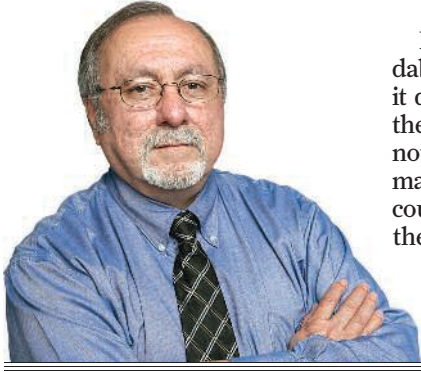


The state's bogus redistricting argument



It is an argument understandably lost on those affected and it defies any reasonable look at the evidence. But, in its quest not to have its redistricting maps ruled discriminatory by a court in Washington D.C., it is the state's key talking point. It goes something like this. Even if the effect of the state's redistricting maps

Redistricting: Two sticking points in negotiations. **B8**

is to deny minority voters the opportunity to elect candidates of their choice, it isn't discrimination because that wasn't the state's intent. The intent, the state says unabashedly, was to get as many Republicans elect-

ed as possible.

The nuance here is that discriminating against minorities is illegal; discriminating for Republicans isn't. Just plain lame as a matter of right and wrong — and the strongest argument I've yet seen for taking redistricting out of the hands of partisan legislators, who, they should be told, aren't elected to

gerrymander their way to career longevity.

The three judges in that D.C. court should see through this who-me-discriminate sham and so should the three federal judges in San Antonio who will draw interim maps.

The Supreme Court has told these San Antonio judges to *Pimentel continues on B2*

Metro AND STATE NEWS



Friday, February 17, 2012 | PAGE B1 | SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS AND MYSA.COM

1926 LANDMARK

Historic Aztec Theatre closes

'San Antonio Rose Live' ends its run

By Hector Saldaña

The Aztec Theater, a city landmark since the 1920s, closed this week in the midst of an ongoing Branson-style classic country music show, announcing on its voicemail that all shows were canceled "due to the current and future economic outlook."

"San Antonio Rose Live," which had operated on week-ends since Sept. 21, 2009, closed Sunday. The glitzy pro-

ject — which included a \$6 million renovation of the 1926 landmark at St. Mary's and East Commerce streets — was a dream for its creator Rick Drury, director of Drury Southwest.

"I'm not rolling out some bush league production. This is going to be over the top," Drury told the San Antonio Express-News in January 2008. "This is modeled after Branson and Grand Ole Opry stuff."

Belgian multimillionaire Theodore Bracht owns the Aztec. He purchased the theater in 1998 and carried out a \$20 million renovation. It reopened in 2006 as a large-format movie theater and tourist destination but struggled to attract an audience.

Drury negotiated the lease and oversaw the conversion. He originally planned to open his country show in spring 2008, but production and *Aztec continues on B5*



The Aztec Theatre, built in 1926, is part of the Texas Star Trail that connects many historical sites in downtown San Antonio.



Marcus Rodriguez drops off his daughters Aurelia Rodriguez, 9 (left), and Eva Rodriguez, 4, at St. Philip of Jesus School. It and St. Cecilia Catholic School will close this fall.

CONTROVERSIAL DECISION

Two Catholic schools closing

By Abe Levy

Catholic school leaders said Thursday they will close two historic South Side schools by the end of the year, acknowledging the emotional loss in the community of campuses that have educated generations of families.

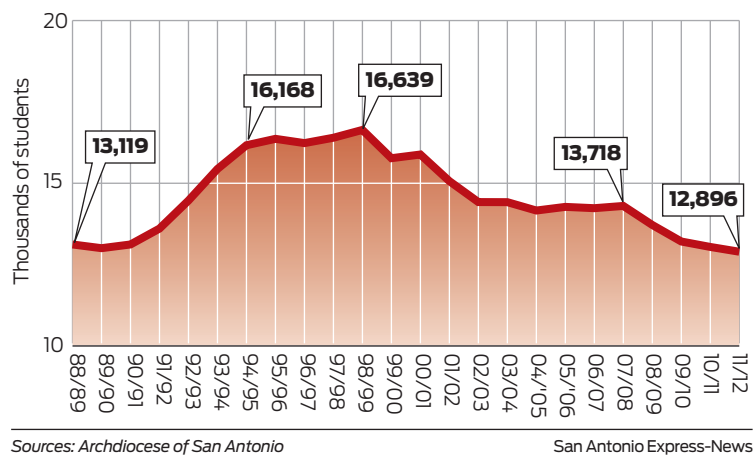
But they also praised the potential of a proposed regional academy to protect against constant debt, enrollment declines and the overall downward spiral of inner-city Catholic education.

Still, the plan was not well-received by parents with children at the St. Philip of Jesus primary school. They learned Wednesday that their school would close — just two years shy of its 100th anniversary — as part of this consolidation plan.

Schools at St. Philip and St. Cecilia parishes will relocate to St. Leo the Great Catholic School in the fall for the official launch of the Good *closures continues on B5*

Declining Catholic enrollment

Catholic school enrollment in the San Antonio archdiocese has declined by 21 percent since a peak of more than 16,000 students in 1997-98. The archdiocese has closed nearly a dozen campuses in recent years, and next year will close two more.



SAISD

Alamo Stadium petition launched

By Maria Luisa Cesar

San Antonio Independent School District residents launched a petition drive Thursday asking board members to keep the existing track at Alamo Stadium and rescind their votes to add a soccer field large enough for a professional team.

"This is about trust," said former City Councilwoman Maria Berriozábal. "We want to make sure that pro soccer can never be at Alamo Stadium."

About 15 supporters of the petition, including San Antonio Conservation Society President Nancy Avellar, gathered outside SAISD headquarters to denounce the board's vote to include in the stadium's renovation a field that meets the standards set by FIFA, the governing body of international soccer. They are concerned that the 70-yard-wide field, which was not recommended by the district staff or the Citizens' Oversight Committee, was chosen to seal a deal with Spurs Sports & Entertainment, which wants to bring a pro team here.

A week after trustees approved the field in a 4-2 vote, they decided to end consideration of the Spurs' proposal for soccer and concerts at the stadium.

Sally Buchanan, a petition organizer and Riv- *Petition continues on B5*

CITY PROJECTS

\$596 million bond election set for May 12

By Tracy Idell Hamilton

The City Council on Thursday set a bond election for May 12 on a \$596 million package to pay for 140 projects — including the reshaping of HemisFair Park — while turning down one last-minute plea for money by the director of an inner-city youth center.

The council unanimously agreed to place five propositions on the ballot that will cover streets, drainage, parks and public safety improvements.

It also approved a charter amendment for May 12 that would allow voters to replace council members who step down with more than nine months left in their term.

What began as a fairly dry recitation of the particulars of the bond election — how the projects were divided into five categories, when early voting will begin — took an operatic turn when Barbara Hawkins, executive director of the George Gervin Community Center, addressed the council. *Bond continues on B5*

RESEARCH

Project would share local cancer data

By Don Finley

An unusual and ambitious project is under way in San Antonio to identify the genetic differences between healthy and cancerous cells and to make that information freely available to scientists around the world.

Organizers say the ultimate goal of the San Antonio 1000 Cancer Ge-

nome Project is to help scientists better develop treatments based on each patient's genetic profile. Such targeted therapies have been an elusive goal in cancer research.

Almost 100 local physicians, a handful of Ph.D.s and Rackspace, the hosting and cloud computing service headquartered here, have signed on to the effort.

The idea is to collect samples of

1,000 or more common tumors after they've been removed, analyze the complete genetic code for the cancerous cells, and compare that to the genetic code of a healthy blood cell from the same patient.

The rapidly falling cost of such genome-wide scans, now about \$5,000 each, makes it possible to do on a relatively small budget. The group is *Cancer continues on B8*

METRO

REDISTRICTING

2 sticking points in negotiations

By Nolan Hicks

A Texas House district in Houston and Lloyd Doggett's congressional district have emerged as the two main sticking points in negotiations to create a set of compromise redistricting maps for the 2012 election.

Minority groups, Democrats and Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott have been unable to cut a deal for Texas House and congressional maps, which forced a San Antonio federal court Wednesday to delay Texas' primary election until at least May 29.

It is the second time the primary has been postponed because of redistricting, imperiling Republican hopes that Texas could play a significant role in picking the GOP challenger to President Barack Obama.

"The whole process has effectively reinvented the wheel," said Paul Bettencourt, a former Harris County tax assessor and member of the Republican Party of Texas' redistricting committee.

He described the Legislature's Texas House plan as an "absolute waste of time because it couldn't possibly pass the Voting Rights Act," citing changes state lawmakers made to Harris County.

He said that when people look back and ask if it was worth the time or effort, they will say "probably not, but it's the way the political system works."

Bettencourt said GOP activists would accept a compromise congressional map that gives them two of Texas's four new congressional districts, even if the proposal allowed U.S. Rep. Doggett, D-Austin, to keep his seat, adding: "they don't care about personality, they care about the results."

Still, Abbott has refused to

compromise on the issue.

During the two-day redistricting hearing this week, Deputy Attorney General David Mattax called the dispute "insurmountable."

Abbott has argued that the Legislature has the power to carve Travis County into five districts. Several groups suing the state contend that fracturing violates the Voting Rights Act.

"The No. 1 sticking point is (Doggett)," said Luis Vera, an attorney for the League of United Latin American Citizens, one of the groups suing the state.

Negotiations for a compromise Texas House map seem to have gotten stuck on one district east of Houston, currently represented by Rep. Ken Legler, R-Pasadena.

A proposed deal, worked out by the Latino Redistricting Task Force and Abbott, would make the seat a toss-up that becomes more Democratic as the area's Latino population grows.

Other minority groups have complained that the deal is not enough, and Harris County Republicans have campaigned against additional compromise.

"They were more willing to relax on (changes to a San Antonio district) than (Legler's district)," Vera said. "They're not budging on (Legler) at all."

Bettencourt said a deal seemed close Tuesday night but that the talks had fallen apart.

"There's an old expression that time kills all deals, and that's what's happening now," he said, accusing minority groups of making "hyperbolically unreasonable demands."

Vera pinned the blame back on the Republicans and Abbott: "They're not moving. They're not even meeting halfway."

nhicks@express-news.net
On Twitter: @ndbapple



Lisa Krantz / San Antonio Express-News

Bensons receive Catholic Church award

Tom Benson shakes Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller's hand as Bishop Michael Pfeifer stands with Gayle Benson after Pfeifer, of the Diocese of San Angelo, presented the Bensons with the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Award. The medal is the highest service award for Catholic lay people. The celebration Mass at the Oblate School of Theology Immaculate Conception Chapel was held Thursday.

CANCER

From page B1

trying to raise \$3 million to pay for it, with about \$200,000 collected so far.

The doctors expect to find dozens of differences between the cancerous and healthy cells. Armed with those genetic profiles, the doctors will then follow the patients for several years to determine how aggressive their disease is and which drugs work best for them.

"We'll have the patients and we'll be able to follow them year after year," said Dr. Anthony Tolcher, director of clinical research at South Texas Accelerated Research Therapeutics, who is leading the effort. "And we'll be able to identify in them which genetic changes might predict response or absence of response to treatment."

Lori Vanta, 41, a stay-at-home mother of two, was

"I have a lot of living to do. We have to find a cure for this stuff."

Lori Vanta, cancer survivor and project participant

treated for colorectal cancer in 2008, only to learn it had returned and spread to her liver and lung about a year ago. She agreed to take part in the project after that.

"I said absolutely, whatever it takes to help in the fight," said Vanta, who noted that her diagnosis came at a relatively young age. "I have a lot of living to do. We have to find a cure for this stuff."

Tolcher, who left the University of Texas Health Science Center in 2007, said the fact that the data will be made widely available makes it different than most research conducted at universities.

"It is a very competitive

world out there, with falling grant-funding levels," Tolcher said. "People are keeping data close to themselves."

Tolcher noted that a similar large collection of breast tumors, gathered by the late Dr. William McGuire at the health science center, led to major advances in breast cancer treatment, including the discovery that certain patients whose tumors produced a lot of HER2 protein could benefit from a drug called Herceptin.

"We have an increasing number of FDA-approved targeted therapies, and many targeted therapies are in the pipeline in clinical trials right now," said Dr. Shelly Gunn, a pathologist and medical director of Oncopath Laboratory here. "But we need more. And we're not going to have more until we know what's going on in these tumor genomes."

dfinley@express-news.net

32nd Annual San Antonio
Home & Garden Show

\$1 OFF
COUPON
ONLINE
at ShowTechnology.com

February 24-26 | Alamodome

SAVE TIME

- Find everything for your home and garden in one place
- Meet with San Antonio's finest builders and remodelers
- Plant sale and giveaways
- Free DIY Seminars all weekend long
- Meet with experts from NKBA

NEW THIS YEAR

- Over 15,000 square feet of landscapes and water features!
- Home theatre and electronics
- Incredible selection of kitchen and bath solutions
- 15 ton interactive sandcastle display courtesy of nationally-recognized sculptor Ted Siebert of The Sand Sculpture Company

SAVE MONEY

- Take advantage of "Show Only" prices
- Buy direct, and get the best deals
- Pay once, come back FREE all weekend

MEET CELEBRITIES

Donna Moss
Design Star Finalist
Host of Donna Decorates Dallas
(Sat. & Sun. Only)

Bob Guiney
Former star of *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette* and current host of *Showhouse Showdown*
(Sat. & Sun. Only)

HAVE FUN

- Gourmet wine, beer and food tastings
- Art, Gift and Gourmet Area
- Pet Zone
- Interactive Kids Zone

Admission:

Adult 17+.....	\$9.00
16 and under.....	Free
65+.....	\$5.00 (Friday only)
Military Active Duty.....	\$4.00*

*No further discounts applied to seniors and military

THE BIGGEST SHOW IN TEXAS

Friday, 2pm-7pm • Saturday, 10am-7pm • Sunday, 11am-6pm

Sponsored by

WE RODEO. YOU READY?

PRCA RODEO ACTION & LIVE ENTERTAINMENT!

2012 ENTERTAINMENT LINEUP

CHRIS YOUNG Thu. 2/9, 7:00 pm	JOSH ABBOTT BAND Thu. 2/16, 7:00 pm	MIRANDA LAMBERT Tue. 2/21, 7:00 pm
LUKE BRYAN Fri. 2/10, 7:30 pm	LADY ANTEBELLUM Fri. 2/17, 7:30 pm	RODNEY ATKINS Wed. 2/22, 7:00 pm
KEITH URBAN Sat. 2/11, 1:00 & 7:30 pm	JAKE OWEN Sat. 2/18, 1:00 pm	ALAN JACKSON Thu. 2/23, 7:00 pm
HOT CHELLE RAE Sun. 2/12, 1:00 pm	DAUGHTRY Sat. 2/18, 7:30 pm	JOAN JETT AND THE BLACKHEARTS Fri. 2/24, 7:30 pm
RONNIE DUNN Mon. 2/13, 7:00 pm	JOE NICHOLS Sun. 2/19, 1:00 pm	TRACE ADKINS XTREME BULLS Sat. 2/25, 1:00 pm
TENTH AVENUE NORTH Tue. 2/14, 7:00 pm	EL TRONO DE MEXICO Sun. 2/19, 7:30 pm	DIERKS BENTLEY RODEO FINALS Sat. 2/25, 7:30 pm
THE BAND PERRY Wed. 2/15, 7:00 pm	TERRY FATOR Mon. 2/20, 7:00 pm	

RODEO TICKETS: \$10, \$25. All seats are reserved and include grounds admission.

To purchase tickets, call 877-63-RODEO, or visit ticketmaster.com or the AT&T Center Southwest Box Office.

For more information, call 210-225-5851.

Follow us on &

FEBRUARY 9-26, 2012

San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo
SARODEO.COM

THE EXPRESS-NEWS RODEO DEAL

BUY 1 ADULT GROUNDS ADMISSION TICKET GET 1 ADULT GROUNDS ADMISSION TICKET FREE!

San Antonio Express-News | mySA.com

Coupon redeemable Feb. 9-Feb. 26, 2012 at any Rodeo Ticket Office. Valid Monday thru Thursday only (excludes President's Day.) One coupon per person. Not valid with any other offers. While supplies last.