puertorriqueño Freire, baterista de la agrupación.

Cinco meses después firmaron con el sello Hecho a Mano, del cantautor venezolano Ricardo Montaner.

"Fue malo porque firmamos un mal contrato. Cuando terminamos el disco nos dimos cuenta que no queríamos trabajar con ellos porque no había ética, respeto. Una gente al garete", añadió el baterista.

De todas formas grabaron un álbum, al que titularon Madera y, justo en el momento en que se libraban del contrato, Warner Music llegó, los vio y los conquistó.

Con el álbum Caraluna, para la disquera multinacional, se

abrieron las puertas de una nueva dimensión.

Es aquí cuando les llega la oportunidad de ser los teloneros del cantautor español Alejandro Sanz durante su gira por España y de cambiar un público de 250 personas por uno de 40 mil.

Luego vino la nominación al Grammy al Mejor Album Vocal Pop Dúo o Grupo Latino, del que salen victoriosos.

A pesar del triunfo obtenido, se creía que los integrantes serían artistas de un solo éxito, pero ellos demostraron lo contrario.

"Desafortunadamente, el éxito de un grupo no tiene que ver sólo con la calidad de música, tiene que ver con estética, distribución y billetes", acotó Freire.

De todas maneras, el trio ha demostrado su potencial y no se preocupa por las expectativas que puedan alzar para su siguiente producción.

"Yo no tengo ningún miedo, ninguna inseguridad ni nada porque hay unos temas increíbles", agregó.

A partir de marzo del próximo año, Bacilos comenzará a preparar su nueva producción que promete incluir "la influencia y el sabor brasileño, así como un tema que se llama En las calles de San Juan.

El dinero quizás no les ha llegado, pero la fama la llevan bien y eso de tener un Grammy en sus bolsillos hace que reciban más atención de los medios y hayan sido seleccionados para compartir con grandes de la talla de Maná, Sabina, Rabanes, Ana Belén y Jag-

uares, entre otros.

No se sienten intimidados con los nuevos talentos, ya que "estamos en diferentes mundos. No somos colegas de ellos, en teoría lo somos, pero no lo somos", dijo el colombiano Jorge Villamizar, el principal compositor del grupo, nominado por su cuenta a tres premios Grammy Latino.

Villamizar agregó: "Colega es un tipo que hace lo mismo que tú haces. Paulina Rubio es una amiga mía, pero yo no creo que sea mi colega. Enrique Iglesias y Julio Iglesias son excelentes como personas, pero no son mis colegas. Ellos y nosotros lo sabemos".

Haber sido postulados a los premios Grammy Latino de este año lo ven como "un

bono" que no podían creer, aun ya teniendo un Grammy.

"Somos los más nominados", aseveró el baterista, argumentando que las grabaciones del grupo también le dieron cuatro nominaciones al productor y compositor Sergio George. "No sólo las nominaciones sino que es en Miami, la ciudad donde nos

juntamos, es nuestro patio y vamos a tocar [en la ceremonia]. Uno gana ya estando nominado".

No descartan el crossover, pero por el momento los planes inmediatos son "capitalizar".

"Ahora es que nos estamos acercando a los billetes; aunque faltan varios ceros, falta un cero para llegar al millón", dijo entre risas Freire.

Calls from the stars promote telecom firm in lucrative US Hispanic Market

More than a million Latinos are about to get a surprise phone call from their president or from music superstars as part of an unusual campaign by a telecom firm seeking to boost its share of the lucrative US Hispanic market.

In the next few days about 500,000 US-based Salvadorans should get a prerecorded call from their President Francisco Flores and another 500,000 will receive a telephone message from the likes of Colombian singer Juanes, Cuban-born salsa star Willy Chirino or Mexico's Alicia Villareal.

"It's a win-win campaign, everybody benefits from it," says Camilo Castellon of the Miami-based Americatel firm that is behind the unusual calls.

The singers will promote the upcoming Latin Grammy awards in Miami.

Flores will press his fellow citizens to take advantage of a special migrant status for Salvadorans living in the United States.

Salvadoran immigrants get to

use a free telephone line, provided by Americatel, to get advice on how to fill out the forms.

And Americatel, a subsidiary of Intel Chile, gets to promote its own service in a bid to boost name recognition among US Hispanics.

The stakes are high. Hispanics in the United States currently have an annual purchasing power in excess of 500 billion dollars a year, which is expected to shoot up to 925 billion dollars by 2007.

"Communications providers just cannot ignore the growth of the Hispanic community," says Robert Rosenberg of Insight Research Corporation, a telecommunications industry analysis firm.

Projections show Hispanics in the United States should spend 21.3 billion dollars on telephone calls this year, says Rosenberg, adding that the figure is expected to grow 12 percent a year.

"What really has our attention is that these numbers are getting bigger fast, as Hispanic

buying power and population size continue to grow faster than the national average," says Eduardo Menasce of the giant Verizon telecommunications firm.

"Whom we call says a lot about who we are," says Stephan Beckert with the Telegeography industry researchers, pointing out that 2001 figures show Mexico was the country dialed most frequently from the United States, with 5.2 billion minutes.

To successfully market to Hispanics, telecom firms need to be seen as understanding the culture, and giving back to the community, according to sector experts.

"Companies who appreciate the 'mi casa es su casa' (my home is your home) dynamic of Hispanic culture and go the

extra mile will be the most successful," Insight said in a survey of market survey.

Leading carriers say they are doing just that, donating funds to community groups, sponsoring cultural performances and reaching out to customers in their first language.

Or, in the case of Americatel, providing free phone lines to Hispanics needing assistance from their governments or consulates.

Castellon is convinced what he calls the promotion will pay off.

"Just imagine how emotional it is for a Salvadoran of humble background to receive a call from his president. He'll probably be moved to tears. And, hopefully, he'll remember who made the call possible," said Castellon.

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US Avoids Another Shocking Loss to Argentina in 94-86 Win

Argentina couldn't do it again, not with Jermaine O'Neal taking a huge first step on the road to redemption.

With an improved United States team showing greater degrees of poise and talent down the stretch, the Americans avenged a groundbreaking defeat of a year ago by defeating Argentina 94-86 Tuesday in the second round of the Tournament of the Americas.

Fittingly for the U.S. team, the star was O'Neal -- one of only two U.S. players held over from last summer's team that finished a disappointing sixth at the World Championships.

O'Neal scored 22 points and made one of the biggest plays of the game at the defensive end, blocking a shot by Fabricio Oberto with 1:13 left -- a play that led to a fast-break dunk by Vince Carter off a pass from Allen Iverson for an 89-83 lead. It was the only missed shot for Oberto, who finished 8-for-9.

"Regardless of what happens, I'm always going to be marked in the record books as being on the first (U.S.) team to lose using NBA players," O'Neal said. "That doesn't matter to me anymore. My goal now, and I think the only way I can see redemption, is to win the gold medal in the Olympics."

The United States remained undefeated in this Olympic qualifying tournament and improved to 22-0 in qualifiers. The Americans are 64-3 when using professional players in international tournaments, all three of the losses coming last summer.

With a contingent of Argentinian fans singing "Don't forget what happened last time," the teams played an intense four quarters.

The score was tied 74-74 with 6 1/2 minutes left before the U.S. team closed the game by scoring 20 of the final 32 points.

"The thrill comes from watching this group continue to mature," said U.S. assistant coach Gregg Popovich, who also was an assistant on last summer's U.S. team. "I still think about that once or twice a week. We just won an NBA championship (in San Antonio), and I probably think about (losing to Argentina,

Yugoslavia and Spain) as much or more than I do about the NBA championship because I'm a sick coach and I think about those things.

"It's not about redemption or anything else. They won that thing, you can't take that away. That hurt will be there forever. This is a new deal."

Tim Duncan scored 19 points, playing most of the fourth quarter with four fouls, Iverson had 13, and Carter and Mike Bibby scored 11 apiece. O'Neal had a team-high 10 rebounds.

Oberto had 17 points, and Manu Ginobili and Andres Nocioni added 16 each for Argentina.

"We played great. We almost beat them, so we have to be very optimistic for the rest of the tournament," Ginobili said.

Following O'Neal's block and Carter's dunk, Andres Nocioni missed a 3-pointer, and Iverson went to the line with 1:07 left and made one of two. Another missed 3 by Nocioni from the same spot was followed by two made free throws by Tim Duncan to make it 92-83, and Argentina got no closer than six the rest of the way.

The second round continues Wednesday and Thursday before the semifinals are held Saturday. Three berths in the Athens Olympics are at stake.

"If we have to play them again, it'll be a great game," U.S. coach Larry Brown said. "We were very fortunate to win, that's obvious."

Duncan picked up his fourth foul with 8:54 left and went to the bench for the next two minutes, nearly picking up his fifth shortly after he returned. But no call was made after Duncan defended a shot by Luis Scola, and he raced downcourt and fed O'Neal for an alley-oop dunk and a 78-74 lead.

It was 81-77 when Iverson stole the ball and raced in uncontested. But he missed a layup, which Ginobili then reciprocated at the other end by missing a reverse.

A 3-pointer by Iverson late in the shot clock gave the Americans an 85-79 lead, and a missed 3 by Ginobili was followed by two foul shots from O'Neal with 3:11 left.



There were 12 lead changes in the first quarter, which ended with the Americans ahead 27-23. The U.S. team had a 7-0 run to open the second quarter, holding Argentina scoreless for the first 4 1/2 minutes to take a 34-23 lead.

Nocioni, playing with three fouls, hit a 3-pointer to begin a 7-2 run, and Lucas Victoriano and Ruben Wolkowyski hit 3s in an 8-0 run that pulled Argentina to 41-40 with 26 seconds left before halftime.

O'Neal had a three-point play to give the Americans a 44-40

halftime lead.

Ginobili drove into traffic and hit a layup with 5:34 left in the third quarter to give Argentina a 53-52 lead - its first lead since 21-19 late in the first quarter.

Duncan had a tip-in and a dunk before assisting on a 3-pointer by Ray Allen to give the U.S. team a 62-58 lead, and Allen banked in a 14-footer at the buzzer following an Argentina turnover to give the Americans a 70-65 lead entering the fourth quarter.

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DeLaHoya Says Hand Injury Won't Defer Fight

Oscar De La Hoya hurt his left hand sparring while training for his Sept. 13 fight against Shane Mosley, but he said the injury won't jeopardize the defense of his WBC and WBA super welterweight titles.

"I have trained too hard to postpone the fight," he said Wednesday at his camp in the mountains east of Los Angeles. "The only one who can postpone the fight is me, and I'm not going to postpone it."

De La Hoya and Mosley will fight for the 154-pound titles at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. De La Hoya lost his 147-pound WBC welterweight title by a split decision to Mosley in 2000 in Los Angeles.

Top Rank president Bob Arum said he was not concerned that the fight would be postponed.

"It is being taken care of," Arum said. "He'll be fine. It happened before. Every day it

gets better. It's not broken. There's no swelling at all."

De La Hoya said he has not sparred since last Friday when the injury occurred while he was wearing a soft brace.

But he has continued the rest of his training routine, includ-

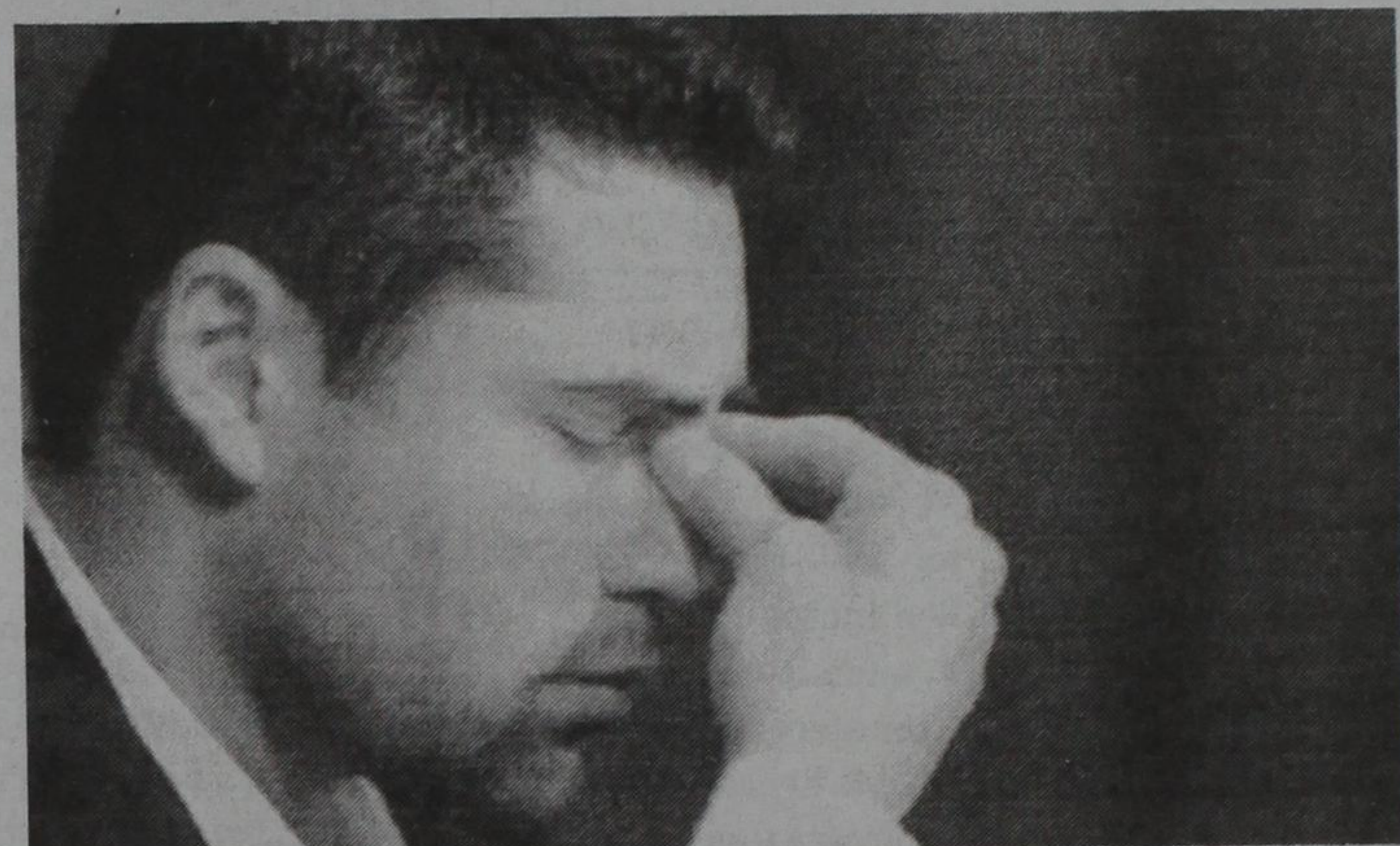
ing running, chopping wood, shadow boxing and hitting the heavy bag and speed bag with his right hand.

He had surgery on his left hand two years ago to remove cartilage and repair torn ligaments, but his hand has been

tender for years. "It doesn't go away," he said. "It's frustrating."

De La Hoya conceded the hand injury would affect the length of his career.

"I'm very positive it will cut it short," he said.

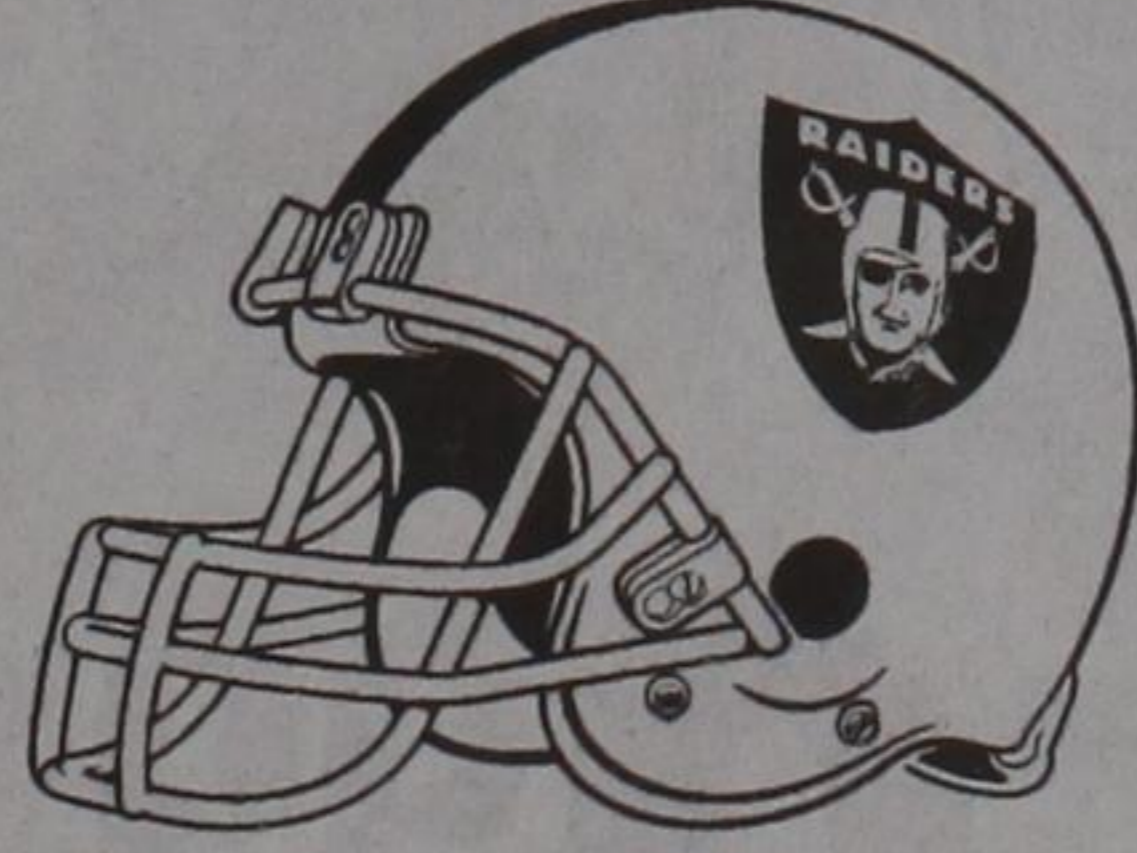


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Classified/JOB

LEARN Inc. ENTRY LEVEL ADVISOR

LEARN Inc. Now Accepting Applications For An Entry Level Educational Advisor. Bachelors Degree in Education, Sociology, or Human Services Required. Knowledge of College Admissions, Testing, and Financial Aid Preferred. Computer Skills & Ability to Work with Youth/Diverse Populations a Plus. Position Requires Weekly Travel, Some Evenings and Weekend Hours. Resume, References... College Transcript and Job Application Required. Apply in Person At 2161 50th St., Lubbock, Tx. E.O.E.

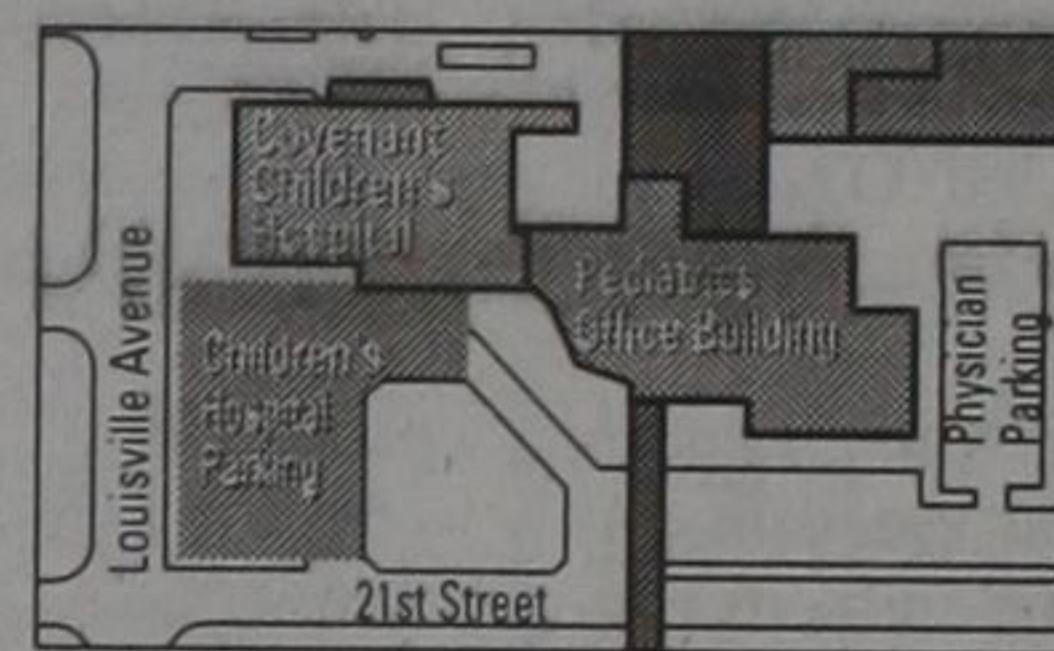
WE'RE OFFERING \$5.00 IMMUNIZATIONS FOR A GOOD REASON.

One of the best things you can do for your children is to protect them from disease. One of the best things we can do is make immunizations affordable and convenient. Immunizations are available for only \$5.00 from Covenant Children's Hospital.

- 8:00 a.m. - Noon
- Monday through Friday
- 3606 21st Street, Suite 103 (Pediatric Office Building adjoining Covenant Children's Hospital)
- No appointment necessary
- Bring your child's shot records

We love kids.

Covenant Children's Hospital



725-4550



United Supermarkets



Country Store Leg Quarters
Approximate 10 lb. Bag

Labor Day savings.

29¢ lb.



Blue Bell Ice Cream or Yogurt
All Varieties
1/2 Gallon

3 for \$10



Boneless Ribeye Steak

5.99 lb.

Boneless Ribeye Steak 6.99 lb.



Red Seedless Watermelons

2.99



Pace Picante Sauce
Mild, Medium or Hot
24 oz.

2 for \$4



Ranch Style Beans or Van Camp's Pork and Beans
15 oz.

5 for \$2

