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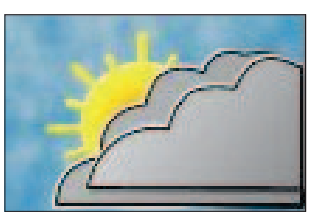
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BIG SPRING
HERALD

THURSDAY
JULY 26, 2007



VOLUME 102, NUMBER 206 COPYRIGHT 2007 50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

Cuts slice services, personnel

Budget shortfall puts financial squeeze on county departments

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
 Staff Writer

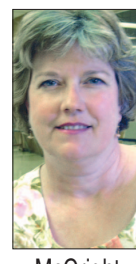
Budget shortfalls will mean layoffs for several departments within Howard County and are expected to adversely impact customer service, according to officials.

County Judge Mark Barr said Wednesday several major cuts have been made to the county's budget and will leave department heads with arduous task of eliminating some positions.

"There's just no other way," said Barr. "We're cutting the county library budget by \$100,000, the road and bridge administration's by \$120,000 and the maintenance department's by one full-time employee and one part-time employee. We've also implemented a hiring freeze."

"We're looking at a budget shortfall of about \$250,000 for the coming year and a shortfall of about \$400,000 the following year," Barr added. "The fund balances have been steadily declining over the past several years, and the tremen-

"I've managed to make cuts in line items that amount to \$12,000, but in the end, I'm going to have to make cuts in personnel to cover this."



McCright

dous cost of the county jail being closed simply put it over the edge."

The county jail was shut down by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards in November after it failed to meet several life-safety criteria, forcing county commissioners to not only fund repairs to the facility totaling more than \$250,000, but also to shoulder the expense of housing inmates in other county jails, an expense Barr described as tremendous.

Although the jail was recently given the OK to reopen by TDJS, Barr

See **COUNTY**, Page 3A

Best in the land

FHS Band is tops in Class 1A

By **STEVE REAGAN**
 Staff Writer

FORSAN — Forsan High School Band has earned many superlatives over the years, but this one can't be topped.

The FHS Band was recently named the Texas Music Educators Association Class 1A Honor Band for 2007. The distinction is awarded to the top Texas high school band in its classification.

Director Jim Rhodes said the band entered a CD of its University Interscholastic League concert performance in the TMEA competition. Forsan advanced past the regional and area rounds to qualify, along with seven other bands, for the state TMEA contest in San Antonio last Thursday.

When the winners were announced, Rhodes and Assistant Director Misty Hoelscher learned that their band placed first on all five judges' ballots. Seagraves placed second, while Sundown was third.

"We had placed first in the earlier stages, so we got our hopes up that we might do well at state," Rhodes said. "I did feel we had a chance to place in the top five — that was what we were hoping for."

It was a case of the third time being the charm for Forsan — the band placed fifth and second, respectively, in its past appearances at the TMEA state contest.

"It is the highest award you can win for your program," Rhodes said. "It's

"It's the pinnacle of what we strive for ... I didn't even know what to say when we won. I wanted to say something profound, but needless to say, it was absolute excitement."

—Jim Rhodes, band director



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan
Forsan High School Band Director Jim Rhodes and his assistant Misty Hoelscher are shown in the FHS band hall Wednesday. The band was named the top Class 1A concert band in the state by the Texas Music Educators Association.

the pinnacle of what we strive for ... I didn't even know what to say when we won. I wanted to say something profound, but needless to say, it was absolute excitement."

By winning the award, the band will perform at the TMEA Honor Band Concert in San Antonio next February, along with Class 2A winner Queen

City and Mesquite Poteet High School, which won the Class 4A award.

"It is a real big deal," Rhodes said. "We're going to play for an audience of our peers, which makes it a little more nerve-wracking."

This award comes 20 years since a Rhodes-directed band won the TMEA honor — in 1987,

he led Grandfalls-Royalty to the top spot.

"I'm getting near the end of my career, so this is kind of a vote of confidence for the 'old guy,'" he said.

Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-7331, ext. 234 or by e-mail at reporter@bigspringherald.com.

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Moore Board visits with prospective client

No updates on Settles; Niklasch resigns from board of directors

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
 Staff Writer

Members of the board of directors for Moore Development met Wednesday evening, spending the majority of the group's time in an executive session that failed to prompt any action in regular session.

According to Larry McLellan, president of the board, the economic development firm is currently in talks with an employer that is considering moving its



Niklasch

operations to Howard County.

"They were in town Wednesday, so we spent some time talking to them about the move," said McLellan. "The company is expected to employ approximately 30 people at between \$12 and \$24 per hour. They have already been out looking for a site and might have a contract soon."

"These proceedings are still in the early stages, but I feel like it's a very good prospect for us. The company seems very eager to move its operations to Big Spring."

While the board moves forward with its new business

prospect, McLellan said the matter of a letter of intent between the economic development agency and the Settles Hotel Development Company for project funding has seen no developments during the past few months.

"We sent the revised version of our letter of intent to SHDC back in April," said McLellan. "Right now it's just a matter of

prospect, McLellan said the matter of a letter of intent between the economic development agency and the Settles Hotel Development Company for project funding has seen no developments during the past few months.

"We sent the revised version of our letter of intent to SHDC back in April," said McLellan. "Right now it's just a matter of

See **MOORE**, Page 3A

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Sports

BIG SPRING HERALD

Do you have an interesting sports item or story idea? Call Jonathan Hull at 263-7331, Ext. 237. Email results to: sports@bigspringherald.com

Page 1B
Thursday, July 26, 2007

IN BRIEF

Garden City hosting two all-star games

Glasscock County Independent School District will be hosting a basketball and a football all-star game.

The Small School Shootout will take place Friday at Dorothy Garrett Coliseum. The girls game will occur at 6 p.m. with the boys taking the court at 8 p.m.

The Texas Bowl is a 6-man all-star football game scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Saturday in Garden City. The game will feature Division I all-stars pitted against Division II all-stars.

Several area athletes from Garden City, Sands and Grady will be participating in both events.

Lady Steer Booster Club meeting

The Big Spring Lady Steer Booster Club will hold a meeting at 6 p.m. Monday in the Athletic Training Center.

All parents of Lady Steer athletes are encouraged to attend.

Call Carrie Fox at 816-9687 for more information.

Physicals required for some athletes

Big Spring High School is informing all student athletes that a physical is required for all incoming seventh, ninth and 11th graders, as well as any students who are new to the district.

Physicals must be taken care of and on file at the Athletic Training Center before athletes will be allowed to practice, participate or get equipment issued to them.

Call the ATC at 264-3662 with any questions.

Howard County Golf Championship set

The 2007 Howard County Championship golf tournament has been set to take place Friday through Sunday at the Big Spring Country Club.

The format is 54-holes individual stroke play and all participants must have been a Howard County resident prior to Jan. 1, 2007.

Entry fee \$75 per player plus a \$30 cart fee. Prizes will be given for gross and net scores with the field being pre-flighted based on handicap. The championship flight will break into two flights after the first round.

A senior division will be made for those over 70. The lowest score for a country club member will be club champion.

Tee times will be set for Friday and Saturday with a 1 p.m. shotgun on Sunday. A barbecue lunch will be served Saturday.

To enter or for other information, call the country club at 267-5354.

Big Spring Youth Soccer meeting

The Big Spring Youth Soccer Association will be holding an organizational meeting at 2 p.m. Saturday at College Baptist Church's Fellowship Hall.

See **BRIEFS**, Page 2B

What in the wide world of sports?

Steroid use is reportedly rampant in Major League Baseball.

One of the National Football League's premier quarterbacks is under federal indictment.

A National Basketball Association referee allegedly bet on games, including those he officiated.

Cycling's Tour de France is

more notable for which entrant is clean than who is using an illegal substance.

Next thing you know, someone's going to tell me that pro wrestling isn't legit.

As a former sports editor and a current sports fan, I have been watching the latest developments in the pro sports world with slack-jawed amazement. Summer is supposed to be a slow time in sports, not prime time of the School of Scandal.

Remember when athletes just played games? Wasn't that just a quaint time?

I'm not going to discuss the Tour de France doping scandals because, well, I never considered cycling a serious sport. Cycling, to me, is more work than anything else. Work is not fun, so let's move on, OK?

Football, baseball and basketball, on the other hand, are fun — or should be. Why, then, are the commissioners of those three sports frowning so much these days?

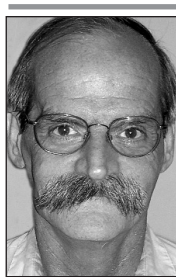
Let's start with football, where the big news is not about the opening of NFL training camps, but rather the indictment hand-

ed down by federal authorities against Atlanta Falcons' quarterback Michael Vick.

Vick, as I'm sure you're aware, has been accused of hosting illegal dogfights on his Virginia property. But that in itself is not what has everyone so atwitter.

No, dogfighting alone is a despicable enterprise, but what Vick and his associates allegedly did to some of the poor dogs under his care is truly beyond the pale. According to the

See **REAGAN**, Page 2B



STEVE REAGAN



Courtesy photo

The Big Spring Sandlot will be competing in the United State Specialty Sports Association's Slow Pitch Recreation Nationals Tournament in Lubbock Friday and Saturday. The 16U team has been together for three seasons. Bottom row (left to right): Donnie Rodriguez, Justin Solis, Augustine Rivera. Middle row: Jake Hernandez, Justin Yanez, Isaac Nieto, Adam Guzman. Top row: Coach Tony Sarracho, Manuel Sosa, Anthony Sarracho, Jacob Acosta, Brian Solis, Elijah Salazar, Coach Ben Flores.

Big Spring Sandlot playing in softball nationals

By **JONATHAN HULL**
Sports Editor

Ben Flores saw an opportunity with Big Spring's youth. He noticed that there was not a youth slow-pitch softball team in the area. This led Flores to creating the Big Spring Sandlot three years ago. "I'm originally from Lubbock and these softball teams are a big up there," explained Flores. "There has never been a

boys softball team here. I coached little league here and I started talking to some of the boys and the parents and decided we should give it a try." The Sandlot will be competing in the 2007 United States Specialty Sports Association's Youth Slow Pitch Recreation Nationals in Lubbock. The tournament starts Friday and will conclude Saturday. The Sandlot has found success in their previous

two summers of competition. Last year, they finished second in the state tournament and fifth in the national tournament in the 14U division. The Sandlot had to move up into the 16U division this season. They attempted to enter an interstate tournament already this summer, but were refused entry in Clovis, N.M. "We got there and they didn't let us in. They didn't really give us any rea-

son either," said Flores. "So we're yet to have experienced real competitive play this year." The lack of other boys softball teams in the area prevents the Sandlot from scheduling exhibitions or other types of competitive games. This puts a huge emphasis on practice. "We practice all the time," said Flores. "These guys are really

See **SANDLOT**, Page 2B

Rangers complete series sweep of Mariners

By **STEPHEN HAWKINS**
AP Sports Writer

ARLINGTON — With unblemished closer J.J. Putz finally back on the mound, the Seattle Mariners had to anticipate a winning end to a miserable trip.

Except, they only felt worse when it was over.

Putz, who hadn't allowed a run in 16 road appearances this season and hadn't blown a save since last year, gave up a two-run homer to Ramon Vazquez with two outs in the eighth inning as the Texas Rangers rallied for a 7-6 victory Wednesday night to complete a four-game sweep.

"There's not much I can say. He put a good swing on it," Putz said. "This is not the best time for this to happen. ... Things

aren't going our way. We're in a bad cycle."

Having not pitched since Friday, Putz came on with one on and one out in the eighth. He struck out Gerald Laird, but Vazquez hit a 414-foot drive to right-center — his fifth of the season.

Putz had converted a majors-best 31 straight save chances, including all 29 this year, and had thrown 22 consecutive scoreless innings.

"He's human," Rangers manager Ron Washington said. "I don't care how good you are, things can turn for you sometimes in the wrong direction."

Seattle lost its sixth straight game since winning the trip opener at Toronto to get within a game of the AL West-leading Los Angeles Angels.

Five of the losses were by one run, including all four games in Texas, but they have only slipped to 3 1/2 games back.

"It's been a long trip. We need to get out of here," Mariners manager John McLaren said. "No one feels worse than J.J. He's the ultimate gamer."

Marlon Byrd led off the eighth with a single and Frank Catalanotto had a sacrifice bunt — both against different pitchers before Putz came in the game.

"Just looking for a fastball, trying to get a pitch I can drive," said Vazquez, a regular in the Rangers lineup only because third baseman Hank Blalock and second baseman Ian Kinsler are on the dis-



MCT photo/Sharon M. Steinman/Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Texas Rangers' Joaquin Benoit throws a pitch in the eighth inning against the Seattle Mariners in Arlington. Benoit picked up the win as the Rangers completed the series sweep of the Mariners 7-6.

See **RANGERS**, Page 2B

Phillips gives Cowboys a good feeling

By **JAIME ARON**
AP Sports Writer

SAN ANTONIO — A half hour before his first training camp practice in charge of the Dallas Cowboys, Wade Phillips strolled out of a tunnel and onto the turf of the Alamodome. As soon as he came into view Wednesday afternoon, about 8,000 fans stood and cheered.

So Phillips smiled, waved and kept walking.

He also came to a quick conclusion: "That's the last time I'll get a standing ovation."

Not necessarily. If the Cowboys can live up to the "good feeling" their new coach has about them, Phillips may get used to entering rooms greeted by a chorus of applause. After all, this is "America's Team," a status confirmed by the huge turnouts for a pre-camp concert Tuesday night and again Wednesday for Day 1 of workouts in helmets, shoulder pads and shorts.

"There's not any training camps like this that I know of or that I've been in," said Phillips, entering his 31st season in the NFL and with his seventh franchise. "This was probably the most and the most enthusiastic. It helps because your players practice better. When the fans are out there, they're going to do more, so I think it's a real plus for us."

The Cowboys are coming off a 9-7 season that ended with a playoff loss. Dallas hasn't won a post-season game in 11 years, a dismal streak that Bill Parcells failed to end in his four years in charge.

Now it's Phillips' turn.

See **COWBOYS**, Page 2B

Lottery

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Lotto Texas drawing Wednesday night:
Winning numbers drawn: 3-8-12-15-30-38.
Number matching six of six: 0.

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Cash 5 drawing Wednesday night:
Winning numbers drawn: 7-9-15-22-27.
Number matching five of five: 3.
Prize per winner: \$8,466.
Winning tickets sold in: Temple, Richardson, Lubbock.

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Wednesday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 3-5-8.

Take Note

• **HOWARD COLLEGE AND SOUTHWEST COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE FOR THE DEAF** will be honoring Ron Brasel, provost at SWCID for the past 21 years, with a retirement party from noon to 1 p.m., Monday, Aug. 6 in the SWCID Auditorium. Refreshments will be served and a "retirement rocking chair" will be available for all in attendance to sign messages to Ron. Everyone is invited.

• **A FUND HAS BEEN CREATED** to help Garland and Nalynda Helmstetler raise the \$25,000 needed for medical treatment that the family's insurance will not cover. Nalynda has been diagnosed with breast cancer that cannot be treated by radiation and chemotherapy. Doctors have told the family she should begin treatment on Aug. 1 so that the cancer does not spread to other organs. Donations may be made payable to Nalynda's Cancer Fund at the Federal Employees Credit Union located on FM 700.

• **SNO CONES FOR SALE**, a fund-raiser for Cornerstone Church, is set from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday at the west doors of Wal-Mart. For more information, call the church at 263-3072.

• **A FUND HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED AT COSDEN CREDIT UNION** to help pay medical expenses for Raul Robles. Any assistance would be appreciated. The account is No. 761882.

• **ST. MARY'S AND FRIENDS OF ST. MARY'S ARE HOLDING A LAP BLANKET DRIVE** to place approximately 400 lap blankets in the hands of every nursing home patient in Big Spring. Blankets can be taken to the church office, 1001 Goliad, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Friday or call Connie Fowler at 267-2713.

A beginning crochet class is being held at 6 p.m. Wednesday in the church's Parish Hall.

• **ALL CREATURES SANCTUARY AND RESCUE** has an account set up with Big Spring Salvage at 3608 N. Highway 87 for all types of metals and aluminum cans. See manager John Kimberly or Cruz Rodriquez, metal specialist, to make your donations. Please tell them that your donations are for All Creatures Sanctuary and Rescue. The sanctuary is also still taking weight circles off of all Purina Brand Dog Foods. Send your Purina Weight Circles to A.C.S. & R. at P.O. Box 871, Coahoma 79511. All Creatures Sanctuary and Rescue has an account also set up with Howard County Feed and Supply at 701 E. Second St. For donations of coastal or grass hay for a rescue horse.

• **CHRIST COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP IS COLLECTING INFANT CAR SEATS AND CARRIERS.** These are given to new mothers who cannot afford them. To donate your old or new car seats and carriers, call Karen Allen at 263-3517 or leave a message at Christ Community Fellowship, 263-love. All donations are appreciated.

• **ROAD TO RECOVERY**, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, seeks volunteers to drive cancer patients to treatment in Midland. This requires just a few hours commitment each month. To volunteer, or to request a ride for treatment, call Nancy Koger at 267-7809.

• **NEW LIFE MINISTRIES** Church of God In Christ is holding a soup kitchen every second and fourth Tuesday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at 204 N.W. 10th. The meal is free. Call 264-0771 for more information.

• **THE PET PATROL** helps locate lost pets and owners of found pets. To volunteer or for more information, call Melanie Gambrell at 267-PETS (7387).

• **ODYSSEY HOSPICE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS** to work in the office and perform patient services. For more information or to volunteer, call 263-5999.

• **THE MOBILE MEALS PROGRAM** that delivers meals to the elderly and homebound needs volunteers to deliver meals. If you can spare one hour per week to deliver eight or 10 meals, you are needed. About 85 to 90 meals are prepared, packaged and delivered to recipients within the city limits of Big Spring. If you can volunteer, please call 263-4016 before 3 p.m.

• **LEGAL AID OF NORTHWEST TEXAS** is accepting appointments from 2 p.m. until 5 p.m. the first and third Wednesday of each month. Individuals seeking legal advice for matters concerning family law, divorce, custody and child support issues, social security cases, employment and housing may contact the office to schedule an appointment. Criminal cases are not accepted. Anyone recently served with legal documents should call the office immediately at 800-926-5630 or 432-686-0647.

• **BIG SPRING AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES** are in critical need of foster families. Foster parents are the caretakers for the children in the community who have been abused or neglected. For more information on becoming foster parents or adoptive families, call the Children's Protective Services office at 263-9669.

Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity between 7 a.m. Wednesday and 7 a.m. today:

- **JONATHAN MATA**, 22, of 803.5 14th Street, was arrested Wednesday on a capias warrant.
- **CARLA PINEDA**, 22, of 1512 S. Main, was arrested Wednesday on a capias warrant.
- **CHAD ALLEN MUSGROVE**, 39, of 405 Moss Lake, was arrested Wednesday on two local warrants.
- **JUAN EMILIO BARRERA**, 50, of 2911 W. Highway 80, was arrested Wednesday on a charge of theft.
- **JIMMY F. MASSINGILL JR.**, 40, of 1637 Hamilton, was arrested on a charge of public intoxication.
- **AGGRAVATED ASSAULT WITH A DEADLY WEAPON** was reported in the 3200 block of Fenn.
- **ASSAULT BY CONTACT** was reported in the 1500 block of Oriole.
- **ASSAULT BY THREAT** was reported in the 1600 block of Tucson.
- **ASSAULT CAUSING BODILY INJURY** was reported in the 2600 block of Gregg.
- **ASSAULT CAUSING BODILY INJURY/FAMILY VIOLENCE** was reported in the 1400 block of Highway 87.
- **BURGLARY OF A VEHICLE** was reported in the 400 block of Hillside.
- **CITY EMPLOYEE INJURY** was reported in the 1600 block of Martin Luther King.
- **CRIMINAL TRESPASS** was reported in the 1000 block of Gregg.
- **DISORDERLY CONDUCT** was reported in the 1100 block of Mulberry.
- **THEFT** was reported:
 - in the 1400 block of Fourth Street.
 - in the 1100 block of Lamesa.
 - in the 1800 block of Gregg.

Sheriff's report

The Howard County Sheriff's Office reported the following activity:

- Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 48 inmates at the time of this report.
- **TAMMIE SUE HORN**, 38, was arrested by the HCSO Wednesday on a charge of public intoxication and a violation of promise to appear.
 - **CASSIE RENEA EMERSON**, 19, was arrested by the HCSO Wednesday on a charge of no drivers license.
 - **THOMAS RAY CAMARILLO**, 34, was arrested by the HCSO Wednesday on a charge of felony possession of a firearm.
 - **TIFFANY CLAUDIA GIBSON**, 18, was arrested by the DPS Wednesday on a charges of failure to identify a fugitive from justice, giving fictitious information and no drivers license.
 - **CHARLES BURDEN**, 42, was arrested by DPS Wednesday on charges of driving while license invalid, no drivers license and an open alcohol container.

Fire/EMS

The Big Spring Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services reported the following activity:

- **TRAUMA** was reported in the 1400 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **TRAUMA** was reported at Moss Creek Lake. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **TRAUMA** was reported on the corner of 14th Street and Owens. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1400 block of Pacific. One person was transported to the VAMC.
- **TRAUMA** was reported in the 2600 block of Gregg. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1300 block of Colby. One person was transported to SMMC.

Weather

Tonight...Partly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Lows in the upper 60s. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.

Friday...Mostly cloudy. Highs around 90. East winds 10 to 15 mph.

Friday night...Mostly cloudy. Lows around 70. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.

Saturday...Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 90s. Southeast winds around 10 mph.

Saturday night...Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Lows in the upper 60s.

Sunday...Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the lower 90s.

Sunday night...Mostly cloudy. Lows in the lower 70s.

Monday...Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the lower 90s.

Monday night...Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Lows in the lower 70s.

Tuesday...Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 90s.

Tuesday night...Mostly cloudy. Lows in the lower 70s.

Wednesday...Mostly cloudy. Highs in the lower 90s.

Bulletin Board

If you have items for the Bulletin board, contact the Herald news room at 263-7331 or email editor@bigspringherald.com

TODAY

• League of United Latin American Citizens LULAC Chapter 4791 meets at 5:30 p.m. at the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce. For more information, contact John Ybarra at 264-1628. The public is invited.

FRIDAY

• Signal Mountain Quilting Guild meets from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. at 1019 Nolan St. Call 267-1037 or 267-7281 for more information.
• AMBUCS meet at noon in La Posada Restaurant.
• Greater Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon at the Big Spring Country Club.
• Spring City Senior Citizens Center country and western dance from 7:30 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. featuring Monroe Casey and the Prowlers. All area seniors are invited.

SATURDAY

• Eagles Lodge Dance at 8:30 p.m. at 703 W. Third.

MONDAY

• Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) No. 21 meets at 5 p.m. in the Dora Roberts Rehabilitation Center, 306 W. Third, for weigh-in. The meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. Call 1-800-392-8677 or 263-0391 or 263-1758.
• Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) No. TX 1756 meets in the First Christian Church of Big Spring, 911 Goliad. A different program is offered every week. Enter through the south side door off 10th Street. Call 213-1342 for more information. Weigh-in starts at 5 p.m.; meetings begin at 5:30 p.m.
• Prospector's Club work night begins at 7 p.m. at 606 E. Third.

TUESDAY

• Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room.

WEDNESDAY

• Optimist Club meets at 7 a.m. in the Howard College Cactus Room.
• Senior Circle meets at 10:30 a.m. at Scenic Mountain Medical Center for Sit and Be Fit Chair Aerobics. Those 50 years and older are invited to attend. Call 268-4721.

Support Groups

THURSDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m.; women's meeting; 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. Non-smoking closed discussion meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

FRIDAY

• AA open discussion meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at 605 Settles. Open Big Book study meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

SATURDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. Open podium/speakers meeting 615 Settles 8 p.m. until 9 p.m. Open birthday night, no smoking meeting the last Saturday of each month at 8 p.m.

SUNDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous meets from 11 a.m. to noon at 615 Settles. Open meeting 5 p.m. until 6 p.m.

MONDAY

• Encourager's Support Group for all widows and widowers meets the first and third Monday of the month. For more information, call Nancy Hale at 398-5239.

• Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) TX. 21, weight loss support group meets at Dora Roberts Rehabilitation Center, 306 W. Third St. at 5 p.m. TOPS provides members with information, motivation and fellowship in attaining and maintaining their physician-prescribed weight goals. For more information, call Alex at 264-6921 or 1-800 392-8677.

TUESDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. and closed discussion meeting 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

• The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) support group meets from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Howard County Library, 500 S. Main. Anyone who has a mental illness or has a friend or family with mental illness is invited to participate. Call Felicia Talley at 268-3835 for more information.

BIG SPRING HERALD

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REAGAN

Continued from Page 1B

indictment, these men took dogs that were not performing aggressively enough in fights and disposed of them by electrocution, drowning or just plain beating them to death. One can look at those accusations and decide that, if true, the young man in question must have more than a couple of loose screws up in the ol' belfry. One would probably be right. Someone apparently forgot to inform Vick that quarterbacking a NFL team and engaging

in animal torture are not mutually compatible endeavors. People tend to look poorly on such inconsistencies. If he is found guilty of the charges, he will lose much more than his freedom. He will lose a multi-million dollar career, not to mention additional millions in endorsement deals. Regardless of the outcome, Vick's net worth will probably end up somewhere around mine. As damning as the case against Vick appears, however, football isn't the sport taking the biggest hit this week. That dubious distinction belongs to basketball. It was announced recently

that the FBI is investigating allegations that veteran NBA referee Tim Donaghy bet on basketball games over the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 seasons, including ones in which he officiated. Now, we can make bad jokes about brain-dead quarterbacks until the cows come home, but referees on the take is serious business. At the end of the day, the only thing sports franchises can offer their fans is the belief that their games are on the up and up. Take away that belief, take away a sport's credibility and it might as well be pro wrestling. Despite what some people

might think, I was not around at the time of the infamous Black Sox gambling scandal in 1919, but everyone agrees it was almost the death of baseball. And the same kind of damage awaits basketball unless the NBA Powers That Be jump on this fast. After all, if there's one crooked ref, there can always be another. And maybe a player or two. Or even an owner. Who knows how widespread this thing is? NBA Commissioner David Stern said in a Tuesday news conference that it appears that Donaghy was the only referee who apparently bet on games. But Stern needs to go further

than reassuring statements. He needs to launch a full-scale investigation to make sure there is no other funny business going on under his watch. And he needs to keep the public informed every step of the way. It would be a shame if basketball took a permanent hit because of a credibility problem, but it's happened to a major sport before. You remember boxing, don't you? Like pro wrestling, but with gloves? Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-7331, ext. 234, or by e-mail at reporter@bigspringherald.com

COWBOYS

Continued from Page 1B

His first practice of the season got off to a bad start when line-backer Greg Ellis aggravated his rehabilitating Achilles' tendon early on and had to be replaced by undrafted rookie Alex Obomese. He zoomed to the top of the depth chart because top pick Anthony Spencer isn't signed. Neither is third-rounder James Marten, who could be getting valuable experience at tackle because starters Flozell Adams and Marc Colombo went on the physically unable to perform list Wednesday. But things went well otherwise, with team drills ending on a very fan-friendly note: a 60-yard strike from Tony Romo to Terrell Owens.

Actually, the segment had about 30 more seconds, but Phillips made the executive decision to blow the horn. "The defensive coaches got mad at me. They said, 'If you were still a defensive coach, you wouldn't have ended on that play,'" Phillips said. "That's the difference in being the head coach and the defensive coach." While this was Phillips' first training camp practice, it was far from his first time on the field with the team. He held enough minicamps that players knew what to expect — and, no, it's not as simple as him being the anti-Parcells. However, there were some clear differences between Phillips and his predecessor. Rookies didn't have to wear star-less helmets, Terry Glenn was allowed to work out in white shorts while everyone

else had blue and the coach drew laughs for jokes, not sarcastic comments as he talked to players. The most notable change might've been that Owens was a happy camper. He lined up at two different receiving spots and even helped out on kick returns. "It's just refreshing for a lot of us," Owens said. Romo described the coaches as "real similar, except for the language." "They're a little different in their styles, but they're both very successful in my eyes in how they bring things to the table," Romo said. Maybe Phillips' sunny disposition is part of the reason for the optimism that's already running rampant around the team. He definitely notices an intangible quality that he likes. "You get a sense of something

there with some teams. I get that sense, whatever that is. A little mystic, maybe, but there's a feeling," he said. "They're all pulling in the same direction. They want to do the same things and want to be involved and they have some talent — all of that combined. "See, I see the little things — an offensive guy patting a defensive guy on the back, things like that, already. It's not offense-defense. They've got something that kind of clicks together already, and I was glad to see that because most of the time it's 'We're the offense' and 'We're the defense' and 'This is special teams.' They have feeling for each other." Now all he's got to do is keep it going until February. Extra points: The Cowboys are bracing for a long wait before Spencer signs. Only one player drafted before him has a

deal and agents like using other picks as barometers of how much their guy is worth. ... RB Alonzo Coleman joined Adams and Colombo on the PUP list. Rookie WR Isaiah Stanback went on the non-football injury list because of a problem dating to his college days. ... Phillips' dad — Bum Phillips, who coached the Houston Oilers and New Orleans Saints — watched from the sidelines. "He told me today he was glad he was out of it," Wade Phillips said. "I don't know what that means." ... Longtime Cowboys scouting director Larry Lacewell, who rarely visited during Parcells' tenure, also was on hand. ... Phillips said this was the first time he opened camp without players being in pads. Players will be fully suited up Thursday, when they'll have their first day of two-a-days.

RANGERS

Continued from Page 1B

abled list. "I got ahead 2-0 and then I just started thinking get on base, give me a chance." Kenny Lofton homered and drove in three runs in what might have been his last home game for the Rangers, who matched their longest winning streak of the season with the four-game sweep — their first since doing the same to Seattle at home last August. Lofton's two-run homer in the third put the Rangers up 3-1. After Seattle tied the game, the 40-year-old added a tiebreaking RBI single in the fifth and scored on a double by Mark Teixeira, who may also be gone by time Texas plays at home again Aug. 6. "Kenny's just being Kenny. He's just going to

keep doing it," Byrd said. "Hopefully, he keeps doing it here." With the Rangers again in last place in the AL West, there has been plenty of interest from contending teams in acquiring Teixeira and Lofton before Tuesday's non-waiver trade deadline. And general manager Jon Daniels is listening to the offers. Lofton was 2-for-5 to raise his average to .303 — four points better than his career average over 17 seasons. Texas became his 11th team when he signed a one-year deal last winter. The still-speedy outfielder, with 21 of his 620 steals this season, has been to the playoffs 10 times with six teams. Teixeira, the switch-hitting slugger who has won two Gold Gloves at first base, is eligible for salary arbitration after this season and can become a free

agent after 2008. He is hitting .299 with 13 home runs and 49 RBIs despite missing 27 games with a strained left quadriceps after playing a team-record 507 consecutive games. Adrian Beltre tied a team record with three doubles and drove in four runs for the Mariners, including his two-run double in the eighth off Joaquin Benoit (4-3) that tied the game before he came home on a double by Raul Ibanez to put Seattle up 6-5. Benoit had allowed only one run over 18 2-3 innings in his previous 14 outings before giving up three doubles in the eighth. He pitched a perfect ninth. Catalanotto and Laird had back-to-back doubles in the second to put the Rangers up 1-0. Travis Metcalf, 9-for-13 his last four games, had a leadoff

single in the third before Lofton's seventh homer. Michael Young, who was 2-for-4, was thrown out at home while trying to score from first on Teixeira's double in the fifth. Ichiro Suzuki, the only player with more hits than Young since 2003, also had two hits and scored twice. But he struck out with two on to end the sixth and popped out to short center field with two more on in the eighth. "It's frustrating. We're losing tight games," Putz said. "But there is not a sense of panic. We'll keep playing hard and things will turn around." The Mariners play their next 10 games at home, including three next week against the Angels. Notes: Rangers starter Brandon McCarthy allowed three runs in five innings and still hasn't

won since May 20 at Houston. Seattle's Miguel Batista had allowed only 12 earned runs over 44 innings his last seven starts, but gave up five runs in six innings. for the first time this season from Triple-A Toledo on July 6. He hit his first career homer last Friday and is 10-for-20 in nine games, with three homers and 10 RBIs. "What I like about him is he's a hungry player," Tigers manager Jim Leyland said. "He went down to Triple-A and did everything we asked." Raburn's only other appearance in the big leagues was a 12-game stretch with Detroit in 2004. Raburn's night didn't start impressively as he laid down a sacrifice bunt in the first inning. Raburn homered in the third and fourth innings and had an RBI double during Detroit's five-run fifth. He drove in two more runs with a single in the ninth. Raburn was called up

SANDLOT

Continued from Page 1B

excited about the tournament and the chance to play. They've worked really hard and are going to be very competitive." Many of the players on the team also play for pony leagues as well as for some of the area high schools. "I've got players who

have played several years of little league," Flores said. "I've got kids who play football for the Big Spring Steers. There are some good athletes on this team." The athleticism of the team transcends to their defensive abilities on the softball diamond, according to Flores. "Success in slow pitch is heavily dependent upon defensive abilities,"

he said. "These guys practice hard and cover a lot of ground. They're very good defensively." The Sandlot has had plenty of help from local sponsors. PRO2 has paid the \$250 entry fee and Burrito Express II and Tio Lencho's have provided funds for the team's uniforms. As far as hotel rooms and food expenses, the players have gone out

earned the funds themselves. "It means a lot more that they are earning their way to the tournament," said Flores. "Hopefully, their hard work will pay off." Contact Sports Editor Jonathan Hull by calling him at 263-7331, ext. 237, or email him at sports@bigspringherald.com.

BRIEFS

Continued from Page 1B

New officers will be elected for the 2007 season. For more information, contact Jamie Scott at 264-0001 or Robert Smith at 263-3333. Lady Steers v-ball team meeting Big Spring's Lady Steers volleyball team will hold a parent/athlete meeting at 6 p.m. Aug. 2 at Alan and Della Partee's house at 1600 Kiowa. The meeting will discuss rules and expectations for the upcoming season since two-a-days begin Aug. 6. A swim party will be held following the meeting. Parents are asked to bring snacks and drinks. Call Della Partee at 367-

4038 or Coach Amanda Whitaker at (325) 864-1467 with any questions. Steers season ticket sales have begun Big Spring High School have made 2007 Steer football season tickets available for previous season ticket holders at the Athletic Training Center. Season tickets will be made available to the general public Aug. 8 through Aug. 22 from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Call Kay Cook at 264-3662 with any questions. Magers-Powell camp scheduled Rose Magers-Powell, the Big Spring High School Hall of Fame volleyball star and 1984 Olympian, will again be conducting

a volleyball camp at BSHS this summer. The camp is scheduled for July 30-Aug. 1 with sessions for middle school players from 9 a.m. to noon. The high school players' session is from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. each day. The fee will be \$125 per player. Players can register online and get additional information on the camp at www.gotrosevolleyball-camps.com. Country club hosting over 80 golf tourney The Big Spring Country Club is hosting an over 80 scramble tournament starting at 1 p.m. Aug. 18. The tournament will conclude Aug. 19. Entry fee is \$60 per player plus an optional golf cart fee. Private carts are welcome. Entry includes a barbecue lunch on the course both days. Call the pro shop at 267-5354 for more information or to enter a team. QUICK CASH REBATES The Quick Way to Payday We'll cash your personal check in minutes, deposit it on your next payday, up to 14 days, give you the money you need, the long distance you want and the discount you deserve! Requirements For Service: 1) Valid Picture ID 2) Verification Of Income 3) Most Recent Checking Account Statement 612 S. Gregg Big Spring, Texas 432-263-4400

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MOVING SALE: 108 Jefferson St., Friday & Saturday 7am-? Lots of Stuff. Must Sell.

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GARAGE SALE 606 Edwards Circle, Saturday 8am-3pm. Bikes, computer desk, golf clubs, baby clothes, dog house & lots of misc.

GARAGE SALE, 807 Baylor. Friday 1pm-5pm & Saturday 8am-5pm. Tons of name brand clothes, teen to adult, all seasons. Purses & lots of misc.

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GARAGE SALE: 307 Ramsey in Coahoma. Friday & Saturday 7:30-? Crocks, Coleman lanterns, Coleman heater, bicycles, bedding, what-nots, linens, clothes, glassware, baby bed and more.

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Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Howard County Auditor will accept sealed bids until 10:00 A.M. on August 10, 2007 for the following:

The purchase of one (1) New Ford Neck 3 Axle Trailer to be used for maintenance of County Roads. Specifications may be obtained in the Auditor's Office, 300 S. Main, Room 203, Big Spring, TX or by calling (432) 264-2210.

Bids will be presented to the Commissioners' Court at 10:00 A.M. on August 13, 2007 for their consideration.

The Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids.
#5455 July 26 & August 3, 2007

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Tomorrow's Horoscope

hurt to try just about everything at least once. You're divinely directed in pursuits of fun and profit.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You're throwing out tons of ideas. Don't be afraid of the wrong ones. Right ideas still have to be proved, whereas wrong ones are already proved. Guaranteed, they lead you closer to your solution.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Social responsibility is the theme. You simply couldn't bear to stand by and let the bad guys win. When others see you making a difference, they follow your lead.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Feel like doing nothing? Revolt against the notion instead. Action changes your feelings. Your smile will be the source of your joy and not the other way around.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Making money depends on providing what a lot of people might provide, but in a way that only you provide it. Charm is your chief asset — spread it on thick.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). A part of your life that was once electrifying is now a bit dull. You can move on without feeling defeated. There's a reason lightning doesn't strike the same tree twice. That tree is gone the second time.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). When you don't have time to relax, take it as a sign that you should relax. Think of it as prevention, and also as pleasure. The best things in life are things

you don't have time to do, but do anyway.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). They'll try to tell you that one chance is all you get, but in fact you'll have endless chances. So give it your best shot. If you miss, you can use what you learn to do better next time.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Everything, big and small, matters. What is done contributes to the big picture almost as much as what's left undone. Load up your list, and tackle whatever you can.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Your ideas deserve respect. Arrange to have someone go before you to build you up. It helps you command the attention you'll need to properly make your point.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: Venus moves retrograde — The shadow of love is near, as tomorrow the goddess of love takes a backward dip in Virgo, then Leo, for introspective changes of heart. In world myths, when Venus disappears behind the sun for six weeks, she journeys into the underworld. When Sumerian Venus, Inanna, visited her jealous underworld sister Ereckigala she was stripped of her jewels, clothes and her husband! Venus overly identified with beautiful things and love relationships at the expense of her sister, and lost everything. This is why astrologers say Venus retrograde isn't the best time to start a relationship, buy luxury items or have cosmetic surgery. Hopefully your love life won't resemble a

"Desperate Housewives" episode, but you'll have the opportunity to untangle knotty thorns in your relationship and to re-evaluate your agreements. You'll make new observations about how you relate to others. Instead of rushing out to satisfy your desire for ideal love and beauty, turn within. Ask yourself: Am I in a balanced relationship? Is what I'm buying worth its actual price? Reflective solitude is good heart therapy for Venus in Virgo/Leo retrograde, which asks us to not compulsively grasp love and beauty, but to integrate it internally.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Middleclass nobility wears thin for the aristocratic Leo, who soon evolves into head of a tribe. Mick Jagger is the rock 'n' roll chieftain, appropriately knighted by the British monarchy for his "services to popular music." For Jagger, there's nothing finer than roaming around as king of the jungle, with his loyal band members and fans, and shaking his colorful tail feather proudly.

If you would like to write to Holiday Mathis, please go to www.creators.com and click on "Write the Author" on the Holiday Mathis page, or you may send her a postcard in the mail. To find out more about Holiday Mathis and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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Annie's Mailbox

Dear Annie: I'm a single mother of a wonderful 12-year-old boy. He gets A's in school, plays sports and reads voraciously. I am divorced from my son's father, who lives nearby, and we share custody.

My ex thinks our son is unmotivated because he doesn't make extra effort in school and he's losing interest in playing guitar, etc. Recently, my son told me his dad calls him lazy and this does not inspire him to work harder, but, rather, has the opposite effect.

I told my ex this was counterproductive and hurtful. His response was, "Well, it's true." I said that regardless, he should not voice that opinion in front of our son. My ex declared, "It's not my problem" and walked out. Now he's not speaking to me.

Given that my ex doesn't care what I think, what can I say to my son about his father's insensitive words? — Concerned Mom

Dear Concerned: Children have a tendency to live up — or down — to what others think of them. Parents who label their children can do particular damage.

Your son does well in



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

school, is involved in athletics and "reads voraciously." We don't know how much more his father expects of a 12-year-old boy. Losing interest in a musical instrument is fairly common and not an indication of laziness.

Before your son becomes determined to prove his father right, we strongly urge all of you to get into family counseling. If your ex won't go, go without him.

Dear Annie: My husband and I have some really annoying neighbors, "John and Alice." They moved in two years ago. Alice is tolerable, although we don't have much in common, but we don't like John at all. He is really creepy. He stares at me and doesn't talk. When we try to engage him in conversation, he rarely has anything to say, and when he does, it tends to be idiotic. He makes a joke out of everything and he is NOT funny. Other neighbors have met them and feel the same way we do.

John and Alice constantly ask us over for dinner or to go to a movie, and I have turned them down at least 20 times. They just don't get that we're not interested. They have no friends, and I have never seen

any of their siblings, although I know John has two brothers.

I try to avoid them, but every time they see me or my husband doing yard work, they come over to chat and ask us to dinner. What do I do? — Annoyed

Dear Annoyed: These are your neighbors, so it's best to stay on polite terms, but you don't have to socialize. When John and Alice invite you to join them, all you need to say is, "Thanks, but we can't make it." Keep repeating it, no matter how many times they ask.

Dear Annie: So, "Second Fiddle" wants to banish her husband's beloved dogs because one of them nipped her toddler? Kudos to her husband for his loyalty to his other family members.

A nip from a female dog is more likely to be a correction to a smaller pack member than aggression. Was the child pulling her fur or her ears or climbing on her? Rather than accept responsibility for teaching a child how to interact properly with a family pet, Second Fiddle simply goes mommy-hysterical, blaming the dog (who was there first), and you back her up. A dog is a lifetime commitment, not a "thing" to be discarded when it's inconvenient. — Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Pittsburgh: Since a dog bite is so dangerous to a child, the dogs need to be trained not to bite the baby until the baby is old enough to learn not to annoy the dogs. It doesn't matter that the dogs were there first. When a dog and a baby cannot learn to coexist peacefully, it's the dog — not the child — that has to find a new home.

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ANSWERS

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News in brief

House Demos expect drop in GOP support for war, offer bill to bring troops home in 60 days

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Democrats have drafted new Iraq legislation they hope will appeal to Republicans fed up with the war: Start withdrawing troops in two months but leave it up to President Bush to decide when to complete the pullout.

The vote will come next week, as members take up a \$460 billion bill covering military spending for 2008. Another vote could come again in September, after Iraq commander Gen. David Petraeus delivers a long-anticipated assessment on the war and Congress considers a \$142 billion measure needed to finance the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"This is big time," Rep. John Murtha, D-Pa., said of the upcoming fall debate. "When you get to September, this is history. This is when we're going to have a real confrontation with the president trying to work things out."

The House has passed similar anti-war measures in the past, but has been unable to push the legislation through the Senate, where Democrats hold a slimmer majority and Republicans have routinely blocked such bills from advancing.

Most recently, the House approved legislation that would have required troop withdrawals to begin this November and finish by April 1.

Families of molestation victims at San Diego hospital lash out at convicted therapist

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Respiratory therapist Wayne Albert Bleyle was in New York state on a wintry day when investigators called him about allegations he had molested patients too sick to defend themselves.

When they asked how many children he molested, investigators said, he looked out his window and asked, "How many snowflakes are there out there?"

On Wednesday, Bleyle didn't turn to look as a succession of parents and family members of victims spoke at his sentencing hearing. Some wept; others shook with anger.

As part of a plea deal, Bleyle, 56, was sentenced to 45 years and eight months in prison for molesting five of his young, disabled patients and for taking pornographic photographs of others. Prosecutors said he targeted those who were comatose, brain-damaged or too disabled to talk.

"You have violated the trust of your patients, you have violated the trust of your employer, and you have inflicted indescribable anguish on your victims and their families," Superior Court Judge Kenneth K. So told Bleyle.

Country singer Mindy McCready taken into custody in Tennessee on probation violation

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Country singer Mindy McCready was taken into custody at Nashville International Airport, accused of violating her probation after a scuffle with her mother and authorities in Florida, officials said.

McCready, 31, was arrested last week in Fort Myers, Fla., her hometown, on misdemeanor charges that she scratched her mother on the face and then resisted

sheriff's deputies.

She was on probation for obtaining the painkiller OxyContin fraudulently at a pharmacy in 2004. Still pending was another probation violation charge resulting from a drunken driving arrest in May 2005.

Deputy District Attorney General Derek Smith told The Tennessean that she violated probation in three ways: by being charged in a new offense; not reporting those charges immediately to her probation officer; and by the nature of the new assault charges.

An official at the Williamson County sheriff's office just south of Nashville said McCready was being booked Wednesday night.

South Korean envoy heads to Afghanistan in attempt to save 22 hostages held captive

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — A top South Korean envoy headed to Afghanistan on Thursday, scrambling to save 22 of his country's citizens held captive by Taliban kidnappers after the militants killed one hostage.

However, a local police chief said that the negotiations with the captors were difficult because their demands were unclear.

"One says let's exchange them for my relative, the others say let's release the women and yet another wants a deal for money," said Khwaja Mohammad Sidiqi, a local police chief in Qarabagh. "They have got problems among themselves."

On Wednesday, authorities found the bullet-riddled body of 42-year-old Bae Hyung-kyu in Qarabagh district of Ghazni province, where the South Koreans were abducted July 19. Church officials said he was killed on his birthday.

Bae was found with 10 bullet holes in his head, chest and stomach, said Abdul Rahman, a police officer. Another Afghan police official, who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the situation, said militants told him the hostage was sick and couldn't walk and was therefore shot.

US commander: Better aim of mortars, rockets into Green Zone appears related to training

BAGHDAD (AP) — The U.S. military has noted a "significant improvement" in the aim of attackers firing rockets and mortars into the heavily fortified Green Zone in the past three months that it has linked to training in Iran, a top commander said Thursday.

Lt. Gen. Ray Odierno, the top day-to-day U.S. commander in Iraq, also expressed cautious optimism over a decline in the number of American troops killed this month. At least 60 U.S. troops have died so far in July after the death toll topped 100 for the previous three months, according to an Associated Press tally based on military statements.

Odierno said it appeared that casualties had increased as fresh U.S. forces expanded operations into militant strongholds as part of the five-month-old security operation aimed at clamping off violence in the capital, but were going down as the Americans gained control of the areas.

"We've started to see a slow but gradual reduction in casualties and it continues in July," he said at a joint news conference with Iraqi military commander Maj.

Jameson. "In the end, we're only going to have to get rid of one part-time position that's currently filled. We'll also be eliminating two full-time positions, but one of those is a position an employee recently retired from and we simply won't fill, and the second is a position held by an employee who is about to retire. That position will also remain unfilled as a part of the cuts."

Jameson, whose department is currently made up of 22 full-time employees and one part-time employee, said Howard County residents can

expect to see a drop in services from his department as well.

"We're basically eliminating our road crew because of these cuts," said Jameson. "The road crew is responsible for maintaining the county's caliche roads, so you're going to see a difference in the coming year. Fortunately, everyone that's on that crew will still be with us, so if we have to make some repairs, we'll still have the people, we'll just have to pull them from other parts of the department."

Barr said cuts have not been made to any other

Gen. Abboud Qanbar. "It's an initial positive sign, but I would argue we need a bit more time to make an assessment whether it's a true trend."

Documents show leaders were briefed on terror surveillance, contradicting Gonzales

WASHINGTON (AP) — Documents indicate eight congressional leaders were briefed about the Bush administration's terrorist surveillance program on the eve of its expiration in 2004, contradicting sworn Senate testimony this week by Attorney General Alberto Gonzales.

The documents underscore questions about Gonzales' credibility as senators consider whether a perjury investigation should be opened into conflicting accounts about the program and a dramatic March 2004 confrontation leading up to its potentially illegal reauthorization.

A Gonzales spokesman maintained Wednesday that the attorney general stands by his testimony.

At a heated Senate Judiciary Committee hearing Tuesday, Gonzales repeatedly testified that the issue at hand was not about the terrorist surveillance program, which allowed the National Security Agency to eavesdrop on suspects in the United States without receiving court approval.

Instead, Gonzales said, the emergency meetings on March 10, 2004, focused on an intelligence program that he would not describe.

N. Korea storms out of military talks with S, Korea; no agreement reached

PANMUNJOM, Korea (AP) — North Korea walked out of military talks with South Korea, ending three days of high-level negotiations Thursday with no agreement amid a lingering dispute over their shared sea border.

"We've come to the conclusion that we don't need these fruitless talks any more," North Korea's chief delegate Lt. Gen. Kim Yong Chol said at the final session in the truce village of Panmunjom.

Kim criticized the South for avoiding discussions of what he termed the "illegal" sea border.

City employee recovering from accidental gunshot wound

Herald Staff Report

A city of Big Spring employee is recovering from an accidental gunshot wound sustained Wednesday afternoon at approximately 2 p.m. near his home on U.S. Highway 350.

According to city officials, City Parks Manager Jesse Baker, who was off duty at the time of the accident, dis-

charged a .22 caliber rifle and was struck in the top part of his foot.

Baker was taken to Scenic Mountain Medical Center, where he was held overnight while awaiting surgery, which was completed shortly after 7 a.m. today.

He's expected to return to work as soon as Monday and make a full recovery.

departments at this time, but that's no guarantee of what the future holds.

"We're looking at the budget very diligently," said Barr. "I wish I could say these are the only cuts that are going to have to be made, but I can't. We're still looking at it."

Contact Staff Writer Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail at citydesk@bigspringherald.com.

COUNTY

Continued from Page 1A

said the damage to county coffers has been done.

According to county library director Hollis McCright, those budget cuts will amount to a reduction in personnel, and ultimately, in services provided to county residents.

"I currently have eight full-time employees and one part-time employee in my department," said McCright. "I've managed to make cuts in line items that amount to \$12,000,

but in the end, I'm going to have to make cuts in personnel to cover this.

"We're also planning cuts in subscriptions and book buying, and we're also going to have to look at decreasing the number of hours that we're open. This is going to mean cuts in the services we provide, without a doubt."

While McCright struggles with impending layoffs as a result of the budget cuts, County Road and Bridge Administrator Eddy Jameson said his department is making plans as well.

"We've been very fortunate in this," said

MOORE

Continued from page 1A

letting their attorneys deal with our attorneys so we can get this deal hammered out."

Moore Development directors voted unanimously in April to provide up to \$3 million to help Brint Ryan — manager of the Dallas company and the founder and CEO of Ryan & Company — renovate the Settles Hotel, which he purchased for \$75,000 from the city of Big Spring.

SHDC announced plans for a \$12 million renovation project in December. The project includes

plans for commercial and residential use of the property, with retail space available on the first and second floors.

Ryan's company has placed \$75,000 in escrow to pay for the building, according to city officials. Ryan said it was necessary for the company to wait to take control of the title to the building due to "timing issues" in efforts to renovate the structure and have it added to the national registry of historic places.

Also during the meeting, board member Mike Niklasch submitted his letter of resignation to the governmental body. Niklasch, who has been residing in both Big

Spring and St. Petersburg, Fla., said he and his family would be spending more time in Florida, making it a tough order to attend board meetings.

McLellan said he will be submitting a report to the Big Spring City Council, which oversees the eco-

nomic development corporation. The council is expected to appoint someone to fill the unexpired term.

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AN ENCOURAGING WORD

By Eddy Pitchford

The information highway enables us to worry about people and places far removed from our daily experiences. We now have the ability to worry about weather in places we will never go. We can get upset about prices in countries we will never shop. We can question the choices made by athletes we will never meet.

Add to this media maze the confusion of politics, unrealistic reality shows, idle talent, the jeopardy of reducing life to trivial facts, and the results seems to be life has little meaning. Into such a scene, the testimony of scripture needs to be loudly proclaimed and embraced.

"Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." "Whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."

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EDITORIAL

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

-FIRST AMENDMENT

Opinions expressed on this page are those of the Editorial Board of the Big Spring Herald unless otherwise indicated.

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OTHER VIEWS

U.S. Attorney should have tried agents

One of the odder controversies swirling these days is the bitter criticism being flung at Johnny Sutton, the U.S. attorney for the Western District of Texas which is based in San Antonio. Sutton's shortcoming, it appears, is his strict enforcement of the law even when the lawbreakers are Border Patrol agents.

Sutton, appointed by President Bush, prosecuted the two agents for shooting at and wounding a fleeing but unarmed drug suspect and then lying about it in 2005. However, it wasn't Sutton who convicted them; a West Texas jury did that after a 2 1/2-week trial laying out all evidence. The agents are Jose Alonso Compean, who is serving a 12-year prison sentence, and Ignacio Ramos, who is serving an 11-year sentence.

Among many Americans alarmed about the nation's porous border with Mexico, Compean and Ramos are seen as martyrs, unjustly prosecuted and imprisoned by an over-zealous prosecutor while trying to protect the country from drug runners.

Sutton, though, told the Senate Judiciary Committee in Washington this week that Compean and Ramos "are not heroes. They deliberately shot an unarmed man in the back without justification, destroyed evidence to cover it up and lied about it."

The agents contended that they saw an object in the suspect's hand that looked like a gun. But they first made that claim a month after the shooting, Sutton said.

The suspect, Osvaldo Aldrete Davila, entered the United States illegally in a van with more than 700 pounds of marijuana. When the van was stopped, he got out and fled. Compean fired at him 14 times and Ramos once, and Davila was hit once as he ran away to Mexico.

On one point, Sutton seemed grudgingly to agree that it "probably wasn't a very wise move" to grant Aldrete a humanitarian visa to get him back to the United States to testify, under immunity, against the two agents. Critics don't like his grant of immunity from prosecution in the case, either.

Among the critics of the lengthy sentences are Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas. Cornyn and a Democratic senator from California, Dianne Feinstein, have sent a letter to President Bush asking him to commute the sentences.

The senators are using the word "excessive" to describe the sentence the same word the president used to justify his recent decision to commute the sentence of former vice presidential aide Lewis "Scooter" Libby, who was convicted of lying to a grand jury and investigators.

Some reduction in the sentences of the agents but not a pardon might be justified. The man who was shot recuperated well enough to be arrested several months later in a separate drug smuggling case.

But Sutton was right to prosecute. Law enforcement officers have every right to defend themselves but no right to start shooting suspects who have posed no threat to them or others and flee and then lie about it.

As Sutton told the committee, "If we let our agents just open fire, shooting to kill some innocent person is going to get gunned down execution-style by a cop, and there's going to be an outcry."

THE AMERICAN-STATESMAN
AUSTIN

How To Contact Us

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A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

May we have a heavenly manner that draws others to You, Lord.

Amen

It's the cheating, stupid

Sen. David Vitter, R-La., is a disgrace. This month, thanks to porn sleaze-meister Larry Flynt, Americans learned that the alleged prostitution ring run by Deborah Jeane Palfrey — the D.C. madam — called Vitter five times between 1999 and 2001. Vitter promptly issued a statement apologizing for "a very serious sin" — then went into seclusion. On Monday, Vitter trotted out his poor wife as he offered "my deep, sincere apologies to all those I have let down" and said he accepted responsibility for his mistakes.

A few problems: For one thing, paying a prostitute is a crime, even if authorities cannot prosecute Vitter because of the statute of limitations. For another, Vitter is guilty of criminal stupidity. Vitter entered Congress in 1999 after he won a special election to replace Rep. Bob Livingston, who resigned in the heat of the Clinton impeachment after admitting that he had had an extramarital affair. About that time, Vitter was vocal in his criticism of then-President Bill Clinton — he said Clinton was "morally unfit to govern" — yet, at the same time, he was calling call girls.

I would ask, what was he thinking? But, of course, it is clear: Vitter was not overworking his brain.

About the only facts you can put in Vitter's plus column are that he didn't lie about doing busi-

ness with Palfrey's service and he didn't run into rehab.

Those plusses, however, pale next to the sheer arrogance and breathtaking stupidity that enabled Vitter to behave in a manner that discredited his alleged deeply held beliefs.

No doubt about it, Vitter is a big story in part because of the hypocrisy angle.

According to The Associated Press, Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., criticized Vitter for his hypocrisy. Palfrey told the Advocate, a Louisiana newspaper, that Vitter "is a hypocrite of the highest order."

Flynt's Hustler magazine has made it known that it wants to out "moral hypocrites." Yes, Vitter has made himself a juicy target by advocating abstinence programs for teens while dialing for dalliances. But what does it say about a people who object to adultery only if the cheating spouse has said it is bad? OK. No one wants to be judgmental.

Most Americans consider adultery to be wrong, but also know good people who, trapped in miserable marriages, have strayed looking for love.

Vitter's behavior does not seem to fall into that niche. Paying for sex puts him in the serial philanderers' club — the world of men who cheat on their wives regardless of the state of their marriage.

That's what stinks. Besides, there is plenty of hypocrisy to go around.

If it is hypocritical for a "family values" pol to stray, it also is hypocritical for a liberal Democrat who says he cares about women to humiliate his wife while he treats

other women as if they are used goods.

Palfrey called Vitter a "hypocrite" at the same time as she claims to have operated a legitimate business. If she was not running a sex-for-hire ring, then why out him?

The only person in this story who may not be a hypocrite is Flynt, who proudly crowed to Howard Kurtz of CNN's "Reliable Sources" on Sunday, "That's right, I'm a slimeball." Any value system that puts Flynt on the moral high ground is seriously flawed.

Besides, the thinking behind those who gloat about Vitter's hypocrisy is that of course men cheat on their wives, but the better man does not pretend to value monogamy. All hail the honest adulterer — even if he lies about sex.

My sympathy lies with Wendy Vitter.

In 2000, she told a reporter that if her husband strayed, "I'm a lot more like Lorena Bobbitt than Hillary (Clinton). If he does something like that, I'm walking away with one thing, and it's not alimony, trust me."

Monday, Wendy Vitter was stuck in the long-suffering-wife-sticking-by-cheating-husband role, as she told reporters she was "proud" to be David Vitter's wife and that their marriage was stronger than ever.

It would be easier to believe that if her husband had cared enough to spare her that ordeal.

E-mail Debra J. Saunders at dsaunder@schronicle.com.
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Chris Matthews and 'misinformation'

MSNBC's Chris Matthews appeared on "The Tonight Show" a week ago Wednesday night pontificating, mostly, about the Iraq war. Those who deny the overwhelming liberal bias of the mainstream media and who are pushing the Fairness Doctrine to muzzle conservative talk radio should be required to watch a tape of Matthews' performance.

To a fawning Jay Leno, Matthews engaged in a nearly uninterrupted soliloquy trashing all things Bush, from his governing according to perceived signals from God to his alleged lies about WMD.

Notably ironic, was Matthews' repeated spewing of misinformation in the process of characterizing the administration of disseminating misinformation. They talk about men and women occupying different planets. Perhaps, but at least their planets seem to be in closer proximity than the ones inhabited, respectively, by liberals and conservatives.

Leno jump-started Matthews by asking him about New York Times columnist David Brooks' supposed assertion that President Bush has pursued the war in Iraq because God wills it. "God told him that we should fight this war."

We've heard this bogus charge before. Matthews dutifully responded, "Well, if he was going to play Joan of Arc, we wouldn't have elected him. Getting whippers from heaven is scary business. The guys we're fighting say that, too." Matthews said Bush needed "a little humility." Even Abraham Lincoln, Matthews said, didn't claim to have God on his side in the Civil War.

While I can't prove a negative, I am confident Bush never said that

God is on our side in this war — though it wouldn't bother me if he had — or that God directed him to attack Iraq. He has said he continually prays for divine guidance and reads the Bible every day. That is wise, commendable and utterly no different from what Abraham Lincoln and many, probably most presidents in our history did.

This is not a distinction without a difference. Matthews is unequivocally implying that Bush has claimed to get his marching orders directly from God and that that is scary — as if he's in some kind of spiritual trance. It simply isn't true, and Matthews is distorting the truth in suggesting it is.

Contrary to Matthews' depiction, Bush is exhibiting the ultimate humility in prostrating himself before God to ask for His guidance and blessing. Perhaps Chris has his wires crossed. It's the secular humanist types who are more likely to have too much pride: to believe in God, much less ask for His guidance.

Matthews then began a rant, saying "almost half the American people believe that Iraq attacked us on 9/11. The misinformation, the indoctrination that's going on. And the rest of the American people have gotten so skeptical now do you think the American people believe that the brass didn't have something to do with Abu Ghraib? Do you think the American people don't think that we were given a bill of goods to get us in over there? ... I think we gotta be damn skeptical of this crowd, because on WMD, on the connection to 9/11, on the surge, on the torture, on every step of the way we've been given misinformation to the point now, we just did a poll, a fifth of the American people believe we found weapons of mass destruction when we got there. They're still indoctrinated. How do we get all this misinformation? From the top, unfortunately. It's a sad

thing."

There is no question in my mind that Matthews believes this nonsense he is spewing. I think he's a decent enough guy — but he just doesn't think straight. The administration never said Iraq attacked us on 9/11. It never said there was an operational relationship between Iraq and Al Qaeda, just that there was a relationship, which there was.

Only grassy-knoll nutcakes and anti-military types believe the "brass" authorized systematic abuse of enemy combatant detainees. I don't deny that many Americans now mistakenly believe, after being bludgeoned over the head with liberal propaganda for years, that Bush lied us into war — as I've said three billion times, but apparently not often enough.

On all of these points and more it is the Democrats and mainstream media who are responsible for the "misinformation."

If two-fifths of the American people believe Iraq attacked us on 9/11, it isn't Bush's fault because he never said that. And if one-fifth of the people believe we found new WMD stockpiles (we clearly did find old WMD), it isn't because Bush said so. Yet Matthews says this "misinformation" came from "the top," meaning Bush. But he knows that Bush has never said we've found WMD there. Never. He's said quite the opposite. This one isn't even arguable.

Unchallenged, even frequently applauded, Matthews "disseminated" his "misinformation" to the audience. It's no wonder people so many people are so woefully misinformed.

Chris, you're not helping.

To find out more about David Limbaugh, please visit his Web site at www.davidlimbaugh.com.

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'08 Taurus

Familiar name, new look, more power, more features

Less than a day after Ford Motor Company received 14 vehicle honors for quality in the J.D. Power and Associates 2007 Initial Quality Study (IQS), the company wasted no time launching its next success story — the 2008 Ford Taurus.

While the name is familiar (Ford has sold more than 7 million of the mid-size Taurus units from 1985 through 2006 when it was replaced by the Fusion) make no mistake, this is an all-new Taurus.

"Customers will find the 2008 Taurus delivers more of what they are looking for, including a strong design, high-quality interior, power and performance, must-have features like Ford Sync and a great safety reputation," said Cisco Codina, Ford's group vice president, marketing, sales and service.

For starters, unlike the previous mid-size Taurus models, the 2008 is competing for market share in the full-size sedan segment (it has an 112.9-inch wheelbase with an overall length of 201.8 inches and more than 21 cubic feet of trunk room).

Yes, it does replace the Ford Five Hundred.

And while it shares the Five Hundred architecture and platform, it has been redesigned inside and out.

The stodgy exterior lines have been resulted to provide a more modern, flowing look. The interior has been enhanced with a new instrument panel and more elegant materials can be seen and touched throughout the cabin.

ON THE ROAD



BY NEAL WHITE

While I was a big fan of the Five Hundred, I really like what Ford has done with the 2008 Taurus.

The styling is spot on and the interior touches give it the look and feel of a premium luxury sedan costing thousands more.

For the record, the 2008 Taurus has a base price starting at 23,995. It is available in two trim lines — SEL and Limited, both available in front or all-wheel drive configurations.

My test drive model during the product launch was an AWD Limited with a base price of \$28,695. Prior to looking at the sticker, I would have guessed the cost would have been a lot higher.

I also had the chance to ride in the back seat during one leg of our test



Detroit) also received a Platinum Award, recognizing it as the industry's best-quality performing plant worldwide. It also marks the first time since 1999 that a North American plant has received J.D. Power's top award for producing vehicles yielding the fewest defects.

"We are designing and building world-class vehicles, and it's great to have this affirmation from the customers who drive our cars and trucks every day," said Mark Fields, president of the Americas Ford Motor Company. "While we're pleased that our internal focus on quality is receiving this kind of recognition from J.D. Power and Associates, we will not let up. We will continue to deliver even more high-quality products that customers want."

Neal White has been covering the automotive industry for more than 15 years and is affiliated with the Texas Auto Writers Association and the Midwest Automotive Media Association. Comments may be sent to Neal at neal.white@waxahachiedaily.com.

drive. There is an abundance of room back there — head, shoulder and legroom.

Produced at Ford's Chicago assembly plant, '08 Taurus units began arriving at Ford dealerships this week.

There's also a new engine under the hood, mated to a new six-speed automatic transmission. The powertrain is more powerful, yet is more fuel-efficient and produces lower emissions than the '07 Five Hundred powerplant.

The 3.5-liter Duratec V-6 produces 263 horsepower and 249 lb.-ft. torque. Using regular unleaded fuel, it has an EPA fuel economy rating of 18/17 mpg city, 28/24 mpg highway (FWD/AWD). It is also rated as a Partial Zero Emissions Vehicle.

So in essence, there's a lot more that's new about this platform than just a name.

Including safety. "This is one of the safest full-size sedans on the road," said Steve Kozak, chief safety engineer for the Taurus, announcing the Taurus is the only large family car to earn both a "Top Safety Pick" rating from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and the U.S. government's highest available five-star ratings in all crash test categories.

"Basically, in terms of automotive safety, we took this car to the Super Bowl and won," Kozak said during the recent

product launch held in Frisco, north of Dallas.

Kozak said from the beginning, safety was "priority one" during the design and planning stages for the new Taurus.

As part of Ford's 360-degrees of Protection safety program, the Taurus is the first vehicle in the industry to offer a two-row Safety Canopy side airbag that provides additional protection not only in side impact collisions, but also deploys in rollover accidents.

Another available safety system is the AdvanceTrac electronic stability control to provide more stability and handling in all weather conditions.

Ford worked hand-in-hand with Volvo in developing the Taurus safety story.

While I only spent a day with the new Taurus, I was extremely impressed. For those in the market for a full-size, five-passenger sedan, it is an absolutely must test drive.

My comment to the Ford engineers following the program was, "If

folks drive it, they will buy it." It really is that impressive.

Back to the news on Ford's quality.

On June 6, the J.D. Power IQS survey awarded Ford more award for quality than any other automaker.

Five vehicles — Ford Mustang, Mercury Milan, Lincoln MKZ, Lincoln Mark LT and Mazda MX-5 each swept their vehicle segments for top honors for quality.

The Ford F-150, Lincoln MKX and Lincoln Navigator received second place honors for fewest problems in its segment while Ford Motor Company earned six third place quality awards.

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Laura on Life: Books for 'dummies'

There are certain things that "dummies" simply shouldn't mess with. Neurosurgery comes to mind, for example.

My oldest son celebrated his 24th birthday recently. It is a manly rite-of-passage that at some point he receives his very first gas grill. My husband decided that he was old enough now to handle such an important responsibility. Plus, it allowed my husband to buy a gas grill, something he always enjoys doing. The problem was that, other than macaroni and cheese and Ramen noodles, my son had never cooked a meal on an indoor appliance, much less on an outdoor gas grill.

His brother decided that he needed a book to teach him how. That is how we found ourselves in a bookstore surrounded by books that ended in the words...For Dummies. These books were in the reference sec-

tion of the store where you'd normally find such dry tomes as Computer Programming: In Fourteen Languages. I always wondered...If you only speak one language, is the rest of the book wasted?

Anyway, we eventually found what we were looking for: Grilling For Dummies. Not only did it teach a complete "newbie" all about grilling, it also gave my younger son the unholy pleasure of indirectly placing my oldest son in the category of "Dummies." They also had the Complete Idiot's Guide to Grilling, but the difference between a Dummy and a Complete Idiot was just enough to get the younger one decked. So he chose the one that was less harmful to his health, but still allowed him to insult his older brother on his birthday.

Personally, I wouldn't be caught dead walking out of a book store with a book that proclaimed to all and sundry that I was a "Dummy" or a "Complete Idiot." So I have to believe that there simply must be a lot of people buying these books for their loved ones. The marketing guys for these books must be geniuses.

While we were perusing the shelves of that book store, we came upon some interesting titles for the "Dummies" books. Gardening for Dummies, Bartending for Dummies. They should have The Complete Idiots Guide to Drinking and Driving. I wonder what could possibly said about that subject that would make the book the size of an encyclopedia. Maybe when you open it up, it

See SNYDER, Page 6A



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Keep Big Spring Beautiful (KBSB)
Big Spring Herald

News in brief

House decision supports convicted agents

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House on Wednesday approved a move by conservative Republicans to try to set free two Border Patrol agents convicted of shooting a Mexican drug dealer.

After a long, emotional debate, the House voted by voice to block the Bureau of Prisons from keeping former agents Ignacio Ramos and Alonso Compean in federal prison. Ramos and Compean are serving 11- and 12-year federal prison sentences, respectively, for the 2005 shooting of Osvaldo Aldrete Davila on the Texas border near El Paso.

The case has caused a furor among conservative lawmakers and on talk radio across the country.

The agents shot him in the buttocks as he fled, but got rid of crucial evidence and failed to report the incident as required. They later found a load of marijuana in a van that Aldrete had used to try to elude them. But U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton said there was no proof to tie the drugs to Aldrete so he could not prosecute him.

Thompson flies through Texas rallying crowds, raising money

HOUSTON (AP) — About 100 people greeted possible Republican presidential candidate Fred Thompson at a Houston airport Wednesday, chanting "We want Fred" as the former senator and actor began a fundraising and campaign swing through Texas.

Thompson, who polls in double-digits without having

announced a campaign, was still noncommittal, saying he plans a decision "in the not too distant future."

This was the first stop he's made in Texas since becoming a 2008 GOP contender.

TXU CEO to quit after \$32 billion sale closes

DALLAS (AP) — Electric utility TXU Corp. has recommended that shareholders approve a \$32 billion buyout and also said its chief executive will resign if the sale to private investors goes through.

Chairman and CEO C. John Wilder said Wednesday that his turnaround of TXU "is essentially complete" and the company has other capable leaders.

Wilder, 49, stands to leave the company with at least \$277 million worth of stock plus millions in other perks, according to a TXU regulatory filing.

Shareholders are scheduled to vote Sept. 7 on the sale of TXU to investors led by Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. and Texas Pacific Group. It would be the largest private buyout ever.

The company said in the filing that higher interest rates and tighter credit made it harder for other buyers to arrange financing. TXU said it solicited bids for several weeks but none surpassed the KKR-Texas Pacific offer.

Dewhurst makes plea for community colleges solution

AUSTIN (AP) — Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst made a public plea Wednesday for state leaders to find a way

to reallocate \$154 million in vetoed funds for community college health insurance.

Gov. Rick Perry vetoed the funds last month and community college officials from all over the state have responded with anger, saying they'll have to consider tuition increases, local tax increases or restrict enrollment.

Judge rules woman accused of taking newborn competent for trial

LUBBOCK (AP) — A judge ruled Thursday that the 21-year-old woman accused of slipping into a hospital maternity ward wearing medical scrubs and abducting a days-old baby girl is competent to stand trial.

Rayshaun Parson April pleaded not guilty in April to a federal kidnapping charge in connection with the disappearance of Mychael Darthard-Dawodu from a Lubbock hospital.

U.S. District Judge Sam Cummings, who has issued a gag order in the case, sealed the report on Parson's mental evaluation. The trial was set for Aug. 20.

Surveillance footage from Covenant Lakeside Hospital showed a woman wearing blue and flower-print hospital scrubs and a gray, puffy jacket with a hood walking out of the hospital in the middle of the night March 10. She was carrying a purse as she walked past an unstaffed information desk near the exit.

The baby was found the next day in Clovis, N.M., where Parson lived.

Parson has remained in federal custody since her arrest that day.

SNYDER

Continued from Page 5A

could have one word on every page: DON'T! A word that even a complete idiot could understand.

After seeing that the French Cooking For Dummies book contained just as many pages as the Computer Programming books, I decided that French Cooking could be taken off my list of Things To Do Before I Die. Life is too short.

Learning To Program a Computer never even made it to my list. I was looking for a book called Rocket

Science for Dummies, just in case I ever needed that information. Not surprisingly, they didn't have one.

Like I said, there are certain things that "Dummies" probably shouldn't mess with.

Laura Snyder can be e-mailed at lsnyder@lauraonlife.com. Or visit her website www.lauraonlife.com.

su | do | ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9 with no repeats. That means no number is repeated in any row, column or box. Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

		8						
	2				9	7	4	
	9			2	8			3
	6	2		3				
		1	8		2	5		
				4		2	1	
9			2	6				7
	4	7	1					9
							4	

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Abracadabra

West dealer. Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ —
♥ A K Q 5
♦ A Q J 4
♣ Q J 8 7 2

WEST
♠ K 3
♥ 10 8 7 6 2
♦ K 10 7 3
♣ A 9

EAST
♠ A Q 4 2
♥ 9 3
♦ 8 6 5
♣ 10 6 4 3

SOUTH
♠ J 10 9 8 7 6 5
♥ J 4
♦ 9 2
♣ K 5

The bidding:
West North East South
Pass 1 ♣ Pass 1 ♠
Dble 2 ♦ Pass 2 ♠
Pass 3 NT Pass 4 ♣

Opening lead — six of hearts.
This deal occurred in a district semifinal of the 2007 Grand National Open Teams. It might seem that South must lose three trump tricks and the ace of clubs to go down one at four spades, but looks can be deceiving. A harmless-looking defensive slip by East was all the declarer, Rich De Martino, needed to bring his contract home.

De Martino won the opening heart lead with the jack and took an immediate diamond finesse. The ace and king of hearts were led next, and when East ruffed the king low, the

contract could no longer be defeated! Declarer overruffed the deuce with the five, took a second diamond finesse and cashed the diamond ace, discarding a club. Then came the coup de grace, dummy's queen of hearts.

What could East do? If he refused to ruff, South would discard his remaining club and lose only the A-K-Q of spades. And if East ruffed low, declarer could overruff, lead a spade and lose only two trump tricks and a club, or he could discard the king of clubs and lose three trump tricks.

In practice, East elected to ruff the queen of hearts with the ace of spades, but the horse was already out of the barn. De Martino simply discarded the king of clubs and conceded two more trump tricks to make his game.

After the opening heart lead, East had only one way to defeat the contract, and that was to ruff dummy's third heart with the ace (or queen) of spades at trick four rather than ruff low. A good case can be made for ruffing high — as evidence the actual deal — but not many players, in the heat of battle, would find the inspiration to make this play.

At the other table, North played in three notrump and could not score more than four hearts, two diamonds and two clubs for down one after an opening heart lead by East.

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BEALLS HOURS

MONDAY THRU SATURDAY 10 AM - 9 PM SUNDAY 12 PM - 6 PM
INSIDE THE BIG SPRING MALL • 263-0273

THURSDAY

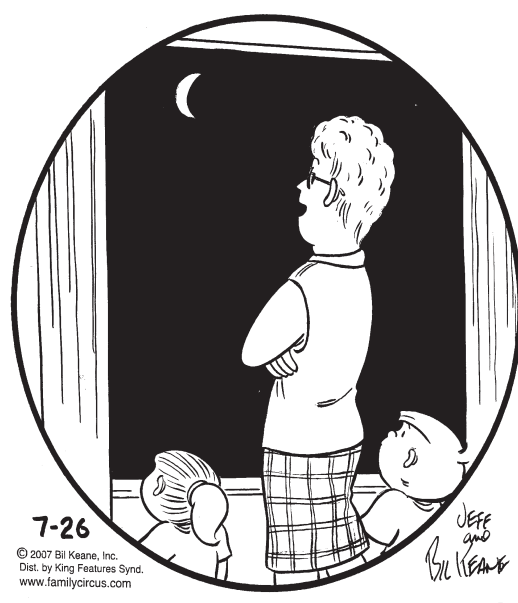
	WFDA (2) Dallas	KMID (3) Midland	UNI (4) Spanish	KPEJ (5) Odessa	KOSA (7) Odessa	KTLE (8) Telemundo	KWES (9) Midland	WTBS (11) Atlanta	KMLM (12) Odessa	KPBT (13) Odessa	DISC (20) Discovery	AMC (21) Classics	SPIKE (22) Spike TV	TNT (23) Atlanta	BET (26) Black Ent.	DISN (27) Disney	ESPN2 (28) Sports	ESPN (29) Sports	SCIFI (64) Science Fic.
6:PM	News (CC) Entertainment	News Wheel-Fortune	Yo Amo a Juan	King of the Hill The Simpsons	News Entertainment	Dame Chocolate	News Be a Millionaire	MLB Baseball: Atlanta Braves at San Francisco	Joe McGee John Hagee	News-Lehrer	Build It Bigger	Movie: U.S. Marshals	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	Homicide: Life on the Street	Live (CC) Hell Date	Han, Montana Zack & Cody	MLS Soccer: Chivas USA at	Football Live	
7:PM	Ugly Betty (CC)	Ugly Betty (CC)	Amar sin Limites	Don't Forget the Lyrics!	Big Brother 8 (CC)	Madre Luna	Name Is Earl 30 Rock	Update/Israel Sid Roth	TX Mnthly Talk Session	Dirty Jobs			CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	Black Carpet Access	Movie: Zenon: The Zequel	Red Bull	ESPN Ultimate NASCAR	
8:PM	Grey's Anatomy	Grey's Anatomy	Destilando Amor	You Can Dance	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	La Esclava Isaura	The Office Scrubs (CC)	Giants (CC)	Light of the Southwest	Antiques Roadshow	Deadliest Catch (CC)		TNA Wrestling Impact! (CC)	Movie: Sleepy Hollow (CC)	Ghetto Mess The Wire	(CC)	MLL Lacrosse: New Jersey at	ESPN Ultimate NASCAR	Want to Be a Superhero?
9:PM	Men in Trees (CC)	Men in Trees (CC)	Noticias	Becker (CC) Friends (CC)	Shark (CC)	La Esclava Isaura	ER (CC)	Movie: Under Siege (CC)		Soundstage (CC)	Man vs. Wild	Mad Men	UFC Unleashed			That's-Raven Life Derek	Philadelphia	Baseball Tonight	Mind Control- Derren Brown
10:PM	News (CC) Nightline	News Nightline	Primer Impacto Noticiero Univ.	70s Show Raymond	News Late Show-	Noticias Titulares y Mas	News Tonight Show		The Hour of Healing	Charlie Rose	Dirty Jobs (CC)	Mad Men	UFC Unleashed	Saving Grace (CC)	Take the Cake (CC)	Zack & Cody Han, Montana	Arm Wrestling Arm Wrestling	SportsCenter (CC)	Want to Be a Superhero?
11:PM	The Insider Jimmy Kimmel	Jimmy Kimmel Live (CC)	Bus-Timbriche Hora de-Risa	King of the Hill Malcolm-Mid.	Letterman Late Late	12 Corazones !Al Rojo Vivo!	Late Night- Tonight Show	Raymond Friends (CC)	Betty Swann Y. Salamanca	Sign Off	Dirty Jobs	Movie: Das Boot	Whacked Out Whacked Out	Movie: Sleepy Hollow (CC)	The Five Jamie Foxx	Replacements Kim Possible	NASCAR Now (CC)	Baseball NFL Live	Mind Control- Derren Brown
12:AM	Live (CC) News (CC)	Extra (CC) Mercury Media	El Privilegio de Amar	Malcolm-Mid. My Wife-Kids	Show The Insider	Programa	Conan O'Brien News	12:10 Movie: Under Siege	Update/Israel Light-World		Deadliest Catch (CC)		Raising Roots The Dudesons		BET After Dark (CC)	Emperor New American Drgn	2007 World Series of Poker	SportsCenter (CC)	Twilight Zone Twilight Zone

DENNIS THE MENACE



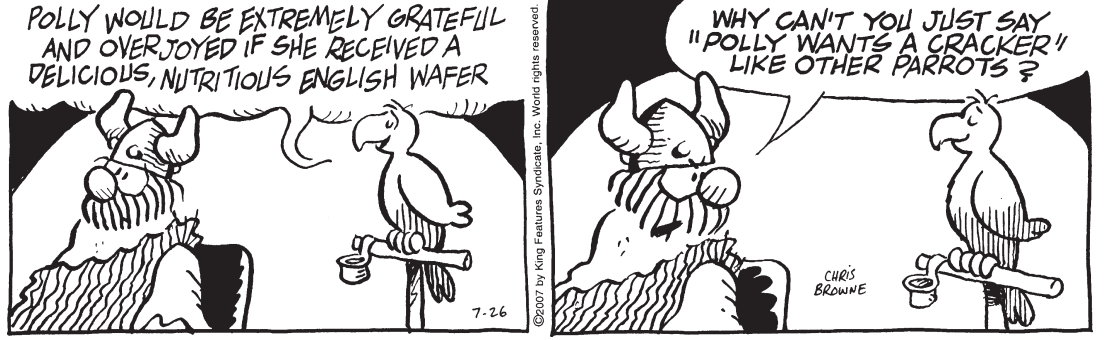
"YOU'LL KNOW YOU'RE GROWN UP, JOEY, WHEN YOU START GETTIN' MORE HEADACHES THAN YOU CAN TAKE!"

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Pessimists see it half empty and optimists see it half full."

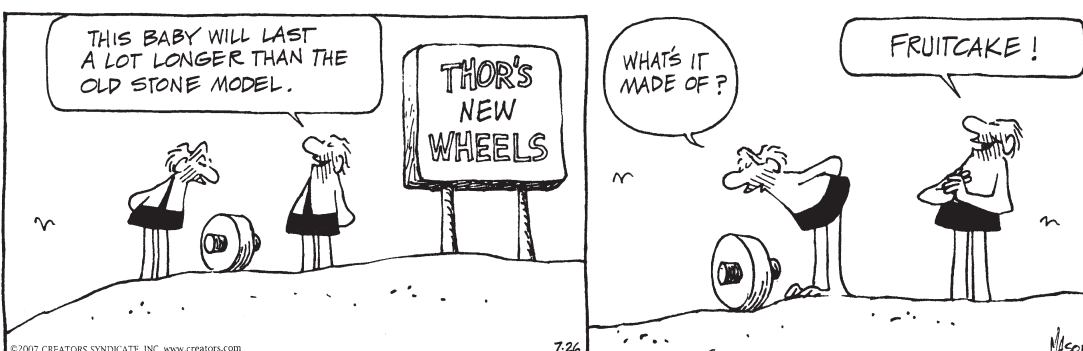
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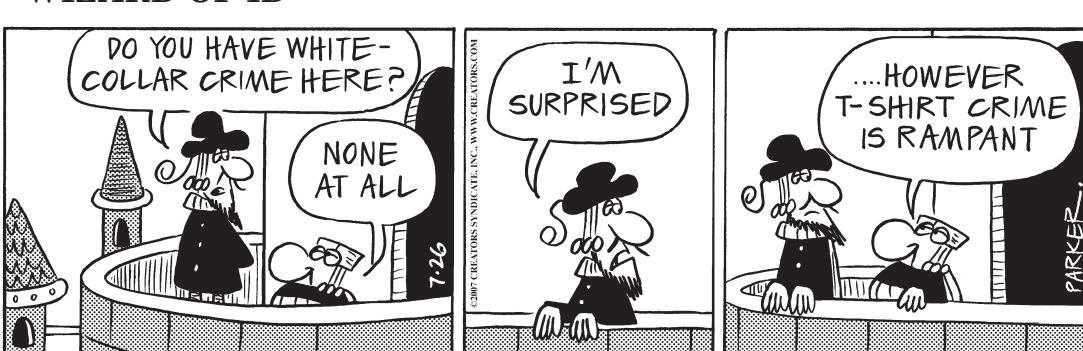
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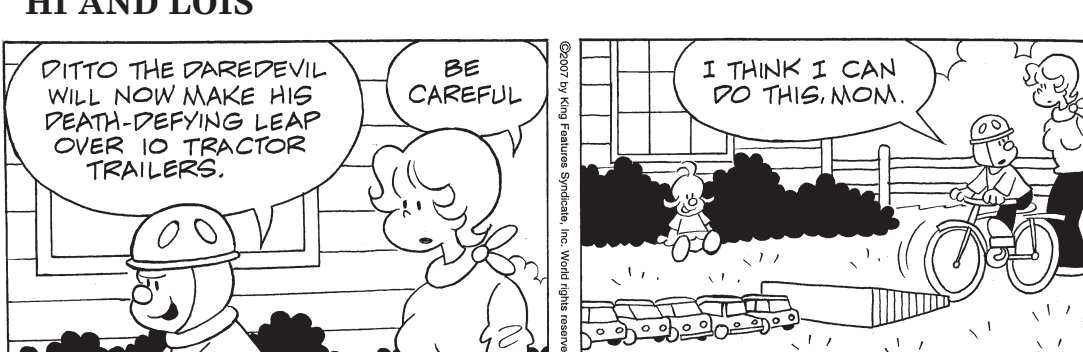
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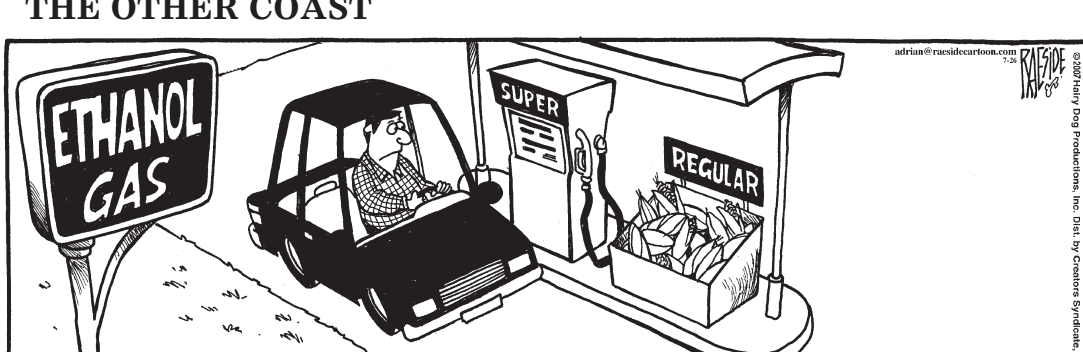
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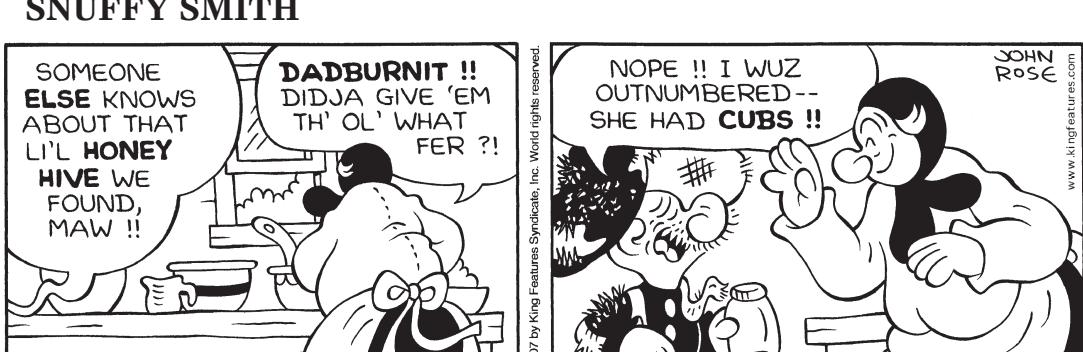
HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Thursday, July 26, the 207th day of 2007. There are 158 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 26, 1947, President Truman signed the National Security Act, creating the Department of Defense, the National Security Council, the CIA and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

On this date:

In 1775, Benjamin Franklin became Postmaster-General.

In 1788, New York became the eleventh state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1856, playwright George Bernard Shaw was born in Dublin, Ireland.

In 1945, Winston Churchill resigned as Britain's prime minister after his Conservatives were soundly defeated by the Labour Party. (Clement Attlee became the new prime minister.)

In 1952, Argentina's first lady, Eva Peron, died in Buenos Aires at age 33.

In 1952, King Farouk I of Egypt abdicated in the wake of a coup led by Gamal Abdel Nasser.

In 1956, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal.

In 1956, the Italian liner Andrea Doria sank off New England, 11 hours after colliding with the Swedish liner Stockholm; at least 51 people died.

In 1971, Apollo 15 was launched from Cape Kennedy.

In 1986, kidnappers in Lebanon released the Rev. Lawrence Martin Jenco, an American hostage held for nearly 19 months.

One year ago: A thinner but combative Saddam Hussein returned to his trial for the first time since his hunger strike and hospitalization.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Blake Edwards is 85. Actor James Best is 81. Singer Dobie Gray is 67. Actress-singer Darlene Love

is 66. Singer Brenton Wood is 66. Rock star Mick Jagger is 64. Movie director Peter Hyams is 64. Actress Helen Mirren is 62. Rock musician Roger Taylor (Queen) is 58. Actor Kevin Spacey is 48. Rock singer Gary Cherone is 46. Actress Sandra Bullock is 43. Actor Jeremy Piven is 42. Rapper-reggae singer Wayne Wonder is 41. Actress Kate Beckinsale is 34. Rock musician Dan Konopka (OK Go) is 33. Gospel/Contemporary Christian singer Rebecca St. James is 30.

Thought for Today: "My friends, there are no friends," - Coco Chanel, French fashion designer (1883-1971).

Answer to previous puzzle

SHIPS	STEM	BRAD
CURIE	LODE	RELO
ALONE	ADAM	INTO
BANTHE	BOMB	DEAR
ESS	EDGERS	
TIMBRE	PARIE	
EDDIE	HEN	SCRAP
ALSO	ANT	LIMO
KEELS	ICE	TUDOR
OHARE	ROBERT	
STAGER	CAR	
TORY	BREAD	CRUMB
AWOL	OARS	HONOR
FEMA	RIME	ELITE
FLAB	SLAY	DETER

Newsday Crossword

NAME OF THE GAME by Kevin Donovan
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS**
- 1 Ask for opinions
 - 5 Shady deal
 - 9 Porky's pal
 - 14 Medicinal plant
 - 15 Fashionable Chanel
 - 16 Simone's school
 - 17 Orange skin
 - 18 Choir part
 - 19 Tiler's filler
 - 20 Conspirator's line
 - 23 Begat
 - 24 Payable
 - 25 Ad ender
 - 28 Possesses
 - 29 Basketball shot
 - 33 Dedicate, as time
 - 35 Less reassuring, perhaps
 - 37 In the past
 - 38 Potential buyer's line
 - 43 Socks
 - 44 Ran off together
 - 45 Move back
 - 48 Getz of jazz
 - 49 Cooling-system part
 - 52 NATO member
 - 53 It's found underground
 - 55 Keep score
 - 57 Salesman's line
 - 62 Steamed
 - 64 Baker's appliance
 - 65 Corporate communication
- DOWN**
- 66 It may be grand
 - 67 Look after
 - 68 Screen symbol
 - 69 Neato
 - 70 Cupid alias
 - 71 Thomas Hardy girl
 - 8 Bellowed, as Bossy
 - 9 Extent
 - 10 Field measure
 - 11 Ballpark frank
 - 12 Winter ailment
 - 13 Even so
 - 21 More peculiar
 - 22 Llama chew
 - 26 Tingling sensation
 - 27 Sugar source
 - 30 Swiss canton
 - 31 Riviera city
 - 32 Ship structures
 - 34 Empty space
 - 35 Fencing piece
 - 36 Laughfest
 - 38 Drive-__
 - 39 Garden gear
 - 40 Intensify
 - 41 Place to unwind
 - 42 Oscar de la __
 - 46 "Go on . . ."
 - 47 Work sites for RNs
 - 49 Swindle
 - 50 Los __, NM
 - 51 WWII-era scarcity
 - 54 Chew the scenery
 - 56 Word on a ticket
 - 58 List finisher
 - 59 Assert as accurate
 - 60 Game for gamblers
 - 61 Objectives
 - 62 A thing's
 - 63 Noisy quarrel

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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43							44					
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52				53			54		55	56		
			57	58			59	60	61			
62	63						64			65		
66							67			68		
69							70			71		