Sports

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 Tuesday, December 11, 2007

IN BRIEF

Big Spring High School schedules fall sports banquet

The Big Spring High School booster clubs have scheduled a fall sports banquet for Saturday at 6 p.m. in the high school's cafeteria.

Male and female athletes that participated in football, volleyball, cross country and cheerleading will be recognized.

Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased from Kay Cook at the Athletic Training Center.

Call Denise Carillo at 816-1685 with any questions.

Lady Steers softball holding fund raiser at Pizza Inn Dec. 20

The Big Spring Lady Steers Lady Steers Booster Club will be holding a fundraiser for the softball team Dec. 20 at the Pizza Inn.

The Pizza Inn Doughnation Drive begins at 5 p.m. and ends at 9 p.m. Pizza Inn will donate 10 percent of the night's profit to the softball team.

Individuals needed to referee area basketball games

Individuals are needed to referee area subvarsity basketball games for the 2007-08 season.

Anyone interested should call Adam Rodriguez at 517-0300.

Crossroads region varsity sports weekly calendar

Here's a look at the upcoming Crossroads varsity sports schedule: **TODAY**

Big Spring boys basketball at Midland Lee, 7:30 p.m.

Big Spring girls basketball at Pecos, 6:30

Forsan boys and girls basketball vs. Grady, 6:30 p.m.

Coahoma girls basketball at Colorado City, 7:30 p.m.

Coahoma boys basketball vs. Reagan County,

7 p.m. **FRIDAY**

Big Spring girls basketball vs. Clyde, 7:30 Forsan boys and girls

basketball at Garden City, 6:30 p.m. Coahoma girls basket-

ball vs. Stamford, 7:30

Coahoma boys basketball at Pecos, 7:30 p.m. **DEC. 17**

Big Spring boys and basketball vs. girls Snyder, 6 p.m.

DEC. 18

Forsan boys and girls basketball at Rankin, 6:30 p.m.

Coahoma boys and girls basketball Merkel, 6:30 p.m.

Forsan teams contend in tourney finals

By JEFF LANE

Special to the Herald

The Forsan Buffaloes varsity boys basketball team participated in the Borden County Tournament this past weekend narrowly missing their second straight tourney championship.

The Buffs struggled through a tight first half, eventually falling short in a comeback bid to Lubbock Christian, 47-45, in the championship round.

Adam Bailey led the Buffs, averaging 23 points per game, as they extended their overall season record to 7-1. Jeremy Robbins averaged 10 points per

game over the 3-game span.

Earlier on Thursday, the boys defeated Meadow, 61-45, and had an easy time with the Seminole JV squad, taking a 73-56 win on Saturday in the second round of play.

"It was a good tournament for us," said Buffs' Head Coach Terry McDonald. "We just couldn't get anything going in the first half against Lubbock Christian. We shot only 32 percent from the field and 46 percent at the line."

The Buffs will next play at home against Grady on Tuesday night.

The Forsan Lady Buffs also

made it to the final round of play in the tournament where they took on O'Donnell. However, they were unable to bring their record to .500, losing 50-26.

The ladies did improve their record to 4-6 on the year as they beat Meadow and host Borden County in the first two rounds of

"We are really playing well as a team and are beginning to trust each other," said Lady Buffs Head Coach Robert Hillger. "We have been developing an attitude of putting our teammates ahead of ourselves and doing things for the betterment of the team as a

whole. It is really beginning to show in how they are playing."

Leading the Lady Buffs was Amanda Longorio, who came away averaging nearly 13 points and 11 rebounds per game. Tori Gauer also stepped up her game, averaging 11.3 points while pulling down 14 total boards and collecting eight steals.

Sandi Golleher chipped in 23 points and 18 rebounds total for the tournament.

The ladies will also play at home Tuesday night against

Junior varsity action will begin at 4 pm at Buffalo Gym.

Vick sentenced to 23 months

By HANK KURZ Jr.

AP Sports Writer

RICHMOND, Va. — Michael Vick's outlook changed as the dogfighting case against him grew, going from disbelief that he could be hurt to depression at what he'd lost.

Vick broke down when an FBI agent suggested he was lying on a polygraph test about his role in the killing of dogs, ultimately admitting to full involvement in the hope of showing he had accepted responsibility for his actions, lawyer Billy Martin said in court. He sought the numbing comfort of marijuana to cope with his depression.

As Vick awaited his federal sentencing, already having relinquished his lucrative standing as one of the NFL's most popular stars, he shared another emotion: relief.

"He understood that some of the things he was doing in life and off the field were dangerous," longtime family attorney Lawrence Woodward said outside the courthouse where Vick was sentenced Monday to 23 months in prison, "and he told me he feels lucky that he's alive and not hurt and now it's all about the future."

At least until the summer of 2009, that future will be in a federal prison, most likely a campstyle facility with dormitories and jobs instead of barbed-wire fences and cells.

"He doesn't want anyone to feel sorry for him," Woodward said, sharing a message at Vick's request. "He just wants a chance to prove himself when all this is over."

The suspended Atlanta Falcons quarterback, who turned himself in Nov. 19 to begin serving his sentence, wore a black-and-white

See VICK, Page 2B



Michael Vick (left) enters federal court with his lawyer Billy Martin. in Richmond, Va. Vick was sentenced to 23 months in prison Monday Dec. 10, 2007 for his role in a dogfighting conspiracy that involved gambling and killing



Randolph (50) during the fourth quarter of the Mavs' 99-89 win Monday at

Madison Square Garden in New York.

AP photo/Ed Betz The Dallas Mavericks' Dirk Nowitzki shoots past the New York Knicks' Zach

Nowitzki gets on track, leads Mavericks past Knicks, 99-89 and they show up and we're glad By BRIAN MAHONEY

AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK — Isiah Thomas began and ended his night the same way: defending his con-

If only his New York Knicks did a little more defending against Dirk Nowitzki.

Nowitzki scored a season-high 36 points, leading the Dallas Mavericks to a 99-89 victory over New York on Monday night.

But as usual with the Knicks, basketball was only part of the story.

Thomas opened his pregame news conference by reaffirming his innocence in a sexual harassment trial he and Madison Square Garden already lost, and after the game he danced around questions about whether he scolded fans near his bench for not being supportive.

Thomas wouldn't directly answer if he had interacted with any fans.

"I was just trying to make sure that we kept the team together and we stayed focused on what we were doing and trying to win a basketball game," he said. "Our fans are great, they support us they're here."

Asked a second time, he responded: "Again, I just want to make sure that our team stays focused. The fans are great, we love them and we're glad they're here and they give us a lot of support."

In other NBA games on Monday, it was: Atlanta 98, Orlando 87; Philadelphia 100, Houston 88; Miami 117, Phoenix and Sacramento Milwaukee 93.

The Mavericks let a 23-point lead slip to seven, and coach Avery Johnson was clearly during his profane angry postgame remarks.

"We had a big enough lead and we should have kept it," Johnson said. "The last 2 minutes or 3 minutes of the third quarter was absolutely pathetic. The guys who were in there let the whole team down. We can't afford the team to do that."

Though the fans cheered the Knicks during the comeback, Thomas and center Eddy Curry were the targets of boos most of

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Take Note

tuesday page 2a 12/11/07 10:54 AM Page 1 Network Macintosh HD:Desktop Folder:

- Pediatric flu vaccinations for children ages 6 months to 35 months are now available at the Texas Department of State Health Services clinic in College Park Shopping Center. Cost is \$10, although no one will be turned away for inability to pay. For more information, call 263-9775.
- 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-
- A beginning crochet class is being held at 6 p.m. Wednesday in the church's Parish Hall.
- Bring joy and kindness to others by becoming an Odyssey Healthcare volunteer. Help those at the end of life's journey. Make a difference in someone's life. Call 263-5999 to begin your journey.
- All creatures Sanctuary and Rescue has an account set up with Big Spring Salvage at 3608 N. Hwy. 87 for all types of metals and aluminum cans. Please tell them that your donations are for All Creatures Sanctuary and Rescue. All Creatures Sanctuary and Rescue 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.0, 871, Coahoma 79511. All Creatures Sanctuary and Rescue is still accepting old and used cell phones and ink jet cartridges, for drop off locations in Big Spring and Coahoma, Call Melanie at 267-7387.
- 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).
- · 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. Monday and 7 a.m.

- NICOLAS MILLS, 27, of 1514 Sycamore, was arrested Monday on charges of driving while license invalid - enhanced and possession of a controlled sub-
- PRISCILLA CARRILLO, 35, of 1407 Park, was arrested Monday and held for the HCSO.
- THEFT was reported in the 400 block of Lancaster. ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE was reported:
- in the 2600 block of Fairchild.
- in the 1400 block of Sixth Street.
- in the 600 block of Bucknell.

Sheriff's report

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

Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 67 inmates at the time of this report. • JESUS ENRIQUE GARCIA, 34, was arrested Monday by the HCSO on a motion to revoke probation for possession of marijuana - two ounces or less.

• JAMES RUSSELL HALL, 57, was transferred to the county jail Monday by the BSPD on a charge of driving while intoxicated.

• BOBBY D. FOSTER JR., 36, was transferred to the county jail Monday by the BSPD on a motion to revoke probation for theft by check.

• JUAN LUIS CISNEROS, 37, was arrested Monday by DPS on charges of failure to control speed and public intoxication.

• JUAN ARTURO VIRRUETA. 26, was arrested Monday by DPS on a charge of public intoxication.

Fire/EMS

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

NOTE — The following report includes several reports of structure fires from the weekend.

• TRAUMA was reported in the 200 block of Nolan. One person was transported to SMMC.

• MEDICAL was reported in the area of ValVerde Road. One person was transported to SMMC.

• MEDICAL was reported in the 1200 block of Lamar Road. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1000 block of E. 21st Street. One person was transported to SMMC.

• MEDICAL was reported in the 600 block of Abrams. One person was transported to SMMC.

MEDICAL was reported in the 1100 block of Todd

Road. One person was transported to SMMC • RUBBISH FIRE was reported in the 2300 block of

Mishler. • STRUCTURE FIRE was reported in the 400 block

of W. Sixth Street. • STRUCTURE FIRE was reported in the 1200 block

of Lamar. • STRUCTURE FIRE was reported in the 2600 block

• COOKING FIRE was reported in the 1500 block of

• STRUCTURE FIRE was reported in the 600 block

of W. Sixth Street.

• STRUCTURE FIRE was reported in the 2600 block of Chanute.

Support Groups

TUESDAY

- •The Path, faith-based addiction recovery, meets at 6:30 p.m. at Spring Tabernacle Ministeries, 1209 Wright St.
- Dual Recovery Anonymous meetings have been canceled. They will no longer take place at the Howard County Library. If you have questions, call Deidra F. at (432) 816-3033.
- Life Recovery, a non-denominational Christian group of recovering alcoholics and addicts, meets at 7 p.m. at the St. Paul Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall.
- •Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. and closed discussion meeting 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- · Al-Anon, 615 Settles for family members and friends of alcoholics meets at 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

• RSD (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, a chronic pain disease), a new support and informative group meets at 213 Circle. Call Lucy at 264-1213 for more informa-

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.

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

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Big Spring, Texas

432-263-4400

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.

- 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-
- 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.

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Bulletin Board

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

TODAY

• The Powwow Committee of Big Spring meets at 7 p.m. at St. Paul Lutheran Church annex, 809 Scurry, or the fellowship hall at 810 Scurry. Call Robert Downing at 263-3255 for information.

WEDNESDAY

- Optimist Club meets at 7 a.m. in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- 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.
- Senior Circle meets at 11 a.m. at Scenic Mountain Medical Center classroom for Stretch and Tone. Call
- Downtown Lions Club meets at noon at the Howard College Cactus Room.
- Duplicate Bridge Club meets at 1 p.m. in the Big Spring Country Club.
- Eagles Lodge Ladies Auxiliary meets at 7 p.m. in the Eagles Lodge, 703 W. Third.

THURSDAY

- Gideon International Big Spring Camp U42060 meets at 7 a.m. in Herman's Restaurant.
- · Kiwanis Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane. Call 267-
- Friends of the Library meets at noon in the Howard County Library, 500 S. Main.
- Big Spring Main Street meets at noon in the Railroad Museum located at Second and Main streets.
- 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.
- · American Legion Auxiliary meets at 6 p.m. at 3203 W. Highway 80.
- The Prospector's Club meets at 7:30 p.m. at 606 E. Third St. The public is invited to these meetings. For more information contact Lola Lamb at 263-3340 or Doyle and Virginia McClain at 263-8407.

Weather

Tonight...Mostly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of rain or snow or Light sleet after midnight. Lows in the lower 30s. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.

Wednesday...Mostly cloudy. Chance of rain and snow or light sleet in the morning...Then a chance of rain in the afternoon. Colder. Highs in the upper 30s. North winds 10 to 15 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 Wednesday night...Decreasing clouds. Lows in the

lower 30s. West winds around 10 mph.

Thursday...Partly cloudy. Not as cool. Highs in the lower 50s. West winds around 10 mph shifting to the south in the afternoon.

Thursday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the lower

Friday...Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers. Highs in the upper 40s.

Friday night...Cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers. Lows around 30.

Saturday...Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 40s. Saturday night...Mostly clear. Lows around 30. Sunday...Sunny. Not as cool. Highs around 60. Sunday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 30s. Monday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the mid 60s.

Lottery

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Texas Two Step drawing Monday night:

Winning numbers drawn: 23-26-29-31. Bonus Ball: 14. Number matching four of four, plus Bonus Ball: 0.

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Cash 5 drawing Monday night:

Winning numbers drawn: 10-13-20-23-32. Number matching five of five: 0.

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Monday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 5-6-3-1. Sum It Up: 15.

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Monday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 2-2-5. Sum It Up: 9.

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Falcons see Vick sentenced, then get blown out by Saints

By PAUL NEWBERRY

AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA -The New Orleans Saints shook off the hangover from a devastating loss. The Falcons are still trying to get over a much bigger setback.

After waking to news that disgraced quarterback Michael Vick would have to serve nearly two years in prison for dogfighting, his one-time teammates in Atlanta trudged through another dismal performance in a lost season.

With Reggie Bush watching from the sideline and reportedly done for the year, Drew Brees passed for 328 yards and three touchdowns and New Orleans gave its playoff hopes a boost with a 34-14 rout of the Falcons on Monday night.

The Saints (6-7) had no trouble getting over the disappointment of their last-minute loss to Tampa Bay a week earlier, taking advantage of a team that had to be distracted by the events in Richmond, Va., earlier in the day.

Vick was sentenced to 23 months behind bars, completing his stunning fall from NFL star to federal prison inmate.

"The team misses him and we really need him this season," said receiver Roddy White, one of two Falcons who showed their solidarity with Vick for all to see.

Cornerback DeAngelo Hall ran on the field during pregame introductions holding up a Vick poster and had "MV7" painted beneath his eyes. After White hauled in a 33-yard touchdown pass that briefly tied the game at 7, he pulled up his jersey to reveal a T-shirt with the handwritten message "Free Mike Vick."

Hall and White are both likely to be fined by the NFL, and they can only hope Vick didn't have cable TV in his jail cell. This was another ugly performance by the team No. 7 put in such a bind with his off-the- NFC South. field troubles.

tuesday page 2b 12/11/07 10:17 AM Page 1 Network Macintosh HD:Desktop Folder:

At the management and coaching level, the Falcons (3-10) say they're moving on without Vick. The players know it's not that easy.

"I don't want to say this franchise doesn't want to acknowledge the situation, but that's kind of the way you feel," Hall said. "All his pictures are gone, no more jerseys, no more nothing. We just wanted to let him know we're still thinking about him. We care about him as a human being, not just as a football player and as a running quarterback."

Bush watched from the sideline, his season apparently ended by a partially torn knee ligament. But the Saints didn't miss a beat with third-stringer Aaron Stecker, who rushed for 100 yards on 20 carries.

"When you lose a guy like Reggie Bush, everybody has to step up," said receiver David Patten, another of those who did just that.

Patten had nine catches for 122 yards, including an acrobatic 25-yard touchdown grab for New Orleans' first score. Marques Colston also had nine catches for 92 yards and two TDs.

Brees shredded the Falcons' defense with four scoring drives that covered at least 75 yards, including a 99-yarder. He should've had a fourth TD pass, but Eric Johnson dropped a throw in the back of the end zone with no one around.

"Throughout this season, we have shown signs of greatness," Brees said. "We had to start some drives deep in our own territory, but we stuck with it. We had to earn every one."

The Saints vowed not to play timid after botching a trick play late in their game against the Bucs, who recovered and drove for the winning touchdown with 17 seconds remaining to take firm control of the

Coach Sean Payton lived up to his word on his team's very first possession, going for it on fourth-and-1 at the New Orleans 33. Brees was stuffed for no gain, but that was about the only thing that didn't go right for the Saints. The defense held and forced the Falcons to punt.

By winning, New Orleans stayed in the midst of the wildcard race and prevented Tampa Bay from clinching the division title.

"We are an aggressive team offensively," Brees said. "That is our mind-set. That is what we are. That is why we're suc-

The Falcons long ago gave up on the playoffs. Trying their third different quarterback of the post-Vick era, Atlanta handed journeyman Chris Redman his first start in more than five years.

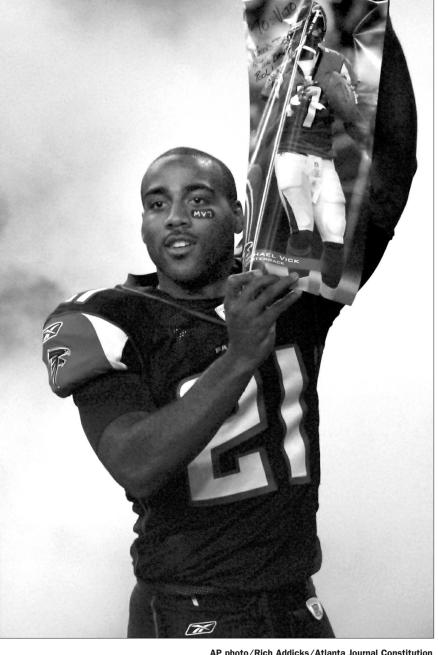
While Redman's journey was inspiring — he was out of the league the last three seasons and selling insurance a year ago — his appearance did little to spark one of the NFL's most anemic offenses.

Redman threw for two touchdowns and a career-best 298 yards, the second-highest total this season for a team that also has used Joey Harrington and Byron Leftwich. But the Saints built a 17-7 lead by halftime and blew it open with two more touchdowns early in the third quarter.

New Orleans took the secondhalf kickoff and drove 80 yards in 11 plays, capped by Brees' 2yard touchdown toss to Colston.

Two snaps later, Redman threw a pass that went right through the hands of receiver Michael Jenkins. Roman Harper picked off the wobbly ball at the Atlanta 31 and didn't stop running until he was in the end zone.

In a final indignity for Redman, Jason Craft delivered a block on the quarterback



AP photo/Rich Addicks/Atlanta Journal Constitution Atlanta Falcons cornerback DeAngelo Hall holds a Mike Vick poster as he runs onto the field prior to the start of the Falcons' 34-14 loss to the New Orleans Saints at the Georgia Dome Monday in Atlanta. Vick was sentenced to 23 months in prison for his role in a dogfighting ring.

right at the goal line that sent chipped in with 31 yards on six him sprawling.

"Not a good day," Falcons coach Bobby Petrino said curt-

Notes: The Saints rushed for 145 yards overall, averaging 4.8 yards per carry. Pierre Thomas

carries. ... Jenkins tied his career high with nine receptions, accounting for 83 yards. Falcons rookie Laurent

Robinson had a 41-yard catch, the longest of his young career.

VICK

Continued from Page 1B

striped prison suit as he stood before U.S. District Judge Henry E. Hudson. He acknowledged using "poor judgment" and added, "I'm willing to deal with the consequences and accept responsibility for my actions."

Vick also apologized to the court and his family, drawing a rebuke from Hudson: "You need to apologize to the millions of young people who looked up to you," he said.

sir," "Yes, Vick

answered. Hudson then rebuffed defense team's appeals for leniency, determining Vick had lied about his involvement in the killing of dogs, and about his drug use. Vick tested positive for marijuana Sept. 13 after claiming to have avoided illicit drugs.

"You were instrumental in promoting, funding and facilitating this cruel and inhumane sporting activity," Hudson told Vick, who exhibited no visible reaction.

The sentence means Vick will be in prison until at least mid-July 2009, even if he meets the federal standard of 54 days' reduction per year for good behavior.

Vick, whose \$130 million contract was once the richest in NFL history. was suspended without pay by the NFL and lost all his lucrative endorsement deals. NFL commissioner Roger Goodell was asked after the sentencing if Vick should play again.

"That's a determination we'll make later on," he told The Associated Press from a legislative hearing in Austin, Texas. "As I said earlier when we suspended him indefinitely, we would evaluate that when the legal process was closed."

Hudson also ordered Vick to three years of

supervised probation upon his release, enrollment in a substance abuse program if his parole officer deems it necessary, reminded him you've fully accepted vowed: "I will redeem that felons can't own guns responsibility," Hudson myself. I have to.' and said he can never again own a dog.

Throughout the 45minute hearing, Vick's brother, Marcus, sat with his arm around their mother, Brenda Boddie, comforting her as she covered her eves and wept.

Much of what she heard could not have made her feel any better.

Hudson agreed with a federal probation officer's finding that Vick had lied about his hands-on killing of dogs, calling honesty "really the crux of the matter here."

"You were a full participant and you were at least equally culpable" as the three other defendants. the judge told Vick in summing up his own findings. "This is a racketeering case in front of me and you are to be sentenced accordingly.'

to help the Mavericks beat the Knicks for the 11th time in 12 meetings. Reserve Jerry Stackhouse

Randolph scored 24 points, all in the second half, and grabbed 11 rebounds, but the Knicks lost their third straight. Shooting guard Jamal Crawford had 19 points and small forward Fred Jones 16.

added 13 points for Dallas,

which shot 54 percent

from the field.

Nowitzki was 14-of-23 from the field, throwing up an airball on his final

Hudson said Vick at times admitted killing dogs, and other times denied it.

said. Federal sentencing guidelines called for a

term of 18 months to two years. Federal prosecutor Michael Gill said Vick's involvement warranted a sentence at the high end. "He did more than fund

it," Gill said, referring to the "Bad Newz Kennels" dogfighting operation. "He was in this thing up to his neck with the other defendants.'

Vick pleaded guilty in August, admitting he bankrolled the dogfighting operation on his 15acre property in rural Virginia and helped kill six to eight pit bulls that did not perform well in test fights. He also admitted providing money for bets on the fights by his co-defendants, but said he never shared in any winnings.

attempt.

But the Mavs were up 14 by then, safely on their way to a second straight victory following consecu-

tive losses. "I was fortunate I was able to find the rhythm very quick," Nowitzki said. "The last couple of weeks, my jumper didn't feel great, didn't really have a lot of good looks. But from the beginning on I stayed aggressive, had some good looks. Pretty much I was on attack mode all night

After making his plea, Vick apologized to the NFL, the Falcons and youngsters who viewed "I'm not convinced him as a role model and

> Court papers revealed gruesome details about the operation, including the execution of underperforming dogs by elecdrowning, trocution, hanging and other means. Those details prompted a public backlash against the NFL star and outraged animal-rights groups, which used the case to call attention to the brutality of dogfight-

John Goodwin of the Humane Society of the United States called the sentence appropriate and said the benefits of the exposure the case has received continue.

"People that involved in this blood sport are on notice. You can throw your life away by being involved in this," he said. "His future is in his hands."

The Knicks were without starting point guard Stephon Marbury, still emotional after the death of his father.

Marbury was ineffective trying to play in two games since, and the Knicks have said he can have as much time as he needs.

76ers 100, Rockets 88

Andre Miller had 17

Co-defendants Purnell Peace, of Virginia Beach, got 18 months, and Quantis Phillips, Atlanta, got 21 months at their sentencing hearings on Nov. 30.

Another co-defendant, Tony Taylor, will be sentenced Friday. The case began in April

when a drug investigation of Vick's cousin led authorities to the former Virginia Tech star's Surry County property, where they found dozens of pit bulls — some of them injured — and equipment associated with dogfighting.

Vick initially denied any knowledge about dogfighting on the property. He changed his story after the co-defendants pleaded guilty and detailed Vick's involvement.

Associated Press writers Larry O'Dell and Zinie Chen Sampson Richmond andJimVertuno in Austin, Texas, contributed to this report.

points and 12 assists and Andre Iguodala added 16 points for Philadelphia. which led by as many as 31 points on the way to its first three-game winning streak this season.

Bonzi Wells led Houston with 24 points.

Rockets star shooting guard Tracy McGrady scored 12 points before leaving the game in the second half with a sprained right ankle.



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NBA

Continued from Page 1B

the night. Mara Altschuler, a fan sitting near the Knicks' bench, said Thomas was talking to some fans during the game, blaming them for being a poor "sixth man" for the team.

"It's real hard. I ain't never been in a situation like that and I don't understand," Knicks forward Zach Randolph said. "I guess they say it's New York fans, but you know it's real tough. Honestly. Especially for me. because I've never experienced every time a player walks off the court you're booing.

"Everywhere else, in lower lip. Portland, fans were a big part of our team. Fans are a big part of every team everywhere you go. We need the fans to be sup-

portive with us, even when we're down.'

Earlier Monday, MSG and Thomas reached an \$11.5 million settlement in the sexual harassment case brought by former team executive Anucha Browne Sanders.

Thomas read a statement reaffirming his innocence, but supporting MSG's desire to settle. He wouldn't take any questions about the matter.

Thomas heard his normal boos, but the fans seemed to focus more of their anger toward Curry, who was 3-of-13 from the field and scored six points in another ineffective performance.

The Knicks said Curry sustained a lacerated

Mavericks' small forward Josh Howard, who scored a career-high 47 points Saturday in a victory over Utah, added 22

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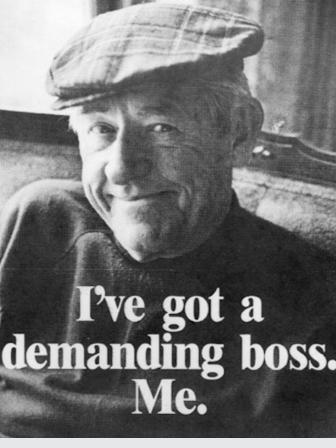
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HOLIDAY

MATHIS

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BY HOLIDAY MATHIS If the culmination of life's journey is wisdom, Jupiter's meeting with Pluto corrals

wise the into sage humanity's corner. Profound truths bubble into our

awareness. Monumental risks are undertaken. Hidden riches are

know

impact.

throw it out.

the difference.

for you.

desires.

maturity

believing

family

don't conform.

their happiness.

scale

ARIES (March 21-April

19). You're going through

a process of elimination

and renewal. Have no

pity. If you don't love it

and if you wouldn't

choose it again if you saw

it for the first time today,

TAURUS (April 20-May

20). You have a story to

tell, and you tell it

exceedingly well. But

before you do, make sure

you have the right

audience. Knowing your

audience will make all

GEMINI (May 21-June

21). There's a fine line

between compassionate

generosity and being a

doormat. Over the next

three days, you figure it

all out. There is no right

or wrong. What you're

comfortable with is right

CANCER (June 22-July

22). Resolving not to

complain frees up energy.

Tonight, your dreams

will provide a sneak

preview of what's to

come. If you don't like

your dreams, change

something about your

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).

Friends blow your mind

with their needs and

others to be happy even if

you cannot remotely

relate to the source of

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept.

22). Just because an idea

is popular doesn't make

it right. If everyone is

doing it, buying it or

skeptical. True friends

love you even when you

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

The closest people to you

are the ones who will be

the trickiest now. When

emotions run hot. Taking

the high road is, as usual, the most difficult — and

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov.

21). Your lack of pretence

endears equally realistic

characters delight and

inspire you. You're to be

commended for being able to relate to people of

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-

Dec. 21). Courage is attractive. Surrender to

your desire. When you

really risk your feelings,

you will be rewarded.

And what a rush! It feels as though your heart is riding on a magic carpet.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-

Jan. 19). Don't wait for

the perfect scenario to move forward. There may

circumstance. Once you

make it clear that you're

be such a

is

the best — way to go.

individuals.

all walks of life.

it,

Emotional

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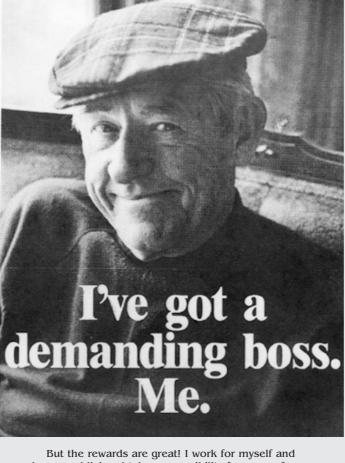
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SPRING HERALD

marching onward no matter what, things start

working better. AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Recent changes have made it impossible for you to go about your business in the same manner as before. You're optimistic and see new opportunities too. Tonight: Command an audience.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Healthy relationships a product of are consistent behavior. Resolve small differences, or let them go. If you practice this pattern consistently, maybe the big differences won't materialize at all.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "Would you please explain about the north node? I see it listed on charts but have not found an explanation of what it is."

In birth charts, the nodes look like pairs of headphones — one set right-side-up (north node) and one set upside-down (south node). Neither is actually a planet. Astrologically, when we talk about the nodes, we mean nodes of the moon, but every planet has 'em. In space, they're the northernmost southernmost points that a planet's orbit crosses the sun's ecliptic. Symbolically, they're the DNA of our birth charts, carrying our natural gifts and blind spots. The south node is our inherited past habits, strengths and weaknesses legacies from our previous ancestors. maybe even lifetimes ago! But blessings can curse — we've leaned on these automatic strengths too hard. For example, the Capricorn south node is an exceptional provider, but the memory "no one will take care of me but disheartens. The me" north node (opposing sign) brings balance. north Cancer's starting suggests family, depending others and practicing unconditional love as necessary growth steps. The nodes' promise: As we chose to move north (from south), we evolve old karma and fulfill our destinies. **CELEBRITY**

Politically, PROFILES: John Malkovich has the quintessential zeal of a Sagittarian — he is an outspoken freethinker and self-proclaimed libertarian. Man's (and woman's) right to selfgovern appeals to the archer's need for wide. open spaces to roam and discuss. With Saturn in Scorpio, he relentlessly pursues professional excellence, taking his body of work very seriously.

Holiday Mathis is the author of "Rock Your Stars." To write to her, 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 theCreators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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County commissioners sign abatement contracts

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

Howard County commissioners signed tax abatement agreements with five wind development companies Monday morning, deals that could net the county an additional half-million dollars next vear.

Commissioners signed-off on Airtricity abatements for (Panther Creek Wind Farm proiect), Padoma (Elbow Creek project), Duke (Ocotillo Windpower project), Invenergy (Gunsight Mountain Wind Energy project) and Iberdola (Wildhorse Mountain Wind

According to Terry Wegman, executive director for Moore Development — the local agency that acts as liaison between the wind energy companies and the county's taxing entities for the purpose of tax jects." abatements — the contracts are for 10 years.

tuesday page 3a 12/11/07 10:53 AM Page 1 Network Macintosh HD:Desktop Folder:

"What the contract does is abate the taxes for these companies for a 10-year period," said Wegman. "In lieu of the taxes they would have paid, the wind energy companies agree to pay \$1,100 per megawatt of power each year, which comes out to an approximate increase

in county revenue of \$500,000." A public hearing conducted prior to approval of the abatements failed to draw any com-

ments from local residents.

"Four of the companies are expecting to begin and complete their projects before the end of 2008, while Iberdola has moved its project back to be completed by the end of 2009," said Wegman. "They all look very viable, and I feel like we're looking at some promising pro-

Wegman said the wind energy companies will pay normally assessed county taxes until their projects are completed, at which time the abatements will

go into effect. County officials also approved a tax abatement for the Settles Hotel Development Company during the meeting, following a presentation from Big Spring

City Attorney Linda Sjogren.

"The abatement we're asking for is a 10-year agreement for 100 percent of taxes," Sjogren told commissioners. "Mr. (Brint) Ryan is making a sizable investment in this project, which will most likely lose money for a number of years."

Ryan's company announced plans for a \$12 million renovation project — which includes plans for commercial and residential use of the property, with retail space available on block." the first and second floors more than a year ago.

The abatement, which commissioners approved by a unanimous vote, extends not only to the work expected to be done to the historic hotel, but also to other properties near the Settles recently purchased by

Also during the meeting, commissioners took action on a pair of tracts of land associated with the upcoming construction of a new county jail.

The court agreed to purchase a strip of land — located on U.S. Highway 80, between Utah and Wright, on the city's west side — from land owner Clay Harris for \$10,000.

"It's a small lot in the northeast portion of the block," said County Judge Mark Barr. "It's where the old motel sits on the

Commissioners also gave county officials the go-ahead to begin negotiations with Mona Tonn, owner of Spring Tabernacle Church, for possible purchase of a second parcel of land located within the block.

"This isn't for the area where the church is located," said Commissioner Jerry Kilgore. "Mona has already made it clear she doesn't want to sell that property. This is for a small strip of land located near the church.

Commissioners received the go-ahead from voters in a November bond election for the construction of a \$11.57 million 96-bed jail facility.

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

Moore Board approves Settles pact in 4-1 vote

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

Energy project).

The board of directors for Moore Development approved the performance and escrow agreements between the economic development corporation and the Settles Hotel Development Company Monday night, moving forward with \$3 million in funding for the restoration of the downtown landmark.

The board approved the agreements on a 4-1 vote, with board member Glenn Fillingim the lone dissenter.

Moore Development

directors voted unani- McLellan, and directs the mously 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 agreed to purchase for \$75,000 from the city of Big Spring.

According to Terry Wegman, executive direcof Moore Development, the two agreements approved by the board spells out what both sides — Moore Development and SHDC — are expected to do.

"The motion was made by board member Larry board's president Frank Parker — to execute performance and escrow agreements with Brint Ryan," Wegman. "The motion also said the agreements are subject to any revi-

sions necessary from the

board or its attorney,

which basically gives us a chance to clean up some wording in the contracts. "The performance agreement lays out what is expected of Ryan and

SHDC. It also says what Moore Development can and cannot — provide funding for. We can pay for plumbing, electrical

work, even asbestos abatement. What we can't fund, however, are finishing items, like stair rails and chandeliers."

SHDC announced plans for a \$12 million renovation project in December 2006. According to SHDC officials, the project includes plans for commercial and residential use of the property, with retail space available on the first and second floors.

Wegman said because the expenditure is not a budgeted item, it has to win the favor of the Big Spring City Council before it can become offi-

"It will go before the city council tonight in an emergency item," said Wegman. "That means it won't require a second reading if the council approves it unanimously. If it doesn't pass unanimously, there will have to be a second reading, which would happen at the council's next meeting."

Since announcing the project, Ryan and SHDC have also acquired severother properties, al including 313 and 315 Runnels, adjacent to the Settles Hotel, which served as a Greyhound

Station during the hotel's hevdav.

Earlier this year SHDC got a helpful nod from the Texas Historical Commission, which confirmed eligibility of the downtown landmark to be nominated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, making the project an "excellent candidate" for federal tax credits, according to Ryan.

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

GIVING

Continued from Page 1A

of this area always respond. The people in Big Spring and other communities in the Permian Basin have always come through."

Mobley admits, howev-

er, that this year the Giving Tree ornaments have not been picked up as quickly as they have been in the past.

"I don't know what it is, but I'm sure there are a lot of people that are seeing their cost of living and transportation rising and they're being a little ment that contains the and Maria Saracho will are encouraged to partici-

hesitant more than usual," she noted.

The tree contains the wish list of about 70 children in Howard and Glasscock counties currently under the charge of Anyone can participate

by picking up an orna-

child's first name, sizes and gifts desired.

The unwrapped gifts can be delivered to the bank by Friday or the Big Spring CPS office, 501 Birdwell Lane, according to Lopez.

Lopez said she and CPS

be happy to accept Giving Tree gifts that are dropped off by the CPS office.

Several volunteers will meet at the Big Spring CPS office to begin wrapping the donated gifts once all of them have co-workers Bea Ortega been received. Volunteers

the polling locations and

release more on the

polling places once we get

closer to the next elec-

tion."

pate.

Contact

For more information, call Lopez, Ortega or Saracho at 263-9662.

Managing

Editor John A. Moseley at 263-7331, ext. 230, or by emaileditor@bigspringherald.c

Continued from Page 1A

told the court. "Needless to say, they would prefer us to not use their campus as a polling place for that reason.

"I've talked to the people from First Baptist Church, and they were very receptive to the idea. The lobby area is easily accessible and has plenty of power outlets. It's also more centrally located in precinct, where Goliad school was located along the far edge.'

Bloom said area voters can determine whether or not the change will effect

FESTIVAL

Continued from Page 1A

"But that just means that they can come visit us again," Simmons added.

Admission is free to the event, although donations will be accepted.

"Donations are what keep us going," Simmons said. "One hundred percent of the money from donations goes back into the Festival of Lights."

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

them by simply checking their voter certificate. "This will effect voter

Precincts 33, 34 and 35,' said Bloom. "These are the new precinct numbers listed on the newer, orange voter certificates, which were mailed out last week."

Bloom said she hopes the switch doesn't confuse potential voters.

"I'm sure there will be a handful of voters who never check their card and show up to Goliad on the day of the primaries," said Bloom. "However, we're hoping we can get the word out through the media so people will check their precincts ahead of time, avoiding this kind of mix up."

Bloom said recent changes in precinct num-

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bers in Coahoma and Big Spring should make it easier for area voters to find their polling places come election day.

"Voters in the cities of Big Spring and Coahoma will notice a change in their voter precinct. For Coahoma, it's simply the letter C added at the end of 207," said Bloom. "This indicates you're inside the city limits and eligible to vote in city elections. For Big Spring, the voter precinct will be changing to a two-digit number, which represent your county precinct and city council district.'

Bloom said a voter lives in the county's Precinct 1 and the city's District 1 would have a voter precinct of 11.

"This will allow us to

combine and eliminate some of the 35 voting precincts in our previous system," said Bloom. "We hope this will make it less confusing for voters in the future. It shouldn't have a great impact on





Bloom said anyone with most voters won't see a questions regarding their change in their polling voter card or precincts location. We plan to can contact her office at 264-2273. Contact Staff Writer

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

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-First Amendment

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

Ron Midkiff

John A. Moseley Managing Editor **Bill McClellan**

OUR VIEWS

Time's running out for giving to good causes

irtually all of us have our thoughts centered on Christmas. That's well and proper, but we all need to remember this is a time to help out the various charitable drives that take place every year here in Big Spring.

While there's almost a couple of weeks of shopping days left for us to complete our search for gifts to give friends and family, there's less time to help out charities. Much less.

So, now is the time to take a few minutes and remember those less fortunate than ourselves. And to recognize the spirit of giving far outweighs that of getting.

That's a message almost all of us try to preach to our children at an early age during the holidays.

And this Christmas, as is always the case, there are a number of agencies that need our help. But this year, the need is perhaps greater than it has been in decades.

What's worse, for some of these projects, there's less than a week left for us to respond to the call.

The Salvation Army's Angel Trees have the Christmas wishes of more than 500 children and 70 elderly citizens on them this season.

The Angel Trees are within easy reach, located at the Big Spring Mall, Bealls Department Store, Scenic Mountain Medical Center and Wal-Mart. In addition, the tree for seniors is located here at the *Herald*.

There's also still time to help out the Giving Tree project in Big Spring.

Child Protective Services annually sponsors a Giving Tree in the lobby of Wells Fargo Bank. The tree is trimmed with paper ornaments, each bearing the name of a child who has three wishes for the holidays. People purchase the gifts indicated on those ornaments and return them, unwrapped to the tree. Each ornament is marked with the child's shoe and clothing size. The deadline for that project is Friday.

Adult Protective Services' annual "Be a Star" program is also under way and is another opportunity to help needy elderly and disabled adults.

So, if you can, take a few minutes to drop by Wells Fargo Bank and pick an ornament off the Giving Tree and make this a special Christmas for a special child; or go by any of the three First Bank of West Texas locations and pick up a star off the "Be a Star" trees.

Additionally, we would also ask our readers to remember that for children, Christmas just isn't Christmas without a new toy.

The Herald and the Salvation Army want to make sure no child in Big Spring has to experience that feeling this Christmas season, and that's why we'll again be partnering a joint toy drive.

So, if you can, please heed the call. We'll have the doors open here at the *Herald* offices each day this week and on Monday from 8 a.m. and until 5 p.m. for those wishing to donate to the drive.

The toys will be taken to the Salvation Army on Tuesday, Dec. 18, and distributed Dec. 21. Please help us make sure they can give every child in need at

least one new toy this Christmas. Let's all be able to say we did our best to make it a joyous holiday season throughout Big Spring and Howard County.

Remember, the feeling you will receive from helping others is nothing short of a Christmas blessing. We can all use one of those.

LETTER POLICIES

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.

Limit your letters to no more than 300 words.

 Sign your letter. Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street

address for verification purposes.

 We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity. We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per

30-day period per author. Letters that are unsigned or do not include a telephone

number or address will not be considered. · Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be emailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

With You, Lord, we have a stable situation.

Amen

With their heads in the trees

or a year now, protesters have been squatting on trees at UC-Berkeley's Memorial Stadium to protest plans to build a \$125 million sports training center. When protesters fall from the trees and

break their bones, as has happened at least twice, people laugh and liberals start to wonder if perhaps there is a god.

Over the years, activists have lodged many protests to fight severe injustices in the world, such as racial inequality and genocide. At times, I've disagreed with pro-

testers — on the Iraq war, for example — but I at least had to respect their commitment to make a difference on a life-and-death

In the case of the "People's Perch" — as some are calling the year-long Bezerkley tree-squat never before has so much been done for a cause so trivial. The tree-sitters argue that in fighting to save some 100 trees, they are protecting "a healthy, functioning native oak ecosystem." One problem: The stadium property is not pristine wilderness. Most of those trees owe their existence to UC landscaping.

"People call us crazy monkey hippies," one tree-squatter told The San Francisco Chronicle's Carolyn Jones, "but this is the greatest thing I've ever done." Except the tree squatters have achieved nothing. Alameda County Superior Court Judge Barbara Miller issued an injunction that barred the university from felling the trees. The squatters could have walked away 11

months ago, and the trees would still be standing. It's lawyers, not aging adolescents swinging in the trees, who have kept UC chainsaws at bay.

While the tree squatters have called UC "arrogant" and allmighty, in fact, it is the oak activists who take the prize for arrogance and rule-breaking. A judge ruled that UC has to postpone the development project until she makes a final ruling, and UC complied. Judge Richard Keller issued an injunction in October barring protesters from living in the trees, with which they would not dream of complying. Activists trespass on university property, set up illegal homes, break fire rules by cooking with propane tanks in the treetops — and they know they have little to fear from campus police, probably the most politically correct police force in the country.

Their cause is so ludicrous that a student newspaper editorial faulted a TV story on the tree-sitters' Thanksgiving among the branches for failing to mention "the police officers who had to miss Thanksgiving with their own families because they had to patrol the oak grove.'

Frustrated alumni, donors and taxpayers have let UC administrators know they'd like to see campus police do more than dodge human feces, write feckless citations and escort injured protesters to the emergency room.

Have you thought about tear gas? I asked UC Berkeley spokesman Dan Mogulof. He answered that "certain tactics" that would fly in corporate America or other areas "simply don't mesh with the culture, character and traditions of this university."

And, "Eventually, this protest

will end, but we have to bring it to an end in a matter that is consistent with our values and our very strong desire not to have anyone injured in the process.'

The university finally has put up chain-link and barbed wire fences to isolate squatters from their supporters. At night, the university now shines floodlights into the trees. The tree-squatters have responded hysterically, charging that the university had turned the oak grove into Berkeley's "Guantanamo."

The People's Perch is a perfect example of the infantilization of the American Left's protest movement — and I say this aware that many good liberals are appalled at this spectacle.

Like young children, the tree-sitters have no sense of proportion. They can leave at any time. They eat and mix with others as they will. The worst they have to fear is five days in jail. Yet they equate their plight with that of Gitmo inmates?

It's a Peter Pan protest. Activists go by kiddie names — Redwood Mary, Midnight Matt. And they have a child's sense of what is important. In a world darkened by genocide, starvation and ignorance, they see fit to champion the cause of landscaped trees, which, by the way, UC has offered to replace on a three-to-one basis.

In short, the tree-sitters have picked an unworthy cause. Given Judge Miller's injunction, their squatting is irrelevant.

They could work to make the world a better place, but they've chosen to waste other people's time and money.

E-mail Debra J. Saunders at dsaunders@sfchronicle.com. COPYRIGHT 2007 CREATORS SYNDICATE INC.

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Once more into the breach

want to run a strong, positive campaign,' Michael Dukakis told me over and over again 20 years ago. "People hate negative campaigns," he said, more times than I cared to count or remember. He was half right. People don't like negative campaigns.

They'll tell you that till they're blue in the face, in between asking you if he really did let a murderer go free, or fake his injuries, or let his men down.

Which ad does everyone remember from last time around?



ESTRICH

How do you spell Swift Boat? Is it because it was the smartest, best produced and most accurate? How about none of the above? Is it because they reported on it endlessly, the candidate tried and failed to ignore it, and it ended up defining his character?

Negative campaigns may be disgusting, unethical and, usually, inaccurate, but people remember them. The press covers them They get attention. And the folks who shrink from them get smaller in the process, not bigger.

President Dukakis? Not. President Kerry? Not.

I'm not saying this is always true. Maybe you can find some examples of decent and honorable people who ran decent and honorable campaigns, never resorting to the negative, and won. For state legislature, anyway. Congress, occasionally. But president? Get serious.

Did George W. Bush run a posi-

tive campaign against John McCain in 2000? He did not. Did the older George Bush run a positive campaign against Bob Dole in 1988? He did not. Did Bill Clinton run positive campaigns? With Dick Morris calling the shots? He did not.

The closest any successful candidate I can remember has come to running a positive campaign would have to be Ronald Reagan's campaign against Jimmy Carter in 1980. But that was a special case because people already hated Carter so much that Reagan didn't have to convince them to vote against him. The only question was whether a guy who thought trees caused pollution and who regularly made up stories about welfare mothers who didn't exist could be trusted to be president. Affirmative, in a landslide. All Reagan had to say was, "There you go again," and people were willing to turn Carter's attacks against him.

If George Bush were running for re-election, his opponent could afford to be positive. No one else in this race enjoys that luxury.

It's usually January before the candidates start to wake up and realize the witching hour is upon them. But everything's at least a month early this year, so Merry Christmas, and let's start throwing mud. Heard about Huckabee's high taxes? You will. Barack's Senate record — and I mean state senate? Get ready.

Consider what's happened in the last month. Has Barack Obama articulated a new vision for America? No. Has Hillary made critical mistakes? No. She had one middling debate, followed by one very good one. Obama had one

very good debate, followed by one middling one. But something significant has happened, that's for sure. He's now leading in Iowa, albeit within the margin of error. The race is tightening in New Hampshire. Karl Rove is giving him pointers. (Watch out! The former presidential adviser used to have power. Now he has space to fill. Caveat emptor.)

What's happened is a change in temperature, in atmosphere, in sensibility. Obama is on the attack. It doesn't matter about what. I can't, to be honest, tell you exactly which attacks of his have helped him pull ahead. Sadly, the issue is not the issue.

I learned that early on, as an issues person in my first campaign, when I realized that no one read any of the white papers I wrote. Bullet points on the cover, preferably with the attack lines underlined, were all that was necessary. I could have stapled together an excerpt from the telephone directory and gotten credit for a comprehensive issue paper, so long as it was wrapped in red

Obama has been rewarded for stepping up. Now, Hillary has to hit back. Can anyone remember exactly what the fight is about? Is it really about who planted questions, whether the Iranians are actually bad guys, who gave money to Obama's PAC, or how he voted in the state legislature?

No. It's a fight. That's the point. Come on in. The water's freezing. The mud's flying. Merry Christmas. It's going to be an ugly

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Bird Poop:

Common loon rescued from parking lot landing

hrough the entrance, past the circular desk staffed by city employees constantly answering the phone, we followed the officer

through the first of many steel doors. The hallways were becoming familiar. Straight ahead, a turn to the left, then right pass



Веве McCasland

the tubs, we walked through yet another door and into the holding area. While reaching this part of the animal control facility, we appreciated the absence of odors. A daily effort was evident in the cleanliness of the place. A monotony of tile walls, concrete floors and holding cages gave the reality of their work

The quiet, isolated area where birds were kept

a stark and unforgettable

presence.

was appreciated. Through the barred door of the steel container, we could easily see the large water bird resting on its belly with legs and feet splayed. Several weeks before we had answered a request to pick up a hawk and a falcon. Instead, we had discovered an osprey and a poorwill. Incorrect identification of birds was common among not only animal control officers, but the public as well. Of greater importance was our response in retrieving whatever they had rescued. Briefly explaining the diet and behavior of a bird would lend to

more knowledge in the future. We were grateful to be able to identify and obtain the necessary veterinary and rehabilitative care for any migratory birds they had.

Uneasily turning its head to glance backward through the bars, the common loon could not readily turn its heavy body to confront us. Since the bird had been placed head-first inside the structure, its removal was easier than if we had to confront the jabs from its long, sharp gray bill.

With my hands firmly pressing its wings against its body, I lifted the eight- to nine-pound loon out of its temporary prison. Immediately, its legs that are located at the back of its body began to pedal madly as if on an imaginary bicycle. Round and round its big feet churned the air. "We won't need the bathtub for this one," Art sighed with relief. The loon had proven its ability to ply the waters of any inland lake or deep reservoir.

Suddenly, from the inner depths of the loon's body came a cry of absolute wildness. Guttural, melodic, that moment of the bird's mournful sound caused shivers in both of us as we realized we had heard the voice of a bird that loves the solitude of northern lakes. The room, with its harsh floor and walls, had amplified our experience.

"Where did you find it?" was my question after carefully inserting the bird inside and on to thick bedding in our carrier. The answer was not surprising. "The parking lot of a Baptist church."



Rising out of the water, the common loon will stand almost erect on the water. With its great wings flapping and running as fast as it can, the bird will become airborne as it continues its journey to the south.

Explaining that during migration loons often mistake the late afternoon sheen of asphalt for what they think is the surface of a body of water, we added that without the adequate length of a lake or pond, the birds could never become airborne again. Only through running on top of the water could it obtain the forward momentum and air speed for flight.

As the three of us looked at the loon, I

noted the bird's nonbreeding winter plumage. For its protection, nature has given it a dull appearance of gray to gray-brown above, while its underparts were white. After thanking the officer for calling us, we headed home and to Comanche Lake. We couldn't help but be excited at another launch.

Approaching the water from the south side, we

See LOON. Page 6A



By Steve Becker

East won the first diamond with

the ace and played the ace and

another club. From East's failure to

return a diamond at trick two, which

would seem logical, declarer inferred

that East had started with the single-

It seemed that the outcome now

ton ace of diamonds.

appearances can be deceiving.

Bad News, Good News

North dealer. Both sides vulnerable NORTH

North West Pass Opening lead — queen of diamonds. Many contracts hinge on whether

declarer can avoid losing a trump trick when he is missing the Q-x-x-x of the suit. The normal play in such a situation is to eash the A-K and hope the queen falls, rather than take a finesse if one is available.

Today's deal is unusual in that even if it turns out that declarer must lose a trump trick to the queen, he is virtually certain to regain the trick elsewhere — regardless of which defender actually has the queen!

After West's lead of the diamond queen, it would appear that declarer, with normal play, must lose two diamond tricks (to the ace and iack), the ace of clubs and a trump trick. But as all experienced players know, depended strictly on what happened in the trump suit. But declarer already saw that even if one opponent held three trumps to the queen, the contract was still almost certain South started by cashing the A-K

of spades, learning that East had a trump trick coming. Declarer then put his backup plan into motion by cashing the A-K-Q of hearts, discarding a diamond. He then played the king of diamonds, and whether East ruffed or not, the battle was over.

In practice, East refused to ruff, so declarer conceded a trump to East's queen. Since East had no diamond to return, he was forced to lead a club or a heart, allowing South to discard his remaining diamond while ruffing in dummy. Declarer thus lost only a diamond, a club and a spade to finish with 10 tricks

And what if West had turned up with the Q-x-x of trumps? In that case, he would likewise have been endplayed after declarer cashed the top hearts and exited with a spade. West would then be forced to lead a diamond from the jack, permitting dummy's ten to score a trick, or yield a fatal ruff-and-discard.

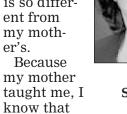
<u> Laura on Life:</u> We are ill-equipped and floundering

aising children is hard. It always has been. There is no instruction manual. As a result, I don't know what I'm doing any more than my mother did. Although I can take

some of my cues from her, my experience raising kids is so different from my mother's.

the stan-

dard



Laura

SNYDER

answer for why a child should not watch two dogs doing the nasty on your front lawn is: "Because I said so!" Tell me you haven't caught yourself saying that once or twice; even when you swore you never would.

However, other than the occasional "Don't make me come back there!" raising children now is different. Disagreements between teens and their parents used to be about wearing makeup, cutting their hair and when to get their ears pierced. Now, it's about cell phone minutes, tattoos, and whether to get their — (insert random body part) — pierced.

It's no longer viable to send a kid to their room as punishment, because they want to be there. That's where they do all their socializing on My Space. If they are banned from the computer, you'd never know if they were

receiving one of hundreds of text messages a day on their cell phone.

Teens are masters of the "the code" for text messages. Once while sitting next to my 16-year old nephew, who was texting at the time, I read something that looked like: "Bananas, no, chickens, save me!" What exactly does that mean in their language? I'm not sure if the kid was describing an unappetizing lunch buffet and hoping my nephew would not delete it or if it was an SOS call from some-

one caught in the produce section of a poultry farm.

Whatever it was, it was definitely not something my mother ever had to deal with.

My mom says I have it easy because she never had disposable diapers. That may be true, but no tree-hugging ex-flowerchild ever made her feel guilty about soaking cloth diapers in her toilet. Disposables come with the requisite guilt trip for filling up landfills, and using trees to cover our babies behinds.

Being a mom who was once in the excrementfilled trenches with five children, I can't imagine a better use for a tree. Ask me again in twenty years when the memory of those trenches fades.

Some things my mother never said while I was growing up:

"Put your Game Boy down and load the dishwasher!"

"Did you remember to put that 2-liter bottle in the recycle bin?'

"Put your seat belt on!"

See LAURA, Page 6A

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

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	6					7		
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Tuesday, December 11, 2007 Dairy business booming across Texas Panhandle

By BETSY BLANEY

Associated Press Writer BROWNFIELD — Mike Schouten has watched the dairy industry grow in the Panhandle — and

helped it along. Schouten moved his dairy operation to the region five years ago from near Stephenville in central Texas, one of dozens who have done so since

The region is attracting dairies from within and outside Texas. Land in the wide-open Panhandle is cheaper and the climate is ideal — low humidity and less rainfall — which aids swift evaporation and limits runoff into the few streams running through the region.

There's also a reliable water source, the Ogallala Aquifer, which lies deep underground. And feed for the cows can be grown on the dairies or by nearby farmers.

"You don't have the heat stress in the summertime and the wintertimes are similar to central Texas with the exception of more wind," said Schouten, who has a herd of nearly 4,000 cows. And there is "the ability to grow my business in an area that understands agriculture."

The cow population in the Panhandle has ballooned in the past six years from about 20,000 to 140,000, and the number of dairies has more than tripled to about 70. And more cows are on the way: Officials predict the region's dairy herd will increase by 20,000 annually for the next five years.

The dairies have created jobs — one new job is added for every 100 cows and improved the economies in numerous small towns, some of which courted the industry aggressively to help sustain their viability.

tuesday page 6a 12/11/07 10:22 AM Page 1 Network Macintosh HD:Desktop Folder:

Panhandle dairies now produce more than 40 percent of Texas' milk, up from about 10 percent in 2000, said Ellen Jordan, a dairy specialist with the Cooperative Texas Extension. Of the state's top five milk producing counties, three — Parmer, Deaf Smith and Castro are in the Panhandle.

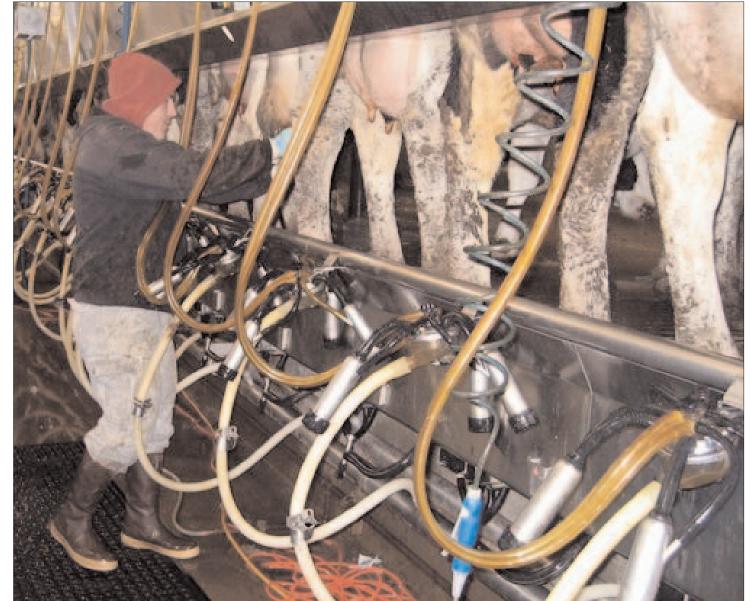
"The cows don't have to expend any energy to just stay cool or warm,' Jordan

'Consequently, they can be more efficient. That has piqued the interest of a lot of people."

Texas' dairy industry historically operated mostly in verdant eastern Texas and in Erath and Bosque counties west of Waco. Wet conditions and higher normal rainfall created an environmental impact from manure and runoff into nearby rivers, which created problems for dairy farmers there.

Environmentalists are enamored with dairies and they remain wary of the operations moving to the Panhandle, even if they do seem to pose a lesser pollution threat. Despite the drier climate, they point out there's still plenty of wind.

"Now, not only are you going to breath sand, you're going to be breathing dried cow dung," said Collins, Jerome



Ivan Mendoza helps prepare cows for milking machines at Cal-Star Dairy in Brownfield. There are regularly about 2,100 animals at the dairy. West Texas, and the Panhandle in particular, has seen the number of dairies grow in the past six years. The industry has brought jobs to small towns and helped diversify and grow their economies.

spokesman for the Lone Star chapter of the Sierra Club.

With about 660 dairies, Texas is the nation's eighth-leading milk production state and is expected to surpass neighboring New Mexico this year. California remains the top U.S. milk produc-

"They are coming from a wide area of the country and find the people in the Panhandle ag friendly," Jordan said of dairies relocating to the region from New Mexico, Arizona, California and New York.

"We've grown dairies by leaps and bounds the past few years, and I would

expect that to continue for the next few years," said Jeff Ammons, a Texas Farm Bureau field representative for 12 counties in the western Panhandle.

Lower transportation costs are another reason for the growth. Milk producers in the region have four plants in western

Texas and eastern New Mexico to choose from. including the Hilmar Cheese Co. factory in Dalhart, which opened in October.

Cheese plants took notice as more dairies started springing up in the Panhandle. Since

See **FARMS**, Page 8A

LOON

Continued from Page 5A

were eager to watch our charge return to a proper environment.

Awkward and stumbling when on land to nest, the loon would become grace personified when reintroduced to its watery world.

Placing it on the surface of the lake, we were mesmerized by its immediate dive beneath the surface.

Some 40 feet away, it surfaced, shook droplets from its feathers and scanned the shorelines. Diving and resurfacing again and again, it was finding the contents of the lake to its liking.

Finally satisfying itself with enough fish, it chose to stay atop and slowly investigate its new habitat.

What had been heavy in my hands was a buoyant, streamlined swimming wonder.

For a bird that needs as much space to land as to take off, the loon now had its place. Its strength

and speed on and in the water would easily be matched in the coming days by its strong, rapid sustained flight during the rest of its migration. As we walked back to

the vehicle, we knew our experience with another common loon had been heightened by the loveliness of the sounds the bird had shared in protest of our handling

That cry was unforget-

Bebe McCasland is federally and state licensed to rehabilitate wild birds.

LAURA

Continued from page 5A

Some things I've never said to my children:

"Got a headache? Crush an aspirin in a teaspoon of water."

"You just wait till your father gets home!" "Well, if you don't like

I Love Lucy, try the

other two channels.' My point is that things have changed and we can no longer raise our children the same way our parents did. It's not surprising that so many parents wonder about their own competency. Our points of reference have gone the way of the typewriter and eight-track

tape player. We're floundering in a 21st century sea hoping for a 20th century life

preserver. My dad used to say that the only way to teach a kid to swim is to throw them in the deep end. If we did that now, we'd be imprisoned for child abuse. Our parents believed that if you spared the rod, you would spoil the child. My generation said "Rods are not necessary for discipline." Today's young parents say, "What's wrong with spoiling them?'

Without that 20th century life preserver, we seem to take any floating flotsam to come our way. website $www.laura on life.com \ for$

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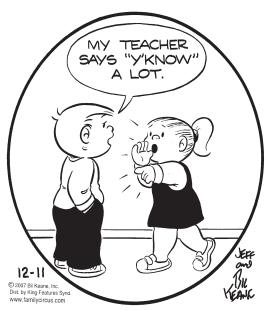
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12 :A	M Live (CC) News (CC	Extra (CC) Axis Marke	Guadalupe ting "	Reno 911! George Lopez	Show The Insider	27	Conan O'Brien News	Nicky (CC)	Update Israel J.R. Church	Sign Off	Dirty Jobs	" Breaking Bad	Whacked Out Whacked Out	Without a Trace (CC)	Comicview (CC)	Emperor New American Drgn	National Finals Sixth Round		Twilight Zone Twilight Zone

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HAGAR



YOU DON'T HAVE TO

BLONDIE







BC

6B













HI AND LOIS

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DRAW PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER!





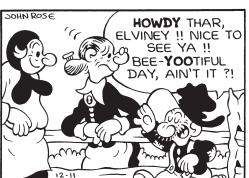


THE OTHER COAST





SNUFFY SMITH





BEETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, Dec. 11, the 345th day of 2007. There are 20 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 11, 1936, Britain's King Edward VIII abdicated throne to marry American divorcee Wallis Warfield Simpson. On this date:

In 1792, France's King Louis XVI went before the Convention to face charges of treason. (Louis was convicted, and executed the fol-

lowing month.) In 1816, Indiana became the 19th state.

In 1882, Boston's Bijou Theatre, the first American playhouse to be lighted exclusively by electricity, gave its first performance (Gilbert and Sullivan's "Iolanthe").

In 1928, police in Buenos Aires announced they had thwarted an attempt on the President-elect of

Herbert Hoover. In 1937, Italy withdrew

from the League of Nations. In 1941, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States; the U.S. responded in kind.

In 1946, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was established. In 1981, the U.N. Security

Council chose Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru to be the fifth secretary-general of the world body.

In 1991, a jury in West Palm Beach, Fla., acquitted William Kennedy Smith of sexual battery, rejecting the allegations of Patricia Bowman. Today's Birthdays: Nobel

Prize-winning Alexander Solzhenitsyn is Actor Jean-Louis Trintignant is 77. Actress Rita Moreno is 76. Former California state lawmaker Tom Hayden is 68. Pop singer David Gates (Bread) is 67. Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., is 66. Actress Donna Mills is 65. Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., is 64. Singer Brenda Lee is 63. Actress Lynda Day George is 63.

Music producer Tony Brown is 61. Actress Teri Garr is 59. Movie director Susan Seidelman is 55. Actress Bess Armstrong is 54. Singer Jermaine Jackson is 53. Rock musician Mesaros (The Smithereens) is 50. Rock musician Nikki Sixx (Motley Crue) is 49. Rock musician Darryl Jones (The Rolling Stones) is 46. Singer-musician Justin Currie (Del Amitri) is 43. Rock musician David Schools (Gov't Widespread Panic) is 43. Actor Gary Dourdan is 41. Actress-comedian Mo'Nique ("The Parkers") is 39. Rapper-actor Mos Def is 34. Actor Rider Strong is 28.

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submarine

36 Tied in score

38 Retired jets:

41 Letter pair in

"pummel"

49 Hearty drink

shoelaces

54 Flows slowly

50 Open, as

51 Really like

52 Lassos

56 Foyer

57 "What

44 Took a breather

46 Numbered rds.

Abbr.

37 Take a breather

35 Tubular

device

Newsday Crossword

65 Honolulu's

island

fruits

69 Service

68 Pizza orders

charges

70 Run out, as a

71 Shade trees

DOWN

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6 Perform better

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1 This one and

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- 14 Tulsa's loc.
- 15 Actress
- Roberts
- 16 Female voice range 17 Fearsome
- dinosaur, for short **18** Attacked by
- a bee 19 Horse-hoof
- sound
- **20** Vietnamese
- capital **22** Fawns' mothers
- 23 Donut feature
- **24** At an earlier
- time
- **26** Menial 27 Redeem one's
- chips
- **30** Table border **33** Confront boldly
- 34 Nosy ones
- **39** Comedian Laurel
- **40** News summary **42** Days before
- holidays 43 Not at all
- interesting
- **45** Run in 47 Special-interest
- grp. **48** Tours of duty
- **49** Gallon fraction
- **53** Carryall bags
- **55** Counteract
- 56 Circle of light
- 58 "Get out!"
- **62** On the
- summit of **63** Surprise greatly

DOWN THE TUBES by Sally R. Stein Edited by Stanley Newman

7 Tubular light source

- **8** Monetary
- 66 On __ (burning) 67 Green citrus penalty
 - 9 Droops
 - **10** Like he-men
 - 11 Give the OK for 12 South Seas
 - spot 13 Feeling blue
 - 21 Part of the eye
 - 25 Opening
 - remarks **26** Zodiac lion
 - 27 Performing
 - group 28 Overture
- 3 Secluded valley 4 Tubular musical follower
 - 29 Leave a
 - mark on
 - 31 High-tech "fingerprint" **32** Overshoot
- **59** Train line
 - 60 "Excuse me!" 61 Tousle, as hair

mind reader?"

- **64** Language suffix 11 | 12 | 13

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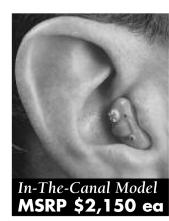
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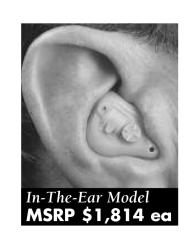
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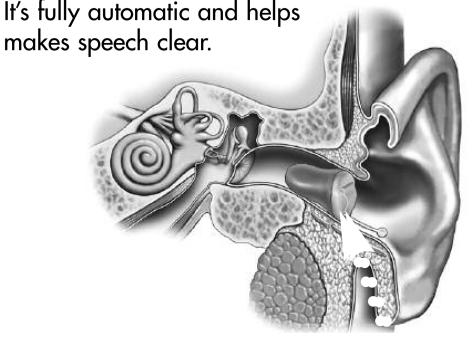




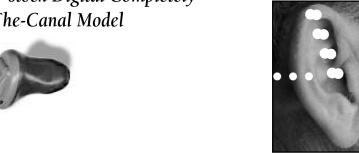


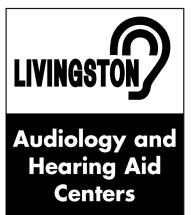
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Accepting prize, Gore urges stop to war on environment

FEATURES

By DOUG MELLGREN

Associated Press Writer

OSLO, Norway Saying it's "time to make peace with the planet," Al Gore accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on Monday with a call for humanity to rise up against a looming climate crisis and stop waging war on the environment.

The United States and China — the world's leading emitters of greenhouse gases — will stand accountable before history if they don't take the lead in that global challenge, the former vice president said.

"Without realizing it, we have begun to wage war on the Earth itself," Gore said in his acceptance speech. "Now, we and the Earth's climate are locked in a relationship familiar to war planners: 'Mutually assured destruction.' It is time to make peace with the planet."

Gore was awarded the prize for sounding the alarm over global warming and spreading awareness on how to counteract it. His co-winner, the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, was represented by the panel's Rajendra leader, Pachauri.

They received their Nobel gold medals and diplomas at a gala cere-

while the Nobel prizes for medicine, chemistry, physics, literature and economics were presented in a separate ceremony in Stockholm, Sweden.

Gore urged government officials at a U.N. climate conference in Bali, Indonesia, to prepare the ground for quick negotiations on an emissions-limitation treaty to replace the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on global warming.

Gore and Pachauri will leave for the U.N. meeting Wednesday. "I will urge the delegates in Bali to adopt a bold mandate for a treaty," Gore said.

In a speech that quoted Churchill, Gandhi and the Bible, Gore said the world's biggest producers of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases the United States and China — must stop blaming each other for the stalemate over warming.

Instead, they should take the lead in solving a problem for which they bear a large responsibility, he said, or be "accountable before history for their failure to act.'

He drew a parallel between leaders who ignore the climate crisis and those who didn't act as Nazi Germany rearmed before World War II.

"Too many of the world's leaders are still best described in the applied to those who ignored Adolf Hitler's threat: 'They go on in strange paradox, decided only to be undecided, resolved to be irresolute, adamant for drift, solid for fluidity, all powerful to be impotent," Gore said.

He likened the current "planetary emergency" to wartime. "We must quickly mobilize our civilization with the urgency and resolve that has previously been seen only when nations mobilized for war," he said.

Although Pachauri described the threat largely in measured, scientific terms, he warned of a grim fate if greenhouse gases emissions are not limited.

"Neglect in protecting our heritage of natural resources could prove extremely harmful for the human race and for all species that share common space on Planet Earth," Pachauri said. "It is within the reach of human society to meet these threats.'

Before presenting the award to Gore and Pachauri, the chairman of the Norwegian Nobel awards committee, Ole Danbolt Mjoes, praised them for moving climate to the top of the agenda.

"We thank you for what you have done for Mother



BIG SPRING HERALD

Tuesday, December 11, 2007

Nobel Peace Prize laureates Al Gore, left, and Dr. Rajendra K. Pachauri, chairman of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, greet members of the public from the balcony of the Grand Hotel in Oslo Monday. Gore accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on Monday and called on humanity to mobilize at once against the dangers of a changing climate.

Earth," Mjoes said.

Gore's wife, Tipper, in the audience with their four children, smiled broadly when he accepted the award, which includes a \$1.6 million stipend to be shared equally between the two winners. The audience, including Norway's King

Sonja, rose for sustained applause.

Gore urged world leaders to put a new climate treaty in place by 2010 two years earlier than planned..

"The future is knocking at our door right now. Make no mistake, the

Harald V and Queen next generation will ask us one of two questions," said Gore. "Either they will ask: 'What were you thinking; why didn't you act? Or they will ask instead: 'How did you find the moral courage to rise and successfully resolve a crisis that so many said was impossible to solve?"

FARMS

Continued from Page 6A

2000, many municipalities and counties in the Panhandle and southern Plains aggressively recruited dairy operators and related industries.

Many offered incentives, which have paid off. "You see the changes in the towns," said Jordan, who pointed to new stores, restaurants and

hotels in Hereford, with about 14,500 people, as an example.



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