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Unfinished Business for Latino Protester

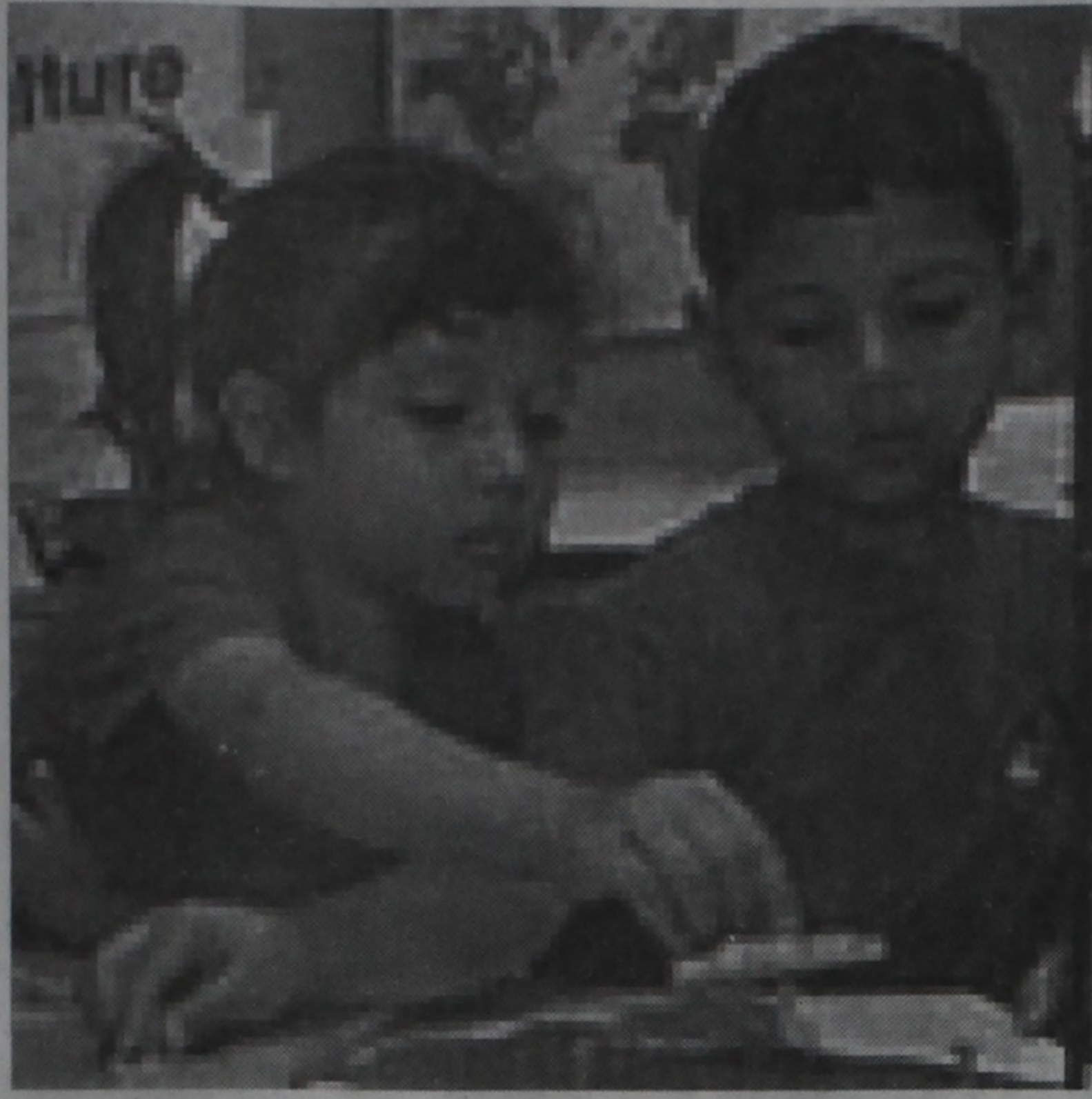
Mercedes Lynn de Uriarte
As is so often the case, politics played in its own theater of irony this spring.

While hundreds of thousands of Latinos marched to protest proposed federal legislation that would define as felons both unauthorized immigrants and those who rendered them assistance, Texas legislators convened to debate public school funding in a state with a two-tier system of education.

Governor Rick Perry compelled them once again to address in special session the inequity of state support to public schools. The schools on the short-shrift side are mostly attended by Hispanic and black students in inner cities, in south Texas, and youngsters in rural areas.

This funding conflict continues even though more than 40 years ago the Texas Supreme Court ruled in *Edgewood v. the State of Texas* that the state's educational resource distribution was unconstitutional. In 1993, when representatives took the first timid move to comply with the courts, the press labeled that effort the "Robin Hood Act," thus eliminating any acknowledgment of civic responsibility and generating animosity between neighborhood school zones.

The long legacy of intellectually impoverishing Hispanic



and black youngsters is not restricted to Texas. As Jonathan Kozol wrote so eloquently in Harper's magazine last September, these youngsters are trapped - "deeply isolated in the poorest, most segregated schools." He documented a pervasive national nightmare: black and Hispanic youth make up 96 percent of Detroit's schools; 94 percent in D.C., 89 percent in Baltimore, 87 percent in Chicago, 84 percent in Los Angeles, 82 percent in St. Louis, 79 percent in Cleveland and 75 percent in New York City.

But so far no national Latino demonstrations are organized to

demand better schools, even though so many of these young people are cheated of a solid start, eliminating the path to opportunities they now march to ensure.

Here in Texas, where as in California non-Hispanic whites are now a minority population, live the largest number of uninsured youngsters in the nation.

No need to describe which youngsters are most affected. The highest concentration is among Mexican Americans.

For the most part, poor black children and first- and second-generation Latino children face

severe health care inequities across the nation. In 2003, 35.7 percent of Latinos and 20.8 percent of African-Americans were uninsured.

But no similar organized marchers demand health-care justice.

Criminals, as defined by some of our elected representatives, are the unauthorized immigrants and all who would assist them in any way to survive in the United States for meager wages without benefits or protections.

What's the appropriate label for those who profit from this modern form of slavery? Migrants who crossed our border submitted to such servility in the interest of a better future for themselves and their families?

Even for those who might attain guest-worker status or citizenship, there remain entrenched institutional chasms on the road to prosperity.

As a demonstrator of the 1960s, I am pleased to see Latinos turn out on behalf of humane treatment for unauthorized immigrants upon whom so much of our economy relies.

Needed next are similar efforts for better social conditions than those under which Hispanic and other youngsters of color are presently subjugated.

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Desafios Que Ahora Deben Ser Enfrentados

Mercedes Lynn de Uriarte
Como suele ocurrir, la politica se represento en su propio teatro irónico esta primavera.

En lo que miles de latinos manifestaron en protesta de legislación federal propuesta que acusaría de criminales tanto a inmigrantes sin autorización de entrada y a aquellos quienes los asesoran, legisladores de Texas se reunieron para debatir la financiación de las escuelas públicas en un estado cuyo sistema de educación se bifurca en dos niveles.

El gobernador Rick Perry los obligó, una vez más, a considerar en una sesión especial, la inequidad del apoyo estatal a las escuelas públicas. Las escuelas que menos reciben son de poblaciones de estudiantes en su mayoría hispanos y negros que están en los centros urbanos, en el sur de Texas, y en zonas rurales.

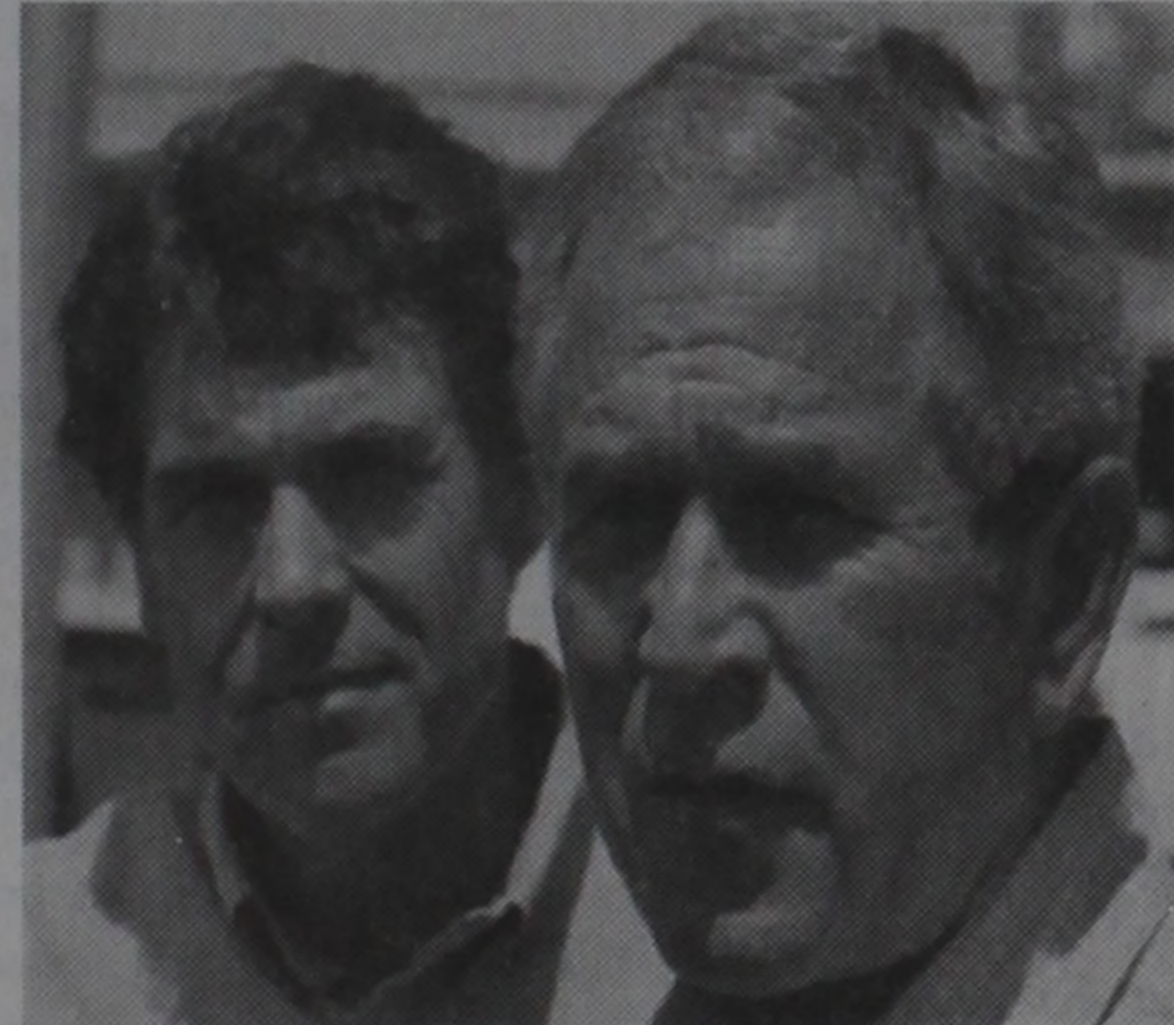
El conflicto sobre la financiación de la educación continua a pesar de que hace más de 40 años el Tribunal Supremo de Texas falló en el caso *Edgewood v. el Estado de Texas* que la distribución de los recursos estatales en cuanto a la educación no cumplía con lo estipulado en la Constitución. En 1993, cuando por primera vez los representantes dieron un paso inicial tímido para acatar lo dispuesto por el Tribunal, la prensa tildó el esfuerzo la "ley de Robin Hood", así eliminando cualquier reconocimiento de la responsabilidad cívica y generando adversidad entre zonas escolares colindantes.

La extensa historia del empobrecimiento intelectual de los jóvenes hispanos y negros no se limita a Texas. Como escribió con tanta elocuencia Jonathan Kozol en la revista Harper's en septiembre, los jóvenes están atrapados - "profundamente aislados en las escuelas más pobres y más segregadas". Kozol documentó una pesadilla nacional que no muere: los jóvenes negros e hispanos son el 96% de la población escolar de Detroit; 94% en Washington, D.C., 89% en Baltimore, 87% en Chicago, 84% en Los Angeles, 82% en St. Louis, 79% en Cleveland, y 75% en la ciudad de Nueva York.

Sin embargo, hasta ahora no se organiza ninguna manifestación de latinos para exigir mejores escuelas, a pesar de resultar estafados los jóvenes de un comienzo sólido, lo cual les veda el camino a las oportunidades que ahora quieren asegurar con las manifestaciones.

Aquí en Texas, así como en California, donde los blancos no hispanos son ahora población minoritaria, vive el número mayor de jóvenes sin

seguro médico en toda la nación. No hace falta describir a los jóvenes más afectados. La mayor concentración se encuentra entre los



mexicano americanos.

En gran parte, los niños pobres negros y los de primera y segunda generación latinos enfrentan severas

inequidades en términos del cuidado médico por toda la nación. En el 2003, el 35.7% de los latinos y el 20.8% de los afroamericanos carecían de seguro médico.

Tampoco ningún grupo organizado de manifestantes exige justicia en cuanto a servicios médicos.

Los criminales, según la definición de algunos de

nuestros representantes electos, son los inmigrantes sin autorización de entrada y todos aquellos que los asesorarían en

cualquier forma para que sobrevivieran en los Estados Unidos con salarios paupérrimos sin beneficios ni

protecciones.

¿Y qué hay que llamar a los que se beneficien de esta forma moderna de la esclavitud a la que se someten los trabajadores con el fin de tener mejor futuro para sí mismos y para sus familias?

Aun para los que pudieran llegar a valerse del programa de trabajadores invitados, o que alcanzara la ciudadanía, siguen atrincherados los abismos institucionales del camino a la prosperidad.

Como manifestante de la década de los sesenta, me agrada ver a los latinos hacerse oír en pro de tratamiento humano para los inmigrantes sin autorización de entrada sobre los cuales depende tan gran parte de nuestra economía.

Lo que se necesita a continuación son esfuerzos similares para conseguir mejores condiciones sociales que las actuales para los jóvenes de color.

Mayor Miller to host "Mayor's Night In"

In a clear indication that city government will be run differently under his mayoral administration; Mayor David Miller will begin hosting a "Mayor's Night In".

The idea is to make it more convenient for city residents to have face to face time with the new mayor.

One of the criticisms aimed at former Mayor Marc McDougal was that a lot of residents felt that they had been silenced with the changes that had been pushed by the former mayor and former Mayor Pro Tem and mayoral candidate Tom Martin.

Back in 2005, citizens, mostly from the North side or Guadalupe Neighborhood, had been very vocal concerning some funding issues; in particular funding for a new Guadalupe Neighborhood Center.

The city council, with the exception of Councilwoman Linda DeLeon: perhaps feeling that citizen comments might successfully sway public opinion in their favor, quickly moved to curtail citizen comment sessions. They enacted a city ordinance which called for a citizen to have to sign up at least 7 days prior to a council meeting if they desired to speak before the council.

Another issue was the starting time of council meetings. For many years, some Lubbock residents have complained about the early start times for city council meetings; claiming that it is too difficult to make time from their work schedule to be able to appear before the council during regular council meetings. This should give them an additional option of getting their voice heard by the mayor at least. No other council members are expected to be present.

The first "Mayor's Night In" is scheduled for this coming Monday, June 19, from 6PM until 9PM. Residents are asked to sign up before the meeting start time so they may be on the schedule to speak.

Future "Mayor's Night In" is scheduled for the 3rd Monday of every month.



Department of Justice to review Taser Related Deaths

Nunez Family Files Lawsuit against City and Taser International

Up to 184 people have died as a result of the use of Tasers on them by law enforcement personnel since 1986. Now the U.S. Justice Department has decided to review at least some of the deaths in where the use of Tasers has been involved.

"These deaths raise a question in our mind that should be examined", said Glenn Schmitt, acting director of the department's National Institute of Justice (NIJ).

Over the past few months, more and more deaths have occurred when Tasers have been used by law enforcement personnel.

Just last April, 27 year old Lubbock resident, Juan Manuel Nunez, III lost his life after being Tasered by a Lubbock police officer.

While the Lubbock Medical Examiner has ruled that a combination of alcohol, a blow to the back of the head as he fell back from the shock of the Taser, and the use of the Taser itself, caused the death; the investigation by the NIJ review will be able to determine just how much a role the Taser itself has played in the deaths.

Taser International, the largest manufacturer of stun guns, supplies more than 130,000 stun

COMMUNITY VOICES

Recently the U S Senate passed an amendment to its Immigration Reform bill which states that English is the "national language" of the United States. Will it impact Spanish language speakers or not? What was the intent of the amendment?

This week, Community Voices hears from readers on this very important issue. We will keep this question open until next week and invite our readers to submit their opinions on this issue.

Meaningless Amendment

I do not think that Mejjicano-Americanos—if not other Hispanics—especially of the first generation, are losing their native language. Argentines,

Brazilians, Chileans whom I know are wanting to learn English and become Americans perhaps faster. Their cultural ties and class background may be more middle class than many Mexicanos and Hispanics and thus they are not as strongly tied or connected to the mother language, or they see their cultural identity as Mexicans related very much more to retaining their language.

Many second generation Hispanic American students—whether here legally or not—are taking Spanish or are in bilingual programs. It appears to me from my location this week in Buenos Aires that the Senate Amendment is a symbolic statement. Without legislation that restricts foreign languages being used in official governmental functions such as

Texas elections or applications for driver's licenses, the amendment is meaningless but would appeal to conservative, nationalist or xenophobic feelings. Saludos desde el invierno bonaerense.

Neale Pearson, via email

Motivated by Fear

I believe that this legislation is aimed primarily at Spanish-speakers and that it preys on the fear that many English-only speakers feel about being surrounded by people they do not understand in the communities where they grew up and are raising families.

The language barrier, as anyone who has lived where their own language is not understood, is a huge obstacle to forming relationships where confidence in each other, opportunity, justice and understanding can flourish. This legislation is not to my liking. I do not believe for one moment it will stop anyone from speaking Spanish at home, with their friends or to their Spanish-speaking business associates. If it has any impact at all it will be to harden feelings of animosity and make life just that much more difficult for those in the initial stages of gaining a foothold in American society.

America is never at its best when motivated by fear.

Susan Barrick, Lubbock via email

Spanish: First European Language Spoken in North America

In answer to your question, this Bill 2611 is just another way of demonstrating the fear that the General Population has that Spanish is becoming a very dominant language. They can attach whatever they want on the Immigration Bill as far as the National language is concerned. But look! No one! But no one can impose a language on any person! That will never happen. I don't think that this bill will have any impact whatsoever on any changes of the use of the Spanish language. We have too many Spanish language media (local and National) from newspapers, radio and Television that contribute to the daily use of this language.

I do believe that the third and fourth generation is losing some of the language as they begin to assimilate into the general population. But, at some point they begin to rediscover the Spanish language, some through contact with Spanish speaking (work place) individuals, some by music, and reading Spanish print like newspapers that are bilingual. Let's not forget that Spanish was the first European language spoken in North America when Cristóbal Colon landed on our shores in 1493.

José Gómez Dávila, Lubbock via email

Next Week's Question:

What is your opinion of the Senate passing an amendment to its Immigration Reform Bill, S 2611 which states that English is the "national language" of the United States? What impact do you think this will have on the Hispanic population in this country? Do you think that Hispanics in the U.S. are losing their native language?

"Community Voices" would like to hear from you, the readers. You may remain anonymous, but El Editor reserves the right to edit all comments for offensive language, offensive or distasteful content, or personal attacks, and for space. Mail your comments to Community Voices, 1502 Ave M, Lubbock, 79401, or email your comments to acruztsf@aol.com

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guns to about 7,000 of the nation's law enforcement agencies.

On Monday, June 5, local attorney Kevin Glasheen, called a news conference to announce that he would represent the family, Nunez's mother Grace Nunez and sister Lisa, in a lawsuit filed against the city of Lubbock and the manufacturer, Taser.

International. According to Taser International, they are named defendants in at least 49 lawsuits alleging wrongful deaths or personal injury. Taser International continues to maintain that its Tasers are safe and are designed to subdue unmanageable subjects; not kill them.

But the historical use of Tasers seems to suggest otherwise. Depending on whose numbers one believes, data puts the number of Taser related deaths as high as 150 by Amnesty International since 2001. That date coincides with the time that Tasers first started being used by law enforcement departments around the country. The NIJ however will review only 30 of the deaths.

The Justice Department review will take up to 2 years and was undertaken after several law enforcement authorities expressed their concern about the high rate of deaths that had occurred when Tasers were used.

Schmitt, the NIJ acting director, said investigators are expected to examine a range of issues in each case, including ages, weight, possible physical impairments, evidence of drug use and other factors that could have contributed to the deaths.

In addition, Schmitt said, investigators will explore a phenomenon known as "excited delirium," in which a shutdown of bodily functions occurs after sensory overload.

"There is no reason to do anything different for now," he said. "We'll let the research answer the questions."

Texas SuperCup Registrations

Registrations are now being taken for this year's annual Menudo/Texas SuperCup Softball tournament. Teams that register early can request a time to begin play. Entry fee for Men's C/D and E is \$195. Entry fee for Co-Rec teams is \$135. To register call Bidal at 806-763-3841 or email eleditor@sbcglobal.net

On the Border, The Floating Population

José de la Isla

Deployment of the Utah National Guard to support the U.S. Border Patrol in Arizona was the signal for beginning what public-policy analysts call "unintended consequences."

It means non-military "collateral damage." For example, some experts predict that these actions will only increase the massing of would-be crossers on the Mexican side. Towns such as Tijuana, Mexicali, Agua Prieta, Ciudad Juárez, Reynosa and Matamoros - already teeming with people - will explode with new population. Already about 30 percent of migrants reaching the northern Mexican state of Tamaulipas remained as residents during the past decade, according Maricela Garza Wong, director of the state's Council on Population, or COESPO.

They are referred to as the country's "floating population," población flotante. A dismaying scenario shows scarce basic services in water, sewage, health, housing and schooling tap out. These resources become fewer and costlier, meanwhile the new

concentrations bring more of the problem border towns already have too much of - increased crime. This happens because barriers and troops continue to increase the risk for those still wanting to cross the border illicitly. That leads to a huge price inflation, with some already occurring in central Mexico. Polleros, or people-smugglers, now charge about \$5,000, up from about \$2,000 not long ago. Two out of five undocumented border crossers are presumed to enter the United States aided by these human traffickers. In the 1980s such persons could be contracted for \$200. More border walls increase the inflation. Add the National Guard presence and prices kick many north-bound migrants out of the market. Some end up as permanent residents in Mexico's border communities. Others try the dangerous crossings by themselves or team with inexperienced, entrepreneurial gangs. The new polleros likely come from the lower narcotrafficking ranks. Those involved in human cargo must overcome logistical obstacles

by paying off whomever they need to. As Jorge Santibáñez, president of Colegio de la Frontera Norte in Tijuana explains, there are three layers of barriers to surmount, ones with heat sensors and cameras. So how does one avoid detection in these places? Officials and enforcement personnel on both sides of the border become bribe targets. The way to solve our illegal-immigration problem is not by spending on human and concrete deterrents nor to feed the growth of underworld border networks. But there is more. Between 1986 and 2002, the Border Patrol budget increased from \$151 million to \$1.6 billion. Yet, since the 1970s, when 45 percent of Mexican illegal immigrants were returned, now that probability is 25 percent. Simply stated, the more that is spent, the lower the chance of detection! Together, the treacherous trails, nefarious polleros and wrong-headed policy create a deadly cocktail. Between 2001 and 2005, nearly 2,000 migrants died trying to cross. Queen Juliana of the

Netherlands, whom I seldom quote, is purported to have once said about another matter: "I can't understand it. I can't even understand the people who can understand it." It fits this occasion. The immigration challenge is being played out like a Ponzi game on the United States public. All eyes have turned to the Mexican border, even though that's not where most illegal entries occur. And the imposed policies only create extra hardships for the border towns and more danger for those who do cross, with rewards going to crooks, The underlying causes for people who cross illegally over land or the Rio Grande are the circumstances around the diaspora. They are driven by economic refugees, our national insatiable hunger for cheap labor, NAFTA, family displacements and political posturing, capped by aspects of war and violence. One thing is sure - the highly publicized and promoted current border policy needs to be turned on its head, taking its unintended consequences into account.

En la Frontera, La Población Flotante

José de la Isla

El despliegue de la Guardia Nacional en apoyo a la Patrulla Fronteriza Estadounidense en Arizona señaló el inicio de lo que los analistas de políticas públicas llaman "consecuencias no intencionadas".

Significa "daños colaterales" de índole civil, no militar. Por ejemplo, algunos expertos proyectan que estas acciones sólo incrementarán el amasamiento de los que quisieran cruzar la frontera desde el lado de México. Las ciudades como Tijuana, Mexicali, Agua Prieta, Ciudad Juárez, Reynosa y Matamoros - ya atestadas de gente - reventarán de nueva población. Ya aproximadamente el 30 por ciento de los migrantes que llegan al estado de Tamaulipas se quedaron allí a residir durante la década pasada, asevera Maricela Garza Wong, directora del Consejo Estatal de Población, COESPO.

Se conoce como la población flotante del país. Una vista panorámica muestra la triste realidad de la escasez y desaparición de servicios básicos como agua y alcantarillado, salud, vivienda y educación. Al hacerse

menos y más costosos estos recursos, las nuevas concentraciones de gente llevan a los pueblos fronterizos más del problema que ya les sobra -- el crimen. Esto ocurre por lo que las barreras y las tropas continúan incrementando el riesgo a los que todavía quieren cruzar la frontera de manera ilícita, lo cual conlleva enormes alzas en los precios, que llegan hasta partes de México central. Los polleros, o los que llevan de contrabando a las personas que cruzan la frontera, cobra ahora unos \$5,000, un aumento de los \$2,000 que hace poco cobraban. Dos de cinco de personas que cruzan la frontera sin documentación se supone entran a los Estados Unidos con la ayuda de estos traficantes en seres humanos. En la década de los ochenta, tales traficantes cobraban \$200. A más barreras fronterizas, más inflación. Con agregar la presencia de la Guardia Nacional los precios eliminan a muchos migrantes camino al norte del mercado. Algunos permanecen residiendo permanentemente en las comunidades de la frontera norte de México. Otros intentan el cruce peligrosísimo solos, o acompañados de pandillas ambiciosas e inexpertas. Los nuevos polleros lo más probable previenen del rango más bajo de

los narcotraficantes. Los que participan en el contrabando humano deben sobreponerse a obstáculos logísticos pagando a quien sea que les exija. Como Jorge Santibáñez, presidente del Colegio de la Frontera Norte explica, hay tres barreras que sobreponer, con sensores y cámaras. Entonces, ¿cómo es que se evita la detección en estos lugares? Personal oficial y de fuerzas del orden de ambos lados de la frontera se convierten en blancos del soborno. La manera de resolver nuestro problema de inmigración ilegal no es con gastar en barreras de cemento y humanas, ni con fomentar el crecimiento de las redes clandestinas de la frontera. Pero hay más. Entre 1986 y el 2002, el presupuesto de la Patrulla Fronteriza de EE.UU. aumentó de \$151 millones a \$1.6 mil millones. Sin embargo, desde la década de los setenta, el 45 por ciento de inmigrantes ilegales mexicanos fueron devueltos, mientras que la probabilidad de ser devuelto está hoy en 25 por ciento. Dicho con sencillez, mientras más se gasta, ¡menos es el riesgo de detección! En conjunto, los senderos traicioneros, polleros infames, y políticas erróneas crean un cóctel fatal. Entre el 2001 y el 2005, unos

2,000 migrantes murieron en el intento de cruzar la frontera. La reina Juliana de los Países Bajos, a quien muy poco cito, se dice haber dicho una vez sobre otro asunto: "No lo comprendo. No comprendo si quiera a las personas que lo pueden comprender". Calza la ocasión. El reto de la inmigración se despliega cual juego de Ponzi sobre el público estadounidense. Todas las miradas están fijadas en la frontera con México, aunque no es por allí donde ocurre la mayor parte de las entradas ilegales, y las políticas impuestas sólo crean más dificultades para los pueblos de la frontera y para los que logran cruzar, premiando a los criminales. Las causas subyacentes para los que cruzan la frontera de manera ilegal por tierra o por el Río Bravo son las circunstancias que fundamentan la diáspora, impulsadas por los refugiados económicos, nuestra ansiedad insaciable de mano de obra barata, NAFTA, desplazamientos de familias y engaños políticos, y coronadas de aspectos bélicos y violentos. De una cosa podemos estar seguros - hay que poner de cabeza a la actual política fronteriza, altamente publicitada y promovida, tomando en cuenta sus consecuencias no intencionadas.

It's Not Really About Immigration, Is It?

By Marta Donayre

I've developed a pet peeve lately. I get antsy with statements like "I have no problem with legal immigrants, it's the illegals that I have a problem with." Phrases like this raise the hair on the back of my neck. How can someone on the street tell the difference between an undocumented alien and me, a legal resident? Is it through my English-language skills? I don't think so. I've met undocumented immigrants with far better English than mine. Could it be the way I look? But I've known way too many blond, blue-eyed Latinos and non-Latinos who are undocumented. Maybe it's because I act more "American" than recent immigrants? Nope. There are undocumented immigrants who seem like

they were born and raised here. They've absorbed American fashion and ways much better than I have. There's really no accurate way to tell the difference just by looking at us or listening to the way we speak. To really figure it out, an inquisitor would have to open my wallet to see my green card, which I'm required to carry with me at all times. It looks pretty much like a driver's license, but with a much thicker magnetic strip. If I were to lose it, I'd be in very serious trouble. The thought of losing my wallet terrifies me. The mere thought that this piece of plastic differentiates me from someone so many deem unwanted, exploitable and deportable lets me know how vulnerable I am. At times I imagine what it must've been like for a freed slave to lose his or her freedom papers, or to

have someone take them away. Deportation is nothing like being sent to a plantation to be whipped and exploited, but I can't help but imagine an empathy across time for those freed slaves. I too need to carry my "free to live in the U.S." card with me all the time. I also risk losing it, having it stolen, or snatched out my hands. Ironically, my green card provides little protection in an anti-immigrant environment, because people and authorities DO judge your legal status often by your looks and accent, no matter how inaccurate these standards are. At a Mother's Day event in San Francisco, I heard a woman tell her story. She was a naturalized American citizen, in her 60s, married to an American, and she was nearly deported to Mexico. She wasn't even Mexican. Her near-deportation was caused solely by the fact that she was a Latina. As a full-blown citizen she wasn't protected from deportation. She's not alone.

A decorated war veteran told me that when he was 12 years old, immigration authorities came out of nowhere and seized a friend he was playing with and speedily deported him to Mexico. Unable to speak Spanish, with no money and no family in Tijuana, the American-born Latino child had a really hard time contacting his family and returning home. He was lucky his experience didn't end tragically. These stories were a rude wake-up call for me. If U.S. citizenship didn't protect these people, having a green card won't protect me either. Which brings me back to the question, how do they know by looking at me if I'm here legally or illegally? Should I wear a green rectangle on my clothing? During World War

My Dad

By Abel Cruz

Father's Day will be celebrated this coming Sunday; a day in which we celebrate the men who we inevitably begin to resemble in one way or another as we age. Here then are some thoughts about my dad as I look ahead to my first father's day without him. My father was a very simple, unassuming, and proud man. He was proud of the point where he had come to in his life; he seemed to be fulfilled and contented.

Losing his mother at the young age of 7 had been one of the most overwhelming challenges that he had faced; but he rose to the occasion and overcame his loss. And over the years, the adversity he faced early on and during the rest of his lifetime, defined the kind of man he became. It transformed him from a scared 7 year old boy into a man who appreciated things in life more because of the struggles that he had overcome. He became a man who believed in God deeply, he loved his wife and family; and put his unconditional faith in God's promise of everlasting life. He embraced life as it came, and valued every day he was blessed with.

Part of what we leave behind when we are called by God, is our legacy. Some people leave behind riches, others, magnificent buildings or material things. My dad left nothing of the sort. His passing reminded me of a quote that says; "Many men can make a fortune but very few can build a family". As someone who worked mostly with his hands, he seemed to place more value in the work that it took to construct the many projects that he had worked on in this city. He valued the labor and effort more; he realized that in the end those were the things that mattered and it would be those things that would stand the test of time. Consequently, my dad did the best with the gifts that God blessed him with; I like to think that we, his children, are his legacy he left behind.

Although far from perfect, and he would be the first one to tell you that, he went about his life simply, quietly and always grateful for what he had. He shared 61 years with my mother and cared for her until the day came when he had to gently let go of her hand. In a conversation we had shortly after my mom died in 1999, he shared with me his love for her but also his fear of life without her. But he accepted God's will because he had faith; he went forward and led our family through some difficult days. That was his way. Each one of my sisters and brothers, me included, knew him in our own special way. We each shared our special moment with him that will remain engraved in our hearts forever. And I suspect that this Sunday we will remember that unique memory in a special way. And when the time comes when we have to face our appointed time, as all of us inevitably will, I will remember how he handled his; with quiet strength and dignity. On December 28, 2005, surrounded by most of his family, he died peacefully at the age of 95. And I miss him. So on this Father's Day, I leave you with this one thought for those of us fortunate enough to be a dad: The mark of a true father is one who holds his children's hands from the moment they are born, until the day he leaves this world. Email: acruzts@aol.com

THE ARTFUL DODGER STRIKES AGAIN

by Jim Hightower

In the first grade or earlier, most of us are told a morality story about young George Washington. As a tyke, he cut down his father's favorite cherry tree. Confronted by papa, George said manfully: "I cannot tell a lie. I did it with my little hatchet." The story is a myth, but the moral message is clear: don't lie. Fast forward about three hundred years from George Washington's childhood to our present president, George W. Apparently, W was not told the moral message of the cherry tree incident, or he was never absorbed it, for he can't seem to tell the truth about anything, constantly lying about things both large and small. George's latest flat out falsehood came around his naming of Hank Paulson to be the new treasury secretary. We now know that at a May 21st meeting with George at the White House, Paulson agreed to replace the incumbent secretary, John Snow. Yet, at a news conference four days later, Bush was asked the direct question of whether he had any indication that Snow would soon be leaving. "No," replied our prevaricating president, "he has not talked to me about resignation." Reporters later inquired with the White House press office about George's untruthful statement. Oh, tut-tut, they were told, it was merely "an artful attempt" by the president to keep Paulson's appointment a secret. OK, children, are we clear on the moral lesson now? When you do it, it's a lie. But when the president does it, it's "an artful attempt" to keep secrets. And throughout his life, Bush has been very, very artful at keeping secrets - from the secret about his National Guard service to the one about those weapons of mass destruction. This is Jim Hightower saying... If it had been George W instead of George Washington at the cherry tree confrontation with papa, W would've said: "I cannot tell a lie. It was done by terrorists who have hatchets of mass destruction."

EL EDITOR

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Dixie Chicks Concert Sales Lacking

While the Dixie Chicks' record sales are soaring, tickets for their Accidents and Accusations Tour are failing to take flight in some cities.

"I think before it's said and done the entire tour will be, at the very least, reorganized," Ray Waddell, senior editor of touring for Billboard magazine, said Friday.

Shows in cities including St. Louis, Houston, Indianapolis, Oklahoma City and Memphis, Tenn., are up in the air, according to Waddell.

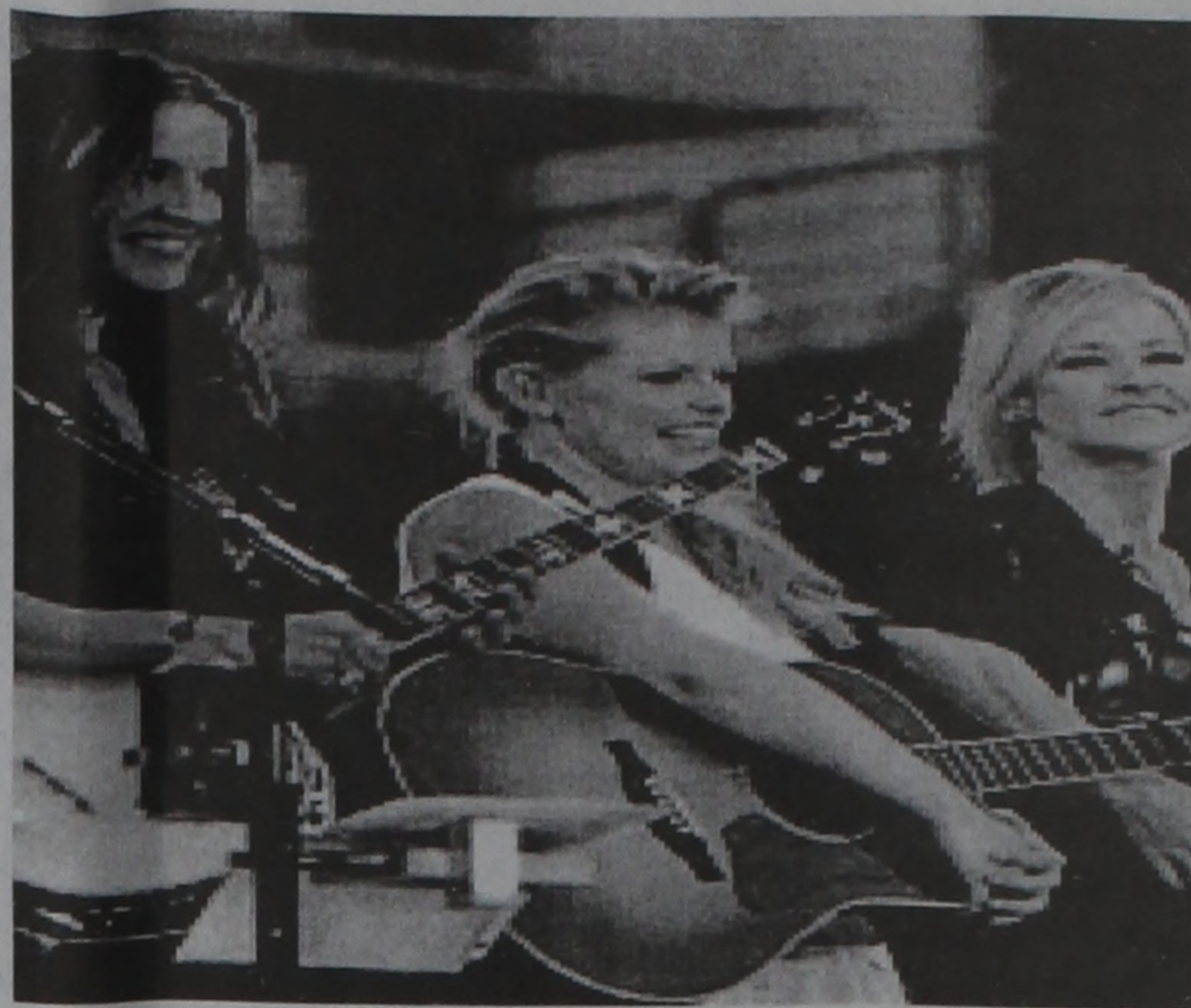
The group said on its Web site that reports of cancellations are false.

"I don't think they've formally come out and canceled a single date, but I think that some sort of announcement will be coming next week," Waddell said.

The trio has caught a lot of criticism from country fans ever since lead singer Natalie Maines told a London audience in 2003 that the group was "ashamed" President Bush was from their home state of Texas.

In January, Maines told Entertainment Weekly magazine that she was disappointed with country music and that she's "pretty much done" with the genre.

Their new album's first single, "Not Ready to Make Nice," addressed the controversy head on,



sign that pre-sale tickets to fan clubs were weak in those markets. Organizers use pre-sales as a barometer of public interest, and if they are slow, often will postpone or pull the plug on public sales.

Waddell said most arenas can be reconfigured for theater seating, and shows can be moved to smaller venues if need be.

Not all markets are soft. Sales were reportedly brisk in Chicago, Philadelphia and Minneapolis. In Toronto, a first and second show sold out.

But the overall picture is far different from the Chicks' last tour in 2003, in which almost 900,000 tickets moved in the first weekend and second shows were added in several markets. The group ended up with the top-grossing country tour that year at \$62 million.

While ticket sales have been off, album sales remain strong. The Chicks' new album "Taking the Long Way" sold 526,000 units its first week and 271,000 the second - enough to keep it at No. 1 on the country and overall album charts for two straight weeks.

"With an act like this that is supposed to be very hot, you would expect a lot more juice," Waddell said. "But that's not to say they couldn't come up with a couple of hit singles and renew interest. Anything can happen."

with Maines singing in the chorus, "I'm not ready to make nice. I'm not ready to back down. I'm still mad as hell and I don't have time to go round and round and round."

A spokeswoman for the group did not return a phone message.

"Any reports being made about the cancellation of our upcoming Accidents And Accusations tour are completely false. We have known since March 2003 that our path in this business would have obstacles at every pass," the Web site message to fans dated Friday said.

"This time around we are will- ously feeling our way through uncharted territory. Things don't come as easy as they might have come in the past, and it makes each accomplishment more exciting and appreciated. We will go where the fans are with great anticipation and no regrets. To find out (along with us) where that is, visit our website for all updates," the message said.

Ticket counts for the 20-plus arena shows that went on sale last weekend were averaging 5,000 to 6,000 per show in major markets and less in smaller cities, Waddell said.

The group's Web site listed 12 dates in which public ticket sales were still to be announced - a

only for African Americans but also for Latinos, so I think that purpose has been met," she told the paper in a January interview.

At the start of this season, 26 percent of Major League players and 40 percent of minor leaguers were foreign born, the overwhelming majority of them from Latin America, baseball spokesman Richard Levin said.

The group's Web site listed 12 dates in which public ticket sales were still to be announced - a



Miss America Reality Series Set for L.A.

The road to Miss America will go through Hollywood this year. Whether it leads to Las Vegas again remains to be seen.

The pageant will tape a seven-episode documentary series titled "Finding Miss America" in Los Angeles from Sept. 5 to Sept. 13, the Miss America Organization announced Monday.

The series, which is to air on Country Music Television for a week preceding the televised pageant finals in January (the exact date still to be determined), will show the 52 women in preliminary competition and give viewers a chance to choose which ones advance to the top 15 for a shot at becoming Miss America 2007.

But pageant officials still aren't saying where or when the next crowning will be held. Other cities have expressed an interest in hosting Miss America, said pageant CEO Art McMaster. He is awaiting, he added, a final proposal from Las Vegas, which hosted the last one. He wouldn't identify the other cities.

The changes mark the newest wrinkles for an institution still trying to find its way in a post-network TV life.

Jettisoned by ABC after record-low ratings for the 2004 pageant, Miss America broke with 85 years of tradition last year in moving out of Atlantic City, where it was founded in 1921 as a bathing-beauty revue.

Picked up by the Nashville, Tenn.-based cable outlet, the Jan. 21 crowning of Miss Oklahoma Jennifer Berry drew 3.1 million viewers - paltry numbers by network standards but huge for CMT, which never drew more than 2.9 million for a program before Miss America. The channel reaches 82.5 million households, about one-third less than the networks reach.

The documentary series is considered a means of drumming up interest in Miss America, which existed as a once-a-year TV special since 1954 but has struggled to keep viewers who are bored with its swimsuits-and-sashes

formula.

In "Finding Miss America," film crews will follow the women as they prepare and participate in swimsuit, talent and evening-wear competitions held in different places on different days. Viewers will get to vote by telephone or online.

McMaster expressed confident that ratings "are going to go through the roof" because of the interest he expects the documentary to attract.

Latinos Petition Baseball to Retire Clemente's 21

Hispanic supporters delivered a petition with 30,000 signatures on Tuesday asking Major League Baseball to retire the jersey No. 21 belonging to Roberto Clemente, one of the game's greatest Latin heroes. The honor would recognize the growing status of Latin American ballplayers in the U.S. national pastime at a time when Hispanic immigrants are asserting their rights in U.S. society amid a political debate about immigration policy.

Clemente, of Puerto Rico, was a Hall of Fame outfielder for the Pittsburgh Pirates. He was revered for the way he lived -- as a proud ambassador for Latin America -- and how he died -- in a plane crash at age 38 while delivering relief supplies to Nicaraguan earthquake victims on December 31, 1972.

Major League Baseball is considering the move but acknowledged that one issue was whether it would dilute the recognition given to the only player to have his number retired throughout baseball, Jackie Robinson.

Robinson's No. 42 was retired from all Major League teams in 1997 for the 50th anniversary of his breaking the color barrier, when he became the first black player of the modern era, joining the Brooklyn Dodgers.

"I think there's enough space for a great Latin American alongside a great African American," said Fernando Mateo, president of Hispanics Across America, who delivered the petition in cardboard boxes to the league's office in Manhattan.

"It would be the best company

that Jackie Robinson could ever have," Mateo said.

The signatures were the first 30,000 of 100,000 to be delivered this week, Mateo said.

But Robinson's daughter Sharon Robinson opposed retiring Clemente's number, the New York Daily News reported.

"The purpose of retiring my father's number is that what he did changed all of baseball, not

only for African Americans but also for Latinos, so I think that purpose has been met," she told the paper in a January interview.

At the start of this season, 26 percent of Major League players and 40 percent of minor leaguers were foreign born, the overwhelming majority of them from Latin America, baseball spokesman Richard Levin said.

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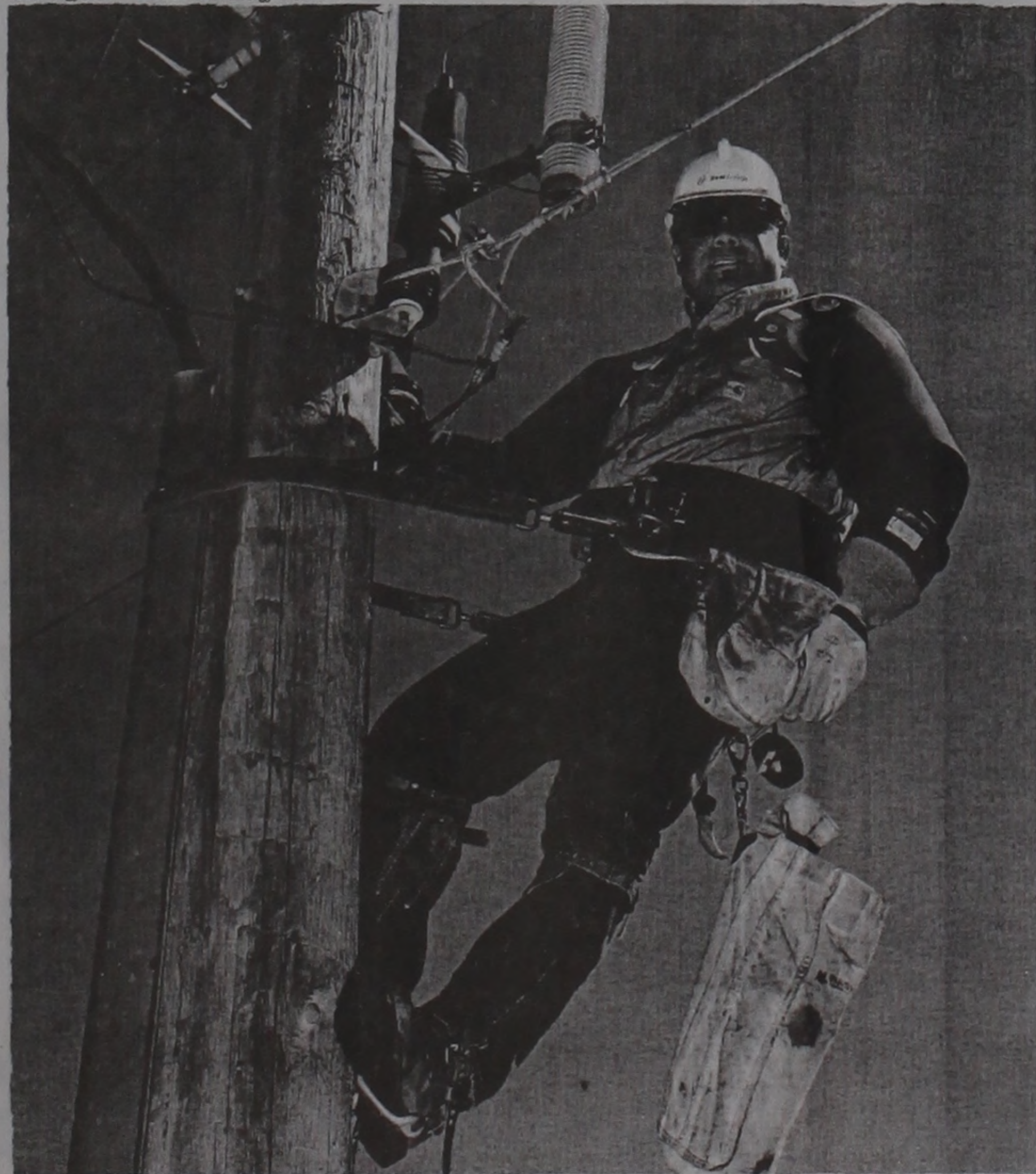
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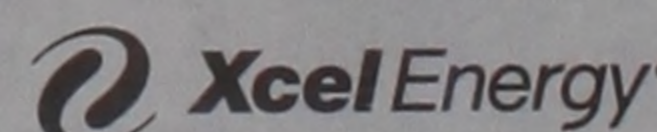


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Dallas: City plays the optimist, plans for 500,000 downtown

The Dallas Mavericks, of course, must win two more games to prevent their victory parade from getting rained on.

But Dallas police and city officials are busy preparing a parade anyway in anticipation of at least 500,000 NBA championship-crazed fans -- and possibly many more -- flocking downtown.

Dallas is up 2-0 against the Miami Heat in the best-of-7 championship series.

parade map
If the Mavericks were to win the series in four games or five, Dallas would kick off a victory parade June 20, said Celia Barshop, manager of the city's Office of Special Events. A Finals victory in Game 6 would push the parade to June 22, and a win in seven means it would commence June 26, she said.

The parade would begin at 11 a.m. for all scenarios, Ms. Barshop said.

The team would begin the milelong journey one block west of City Hall near Griffin and Young streets, according to the city's latest plan. Proceeding west on Young Street, the Mav-



ericks would turn right at Houston Street, passing through the West End and underneath Woodall Rodgers Freeway until reaching Continental Avenue.

After turning left on Continental Avenue, the parade would immediately swing right onto aptly named Victory Avenue and travel north until reaching the Mavericks' home venue, American Airlines Center. The team would ride in trucks, although

some might walk, Ms. Barshop said.

"We feel it's the best route for providing visibility to spectators," she said.

The city is asking fans to line up along the route no earlier than 8 a.m. to ease morning business commuters' travels. Six portable restroom banks will be installed along the route.

As for event security, Dallas Deputy Police Chief Jesse Reyes

declined to provide specific officer numbers but said: "We will have a strong presence at the parade. We do anticipate a much larger crowd than at other such events."

The last time Dallas celebrated a major professional sports championship was 1999, when the Dallas Stars won the Stanley Cup. The largest public event in downtown Dallas history, however, came only two months

ago, when as many as a half-million people marched through center-city streets to City Hall in support of immigration rights.

City officials say the Mavericks may feature various "crowd pleasers" during the parade, but there would be no "static event" for the public in which team players and coaches could give speeches.

There would, however, be surprises, Ms. Barshop said.

"And we can't tell you all the fun secrets," she joked, adding that ticker tape and confetti probably would not be part of the celebration.

The city, despite organizing the parade and providing staffing and policing for it, isn't funding the event -- the Mavericks are, in full, Ms. Barshop said.

A Mavericks spokeswoman said Monday she had no immediate details of the team's plans for the parade.

Fans should strongly consider walking or using public transportation, such as Dallas Area Rapid Transit buses and light rail, as well as the Trinity Railway Express commuter train, in-

stead of driving, city officials say. Parking, they say, may quickly grow scarce.

Only severe weather would cause the city to cancel the parade, Ms. Barshop said, adding that it would probably be rescheduled in such an event.

And if the Heat come back to defeat the Mavericks?

No Mavericks championship, city officials say, means no parade.

Parade tips
If there's a victory parade, attendees should:

-- Arrive downtown early but not before 8 a.m. No matter the date, the parade would start at 11 a.m.

-- Use public transportation. Parking may be scarce.

-- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing and sunblock.

-- Drink up, but don't booze. Alcohol is dehydrating, and it's already plenty hot outside. "The key is water, water, water. Stay hydrated," said Paul Pepe, chairman of emergency medicine at UT Southwestern Medical Center.

Zbikowski, hopkins enjoy glorious experiences Saturday

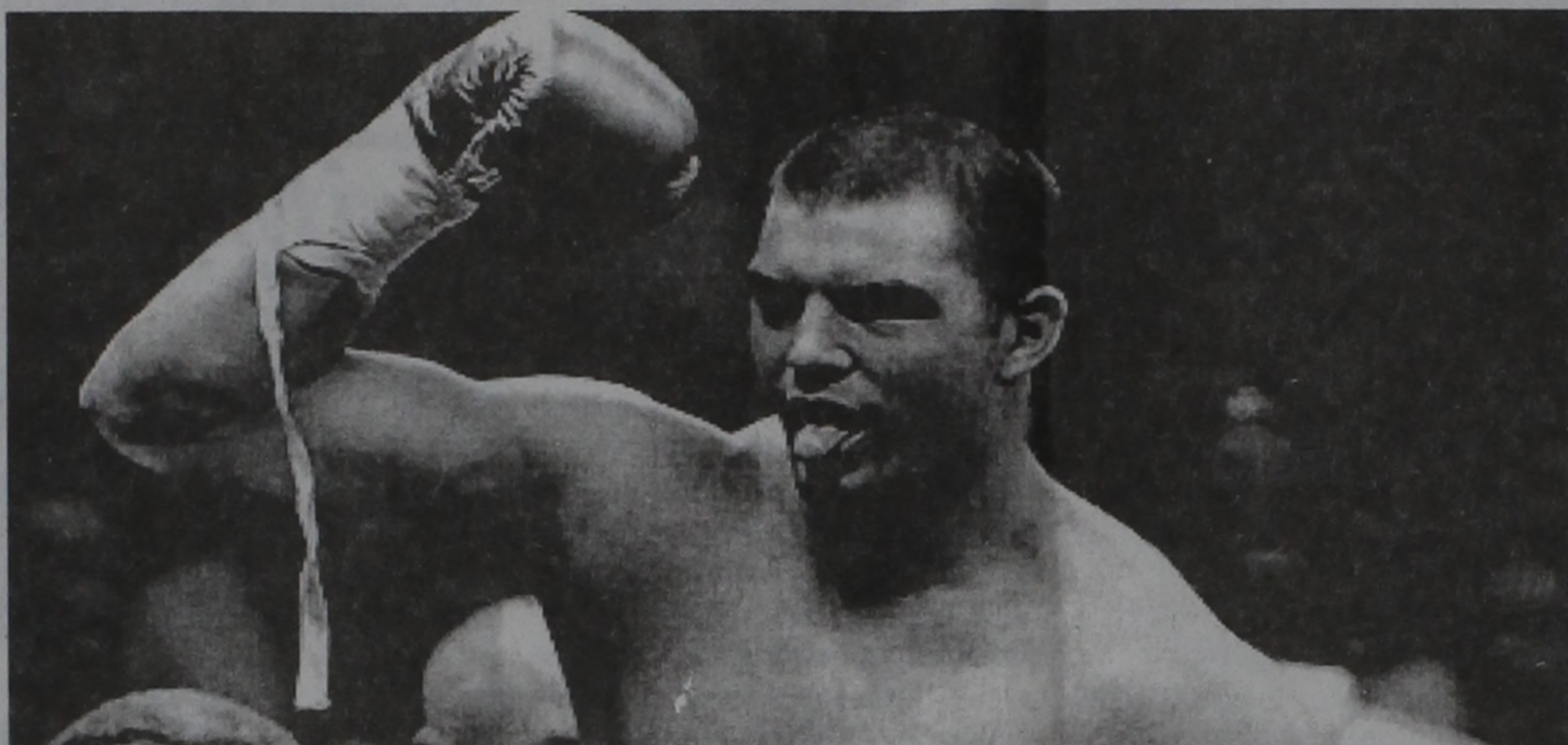
And when I die,
And when I'm dead and gone,
There'll be one child born,
And the world to carry on,
Carry on ...

- And When I Die, Blood, Sweat and Tears

Boxing isn't about life and death -- well, not usually -- but you couldn't help but make certain analogies when considering the two pay-per-view fight cards that took place Saturday night.

For one fighter (Tommy Zbikowski), there was a glorious if bizarre beginning. For another (Bernard Hopkins), an even more glorious ending. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Thus has it always been, and probably always will be. The circle remains unbroken.

In Madison Square Garden, site of so many outstanding boxing events involving actual legends of the ring, debuting pro Zbikowski upstaged the main event after the rookie had basked in the glow of media coverage that suggested the paparazzi's relentless pursuit of Brad Pitt and



Angelina Jolie.

Zbikowski, the Notre Dame safety who figured he'd give boxing a fling before the start of fall practice, became the sport's hottest entity since Oscar De La Hoya began knocking men stiff and making teenaged girls faint. There are reigning world champions, veterans with 10 or 15 years of experience, who would

sell their souls for a fraction of the attention that Tommy Z received for routing a flabby designated victim named Robert Bell only 46 seconds into their scheduled four-rounder.

However brief his boxing adventure, Zbikowski enviably has been cast in the role of crossover sensation. You have to wonder if lining up against Michigan even

will give him such a rush.

"I love this kid," Angelo Dundee, the 83-year-old Hall of Fame trainer of Muhammad Ali and Sugar Ray Leonard, said of his latest protégé, who is said to have compiled a 75-15 amateur record. "He's been a boxer since he came out of the crib."

At 5-feet-11 and 214 pounds, Zbikowski appeared to know what to do and how to do it. He

is undeniably a gifted athlete, blessed with quick hands, good mobility and a decent punch, although the level of resistance put up by Bell, 32, didn't qualify as much of a goal-line stand.

Bell, an Akron native, wore an Ohio State football jersey into the ring, but Buckeyes everywhere are disavowing any connection with someone whose quick dive to the canvas suggested a pugilistic Mark Spitz.

Don't blame Zbikowski for pocketing a quick \$25,000. NCAA rules allow an athlete in

one sport to be a professional in another, so long as they do not endorse products. Such a wad of pocket money can buy a lot of take-out pizza until Zbikowski, whose first priority remains football, either makes it in the NFL or takes another run at boxing.


Nor should anyone fault Arum, who has elevated the novelty act to an art form. Remember, this is the man who put Butterbean and Playboy model Mia St. John on the undercards of several pay-per-view shots headlined by De La Hoya.

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July 14-16 Youth Slow Pitch State USSSA \$200
July 22-23 - Texas SuperCup/Menudazo Softball Tournament Aug 4-6 USSSA West Texas Men's C and E State USSSA \$250
Aug 11-13 USSSA West Texas Men's D and Women's State USSSA \$250
Aug 25-27 2nd Annual Cotton Pickin' Midwest National (Men's & Women's) USSSA \$300 S

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Frenship School Reunion

After one year of planning June 10, 2006 was finally 'A Day to Remember.' This was the theme to the first ever Hispanic Frenship School Reunion.

Frank and Lupe Rodriguez attended Frenship during the 1960's and thought about the idea of bringing Hispanics together for a reunion. But unlike any other reunion, they wanted all Hispanic students who attended Frenship during 1960-1970.

Mr. Rodriguez stated they wanted to give these alumni a chance to attend a reunion regardless if they graduated or not. Rodriguez also stated that a lot of students did not finish school because they were migrant workers which caused them to move away or they simply had to drop out of school to help support their family. Nonetheless, these students never returned and all contact ceased.

The search began one year ago in an attempt to spread the word of the upcoming reunion. The job was not easy but Lupe Rodriguez began by looking through old yearbooks. She matched names in the phone book, knocked on doors, and used the Internet in order to spread the word. Mrs. Rodriguez's persistence paid off as the Knights of Columbus hall filled with 189 Frenship alumni.

Freddie Tobias attended Frenship from 3rd to 7th grade and said, "after 7th grade I had to work to help my parents and I didn't think about going back to school because I was making good money." Tobias also stated he was happy this reunion took place be-



cause several years ago he had a chance to go to another Frenship reunion. "I wanted to attend but the coordinator did not call me

back after I told her that I did not graduate."

Steve Gutierrez from Indio, California, attended the reunion with

his wife and although he did not attend Frenship, he stated that he has attended his high school reunions in the past. "My high

school reunions were fun but I just think that Hispanics don't normally get involved in reunions, so this Hispanic reunion is a

good thing," Gutierrez said.

The reunion began with a fellowship where Frenship alumni met for the first time after 30 years. Robert Rodriguez stated he expected to see pelones, pansones y canosos but after 30 years everyone did not look as bad as he thought they would. The night continued with dinner then a dance but a reunion would not be the same without recalling those special memories everyone can relate to.

Dora Arguelles the owner of Dora's Restaurant was given a gift of gratitude for 15 years of feeding Frenship alumni. During those years students use to gather at Dora's to eat .25 cent chicken fried steaks and stay until the tardy bell rang. "I never let anyone go without eating--if they didn't have money, I would let them charge the food but nobody went without food," Arguelles said. Arguelles' most memorable moment is just recalling that she and the students were always happy. She stated that she spoiled the students and that's the reason why they came back to her restaurant.

The night ended with a special farewell for Frenship alumni. The school fight song played as all alumni gathered together to sing and cheer about the pride they still had for Frenship.

Frank and Lupe Rodriguez stated this would not have been possible without the help of their committee members who were: Marty & Joann Carrizales, Armando & Dottie Garcia, and Joe and Irma Martinez.

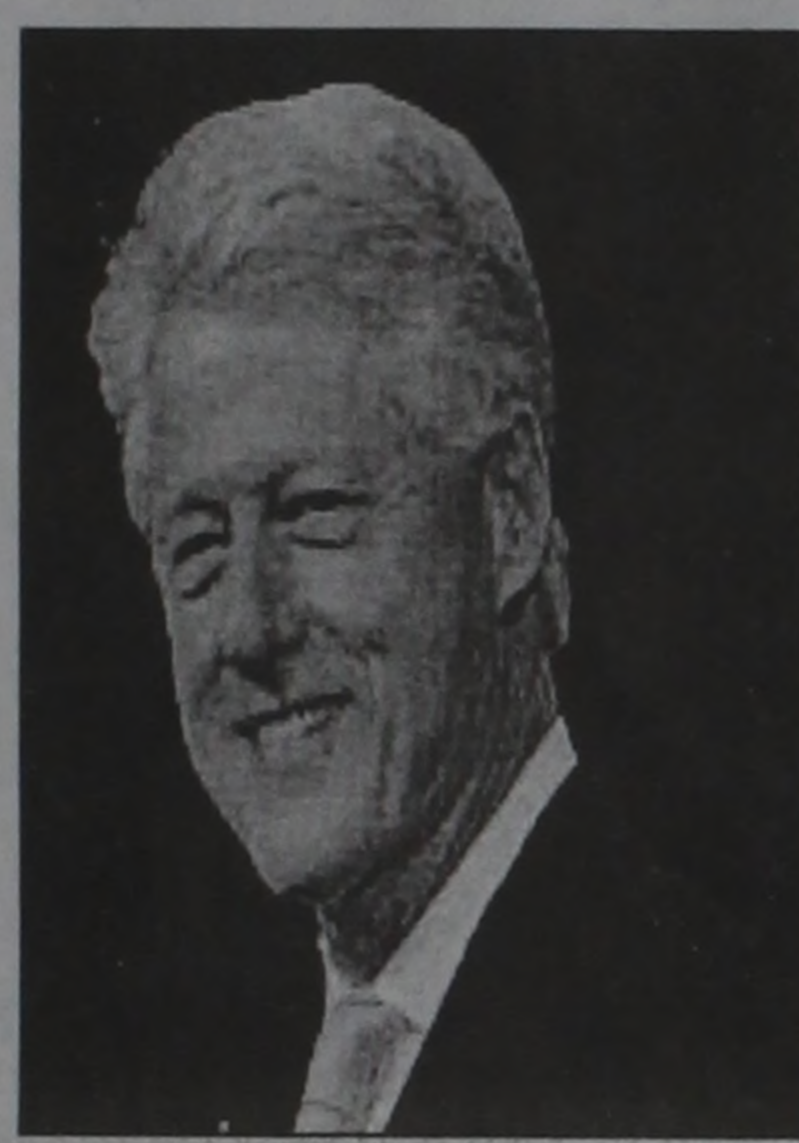
Clinton: Sería "una locura" expulsión de inmigrantes

El ex presidente Bill Clinton declaró el martes que la propuesta de la Cámara de Representantes de deportar a las personas que viven ilegalmente en Estados Unidos "es una locura".

La inmigración permite a Estados Unidos "mantener su posición económica en un mundo cada vez más dependiente", dijo Clinton hablando en una entrevista matinal conducida por el presidente del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo Luis Alberto Moreno.

Indicó que "prácticamente el 100% de los inmigrantes que han venido a Estados Unidos, legal o ilegalmente, están trabajando", lo que significa que no sólo están satisfaciendo sus propias necesidades sino también pagando impuestos y enviando dinero a sus familiares.

Clinton fue invitado por Moreno como participante especial en una conferencia de dos días en la sede del BID que permitió a varios expositores plantear ideas sobre cómo crear oportuni-



dades para un 70% de la población en el Hemisferio Occidental que vive con 300 dólares o menos al mes.

Ex presidente demócrata no tuvo una exposición central sino que en cuanto llegó --y lo hizo con 45 minutos de retraso-- fue interrogado por Moreno acerca de tópicos que fueron desde la globalización al comercio y la estabilidad mundial actual com-

parado con el periodo de su mandato en la década pasada.

Clinton --cuya esposa Hillary Rodham Clinton es una potencial candidata presidencial demócrata en las elecciones del 2008-- dijo que los republicanos de la Cámara de Representantes estaban tratando de sacar adelante un proyecto que "declara delincuentes" a los indocumentados y empresarios que les den trabajo.

El proyecto, que ya ha sido aprobado y está en proceso de armonización con otro del Senado, propone también la deportación de los indocumentados y la construcción de vallas en un tercio de la frontera con México.

Clinton no habló sobre las vallas, pero dijo que en el caso de la deportación de los indocumentados "no sólo era un recurso desesperado sino una locura" ante la falta de capacidad para crear formas de control fronterizo e inmigración.

"No hay una solución

perfecta...", indicó. "Pero la ley que salga debe ser realista y humana".

Se calcula que en Estados Unidos viven unos 11 millones de personas ilegalmente, de los cuales hasta un 75% son de origen hispano.

El Senado ha abierto en camino para la residencia a los que estén cinco años o más en el país. Los que tengan más de tres años pero menos de cinco deberán salir para gestionar su retorno y los que tengan dos años o menos deberán abandonar definitivamente el país.

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Mexican Candidates Promise Modernization

Mexico's presidential candidates are promising to be big spenders, pledging roads, railways and even oil refineries they say will modernize the country and attract investment.

Mexico desperately needs better infrastructure, one group of engineers estimates \$330 billion worth. But many fear the candidates' proposals are a throwback to old-style politics, when the government ran up debt and threw together shoddy public-works projects to win over voters.

"A lot of the projects that the candidates are talking about do seem to be white elephants," said Jonathan Heath, chief economist for the Mexico unit of HSBC bank.

Roberto Madrazo, trailing in third place ahead of the July 2 election, sought to revive his campaign this month by announcing plans for an astonishing 1,027 infrastructure and development projects.

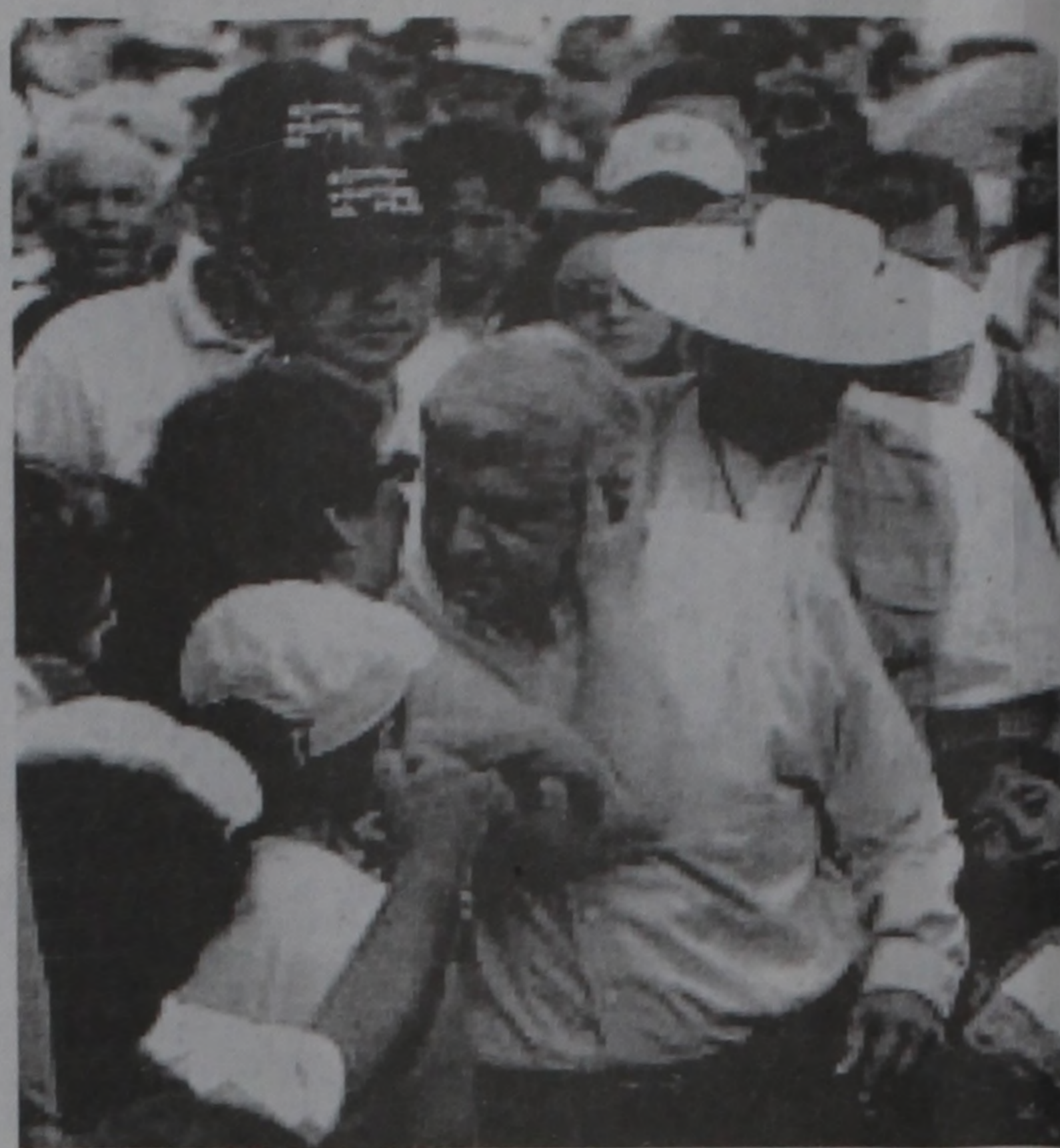
Madrazo's Institutional Revolutionary Party ruled Mexico from 1929 to 2000. For most of that era, all-powerful presidents could spend at will, unencumbered by congressional oversight or fiscal discipline.

But leftist Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has seen those ambitions and raised him a few, including plans for 30 new public universities during his six-year term.

Lopez Obrador wants to build a bullet train from Mexico City to the Texas border. And he plans rail and road links from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific to rival the Panama Canal, and highways where there are now only goat paths.

As Mexico City mayor from 2000-2005, Lopez Obrador built miles of double-decker expressways and a free city university.

But the expressways have created their own traffic snarls, and many question the value of the university, which has no entrance exam, gives no grades, and whose 11 degree programs



lean heavily toward the social sciences and community activism.

Lopez Obrador's main rival, Felipe Calderon of the ruling National Action Party, isn't sitting this competition out.

He is pledging to crisscross Mexico with new roads and build water treatment and distribution systems, less visible but sorely needed projects.

Calderon and Lopez Obrador are running nearly even, according to most polls.

To some extent, it's traditional politicking. "Voters do want to see public works," political analyst Federico Estevez said.

But voters aren't the only ones who want to see big public-works projects. Carlos Slim, a Mexican telecommunications magnate and the world's third-richest man, has launched a construction and infrastructure investment company and is pressing the candidates to commit to dozens of new building projects.

Some argue that Slim, whose fortune is estimated at around \$30 billion, would profit from

the candidates' proposals.

But Slim and others say low interest rates, economic stability and high foreign reserves represent a golden opportunity for Mexico to make a great leap forward.

"What really would be important for Mexico is to break the barrier of underdevelopment, and we are not far from breaking it," Slim said recently.

In the 1970s, high oil prices produced soaring buildings and mammoth industrialization projects that fueled the development of entire manufacturing towns.

In his first big government job, as director of Tabasco's Indian development agency, Lopez Obrador created subsistence farming plots for landless Indians by scooping soil out of la-

Lopez Obrador and Madrazo seem marked by that era. Both began their political careers in the 1970s, and both are from the oil-producing Gulf coast state of Tabasco, where the landscape is dominated by two things: swamps and big government projects.

goons and piling the dirt into narrow, artificial fingers of land.

"It's classic for swampland politicians. You get a lot of mileage by draining the swamps, like Florida politicians 80 years ago," Estevez said.

Many of the artificial plots now stand abandoned, but the government-funded construction boom continues, notably in Tepetitlan, Lopez Obrador's hometown. The current local government, headed by his brother, Jose Ramiro, built a large con-

crete bridge that leads to nearly impassable dirt roads.

History has not been kind to government projects. By the 1980s, Mexico's oil boom had ended, and the country woke up to a hangover of debt and the realization that many projects had been badly planned and poorly executed.

But candidates in the presidential race vow not to repeat that mistake. Lopez Obrador says he will fund his building spree by reducing waste and high salaries

in government. Calderon touts private investment.

Many voters complain that President Vicente Fox, known for his conservative fiscal policy, didn't do enough to create jobs or improve infrastructure.

"I think (Lopez Obrador) sees it as a way of promoting employment, and as long as there are big projects in his term, he's created jobs," Heath said.

He noted another incentive: "At the end of the term, there's a big plaque with his name on it."

New Diabetes Drugs Give Double Punch

Two experimental pills seem to help older diabetes drugs lower patients' blood sugar, with the added bonus of a little weight loss.

The once-a-day medications are the first in a new class of Type 2 diabetes drugs that work in a unique way, and competitors Merck & Co. and Novartis AG both hope to win Food and Drug Administration approval to begin selling them by year's end.

It's not clear how widely used the drugs would be, given the expected price tag of \$3 to \$6 a day. Older diabetes drugs cost 50 cents a day or less.

Still, specialists eagerly await the new options, which work with a one-two punch: They increase levels of a hormone that triggers the pancreas to produce more insulin to process blood sugar while simultaneously signaling the liver to quit making glucose. The pills do that by blocking production of an enzyme, called DPP-4, that normally inactivates that hormone.

The positive effects of the drugs, coupled with fewer of the negatives seen in other diabetes treatments, is what sets them apart, said Dr. John Buse, vice president of the ADA.

"It's combining some of the effects of three to four classes of drugs used today. That is what has everyone excited," said Buse, cautioning that the expected cost of Januvia and Galvus likely would curtail their use. Side ef-

fects of the pills include cold and flu-like symptoms and headaches.

In Type 2 diabetes, patients either don't produce enough insulin or cells in the body ignore it. Insulin is needed to process sugar; without it, blood sugar levels soar.

American Diabetes Association guidelines suggest diabetics cut their levels of an averaged measure of blood sugar levels, called A1c, to less than 7 percent. Many, if not most, diabetics exceed that threshold. Helping them drop below it could reduce their risk of serious complications, like kidney failure and amputations, the ADA says.

"There is a great need in the care of patients with Type 2 diabetes to improve glycemic control. Many, many patients are not in control. The exciting thing you are hearing today is these are new options to treat patients," said Dr. Peter Stein, of Merck Research Laboratories. Details were being presented Tuesday at the American Diabetes Association's annual scientific conference. Stein and others discussed them under embargo at a Monday news conference.

Merck said its pill, Januvia or sitagliptin, lowered blood sugar levels by 0.67 percent in a year-long trial, or just as much as another, older drug, glipizide. Roughly two-thirds of patients reached the ADA's 7 percent goal.

Most importantly, Merck said the Januvia patients also lost weight and experienced fewer episodes of excessively low blood sugar than those on glipizide, a member of the sulfonylurea class of drugs. Excess weight is a common problem in Type 2 patients.

Novartis said its pill, Galvus or vildagliptin, reduced blood sugar levels by 1.9 percent when used with another older drug, pioglitazone, which reduces insulin resistance. Nearly two-thirds, or 65 percent, of the patients in the six-month trial reached the ADA-recommended blood sugar level, compared to just shy of 43 percent of those treated with either of the two drugs alone. Elderly and obese patients showed even greater drops.

In that and a second trial, patients treated with the drug either lost some weight or showed no significant weight gain, Novartis said.

A third company, Novo Nordisk Inc., is developing an injectable drug that is an analog of the hormone inactivated by the enzyme that the Merck and Novartis pills block.

More than 230 million people worldwide have diabetes, up from just 30 million in 1985, according to the International Diabetes Federation. Diabetes is expected to affect 350 million people by 2025.

Gen Responsable por Obesidad

El exceso de grasa es almacenado en el tejido adiposo, un depósito básico de energía del organismo, ubicado en la sección media del cuerpo. El gen, investigado por un equipo de la Universidad de Michigan, actúa como una tijera metabólica, que corta a través de la red del tejido de colágeno, que mantiene la grasa en su lugar, y permite la expansión de las células de grasa bajo el vientre.

El equipo formado por los investigadores Tae-Hwa Chun, Stephen Weiss, y Alan Saltiel del Instituto de Ciencias de la Vida (ICV) de la Universidad de Michigan, descubrió que el gen metalproteinasa de matriz extracelular (MTI-MMP) poda la malla de colágeno que mantiene a las células de grasa en su lugar y permite su liberación y expansión. El estudio ilustra la

relación entre el gen, la obesidad y el metabolismo.

El gen MTI-MMP es especialmente importante en la regulación del tamaño de las células de grasa y la expresión metabólica. En el laboratorio, cuando se eliminó la función del gen, los ratones adelgazaron. El tejido adiposo alrededor del vientre terminó siendo muy pequeño, pero el tejido adiposo café, un depósito de grasa especializado que regula el consumo de energía en el cuerpo, no tuvo cambios.

El equipo también descubrió que la diferenciación de adipositos (células de grasa) en un cultivo de células convencional de dos di-

mensiones (2D) es diferente a la de un cultivo tridimensional (3D) en un cuerpo complejo. En sistemas de cultivos simples 2D, el gen MTI-MMP no fue necesario, pero se convierte en una tijera metabólica fundamental una vez que las células están en un ambiente tridimensional, ya sea en el colágeno o en el tejido del ratón. Este descubrimiento puede llenar el vacío que existía hasta ahora entre biología celular convencional 2D y la función tridimensional.

Estos descubrimientos son un aporte para la biología de las células de grasa y posiblemente generará nuevas terapias para prevenir la progresión de la obesidad.



Estudio de la Vejez del Condado de Cochran

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¿Qué es el Estudio de la Vejez del Condado de Cochran? Es un estudio de investigación conducido por La Escuela de Medicina de la Universidad de Texas Tech sobre el envejecimiento y la memoria.

¿En qué consiste? El estudio consiste en una entrevista de 45 a 60 minutos. Se harán preguntas sobre su historial médico, la memoria y el funcionamiento diario.

¿A dónde tendría que ir para participar? Las entrevistas serán llevadas a cabo en los centros para adultos mayores, en el hospital del condado o hasta en la comodidad de su hogar.

¿Por qué debería participar? Aunque existe un gran número de información acerca del envejecimiento en las grandes ciudades, se sabe muy poco sobre el proceso del envejecimiento en las comunidades rurales, tal como en el Condado de Cochran. El Estudio del Condado de Cochran ha sido diseñado para proveer esta información a la sociedad entera para así poder ayudar al cuerpo médico que trabaja en áreas rurales de los Estados Unidos.

¡Sea parte de una buena causa!

Para más información favor de contactarse con Vicki Ramirez
TTUSHC Dept of Neuropsychiatry
3601 4th St. MS 8321, Lubbock, TX 79430
806-743-2385

Cochran County Aging Study

Share your story with us and leave a legacy in Cochran County

What is the Cochran County Aging Study? It is a research study being conducted by the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center looking at aging and memory.

What is involved? The study involves a 45-60 minute interview. Questions will be asked about your medical history, memory, and daily functioning.

Where do I go to become involved? Interviews will be conducted at local senior citizen centers, Cochran County Hospital, or even in your home.

Why Should I Participate? While a lot of information is available regarding aging in large cities, little is known about the aging process in rural communities such as Cochran County. The Cochran County Study is designed to provide this information to society as a whole in order to help medical professionals working in rural areas in the United States.

Contact: Barbara Cherry or Sheilah Patridge
6630 S. Quaker Ste. E - Lubbock, TX 79413
806-743-7821



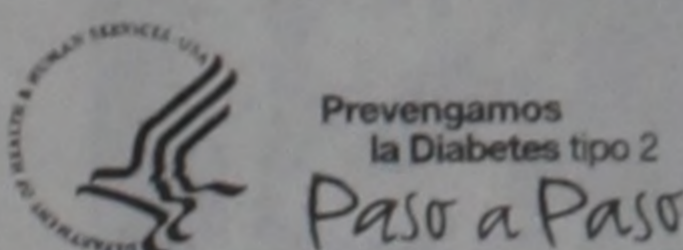
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