

Everyone's favorite, zany housekeeper is back and at it again! OPAS Jr. invites you to come watch Amelia Bedelia as she makes hilarious mistakes and pulls it all back together in the end. For kids of all ages who are just looking for good, clean fun, Amelia Bedelia is MAID to order!

> Sunday, October 8, 2000 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM

Prosecutors to stop trying federal cases

LAREDO (AP) — They are done begging, through threatening, sick of talking.

Broke and bogged down, some county prosecutors along the U.S.-Mexico border vowed to ban federal drug cases from their courts starting today. Their decision promises to drop even more cases into the swamped federal courts on the nation's southern edge.

But prosecutors say they have no choice: Struggling counties lose millions of dollars and weeks' worth of court time prosecuting federal drug cases. From now on, they say, the U.S. government is on its own.

"As of Monday we won't take any more federal cases," said Hidalgo County District Attorney Rene Guerra. "The cases are a financial drain, and we can't do it anymore. We shouldn't have to.'

It is a time-honored

deal at international

bridges and roadblocks:

Agents send large drug

busts to federal court. Small drug seizures -

less than 50 pounds of

pot, or minor cocaine

caches - are kicked

For years, nobody re-

ally minded. But an ex-

plosion of agents along

the border has sent drug

seizures soaring - and

what was once a rare has-

sle is now a steady stream

down to county courts.

The cases are a financial drain, and we can't do it anymore. We shouldn't have to."

> — Rene Guerra Hidalgo County District Attorney

of costly cases.

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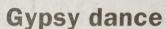
"It's changed a lot," said Chris Roll, Cochise County, Ariz. "As the (federal courts) get overloaded, they start turning loose more and more cases. It all ends up coming to us." For the time being, Roll will continue to stretch his \$3

million budget to include the federal cases, he said. The handme-down busts make up about a quarter of his total docket. 'There's a load on our jail, a load on our courts, and we

can't get reimbursed," he said. "There's certainly some people in the county who'd love to see us stop taking the cases." Most Texas prosecutors were expected to stick to the Oct.

1 deadline. That was the date agreed on earlier this year, when the Lone Star counties led a vociferous demand for emergency money.

In July, they appeared to have triumphed: Congress set aside \$12 million to be divided evenly among the four border states. But the cash got mired in a bureaucratic quarrel, and still hasn't made its way into county coffers.



SIATE **HE BATTALION**



STUART VILLANUEVA/THE B

Monday, October]

Alla Shariy, a dancer in the Gypsy Dance Theater, performs at the opening day of the Texas Renaissance Festival in Plantersville. The Gypsy Dance The ater is a group comprised of dancers from around the world. Shariy, the newest member, recently came to the United States from the Ukraine, when she was trained as a dancer.

Reports: mentally ill lack assistand

adequate care for children with mental illness. parents and mental health advocates say, leaving many families desperate and bankrupt as they try to find help for their children.

Texas ranks 43rd nationally in funding for its mental health system and many children must do without treatment, the Austin American-Statesman reported in Sunday's editions.

Parents, running out of options, sometimes file minor charges against their children so they will go to juvenile jail, making them eligible for more mental health services. Others give up care of their children to the state.

More than 655,000 Texas children suffer mental health problems, ranging from depression to schizophrenia, the newspaper said.

Many need intensive help, services like hospitalization or residential treatment. In Texas, only the bare necessities of medicine, therapy and some training are offered, and can take weeks to receive.

"I call it 'Solomon's choice,' " said Deborah Bradley Berndt, children's services direc-

AUSTIN (AP) - Texas does not provide tor for the state Department of MentalH and Mental Retardation. "Do you sp \$50,000 to give one kid six to nine mont residential care? Or do you use that more serve 30 kids in the community?"

Many mentally ill children end upit state juvenile prison system. Of the 5,524 dren in the Texas Youth Commission syste August 1999, 42 percent were diagnosed high mental health needs, the newspaper

After years of trying to control hers tantrums, Austin resident Mattie Dixon police take 11-year-old David to juve jail last year.

"There is no help," Dixon said. "I did know what else to do."

Hospitalization is not always an opti since 25 percent of the state's mental hosp beds, about 900, have been cut since 1992. addition, many private psychiatric hospita are closing because of financial problems, sai Amanda Engler, spokeswoman for Texash pital Association. In 1998, Texas had 47 vate psychiatric hospitals. Today, there are

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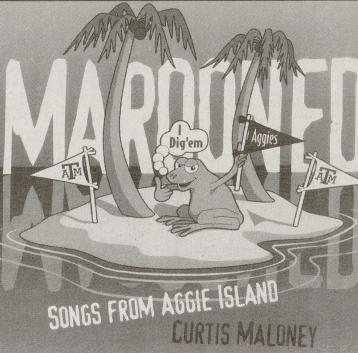
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