

Casualties of  
War in Iraq  
2733  
as of Oct. 6  
2006

# El Editor

"El Respeto al Derecho  
Ajeno es la Paz"  
Lic Benito Juarez

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## Comentarios

de Bidal Aguero

The answers that we received this week to our question of the week proved interesting to say the least. It was worthy of note to see that a couple of our



readers just said "no" with no comment. I guess that would seem to exhibit a bit of frustration with local government. Mayor Miller, I guess feeling a little bit of pressure, got on TV this week and tried to explain his actions. It is yet to be seen whether his explanation of seeing the needs in our community - including 70,000 potholes and deciding to "do the best for the citizens" will be accepted. In my mind it remains to be explained why the so-called "tremendous growth" in Lubbock cannot provide enough to have an ongoing program that will allow for maintenance. If maintenance has been ignored what were our employees doing throughout the years of neglect to our infrastructure? Of course to this our Mayor will have to answer "I wasn't here"....and the taxpayer is left out in the dark just to wait for another election.

And then there is another election...the one in November. One can't help but listen to all the goings-on that is happening nationally. The follies of the Republican Party, including the misadventures of Congressman Foley, seems to have the entire Republican Party running scared. I have very often wondered whether local Republicans are affected with this type of actions by the national Party or are they are so wholeheartedly devoted to President Bush that they blindly follow their leader regardless.

## Gonzales Cites I-10 in Human Trafficking

An interstate that runs from California to Florida has become a magnet for human traffickers seeking to exploit labor needs on the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast, U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said.

"The thirst for freedom and opportunity is part of the human spirit and is very strong in this world," Gonzales said at a conference on human trafficking. "To offer it as a lure, for purposes of a crime, is unconscionable."

Nearly \$8 million is being used to set up 10 new task forces, partnerships between law enforcement agencies and social service groups, to investigate and prosecute trafficking cases and to help victims. Roughly \$450,000 of that will go to Louisiana.

Jim Letten, the New Orleans-based U.S. attorney, said the opportunity for exploitation in the state, and particularly hard-hit New Orleans, is ripe.

Thousands of migrant or unskilled workers are estimated to be in the area to work, he said. And with Interstate 10, which skirts the Mexican border in Texas and runs through Louisiana, traditionally seen as a pipeline for moving drugs, there is a strong opportunity to use the route to move people, Letten said.

"New Orleans is a frontier town now," Letten said in an interview.

Other states set to receive funds for new task forces are Florida, Missouri, Nevada, New York, Texas and Utah,

Over 120,000 Texas Students Failed to Graduate in 2006;

## Minority Students Make up 70 Percent of High School Dropouts

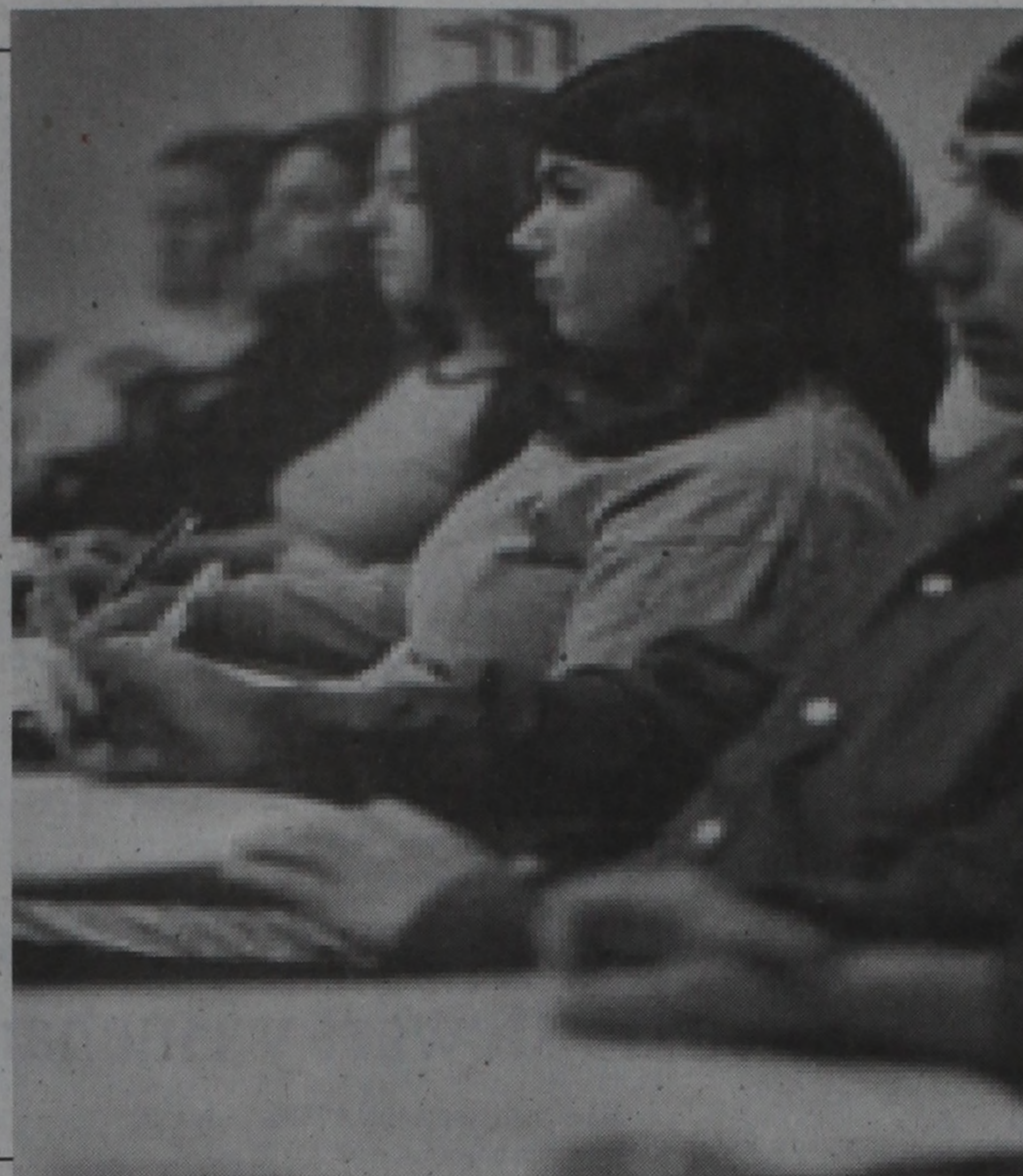
The graduation crisis in Texas has reached a boiling point with about one-third of the state's public high school students "more than 120,000 young people failing to graduate with a regular diploma in 2006," according to a new analysis conducted by the Bethesda, Md.-based Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) Research Center.

Seventy percent of all dropouts are minority students, including Black students, who have a statewide graduation rate of just 59.9, and Hispanics, whose rate is 57.8. The figures, calculated by the EPE Research Center using the widely reported Cumulative Promotion Index method, stand in stark contrast to official graduation rates from the Texas Education Agency of 81.1 percent for Blacks and 77.3 percent for Hispanics.

And the problem is worst in large cities where more than half of all students fail graduate according to the report, which cites district-level graduation rates of 46.3 for Dallas, and 48.9 for both Fort Worth and Houston, all of which fall far short of the official TEA figures of 81.3, 76.5 and 71.3, respectively. The EPE Research Center report includes overall and disaggregated graduation data for the 10 largest Texas school districts. A separate online mapping tool from EPE also provides comparable data for every district in the nation.

In some of the largest Texas districts, nearly 60 percent of some minority groups are failing to graduate, including Austin, which has a Hispanic graduation rate of 42.8 percent, Houston (43.3 percent) and Dallas (43.6 percent), according to EPE, which calculates similarly troubling rates for Black students in most cities.

"Nearly every state currently inflates its graduation rates," said EPE Research Center Director Christopher B. Swanson, "but Texas is a main offender, especially where minority students are concerned. Minority rates



are overestimated by 20 points or more. And for students in large cities, graduation rates can be inflated by as much as 35 percentage points."

According to the EPE Research Center analysis, the Texas rate (66.8) trails the national average of 69.6 percent and ranks 35th among the states. The EPE report was presented at a special conference "The Texas Dropout Crisis and our Children," held at Rice University in Houston on October 6. At the conference, a collection of national experts and researchers highlighted findings from a range of independent studies that confirm the severity of the dropout situation, suggest its causes and outline potential strategies and policies for

### Bush asigna fondos para muro fronterizo

## Se autorizan 1,200 millones de dólares para construir 370 millas de barreras físicas y tecnología para la vigilancia

Maribel Hastings

El presidente George W. Bush autorizó el primer paso para la construcción de una barda en la frontera con México al promulgar ayer el presupuesto que asigna 1,200 millones de dólares para 370 millas de barda, barreras vehiculares, y tecnología para la vigilancia fronteriza.

Bush promulgó en Scottsdale, Arizona, el proyecto de gastos de 34,000 millones de dólares del Departamento de Seguridad Interna (DHS) para el año fiscal 2007 y enumeró los rubros de seguridad que abarca la medida, incluyendo la seguridad fronteriza.

"Es lo que la gente en este país quiere. Ellos necesitan saber que estamos modernizando la frontera para que podamos asegurarla mejor", sostuvo Bush, quien dice que apoya una reforma integral pero es criticado por diversos sectores por no presionar al Congreso de mayoría republicana de forma más agresiva.

Ayer reiteró que el enfoque de sólo seguridad, aunque necesario, no funcionará: "Se necesita una reforma amplia que dé una vía legal para que la gente venga a trabajar temporalmente", dijo Bush. Agregó que seguirá trabajando con el Congreso hacia esos fines.

La semana pasada el Senado aprobó una medida, aún no promulgada, que autoriza la construcción de 700 millas de barda en la frontera entre México y EU, pero no le asigna los fondos.

Por lo tanto, la ley de gastos del DHS supone dólares iniciales para la barda, aunque sólo contempla 1,200 millones de dólares para 370 millas de verja que ya se contemplaban en el plan de reforma integral que el Senado aprobó en mayo pasado, pero que nunca avanzó en el Congreso.

Se ofrecen diversos cálculos sobre el 2,000 millas de barda en la franja y van desde 2,000 millones hasta 9,000 millones de dólares, según quien hable.

El martes el líder de la minoría demócrata del Senado, Harry Reid, de Nevada, pronosticó que la barrera quizá nunca se concrete por falta de fondos. Ayer el portavoz presidencial de México, Rubén Aguilar, recordó que "en la discusión del Congreso de Estados Unidos había declaraciones de que aunque estuviera aprobado el muro no hay recursos y que probablemente no se va a construir", según reportes de prensa.

Tras aprobarse la barda por el Congreso de EU, el gobierno mexicano envió una nota diplomática al Departamento de Estado reiterando que la acción tiene el potencial de lastimar las relaciones entre los países vecinos.

El Departamento de Estado recibió la nota y dice que la "revisará cuidadosamente" porque EU valora su relación con México.

Sin embargo, a semanas de los comicios de medio período los republicanos creen que el tema de la inmigración y de medidas enfocadas en seguridad le resultarán beneficiosos en ciertas contiendas en sus intentos de mantener el control del Congreso.

En días atrás Bush aseguró que promulgará la medida del muro, pero hasta ayer no se había programado fecha para hacerlo, indicó la Casa Blanca.

Los demócratas, grupos pro inmigrantes y el gobierno de México

the 9th-grade. This pattern mirrors a national trend, but is far more pronounced in Texas.

Male students are also consistently less likely to graduate, with female students enjoying a graduation advantage of over 8 percentage points. Gender gaps exist for all racial and ethnic categories, with the largest difference (13 percentage points) found among black students. Hispanic males are the lowest-performing group, graduating at a rate of less than 53 percent.

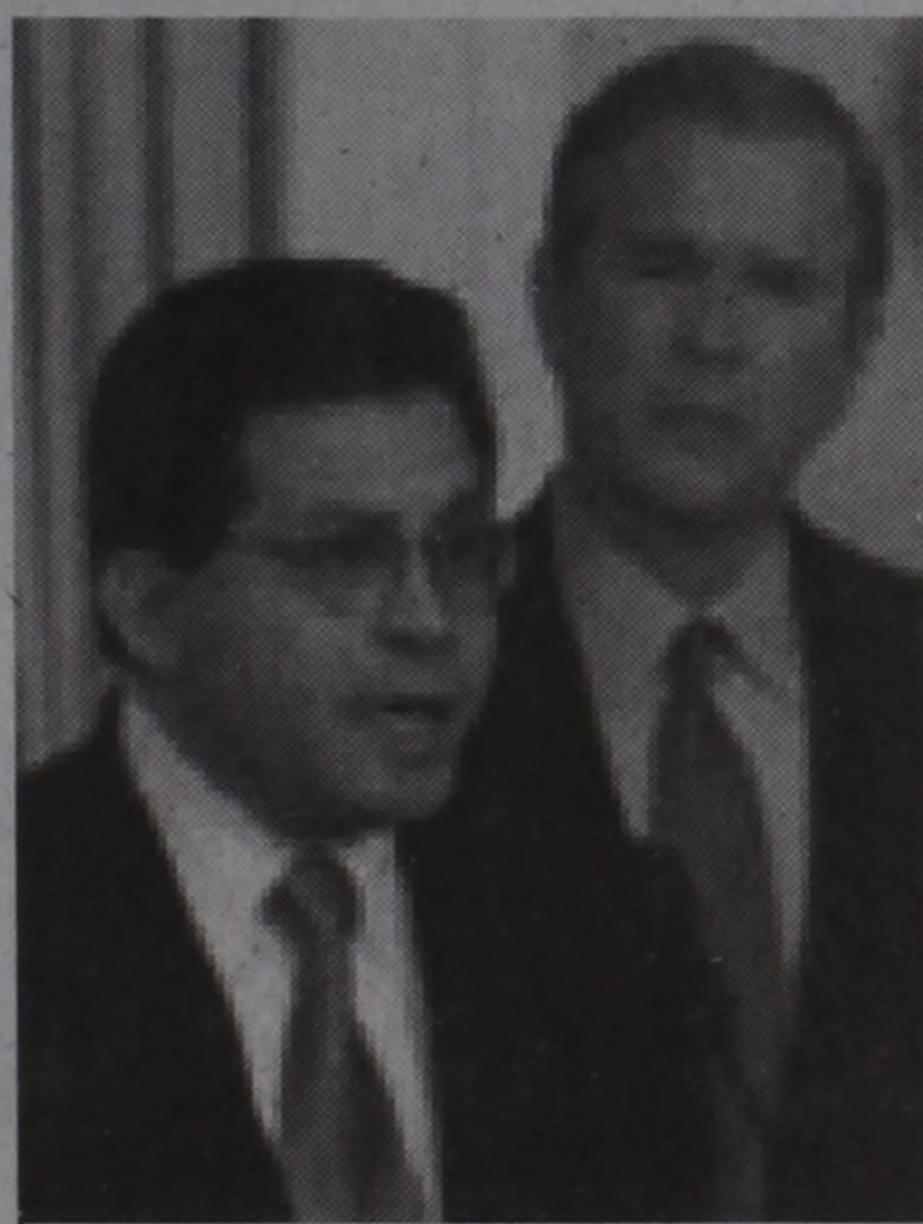
Texas has been a majority-minority state for over a decade (non-white students make up more than half of student enrollment). But the EPE Research Center study shows that racial and ethnic minorities have become even more segregated from their white peers over time. Levels of segregation are extremely high in the state's largest urban districts. The EPE analysis, based on 2002-03 data, found that districts with high levels of racial isolation have graduation rates about 13 percent lower than districts with less extreme levels of segregation.

Powerful Data Tool On the Web

The EPE Research Center will debut a powerful new online mapping service that can produce report cards on graduation rates for every U.S. school district and compare its performance against state and national averages. Produced in collaboration with the Redlands, Calif.-based ESRI, a leading designer and producer of geographical mapping applications, it allows users to zoom in on each of the nation's individual school districts and create a special report for that district, including a view of ten-year trends, examination of the high school pipeline, and comparisons with state and national figures.

The mapping tool can be accessed on the Research Center's website at [www.edweek.org/](http://www.edweek.org/) <http://pull.xmr3.com/p/151-0409/7018731/> <http://www.edweek.org-rc.html>

El Editor on the internet



as well as the commonwealth of Northern Marianas. Already, 32 task forces are established around the country, in some of the same states getting new groups, and in U.S. territories, according to the Justice Department.

Each year, traffickers bring up to 17,500 people, mostly women and children, into the United States to be prostitutes, work in sweat shops or otherwise work in forced labor situations, Gonzales said.

The number of human trafficking cases brought by prosecutors has risen in recent years, according to the Justice Department. Gonzales credited the rise in cases to an increased focus on the issue and partnerships between agencies.

"Freedom is guaranteed only with vigilance," he said.

El Editor on the internet



consideran que el muro será inútil porque deja de lado el problema real de que ya hay millones de indocumentados en el país, muchos con hijos ciudadanos estadounidenses; y que no toca el tema de los futuros flujos que pueden abordarse mediante un plan de trabajadores temporales.

Dicen también que por más muros que se levanten, los indocumentados buscarán la forma de cruzar, y que más de la mitad de los indocumentados no ingresan por la frontera, sino legalmente por otros puertos de entrada y permanecen una vez vencen sus visados.

Se cita además que surgen daños a la ecología.

La ley de gastos del DHS crea una "valla virtual" con tecnología, equipo y personal para que esta entidad logre y mantenga "total control operacional" de la franja fronteriza. También le da mayor poder a los agentes fronterizos contra vehículos que se den a la fuga.

Otra cláusula impone penas carcelarias, de hasta 20 años, a quienes construyan o financien túneles fronterizos, y 10 años de prisión a quienes permitan el uso de su propiedad para construir el túnel o a quienes lo usen para el tráfico de personas, drogas, o para el ingreso de potenciales terroristas.

Añade además 1,500 agentes fronterizos y 6,700 camas en centros de detención.

Aunque refuerza la vigilancia en la frontera sur, sólo recomienda que se determinen las necesidades de infraestructura en la frontera norte con Canadá, pese a que algunos detenidos en casos de terrorismo han ingresado precisamente por esa frontera.



# J.Lo, Marc Anthony Co-Star in New Film



Hector Lavoe served as both an inspiration and a warning to Marc Anthony.

Anthony, the singer and husband of Jennifer Lopez, plays old-school salsa star Lavoe in the upcoming biopic "El Cantante." Lavoe is credited with bringing salsa to the United States before dying in 1993 at age 46 after struggling with drug addiction.

"He painted this clear picture of what you could be if you put your mind to it, but how painful a life you could live if you made the wrong choices," Anthony told The Associated Press as he kicked off a concert tour in San Juan.

Lopez co-stars in "El Cantante," which premiered last month at the Toronto Film Festival and is expected to reach theaters next year. She took on the project nearly five years ago after Lavoe's widow approached her with a script and asked the pop star to consider playing her.

"Once I read the script, I knew there was something

about their life, the relationship they had, that was compelling to watch," Lopez said.

The film traces Lavoe's rise from Puerto Rico to stardom in New York, where his sold-out concerts and best-selling albums gave way to drug addiction and a strained marriage. At one of Lavoe's lowest points, he was performing an outdoor concert in Puerto Rico in 1988 when promoters cut the power because a nearby festival had left him with a small audience. That night, he jumped from the ninth-floor balcony of his hotel, but survived with severe injuries.

Anthony said he aimed to portray not an icon, but a "tormented soul."

"I got tired of people saying, 'Oh Hector Lavoe, he's the guy who jumped and the drug addict,'" he said. "I was focusing on making it as personal as possible. What did he go through that day? What pushed him over the edge? What made him make some of those destructive decisions?"

# Red Raiders Report: Strategy & Personnel

**THIS WEEK'S GAME:** Missouri at Texas Tech, Oct. 7 - The Tigers are the flavor of the month in the Big 12 North, rolling to 5-0 start, though the collective record of their opponents is 6-19. One of the biggest keys for Tech will be keeping tabs on Missouri DE Brian Smith, who ranks third in the nation with seven sacks and holds the MU record with 31 career sacks. Tech will be facing an undefeated team for the fifth time in six games.

**PLAYERS TO WATCH**  
**QB Graham Harrell** - Named Big 12 Offensive Player of the Week after completing 32-of-45 passes for 393 yards with four touchdowns and no interceptions in a Sept. 30 win at Texas A&M. Harrell threw scoring passes in the final minute of each half.

**WR Robert Johnson** - Leads the Big 12 with six touchdown catches after snagging three against A&M, including the 37-yard game-winner with 26 seconds re-



maining. He has 38 receptions and leads teammate Joel Filani (34) atop the Big 12.

**LB Justin Warren** - Leads Tech with 38 tackles, but only six were credited as solo hits.

**ROSTER REPORT**  
 With injured OG Louis Vasquez out, the Red Raiders rotated Ofa Mohtau and Brandon Carter every other series in the Sept. 30 win at Texas A&M. Carter is a red-shirt freshman.  
 CB Chris Parker returned

after missing two games with an undisclosed injury and made an interception on Texas A&M's second play from scrimmage.

**DT Ra'Jon Henley** returned for the Red Raiders after missing time with an undisclosed injury.

**SCOUTING THE OFFENSE**

One of the biggest problems for Texas Tech is its inability to convert on third down. The Red Raiders are 22-for-58 (.379) in such

situations and went 1-for-7 in a Sept. 30 win at Texas A&M. One problem for Tech is it seems to come up with routine plays on third down, but when faced with longer yardage, the Red Raiders often come up short.

**SCOUTING THE DEFENSE**

Holes in the Texas Tech rush defense were exposed by Texas A&M, which gouged the Red Raiders for 250 yards on the ground. Success in the run game is something many opponents try to establish in order to run clock and limit the explosive Tech offense's time on the field. Tech coordinator Lyle Setencich said he planned for different formations and the Raiders were caught off-guard by A&M.

**QUOTE TO NOTE**

"We haven't proved nothing yet. We were up 24-14 (against Texas A&M). We've got to finish the game. It was a good win for us, but we've got to learn how to finish." - Texas Tech WR Robert Johnson

## Owens' long-awaited return to Philly drawing near

It's time for the next act in the circus surrounding Terrell Owens. This is the big one anticipated since he signed with the Dallas Cowboys seven months ago.

A game with huge implications in the NFC East is even bigger this week because Owens is going back to Philadelphia, where he helped the Eagles almost win a Super Bowl before being unceremoniously dumped midway through last season.

"Hopefully, we can give T.O. something to be proud of. I know he's going to go out there and do his deal," cornerback Aaron Glenn said Monday.

"It's big for him going back," tight end Jason Witten said. "It's such a big game for us anyway because it's a division game, and there's always a little extra enthusiasm out there when

you're playing Philadelphia." That's multiplied by the T.O. factor.

The Cowboys (2-1) came off their bye week with a 45-14 victory at Tennessee on Sunday, their highest-scoring game since 2000, three years before coach Bill Parcells arrived. Philadelphia (3-1) beat Green Bay 31-9 on Monday night.

Owens caught five passes for 88 yards against the Titans, though he dropped a touchdown pass, just five days after being hospitalized for what police termed an accidental overdose of the pain medication he was taking because of the broken bone in his right hand.

At the start of his most-anticipated week with the Cowboys, Owens wasn't in the locker room during the 45-minute open period Monday. The receiver generally talks to reporters only on



Wednesday, so his absence wasn't unusual.

After the Titans, Owens wasn't ready to talk about his return to Philadelphia.

"My main focus was on this game," Owens said. "We will talk about Philly next week."

Parcells said he doesn't plan to speak to Owens or his team specifically about the circus atmosphere that will surround the receiver's return to Philadelphia. But hype for the game is already

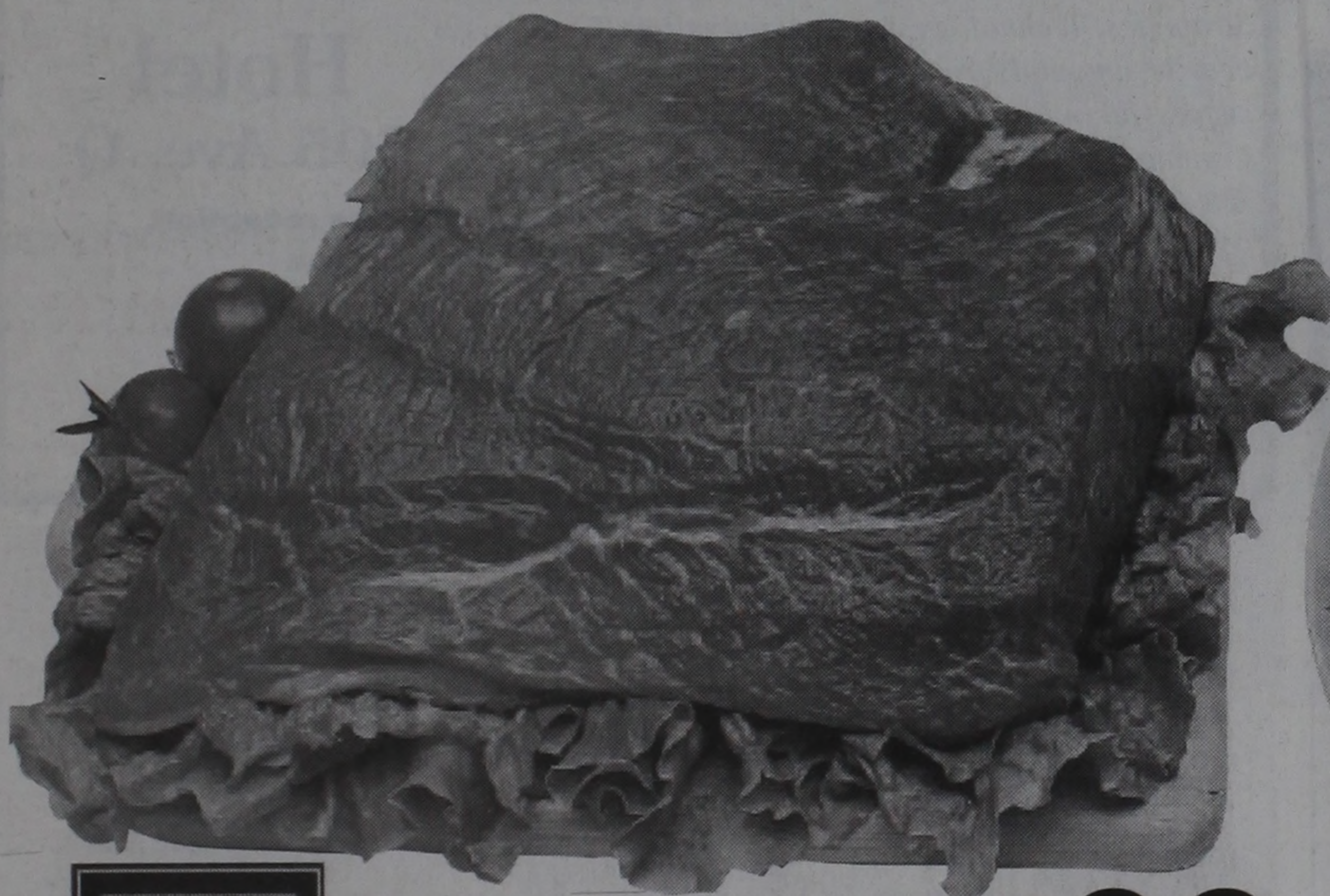
building in unusual places.

Glenn noticed the Cowboys-Eagles game being talked about on TV before leaving home Monday -- on the daytime talk show Live with Regis and Kelly instead of a national cable sports show or even a local broadcast.

"On regular TV, they're talking about the game," Glenn said. "It's a huge game. It's a big game for Terrell, but it's a big game for all of us."

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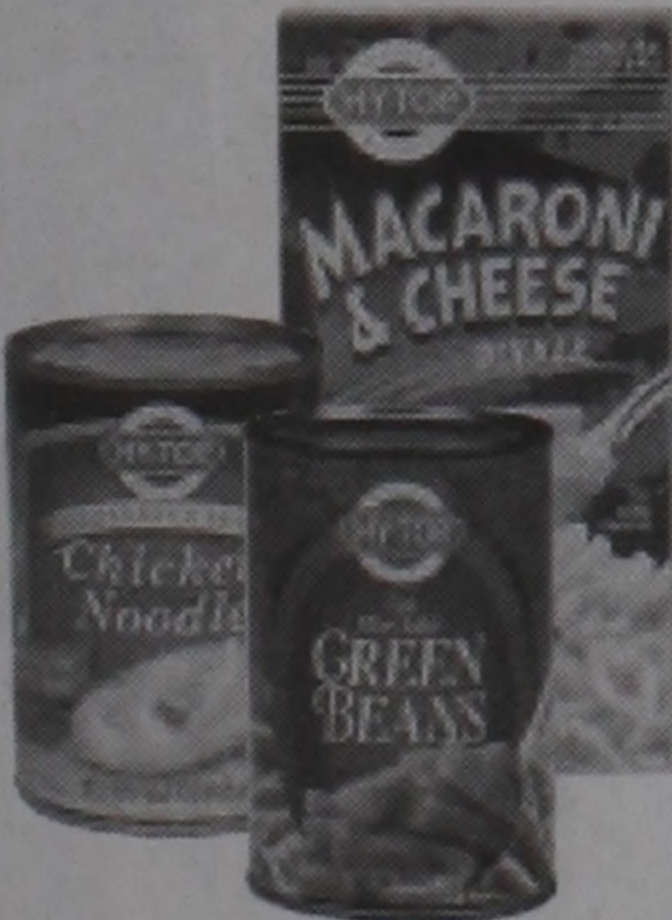
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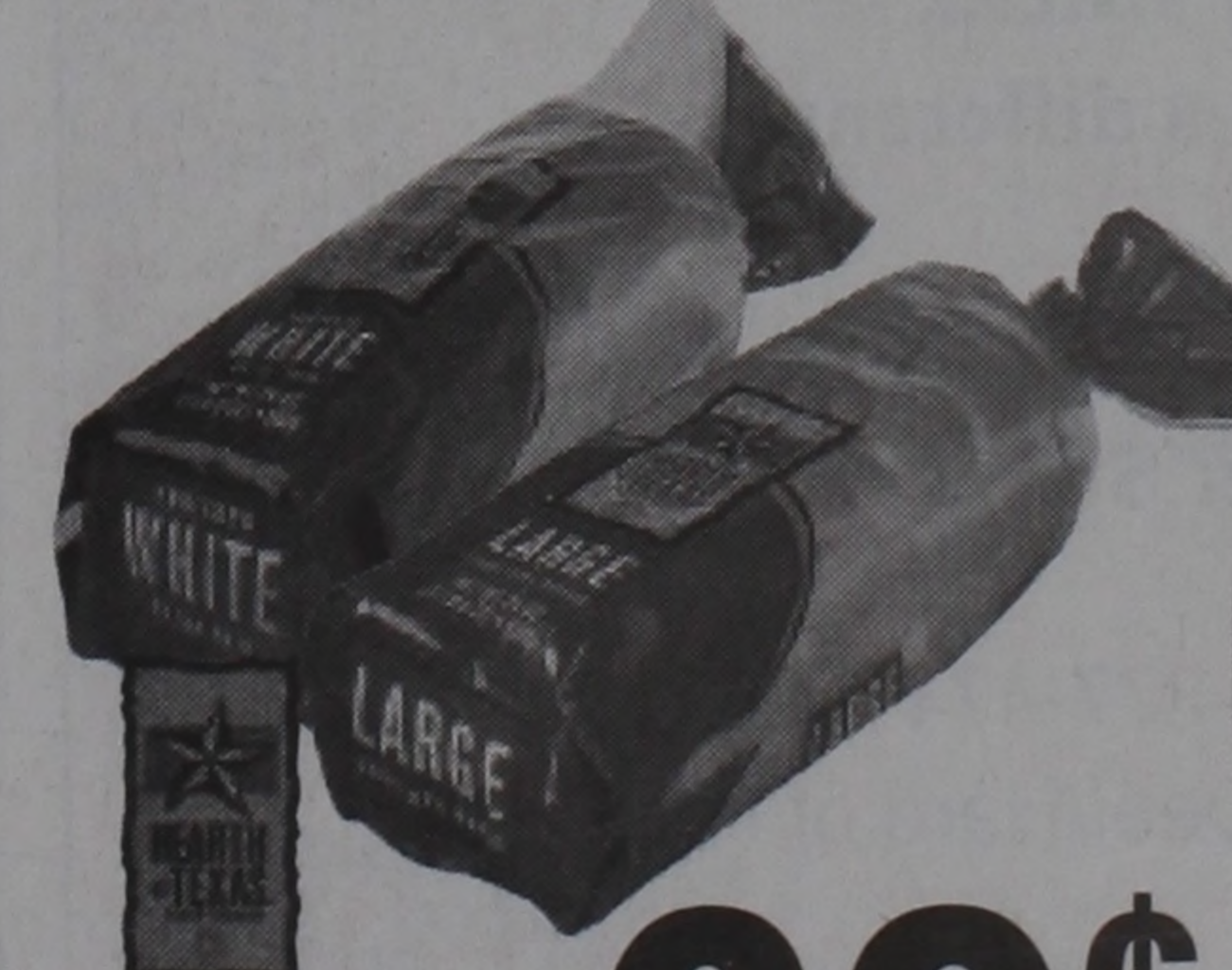


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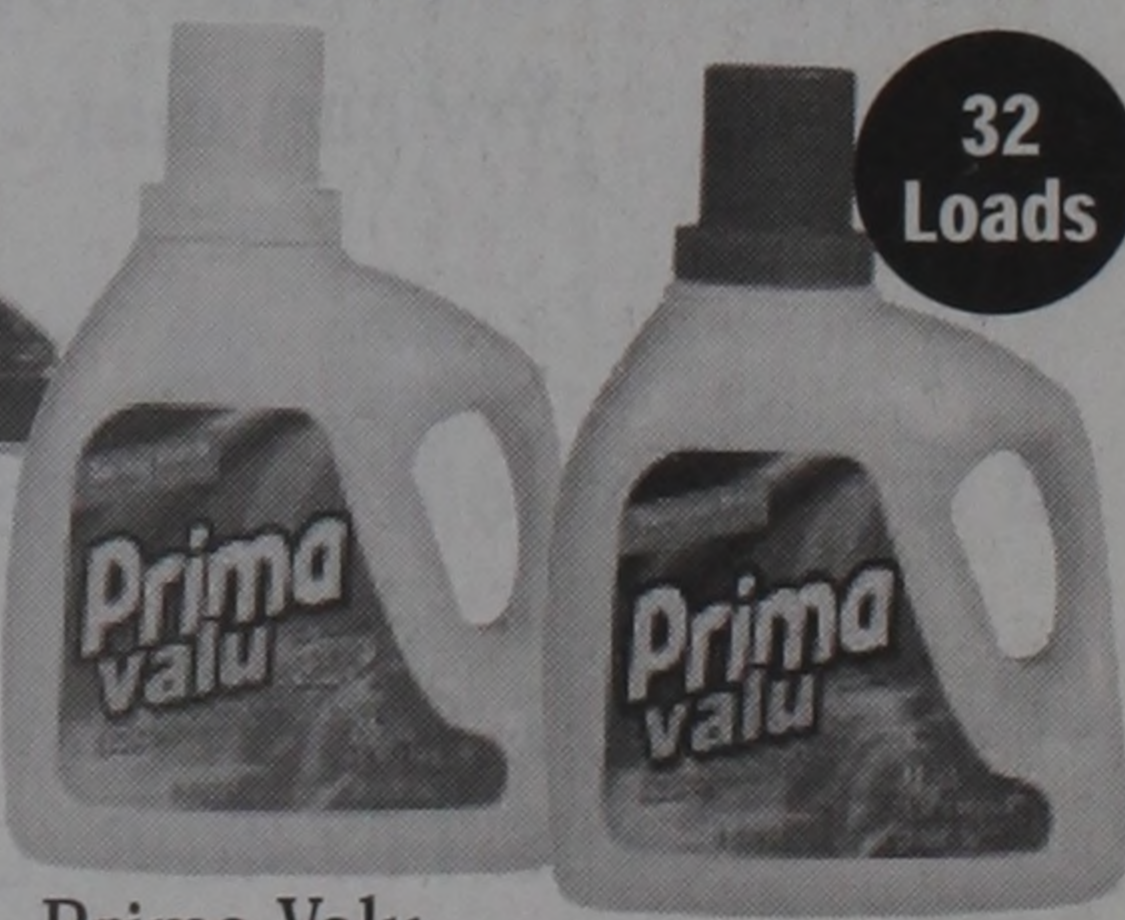
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# Nick lets youngsters make own cartoons



The Nickelodeon network is giving its young viewers the chance to create cartoons, instead of just watch them. Nick has just made available on its Web site technology that allows young fans to make cartoon mashups of different scenes from favorites like "SpongeBob SquarePants" and "Avatar" and distribute them to their friends. The technology is a nod to Web favorites like Youtube.com and a recognition that many young Nickelodeon viewers have a knowledge of computers that

surpasses their parents. "It's a natural and very organic evolution of where we've been over the last 26 years," said Cyma Zarghami, Nick president and head of MTVN Kids and Family Group. "We've always followed the audience where it is going." On its TurboNick Web site, the network provides several scenes from its shows, including non-animated fare like "Drake & Josh," along with graphics, transitions and sounds for them to point and click their way to an entirely new crea-

tion. Participants still aren't able to put their own soundtracks to what they make.

People who play along will be able to post their creations on their own Web sites and e-mail them to friends, said Stephen Youngwood, the network's executive vice president for digital media.

"There is a big chunk of the audience that wants to delve deeper into the content and be a creator," he said.

There's already evidence that he may be right. In recent months, Nick invited viewers of "Avatar: The Last Airbender" to create their own scenes and submit them, and 10 winners were chosen to have the show's actors voice those scenes and see it played on the air. More than 150,000 scenes were submitted, the network said.

Since Sept. 20, when the mash-up technology was introduced, the TurboNick Web site has averaged 236,000 unique visitors a day, compared to 40,000 during the same period last year.

The network also used the Web to heavily promote a new cartoon, "Mr. Meaty," and offered clips online this summer in advance of its Sept. 22 premiere. The same day the show premiered, TurboNick let viewers mash it up.

The Click, a separate Web site for fans of The N, the network aimed at young teenagers, will begin offering mashups of shows like "Degraasi: The Next Generation" starting next month. Both Nickelodeon and The N are owned by Viacom Inc.

Nickelodeon executives say they have no fear that fans will spend so much time on the computer creating their own cartoons that they won't watch the original cartoons on TV. Many viewers like to multitask, they said.

Nick averages 2.1 million viewers at any given time, about the same as a year ago, according to Nielsen Media Research. Its top competitors are the Disney Channel, with its 1.5 million viewers representing a 17 percent increase over last year, and the Cartoon Network, with 1.2 million viewers.

# Study Projects Increase in Hispanic Vote

An incremental increase in the size of the Hispanic electorate is expected this November, according to research conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center and released Monday. The Hispanic share of the total U.S. electorate is expected to grow to 8.6 percent, compared to 8.2 percent in 2004 and 7.4 percent in 2000.

The center has drafted three possible scenarios for Hispanic participation in the midterm elections, ranging from 10 million registered voters in the lowest to 12.3 million in the highest. In contrast, for the 2004 general election 9.3 million Hispanics were registered to vote.

The lowest scenario assumes the same rate of voter registration this year as was seen in 2004, and applies that rate - 58 percent - to the now larger Hispanic population. In 2004 there were 16.1 million Hispanics who were U.S. citizens over age 18, and this year there are 17.2 million, according to Pew estimates.

In the middle scenario, Pew posits a voter participation rate near that of African Americans in 2004. Using Pew's figure of 67 percent would generate 11.5 million registered Latino voters. Pew notes, without comment, that Hispanics register to vote at much lower rates than either eligible Anglos (75 percent) or African Americans (69 percent).

In the last and most optimistic scenario, Pew assumes that Hispanics will register at the same rate as Anglos did in 2004. That 71 percent figure would generate 12.3 million registered His-

panic voters.

Pew does not discuss what might spur additional Hispanic participation in the voting process, but Hispanic politicians and activists have been encouraging registration all summer as a result in proposed changes to immigration law being discussed in Washington, D.C. One of the clarion calls during widespread marches meant in part to demonstrate Hispanic clout was the refrain, "Today We March, Tomorrow We Vote."

Just Friday, for example, the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda called for a voter registration drive called "It Starts With You" or "Empieza Contigo." "The most important message is to go vote and mobilize your families and your organizations," Janet Murguía, president of the National Council of La Raza, said during a joint announcement of the mobilization campaign Friday.

The Pew report does take a closer look at who among Hispanics could vote. Not surprisingly, the native born are the largest component, 12.9 million eligible voters out of the 17.2 million. That segment is also seeing the fastest growth in the electorate, especially among second-generation citizens.

The report also notes that in addition to participating at lower rates than other ethnicities, Hispanics are also less well-represented due to two demographic factors: immigration status and age.

"Eligible voters make up a significantly smaller share of the Hispanic population than in other racial/ethnic groups

because so many Latinos are either adults who are not citizens or citizens who are not yet of voting age," the report says. "For example, 39 percent of Hispanics are eligible voters compared to 77 percent of whites and 65 percent of blacks."



## Quinceañera

Amaris Garcia will celebrate here Quinceañera on Saturday Oct. 7 at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church, Monsignor Curtis T. Halfmann officiating. She is the daughter of Mr. Frank Garcia and Mrs. Christy Martinez-Garcia. She will be escorted by her cousin Matthew Adame. Amaria is an honor student at Lubbock High School. She is a member of the church youth group. Last year she volunteered over 600 hours and was presented the volunteer Center's Cornucopia Youth Award.

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# Congress Approves 700 Mile Border Fence

Suzanne Gamboa

Washington, D.C., September 30, 2006 (AP) - Republicans will go into the elections with a message that they've made great strides fighting illegal immigration, including authorizing a fence along one-third of the U.S.-Mexico border and making a \$1.2 billion down payment on it.

Among its final tasks before leaving to campaign, the Senate on Friday night passed and sent to President Bush a bill authorizing 700 new miles of fencing on the southern border. No one knows how much it will cost, but a separate bill also on the way to the White House makes a \$1.2 billion down payment on it. A 14-mile segment of fence under construction in San Diego is costing \$126.5 million.

The fence bill was passed by the House two weeks ago. The Senate vote on it Friday night was 80-19.

In addition to money for starting work on the fence, a homeland security bill passed Friday by the House and later by the Senate includes \$380 million to hire 1,500 more Border Patrol agents and money to build detention facilities to hold 6,700 more undocumented immigrants until they can be deported.

"We have made giant steps in terms of our ability to control illegal immigration," House Majority Leader John Boehner, R-Ohio, told reporters.

The fence bill became House Republicans' immigration focus in September after they abandoned President Bush's call to bring millions of undocumented immigrants into the American mainstream.

In addition to the money in the Homeland Security spending bill, Boehner cited Bush's deployment of the National Guard on the border and more frequent arrests of undocumented immigrants at work sites.

"The perception that has been painted mistakenly is that the United States government, our Congress is not delivering to the American people on a huge problem that's out there," said Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn. "We're active."

Democrats and immigration advocates say Republicans can hardly claim victory.



House Republicans failed to win measures for deporting immigrant gang members and empowering local police to enforce immigration laws. Their biggest obstacle turned out to be another Republican, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said the border security achievements trumpeted by Republicans don't measure up to the more comprehensive reforms her party backed. What the GOP calls achievements fall "very far short of what Democrats have proposed over and over and over again," she said.

After a debate that stretched over three months, the Senate in May passed a sweeping immigration bill that combined tougher border enforcement measures with new guest worker programs and a plan to give millions of undocumented immigrants already in the U.S. a shot at citizenship.

Despite Bush's ringing endorsement of the measure, the House would have no part of it, sticking to the bill it passed five months earlier that would treat undocumented immigrants and people who offer them aid as felons.

Rather than negotiate a compromise with the Senate, Republican leaders plucked out many provisions of the House bill for new votes in both the House and Senate over the past two weeks.

"It's been two years of high visibility, high volume debate in terms of which way

to go in the immigration system," said Frank Sharry, executive director of the National Immigration Forum. In the end the debate ended in a tie, he said.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., called the fence "a bumper sticker solution for a complex problem."

"It's a feel-good plan that will have little effect in the real world," he said. "We all know what this is about. It may be good politics, but it's bad immigration policy. That's not what Americans want."

Sens. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, and Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., made a 11th-hour appeal to colleagues to include in the fence bill a measure to help the agriculture industry, which relies heavily on undocumented workers.

Those workers have become harder to find because of increased border enforcement and availability of jobs for the workers in construction and other industries, they said. Consumers ultimately will pay the price for that at the grocery store, they added.

"Pickers are few and the growers blame Congress," Craig said, reading a news headline. "The growers ought to blame Congress. They ought to blame a government that has been dysfunctional in an area of immigration that has been problem for decades."

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# Suprema Corte atiende casos de deportación

La Suprema Corte de Justicia escuchó ayer los argumentos a favor y en contra de un caso que pretende determinar si los inmigrantes convictos de delitos graves a nivel estatal pueden ser deportados aunque en el ámbito federal esos mismos delitos se consideren faltas (delitos menos graves).

El caso tiene el potencial de afectar a miles de inmigrantes aunque una fuente de la American Bar Association (ABA) no pudo precisar a este diario un número aproximado.

Se trata de uno de los temas que abordará el máximo tribunal en la presente sesión

que acaba de reanudarse.

La ABA es uno de los grupos que objeta la postura defendida por el gobierno federal de que los inmigrantes convictos de delitos graves por drogas en el ámbito estatal son deportables aunque en el ámbito federal el mismo delito se considere una falta.

Los argumentos se desprenden del caso de José Antonio López, un mexicano residente permanente de Estados Unidos que, por cierto, ya fue deportado a México.

López vivía en Sioux Falls, Dakota del Sur, y se declaró culpable de auxiliar e incitar la posesión de cocaína, un delito grave en ese estado,

pero un delito menor a nivel federal si es la primera ofensa de posesión de cocaína.

No obstante, las autoridades federales ordenaron su deportación ya que un juez de inmigración, un panel de revisión y un tribunal de apelaciones determinaron que el delito de López debe considerarse una felonía con agravantes.

Sus abogados consideran que si el máximo tribunal falla a favor de López, éste podría retornar a Estados Unidos. Su esposa y sus dos hijos son ciudadanos estadounidenses.

En la presentación de argumentos algunos magistrados externaron su preocupación de que no haya uniformidad y de que dos personas puedan ser tratadas de forma diferente si cometen el mismo delito en diferentes estados.

El segundo caso involucra a otro nacional mexicano, Raymundo Toledo Flores, que no quiere que su más reciente convicción por ingresar ilegalmente a Estados Unidos se considere como una felonía agravada.

El juez presidente del máximo tribunal, John Roberts, le respondió que no hay tal cosa para personas fuera de Estados Unidos.

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# Mexicans Divided Over Wall on Border

At the beginning of every school year, bad news comes from Mexican heartland states such as Zacatecas and Queretaro: Local authorities are closing hundreds of schools because so many families have moved north to the U.S. heartland.

Mexicans feel helpless before the migrant exodus, and talk about it the same way they talk about the weather. Everyone complains about it, but there's not much you can do about it.

Friday night, the U.S. Senate approved a 700-mile, high-tech border barrier in a bid to stop the immigrant flow. The decision, a seminal event in the two neighbors' relations, has left many Mexicans wondering whether the open door to the north is closing.

Some Mexicans saw the vote as a collective slap in the face that highlighted the failure of their country's leaders to give Mexicans a reason to stay home.

"Our politicians have not lived up to their responsibilities toward the people who migrate," said Homero

Aridjis, a poet, activist and onetime Mexican diplomat. "Our government has failed before the economic and social plight of the poor."

"I'm from Michoacan," said Aridjis, naming a state south of Mexico City famous for exporting its sons and daughters to the U.S. "When I go there, I see fertile farmland and orchards that have been abandoned."

Few observers expect the new barriers to stop people from Mexico and Central America from seeking a better life in the U.S. New smuggling routes are expected to open through evermore-remote stretches of desert, or over the waters of the river that Mexicans call the Rio Bravo del Norte.

But the bill approved by both houses of Congress, and soon to be signed by President Bush, might signal the end of an era that has seen dramatic cultural and demographic changes in both countries.

The wave of Latin American migration that began in the 1980s helped make Hispanics the largest minority in

the U.S. and the largest ethnic group in Los Angeles and many other U.S. cities.

The beginning of the 21st century saw Hispanic immigration spread to almost every corner of the United States, with Spanish-speaking communities booming in states such as Tennessee and Ohio.

Latin Americans see the initiative as a rejection of the cultural changes brought forth by Hispanics in the United States. In angry editorials and speeches, Mexican writers and politicians have compared the project to the Berlin Wall and the Great Wall of China.

"The exploitation of fear among the citizens of the United States has been at the center of the debate," the newspaper El Universal said in an editorial Saturday. "This wall, like all those built with xenophobic aims, will be far from effective."

President Vicente Fox and President-elect Felipe Calderon have denounced the new fence, as have a host of Mexican political leaders.

For decades, social scientists here have seen migration to the north as a "safety valve" that keeps Mexico from exploding into social conflict.

Now, a small number of voices are saying the brain and muscle drain to the U.S. cannot continue indefinitely.

When the head of Mexico's central bank told a Texas newspaper last week that a new wall between the United States and his country might not be such a bad thing, his remarks were front-page news here. Surprisingly, there were few public expressions of disagreement.

"It would be best to keep its people in Mexico, and it would give incentives for Mexico to create jobs that are needed," Guillermo Ortiz, the bank official, said in an interview with the editorial board of The Dallas Morning News.

Rather than return to Mexico, many immigrants are sending for their families, accelerating the declining en-

rollment in rural Mexican schools, analysts say.

In Zacatecas, state education officials said last month they were closing 269 schools because of declining enrollments.

Before 1929, Mexicans were not required to obtain a visa to enter the United States. Ever since, "The history of the border has been a history of closing the border," said Tony Payan, a professor at the University of Texas, El Paso and author of "The Three U.S.-Mexico Border Wars: Drugs, Immigration, and Homeland Security."

The new measures approved Friday will seal off most of the Arizona-Mexico border. Immigrant smugglers probably will move farther east, to remote crossing points on the Rio Grande upriver from the Texas cities of Eagle Pass and Del Rio, Payan said.

Wayne Cornelius of the Center for Comparative Immigration Studies at the University of California, San Diego, told the Judiciary Committee that even if the entire land border were sealed off, immigrant smuggling probably would move to the waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

Lorenzo Meyer, one of

Mexico's leading historians, argued that the Senate vote had revealed an essential hypocrisy in U.S.-Mexico relations.

"In 1993 we signed the North American Free Trade agreement," Meyer said. "It was supposed to be the beginning of a period of cooperation and friendship." Now the U.S. government has "unilaterally" announced the construction of a wall, he said, despite Mexico's strenuous objections.

"We see now that the idea of a united 'North America' is fiction," Meyer said. "The reality is the wall."

## Medicare Special Needs Plans Focused on Chronic Conditions Expand into Texas

HealthLeaders-InterStudy, a leading provider of managed care industry intelligence, reports that Texas is poised to be an explosion site for Medicare special needs plans (SNP) in 2007. According to the latest Texas Health Plan Analysis, XLHealth, a Baltimore-based disease management firm, recently announced expansion of its SNP to Texas through its Care Improvement Plus plan.

"The state's high Medicare population and prevalence of certain chronic illnesses have made the state attractive to XLHealth," states Ric Gross, HealthLeaders-InterStudy research analyst.

XLHealth began marketing October 1 to around 580,000 Medicare eligible beneficiaries, with open enrollment beginning November 15 for a January 1, 2007, effective date. The plan will enroll chronically ill Medicare beneficiaries living with diabetes, heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and/or end-stage renal disease.

Texas is a good market for a chronic condition SNP, particularly due to the sig-



nificant number of Hispanics who have a higher prevalence of diabetes. XLHealth recognizes the need for addressing the care of these patient populations and the costs associated with them.

Texas currently has 14 SNPs in operation, 13 enrolling dual-eligibles and one the institutionalized; XLHealth is the first announced plan to focus on chronic conditions.

Other health plan news in Texas: \* Texas' continuing expansion into Medicaid managed care is attracting Aetna, Molina Healthcare

and UniCare to its state program and is sharply expanding managed care for the Aged, Blind and Disabled population. \* Midland Surgical Associates, wanting higher reimbursement rates, has walked away from UnitedHealth's network in a contracting dispute mirroring others around the country.

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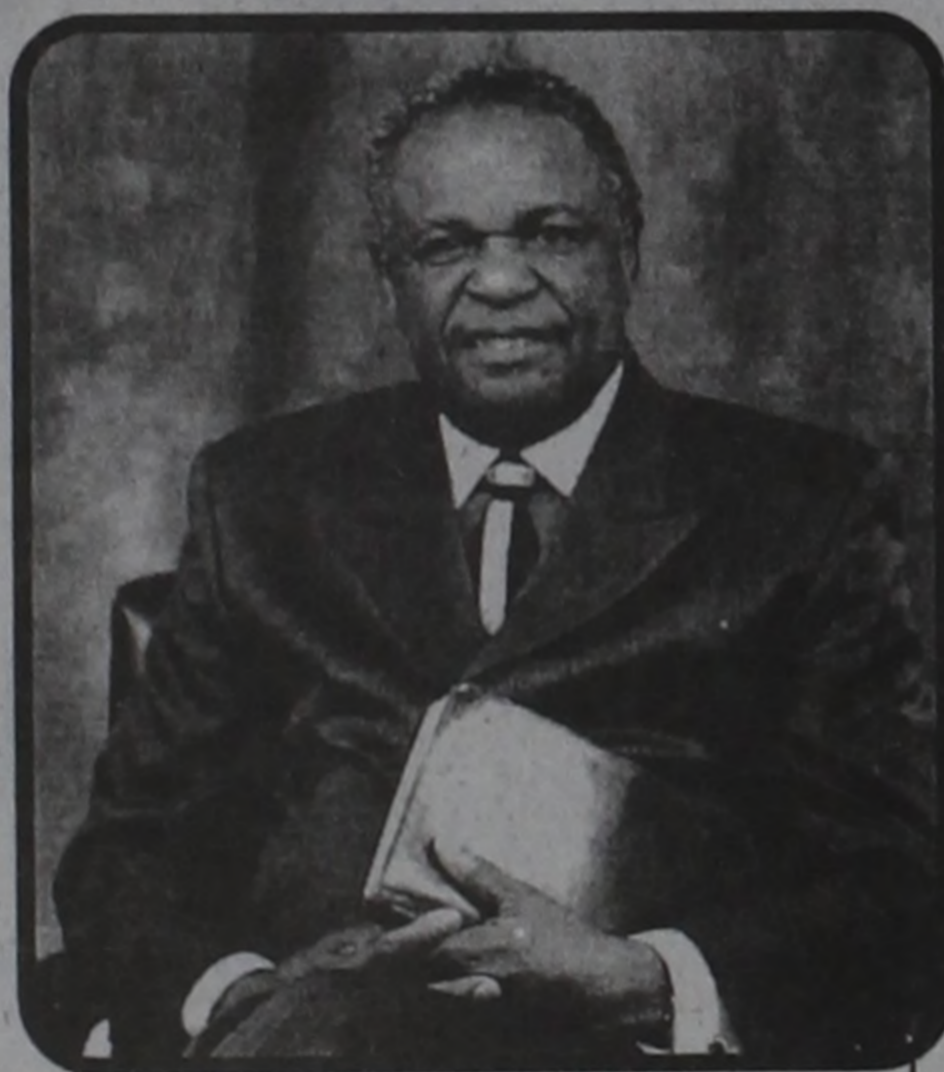
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