

Muslim family sues restaurant over pork tacos

The Associated Press

DALLAS — A Muslim family is asking On The Border Cafes Inc. for \$600,000 in damages because the tacos they ordered from the restaurant contained a small amount of pork.

Eating pork violates Islamic dietary laws. Bernard E. Brooks, the attorney for the Houston-area family whose names have not been released, said he's asking for \$100,000 for each family member.

Brooks said the family was eating at an On The Border restaurant in suburban Houston when a Muslim employee told them the tacos they ordered contained pork.

"They were devastated," Brooks said. "If you look at their menu, it says beef or chicken tacos. It doesn't say anything about pork."

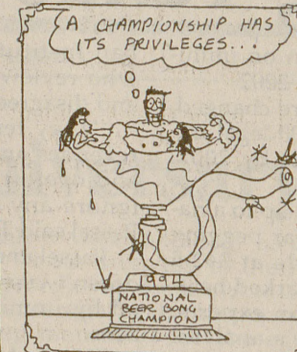
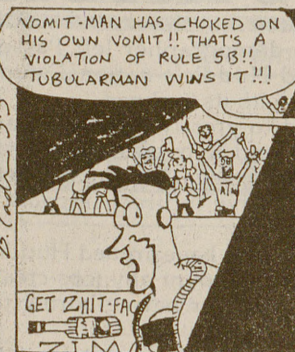
Brooks sent the Dallas-based company a letter Friday accusing the restaurant of violating the state's deceptive-practices laws. He's asked for compensation, but hasn't filed a lawsuit.

Stephen D. Fenstermacher, chief executive of On The Border, said the company has taken pork out of its tacos while it researches the legal issues.

Fenstermacher said On The Border's recipe has long called for a small portion of ground pork for extra flavoring, and the practice isn't uncommon at other Mexican restaurants.

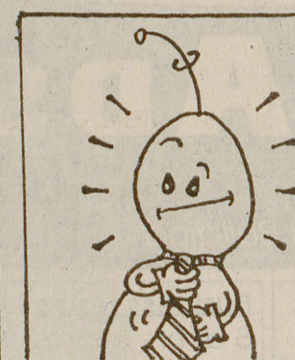
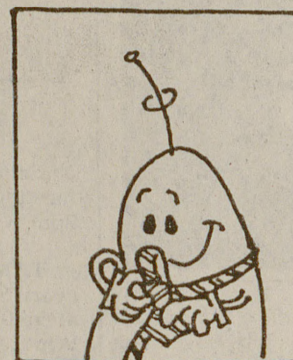
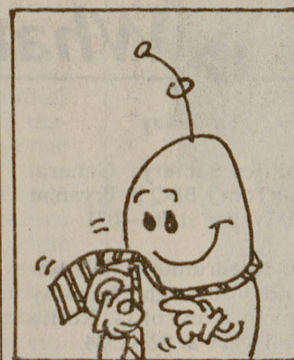
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Changing economy forces NASA to adapt

The Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — If humans are to move into space, NASA must attract whole new professions, including architecture, construction, environmental management, manufacturing and even agriculture, a top agency official said Tuesday.

"Space is not just a new frontier to be explored for adventure's sake, but a place we live and work," Paul J. Weitz, who is with NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, told a general session of the Space '94 conference here. The weeklong conference is focusing on engineering, construction and operations in space.

Weitz said NASA has changed direction as the era of the space race moves into the era of space cooperation — and the age of tight money.

He said putting humans to

Space agency must find new path as budgets tighten, astronaut says

work in space will require international cooperation, given today's economic realities. Paraphrasing the opening lines of "Star Trek," Weitz said space exploration must go "where no nation can afford to go alone."

But he also warned that a trend toward doing things faster and cheaper also makes missions inherently more risky.

"Space flight, whether it involves people or not, is a risky business," Weitz said. "Learning from failure contributes to success. Failing to learn is what is inexcusable in my mind."

Many of the conference's technical sessions deal with robotic technology to help human exploration or for unmanned missions, and Weitz said robotics will be a

major part of the future.

Weitz, a former astronaut, said technology developed for space already benefits people. Dextrous robot hand technology developed for the space shuttle is evolving into lifelike artificial hands, while the virtual reality technology developed to train astronauts in Hubble space telescope missions could help train medical students, he said.

NASA eventually wants to send humans to Mars, but if it is to get the public's backing for such a mission, the agency must "shift the focus from getting there and back to what we're doing there and why," another NASA official said.

David Weaver said the United States can't afford the Space Ex-

ploration Initiative envisioned under the Bush administration — an estimated \$500 billion, 30-year mission to get to Mars in incremental steps, including a space station and Moon exploration.

That initiative raised questions not only about the enormous cost, but about how much would be gained by going to Mars, he said.

"We concentrated on rocket science, not on terrestrial-relevant science," said Weaver, who is with the Planetary Projects Office of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in Houston.

Now NASA is looking at proposals for much less expensive missions — around \$50 billion — that would take less time to get to Mars and leave astronauts on the planet longer to do more, Weaver said.

The idea, he said, is that technology to benefit Earth lies on the surface of the Moon and Mars — not in getting astronauts to and from space.

Kelly AFB cuts deal with employees to save base

The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Kelly Air Force Base officials say more than 600 base employees will leave their jobs Thursday as part of a buyout designed to keep the base from becoming a target for closure in 1995.

The 645 employees who work at the San Antonio Air Logistics Center will receive payments up to \$25,000. The move was designed to keep the center competitive with other maintenance centers when bases are evaluated for 1995 closures.

Employees were told the base wanted to of-

fer the job buyouts in an effort to avoid laying off more than 900 workers.

The number of possible layoffs was reduced to more than 800 when the bonus approval was announced. That figure should be reduced to 200 workers if layoffs are needed at all now that more than 600 employees are leaving voluntarily.

Maj. Dewey Ford, Kelly's public affairs chief, said Tuesday that it is too soon to know if officials have avoided involuntary force reductions.

Two other air logistics centers, Ogden (Utah) ALC at Hill AFB and Warner Robins (Ga.) ALC at Robins AFB, followed Kelly's

lead and sought authority for separations, said Capt. John Boyle of the Air Force Materiel Command.

Ford said the number of workers leaving Thursday could change slightly, but it was 645 as of Monday afternoon. Of those, he said, 346 were retiring early, 233 were taking regular retirement and 66 were resigning.

Kelly AFB spokeswoman Cynthia Bauer said most employees leaving under normal retirement or early retirement options qualify for maximum up-front payments of \$25,000 plus their normal or reduced monthly pension checks.

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