

Diversity now entrenched in U.S.

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Now that the nation officially numbers more than 300 million, what next?

What will 400 million look like?

If demographers are right, we'll hit that mark by 2043. They and other futurists envision a typical American neighborhood that year will be something like this:

More than likely it'll be located in the south or west, despite scarce water resources and gas prices that make \$3 a gallon look like a bargain. Barely half of the community's residents will be White, and one in four Whites will be senior citizens. Nearly one in four people will be Latino, and multiracial Americans will be commonplace.

"We're going to be growing for the next 50 or 100 years, but it's not because of the birthrate," said John Bongaarts, vice president of the Population Council, a nonprofit in New York. "If the birthrate were to drop

we'd have a very different future ahead. If we were not living longer and had no migrants we wouldn't be growing at all."

The U.S. will keep getting more racially and ethnically diverse — by 2043, it will be about 15 percent non-Hispanic Black, 8 percent Asian and 24 percent Hispanic.

Ideas about race that hold sway now, simply won't then, just as the attitudes of 30 years ago have changed.

For example, in the 1970s one in three Whites favored laws that barred marriage between Blacks and Whites; in recent years it's barely one in 10.

More than 7 million Americans reported in Census 2000 that they were multiracial — 42 percent of them were under age 18.

"The racial lines will basically be blurred," said William H. Frey, a demographer with the Brookings Institution. "It's hard to say what the different classifications will be. ...The stark racial

categories now won't hold."

Mixing and melding will be the norm for today's children, who by 2043 will be moving into positions of power across society as the last baby boomers close in on 80.

"Think of the electoral base," said C. Matthew Snipp, a sociologist and demographer at Stanford University. "It seems likely that the power structures will change."

Demographers say some of today's trends will continue: Rust Belt cities like Detroit, Pittsburgh and Cleveland will probably keep losing population, though some argue that lower costs of living may attract people who can telecommute to jobs elsewhere.

The fastest growing states will continue to be Nevada, Arizona and Florida. Census projections through 2030

show the Sun Belt continuing to gain population.

With some cities and suburbs becoming more densely populated, far-out exurban areas will keep growing — which will probably mean longer commutes and more demand for gasoline. Demographers predict costs for gas and water, now relatively inexpensive, will mushroom.

Lifesaving drugs and technologies will help Americans stay alive longer than ever — and the nation overall will age.

In 2000, 12.4 percent of Americans were aged 65 and older — but that percentage is projected to jump to 20 percent by 2043. More than one in four residents of Florida, New Mexico, North Dakota, Maine, Montana and Wyoming will be over age 65.

Here's another way to think of the senior boom:

Between 2000 and 2050, the group of Americans who are 85 and older will nearly quadruple to almost 21 million.

The good news is this will help revitalize rural, retirement-friendly places with lots of natural amenities like the nation's Western mountains and some Great Lakes areas, said Kenneth Johnson of Loyola University-Chicago. "These tourist and retirement destinations are the fastest-growing rural areas," he said, adding that this is attracting workers — many new immigrants — to build houses and tend hotels.

But a big bubble of elderly Americans also will strain Social Security and Medicare, and there will be "big battles" over how to pay for them, Bongaarts said.

Demographers repeatedly warned that projections are iffy — things change.

Expected medical break-

throughs may not happen. World events — wars, diseases, economic ups and down — can stop or speed up immigration. Americans could stop having enough children to replace themselves, which they're just barely managing now. Things that seemed a lock just a short time ago can be thwarted.

Two years ago, for example, California officials downgraded by 15 percent their predictions for state growth, mainly because Latino families were having far fewer babies than expected. When the U.S. hit 200 million people in 1967, the nation was supposed to reach 300 million before the end of the century.

"Nobody really knows for certain where this will go," Snipp said. "All this is premised on many, many assumptions."

Hazing

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been placed under a microscope to an extent after it was discovered a fraternity was hazing potential members. But unlike the Sigmas, DSP has to worry about FSU's higher-ups.

"On the administration side, it's probably raised some eyebrows," Iszard said.

Beaubrun maintains that the Sigmas do not practice hazing because the national chapter has outlawed it.

"We don't condone it," he said. "We follow our national guidelines."

The fraternity has given no official stand of support, but a number of the fraternity members of the former Alpha Xi chapter attended the trial each day to show support for their fraternity brothers who were being accused.

Hobbs said that he is fully prepared to try the case again.

Your Horoscope Says... Oct. 26-Nov. 1

ARIES

Keep focused. Your energies are likely to be spread out this week. Your attention is likely to be pulled in many directions. Let yourself be seduced by the things that interest you most. Concentrate on your affairs. Others need you, but they can wait.

Soul Affirmation: I find a source of strength in someone I love.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 11, 21

TAURUS

Being stubborn won't get the job done. Work with others so they can work for you. Your ideas are not always the best ideas, so don't push them too hard this week. You might find yourself in an awkward position with no allies. Give in to your emotional needs and don't be afraid to let your guard down.

Soul Affirmation: I let go and let my spirit take control.

Lucky Numbers: 20, 42, 54

GEMINI

This week will bring a tendency to dwell on a past betrayal. Your feelings of suspicion are well founded. However, do not personalize it. Work against the harmful act but not against the person who committed it.

Soul Affirmation: I am what I consistently do.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 6, 23

CANCER

Look forward to excellent financial news based on something you're likely to do this week. Wow! It's about time. This week might be an excellent week to window shop for a dream vacation or luxury purchase. You can even window shop in your imagination for the best possible dream vacation location!

Soul Affirmation: Smooth communications is the key to my success this week.

Lucky Numbers: 8, 18, 44

LEO

In the spiritual realm, appearance is not important but in the physical realm looking good matters a great deal. Love has a foot in both realms. It is your challenge to balance the spiritual and physical aspects of love this week.

Soul Affirmation: Slow and steady is an enjoyable way to go.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 6, 13

VIRGO

Stand up and get ready. Be a public speaker this week. Any subject you choose is ripe for your "rap." Spin the talé. Tell the story. People will be fascinated by the way you see things. They'll be impressed. Watch out for a jealous friend when attention is on you.

Soul Affirmation: I make the first step, and the universe will come to my aid.

Lucky Numbers: 24, 32, 53

LIBRA

Be as sharp as you can be this week. Make being alert a personal challenge. Watch carefully for details that might otherwise escape your notice as you search for the best way to get things done at work. Be steadfast in your determination and don't be pulled into conflict with coworkers.

Soul Affirmation: There are other fish in the sea waiting for me.

Lucky Numbers: 12, 23, 27

SCORPIO

What do you do when you're not as lucky as usual? Slow the game down. Risk less. Bet conservatively in all areas of your life. Restrain yourself. Give the job at hand your attention. Live in the present and enjoy what is rather than in anticipation of what luck might have brought.

Soul Affirmation: Truth is revealed in the smallest grain of sand.

Lucky Numbers: 27, 41, 52

SAGITTARIUS

Like-mindedness is going to be hard to achieve among your co-workers, but there are likely to be a few who see things as you do. Choose carefully and find someone to walk with you on this week's journey. Some words of encouragement might be needed to enlist the person you choose.

Soul Affirmation: My needs will be met if I just ask.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 9, 14

CAPRICORN

Where are you going in such a hurry? What you want you already have. Stop looking around yourself trying to find out what's missing. Nothing is missing. The best kind of discovery this week is self-discovery.

Soul Affirmation: I get because I give.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 18, 45

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Knowing and accepting your love nature is extremely important. Don't try to claim that it is as society says it should be. Acknowledge the fact that your love and friendship are often inseparable. You like to be in an adventure with your lover just as you would a partner or a friend. Create this situation by holding the truth of your nature in consciousness.

Soul Affirmation: I enjoy the love that others have for me.

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Dive into it! Don't be intimidated by the unknown. Your adventurous spirit can take you to a new place of celebration this week. If you can, bring someone along who can celebrate in the same manner with you. Harmony and peace is the motto that you should chant when you accomplish what you want to do.

Soul Affirmation: Communication is a skeleton key that fits many doors.

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