Fire destroys business

By Heather Lobenstein  Staff Writer

A commercial fire destroyed a South Tucson mattress factory Oct. 19, causing approximately $300,000 in damages, according to South Tucson Fire Chief Larry Anderson.

The South Tucson Fire Department received a call to respond to a fire in the alley near A-1 Mattress, 223 W. 29th St., at 10:17 p.m., Anderson said. South Tucson’s unit arrived at the scene within four minutes of the call and noticed heavy smoke and flames to the rear of the building, Anderson said.

Tucson Fire Department received a mutual aid request from South Tucson Fire Department and responded to the scene, according to Tucson Fire Department Captain Chris Anderson.

“We requested a ladder truck to assist with the incident,” Chris Anderson said.

A total of three fire engines responded to the fire and one ladder truck, Larry Anderson said.

“we supported and assisted them in the extinguishment of the fire,” Chris Anderson said.

The fire departments organized an offensive attack and aggressive attack on the fire but because the fire conditions changed and the building structure was in question, the department transitioned to a defensive attack, Larry Anderson said.

The firefighters were able to protect the two residential homes next to the factory, Larru Anderson said.

The fire took approximately one hour to control, Larry Anderson said.

South Tucson Fire Department, Drexel Heights Fire Department Fire Marshal David Stone and the Pima County Sheriff’s Department conducted an investigation once the fire was extinguished.

Drexel Heights Fire Department collaborates with South Tucson in a mutual aid agreement since the 1999 Soleng Center Fire that destroyed approximately one block of

Grant seeks detention alternatives

Minority youth to receive support in juvenile centers

By Hadar Avrahami  Staff Writer

The Annie E. Casey Foundation awarded the Pima County Juvenile Court a grant for $125,000 per year for a minimum of three years for the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative.

The executive committee of JDAl announced Oct. 22 at a press conference at the Tucson Urban League, 2323 S. Park Ave., that the grant will help find alternatives to detaining youth in Pima County.

The grant will fund alternative methods to juvenile detention centers, better use of centers and consideration and help for the overrepresentation of minority children in these centers, according to Sgt. Carlos Valdez, a Pima County public information officer.

The grant is renewable after three years depending on the performance of the court, according to Jesus Diaz, deputy court director of the Pima County Juvenile Court.

“The Casey Foundation understands these issues can’t be resolved in three years,” Diaz said after the press conference.

Diaz said the $125,000 is in addition to technological and informational support, advisors, national experts, data analysts and program specialists.

Hector E. Campoy, presiding judge of the Pima County Juvenile Court Center, spoke to a crowd of about 70 students and community members about what he said will be a great endeavor for the community.

He said detaining youth is not a good move for the children or for the community, because the outcome is worse for children who are detained versus those who are not. Those detained are more likely to be found guilty and to experience minimal or no intervention, Campoy said.

“We have not treated minority children fairly in the past,” Campoy said, in an emphasized effort to publically acknowledge the minority overrepresentation. The JDAl committee exists to change this shortcoming.

$200K in federal aid sought to help pollution areas

By Andrea Dalton  Staff Writer

The City of South Tucson is seeking federal money to help determine the level of contamination and pollutants in brownfields sites near commercial centers like South Fourth Avenue.

Approval to seek a grant through the Environmental Protection Agency was given to the mayor and city council during the city council meeting Oct. 18.

This is the city’s first application to the EPA. They are seeking a grant of $200,000, said Shawna Tuttle, City of South Tucson management analyst.

Brownfields are former or unused industrial and commercial sites where redevelopment is difficult because of real or perceived environmental contamination, according to the Environmental Protection Agency web site.

The agency’s web site reports that the purpose of giving grants to local governments is to help communities work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields.

South Tucson find out in May of next year if the city will receive the grant to assess local polluted areas, Tuttle said.

One of the areas of concern that the grant money will apply to is the restaurant district of South Forth Avenue, Tuttle said.

Flu vaccine arrives in Pima County

Need a ride?

Try a Shuttle

TUSD wants to know

Hablan inglés sus niños?
Businesses receive guidance

By Caragh McGrath  Staff Writer

South Tucson businesses affected by the development of large chain stores can receive help from the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Laura Gutierrez, owner of Laura’s Bridal and THCC board member, compete’s against a large chain, David’s Bridal.

“Advertisements are strong. People go by ads. They see Costco and David’s Bridal and they go there because they have everything,” said Blanca Vasquez, Laura’s Bridal employee and Gutierrez’s sister.

Business for Laura’s Bridal has decreased since Sept. 11, 2001, Vasquez said. She said because of the high military population in Tucson there was a period of rush weddings, but recently has not seen a significant amount of customers.

“We still have sales and good customers, but I think David’s Bridal opening recently has hurt our business,” Vasquez said. “They have so much money to advertise and can sell very cheap.”

THCC is providing guidance and assistance to more than 500 small, minority owned businesses in South Tucson and Tucson, helping them develop financially and professionally, a THCC Board of Directors member said.

“The THCC has three main goals,” said Miguel A. Cruz, member of the THCC Board of Directors and owner of REA Communications. “Education, networking and advocacy in our community.”

Founded in 1989, the THCC encourages members to participate in networking events and committee involvement. The organization offers an education committee, a government affairs committee, special events committee, a membership committee, publicity committee and an international committee for members to become involved in.

“Most members are eager to become involved to meet other members and increase networking potential,” Cruz said.

Networking through the THCC is a big incentive for business owners to join. Members may attend a number of social events, lectures and meetings on a monthly basis. The events provide free advertising and marketing between businesses.

Members also enjoy a member-to-member discount service in which businesses offer other THCC member businesses discounts and complimentary services.

Membership with THCC automatically provides membership with the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. This service leads local business in a national and international direction, Cruz said.

The THCC strongly emphasizes development in education and workforce in the Hispanic community. The THCC Foundation was created to provide scholarships for Hispanic youths in Tucson.

“I am able to use my success to help benefit other people in my community,” said Laura Gutierrez, owner of Laura’s Bridal and THCC board member.

Gutierrez is involved in educating Hispanic youth and small business owners about THCC and what it has done for her.

Gutierrez and Vasquez agree that although they serve a wide variety of clients, many of their Hispanic customers come from the THCC.

Applications to become a member of the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce are available online or can be filled out in person at the THCC main office.

Police Log

Stolen Car — 10-31-04:
A man called police when another man borrowed his car and failed to return it, reports stated. The victim told police he was drinking beer at The Wagon Wheel, 2108 S. Sixth Ave, when a man he did not know asked to use his vehicle. The victim did not know the man’s name but told police that where he is from you could loan a vehicle to a stranger and they would return it.

Argument Injury — 10-31-04:
A woman cut her daughter’s finger with a broken beer bottle during an argument with her daughter’s boyfriend on the 400 block of W. 33rd St., reports stated. The woman had been drinking with the man when they began arguing. She broke a 40 oz. beer bottle and lugged toward the man. Her daughter, the man’s pregnant girlfriend, held the woman against the wall to stop the fight. The bottle cut the daughter’s ring finger as the woman tried to break free. The woman was booked in Pima County Jail, reports stated.

Property Damage — 10-31-04:
An unknown driver struck and knocked over a mailbox outside of an apartment complex on the 400 block of E. 32nd St., reports stated. Witnesses told police after the mailbox was hit, two males fled the scene on foot. Police have no suspects, reports stated.

Intoxicated Trespassing — 10-31-04:
A woman called police after an intoxicated man entered her yard, reports stated. When police arrived the man stumbled and hit his head on the house wall. The man was booked in Pima County Jail, reports stated.

Shoplifting — 10-31-04:
Police responded to a call at Walgreens Drugstore, 1900 S. Sixth Ave, when an employee saw a man take a steam vacuum and leave the store, reports stated. The man rode away from the store on a bike. Police have no suspects, reports stated.
TUSD using new English language test

By Michelle Ochoa
Staff Writer

A nationwide shortage of flu vaccine caused fear of an epidemic this fall, but more shipments of the vaccine Fluvarin are coming in to Pima County every week, according to Dr. Elizabeth MacNeill, Pima County Health Department chief medical officer.

"People don't need to panic," MacNeill said. "If you are at high risk, you will be immunized." MacNeill said there will be plenty of vaccines for those at high risk of a deadly case of the flu; however, there will probably not be enough to immunize those not considered at high risk.

Individuals defined as being at high risk are 65 years old and older, between 6 months and 24 months old, pregnant women, caretakers of infants younger than 6 months old and people with chronic health problems.

People in high-risk groups should contact their healthcare provider about immunization. If they are unable to receive the vaccination through their doctor, they can call the Pima County Health Department and request to be added to a waiting list for an immunization clinic, MacNeill said.

There will be private immunization clinics for high-risk individuals at locations on the south side of Tucson, available through the Pima County Health Department by appointment only.

"[Immunization appointments are] helpful because people don't have to stand outside waiting in line to be immunized," MacNeill said.

Pima County is receiving more vaccine every week, including 4,000 doses scheduled to arrive Nov. 2. MacNeill said at least 3 million doses are distributed across the nation each week, and the actual flu season does not begin until January or February so there is plenty of time to be immunized.

Large public immunization clinics have been closed this fall due to the vaccine shortage, with the intention of vaccinating those at high risk first.

"We applaud that decision [to close public vaccination clinics]," MacNeill said. The Pima County Health Department Disease Control agreed, said Sethi. To help prevent catching or spreading the flu virus, influenza, people should wash their hands frequently, always cover a cough, stay at home while sick and try to avoid others who may be sick, MacNeill said.

Tucson Medica Familiar, 3770 S. 16th Ave., is providing immunization for infants between 6 and 23 months old, said Sylvia Welsh, the risk manager of the medical clinic.

"We don't have any vaccine [for adults] right now, but we have ordered some for our employees," Welsh said. "I just keep telling everyone wash your hands, wash your hands, wash your hands." Approximately 75 percent of Pima County's flu vaccine is manufactured by the British pharmaceutical company, Chiron Corporation, one of two suppliers of vaccine to the United States.

British authorities suspended Chiron's license due to contamination of flu vaccine by improper sterilization, according to an Oct. 6 statement by the TUSD legal department.

"No need to panic’ for flu season

By Julia Henry
Staff Writer

School officials are unsure of whether it will test students on English proficiency and AIMS test is one step Tucson Unified School District is taking to accommodate non-English-speaking students.

A nationwide shortage of flu vaccines has been closed this fall due to the vaccine shortage, with the intention of vaccinating those at high risk first.

"People don't need to panic," Welsh said. "I just keep telling everyone wash your hands, wash your hands," Welsh said. "I just keep telling everyone wash your hands, wash your hands, wash your hands." Approximately 75 percent of Pima County's flu vaccine is manufactured by the British pharmaceutical company, Chiron Corporation, one of two suppliers of vaccine to the United States.

British authorities suspended Chiron's license due to contamination of flu vaccine by improper sterilization, according to an Oct. 6

Students in one of Ochoa Elementary School's Structured English Immersion classes take some time to read before lunch.
Destruído la A-1

Por Heather Lobenstein
Reportera

Un incendio destruyó a una fábrica de colchones en South Tucson el Octubre 19 causando aproximadamente $300,000 en daños, de acuerdo al Jefe de Bomberos Larry Anderson.

El departamento recibió una llamada de emergencia acerca de un incendio en el callejón contiguo al A-1 Mattress, en el 223 del Calle 29, a las 10:17 p.m., dijo Anderson.

Unidades de South Tucson llegaron al negocio dentro de cuatro minutos y se daron cuenta de humo espeso y llamas al detrás del edificio, dijo.

El Departamento de Bomberos de Tucson recibió una petición de ayuda auxiliar, dentro de un acuerdo mutual, desde el incendio en 1999 del South Tucson, dentro de un acuerdo mutual, ha colaborado con Drexel Heights y con el Sherifato de Pima.

Anderson dijo que este incendio fue secundaria a otro que comenzó afuera del edificio.

El incendio se controló dentro de aproximadamente una hora, dijo, Anderson.

Las unidades organizaron una ofensiva de ataque pero debido a que las condiciones del fuego cambiaron, se transfirió a un esfuerzo defensivo, dijo Larry Anderson.

Los bomberos lograron proteger a dos hogares contiguos a la empresa, dijo Anderson.

El incendio se controló dentro de aproximadamente una hora, dijo, Anderson.

Larry Anderson, director de Bomberos de Drexel Heights, dijo que no fueron destruidos, dijo Boido.

Boido dijo que está en busca de otro local para el negocio y para reemplazar a los empleados desplazados. “Tengo plan de reconstruir y continuar en la manufactura de colchones,” dijo.

Brownfields
Continued from Page 1

The city recently spent more than $8 million on renovating the area and is worried that possible contamination spots are keeping business away.

“By cleaning up some of the blighted areas along South Fourth Avenue and other commercial corridors, we will be able to capitalize on these infrastructure projects and make the City of South Tucson a destination spot,” Tuttle said of the city’s hope.

The city has become aware of concerns citizens have over possible contamination left by the Union Pacific Railroad Track, the more than 40 auto-related businesses in the city and the junkyards within the South Fourth Avenue re-development project, Tuttle said.

Richar Mariscal, owner of Micha’s restaurant on the south end of the Fourth Avenue restaurant strip, said that he is not sure how much more business South Tucson could attract even if the ugly areas were cleaned up. He also said that he was not aware of the contaminant issue in the community.

He said his restaurant and others on Fourth are successful because of the consistent quality in service the restaurants give, keeping patrons coming back.

The real concern Mariscal has about contamination is pollutants seeping into the water table everyone uses.

“We all want safe water,” he said.

The city is confident the contamination does not go far.

“We anticipate that any contamination found will be relatively low risk surface-level soil contamination,” she said. “It is our hope that this grant will help us overcome any perceived contamination problems and give us a clean bill of health.”

Fire
Continued from Page 1

buildings, Stone said.

“The fire to the building was secondary to the fire that was started outside,” Larry Anderson said.

Investigators took evidence from the scene, Larry Anderson said.

Arson Investigator for the Pima County Sheriff’s Department Detective David Conto said the case is still under investigation and could not comment further.

Investigators found a two gallon canister with some type of liquid in it that was ignitable with no marking or labels, Stone said. The case is currently being tested.

There has been a rash of trashcan fires in the area, and in the past month, Stone has been involved in the investigation of two fires, one was arson and the other accidental, Stone said.

South Tucson Fire Department is developing a map to plot all the recent fires in South Tucson, Stone said.

The investigation could take up to a couple of months, Larry Anderson said.

A-1 Mattress owner of 26 years, Bobby Boido, received a phone call from one of his employees about the fire, Boido said. The factory has been in the building since 1980.

Boido went to the building the morning of Oct. 20 and retrieved files that were not damaged, including most of the company records, Boido said.

The equipment has not been removed from the building due to the insurance, Boido said.

Boido is looking for a place to relocate and secure equipment to get his employees back to work, Boido said.

“I plan on rebuilding and continue manufacturing mattresses,” Boido said.

If you have any information regarding this incident, please call 88-CRIME.
En Ochoa evaluarán lenguaje

Por Michelle Ochoa

Un nuevo examen estatal de evolución del lenguaje es un esfuerzo que TUSD está tomando para ayudar a estudiantes no-ingles hablantes. El distrito enfrenta grandes retos para servir al consejero estudiantil entero, ya que es una necesidad de todas las escuelas, dijo Sal Gabaldon, especialista del currículo de lenguaje.

La escuela elemental Ochoa tiene uno de los mas altos porcentajes de ‘English Language Learners’, según las estadísticas del distrito. Estudiantes de TUSD no-ingles hablantes deben recibir una apoyo especializado en el programa ELL, dijo Yolanda Sethi, representante de familia y currículo de Ochoa Elementary.

Desde octubre del 2004, todas las escuelas de Arizona darán exámenes a posibles estudiantes de ELL con el examen Stanford English Language Proficiency, según Gabaldon.

El nuevo examen no tomará más tiempo para administrarse que el examen Language Assessment Scales que usó Ochoa el año pasado, dijo Sethi. También dijo que solo se dará en inglés.

Esta lo hará difícil para niños que tienen la capacidad adecuada verbal del ingles y habilidad de leer, pero que les falta la capacidad del escrito para pasar el examen ELL, dijo Gabaldon.

Directores de las escuelas no están seguros en lo efectivo que es el examen si no el examen se examinará en estándares de nivel académico o estándares ELL, dijo Gabaldon.

La escuela esta trabajando con lo mejor que tienen pero no hay manera de saber si será efectivo hasta el final del año, dijo Sethi.

“Creo firmemente en la educación bilingüe para ayudar a estudiantes aprender ingles, pero ya que el estado prohibió tales prácticas, maestros tienen que tener cuidado para seguir la ley,” dijo Sethi.

La escuela elemental Ochoa aún ofrece educación bilingüe, pero para estudiantes que dominan el ingles a un nivel de alto, dijo Sethi.

Con tanta presión de subir la percepción del ingles, tal como los resultados de AIMS, maestros de ELL se están enfocando en enseñar vocabulario que se presenta en AIMS, dijo Sethi.

La escuela elemental Ochoa calificó la más baja de todas las escuelas en TUSD en el examen AIM, según Student Achievement Accountability for Results.

Se supone que AIMS examina los estándares justamente, pero lógica indica que la barrera del lenguaje en ELL o estudiantes de Structured English Immersion resultarán en bajas calificaciones, dijo Sethi.

La barrera del lenguaje no debería negar a estudiantes y sus padres acceso parejo, dijo Sethi. Todos necesitan ser capaces de entender. En el 2001, una queja contra TUSD alegó que el distrito no proporcionó traducciones adecuadas para los padres y estudiantes, y como resultado, los empleados de la escuela deben ser entrenados por la Oficina de Derechos Civiles, dijo Gabaldon.

La queja alega que el distrito no aseguró comunicación significante con los estudiantes, y que el distrito no se comunicó con dos estudiantes y padres de la escuela en el idioma que ellos entendieran, según una carta de OCR dirigida al ex-director de TUSD, Estanislao Y. Paz.

El acuerdo de OCR pone bajo el mandato que todo el personal vea una presentación para entender los derechos civiles en el mundo educacional, dijo Gabaldon.

“Structured English Immersion es un programa lingüístico de TUSD para ambos estudiantes y personal y reta a los estudiantes no-ingles hablantes a aprender ingles con estricto uso de su lengua nativa,” dijo Sethi. Miembros del personal que desean ser intérpretes en el entrenamiento de la Oficina de Derechos Civiles tendrán que ir cuatro horas cada semestre de metodología SEI, para enseñar y comunicar con estudiantes del ingles, dijo Gabaldon.

Hay limites en lo que puede hacer el distrito, pero este es el acuerdo más estricto que se ha firmado en cualquier de los distritos del Condado Pima, dijo Gabaldon.

El entrenamiento SEI no será opcional para maestros después del 15 de noviembre del 2004.

El Comité de Educación de Arizona (Arizona Board of Education) requiere que maestros de TUSD participen en 15 horas de entrenamiento SEI para el 2006, y la legislatura de Arizona enfrentará un grave dilema en enero del 2005, dijo Gabaldon.

La legislatura del estado tendrá que sacrificar $200 millones en enero del 2005 para financiar la educación, o serán detenidos $400 millones de fondos de la carretera y el transporte, dijo Gabaldon.

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By Jordan Masi Staff Writer

The over-50 Hispanic population will be the largest minority within its age group by 2010, yet AARP has no current agenda to offer outreach to the local Hispanic community in Southern Arizona despite nationwide efforts.

The first AARP Information Center in Arizona, a state where the Hispanic population increased by 88 percent in the last decade, is located in Tucson.

The information center, part of a national organization that focuses on issues important to people over 50, opened in July as a result of the closure of the AARP Senior Community Service Employment Program that closed due to a lack of funding. The program offered temporary employment for low-income people over 55.

There are current hopes to get involved with local Hispanic issues, once the Board of Directors is established, said David Likness, a volunteer at the AARP Information Center.

"It seems there are enough bilingual volunteers to dig into the Hispanic community in Arizona, but we are not there yet," said Likness.

One of two issues volunteers are currently concentrating on includes health information such as affordable prescription drugs, Medicare reform, and the protection of social security. The other is a job referral program not limited to low-income people.

We’re seeing that seniors who go back to work do so for the same reason immigrants are coming to America," said Likness. "They are doing the jobs other Americans don’t want to do because they need a stable income."

Victor Alvarez, a bilingual volunteer, got involved with the information center a recently in order to help with the job referral program.

"There are a lot of Hispanic entrepreneurs who can benefit from these types of programs," Alvarez said. "I just want to help break down the language barriers for the Hispanics that want to be involved in our programs." AARP actively began its nationwide focus on the Hispanic community three years ago, although reaching this particular group has always been a concern as AARP’s audience is more than 50 percent Hispanic, said Muriel Cooper, AARP media relations specialist.

AARP offers bilingual public awareness information forums and prints all media in both Spanish and English, said Cynthia Fagyes, head of distribution for Southern Arizona.

AARP also provides a bilingual publication, "Segunda Juventud," which is soon expanding from quarterly to bimonthly publication.

"Segunda Juventud" is not only being read, but it is also being passed on to other family members with some children translating it to their parents, said Gabriela Zabalúa-Goddard, editor of "Segunda Juventud."

The circulation of the magazine has more than tripled since it started three years ago, with it now reaching more than 600,000 households, said Cooper.

Segunda Juventud can succeed if its content has value and a purpose, as Tucson is a great market to reach Hispanics, Alvarez said.

It is important for the Hispanic community to see the issues at a local and national level because these are the issues they care about, said Fagyes.

"People across all cultures are the same when it comes to reading," Alvarez said. "If there is a value of importance and interest in the publica- tion, that will determine whether people throw the publication out or use it to guide them in their daily living."

The magazine is sent to the 730,000 members in Arizona as a perk for paying an annual $12 membership fee, said Zabalúa-Goddard.

Tucson resident Cecilia Morelos said people could be better informed about AARP if the publications were also available in stores and not just to members. She said she doesn’t know enough about AARP to become a member, despite important issues that AARP addresses.

Josephine Romero of South Tucson joined AARP four months ago in hopes of getting cheaper car insurance.

"There is a need for outreach in this community," Romero said. "Not enough people know about healthcare and insurance or an organization that serves their needs."

For more information on AARP please contact:

AARP Tucson Information Center
6700 N. Oracle Road, #331
(520) 571-9884
Hours: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Mon. - Fri.
Police, Border Patrol collaborate to curb illegal immigration

By Abigail Kesling

South Tucson Police Department has not experienced any increase in crime levels connected with illegal immigrants; however, there are organizations working toward solving the problems with immigration in Arizona.

The number of immigrants does not impact South Tucson like other cities, according to Police Chief Sixto Molina.

“Smugglers know we are a small city and we have a lot of police offices for our small area,” Molina said. “They usually stay away from South Tucson because the probability of getting caught is higher here.”

“If illegal aliens are involved with a crime, then we get involved,” Molina said. “Otherwise, we don’t look for immigration situations or handle it.”

Even with a low crime level, South Tucson does experience a few instances that connect immigration with crime.

“One instance we experienced here was a call about a robbery,” Molina said. “Well, it turned out the smugglers that were paid to get immigrants across the border turned around and robbed the immigrants once they got them to the hotel here.”

Drop house is a location where people allow immigrants to stay at during their journey.

“People are sometimes kept in hotels, there are no actual homes that are considered drop houses in our city,” Molina said.

South Tucson rarely has drop houses located in the city, according to Molina.

When police officers in South Tucson do come across criminals who are illegal immigrants or involved with smuggling people across the border, they send those individuals to Border Patrol.

According to Border Patrol Officer Rob Griffin, the Border Patrol discourages immigrants from illegally entering the country, not only because it is against the law but also because of the health risks involved.

“The amount of water and walking distance do not coincide,” Griffin said. “The smugglers say it’s a few hours of walking and traveling, but in reality it’s a few days.”

Border Patrol files show the number of immigrants that crossed the border between March 2003 and March 2004 was 72,000, but for the three-month period in the summer the amount lessened to 30,000.

“We save people’s lives when we find them dehydrated in the middle of the hot desert. It’s really sad when they are on the verge of dying,” Griffin said.

An important goal of Border Patrol is to deter illegal entry of immigrants into America, but if that fails they can make arrests.

The U.S. Border Patrol disagrees with the intentions and practices of Humane Borders.

“We don’t encourage Humane Borders’ placement of water stations because it misleads the migrants about the availability of water,” said Border Patrol Officer Rob Griffin. “This gives smugglers the opportunity to lie to migrants about the amount of water.”

Humane Borders is a faith-based organization that aims to lower the number of immigrant deaths by making water available along desert immigration routes, Goodman said.

“Current immigration laws force people into the desert and we think that is wrong,” said Sue Goodman, a member of the Humane Borders Association.

In 2003, 205 immigrants died while crossing the border. This year already, 221 have died, according to Humane Borders.

Water supply is most important to Humane Borders between May and September, because immigration levels are highest during that time, said Goodman.

At each water stop point there are gallons of water for travelers to drink and Humane Borders conducts this with hopes of lessening dehydration deaths.

“People think we are encouraging immigration, but my answer to that is if we took out all the water stations down, the number of immigrants would not change.”

— Rev. Robin Hoover
President of Humane Borders

Buscan fondos anti-contaminación

Por Andrea Dalton

La ciudad de South Tucson está solicitando fondos federales para determinar el nivel de contaminación en locales “Brownfields” cerca a centros comerciales en el Sur de la Avenida Cuarta.

El Consejo de la Ciudad dijo permiso el Octubre 18 para solicitar una subvención a través del Environamental Protection Agency. Esto es la primera aplicación de la ciudad al EPA. La ciudad busca un otorgamiento de $200,000, dijo Shawna Tuttle, analista de administración de la ciudad.

Generalmente el término Brownfields se refiere a locales previamente industriales o comerciales donde el desarrollo es factor difícil debido a la contaminación ambiental o la percepción de contaminación.

South Tucson podría enterarse de una decisión el próximo Mayo, dijo Tuttle.

Una sección de interés se trata del distrito de restaurantes de la Avenida Cuarta, dijo Tuttle.

La ciudad ya ha gastado más de $8 millones en la regeneración de la area y se preocupa que la posible contaminación existente de nuevo.

De por medio de este programa de limpieza en la Avenida Cuarta y otros corredores comerciales, se podría capitalizar en estos proyectos de infraestructura y hacer que la ciudad sea una destinación turística, dijo Tuttle, explicando la meta.

La ciudad se ha dado cuenta de los inquietudes de los ciudadanos en relación a la posible contaminación contiguo a los rieles de Southern Pacific, y los más de 40 yunques del distrito de desarrollo de la Avenida Cuarta, dijo Tuttle.

Richard Mariscal, dueño del Restaurante Michá’s al sur de la Avenida Cuarta, dijo que tiene algunos dudas de que cuantos más negocios se pueda atraer aun que se limpiaran las áreas feas.

Dijo que su restaurante y los otros de la Cuarta Avenida tienen éxito debido a la calidad consistente del servicio.

Michá’s está situada a distancia de los yunques, pero Mariscal dice que puede entender como la gente podría tener inquietud.

Mariscal dice su inquietud real es que la contaminación vaya entrar al nivel superior de agua subterránea.

“Todas queremos agua intacta,” dijo. “Podría ser que la clientela no viniera debido a inquietud sobre el agua.”

Tuttle dijo que la ciudad tiene confianza que la contaminación no ha percolado hasta allá.

“Anticipamos que cualquier contaminación que se encuentre será de relativamente bajo riesgo en el suelo de superficie,” dijo.

“Es nuestra esperanza que la subvención nos ayude superar cualquier percepción de problemas de contaminación y nos da un certificado de salud limpio.”

Consejo de la ciudad
P.O. Box 7307
South Tucson, AZ 85725
(520) 792-2424
Mayor Shirley Villegas
Consejo
Paul S. Díaz
Jennifer Eckstrom
John Garcia
Miguel E. Rojas
Roman Soltero
Pete Tadeo

Photo by Ken Wolverton
Shuttle bus use on the rise

By Ken Wolverton
Staff Writer

At least eight shuttle bus transportation services from the Mexican border to cities in Arizona can generate approximately $3.6 million annually, according to passenger estimates and ticket prices from two companies.

Vidal Ramirez, 42, waves a red flag in his hand and motions a car full of people to pull in next to the passenger van parked at the curb.

“It’s a good service we provide for people who don’t have cars, or if they do, sometimes they have to wait hours to get their car across the border,” Ramirez said. “There are a lot of American people who want to go down for duty-free shopping. We give them a safe ride to Nogales and back.”

Ramirez, owner and director of Sahuaro Shuttle at 4207 S. Sixth Ave., runs one of eight shuttle bus companies located on South 6th Avenue in Tucson and South Tucson.

“It is a good business, and it will get even bigger because we speak English here,” Ramirez said.

Most of the clients are Mexican, according to Armando Ramirez, 35, who began the shuttle business this July with his brother, Vidal. He said on an average day they transport around 100 people, but on Friday and Saturday they move more.

Sahuaro owns vans that can carry 20 passengers and one departs for Nogales every 25 minutes from 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. It takes approximately 50 minutes to get there.

“It is a competitive business,” he said. “We used to run every 30 minutes, but changed it to 25 minutes to have an edge on the other companies.”

Johnny Gonzales, 21, manager for Universal Shuttle said, “We keep in business because we are not greedy. We keep the prices low and give a community service to the people.”

Companies recently raised their one-way price to Nogales from $6 to $8 because of the rise in gasoline prices. The Greyhound Web site shows prices at $79 a ticket with seven departures daily, averaging more than three hours between buses.

“We often give door to door service, and it only takes 40 minutes,” Gonzales said.

The shuttle bus businesses must be licensed by Tucson or South Tucson, as well as go through a rigorous Federal Motor Carrier inspection once a year by an approved mechanic, according to Sgt. Castillo of the Department of Public Safety Vehicle Enforcement Bureau. Castillo said the buses have to stop at truck detail stations set up by the DPS on I-19 at least once a week, and may go through an intense inspection of equipment and driver.

“There’s a lot of shuttle buses out there,” Castillo said. “A couple of years ago we had problems with drivers not having proper paperwork or medical cards. That no longer happens, but on Oct.12 we pulled five buses off the road for faulty equipment. Generally, these days, they keep their equipment and drivers in order. Otherwise they are out of business.”

Frank Esquivel, a level one official at the Motor Vehicle Division, said 14-seat passenger vans need normal fleet registration and insurance requirements. The drivers may need to take commercial driver license training courses for a license with an “S” endorsement that allows them to drive a commercial vehicle with more than seven passengers.

Drivers must have a resident permit if not American, a clean driving record and a physical examination, according to Gonzales.

“One regulation we have to follow is to have seat belts for all passengers, and if a child is under 4 years old they must be in a special infant’s chair,” Gonzales said.

According to Castillo, Highway Patrol officers leave illegal immigration situations to the Border Patrol and will take no action except to call in the Border Patrol. The owners and drivers of the companies are normally not responsible for any foreign passenger that may get on the shuttle bus without proper paperwork because it is the responsibility of the Border Patrol at checkpoints.

Charles Griffin, a spokesman for the Tucson Sector Border Patrol, said that the shuttle buses must go through checkpoints and are given the standard procedure that all conveyances receive.

“We ask the passengers their citizenship and immigration status if they are foreigners,” Griffin said. “We stop them on the highway if there is reasonable suspicion that aliens are being transported. It is a case-by-case situation whether the vehicle will be seized if there are aliens aboard. We follow the same procedure if another agency calls us in.”

Shuttle Boom

Two separate companies revealed: Companies carry about 1,000 people per week.

1,100 people x 8 bus companies x 52 weeks = $457,600 people

457,600 people x $8 per ticket = $3,660,800 per year.

*Informal estimates based on company figures.

Nov. 11: Veterans’ Day.

Nov. 13 – 14: 36th Annual John Walker Memorial Rodeo at the Pima County Fairgrounds, 11300 S. Houghton Road. This two-day law enforcement rodeo will include firefighters from across the Western United States. The event begins at 1 p.m. Nov. 13 and 9 a.m. Nov. 14. Admission is $3 for adults and free for children 12 and under. Contact: 746-4500.

Nov. 13 – 14: New Kiva Motions Puppet Theatre Show “Hot Chiles” at the Red Barn Theater, 5458 N. Main Ave. Sing along with the bilingual chile rap and meet the first chile in space during the show. From 4 p.m. – 5 p.m., and after the show visit with the puppets and make your own take home. Admission is $3. Contact: 887-5144.

Nov. 17: The University of Arizona Cine Club is showing “La Ciudad y los Perros” at 7 p.m. in the Modern Languages building on campus, in room 311. Admission is free.

Nov. 19 – 21: Holiday Craft Market at the Tucson Museum of Art, 140 N. Main Ave. This annual craft market has more than 1,300 booths featuring handmade gift items. Museum hours Tuesday – Saturday are from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Sunday from noon – 4 p.m. Admission is free.

Southern Arizona Calendar of Events

Nov. 11: Rillito Park Antique Fair at the Rillito Park Racetrack, 4502 N. First Ave. Shop for antiques and collectibles from 7 a.m. – 1 p.m. while strolling through the historic Rillito track horse stables. Admission is free.

Nov. 21: Festival of Giving at Park Place Mall, 5870 E. Broadway Blvd. From 6 p.m. – 9 p.m., shoppers will be treated to special store discounts, free gift wrapping, discounted Santa photos, door prizes, refreshments and entertainment. The $5 admission goes to local charities.

Nov. 23: Thanksgiving Day.

Nov. 25 – 28: United Blood Services Blood Drive at Park Place Mall, 5870 E. Broadway Blvd. From 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. both days, come give the gift of life for the holidays. Visit the Center Court or the Community Room at Park Place Mall to make your appointment to donate blood.

Nov. 27 – 28: American Indian Heritage Month Powwow and Craft Market at the Rillito Park Racetrack, 4502 N. First Ave. American Indian artisans with handmade jewelry, the responsive artsy and collectibles celebrate heritage from noon – 8 p.m. both days. Event also includes food vendors, music, dancing and drumming contests. Admission is $7 plus a new, unwrapped toy. Contact: 622-4900.