

WINE & DINE 1D



1-4A clash

No. 1 Austin beats No. 10 Chapin

SUN BOWL APPROVES NEW 4-YEAR CBS DEAL

By Bill Knight El Paso Times

EL PASO — The Sun Bowl Association board of directors on Tuesday voted to approve a new contract with CBS to televise the Sun Bowl for an additional four years, sources close to the board said.

A formal announcement is expected today. Sources spoke on the condition of

anonymity because the contract still had to be sent to CBS corporate headquarters for signing to make the agreement binding.

The agreement comes at a good time for the Sun Bowl, as the venerable 76-year-old game works to attract a new corporate sponsor.

Helen of Troy's sponsorship con-

Please see Sun Bowl 6A



Our schools

EPISD tax hike goes to voters

By Michael D. Hernandez El Paso Times

EL PASO — The El Paso Independent School District is headed for a special May 8 election to ask voters to support a tax increase.

Trustees on Tuesday voted unanimously to have the district's administration proceed with plans for a tax ratification election that would generate about \$36.8 million in revenue.

If voters approve the measure, about \$19.3 million of that revenue will come from the state through matching funds, and local taxpayers will pay about \$17.5 million in additional property taxes.

Trustees must still set a new tax rate to prompt such an election for the city's largest school district.

That vote to increase the tax rate by about 13 cents per \$100 of assessed property valuation will probably come to the school board during a special meeting in early April.

From the tenor of Tuesday's board meeting, such a vote seems a mere formality.

Nobody from the public spoke against the tax increase, and trustees talked about the importance of adding revenue for the growing district.

Board President Patricia Hughes said the election would come during a rough economic period for many taxpayers.

Still, she said that a tax increase is necessary to improve schools in the district, which has

Please see EPISD 6A

Firefighters douse jalapeños



Mark Lambie / El Paso Times

El Paso Fire Department Lt. Frank Perry shows judge Terri Todd his mouth Tuesday after completing the 30-second jalapeño eating contest against the El Paso Police Department at the Whataburger restaurant at 7057 S. Desert Blvd. The contest, pitting El Paso firefighters against El Paso police, featured a total of 36 people divided into three-person teams, and each team member had to eat 12 jalapeños. The Fire Department squad won the contest, raising \$750 for muscular dystrophy research, while the police team raised \$250 for the Child Crisis Center.

\$360,000 grant will fight obesity in EP children

By Erica Molina Johnson El Paso Times

EL PASO — The problems facing overweight and obese children are much more than just a matter of appearance — and El Paso just got a new weapon to do battle.

The extra pounds carried by a growing number of children can lead to significant health problems — including diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, depression, some cancers and brain-vascular disease — as young people age.

In cities like El Paso, with large Hispanic populations, many already are at a genetically higher risk for conditions such as diabetes.

"When you're a kid, you're learning patterns that take

you through the rest of your life," said Bill Schlesinger, CEO of Project Vida, which provides health-care services for many low-income and uninsured El Pasoans.

According to data from the Texas Department of State Health Services, about 37 percent of El Paso-area fourth-graders and eighth-graders were overweight or obese in a 2004-05 study.

The Pan American Health Organization hopes to begin battling the growing problem of childhood obesity with a \$360,000 grant over four years from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The grant was announced Tuesday.

The organization, which

Please see Obesity 6A

Hutchison's border plan uses local officers. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison's program for security along the Texas-Mexico border would let local police and sheriffs enforce some immigration laws. 10A

Northeast court could relocate to Downtown

By David Burge El Paso Times

EL PASO — The City Council on Tuesday took the first steps toward closing the Municipal Court's arraignment center in the Northeast and moving it Downtown, a project that could cost millions.

Council members voted 7-1 Tuesday to explore the idea in detail.

Preliminary cost estimates are \$3.5 million to renovate an existing building Downtown and \$7.6 million to build a new court. This does not include the cost of purchasing or leasing property.

City Manager Joyce Wilson will look at possible locations to either build a new consolidated center

that will house the main offices of the Municipal Court and an arraignment center or find an existing building to renovate.

She will make a formal recommendation in time for summer budget hearings.

About 275 to 550 people visit the Northeast arraignment center each day. An additional 700 to 900 people use the main court Downtown each day for trials and other legal matters.

The council also directed city staff to pursue implementing video arraignments and other technological advances that are designed to make city courts more convenient.

Please see Court 6A



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