Centros de préstamos en South Tucson ofrecen dinero rápido y tarifas altas

By Martin McClarron

Como las flores silvestres después del monzón, los negocios de préstamos están apareciendo a lo largo de las calles de South Tucson. Son tantos, que el consejo ciudadano está buscando restringir los establecimientos.

“Ellos se aprovechan de la gente menos afortunada,” dijo el Consejero Ciudadano John García.

Hay seis negocios de préstamos en South Tucson, más o menos uno por cada 900 residentes.

La Alcaldesa Jennifer Eckstrom dijo, “Esto es ridículo.”

De acuerdo con el Centro para la Integridad Económica Southwestern, 67 por ciento de los centros de préstamos están a un cuarto de milla de las áreas altamente pobres.

“Estas compañías están haciendo presa a las personas que no lo pueden pagar,” dijo García.

La idea detrás de los centros de prestamos es dar a la gente adelantos en sus salarios en caso de que una cuenta inesperada o una emergencia económica surja, sin embargo, lo máximo que se puede pedir prestado son $500 por salario.

Los que piden el dinero prestado deben de estar alertas de la letra pequeña. Estos negocios son conocidos por cobrar tarifas muy altas.

Eileen Sanders, gerente de la sucursal de Quick Cash en 3313 S. 6th Ave., describe el proceso de manera sencilla. Todo lo que se necesita es una identificación y un cheque en blanco.

El proceso, a primera vista, parece ser sencillo. Los que lo necesitan, pagan $500 por salario. No, es más sencillo. Todo lo que se necesita es una identificación y un cheque en blanco.

Los que reciben el dinero prestado deben de estar alertas de las tarifas. Estos negocios cobran por pequeñas cantidades de dinero. En Quick Cash, los clientes deben de hacer un cheque que incluya la tarifa para poder tener su préstamo. Los clientes hacen el cheque por lo que ellos pueden pagar, y el centro de préstamos les quita el 15 por ciento. Lo que resta es lo que el préstamo es en total.

Por ejemplo, una persona necesita hacer un cheque de $588.24 para que le hagan un préstamo de $500.

El 15 por ciento parece ser una tarifa muy alta para algunas personas, pero la ley de Arizona le permite a estos negocios cobrar hasta el 36 por ciento, por lo que el centro de préstamos pudiera quedarse con el 36 por ciento de la cantidad en el cheque.

Una vez aprobado el préstamo, que también es conocido como una presentación de un cheque aplazado, el y el pago se va a vencer. Quick Cash le regresa el cheque al cliente y este hace un cheque para ellos.

A menudo, es el 15 por ciento más el préstamo lo que hace que los clientes regresen.

“I no tienen la cantidad para el día que se vence el pago, no podemos con el cheque hasta el próximo día de pago,” dijo Sanders.

Esto hace que el saldo de los que tienen prestado se pase a un nuevo préstamo.

Si un cliente no puede pagar la cantidad que debe, Quick Cash se queda con su cheque y le añade otro 15 por ciento de interés. Esto es lo que ataja a muchos, y hace que regresen cada día de pago. Los clientes tienen mucho miedo de lo esperando en la próxima semana.

Araceli Borquez, left, and Dora Martinez wave their flags in celebration of their new American citizenships at the TCC Music Hall on September 16 in Tucson. Nearly 300 people sworn in were originally from Mexico.

Welcome to the good ol’ US of A

In front of friends and well-wishers, nearly 500 immigrants from 69 countries take oath of citizenship

By Teresa Yi

The oversized double doors swung open. Clusters of lights shone over a glowing stage. Chattering visitors clutched their American souvenir flags as people from around the world packed into a crowded arena.

No, it’s not the scene of a Bruce Springsteen concert—this is the setting at Tucson Convention Center on a Friday morning just moments before 491 immigrants were declared citizens.

A harmonica performance of “God Bless America” by Pier Herbineaux opened the September 16 citizenship proceedings. Herbineaux, a 69-year-old from Belgium, who also awaited his new citizenship, received loud cheers from the energetic crowd.

“This is pretty intimidating,” U.S. District Judge Jacqueline Marshall said with a chuckle.

Then at Marshall’s request, each of the four-hundred-something immigrants rose and stated their former nationality. Overall, candidates from 69 countries, from Albania to Vietnam, proudly shed their citizenships for the chance to become American citizens.

Deputy Clerk Candee Gordon led the Oath of Allegiance and declared the once foreigners to be citizens of the United States. Once sworn in, the new citizens performed their first act as Americans—the Pledge of Allegiance. Tucson Mayor Bob Walkup shared his appreciation for those who worked hard to learn the culture of this country and the expectations that come with it.

“What a great day this is,” Walkup said enthusiastically. “You will make Tucson a great place by becoming a citizen.” He encouraged the new citizens to vote for good leaders.

A mighty applause broke out from the sea of smiling faces.

Marshall took center stage once more and offered a closing thought. “All have come from different backgrounds but have melted into one nation,” she said, emphasizing the themes of this country, diversity and unity.

Marie Buck, 36, who came from the Philippines in 1991, was full of smiles as she walked out with her new certificate.

“I am truly happy and finally!” Buck exclaimed.

Este centro de préstamos/cambio de cheques es uno de los centros de préstamos que el consejo ciudadano discutirá durante su junta el 3 de octubre. Este centro de préstamos/cambio de cheques es uno de los centros de préstamos que el consejo ciudadano discutirá durante su junta el 3 de octubre.

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DPS, Customs to join forces

By Mary Euler & Juana Gyek

At least 60 Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) officers will join U.S. Customs officers in a heightened effort to stop human smugglers and interdict wanted criminals, drugs and stolen or illegally-traded goods by October’s end.

A two-day training session will address customs law, proper questioning of border-crossers, and the correct handling of currency.

Under two separate plans, some of these newly trained officers will assist U.S. Customs officers in investigative and undercover operations. Others will be participating in traffic stops throughout southern Arizona.

The first plan requires four DPS officers to work alongside U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to identify and arrest human smugglers, or coyotes:
SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA VIGOROUSLY \n
Llega dinero para limpiar lugares contaminados

Por Tim Schultz

South Tucson was awarded $200,000 by the Agencia de Protección al Ambiente para el año 2005 para identificar y valorar las propiedades que estén potencialmente contaminadas con productos de petróleo a lo largo de los cinco principales corredores comerciales. En 1999 un plan presupuestario sugirió que estos lugares contaminados, llamados “brownfields,” eventualmente cubrirían el 21 por ciento de la tierras en South Tucson. Estos lugares varían desde tiendas de lltas hasta deshuesadores y terrenos vacíos.

“El Programa Brownfields da una tremenda oportunidad a las comunidades del Distrito 7 para medir la severidad de los problemas ambientales que enfrentan y para empezar a formular soluciones,” rep. Raúl M. Grijalva dijo en un discurso preparado.

El Director de Plantación de South Tucson, Richard Salaz, dijo que 14 lugares potenciales han sido identificados, todos situados a lo largo de las principales áreas comerciales del Sur de la Cuarta Avenida, Sur Sexta Avenida, Sur 10 Avenida, Calle 29 y Est 29.

Todos los “brownfields” conocidos son propiedad privada. La evaluación y limpieza de estos lugares contaminados hará la reconstrucción y renovación del corredor comercial que ha estado en progreso desde 1992, dijo Salaz.

Mientras que “brownfields” no presentan necesariamente un problema directo a la salud pública, hay obstáculos económicos que se presentan como resultado de tener tantos “brownfields” en South Tucson. Al deshacerse de estos lugares en la ciudad se deberá aliviar un poco del problema.

“Con esperanzas [el proyecto] va a esti- mal algún desarrollo económico,” dijo Salaz.

Las concesiones de South Tucson están pasan- do por un proceso de aprobación final, pero Salaz dijo que espera que se haya terminado para principios de octubre, para que el estudio pueda empezar.

El plan de trabajo para la evaluación de la comunidad entera de productos de petróleo es un proceso de tres pasos. El primer paso es recopilar una lista de lugares “brownfields” potenciales basada en la información pública, registros, quejas y reco- mimos de los lugares actuales. De esta lista, los lugares van a ser escogidos por un estudiante-teacher interac- ción y se selecciona por una base en poten- cial para la reurbanización económica.

El segundo paso del proceso es contactar a los dueños de estas propiedades y pedir permiso para entrar a la propiedad. Una vez que el permiso sea obtenido, una valuación Fase I o evaluación simples, será ejecutado en esa propiedad. Durante los procesos de la valuación Fase I, lugares que estén severamente conta- minados y que requieran inspección adicio- nal serán identificadas y serán prestadas en una lista de propiedades que necesitan la valuación Fase II. La valuación Fase II es el tercer paso del proceso y es una evaluación más profunda, midiendo el grado y exten- sión de la contaminación.

Tucson tiene un programa “brownfields” y ha recibido un par de Brownfields Assessment Grants para el año 2005 en la suma de $200,000 cada uno; una por conta- minación de petróleo y la otra por contami- nación de substancias peligrosas.

El Planoericador de la ciudad de South Tucson Walter Smith dijo que Tucson ha ofrecido “apoyo entusiasta” durante el pro- ceso de aplicación de Brownfields Grant y continua jurando su apoyo.

Brownfields Program otorgó 302 con- cesiones a nivel nacional en el 2005, con un total de $75.9 millones. El programa tiene el crédito de crear un estimado de 31,000 empleos y de distribuir $400 millones de dólares en concesiones en su duración de 10 años.

By Kristin Howell

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EPA grants cleanup funds for fuel contamination

By Tim Schultz

South Tucson was awarded $200,000 by the Environmental Protection Agency for 2005 to identify and assess properties that are potentially contaminated with petroleum products along the city’s five main commercial corridors.

A 1999 comprehensive plan suggested that these contaminated sites, called “brownfields,” would eventually cover 21 percent of the land in South Tucson. The sites range from tire shops and service yards, to simple vacant lots.

“The Brownfields Program provides a tremendous opportunity for communities in District 7 to gauge the severity of the environmental problems facing them and begin to formulate solutions,” Rep. Raul M. Grijalva said in a prepared statement.

South Tucson Director of Planning, Richard Salaz, said that 14 potential sites have already been identified, all situated along the main commercial areas of South Fourth Avenue, South Sixth Avenue, South 10th Avenue, 29th Street, and East 36th Street.

All known brownfields are privately-owned. The assessment and cleanup of these sites will complement the reconstruction and renovation of the commercial corridors, which has been ongoing since 1982, Salaz said.

While brownfields don’t necessarily pose a direct threat to public health, there are economic hindrances that arise as a result of having such a high percentage of brownfields in South Tucson. Ridding the city of these sites should alleviate at least some of that problem.

“Hopefully (the project) will spur some economic development,” Salaz said.

Prospective business owners and developers are often scared off by brownfields. Many hesitate to buy these properties because of their contaminated status, Salaz said. Any purchaser of a contaminated property is required to pay for the full cleanup of the site.

“The goal is to try to eliminate the perception that our business properties are contaminated,” Salaz said.

South Tucson’s grant is still going through a final approval process, but Salaz said hopes that it will be completed by early October, so the study can begin.

The work plan targets completion of the site assessments as early as June 2007.

Tucson has an ongoing brownfields program and received a pair of Brownfields Assessment Grants for the year 2005 for the amounts of $200,000 each; one for petroleum contamination, and the other for hazardous substance contamination.

South Tucson City Planner Walker Smith said that Tucson has offered “enthusiastic support” throughout the Brownfields Grant application process and continues to pledge its support.

The Brownfields Program awarded 302 grants nationwide in 2005 alone, totaling $75.9 million. The program is credited with creating an estimated 31,000 jobs and doling out over $400 million in grant dollars over its ten-year life span.

Lowrider bicycles built for smart street style

By Rebecca Garcia

It sports elaborately customized bodies, handlebars that reach to the sky, paint so shiny you can see your face in it, seats long enough to fit two and chromed out wheels with customized rims to match. A car? A bike? Enough to fit two and chromed out wheels.

“Growing up seeing lowriders I always wanted one, so when I had the chance, I started building one,” said Jones.

Lowrider bikes are typically built by the rider and not bought at a store. The parts are not what one would normally buy for an average bike, Jones explained. “You have to go old school, really, like the old Sting Ray’s and Schwinn’s.”

Jones has luck finding parts for his bike at the Tanque Verde Swap Meet, a public flea market at 4100 S. Palo Verde Road. “If you go to a swap meet, you can buy on sight as if you were at a store,” he said. A wide variety of bike parts can be found at the swap meet. From tires, to wheels, to the trademark banana seat, the swap meet is a great place for lowrider enthusiasts and novices to shop for the perfect accessory.

Even youngsters in South Tucson are getting in on the popularity of lowrider bikes.

At The Boys and Girls Club, other kids were eager to talk about lowrider bikes.

Danielle Duarte, 14, bragged about her older brother Ray’s lowrider. “It has the big white handles, a gold (banana) seat, with a silver frame.”

Jorge Cardenas, 8, said he knows lowrider bikes are popular because they see people riding around on them. “When someone rides by on one of them people stare, they get a lot of attention,” he said. Marco Bojorquez, 12, explained that the bikes can be tricked to handle. “They’re hard to steer, if you turn left you go right, if turn right you go left. My cousin has one, I was trying to ride it but I almost fell down.”

Kenneth Armstrong, art coordinator of B.I.C.A.S, said lowrider bikes “are more about the finish, (and how they are) all chromed out,” but praised bicycles of all shapes and sizes.

To see a variety of lowriders, the All Souls Procession Parade on November 6 is the place to be. A wide variety of different bicycles will be showcased, including extended bikes, named for the extension on the back, and choppers, which mimic chopper-style motorcycles.

Step two of the process is to contact the owners of those properties and get permission to come onto the property. Once that permission is obtained, a Phase I assessment, or simple assessment, is performed on that property.

During the process of the Phase I assessment, sites that are severely contaminated and require further inspection will be identified and put on a list of properties needing a Phase II assessment. The Phase II assessment is the third step of the process and is a more in-depth evaluation, measuring the degree of contamination.

The work plan targets completion of the site assessments as early as June 2007.
Seasoned politico, new mayor dives in

By Dustin Sepelad

Jennifer Eckstrom sits with perfect posture in her padded office chair, showing off a warm smile. She speaks softly as she explains that she had to put a note on a houseplant in her office that reads “Do Not Water” because everyone was over-watering it while she was gone.

Eckstrom, the mayor of South Tucson for five months now, has already gained the confidence of many of her peers by not letting the city’s memory of her father and former mayor, Dan, intimidate her.

She has used to be much harder in South Tucson, so Dan did amazing things for the city,” explained Eckstrom. “There are different problems now, but his shadow is still there, so there’s a little bit of pressure.”

Eckstrom, who has lived in South Tucson her entire life, has spent the last 10 years involved in politics, serving on the South Tucson City Council. The council decided this year to appoint Jennifer as the mayor, the job her father held for 15 years.

Family is noticeably important to many in South Tucson, especially Eckstrom. One of her goals as mayor is to help organize an ordinance to keep more payday loan centers out of South Tucson, as well as passing a big box ordinance which would ban Wal-Marts and other large chain stores, and an ordinance banning adult-oriented businesses.

“We are a family business-oriented city and we want to keep it that way,” said Eckstrom, with pride.

Eckstrom added that she’d like to see more economic development in the area, ranging from more restaurants and retail stores to construction of more affordable housing. Eckstrom helped create an economic development committee to promote these types of positive growth.

“We’re working on a 60-resident town home project behind the Food City that we’re really proud of,” said Eckstrom.

The new homes will operate on a rent-to-own system, Eckstrom explained. “There’s a lot going on in South Tucson right now,” said Fernando Castro, the city manager for six years. “And I think there certainly makes things better.”

On average, Eckstrom spends only about 20 hours a week working as mayor for the city of South Tucson. With the rest of her professional time, Eckstrom has spent the last two years working as an executive assistant to Pima County Supervisor Ramon Valadez.

The city manager handles the day-to-day operations and I just check in every once in a while,” said Eckstrom.

Eckstrom, emphasizes the importance of downtime to maintain a balanced life. “I enjoy yoga and Pilates a lot,” said Eckstrom. “I try to get away too, but that doesn’t happen very often at all.”

In her five months as mayor, the only negative aspects Eckstrom claims to have encountered are bouts of bad publicity that arise occasionally.

While boards and such materials have always disappeared to local children building forts, losses due to theft have been steadily rising.

“It definitely seems worse lately,” said builder Zach Eggman, who is heading up the construction of several single-family units on a South Tucson side street.

Eggman’s window installer, Jeff Hansen, was up early on a dusty Saturday morning, replacing windows on a single-family unit while the stucco crew stood by waiting. Hansen installed the windows two days earlier, but they disappeared. He buzzed the screws with a grinder afterward to prevent further theft.

South Tucson Mayor Jennifer Eckstrom

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Eckstrom says that since she became the mayor, she’s developed a strong sense of respect for people in public office.

“When you realize how much these people do for the city, it changes the way you look at things,” said Eckstrom.

Eckstrom’s term will last only two years, but she says she will gladly repeat her role as mayor, if her colleagues are willing to have her back.

“The key about her performance is pride. She’s really proud of South Tucson,” said Castro.

“All her efforts are going towards promoting that pride. She really loves the city.”

Farm Workers celebrated on film

By Georgianne Barrett

The life and work of Cesar E. Chavez will be honored with a photo exhibit at the University of Arizona until October 8.

The Arizona State Museum will feature the work of Tucson artist Daniel Martin Diaz from now through Nov. 15, in an exhibition called “Mystery of Faith.”

By Craig Grau

New home builders are rolling with the punches when it comes to increasing jobsite theft of building materials. Items ranging from lumber to doors, even copper wiring, are turning up missing—sometimes after installation.

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It’s a pain, but I get paid for it,” said Hansen.

In response, builder’s organizations have started reward programs for neighborhood residents who help bring convictions against thieves. The Arizona Contractor’s Association started their Jobsite Theft Prevention Program in May 2002, which rewards the public for tips leading to arrests.

However, it is the participating firm that wins up paying the reward after the conviction.

Other contractors have found more efficient ways to involve the South Tucson community in stopping material losses.

“I hired mostly local boys hoping loyalty would keep them from causing me vandalism and theft problems,” said Tom Kolter, a Tucson contractor.

Kolter was hired from 2000 to 2001 by the Tucson Airport Authority to replace doors and windows in South Tucson homes.

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Kolter was hired from 2000 to 2001 by the Tucson Airport Authority to replace doors and windows in South Tucson homes.

The project was part of an effort to suppress noise levels.

He said there was only one real theft during the project—when an old gas station rented as an office was broken into and some tools were taken.

Despite these efforts, the resolve of jobsite thieves has grown these days, to the point where items cemented into the foundation of homes are being stolen, said Eggman. He sounds amazed as he describes how electrical grounds for new homes were removed from concrete.

Eggman doesn’t immediately know exactly how much vandalism and larcenies have cost him, as like most builders, they carry insurance to cover major losses.

But those claims would increase Eggman’s rates, which would be passed onto his buyers—often young first-timers looking to start families.

“We’ve been somewhat fortunate,” said Eggman. “You kind of absorb it.”

Home builders develop strategies to combat increasing jobsite theft

Diaz exhibit explores ‘Mystery of Faith’

By Tim Schultz

The Arizona State Museum will feature the work of Tucson artist Daniel Martin Diaz from now through Nov. 15, in an exhibition called “Mystery of Faith.”

Diaz’ solo exhibition will display a wide spectrum of his pieces, including some of his older works. Featured will be Diaz’ recent trio of hand-painted linoleum carvings entitled, “EXORCISM: De Exorcismus et Certain Supplications.”

Complementing the linoleum carvings is an essay from a book by John David Long-Garcia, which explores the practice of exorcism in the Catholic Church. Like his “Exorcism” series, Diaz’ works addresses religious art and symbolism, while portraying it in a dark, yet civil manner.

Diaz has previously showcased his work in California, New York, and Australia.
**Mayor and council to debate viability of 'big box' stores**

By Dustin Seppala

The mayor and council of South Tucson are considering im-
plementing an ordinance which would greatly restrict the build-
ing of a new Wal-Mart or similar large chain stores in the area.
The "big box" ordinance would limit the degree to which Wal-
Marts, Sam’s Clubs, Home Depots and similar stores could estab-
lish themselves within South Tucson’s city limits.

City Council members dis-
agree on what would be in the best interest of the city.

"We’re not saying there shouldn’t be any big box busi-
nesses,” said Mayor Jennifer Eckstrom at the city council meet-
ing September 19. “We just think the mayor and council should have the final say over all specifi-
cations.”

Some councilmembers are concerned about the effect big box businesses would have on local independently owned estab-
ishments.

"Big box stores come in and ruin the businesses there already,” said Eckstrom. "The local businesses have provided a great deal of tax dollars to the city of South Tucson.”

Others say that having a big box business put into South

**Daniel Martin Diaz y su “Misterio de Fe”**

By Tim Schultz

Traducido por Matt Pepe

El Museo Estatal de Arizona presentará el trabajo del artista Tucumecense Daniel Martin Diaz desde ahora hasta el 15 de noviembre, en una exhibición llamada “Mystery of Faith” (Misterio de Fe). La exhibición individual de Diaz expondrá un gran espectro de sus piezas, incluyendo sus primeras obras.

Se presentará el trabajo más reciente de Diaz, un trío de grabados de linóleo pintados a mano titulados, “EXOR-
CEM: De Exorcismos et Supplicationibus Quissidam,” que significa “Referente al Exorcismo y Ciertas Súplicas.”

Complementando los grabados de linóleo estará un ensayo de un libro de John David Long-García, quien tiene una maestría en filosofía y teología. El libro trata de la práctica del exorcismo en la Iglesia Católica.

Al igual que su serie “Exorcismo,” los trabajos de Diaz tratan profundamente con arte sacro y simbolismo religioso, mostrándonos de una manera obvia y cortés al mismo tiempo.

Diaz ha presentado su trabajo previamente en California, Nueva York y Australia.

**Estralla de ‘Mente de Mencia’**

By Alyssa Ravich

Traducido por Matt Pepe

El espectáculo es para todas las edades, incluyendo sus primeras obras a partir del 26 de septiembre al 15 de noviembre, presentando su trabajo desde sus primeras obras hasta sus últimas.

**Teatro Rialto presenta: Escena de ‘Mente de Mencia’**

By Jared Olian

The life and death battles fought in the modern emergency room are often mirrored in hospital board-
rooms, where top executives say they must fight to keep their hospi-
tals out of debt and the doors open.

Hospitals must juggle federal reg-
ulations, financial shortfalls, and un-
paid bills to stay in the business of

50 year reunion planned for Tucson High class of 1958

By Matt Pepe

Traducido por Matt Pepe

Atención all 1958 graduates of Tucson High School! Geraldine Wesson-Carllie is organizing your 50th class reunion!

We are planning for the big event, Wesson-Carllie is searching for updated names and con-
tact information for Class of 58 graduates.

A reunion-planning meeting will be held on October

21 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at The Lodge on the Desert, 306 N.
Alvernon Way.

Hospitals trying to stay afloat

**Festival of cine en Tucson por tres días**

By Teresa Yi

Traducido por Matt Pepe

El Festival Puro Mexicano de Cine de Tucson, un festival dedicado a lo mejor del cine mexicano y mexicano americano, se llevará a cabo del 4 al 6 de noviembre de 2005 en el corazón del centro histórico de Tucson en el Teatro Fox Tucson. El festival mostrará numerosos estrenos esta-
diodénes de películas premiadas.

Patrocinado por el Instituto de Cine Jack y Vivian Hanson y la Oficina de Cine de Tucson, muchos cinematógrafos y actores estarán pre-
sentes para participar en paneles de discusión con el público.

Los boletos estarán a la venta en línea a partir del 25 de septiembre del 2005 o llamando al (520) 624-
1814 extensión 138. Para mas infor-
mación visite www.tucsonfilmfesti-
val.org.
Alumnos reciben segunda oportunidad para terminar la preparatoria

Maestra Patsy Alvarez de la preparatoria alternativa Oasis habla con el alumno Roman Ortiz durante la sesión matutina en el Centro Quince Douglas. Casi 90 por ciento graduará y asistirá una universidad.

"El mayor problema [que enfrentan los alumnos] es económico y cultural," dice Alvarez. "Algunos de ellos tienen problemas de alojamiento y otros sienten que los demás no los comprenden culturalmente."

Con la dirección de los maestros y su esfuerzo, los alumnos en Oasis son capaces de superar los obstáculos que se encontraron en la preparatoria tradicional, dijo Alvarez.

Para los que son padres adolescentes existe el programa Parent-to-Parent, dijo Alvarez. "Los alumnos son capaces de traba-

jalar con el programa y alcanzar sus metas sin sacrificar su educación, dijo Alvarez.

"Somos su última pausa," dice Alvarez. "Y espero que sea una parada exitosa."
Public hearing on payday loan centers will allow for citizen input, questions

By Martin McClaron

Like wildflowers after a monsoon rain, payday loan businesses are popping up along South Tucson streets. So many, in fact, that the city council is looking into restricting the establishments. "They do take advantage of our less fortunate people," said City Councilman John Garcia, citing a need for further regulation of the businesses.

A public hearing is scheduled for October 1 where the city council will examine the regulation of payday loan centers. There are six payday loan businesses in South Tucson, or roughly one for every 900 residents.

Mayor Jennifer Eckstrom said, "That's just ridiculous." According to the Southwest Center for Economic Integrity, 67 percent of payday loan centers are within one-quarter mile of high-poverty areas. Integrity, 67 percent of payday loan centers are within one-quarter mile of high-poverty areas.

The businesses are often known for charging high fees. According to a 2002 study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, the average payday loan in Georgia was $165.30 for a $400 loan. The estimated annual interest rate is 440 percent.

"Those companies are preying on those who can't afford it," said Garcia.

The idea behind payday loan centers is to give people advances on their paychecks in case an unexpected bill or financial emergency comes up. Loans can be secured up to two weeks in advance of a paycheck, however the maximum amount that can be borrowed is $500 per pay period. The idea behind payday loan centers is to give people advances on their paychecks in case an unexpected bill or financial emergency comes up. Loans can be secured up to two weeks in advance of a paycheck, however the maximum amount that can be borrowed is $500 per pay period.

The process, at first glance, appears easy. All that is needed is an ID and a blank check.

Borrowers should be fully aware of the fine print, though. The process, at first glance, appears easy. All that is needed is an ID and a blank check.

Despite her own warnings about refinancing loans, Sanders still argues for the benefit of payday loan centers. "Sometimes you need that extra cash for an unexpected need," said Sanders.

Quik Cash has approximately 200 customers per week. The majority of them are regulars, like Maria Sotelo, who has been coming to Quik Cash for a little over a year. She wishes she could free herself from having to return every payday. Although Quik Cash's rates are comparable with other payday lenders, Sotelo still thinks they're no bargain.

"They do take advantage of our less fortunate people," said Garcia. The businesses are often known for charging high fees. According to a 2002 study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, the average payday loan in Georgia was $165.30 for a $400 loan. The estimated annual interest rate is 440 percent.

"We want to send them a clear message." Mayor Jennifer Eckstrom said, "That's just ridiculous." The businesses are often known for charging high fees. According to a 2002 study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, the average payday loan in Georgia was $165.30 for a $400 loan. The estimated annual interest rate is 440 percent.

"I recommend they don't refinance," Sanders said. "I think that people are making themselves more in debt." Arizona state law only lets a borrower roll over the debt three times. On the fourth, the customer must pay the loan, and all of the added fees, in full.

"I'm tired of them preying on the less fortunate," said Eckstrom. "We want to send them a clear message." Mayor Jennifer Eckstrom said, "That's just ridiculous." The businesses are often known for charging high fees. According to a 2002 study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, the average payday loan in Georgia was $165.30 for a $400 loan. The estimated annual interest rate is 440 percent.

"The only thing we can regulate is how many stores can be open in a certain area," said Councilman Paul S. Diaz. According to Eckstrom, payday loan centers are bringing South Tucson down.

"It looks bad," said Eckstrom. "It makes me feel bad inside."
Edgy comic Mencia coming to Tucson

"Mind of Mencia" star to perform his stand-up routine at Rialto Theatre

By Alyssa Ravich

Comedy Central's Carlos Mencia will take the stage Friday, October 21, at Tucson's Rialto Theatre as part of his "Mind of Mencia" tour.

The comic's new television series by the same name debuted this past July and features Mencia's commentary on current events, along with commercial parodies, audience interaction, and man-on-the-street films.

Mencia's no-nonsense point of view allows him to connect with a diverse audience and discuss society and its quirks.

Mencia also recently released a DVD titled, "Carlos Mencia: Not For The Easily Offended," which touches on subjects from race relations, to patriotism, capitalism and family.

Mencia's comedy comes from a populist angle, and raises concerns that many people are too shy to voice.

He wants every tattoo to be exclusive, working with people to change what they see to suit them better. "You have to bring out what they want," Gallegos said. "We all want to be unique."

George Gallegos, right, places a stencil on the chest of Jesse Gallegos. Jesse Gallegos got a set of praying hands tattooed on his chest, with a scroll containing the names of his deceased parents. This is the eighth tattoo for Jesse Gallegos and the 22nd year of tattooing for George Gallegos.

Film festival to feature new and award-winning ‘puro Mexicano’ movies

By Teresa Yi

The Puro Mexicano: Tucson Film Festival, a festival dedicated to the best Mexican and Mexican-American films, will take place Nov. 4-6, 2005, in the heart of historic downtown Tucson at the Fox Tucson Theatre. The festival will feature numerous U.S. premieres of award-winning films.

The festival is sponsored by the Jack and Vivian Hanson Arizona Film Institute, and the Tucson Film Office. Many filmmakers and actors will be present to participate in panel discussions with the audience throughout the festival.

Tickets will be available online starting September 26, or by calling (520) 624-1871, ext. 138. For more information, visit the festival's website at www.tucsonfilmfestival.org.

Exhibición de fotos cuenta historia de César Chávez

By Georgeanne Barrett

The vida y obra de César E. Chávez será honrada con una exhibición de fotografías en la Universidad de Arizona hasta el 8 de octubre.

"Witness: César E. Chávez and the United Farm Workers Movement: 1975-1979," un documental fotográfico de Cathy Murphy, subraya los esfuerzos del movimiento United Farm Workers durante la década de 1970. La fotógrafa Cathy Murphy capturó en película el movimiento Unido Farm Workers en su momento más alto y presenta una mirada personal dentro de la vida de Chávez.

Además de la exhibición fotográfica, un documental será mostrado todos los jueves que corresponderá con temas importantes para Chávez.

La exhibición va a ser mostrada en el Union Gallery de la Universidad de Arizona, en el tercer piso del Student Union Memorial Center, lunes a jueves de 10 a.m. a 8 p.m., viernes de 10 a.m. a 5 p.m. y sábado de 10 a.m. a 6 p.m.

"Con la esperanza de que esto remueva el interés en el movimiento de los derechos civiles," Olga Briseño, directora de la exhibición dijo. "El fue un ejemplo efectivo de lo que estamos tratando de hacer aquí hoy.