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BIG SPRING

HERALD

SUNDAY

DECEMBER 23, 2007



VOLUME 103, NUMBER 19

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HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Santa Claus distributes Christmas gifts to Lakeview Head Start students at Heritage Museum recently. The gifts were purchased with money donated by museum members, Director Nancy Raney said.

Travel safely for holidays, trooper urges

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

While the holiday season is a time for friends and family across the Lone Star State, it's also a time when many Texans find themselves on the road, traveling to see loved ones.

With temperatures forecasted to drop to the low 30s — possibly even colder during the evening hours — this weekend, Hester said the weather can also be a big concern for holiday-goers who find themselves on the road.

"One of the biggest factors to consider is the weather," said Hester. "You can get road condition reports by calling



800-452-9292, or pay close attention to the local weather channel. We report all road closures to both.

Hester "Pay close attention to bridges and overpasses during freezing weather as well. Another thing to remember is to allow extra time for travel because the high level of traffic is going to increase how long it takes to get where you're going."

Hester said planning your trip — as well as your route — ahead of time can really pay off in

See **TRAVEL**, Page 3A

It's Settled

Renovations to begin in February on historic hotel

By **STEVE REAGAN**
Staff Writer

The Settles Hotel's days as a vacant, decaying hulk are just about over.

That was the news given during a Friday news conference as officials announced that a \$12 million renovation of the historic building will begin in earnest around Feb. 1, 2008.

Christopher Ryan, general manager of the Settles Hotel Development Co., outlined preliminary plans for refurbishment of the Big Spring landmark during the news conference, held at Howard College's Hall Center.

"This is a great day in Big

"My feelings are — let me make sure I get the right word — this is the warmest, fuzziest day I've seen in many a year. ... I didn't think we'd have that feeling again, and it's here. This is very exciting news."

—Gloria McDonald, city council member



Spring," he said. "That old building is going to get a remake soon ... We know the city has been waiting a long time for us to start work and we're not going to make them wait much longer."

If Ryan was excited, however, downtown revitalization advo-

cates reacted as if Christmas had come a week early.

"My feelings are — let me make sure I get the right word — this is the warmest, fuzziest day I've seen in many a year," said Gloria McDonald, city councilwoman and member of Main

Street Inc. " ... I didn't think we'd have that feeling again, and it's here. This is very exciting news."

"Obviously, the feeling is indescribable," Big Spring Mayor Russ McEwen said. "We are in a position where things we hoped and prayed for are coming to a pass — and what could be better?"

Ryan returned the compliments, thanking city and county officials for their help in getting the project off the ground.

City and county agencies recently agreed to provide finan-

See **SETTLES**, Page 3A



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Christopher Ryan, general manager of Settles Hotel Development Co., talks about plans for a \$12 million renovation of the historic building during a Friday news conference at Howard College.

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FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

MERRY CHRISTMAS

The Festival of Lights continues nightly from 6 to 10 p.m. at Comanche Trail Park.
See Page 1C

SHOWER CLEAN SUITS

TOKYO (AP) — No time to take your suit to a dry cleaner? Just turn on the shower to wash it at home.

Washable suits are already available, but Japanese clothing company Konaka says its "Shower Clean" line of business suits, which can be washed in a warm shower and require no ironing, is one-of-a-kind.

Konaka says the suits — made of a lightweight fabric easy to clean — will be available in February in Japan.

The suits, available for both men and women, will be priced between \$260 and \$492, according to the company, which has some 320 stores nationwide.

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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
Sunday, December 23, 2007

IN BRIEF

Individuals needed to referee area basketball games

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

Anyone interested should call Adam Rodriguez at 517-0300.

2007-2008 NCAA Division I-A college bowl schedule

SUNDAY
Hawaii Bowl
At Honolulu
Payout: \$750,000
East Carolina (7-5) vs. Boise State (10-2), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

WEDNESDAY
Motor City Bowl
At Detroit
Payout: \$750,000
Central Michigan (8-5) vs. Purdue (7-5), 6:30 p.m. (ESPN)

DEC. 27
Holiday Bowl
At San Diego
Payout: \$2.25 million
Arizona State (10-2) vs. Texas (9-3), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

DEC. 28
Champs Sports Bowl
At Orlando, Fla.
Payout: \$2.125 million
Boston College (10-3) vs. Michigan State (7-5), 4 p.m. (ESPN)

Emerald Bowl
At San Francisco
Payout: ACC: \$750,000; Pac-10: \$825,000
Maryland (6-6) vs. Oregon State (8-4), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

Texas Bowl
At Houston
Payout: CUSA: \$500,000; MWC: \$750,000
Houston (8-4) vs. TCU (7-5), 7 p.m. (NFLN)

DEC. 29
Meineke Bowl
At Charlotte, N.C.
Payout: \$750,000
Connecticut (9-3) vs. Wake Forest (8-4), 12 p.m. (ESPN)

Liberty Bowl
At Memphis, Tenn.
Payout: \$1.75 million
Mississippi State (7-5) vs. UCF (10-3), 3:30 p.m. (ESPN)

Alamo Bowl
At San Antonio
Payout: \$2.225 million
Penn State (8-4) vs. Texas A&M (7-5), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

DEC. 30
Independence Bowl
At Shreveport, La.
Payout: \$1.1 million
Colorado (6-6) vs. Alabama (6-6), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

DEC. 31
Armed Forces Bowl
At Fort Worth, Texas
Payout: \$750,000
California (6-6) vs. Air Force (9-3), 11:30 p.m. (ESPN)

Sun Bowl
At El Paso, Texas
Payout: \$1.9 million
South Florida (9-3) vs. Oregon (8-4), 1 p.m. (CBS)

Humanitarian Bowl
At Boise, Idaho
Payout: \$750,000
Fresno State (8-4) vs. Georgia Tech (7-5), 1 p.m. (ESPN2)

Music City Bowl
At Nashville, Tenn.
Payout: \$1.6 million
Florida State (7-5) vs. Kentucky (7-5), 3 p.m. (ESPN)

See **BRIEFS**, Page 4B

Two Steers receive All-State honors

Hollandsworth, Anderson named to honorable-mention team

By **JONATHAN HULL**
Herald Sports Editor

There is not a higher honor a football player in the state of Texas can receive than to be named to their classification's All-State Team.

Class 4A's All-State awards were announced Thursday and two Big Spring Steers found their

names populating the list.

Middle linebacker Cade Hollandsworth and running back Monte Anderson each received All-State notoriety by being named to the honorable-mention team. Both fell just a few votes short of qualifying for the second team.

Only three Steers were nominated with wide receiver Sidney

Parker falling a couple votes short of joining his teammates as an honorable mention, according to Steers Head Coach Mike Ritchey.

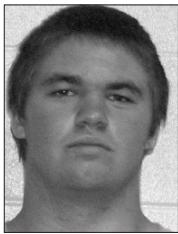
All-state players are nominated by their coaches. Each coach in the state gives the names of players on his team that had seasons that stood out from the rest.

"We nominate the guys we feel like were among the elite with their production," Ritchey explained. "We thought that Cade, Monte and Sidney had

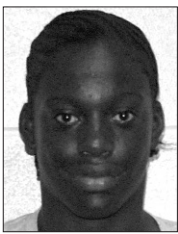
remarkable years and that they were worthy of being named to the team. It's a huge honor for Cade and Monte to receive even an honorable mention. Unfortunately, Sidney came up just a bit short, but we feel like he was deserving."

Anderson dazzled opposing offenses with his combination of speed and toughness throughout the season. He remained the Steers' most consistent offensive

See **STEERS**, Page 2B



Hollandsworth



Anderson

Bufs live up to state ranking in win

By **JONATHAN HULL**
Herald Sports Editor

FORSAN — Being ranked in the state's top 20 boys high school basketball poll this early in the season can be a bad thing. It could put a target on the backs of teams like the No. 15 Forsan Buffaloes.

However, if the Buffs had a target on their back Friday night at Buffalo Gym, then the Trent Gorillas didn't come close to hitting their mark.

The Gorillas never led and held a tie once at 5-5 as Forsan stamped past Trent, 68-17. The Buffs broke the tie with a 13-2 run to end the first period for an 18-7 lead, heading into the second stanza.

Forsan didn't surrender a single field goal in the second period and led 34-8 at intermission.

The Buffs' starters played just the first three minutes of the third and fourth periods, allowing the entire team to see quality time on the court. Ten of Forsan's 11 varsity players scored. Cameron Parker had a game-high 13 points and Adam Bailey chipped in 11. Blake Grantham added 10.

"It's a good game to take into the break," Buffs Head Coach Terry McDonald said. "Everyone got to get on the court and play. Everyone got some good minutes and that's a good way to go into the holiday."

Forsan won't be back in action until Thursday. McDonald said the five-day break is much needed.

"We're still trying to get our legs back under us," McDonald said. "A lot of these guys got off the football field and came right to the gym the next day. So, it'll be good for them to get a few days off."

However, the Buffs have made the transition from the gridiron



Forsan's Jeremy Robbins (20) outruns a Trent defender on his way to the basket in the 15th-ranked Buffaloes' 68-17 win Friday night in Buffalo Gym.

to the hardwood seem effortless as they have jumped out to an 11-1 start, leading to a state ranking.

"I've been here a while. We work on the same things from seventh grade through high school, so these kids know what's expected of them,"

McDonald explained. "This community backs the athletes no matter the sport. We get behind them during football season then follow them into basketball season and we'll do the same throughout our spring sports."

The Buffs play Colorado City in the first round of the Sterling

City Tournament, beginning Thursday. McDonald notes the strong competition that the Buffs have in line after Christmas break is over.

"We've got some tough games ahead of us," commented

See **FORSAN**, Page 2B

Coahoma boys and girls remain perfect in district

By **BRANDON HALLFORD**

Special to the Herald

COAHOMA — Hawley's Bearcats (1-1, 6-7) rolled into Coahoma looking to take advantage of any emotional let down the Coahoma Bulldogs (2-0, 9-3) may have had after collecting head coach Kim Nichols 400th career victory Monday night.

For the first 12 minutes, it looked as if the Bearcats were going to do just that, going into the locker room trailing by just two points.

However, the Bulldogs had other ideas, ripping off a 23-4 third quarter on their way to a 64-38 win.

"We came in knowing that Hawley was able to shoot the three. We just didn't realize that they could shoot it that well," Nichols said. "We were able to make some adjustments and shut that down. Part of that was our ability to knock down the outside shot ourselves. People know that we have a strong inside game, but most don't realize that we can shoot from the outside pretty well if we have to."

Coahoma grabbed an early

lead, bursting out to a quick 5-2 advantage before Stanton Taylor buried the first of his four treys on the night to pull the Bearcats even.

The teams traded baskets for the remainder of the half with Hawley grabbing the 17-15 lead after the 1st period. The only salvation for the Bulldogs in the half was the ability to bury the three, hitting 3 of their 8 shots from behind the arc in the second period and allowing them to claim the slim 28-25 lead after 16 minutes of play.

The second half was a totally different story, though, as the Bulldogs buried 3-pointers for their first two shots and never looked back.

Senior post Colter Morgan and sophomore Jovi Paniagua paced the Bulldogs with 17 points each while Matthew Tatum scored eight in the victory.

The Bulldogs made 11 3-pointers with Paniagua connecting on five. Hawley hit five treys in the game, but all of them came in the first half.

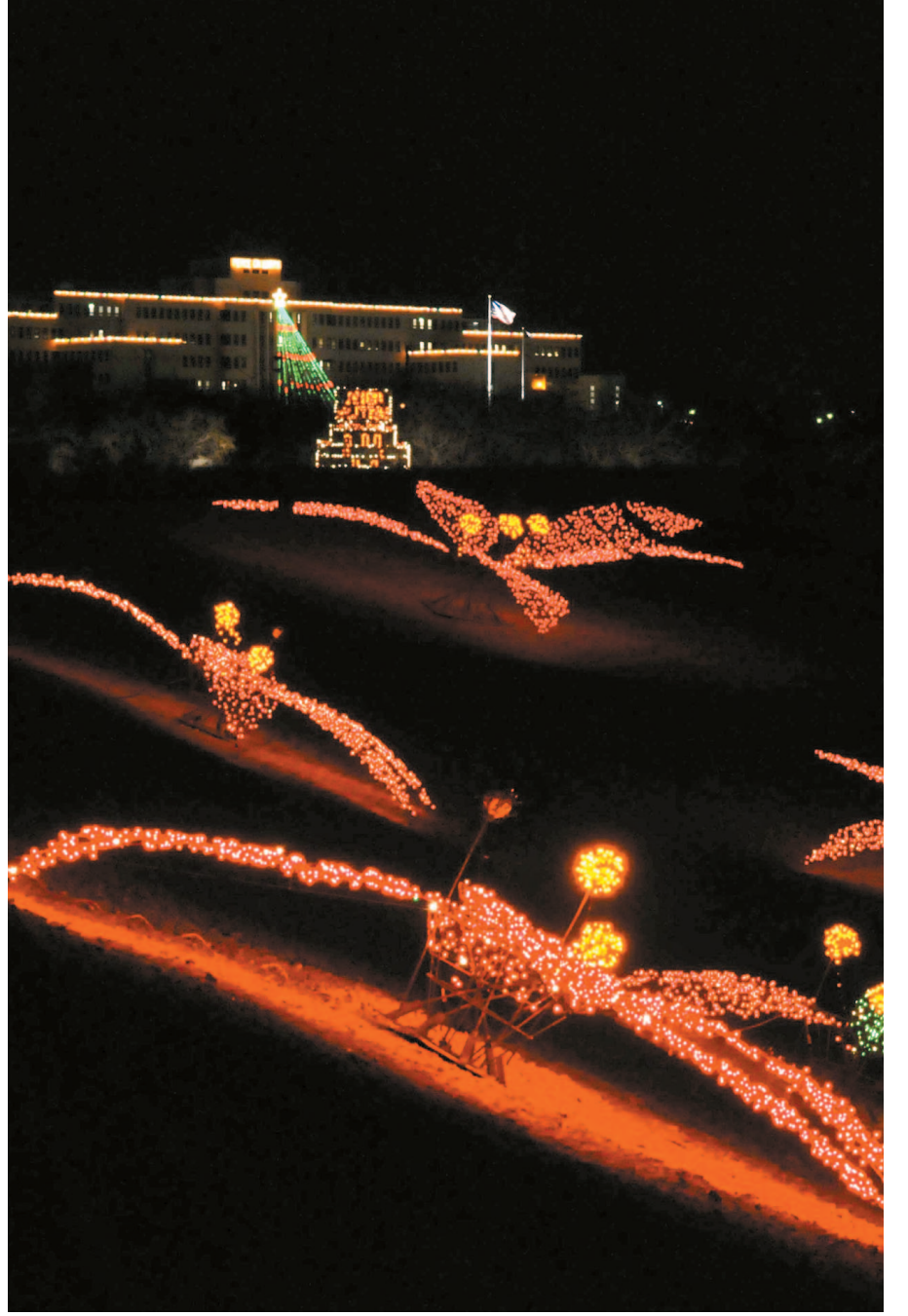
See **COAHOMA**, Page 4B



Coahoma Bulldogs post Cody Sheppard blocks the a Hawley Bearcats' shot in the Bulldogs' 64-38 win Friday night in Coahoma.

HERALD photo/Bruce Schooler

Lighting up the holidays!



The 11th annual Festival of Lights offers holiday tradition in grand style, featuring more than 1 million dazzling bulbs of countless size and colors. The festival, which takes place in Comanche Trail Park, continues nightly from 6 p.m. until 10 p.m. through Dec. 31.

Photos by Bruce Schooler



Obituaries

Police blotter

Linda D. Prince



Linda D. Prince, 60, of Lubbock passed away Wednesday, Dec. 19, 2007, following a courageous battle with cancer.

Born to Otto C. and Delores (Taylor) Rogers, Linda grew up in Big Spring. On Oct. 30, 1970, she married Roy Prince. Her life was devoted to children. Linda was a day care provider and her utmost concern was for the welfare of the children she cared for. She will be deeply missed by all those whose life she touched.

Left to cherish her memory is her husband, a daughter Shanna Prince, son and his wife Timothy and Jimmie Ann Prince and grandchildren Ryan and Rylee Prince.

A memorial service will take place Wednesday, Dec. 26 at 1 p.m. at Resthaven's Abbey Chapel with William McGraw officiating. Cremation under the direction of Resthaven Funeral Home.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society.

Anna Kathleen Holcomb



Anna Kathleen Holcomb, 82, a former resident of Big Spring, died Oct. 24, 2007, in Las Vegas, Nev.

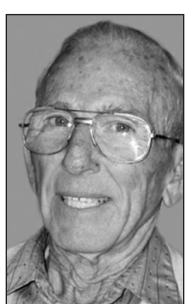
She was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., and moved to Bakersfield, Calif., in the 1950s. She was a homemaker and volunteered at her children's school while they were growing up. She moved to Big Spring in 1973 and married Lon Holcomb. She worked at the TG&Y store in Big Spring for a few years and had other part-time jobs.

She is survived by her three children, Allison Kriivoruchko of Mill Valley, Calif., Katherine Zajac of Las Vegas, Nev., and Peter Thrift of Bakersfield, Calif.

Mattie Fuller

Mattie Fuller, 99, of Big Spring, died Saturday, Dec. 22, 2007, in a local hospital. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring. The family will receive friends at the funeral home from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Buddie Campbell



Buddie Campbell, 84, of Big Spring, died Friday, Dec. 21, 2007, in a Midland hospital. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Monday, Dec. 24, 2007, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel with Dr. Randy Cotton, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, officiating. Interment with full military honors will follow at Trinity Memorial Park.

The family will receive friends from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday at the funeral home.

He was born Dec. 20, 1923, in Redwater and married Mary Elizabeth Graham on Oct. 3, 1949, in Texarkana, Ark.

He served in the United States Air Force for more than 21 years and had served in Korea. After his retirement from the service, he had worked for National Supply Company and Republic Supply Company.

He was a Baptist and a member of the Masonic Lodge.

Survivors include his wife, Mary Campbell of Big Spring; one daughter and son-in-law, Brenda and Buddy Rhyne of Big Spring; three sons and two daughters-in-law, Gary and Debbie Campbell of Nash, James Campbell of Odessa and Bruce and Belynda Campbell of Katy; six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; two sisters, Jean Heflin of Nash and Estelle Edwards of Bryan; and two brothers, Charles Campbell and Dwayne Campbell, both of Texarkana, Texas.

He was preceded in death by his parents; five brothers, Walter, Tom, Frank, R.L. and Robert; and one sister, Blanche.

The family suggests memorials be made to the charity of your choice.

Arrangements are under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring. Online condolences can be made at: www.npwelch.com

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity Friday:

- ASSAULT BY CONTACT was reported in the 400 block of Fourth.
- ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE was reported in the 3200 block of Auburn.
- ASSAULT CAUSING BODILY INJURY was reported in the 800 block of Eighth.
- ASSAULT CAUSING BODILY INJURY/FAMILY VIOLENCE was reported in the 1600 block of Martin Luther King.
- BURGLARY OF A HABITATION was reported in the 500 block of Westover.
- CREDIT/DEBIT CARD ABUSE was reported in the 200 block of FM 700.
- THEFT was reported in the 700 block of Interstate 20, the 1800 block of Gregg, the 4000 block of W. Highway 80 and the 2600 block of Gregg.

Lottery

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

Winning numbers drawn: 13-14-21-22-37
Number matching five of five: none.

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Friday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 3-5-2-9. Sum It Up: 19.

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Friday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 9-9-2. Sum It Up: 20.

Take Note

• 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.

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Circulation Customer Service Representative will be available Christmas Eve, December 24th, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. for your convenience.
If you do not receive a paper call between these hours.

FORSAN

Continued from Page 1B

McDonald. "Colorado City will be a tough test in the Sterling City tournament and then we're going to play Midland Classical who has beaten three 5A teams already this season. It's going to be a challenge."

Trent 7 1 9 0-17
Forsan 18 16 15 19-68

Trent: Pena 3, Woodard 3, Chappa 8, Beaver 3.

Forsan (11-1): Clint Hobbs 2, Jeremy Robbins 6, Tristan Clay 7, Adam Bailey 11, Cameron Parker 13, Evan Burton 3, Alex Huckabee 5, Spencer Briggs 4, Nathan Atkerson 7, Blake Grantham 10.

Trent 49, Lady Buffs 37

At times, Forsan's Lady Buffaloes were able to trade basket for basket with the Trent Lady Gorillas Friday night. However, whenever Forsan's offense faltered, Trent's didn't. The result was a 49-37 Forsan loss, dropping the Lady Buffs

season record to 6-8. "Frustrating," said Lady Buffs Head Coach Robert Hillger. "We had people out of position a number of times. We acted like we were ready to go to Christmas break."

However, for a team that started the season 0-4, the Lady Buffs have shown strong improvement, winning six of their last 10 games. Hillger noted the improved play. "We're playing a lot better than we were when we first started out," Hillger said. "We've just been scrapping and hustling, especially on the defensive end of the floor. We didn't do that defensively tonight, though."

Trent pushed the lead to 13 with a 9-2 run early in the second period, but the Lady Buffs, who have overcome deficits greater than 10 points twice this season, made a 7-0 run to cut the lead to 23-17 with a little more than a minute left to play. However, Trent scored

the final four points of the first half, grabbing a 10-point lead at intermission. The Lady Buffs never got closer than 10 for the rest of the game.

"We had a lot of momentum coming into this game," Hillger said. "We didn't capitalize on Trent when we needed to and we certainly couldn't stop them, either."

Amanda Longorio led Forsan with 14 points and Tori Gauer added nine.

The Lady Buffs also play in the Sterling City Tournament beginning Thursday.

Trent 14 13 12 10-49
Forsan 8 9 8 12-37

Trent: Beaver 8, Majors 24, Hanshaw 8, Towson 2, Alaniz 5, Delagarza 2.

Forsan (6-8): Tori Gauer 9, Miranda Park 2, Sandi Golleher 6, Charlene Stanley 6, Amanda Longorio 14.

Contact Sports Editor Jonathan Hull by calling 263-7331, ext. 237, or by e-mailing him at sports@bigspringherald.com.



Forsan's Miranda Park (center) dives on the floor to compete with two Trent Lady Gorillas' defenders for a loose ball Friday night in Buffalo Gym. The Lady Buffs fell to Trent, 49-37. HERALD photo/Jonathan Hull

STEERS

Continued from Page 1B

weapon, racking up 1,127 yards rushing and 12 touchdowns.

Anderson was a first-team all-district selection in District 4-4A along with nationally-recruited Michael Connor of Frenship. Connor ended up receiving second-team all-state honors as well.

Anderson is just a sophomore and the Steers' coaching staff is ecstatic about his potential.

"Monte is a big play back capable of breaking away on every play," noted Ritchey. "He's got a ton of athletic ability and fits the prototypical mold of a running back within our offense. He was our most consistent threat all season. He can run, catch and block. We're expecting big things from him over the next two seasons."

Hollandsworth was

District 4-4A's Defensive MVP. He led the Steers with 65 tackles and six sacks.

He also had two interceptions, including one he returned for a touchdown.

Ritchey says it's the junior middle linebacker's off the field attitude that make the biggest difference for the team, though.

"Cade has a great desire to be a better athlete and puts the work in to become one," Ritchey said. "I would say his greatest attribute other than his desire to improve himself physically is his passion for the game. He has a passion and a love for football."

On the field, teams had to prepare their offensive gameplans around Hollandsworth, who was also a first-team all-district selection at linebacker.

"The neat thing about all-district is that your district foes vote for you,"

Ritchey noted. "So for Cade to receive Defensive MVP honors shows that other schools had to game plan around him. He's an impact player. It doesn't matter where the ball is going, Cade has the ability to make a big play."

Turns out, the Steers ended up playing against three all-state first teamers — wide receiver Jeremy Watson of Lubbock Estacado, defensive end Aaron Wampler of Frenship and linebacker Jordy Collier of Hereford — and two second teamers — Connor and offensive lineman Chris Dalton of Frenship.

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Melanie Jo Barrera and Rodger Lee Horton

Barrera and Horton

Mr. Tony Barrera and Mrs. Fred Eckert, all of Big Spring, are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Melanie Jo, to Rodger Lee Horton of Midland. Rodger is the son of Brad and Dawn Horton of Andrews.

Melanie is the granddaughter of Jessie and Bertha Barrera and James and Barbara Begley, all of Big Spring. She is a graduate of The University of Texas of the Permian Basin with a bachelor of business administration in accountancy and is employed at First National Bank of Midland as a staff accountant II.

Rodger is the grandson

of Claude and Betty Horton of Andrews and Rodger and Judy Woodall of Canyon. He is a graduate of The University of Texas of the Permian Basin with a bachelor of business administration in management and is employed at First National Bank of Midland as a credit analyst.

The wedding ceremony will be held at First Baptist Church in Stanton at 4 p.m. May 17, 2008, with a reception following at Midland Country Club.



Jamie Lynn Corse and John Wesley Armstrong

Corse and Armstrong

Jamie Lynn Corse and John Wesley Armstrong of Andrews are pleased to announce their engagement and approaching marriage Dec. 29, 2007, at The Baker Building in Lubbock at 7 p.m.

The bride elect is the daughter of Eddy and Sarah Corse, formerly of Big Spring. She is the granddaughter of Earl and Carolyn Corse of Mobeetie and Walton Harrall of Ruidoso. She is a 2002 graduate of Coahoma High School. Jamie graduated from West Texas A&M University in 2006 with a

bachelor of science degree in interdisciplinary studies.

The groom is the son of Tommy and Sandra Armstrong of Andrews. He is the grandson of Jay and Pat Thompson and Phyllis Armstrong, both of Andrews. He is a 1997 graduate of Andrews High School. John graduated from Howard Payne University in 2002 with a bachelor of arts degree in mathematics and a minor in Spanish. He is currently working at Andrews High School as a math teacher and head tennis coach.



Jessi Weir and David Keefe

Weir and Keefe

Jessi Weir of Big Spring and David Keefe of Brownwood are pleased to announce their engagement and upcoming marriage planned for June 28, 2008, at College Baptist Church in Big Spring.

The bride-elect is the daughter of Marcy Weir of Big Spring and the late Danny Weir. She is the granddaughter of the late Ray and Betty Weir and the late Mary Lou Walker and the late Lonnie Tetteleton.

The groom-to-be is the son of Rod and Cindy Keefe of Liberty Hill. He is the grandson of Diane and Butch Maywald of Huntsville, the late Richard Keefe and the late Bill and Charlene

Matthews.

Jessi is a 2002 graduate of Big Spring High School and a 2006 graduate of Howard Payne University with a bachelor of science degree in elementary education. She is employed by the Big Spring Independent School District as a first grade teacher at Marcy Elementary.

David is a 2004 graduate of Liberty Hill High School and a student at Howard Payne University. He will graduate in May 2008 with a bachelor of applied arts and sciences degree in Christian education with an emphasis in youth ministry.

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Merry Christmas

Nation's neediness more apparent this holiday season

By **MARTHA IRVINE**

AP National Writer

CHICAGO — A Salvation Army shelter in a well-to-do Kansas county has an unprecedented waiting list that includes families who've lost their homes to foreclosure.

In Florida, a real estate agent who said she was having a tough time making it this year sought assistance from a food bank for herself and her children. And in Maryland, one agency that serves families says it's seeing more young, working, single mothers who move into shelters and ask family members to care for their kids. They just can't afford rent.

Stories like these tell of a holiday season rife with need across the country, but also what aid workers are calling a disturbing and growing need for assistance all year round.

Everywhere, people are feeling the crunch of rising gasoline and grocery prices, as well as utility bills, rent and mortgage payments. Those factors

also are cutting into people's ability to donate.

"Not only can they not give, many — for the first time — have need and are coming to us," says Melissa Temme, a spokeswoman for the Salvation Army, where stories like that of the overflow at the Johnson County Family Lodge in Kansas are becoming increasingly common.

Last year, 4.8 million Americans got holiday assistance from the Salvation Army, everything from meals and clothing to gifts. It's too early to tell if those numbers will go up this year. But while her organization generally sees a surge in giving of gifts and at kettles right before Christmas, Temme says she's sensed a general unease among staff about the level of need that's out there.

Others say the same. "This isn't a holiday shortage, per se. This is a shortage that's been building," says Ross Fraser, a spokesman for America's Second Harvest, a domestic

hunger-relief organization based in Chicago. At Thanksgiving, the organization estimates that food banks nationally were short a total of 15 million pounds of food, or roughly 11.7 million meals.

Since then, his agency has heard about recent shortages at food banks, from New York, Illinois and Tennessee to Texas and California. One food bank in Dallas reports having to spend \$100,000 a month buying food, because of declining donations of excess food from grocery stores and farmers through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"I don't think anybody ever thought food banks would be going out and buying food," Fraser says.

One food bank in Orlando, Fla., he says, told of a single mother who was forced to get food donations because her income as a real estate agent fell from \$66,000 last year to just \$18,000 this year, due to slumping housing sales.

Rebecca Wagner, executive director of

Community Ministry of Montgomery County, Md., also has seen the need for emergency aid growing among the working poor.

"Before they were cobbling together three and four jobs to make ends meet," Wagner says. "Now that utility bill is a backbreaker."

She's been encouraging donors to make pledges beyond the holiday season — for instance for utility bills and rent next year.

"Toys and bags of oranges only go so far when you can't keep your heat on," Wagner says. But, she adds, families always appreciate the help at the holidays, too.

"All of it helps," she says.

Considering that individual donors represent about three-quarters of all charitable contributions, it means the last few months of giving in a year are critical, says Albert Ruesga of The Meyer Foundation, which funds aid organizations in Washington, D.C., and beyond.

"The giving that happens around the holiday season is really the lifeblood of many organizations that serve our poorest communities," he says.

Corporate donations are also key.

Wal-Mart recently announced that it would donate 50 truckloads of food and grocery items to America's Second Harvest, while ConAgra Foods will donate 35 truckloads and pledged to match individual donations to America's Second Harvest up to \$200,000.

Many others focus on local giving.

That includes Navistar Financial Corp., the Schaumburg, Ill.-based finance subsidiary of the International Truck and Engine Corporation.

Among other things, employees of the company give gifts each year to hundreds of students at

the Lafayette Specialty School, an school that serves toddlers all the way up to eighth-graders in Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood.

John Mulvaney, Navistar Financial's chief financial officer, recently played Santa Claus as he and his staff handed out the gifts to excited students who'd written "letters to Santa."

Tia Martins, a fourth-grader, was one of those. She asked for an electronic diary, "so I can write all the things that happened to me, so I would never forget them."

"It means a lot to me that people that I don't even know would go out and spend their hard-earned money on me," Tia says. "Even though I don't get a lot of gifts, I'm still happy with what I have, not what I could've had."

SETTLES

Continued from Page 1A

cial backing for the project in the form of up to \$3 million in reimbursement funds and a 10-year abatement on property taxes.

"Without that money, this project was dead in the water," Ryan said. "We literally couldn't get this done with the city and county's financial assistance."

Ryan outlined a two-to-three-year effort that would refurbish the build-

ing into a combination of offices, hotel space and residential apartments.

Environmental abatement work has already begun at the old Greyhound station adjacent to the hotel and will continue into the main building in the coming weeks, he said.

After that, plans call to secure the building and perform "minor structural work" before construction begins around Feb. 1, Ryan said.

He envisions the basement and first two floors of the building being

refurbished to the same level as the hotel's glory days.

"I want people to walk into the lobby and it look the same as it did in 1930," Ryan said. "This used to be a happening place, and there's no reason it can't be again."

Other plans call for the tower of the building being used for a combination of hotel rooms and residential apartments, with the old bus station housing a swimming pool and/or other recreational services for hotel tenants. Ryan is hopeful renova-

tion of the Settles will trigger even more revitalization efforts in the downtown area.

"We hope this is the domino that pushes other property owners in the area to get working on their projects," he said.

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

TRAVEL

Continued from Page 1A

the event of an emergency.

"If you're traveling to see family, be sure to tell them what your route will be," said Hester. "That makes it a lot easier when we have to go out and look for someone. Also, be sure to keep

emergency items in the vehicle, such as first-aid kits and blankets.

"No one wants to think about what can go wrong out on the road, but it's always a good idea to be

prepared."

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

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Nowitzki leads Mavs to fifth-straight win

By **DAVID JIMENEZ**

Associated Press Writer

DALLAS — Dirk Nowitzki is aware his long-range game is off right now. So the reigning MVP is trying to work closer to the basket.

Nowitzki scored 30 points and Devin Harris added 21 to lead Dallas past the Los Angeles Clippers 102-89 on Friday night.

Nowitzki is hitting just 30 percent of his 3-pointers — his worst percentage since his rookie season in 1998-99. After missing a 3-pointer on the game's first possession, Nowitzki decide to post up against smaller Clipper defenders.

He scored 14 in the first quarter, then helped close out Los Angeles with a couple of baskets in the fourth.

"Some nights you find your rhythm quick," Nowitzki said. "I had some great looks right away and I got to the foul line."

Los Angeles got within 88-81 on Dan Dickau's layup midway through the fourth.

But Dallas put the game away by scoring the next nine points. Nowitzki hit

a 3-pointer and added a three-point play to put the Mavericks up 97-81.

Nowitzki has scored at least 30 in his last three games.

The Mavericks won their fifth straight game as they held the Clippers to less than 90 points for the ninth time this season.

"At this point it doesn't matter how many games you win in a row," Nowitzki said. "It's a matter of finding a rhythm. This is a step in the right direction. We're not worried about any streaks."

The Clippers have lost 12 of 15 games since starting the season 6-4.

"I thought we went through stretches where we just didn't shoot the ball well again," Clippers coach Mike Dunleavy said. "We made some good runs but we could never get a crack."

Chris Kaman scored 24 points and grabbed 19 rebounds for Los Angeles. It was his 21st double-double of the season and his 11th straight in December.

Dallas led by 12 at the half, but Los Angeles opened the third on a 15-6 run.

Richie Frahm hit a 3-

pointer to bring the Clippers within 60-57.

The Mavericks answered as Harris drove for a layup, then stole the ball from Tim Thomas and finished with another hoop to put Dallas ahead 64-57.

Nowitzki hit a jumper to extend the lead to nine. After a Kaman basket, Josh Howard scored five straight points to put Dallas on top 71-59.

Howard scored 15 points, Jason Terry had 14 and Jerry Stackhouse added 10 for the Mavericks, who improved to 13-2 at home.

"We're not flying high and mighty right now," Dallas coach Avery Johnson said. "We know we still have our game to work on, and that keeps us on our toes."

Cuttino Mobley had 13 off the bench for the Clippers.

The Clippers have been one of the worst offensive teams in the NBA. They came into the game averaging less than 94 points and shooting 42 percent.

"Offense has been a problem for us," Kaman said. "We don't move well, we don't execute

well. Something is wrong and we've got to figure it out on our own."

Harris scored 10 in the second quarter, including a driving layup to put the Mavericks ahead 54-42 at halftime.

Clippers reserve center Paul Davis left the game with 8:53 left in the first half with a sprained right knee. Davis landed awkwardly on his right leg trying to get back on defense.

Davis wasn't putting any pressure on his right leg as needed the help of two teammates to assist him off the floor.

Notes: Johnson, a former San Antonio point guard, will have his jersey retired by the Spurs on Saturday night. Johnson is team's all-time assists leader and his jumper in Game 5 of the 1999 NBA Finals clinched the title. ... Mobley was back in the lineup after missing Wednesday's game against Toronto with a stomach virus.

Pistons 92, Grizzlies 67

At Auburn Hills, Mich., Tayshaun Prince scored 16 points and Antonio

McDyess added 11 points and 11 rebounds to lead Detroit to its fourth straight victory.

The Pistons, who have won 11 of 13, got 14 points each from Chauncey Billups and Richard Hamilton. Rookie Arron Afflalo added a career-best 12.

Rudy Gay led the Grizzlies with 18 points. Pau Gasol returned to the Memphis lineup after missing four games with a toe injury.

He finished with 10 points and 10 rebounds in 31 minutes, but went 4-for-14 from the floor as Memphis shot 33.8 percent.

Jazz 113, Magic 94

Paul Millsap scored a career-high 28 points to help Utah end a seven-game road losing streak.

The Magic, who went 13-4 in November, have now lost six of eight and haven't won a home game since Nov. 24.

Trail Blazers 99, Nuggets 96

At Portland, Ore., Martell Webster scored 19 points and Brandon Roy

and LaMarcus Aldridge each added 18 to help the Trail Blazers extend their winning streak to 10 games.

Portland, which has the longest current winning streak in the NBA, has not won as many consecutive games since winning 12 straight in the 2001-02 season.

Allen Iverson and Carmelo Anthony each had 34 points for the Nuggets. Anthony added 12 rebounds.

Celtics 107, Bulls 82

At Boston, Paul Pierce scored 15 of his 22 points in the third quarter, going 4-for-4 from 3-point range in the third before sitting out the fourth in Boston's easy bounce-back victory.

Recovering quickly from their only home loss of the season, Boston never trailed in the game and never gave up its double-digit lead after scoring 10 consecutive points to make it 40-22 with 7:50 left in the first half.

Ray Allen scored 18 for the Celtics, who have the best record in the NBA (21-3).

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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

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

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

An Unsafe Safety Play

South dealer.

Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 7 6 2
♥ 8 5 3
♦ 9 6 3
♣ Q 7 5 2

EAST
♠ Q 10 9
♥ Q 7 6 4
♦ 7 5 2
♣ J 6 4

WEST
♠ K 5 4 3
♥ K 9 2
♦ Q J 10 8
♣ 9 8

SOUTH
♠ A J 8
♥ A J 10
♦ A K 4
♣ A K 10 3

The bidding:
South West North East
3 NT Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead — queen of diamonds.
You can't play bridge entirely by rote and expect to always get the best result. General rules are valuable in the play of most hands, but they're not expected to take the place of independent thought.

Consider this deal where South went astray through force of habit. Playing three notrump, he won the diamond lead with the king and cashed the ace of clubs. He then led the club three to the queen, trying to guard against the possibility that East had been dealt four clubs to the jack. In that case, he would be able to lead another club from dummy and trap the jack.

However, both opponents followed to the second club, so the precaution was wasted. Declarer then led a heart and finessed the jack. West took the king and returned the jack of diamonds. Eventually South lost four more tricks and went down one, winding up with only the eight tricks he had had from the beginning.

Declarer could have made the contract if he had eschewed the standard "safety play" in clubs. Instead, he should have cashed the A-K of clubs and then led the ten to the queen, preserving the three in his hand.

He could then finesse the jack of hearts and, after winning any return by West, re-enter dummy with a club to the seven to take a second heart finesse. When this finesse worked, South would have had nine tricks.

There is no question that South's manner of handling the clubs would have been correct if making nine tricks depended solely on obtaining four club tricks. But in his misguided zeal to ensure the maximum number of club tricks, he lost sight of his ultimate goal.

He should have recognized that he needed two entries to dummy for two heart leads, which meant that a normal (3-2) club break had to be assumed. There was not much point in protecting against a lie of the cards that would defeat him if it actually existed.

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★ SUV's ★

2005 Saturn VUE - Stk# H124A. Was \$12,495. NOW \$11,495

2004 Ford Explorer 4D - Stk# H139. Was \$14,995. NOW \$13,995

2005 Chevrolet TrailBlazer - Stk# H251. Was \$15,495. NOW \$14,495

2005 Buick Rendezvous CX - Stk# H101. Was \$16,995. NOW \$15,495

2005 Hyundai Santa Fe GLS 4D - Stk# H137A. Was \$16,495. NOW \$15,495

2005 Buick Rendezvous CX 4D - Stk# H185A. Was \$16,495. NOW \$15,495

2006 Jeep Liberty 4D - Stk# H197. Was \$16,495. NOW \$15,495

2003 GMC Yukon XL 1500 - Stk# H111. Was \$18,495. NOW \$15,995

2006 Mitsubishi Endeavor LS 4D - Stk# H222. Was \$18,995. NOW \$17,995

2004 Chevrolet Tahoe - Stk# H120. Was \$19,995. NOW \$16,995

2007 Chevrolet Equinox 4D - Stk# H166. Was \$12,995. NOW \$18,995

2006 Chevrolet Equinox - Stk# H230. Was \$19,495. NOW \$18,995

2006 Pontiac Torrent 4D - Stk# H160. Was \$20,495. NOW \$19,495

2005 Ford Explorer Sport Trac - Stk# H105. Was \$19,995. NOW \$18,995

2006 Chevrolet Equinox AWD - Stk# H106. Was \$20,995. NOW \$17,495

2007 Chevrolet Equinox - Stk# H141. Was \$21,495. NOW \$19,495

2004 Chevrolet Tahoe 4D - Stk# H159. Was \$21,495. NOW \$20,495

2002 Land Rover Discovery - Stk# H240. Was \$20,995. NOW \$19,995

2004 Chevrolet Tahoe 4D - Stk# H161. Was \$25,495. NOW \$24,495

2007 Jeep Wrangler - Stk# H219. Was \$25,495. NOW \$24,495

2006 Chevrolet Avalanche 1500 - Stk# H150. Was \$26,495. NOW \$26,995

2005 GMC Yukon - Stk# H253. Was \$27,995. NOW \$27,995

2007 Cadillac SRX - Stk# H140. Was \$35,995. NOW \$32,995

2007 Chevrolet Tahoe 4D - Stk# H165. Was \$36,495. NOW \$35,495

2007 Chevrolet Tahoe 4D - Stk# H205. Was \$40,995. NOW \$39,995

2007 Cadillac Escalade - Stk# H243. Was \$44,995. NOW \$43,995

2007 Cadillac Escalade 4D - Stk# H164. Was \$48,995. NOW \$48,995

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Investing in your children reaps great benefits

According to a recent poll reported by a Christian magazine, home life has taken a major detour from the honors it once held. The main reason given was the increase of divorce. Other reasons cited were that many parents do not see the home as a family habitat, a shelter from the outside world.



JERRIE STOCKS

Numerous couples reported that they do not enjoy being at home, preferring to be at work instead. Among reasons given, parents do not want or do not know how to deal with the problems of their children. That is a pretty sad situation for our children to grow up in.

It is beyond me why parents bring children into the world if they do not intend to fulfill the role that is rightfully theirs to train their children to be responsible

citizens. The problems we face with our children today is not the fault of the child, in most situations. The problem is squarely on the shoulders of the parents. So parents, your journey has just begun and every journey requires preparation. What kind of sons and daughters do you want to present to the world? Remember, your children are representatives of you.

If your child does not know even the basics of good manners, if they do not understand that integrity, honesty, faithfulness, loyalty, etc. are just a few of the characteristics that build good lives, then your children have no solid foundation to build their lives upon. It should be the privilege of all parents to train and model a life of excellence before their children.

Dear Jerrie,
My son is 14, my daughter 12. Is it too late to talk to them about good manners? The biggest problem is my husband. He is very sloppy at the table and laughs at your columns

when I read them to him. Our family attends church together every Sunday, my husband sings in the choir, but he is not a good example of good table manners before our children.

Thanks,
Shirley

Hello Shirley,
I like to believe that it's never too late to teach the good things in life to our children. However, the early years are the formative years and is the best time to teach them. I would go ahead and talk to your children and explain how good manners mark them and set them apart for good jobs and promotions. You must be the source that your children anchor to. Perhaps when your husband sees the good in them, he will want to make a change, too.

Dear Jerrie,
My husband and I will have a total of six guests for dinner on Christmas Day. What is the best way to pass the food to keep it from going in all directions?
Thank you,

Manners Matters

Dorothy

Dear Dorothy,
You and your husband should sit at each end of the table, with guests seated on both sides. Your husband, who is at the head of the table, will pass the food nearest him to the person on his right. You, at the opposite end, will pass the food nearest you to the

person on your right. This keeps the food moving in the same direction. The key is to not get in a hurry, enjoy the conversation and the aroma of the food until each has been served. When you and your husband place your napkins across your laps, this is the signal that the meal has begun. If you wish to offer thanks, your hus-

band should initiate the prayer by asking everyone to bow their heads.

Jerrie Stocks has for a number of years conducted classes on etiquette in public and private schools, colleges, churches and ladies' groups, as well as providing private tutoring and conducting workshops. E-mail your questions concerning etiquette to yourmanner-scourt@suddenlink.net.

Who's Who

Lindsay Hull Glave graduated Cum Laude from Texas A&M Corpus Christi with a bachelor of science degree in kinesiology and a minor in business administration on Dec. 15, 2007.

Mrs. Glave graduated from Big Spring High

School in 2000. After serving four years in the U.S. Navy as a gunners mate 2nd Class, she enrolled in Texas A&M Corpus Christi in 2005.

She is the daughter of Mike and Beverly Hull of Big Spring. She is the granddaughter of Monty

and the late Jean McGuire and of Jerrye and the late Buford Hull, all of Big Spring.

She and her husband Tyrone Glave, Store Keeper 2nd Class of the U.S. Navy, will soon be transferring to Guam.

New Year's Eve Party
THIS IS THE PARTY YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!!!!!!
At
KOKOPELLI'S
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MONDAY DEC. 31st
9:00 pm TO 1:00 am
MUSIC AND FUN!!!!
\$10.00 PER PERSON
BRING YOUR OWN BOTTLE & SET UPS
Feel free to bring your favorite finger foods or snacks!!
NO ONE UNDER 21

At Dr. Traxel's December is Kids Month!

ENT EAR NOSE THROAT

- Experts estimate that 37 million people are afflicted with sinusitis each year, making it one of the most common health conditions in America.
- The number one reason that a child visits a physician is for an ear infection.
- One of the most common chronic illnesses affecting teenagers is tonsillitis.

Dr. Roger Traxel is a practicing Ear, Nose, and Throat specialist and has been helping patients in the Permian Basin for over 20 years. Call Dr. Traxel for an appointment today.
Dr. Roger Traxel 2012 West Ohio Midland, Texas 79701 (432)-683-1856

Season's Greeting
Happy Holidays
Merry Christmas!

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Submit your photo to be posted on-line

Picture Accepted Until January 1, 2008

Don't forget visit & submit your opinion or just say hello to someone at our Guest Book.

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The Big Spring Herald Delivery Deadlines Are:
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EXTRA!

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.

Ron Midkiff
Publisher

John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

Bill McClellan
News Editor

Just a little ol' Texas sunshine in Washington

At a time when government seems to be growing by the day, Congress made an important move at year-end towards increasing government openness, transparency and accountability. Both the Senate and House approved the most sweeping reforms to our freedom of information laws in more than a decade.



SEN. JOHN CORNYN

I first introduced the OPEN Government Act with U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., two years ago. After months of hearings and negotiations, it was finally approved overwhelmingly in December. The Cornyn-Leahy bill, when signed by the President, will not merely be a victory for transparency in federal government operations. It will be a vital building block to strengthen our democratic process.

Texas has long had one of the nation's strongest open government laws. When I served in state government as Attorney General, I had a key role in enforcing that law. So bringing a little Texas sunshine to the federal government was a top legislative priority for me when I arrived in Washington five years ago.

The Cornyn-Leahy bill updates the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to address undue delays and onerous burdens that often greet Americans looking for information from their government.

The underlying FOIA law was initially enacted more than 40 years ago. Achieving prompt responses has been a serious problem in its enforcement from the beginning. Some pending

requests for information are more than a decade old, possibly sitting in a bureaucrat's drawer somewhere. And many information requests can only be resolved through costly lawsuits, which effectively prevent citizens from receiving information they're entitled to.

The bill restores meaningful deadlines — with consequences — to the FOIA system, encouraging government agencies to provide timely responses. It creates a new initiative for tracking pending FOIA requests and an ombudsman to review agency compliance. It provides safeguards against misuse of the law, and closes loopholes used to avoid compliance. It recognizes changes in the way information is circulated, and allows journalists and public representatives equal access to information.

The OPEN Government Act bolsters the most fundamental requirement for an effective democracy—a free and informed citizenry. It reinforces Abraham Lincoln's notion of a government "of the people, by the people, for the people" by facilitating the flow of information into the hands of Americans. I have tried to advance these principles throughout my years in public office.

These FOIA reforms come after years of legislative work that required significant bipartisan cooperation. In a year when gridlock seemed periodically to take over Congress, Sen. Leahy and I are proud that we were able to achieve consensus in both chambers, and among both parties, for this bill. It is clearly one of the signature accomplishments of the current Congress.

James Madison once declared: "The advance-

See **CORNYN**, Page 5A

No experience and faux experience

"No experience matters," former President Bill Clinton told PBS' Charlie Rose last week. "I mean, in theory, we could find someone who is a gifted television commentator." But to elect such a candidate — read: Barack Obama — president would be to "roll the dice."

Thus Bubba framed the Democratic primary as a contest between a handsome but empty Obama and a Hillary Clinton who often touts her 35 years of experience — Clinton also took the opportunity to talk up the possibility of a John Edwards win in Iowa.

Neither Clinton saw much virtue in experience in 1992 — when the Arkansas governor was challenging the very experienced President George H.W. Bush. Now HRC is running as the experienced Democrat. She's the nonincumbent incumbent.

With 35 years experience, no less.

Hillary Clinton has been in the U.S. Senate for seven years. Before that, she spent eight years as first lady — and she did more than pick out the drapes. Mrs. C had a role in many Clinton initiatives, including as chair of her husband's failed health care reform task force.



DEBRA SAUNDERS

Still, her most valuable political skill was to neutralize her husband's "bimbo eruptions." In 1992, she appeared with her husband on "60 Minutes" as he admitted to straying in his marriage, but denied having an affair with singer Jennifer Flowers — a false denial, it turns out. In 1998, Hillary Clinton blamed the Monica Lewinsky story on a "vast right-wing conspiracy."

Somehow those 15 years have expanded like dog years into "35 years fighting for what I believe in." That is, Clinton's political years include her 15 years as a corporate lawyer, her three years as a law school professor, as well as her tenure as first lady of Arkansas.

Four years after Democrats nominated John Kerry, who trumpeted his decorated service in Vietnam, Hillary Clinton is also the "experience" candidate with no military experience. (Let me inject that the real experience candidate is John McCain.)

Campaigning in Iowa last Sunday, Clinton compared herself to cattle on sale: "I know that you're going to inspect me — you can look inside my mouth if you want." Clinton also has told voters, "I've been vetted. I've been tested. There are no surprises."

I was surprised to learn from Bill Clinton last month that he had opposed the Iraq war "from the beginning." That's surprising considering that Sen. Clinton voted for the resolution to autho-

rize the use of military force in Iraq. At the time, she noted that in 1998, "President Clinton, with the British and others, ordered an intensive four-day air assault, Operation Desert Fox, on known and suspected weapons of mass destruction sites and other military targets." *Known WMD sites? Did Bill Clinton lie about WMD?* Hillary Clinton's most important experience is as a senator. She reached across the aisle to pass legislation with even Republicans and worked behind the scenes with seasoned Democrats.

As Mark Halperin and John Harris wrote in "The Way to Win, Taking the White House in 2008," "She co-sponsored legislation and engaged in advocacy with nearly every conservative member of the Senate and with other prominent Republicans. Most notably, she blunted the memory of her health care fiasco by participating in health care events with former House Speaker Newt Gingrich."

In the process, Clinton won over New York voters.

But no surprises with Bill Clinton?

If so, it is because it is not surprising that vetted and tested Clintons will say anything — 35 years of experience, against the war from the beginning.

Whatever.

E-mail Debra J. Saunders at dsaunders@schronicle.com.
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YOUR VIEWS

TO THE EDITOR:

I have to say that being able to read the *Herald* online everyday is nice. You folks are to be commended especially for the way the online edition is presented — easy to navigate and easy to use.

You are far ahead of other newspapers online in this state.

Keep up the good work

KENT SHARP
GAINESVILLE

TO THE EDITOR:

As a public service of the *Big Spring Herald*, I thought you would like to publish a link to Oncor.

It could be the Big Spring street and security light project. The link is to report any street light or security light that is out and is not burning at night.

The majority of the public does

not know this link exist. After reporting a street light out in my neighborhood, I began noticing there are a lot of street lights and security lights out throughout the city.

Let's make Big Spring a safer community by lighting up the city at night. Let it shine...

Big Spring, report it out at www.txelectricdelivery.com/community/streetlights/form.aspx.

CHARLES SMITH
BIG SPRING

TO THE EDITOR:

We hear so much about "the holidays" during this time of year. Do we say this to keep from saying the actual name of "the holidays?" If so, why?

"The holidays" are usually meant to mean Ramadan, Hanukkah,

Christmas and Kwanzaa. What is threatening about these observances?

Fasting during Ramadan is often thought to figuratively burn away all sins. Muslims believe that the Qur'an was sent at this time.

Hanukkah is an observance of the time in about 165 B.C. when the Macabee Brothers conquered the Syrian army commanded by Antiochus and cleansed the defiled temple.

It was at Christmas that the Christ was born. He is often referred to as the Prince of Peace. No threat here! He always lived in peace but died a very horrible death.

Kwanzaa is not a religious holiday at all, but a time of feasting, fellowship and joy. No threat here.

See **LETTERS**, Page 5A

A look at Spears' family values

Friday's newspapers carried the headline that the fertility rate in the United States is going up again, reaching its highest level in 35 years and distinguishing us from most industrialized nations that, faced with the increasing availability of birth control, the opportunity and necessity for women to work, and who knows what other factors (maybe the paucity of good husbands and fathers), are struggling to reproduce themselves. Women need to have at least an average of two children apiece for a country to replace itself, as it were, and for the first time since the Baby Boom ended, we do. It's 2.1 to be exact.

But is it good news? That is a hard question to answer in the abstract. The zero population growth crowd will tell you that in an overpopulated world using up its resources faster than it can preserve them, encouraging women to have more children is exactly the wrong advice.

I don't know how to dispute that contention in the abstract, except to point out that the same rules don't necessarily hold for developing countries with more mouths to feed than food to do it, as for industrialized nations, who need people to do skilled jobs, not to mention pay into the Social Security Trust Fund. But in any event, it's not entirely an abstract question.

If the higher fertility rate reflects, as it surely does in part, the increasing ability of skilled doctors and scientists to help couples who once might not have been able to experience the greatest joy in life become parents,

then I'm thrilled for the news, and for them.

Believe me, I can remember painfully well the irony and longing I felt when I was trying to have children. I was worried about whether I would be so lucky — the irony being that after years of worrying about not getting pregnant, I was even more worried, even more desperate, for the opposite result.

There is simply no greater joy, no greater blessing, at least in my book of Life, than a much-wanted, much-loved child, and no greater trust than the trust of raising that child.

Which brings me, of course, to the lovely Jamie Lynn Spears. The 16-year-old's announcement of her pregnancy predated by only one day the news about the fertility rates. Apparently, she and her own mother will be paid \$1 million by OK! magazine for an exclusive photo shoot once the baby is born.

Jamie Lynn is, of course, the younger sister of the poster child for selfish, stupid and arrogant mothers: Britney Spears.

Britney's antics with addiction and abuse have made Kevin Federline, her ex-husband, otherwise best known as a wannabe rapper, emerge instead as a candidate for father of the year. The news of little sister's pregnancy, which follows weeks of speculation that Britney, having done such a bang-up job with her oldest two, may again be pregnant, also included mention of the fact that Grandma (who might actually still be of childbearing years herself) has put her book on Christian parenting on hold.

Christian parenting? I don't know much about Christian parenting, not being one, but I do know that it can't have anything to do with this fam-

ily, and the only thing more absurd than Jamie Lynn being paid \$1 million for a story of successful slutdom is her mother being paid to write a book about Christian parenting.

How dumb do these people think we are?

How dumb are we?

When is enough enough? The younger mother-to-be isn't just the sister of a celebrity car wreck, but one in her own right. She's a "star," too — on "Zoey 101," a Nickelodeon show aimed at teenagers who might see her as a role model. This week, Nickelodeon issued the kind of statement that makes you wonder whether any of the people who run these networks are parents themselves, or could care less about the children who are their audiences and make them rich. "We respect Jamie Lynn's decision to take responsibility in this sensitive and personal situation. We know this is a very difficult time for her and her family, and our primary concern right now is for Jamie Lynn's well-being."

Well, I beg to differ. My primary concern is not for Jamie Lynn's well-being, but for her baby's, who didn't ask to be brought into the world by a selfish, immature celebrity who sees in her pregnancy a big payout from a magazine that caters to and encourages the worst instincts of its readers. If she wants to devote herself to being a mother, good luck to her. Kicking her off that television show would give her more time to do it. And as for Grandma, maybe she needs to go buy a book about Christian parenting, instead of pretending that having two daughters she should be ashamed of qualifies her to write one.

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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 e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

When we have the opportunity to help others, Lord, may we do just that.

Amen

COAHOMA

Continued from Page 1B

Bulldogs made 11 3-pointers with Paniagua connecting on five.

Hawley 17 9 4 8-38 Coahoma 15 13 23 13-64

Hawley: Taylor 14, Thompson 3, Bristow 2, Dugan 4, Sellers 7, Manly 2, Easley 6.

Coahoma (2-0, 9-3): Braden Griffin 3, Josh Paniagua 4, Josh Jones 2, Ray Gutierrez 3, Colter Morgan 17, Logan Stone 5, Matt Tatum 8, Jovi Paniagua 17, Cody Sheppard.

Bulldogettes 54, Hawley 31

Earlier in the evening it was the Coahoma Bulldogettes cruising past the Hawley Lady Bearcats, 54-31.

Senior post Heather Sheppard did most of the damage for the Bulldogettes as the 6-5 senior post continually schooled the outsized interior of Hawley's defense on her way to a game-high 21 points.

"We played really good," Sheppard said of her team's effort. "We played consistently all night and didn't freak out like we have before."

One of the main reasons for Sheppard's success was the play of her teammates Laci Sterling and Christie Rich.

"We are always together," Sheppard laughed when asked about the chemistry between the three. "We just get along real well and are always with one another. I think that that helps us to play better on the court as a team."

"I was really proud of the way the girls performed tonight," Bulldogettes Head Coach Chris Sumrall. "On the defensive side, we kept the pressure on and we converted when we had the chance on offense. There are still some things that we have to work on, but we are getting better all the time and that is all I can ask

for." Sterling added 12 while Shelbi Paige and Janice Gonzales scored six each. Both Coahoma teams will return to action next weekend as the Bulldogettes travel to Slaton to take part in the West Texas Invitational.

The Bulldogs will participate in the Mary Tatum Invitational hosted by the Reagan County Owls.

Hawley 4 17 3 7-31 Coahoma 15 12 12 9-54

Hawley: Martinez 4, Tubbs 3, Jordan 5, Phillips 17, Hargis 2.

Coahoma (4-0, 15-3): Veronica Cortez 2, Berkeley Iden 2, Alex Moore 3, Shelbi Paige 6, Laci Sterling 12, Janice Gonzales 6, Kaysea Spiller 2, Heather Sheppard 21.

Notes: In Junior Varsity action it was the Bulldogs suffering a heartbreaking 35-30 loss. Jason Martinez led the way for Coahoma scoring 10 with William Hunter adding seven.

The Bulldogs lost despite holding a 20-9



HERALD photo/Bruce Schooler

Coahoma's Laci Sterling makes a move in the post against a Hawley Lady Cats' defender in the Bulldogettes' 54-31 win Friday in Coahoma.

advantage in turnovers. In the girls' game, the Bulldogettes, powered by the strength of a 42-4 scor-

ing advantage over the second and third quarters, raced away with a 63-23 win.

Kaylea Fowler scored a game-high 18 points for the Lady Bulldogs.

BRIEFS

Continued from Page 1B

Insight Bowl

At Tempe, Ariz. Payout: \$1.25 million Indiana (7-5) vs. Oklahoma State (6-6), 5 p.m. (NFLN)

Chick-fil-A Bowl

At Atlanta Payout: \$2.9 million Clemson (9-3) vs. Auburn (8-4), 6:30 p.m. (ESPN)

JAN. 1

Outback Bowl At Tampa, Fla. Payout: \$3.1 million Wisconsin (9-3) vs. Tennessee (9-4), 10 a.m. (ESPN)

Cotton Bowl

At Dallas Payout: \$3 million Missouri (11-2) vs. Arkansas (8-4), 10:30 a.m. (FOX)

Capital One Bowl

At Orlando, Fla. Payout: \$4.25 million Michigan (8-4) vs. Florida (9-3), Noon (ABC)

Gator Bowl

At Jacksonville, Fla. Payout: \$2.25 million Virginia (9-3) vs. Texas Tech (8-4), Noon (CBS)

Rose Bowl

At Pasadena, Calif. Payout: \$17 million Southern California (10-2) vs. Illinois (9-3), 3:30 p.m. (ABC)

Slaton Insurance Agency advertisement featuring Vicki Slaton and Farmers insurance.

Suzanne A. Beck, M.D., P.A. advertisement for Allergy & Immunology services.

Truck Wrecks advertisement for legal services regarding truck accidents.

Med Care Medical Supply advertisement for a free scooter promotion.

Large advertisement for Bob Brock Ford Lincoln Mercury Nissan featuring a Year End Clearance sale with various car and truck models and prices.

Rolling a strike

Dodds take ownership at Bowl-A-Rama

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

If being a bowling fanatic is a prime requisite for being a bowling alley owner, Big Spring's Bowl-A-Rama is in good hands.

The longtime bowling establishment recently changed ownership, as John and Diana Dodd took over the reins from longtime proprietor J.M. Ringener earlier this month.

For the Dodds, who are both life-long bowlers, running their own bowling alley is the culmination of a dream.

"We've always wanted to own a bowling center," Diana said. "We've been bowlers since we were kids and both of us have always loved bowling. We've seen how bowling centers are run by corporate owners and we thought we could do better."

The Dodds were high school sweethearts — and bowlers, of course — in Ojai, Calif. Despite a separation of almost 30 years (John moved to Australia and later retired after a lengthy stint in the Australian Army), both their passion for each other and their sport have survived.

After reuniting, the couple moved to Midland nine years ago. But a particularly good bowling game on Diana's part played a part in them eventually moving fur-



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan
John and Diana Dodd recently became the new owners of the Big Spring Bowl-A-Rama, located on the south service road of Interstate 20.

ther east.

"About a year ago, we bowled in a league game here ... and I rolled my best game ever," Diana said. "And I told John, 'We need to buy this place' ... the owner happened to be walking by and said, 'I'll sell it to you.' And that's how we ended up over here."

The Dodds have several upgrades planned for the Bowl-A-Rama. A fully-stocked pro shop is in the works, while the building's snack bar and grill are being refurbished.

In addition, the couple are both licensed bowling instructors, so lessons are

available, and John is a certified technician, allowing him to customize bowling equipment to the customer's order.

John said that the couple plans a fun, family friendly environment.

"Bowling is a lifetime sport. It's something I did as a kid and here I am at 59, still bowling," he said. "It's a sport where no one is trying to knock you down ... and the nice thing is that the ball always comes back to you."

The Dodds said operating hours for the bowling center will be from 8 a.m.

until midnight, Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. until 1 a.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday.

The center currently hosts two leagues a night from Monday through Friday, but open bowling times are readily available. Also, birthday and corporate parties can be arranged.

For more information, contact Bowl-A-Rama at 267-7484.

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

Energy Watch



Bhupen Agrawal is branch manager and a senior vice president of Investments of A.G. Edwards' Midland office. He is also a member of the Permian Basin Petroleum Association.

Bill Franks, AAMS, is a senior assistant to the branch manager. He is also a member of the Permian Basin Petroleum Association.



Last week the *Wall Street Journal* reported the highlights of recent building and expansion efforts taking place in Saudi Arabia.

The kingdom, riding the wave of revenue enjoyed as oil prices have accelerated, has embarked on a diversification attempt to become a leading exporter of chemicals, plastics and some metals. In addition, they are wisely building new infrastructure to support their growing economy.

The report suggests that over the next 12 years the Saudi's intend to invest \$600 billion in their economy and specific industrialized cities. We note this push to expand their economy will almost certainly divert crude oil, which would have otherwise been sold and exported, toward their own domestic use. Since 2000, Saudi oil consumption is up more than 15 percent.

In an environment where the call on OPEC is already set to rise, this diversion could prove supportive of oil prices in the years ahead.

However, it remains very difficult to tie any economic boom in a nation like Saudi Arabia to strategic economic reforms rather than the simple rise in export revenues from increasing oil prices.

Nevertheless, Doing Business 2008 ranks Saudi Arabia as the 7th fastest growing economy in the world.

- Following the Energy Information Administration boosting their price projection for 2008 to nearly \$85 per barrel, Goldman Sachs increased its 2008 forecast for West Texas Intermediate prices by \$10 to \$95 per barrel.

- The Federal Reserve cut its fed funds rate and the discount rate 25 basis points. This appeared to be a disappointment for the oil market and prices fell after the decision was released. Though a 25 basis point cut was widely expected, there was hope the Fed would take a more aggressive course in reinforcing the economy against further weakness. A slowing global economy tends to be bearish for many commodities, crude oil included.

- According to Energy Intelligence the U.S. Minerals Management Service is embarking on an aggressive leasing program in Artic waters. Specifically, the Beaufort Sea licensing area is about 205 miles off the Alaskan shore and includes about 33 million acres. It is estimated the Beaufort Sea may hold 8 billion barrels of oil and upwards of 28 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

- Tuesday, Russia oil company executives met with Iraqi officials to discuss opportunities for their firms in the Middle Eastern nation. Most of the companies involved in the talks were active in Iraq prior to the U.S. invasion in 2003. They mostly showed interest in resuming work on deals previously negotiated under the Hussein regime.

- Last week the House approved a comprehensive energy bill. The bill passed 235 to 181. Now, the bill moves to the Senate where it will probably be carved up and sent back to the House for concurrence. Among the provisions in the bill are repeals of tax breaks for oil companies, tighter fuel efficiency standards and new biofuels usage requirements. President Bush has vowed to veto the bill if it reaches his desk intact.

- The Canadian National Energy Board forecasts that sharply higher royalties beginning in 2009 will do little to slow development of the oil sands projects. In Alberta, we note gas output is declining because of natural field decline and lack of development and drilling. This may lead to fewer U.S. imports of Canadian gas. Roughly 60 percent of Canadian natural gas output makes its way into the lower 48.

- In the Northeast, the *Wall Street Journal* reports

See ENERGY, Page 5C

Quail lectureship set to fly Jan. 31

ROBY — Texas Cooperative Extension will host two of the nation's top quail managers during the inaugural "Distinguished Lectureships in Quail Management" set for 9 a.m. Jan. 31 at the Community Center in Roby.

The event, "The Quail Wave: Lessons To Be Learned From The Southeastern U.S.," is being sponsored by

The Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension. The speakers will be Dr. Bill Palmer, director of game bird research for Tall Timbers Research Station in Tallahassee, Fla., and Clay Sisson, project coordinator for Albany Quail Project at Auburn University, Auburn, Ala., said Dr. Dale Rollins, Extension wildlife specialist at San Angelo.

"The Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch was created in March 2007," Rollins said. "One of its missions is to serve as an educational forum for landowners and hunters who seek to become more knowledgeable students of quail. To address these needs, we



TOMMY YEATER

have decided to host an annual conference to feature the nation's leading authorities on quail management.

"These experts are two of the best," he said. "The Tall Timbers and Albany Quail Projects offer an excellent mix of cutting-edge research, innovations in management and excellent support at the grassroots level. Their works are benchmarks of quail management. We plan to model the research ranch at Roby after these programs."

Rollins said the theme for the first lectureship hints at the demise of quail in the southeastern U.S. which was traditionally the stronghold of the bobwhite. He hopes Texas can learn from some of the mistakes made in the southeast, which jeopardized quail hunting just about everywhere east of Interstate 35.

"Bobwhites are 6-ounce ingots of gold here in West Texas," he said. "We want to protect this valuable natural resource. Education and research are key components to sustaining the quail wave in Texas for future generations."

The lecture is open to landowners, hunters, wildlife professionals and anyone interested in quail or wildlife conser-

See QUAIL, Page 5C



Courtesy photo
Belinda Wyman has been named Employee of the Year for State National Bank. She is pictured with Jim R. Purcell, president, left, and Richard Steel, executive vice president.

Wyman named SNB Employee of the Year

State National Bank is pleased to announce the selection of Belinda Wyman as Employee of the Year for 2007.

Belinda began her career at State National as a teller in January 2004 and served in that capacity her first three years. In early 2007, Belinda began operating the Data Processing Department in Big Spring, which processes all items for the bank's three locations.

The announcement was made by bank President Jim R. Purcell at the company's annual Christmas party, held recently.

"Belinda was the winning nominee from all

three of our locations in Lamesa, O'Donnell and Big Spring," Purcell said. "She has transitioned nicely into a position she was not very familiar with and has done a remarkable job. Belinda is a great asset to State National Bank."

Said Wyman, "I really enjoy working for State National. My new position was completely different than being a teller, but the wonderful people I work with did a great job of training me and have allowed me to gain confidence throughout the year."

Belinda is married to Mike Wyman.

Below are results from the Howard County Pecan Show and the Regional Pecan Show held in Abilene.

HOWARD COUNTY PECAN SHOW		
Name	Variety	Placing
Geraldine Hughes • Nathan Hughes	Western	1st (Div. Winner)
	Western	2nd
Jesse Saenz	Stuart	1st
Juan Palacios	Stuart	2nd
Juan Palacios	Desirable	1st
Nathan Hughes	Native	1st (Div. Winner)
Juan Palacios	Barton	1st (Div. Winner)
• Grand Champion		
REGIONAL PECAN SHOW		
Juan Palacios	Barton	1st
Geraldine Hughes	Western	2nd



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Coahoma Elementary teachers and staff added to the holiday spirit by hosting a melodrama and comedy/music revue Thursday evening in the school cafeteria. Here, they start the program with their rendition of "Frosty the Snowman."



HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins

The annual Cossacks Motorcycle Club Toys for Tykes holiday effort got a boost Friday morning, as Kent Ivey, with Transit Mix Concrete, center, hands over a Napa train set he won to Carl Hart, a representative from the Cossacks, right, while Jackie Wilks, manager of the local Napa Auto Parts store, looks on. Ivey won the train set as part of a Napa promotion, but decided to donate the collectors set to be distributed to some lucky child.

LETTERS

Continued from Page 4A

Why not call each by its own name and observe them as they were intended? There is too much turmoil in the world. We need peace!

WILLIAM O. ADAMS
PLANO

TO THE EDITOR:

What is our country coming to? Now we cannot call a Christmas tree a Christmas tree but a Holiday tree?

We must not forget what Christmas is all about. It is when our Lord was born and that is his birthday. So, for all of you who do not believe in him, I am sorry for you and I will pray for you.

I will continue to say Merry Christmas to everyone I see and, if they are offended, I am sorry. That is one right which

can never be taken away from me and my grandchildren.

So with this I will say Merry Christmas to all.

Also, I want to wish all the kids at Marcy Elementary School a very Merry Christmas. I work there as a crossing guard and I will miss you guys. So, have a great time with your families and I will see you all next year.

MARILLYN MIEARS
BIG SPRING

TO THE EDITOR:

Once upon a time, there was a little town by a spring. The "officials" decided to improve the town. It just so happened there were quite a few senior citizens living in this little town. The "officials" said, "Let's promote the town as a retirement town — that would be nice — a town attractive to retired people."

The senior citizens of

this town had a center where they could congregate. They had good, nourishing meals there for a nominal price. They also had a good dance floor with a live band available where they could dance on Friday nights. The senior citizens loved it and seniors from out of town loved to come to the dances. After paying expenses, they even made a profit to put back into the center. Everybody was happy.

Then one day, due to an accident, they discovered there was asbestos under their nice dance floor. "How dreadful!" said the officials. "We will have to cancel your dances."

"Please," the seniors begged of the officials. "We will repair the floor ourselves if only we can

continue to have our dances." And the senior citizens proceeded to put up enough money to repair the floor themselves.

"No," the officials said, "but we will let you have your dances in another room. Of course you will have to dance in one room and sit in another room."

"Phooey!" said the senior citizens. But the "officials" wouldn't budge. And that's the way it was left for a long time. The seniors from out of town quit coming to the dances because they said it was silly to dance in one room and sit in another. It just wasn't worth driving out of town for. So, the center lost some of its revenue.

Then, one Friday night

when the seniors gathered for their dance, lo and behold, there were beautiful decorations on their "closed" dance floor. "Why," they asked, "was the closed dance floor so lavishly decorated?"

"Why, it is for a private party who rented it for a dance," they were told.

What? A dance on the same floor that the seniors were told they could no longer use? That doesn't sound quite fair.

Now why would the "officials" rent out the senior citizens' dance area for outside use, but deny its use to seniors? This is a no-no. Everyone should be treated the same.

Maybe the town should get new "officials." Then the senior citizens in the little town will all live

happily ever after.

MARGIE MYERS
BIG SPRING

TO THE EDITOR:

I'd like to complain to the city about all of our water breaks that we are having.

It seems the city approved fixing up the golf course, but not money to fix what needs to be fixed here in town.

What is wrong with our city council? Can't it do anything right? Put the money where it needs to go

Also our streets are horrible. Hey, you guys wake up and smell the coffee and get our town fixed right.

MARILLYN GROESBECK
BIG SPRING

CORNYN

Continued from Page 4A

ment and diffusion of knowledge is the only guardian of true liberty." But I know firsthand that government, unless prodded, has a natural tendency to suppress distribution of information, particularly when it is inconvenient or embarrassing to those in office.

There are always exceptions to the rule that must be observed, such as the need to keep confidential information that could compromise our national security. Our FOIA reforms recognize that. But our underlying principle is this: when information can be made open and available, it should be.

These reforms will require federal agencies to make significant changes in the way they operate. I will be watching closely to make certain they comply. And Congress itself needs to do much more to improve transparency. The earmark process — when legislators insert

narrow projects into a massive spending bill — should have far greater openness and accountability. I intend to pursue that reform as well.

Texas has long prided itself on its wide-open spaces, and open government. Accountability is also an important Texas value. Our state has been a national leader in advancing the ideals of transparency in our public business. We are all safer, and our liberty more secure, whenever Washington adopts more of that Texas sunshine.

Sen. John Cornyn serves on the Armed Services, Judiciary and Budget Committees. In addition, he is vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Ethics. He serves as the top Republican on the Judiciary Committee's Immigration, Border Security and Refugees subcommittee and the Armed Services Committee's Airland subcommittee. Cornyn served previously as Texas Attorney General, Texas Supreme Court Justice and Bexar County District Judge.

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Public Records

Howard County Justice of the Peace
Outstanding IBC Warrants:

Richard Arley Acuff, 1504 Sycamore, Big Spring
Sonia M. Barlow, 4209 Parkway, Big Spring
Casey D. Bernal, 901 Grand, Hereford
Richard Henry Burk, PO Box 171933, Arlington
Latonya Campbell, 5948 Callaston Lane, Fort Worth
Lenard Carson Jr., 102 S. Peach, Pecos
Andrea Clardy, 2401 Ave. L, Snyder
Jared Coby, 901 S. High St., Longview
Patrick C. Criss, 8030 Catalpa, Texas City

Susan Cuellar, 2301 N. Pecos, Midland
Ramona Davila, 2143 Texas Ave., San Antonio
Randy James Ellis, PO Box 391, Snyder
Hilda L. Fuentes, 502 S. Seventh, Lamesa
Aldo Gustavo Galindo, 922 Jeter, Odessa
Claudet Garza, 3106 E. Elm, Laredo
Naomi Gonzales, 1606 E. Fifth, Big Spring
Raul Gonzales, 2106 Johnson, Big Spring
Jeffrey Grams, 224 Lelon Lane, Springtown
Nora Gutierrez, 606 N. Eighth Street, Lamesa
Dana L. Havink, 600 Star Linda Ct., Arlington
Gerald R. Hodges, 4312 Crane, Houston
Allan J. Hoey, 1401 N. Highway 87 Apt. 2, Big Spring
Lucas Shane Hughes, #1 Courtney Place No. 7, Big Spring
Jeanie Renee Ivey, 5326 Old State Hwy. 7, La Grange
Sharon Annette James, 1215 Cedar, Colorado City
Brandy Johnson, 24327 Pleasonton, San Antonio

Rene M. Johnson, 9205 W. County Road 174, Midland
Alana Marie Lee, 2711 66th Street, Lubbock
Patricia Luttrell, 2726 Redwood, Odessa
Carol Lee McNeil, 2601 Westridge, Snyder
Ebaline Flores Mendoza, PO Box 291, Mertzon
Melissa Merket, 402 W. Eighth, Colorado City
Elizabeth Rose Mills, 1204 Mulberry, Big Spring
Angela Moreno, 1712 N. Third Street, Lamesa
Arna Marie Moreno, 4656 St. Frances Ave., Dallas
Jerry Musquiz, 2609 Colton Flat Road, Midland
Michael Todd McClinton, 1003 S. Midkiff, Midland
William Leslie Neal, 2100 Alabama, Big Spring
Katherine Hardin Perez, 4908 Parkway, Big Spring

Richard Wayne Rains, 4501 Parkway, Big Spring
Michael Dewayne Renteria, 1810 Owens, Big Spring
Keyana Cooley Rincker, 1905 Wasson Apt. 56, Big Spring
Alfredo Riojas Jr., 255, S. 11th St., Lubbock
Gustabo Alfredo Rios, of 1804 Scurry, Big Spring
Frances Rodriguez, 603 Steakley, Big Spring
Veronica Rodriguez, 3010 Cherokee, Big Spring
Sofia Romero, 409 N. Ave. G, Lamesa
Jennifer Ann Rositas, 1429 E. Sixth, Big Spring
Steven G. Ross, 60 Cinamon Lane, San Angelo
Rudy Salazar, PO Box 1275, Stanton
Crystal Ann Schneider, P.O. Box 844, Coahoma
Harl Bradford Shaffer, 5603 Gail Hwy., Big Spring
Syrretta Diane Shellman, 1101 N. Goliad, Big Spring
Janie Spurgeon, 1212 Wadley, Midland
Shawn Spurgeon, 106 N. Adams, Denver City
James Sutton, 2225 Oakland, Abilene
Tiffney Lee Tindol, 2206 Morrison, Big Spring
Jimmy Vasquez, 4000 W. Illinois, Midland
Brenda Vera, 1901 Ave. N, Snyder
Alicia N. Vernon, 9614 Dover Ridge, San Antonio
Tyler J. Voss, Fannin Co. Rd 4925, Leonard
Christina Williams, 400 Macarthur, Odessa
Bernest Elgen Woolridge, 4110 S. Jackson, Amarillo
Jerry Lee Wrightsail Jr., 2816 Ridge Road, Fort Worth

County Court Decisions:
Probated Judgment: Christopher Limon, theft by check - more than \$20 less than \$500, \$250 fine, \$316 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 12 months probation).
Judgment and Sentence: Jesse Lendel Woodruff, assault causing bodily injury, \$320 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: George W. Kostelaz, resisting arrest, \$274 court costs, 60 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Jesse Lendel Woodruff, terrorist threat, \$324 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Jesse Lendel Woodruff, criminal mischief - more than \$50 less than \$500, \$324 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Daniel V. Flores, bail jumping and failure to appear, \$324 court costs, 23 days in jail.
Probated Judgment: Sammeal R. Gray, possession of marijuana - two ounces or less, \$1,500 fine, \$274 court costs, 180

days in jail (jail time suspended, 12 months probation).
Probated Judgment: Jonathan David Furman, driving while intoxicated, \$1,000 fine, \$389 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 6 months probation).
Judgment and Sentence: Frank Lee Jackson, criminal trespass, \$274 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Frank Lee Jackson, criminal trespass of a habitation, \$274 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Frank Lee Jackson, criminal trespass, \$274 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Bobbie Gibson, possession of a dangerous drug, \$500 fine, \$374 court costs, 60 days in jail.
Probated Judgment: Jerardo Vargas, hindering apprehension, \$500 fine, \$274 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 12 months probation).
Judgment and Sentence: Henry Castillo, bail jumping and failure to appear, \$324 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Probated Judgment: Dalton Will White, driving while intoxicated - open container, \$750 fine, \$439 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 6 months probation).
Probated Judgment: Christopher Limon, driving while intoxicated - second offense, \$1,000 fine, \$439 court costs, 365 days in jail (jail time suspended, 24 months probation).
Probated Judgment: Bonnie K. Mears, theft - more than \$50 less than \$500, \$500 fine, \$274 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 12 months probation).
Probated Judgment: Conrad Mezick, driving while license invalid, \$500 fine, \$274 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 12 months probation).
Probated Judgment: Elias Jaimes Munoz, driving while intoxicated, \$500 fine, \$439 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 6 months probation).
Judgment and Sentence: George Kostelaz, criminal trespass of a habitation, \$324 court costs, 60 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Lonnie Donnell Bethany, evading arrest, \$1,500 fine, \$274 court costs, 30 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: James Henry Gibbs, accident involving damage to a vehicle, \$274 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Frank Lee Jackson, evading arrest, \$284 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Robert Edward Baker Jr., theft - more than \$500 less than \$1,500, \$274 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: George William Kostelaz, criminal trespass of a habitation, \$274 court costs, 60 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Jesse Woodruff, resisting arrest, \$274 court costs, 60 days in jail.
Probated Judgment: Eliodoro Reyes, deadly conduct, \$3,000 fine, \$249 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 12 months probation).

Judgment and Sentence: Robert Edward Baker Jr., theft - more than \$500 less than \$1,500, \$274 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: James Henry Gibbs, driving while intoxicated - second offense, \$439 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Frank Lee Jackson, criminal trespass, \$274 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Gavino Jose Ortiz, failure to identify as a fugitive from justice - giving false information, \$274 court costs, 30 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Henry Castillo, failure to identify - giving false information, \$384 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Henry Gomez Castillo, failure to identify as a fugitive from justice - giving false information, \$384 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Probated Judgment: Gabriel Nieto, theft by check - more than \$20 less than \$500, \$500 fine, \$324 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 12 months probation).
Judgment and Sentence: Henry Castillo, bail jumping and failure to appear, \$324 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Henry Castillo, bail jumping and failure to appear, \$324 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Probated Judgment: Vickie Castillo, driving while license invalid, \$500 fine, \$274 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 6 months probation).
Probated Judgment: Juan Barrera, theft - more than \$50 less than \$500, \$500 fine, \$274 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 12 months probation).
Probated Judgment: Vanessa Hollis, criminal mischief - more than \$50 less than \$500, \$200 fine, \$274 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 6 months probation).
Judgment and Sentence: Robert Edward Baker Jr., theft of service - more than \$500 less than \$1,500, \$324 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Veronica Rodriguez, theft - more than \$50 less than \$500, \$274 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Probated Judgment: Zack Monroe Turman, resisting arrest, \$2,500 fine, \$304 court costs, 180 days in jail (jail time suspended, 12 months probation).
Judgment and Sentence: Veronica Rodriguez, failure to identify as a fugitive from justice - giving false information, \$274 court costs, 90 days in jail.
Judgment and Sentence: Henry Gomez Castillo, unlawfully carrying a weapon, \$274 court costs, 90 days in jail.

Joyce Choate vs. Mary E. Jennings, civil suit.
Tammy Kay Silen vs. Johnny Edmondson, protective order.
Citifinancial Inc. vs. Ismael Saiz and Maria L. Saiz, accounts, notes and contracts.
LNVN Funding LLC vs. Marie H. Pulver, accounts, notes and contracts.
In re: Victoria Castillo, Victor Castillo, Brander Castillo, Mercedes Castillo, Breanna Castillo, Manuel Castillo and Baby Castillo, family.
Hudson & Keyse LLC vs. Annie M. Wilbourn, accounts, notes and contracts.
Marriage Licenses:
Pete Mark Anthony Anchondo, 21, and Stephanie Rae Sanchez, 18, both of Big Spring.
Charles Berry, 38, of Big Spring, and Mary Lou Powell, 33, of Arizona.
Donny Juarez, 24, and Katrina Rene Bustamante, 27, both of Big Spring.
Heath Alan Wegner, 28, and Jennifer Lauren McLaughlin, 26, both of Big Spring.
Warranty Deeds:
Grantor: Manuel Briseno and Maria Briseno
Grantee: Ismael Briseno
Property: Lot 1, Block 4, Mountain View Addition
Date: Dec. 13, 2007
Grantor: Stanley Hughes and Linn Hughes
Grantee: Fred Escovedo and Mary Helen Escovedo
Property: Lot 11, Block 5, Douglas Addition
Date: Dec. 13, 2007
Grantor: Alberto Salinas
Grantee: Lupe Guerra
Property: A tract out of Section 18, Block 33, T-2-N, T&P RR Co. Survey
Date: Dec. 17, 2007
Grantor: Mary Frances Osburn
Grantee: First RDW LTD
Property: Lot 4, Block 33, College Heights
Date: Dec. 17, 2007
Grantor: Spring Tabernacle Church
Grantee: Howard County
Property: Lots 1-5, Block 1, Wright's Airport Addition
Date: Dec. 17, 2007
Grantor: Tony Castillo
Grantee: Dillard Teal
Property: Lot 12, Block 23, College Park
Date: Dec. 19, 2007
Grantor: Tony Castillo
Grantee: Dillard Teal
Property: Lot 1, Block 4, Suburban Heights
Date: Dec. 19, 2007

Grantor: M&M General Contractors
Grantee: Dick Helms, Joe Wennik and Carl Johansen
Property: A 18.8 acre tract out of Section 5, Block 32, T-1-S, T&P RR Co. Survey
Date: Dec. 19, 2007
Warranty Deeds With Vendor's Lien:
Grantor: Victor B. Wrye
Grantee: Jack C. Calk
Property: The E/2 of Lot 1, Block 2, Porter Addition
Date: Dec. 12, 2007
Grantor: Dora Roberts Rehabilitation Center, Robert E. Haney Jr. and Jimmy Taylor
Grantee: Jeremy Terry and Jerry Simmons
Property: A 23.9 acre tract out of Section 5, Block 31, T-1-N, T&P RR Co. Survey
Date: Dec. 13, 2007
Grantor: The estate of Thomas F. Horton
Grantee: Maria A. Amos
Property: A tract out of Section 23, Block 33, T-1-N, T&P RR Co. Survey
Date: Dec. 14, 2007
Grantor: Sulema Nabarrette
Grantee: Eric D. Chambers
Property: lot 6, Block 19, Government Heights
Date: Dec. 14, 2007
Grantor: Dora Roberts Rehabilitation Center, Robert E. Haney Jr. and Jimmy Taylor
Grantee: C-Par Land Company and J.W. Grimes Inc.
Property: A 484.35 acre tract out of Section 37, Block 31, T-2-N, T&P RR Co. Survey
Date: Dec. 14, 2007
Grantor: Carrie D. Wright and Lance Wright
Grantee: Brandon Baker and Kasey Baker
Property: Lot 20, Block 4, Douglas Addition
Date: Dec. 17, 2007
Grantor: Ronald L. Howell and Patricia Howell
Grantee: Diana Hudson
Property: LOT 13, Block 1, Stardust Addition
Date: Dec. 18, 2007
Grantor: Stan Partee
Grantee: J. Hopper Homes
Property: Lots 4-6 and 8, Block 3, Caroline Court
Date: Dec. 18, 2007

ENERGY

Continued from Page 4C

at least four nuclear power plants are facing tough challenges to renewing their federal licenses. The Northeast tends to be more incredulous of nuclear power and the populations surrounding the plants have grown since they were constructed. It's interesting the challenges come at a time when nuclear power's benefits of providing low cost energy with limited emissions are being touted.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development has updated their Economic Outlook, now looking for 2.1 percent real GDP growth year-on-year in the 30-nation area. The release is a downward revision form 2.7 percent. If the OECD's estimates prove correct, it would be the slowest pace of growth since 2003.

During November, Chinese inflation reached an 11-year high of 6.9 percent. This could force Beijing to take more aggressive action in tightening monetary policy. Tightening could slow growth, however, we tend to feel the inflation pressure is indicative of robust expansion.

In their Short-Term Energy Outlook for December, the Energy Information

Administration forecast world oil demand rising 1.6 percent or 1.4 million barrels per day during 2008. However, the estimate represents a downward revision.

From our family to yours, we wish you a very merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Portions of this article were produced Dec. 7-12 by Eric Wittenauer, Energy Futures Analyst, Global Investment Strategy A.G. Edward & Sons, Inc. Its publication is a collaborative effort and the information is obtained from sources considered reliable, however accuracy is not guaranteed by A.G.E. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results and additional information is available upon request at (432)684-7335.

QUAIL

Continued from Page 4C

Two Texas Department of Agriculture continuing education units will be offered.

Individual registration is \$25 if received by Jan. 25 and \$40 thereafter. Registration includes lunch and refreshments.

For more information, check: <http://teamquail.tamu.edu>



Courtesy photo
Linda Paredes was the winner of KBST's Cash for Christmas give-away at Papa Georgio's Pizza. She is pictured with Papa Georgio's owner Craig Maxwell, left, and Tom Ruiz of KBST. She was presented a check in the amount of \$500.

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Employment Announcement/ USDA Howard County Farm Service Agency

Opening date: December 24 closing Date: December 28, 2007

The USDA-Farm Service Agency is taking applications for a temporary Program Technician (PT) CO-1101. The position will be fulltime or part time temporary position. Grade level CO-3 through CO-7 level, depending on qualifications of the applicant. Location of the position will be in the Big Spring Service Center (Farm Service Agency). All candidates must be U.S. citizens. Requirements for this position are high school diploma or equivalent, must have ability to organize and file documents/ folders, may require typing and computer skills, may be required to navigate to specified farm locations in Howard County, reliable personal vehicle suitable for travel to various farm locations may be required. Farm or ranch knowledge will be beneficial. Applications (Form FSA-675) may be obtained at the FSA Service Centers located at 302 W IH 20 Suite 106, Big Spring, Texas, (432)267-2557 or visit the following website: <http://intranet.fda.usda.gov/fsa>. Final date to submit applications is 4:30 p.m. on December 28, 2007. Candidates will be considered without discrimination for any non-merit reason such as race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status or membership or non-membership in any employee organization. FSA is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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Annie's Mailbox®: Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: I am a woman in love with a gay man. I told "Geoff" how I feel, hoping it would alleviate the feelings, and for a while, it did. But the feelings are coming back and I can't seem to control them.

Geoff and I go on "dates" that I absolutely love. We joke around a lot about our relationship. I am not seeing anyone else at the moment and wonder if this is the reason why I am so crazy about him. I get very jealous when he's with other women, even though I know nothing is going to happen.

A close friend told me recently that Geoff has been confused about his sexuality for years. I'm sure this is why I still have hope that one day he and I can be together. Lately, I've been waking up in the morning thinking about kissing him.

I want to talk to Geoff about this, but I don't want to come on too strong or seem obsessed. I don't expect Geoff to feel the same about me. Right now, he believes I've gotten past this, and a part of me wants to keep it that way. I want this craziness to stop before everything gets out of hand. What should I do? — Terribly Confused

Dear Confused: We think Geoff is flirting with you just enough to keep your hopes alive. Confusion about his sexuality could explain it, but it's also possible he simply enjoys having that kind of power over you. You need to spend less time with Geoff and more with men who are actually available. Geoff has become a crutch — a way to avoid other, more intimate relationships — and there's nothing wrong with telling him that. Let your friends know you are looking, and see if you can turn this slightly unbalanced relationship with Geoff into a true friendship without unrealistic expectations.

Dear Annie: I have been married to a wonderful woman for 25 years. It's an ideal marriage except for one small detail.

My sweetheart is ALWAYS late for everything. In 25 years, we have never been on time for an appointment, a social gathering, dinner, etc. After all this time, it's beginning to wear on me. Since she is otherwise terrific, should I continue to accept this or keep trying to get her to be punctual? Anytime I bring it up, she becomes very defensive. — Seattle Suburbs

Dear Seattle: Some people cannot plan their time well, others like the attention or control that comes from making people wait. We doubt, after 25 years, that your wife will become more punctual unless she works on it. If you are willing to use drastic measures, you can tell her you will leave on time and if she's not ready, you will go alone and she is welcome to take a taxi. If she is as wonderful, terrific and ideal as you say, we'd suffer through this annoying glitch. Maybe if you stop getting upset when she's not on time, she'll stop trying so hard to be late.

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Stressed in Georgia," who was using pot to counter his anger and stress problems.

I am a lawyer, my wife is a doctor, and we have five children, ages 16-23. My wife and I have been smoking pot in moderation for 30 years.



KATHY MITCHELL
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It helps us to relax, counters nausea when we have the flu and has many other medical uses to alleviate discomfort. It is safe and non-addictive, unlike alcohol, cigarettes and countless prescription drugs.

The scientific literature overwhelmingly documents its medical value. And prohibition doesn't work. Studies show it is easier for a teenager to buy marijuana than it is to buy a beer or cigarettes because those things are regulated. The majority of voters have approved the medical use of marijuana. Please help advocate the regulation of marijuana. — Santa Rosa, Calif.

Dear Santa Rosa: We do, in fact, advocate the decriminalization and regulation of marijuana. However, since it is still illegal, we cannot in good conscience tell our readers to use it.

Dear Annie: My sister is the caregiver for my mother, who lives in Florida. I live in Illinois and call Mom every day. Mom kept falling down, and my sister, who has difficulty lifting, would have to call the police to help pick her up, so she finally put Mom in a nursing home. The problem is, she never told my brother or me.

We feel she is wrong to have done this. Our sister had Mom sign over power of attorney. When my brother and I went to Florida to contest it, we lost. Since it costs us a lot of money to travel to Florida, we are limited in how many times we can visit Mom. Our sister controls everything and won't give us information about Mom's medical condition or bank account or anything else. When we call to see how she's doing, Sis hangs up on us. We discovered she had moved her family into Mom's house and she refused to let us in the door. She said, "See my attorney."

Sis has often said she can't stand our mother,

so I think she's only after Mom's money. I don't think she cares about our mother at all. What can we do? — Illinois Daughter

Dear Illinois: We know you are concerned, but your sister has been the primary caregiver for your mother for many years and your distance may have kept you from understanding some of her decisions. Instead of being sympathetic, you felt marginalized and became antagonistic, and your sister responded by being autocratic and inaccessible. Since Mom is in a nursing home, we assume you have checked it out and she is receiving good care. If your sister has taken over Mom's house and bank account with permission, consider it her "reward." If you think she is stealing money that Mom needs for her care, you should notify the National Center on Elder Abuse (ncea.aoa.gov) at 1-800-677-1116.

Dear Annie: I have my hair done by the owner of a beautiful salon, who, by the way, charges more than the other operators. I feel a little embarrassed tipping her and so, a few times a year, I send her a nice plant. This is also the case with my manicurist who owns her salon and is a personal friend.

I have seen others tipping my hair stylist and manicurist on occasion and am wondering what is the right thing to do. — Sue

Dear Sue: The owner of your (or any) salon is usually not tipped because there is an assumption that she charges more than the other stylists or manicurists and also receives a percentage of their earnings. Yes, she has more costs, but her fees should compensate for that and patrons should be willing to pay more for her services. You are handling it properly. That said, however, many patrons tip the owners anyway, and many owners like it. The choice is yours.

Dear Annie: I feel compelled to respond to the letter from "Pensacola, Fla.," who wanted to take his wife on a trip for their 25th anniversary, but she preferred to use the money for their son's car insurance.

There will always be bills to pay, but there's only one silver anniversary to celebrate.

Five years ago, my husband and I, after much scrimping and saving, celebrated ours with a long-anticipated trip to the Caribbean. It was the best vacation of our lives. Shortly after our return, my husband went to the doctor for back pain that seemed to be getting worse. He was diagnosed with cancer. We were able to look at each other and say, "If the worst happens, we have no regrets." Within six months, he was dead.

Marriage is the foundation for your children. Putting one another first is the way it is supposed to be. I was blessed to have this man in my life for as long as God allowed, and have many happy memories. I hope "Pensacola" and his wife reconsider. You never know what's around the corner. — Ohio Widow

Dear Ohio: Those special vacations can create loving memories. Our heartfelt condolences on your loss.

Dear Annie: My divorce will be final in two weeks. For the past 18 months, my two sons and I have been on our own. Actually, I've been on my own for the past 10 years because my ex-husband is an alcoholic. I haven't dated anyone since I told him he had to leave. I did all I could to help him until I had nothing left to give.

I recently met a very nice man who seems to see a future for us. The problem is the emotional scars I have from the past 10 years. I work two jobs seven days a week and my ex is dodging child support. I have built a brick wall around myself that I cannot seem to demolish. I honestly do not know if I am capable of having a serious relationship. The thought of someone else in my space turns me inside out. I'm afraid of losing the control I have and need.

Should I let this person into my life? Could a new relationship help me heal? Or should I heal first and wait until I'm emotionally able to handle a relationship? — Afraid to Let Go

Dear Afraid: Healing first is usually a better way to approach a relationship, but there comes a point where you are simply hiding. The need to control every aspect of your life is often a form of insecurity. Still, your separation is fairly recent and if you aren't ready for a relationship,

you shouldn't feel pressured into one. If, after another six months, you don't feel your emotional health has improved, you might look into counseling to help you get back on track.

Dear Annie: My brother-in-law's wife, "Anna," is pregnant, and her mother is hosting a baby shower next month. I will not be able to attend because I will be almost eight months pregnant myself and a six-hour drive is too hard on me. Neither my mother nor I received invitations to Anna's shower. We only know about it because we read the information on her MySpace page.

Are we still required to give Anna a gift even though we aren't invited? I know my mother-in-law is giving her a gift because the baby will be her grandchild, but I don't see the point in my mother and I doing so.

I am very upset at getting the cold shoulder from Anna and her family. You would think her mother would have the sense to invite us. What is the proper etiquette? I told my mother-in-law that whatever you said to do, I would do. — No Name and No State

Dear No Name: It's possible Anna and her mother thought you would prefer not to receive an invitation since you were unable to come, but that is unintentionally insulting. You are not obligated to send a gift to an event to which you are not invited, but this is your sister-in-law and you should do it anyway. (Your mother does not have to.) It needn't be anything elaborate, but a small gift would be both appropriate and gracious. At the very least, you should send a card wishing her well. It will show that you are the bigger person.

Dear Annie: This is in response to "Aching Heart," whose divorce was hurting him and who didn't know how to respond to people asking about his ex-wife.

When I divorced my wife, I answered that question by saying, "She's still a little upset about that house falling on her sister, but other than that, I hear she's doing fine." This little bit from "The Wizard of Oz" answers the question with some humor, explains how you feel about her and ends the inquiry. — Been There in

Florida
Dear Florida: Quite amusing — provided, of course, they get the joke. Otherwise, they might be terribly concerned about her sister and bombard you with more questions. (Surrender, Dorothy.)

Dear Annie: My "Uncle Mike" is 82. He has prostate problems and is legally blind and currently recovering from a mild stroke. He takes medication and has physical therapy every week. Uncle Mike never married, but he has three sisters and many grown nieces and nephews, all of whom would do anything for him.

Uncle Mike is extremely depressed about his physical limitations. We try to encourage him, but it's impossible to cheer him up. Whenever we call or visit, we hear the same complaints over and over. He hates his life, he feels miserable and on and on. He never has a positive thing to say to anyone. We have begged him to seek help for his depression. He says he took an antidepressant for three days 18 months ago, but didn't like the way it made him feel, so he stopped. Since then, he insists nothing can possibly help.

Uncle Mike's doctor says we cannot force him to seek treatment. Many family members have stopped calling or visiting because he is just too difficult. The Uncle Mike I remember was a kind and loving person. I have not seen that man in a very long time, but I know he's still in there somewhere. How can I help? — California

Dear California: You are a kind and devoted soul to stick by Uncle Mike, no matter how difficult he makes it. A stroke can change one's personality and that could be adding to his intractability. Also, his doctor may not have adequately explained that antidepressants can take as long as six weeks to be effective, and that initial side effects can include nausea. Please talk to Uncle Mike and tell him how much you love him and want to make his life better. Ask if you can accompany him to his next appointment and discuss the problem in front of the doctor.

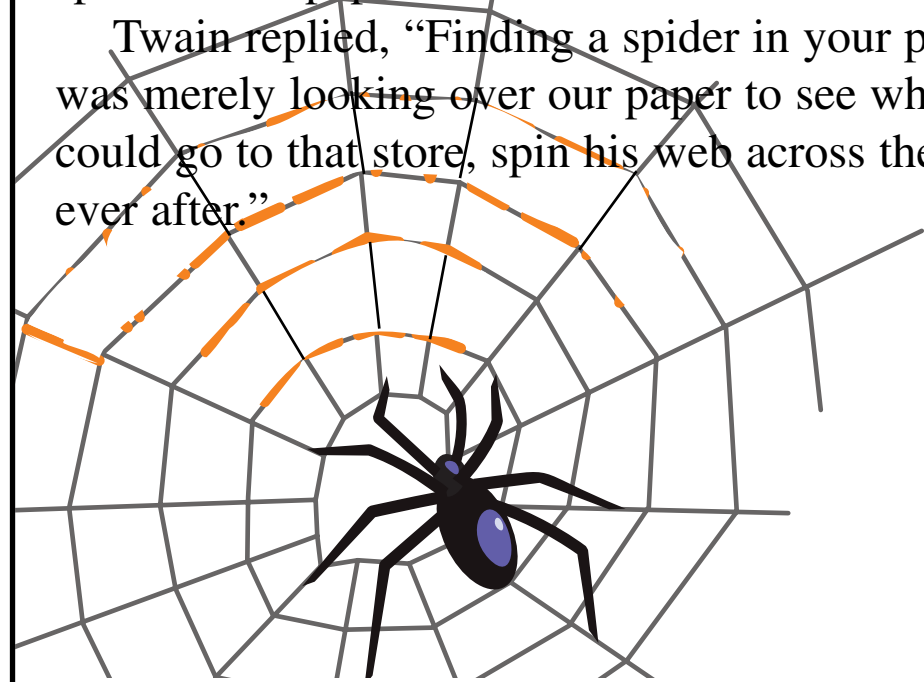
Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net.

The Spider

During Mark Twain's days as a newspaperman, he was the editor of a small Missouri paper.

One day, he received a letter from a subscriber stating that he had found a spider in his paper and asked if this was an omen of good or bad luck.

Twain replied, "Finding a spider in your paper is neither good nor bad luck. The spider was merely looking over our paper to see which merchant was not advertising so that he could go to that store, spin his web across the door and lead a life of undisturbed peace ever after."



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Santa is going strong at the state hospital

Do you believe in Santa Claus? I sure do, and unlike most people, I have seen Santa (in our office). Santa's name is Shirley Bodin (but don't tell your kids). Santa Shirley makes lists and checks them twice before shopping for our 200 patients. And, unlike the jolly man in the red suit, she makes more than one trip.



BILLIE CHRISTIE-MORGAN

We have seen her backing her sleigh/car into our driveway and unloading boxes and boxes of items. Not only has she made a list and shopped but she has organized the delivery of the presents, the gift-wrapping and along with her elf/volunteer friend Dorothy Sheppard, she makes sure each patient

receives two gifts under the tree Christmas morning. We are glad she doesn't spend the rest of the year at the North Pole because we need her here. Thanks, Shirley.

December 11 was quite a day at the hospital when Alon USA Refinery employees arrived on campus to wrap, cut, tape, deliver and sort gifts for our patients. This has become a tradition for Alon USA and we look forward to their band of merry elves driving west on I-20 each December to help us out. Special thanks to Dorothy Sheppard for preparing a wonderful lunch for the Alon volunteers.

It just wouldn't be Christmas at the hospital without the sounds of the music group from Ackerly and the Williams Family and Friends band. This group has made the trip from as far away as Lubbock for

more than 30 years to entertain the patients at the annual Christmas party.

Just as faithful is the Lion's Club, which faithfully appear each Christmas to serve refreshments and visit with each patient. Our volunteers were given some much-needed help during the Carol of Lights celebration from hospital administrators and Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus (Lonnie and Rita Self).

I can't believe I'm saying this, but it's time to pull out Valentines. And we haven't even packed away Christmas. But, yes, we give all holidays equal play, particularly when it helps our patients. And the excitement has already started for Kathy Sheppard and Shirley Bodin, who will serve as this year's co-chairmen. New items at competitive prices will be added to the line-up for

delivery Feb. 14. And, we will continue to offer the ever-popular singing telegrams. Please call the office if you'd like to help in any way. We need singers, delivery people, receptionists, crafty people and those who aren't crafty but who like to learn on the job. Call 268-7535 to sign up.

Any business or individual not using their supply of 2008 calendars can donate them to our patients. They love having these by their bedside.

Hate to throw away your magazines? Don't! Bring them to the Community Relations office. The patients enjoy reading material. We ask that they are published within the past six months and contain appropriate content.

It's also time to make good use of that extra luggage that's been getting in the way in your homes. Our patients need

tote bags and suitcases to carry their belongings upon discharge. The bags can be dropped off on campus at the Community Relations office (take the first left and follow the signs when entering the southern entrance) or The Chalet Resale Shop, 115 E. Second St. in Big Spring.

If you have time one of these wintry days you might get out the cookie sheets and bake up a couple of dozen cookies and drop them by the Community Relations Office as part of our Operation Cookie program.

Bakers around the Big Country share their favorite cookies with our patients each week.

We appreciate all of our cake bakers who sponsor our monthly birthday parties for the patients. I want to especially recognize Dorothy Sheppard, who is making the

patients on the Medical Unit feel really special on their birthday. We still really need a group or individual to bake cupcakes or cakes for a monthly birthday party for two other patient units.

I would like to leave you with this thought as you wind up your year and the Christmas season of giving and enter a bright new year of challenge and opportunity. There are so many ways to volunteer, and we share so many wonderful times with our great volunteers.

Give me a call at 268-7535 and see what volunteer job we have that fits you.

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Billie Christie-Morgan is director of Community Relations at Big Spring State Hospital.

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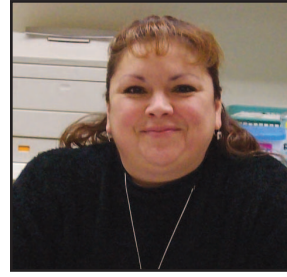
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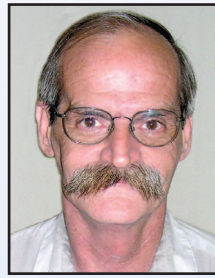
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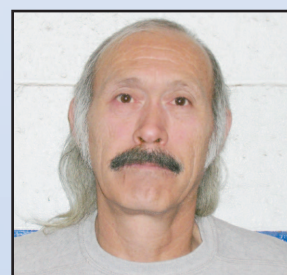
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► News briefs

Man who survived accident then hit and killed seeking help

HOUSTON (AP) — A man who survived a Houston accident that flipped his pickup died after he was hit by a car as he returned from making a phone call for help.

The car's driver told police he did not see the man step into lane in the darkness early Friday.

The victim's identity wasn't immediately released. Accident investigator Sgt. Gregory Hall says it wasn't clear what caused the victim's pickup to flip in the first place.

Police did not expect to file charges against the car's driver but are still investigating.

Police to look for missing Oklahoma student over the holidays

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Rice University officials in Texas plan to continue searching over the holidays for a student from Oklahoma who hasn't been seen for about a week.

Matthew Wilson, a 20-year-old computer science major from Haworth, was last seen Dec. 15 and didn't show up Wednesday to turn in final projects.

"Matthew is a good student, so this behavior was atypical," said Bill Taylor, Rice University police chief.

"Matthew's roommate had alerted us Tuesday that Matthew had not been back to the apartment since Saturday around noon, so these two factors together

caused concern."

The roommate noticed Wilson's backpack and car were missing from their off-campus apartment and thought he was at the library. But when he called his roommate, he discovered Wilson's cell phone was still inside their apartment, investigators said.

Wilson's mother, Cathy Wilson, said her son was supposed to arrive in Tulsa by Friday to spend the holidays at his sister's house. He hasn't been in contact with his family since his disappearance. His mother last saw him when he came home for Thanksgiving, she said.

Wilson's mother said her son took was an honor student with an A average. It wasn't unusual for him to ignore phone calls or e-mails while studying for final exams, but he never would have missed the deadline for exams, she said.

Rice spokesman J.B. Almond said university offices closed on Friday for the holiday but police will remain on campus and pursue leads in his disappearance.

Search for suspect in slaying expands

RICHMOND (AP) — Texas authorities are expanding the search for a third suspect in the stabbing death of a retired schoolteacher to three other states.

Fort Bend County Sheriff's detectives said Friday that police in Louisiana, Michigan and New York have been told to be on the lookout for Marwan M. Saeed, 28. Detectives believe Saeed could be in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Dearborn or New York City.

Saeed has been charged with murder in the death of

Martha Fields, 54.

She was stabbed numerous times Dec. 11 in her house in Weston Lakes, a gated community near Fulshear.

The two other suspects in Fields' death were in the Fort Bend County jail early Saturday morning on \$1 million bond each. Kevin Chase Cypher, 19, of Houston, and Angela Lara, 24, of Victoria, are charged with murder.

Sheriff's investigators said Saeed and Cypher forced their way into Field's home, where they believed \$500,000 in cash was stashed in a safe.

The men are accused of tying her up and then stabbing her. Police say Lara was the getaway driver.

Wyatt to serve his time in Beaumont

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston oilman Oscar Wyatt Jr., who pleaded guilty this fall to a single count of conspiring to make illegal payments for Iraqi oil under the United Nations Oil for Food program, will serve his prison sentence of a year and a day at a minimum security facility in Beaumont.

He is to report there by Jan. 2. U.S. District Court Judge Denny Chin, who presided over Wyatt's New York trial, recommended the Beaumont facility, which is the closest minimum security federal prison to Wyatt's Houston home. Beaumont is about 87 miles northeast of Houston.

Speaking from his Houston office Friday, Wyatt told the *Houston Chronicle* that he was prepared to serve the time.

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Hot tamale! Prices up in advance of Christmas

By ALICIA A. CALDWELL

Associated Press Writer

EL PASO — Every Christmas season since 1984 Gilberto Carrillo's family has wrapped thousands of Mexican tamales by hand.

It's a routine that keeps his family business, Tamales Lupita, and other tamale shops very busy as customers line up for the holiday favorite. This year, Carrillo and some of his Southwestern competitors have faced rising expenses that have forced them to pass on the costs to loyal customers.

"Everything is going up, meat, corn husks, minimum wage, everything," 29-year-old Carrillo said as a line of customers filled his shop. "Our price last year was \$11 (a dozen). Now it's \$12."

A dollar a dozen may not seem like a huge jump, but in the tamale-selling business where customers often order several dozen at a time, it adds up quickly. Especially for the



A worker makes tamales at La Popular Tamale House in east Dallas. The prices of tamales are on the rise in advance of Christmas.

AP photo/L.M. Orto

smaller shops that appear to be the most affected by the higher prices.

Tamale makers blame the jump in corn prices on the

country's efforts to use corn for ethanol-fueled fuel. The price of corn has risen about 55 percent since 2003, along with the price of petroleum products

needed to ship and package it, according to the Texas Department of Agriculture.

At Abuela's, a Mexican food restaurant a few miles to the west of Tamales Lupita, Liz Ray has had to raise menu prices several times since opening in April.

Her restaurant is charging \$12 for a dozen of the corn husk-wrapped meat and corn dough dishes, though she said she only paid about \$10 last Christmas.

"Everything is just getting more expensive," Ray said.

Though prices are lower elsewhere in the state, they're still going up.

Ruben Leal, president of Dallas Tortilla and Tamale Factory, said he has had to raise prices by about a dollar a dozen in recent years.

Because his 57-year-old business serves thousands of handmade tamales a day — Leal wouldn't say just how busy his shop is — he's been able to keep

prices low at just \$6.50. But that may not last for long, he said.

"We're going up to \$7 next year and \$7.50 in '09," Leal said.

Delicious Tamales in San Antonio has avoided a price hike this season, but president Valerie Gonzalez said an increase is likely in January. A dozen tamales now sell for \$5.15 to \$6.15, depending on the filling.

She said the cost of corn has gone up from \$6 per sack to \$8, and her business, which has six locations citywide, "burns through roughly 200 sacks a week."

In Albuquerque, N.M., Dos Hermanos Restaurants is taking a loss on its \$19.55-a-dozen tamales.

"They are handmade and very big," general manager Juan Flores said Friday as he handed 10 dozen tamales to a customer. "But we don't make any more money. But it's something we keep doing, for the repeat customers and regulars."

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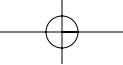
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Births



Kenzie Belle Scott

Kenzie Belle Scott, a girl, was born at 2:24 p.m. Dec. 4, 2007, weighing 6 pounds, 11 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long.

She is the daughter of Sean Scott and Jennifer Cook of Big Spring. Her maternal grandparents are Robert and Sue Cook of Bellevue, Mich. Her paternal grandparent is Kenna Scott of Alamogordo, N.M.



Brayson Maddox Walker

Brayson Maddox Walker, a boy, was born at 10:42 p.m. Dec. 4, 2007, weighing 6 pounds, 8 ounces and was 18 1/2 inches long.

He is the son of Jackie and Cory Walker of San Angelo and the grandson of Dianna Walker of Forsan and the late Tim Walker and Jerry and Belinda Gomez of Sweetwater.

Menus

Spring City Senior Citizen's Center

Monday-Tuesday: closed in observance of Christmas

Wednesday: beef tips and rice, California blend veggies, whole-wheat rolls, sliced peaches.

Thursday: catfish, French fries, pinto beans, coleslaw, corn-bread, fancy fruit mix.

Friday: chopped barbecue on a bun, potato salad, onion, pickle slices, coleslaw, bread pudding.

Area Schools closed for the Christmas vacation

Memories of a Childhood Christmas

by Louise Burgess

The holiday season seems to bring to mind
The fun I had as a child at Christmas time
We'd hang branches of holly and mistletoe
And decorate a tree we'd chopped down in the snow

On Christmas morn, what a joy to behold
There were gifts for everyone, young and old.
There were books, toys and candy for each lassie and lad
A new dress for Mom, a new rifle for Dad.

At Granny's house, where the family would meet
The table was laden with good things to eat
There was chicken and dumplings and country ham
Corn on the cob and candied yams.

There was pickles, cole slaw and butter beans
Corn bread muffins and turnip greens
Strong black coffee in thick, steaming mugs
Sweet apple cider poured from a jug.

There was puddings and cookies and cakes and pies
And the cook and her helpers were praised to the skies
There was happiness and love on each smiling face
As we bowed our head for table grace

As we were leaving, Grandpa would say
"Let us always remember why we celebrate today
For this is the day of our dear Savior's birth
Merry Christmas, may peace reign forever on Earth."



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Page 8
SEASON

Continued from Page 2

in comparison to the way the people of Howard County open their hearts those less fortunate.

The Salvation Army's Angel Tree project, the Adult Protective Services "Be A Star" project; Child Protective Services' Giving Tree and the annual Big Spring Herald-Salvation Army Toy Drive are perhaps the most notable of the efforts to provide a festive Christmas for needy families. There are, however, countless others exist — ranging from the 1946 Hyperion Club's annual project to adopt two families and provide them with presents and a holiday meal to the Cossacks Motorcycle Club's annual Bykes for Tykes effort.

For the past 22 years, the official start of the yuletide has been the Big Spring Herald Community Christmas Parade.

And this year, even Mother Nature helped out. Unlike some past few years when frigid temperatures made watching the lengthy procession a bone-chilling experience, moderate temperatures made for a pleasant evening of parade-watching on Dec. 1.

Herald Publisher Ron Midkiff put his stamp of approval on the evening's proceedings, saying, "I was impressed with the way the community turned out for the parade, and I thought it was a great success."

More than 48 entries echoed this year's parade theme of "Peace on Earth," and three floats earned top honors from the judges.

Winning \$100 for Best in Show, presented to the top entry in the parade, was the City of Big Spring float, while Western Container's entry was awarded the Mayor's Trophy (worth \$75) and West Texas Centers for MHMR earned \$50 for earning the Grand Marshal's Award.

Other division winners this year were:

- Top mounted entry — Howard County Sheriff's Posse.
 - Individual/family — 1. Kayla Cervantes; 2. Naira family; 3. Chap Coker.
 - Civic/church/school — 1. Blue Knights of Texas; 2. Pow-Wow Committee of Big Spring; 3. Birdwell Lane Baptist Church.
 - Commercial — 1. Lamun-Lusk-Sanchez State Veterans Home; 2. Dance Gallery; 3. Sonic Drive-In.
 - Industrial — 1. ALON Refinery.
- As always, Santa and Mrs. Claus

make a special early appearance during the parade.

And Jan Hansen led the procession as they year's honorary grand marshal.

Now the only question seems to be what the weather will be like Saturday evening.

Midkiff, who was experiencing his first Christmas parade since moving to Big Spring and taking over the newspaper's reins, drove the grand marshal's convertible and said he was truly struck by the thousands of people who lined the parade route.

"It's really amazing how excited everyone is about the parade. From our employees, to members of our Readers Advisory Board and the people who annually enter floats, it's pretty clear a huge segment of the community gets involved," Midkiff said.

Midkiff stressed that the Herald takes great pride in sponsoring

TREE

Continued from Page 3

Traditional Christmas music, including standards such as "Deck the Hall," will be performed during the two-hour event. As it has

each year's Community Christmas Parade and employees strive to make every procession just a little better than that which came before.

"It's pretty obvious that the community takes as much interest in the parade each year as we do in sponsoring it," he noted. "The employees who've been here several years say the entries just get better and better."

Midkiff also noted that even bigger and better parades should be expected in the future. "We haven't finalized anything yet, but we've got some ideas for attracting even more floats next year," he explained. "I'm already looking forward to it."

Managing Editor John A. Moseley can be contacted by calling 263-7331, ext. 230, or he can be e-mailed at editor@bigspringherald.com.

for the past three decades, the evening will conclude with a performance of "The Hallelujah Chorus."

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

December 23, 2007

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SPECIAL SEASON

Christmas Parade always a big start

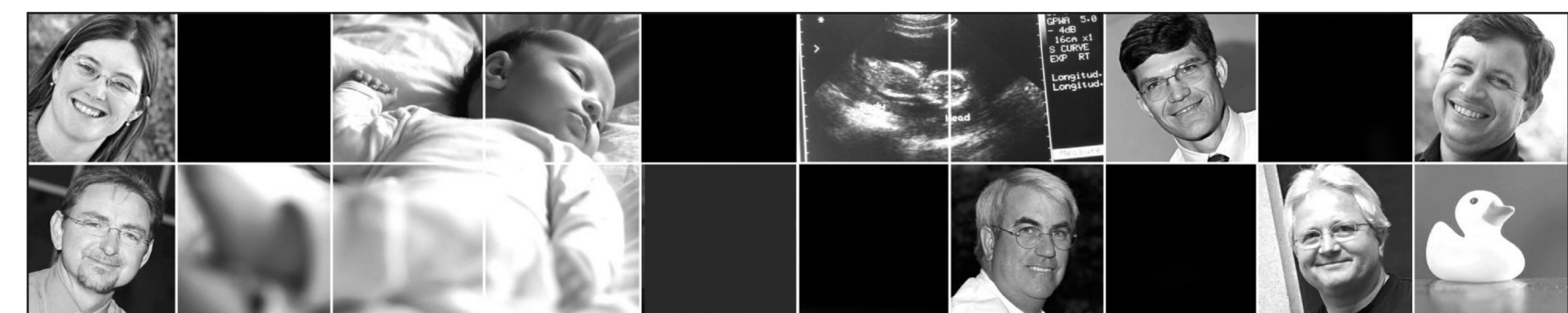
By
John A.
Moseley

Nobody does Christmas quite like Big Spring. Yuletide is a special time in all American communities, but there's something special about the way Big Spring and Howard County celebrate.

From the Big Spring Herald Community Christmas Parade to the First United Methodist Church's annual Living Christmas Tree concert, or First Church of the Nazarene's Living Nativity, the Festival of Lights at Comanche Trail Park, and annual concert by the Big Spring Symphony and special exhibits at the Heritage Museum, there's plenty to see and do during the holiday season.

Each of those activities requires the efforts of anywhere from dozens to hundreds of people every year, but that always seems to pale

See **SEASON**, Page 8



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Church works year-round on Toys for Children effort

Go by Spring Tabernacle Ministries a few weeks — or months, even — before Christmas and you'll find volunteers working on toys. With loving care, the small group scrubs each doll, washes stuffed animals and mends anything that might be bent or broken.

"I wouldn't give anything to these children that I wouldn't give to children of my own," said Mona Lue Tonn, the church's pastor.

The volunteers are preparing for the church's Toys for Children project — only toys aren't all that's given away. Clothing and shoes are offered, too, as are necessary items such as infant carriers and car seats. Stocking stuffers and bags of oranges are also presented to each family.

Room after room at the church is filled with age-appropriate items. The project is designed to provide toys and clothing from newborn to age 16 or 17.

Each year, the project gives more

than 1,000 gifts to children who otherwise might not receive anything.

This year was the 12th year of the project, and another huge success. More than 1,200 items were given to parents so that their children would have a merrier Christmas.

Unlike some programs, there is no advance registration nor do the recipients need to be referred by a church, school or other organization.

"No, we do all this on faith," said Tonn. "We believe if they show up and wait, they must have a need."

Spring Tabernacle holds services at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sundays and has a food and clothing ministry each Thursday at 10 a.m. This year, the church also developed "The Path," to help people deal with drug and alcohol addiction. That ministry is held each Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

For more information about Spring Tabernacle and its ministries, call 267-5321 or visit the church at 1209 Wright.



By Bill McClellan

LIGHTS

Continued from Page 4

oration, festoon it with lights, and you'll likely find it in the park during the festival.

Candy canes, Santa Claus, greeting cards, holiday wreaths and poinsettias — all crafted locally — will be lit up for the festival, Simmons said.

"I think the poinsettias are the highlight of the festival," she said. "A woman from Houston called me and asked where she could get one. I guess she thought we bought

them somewhere ... I still want Big Spring to become the poinsettia capital of West Texas, and I think we can be."

Workers at the event will catch a bit of a break this year. Simmons said booths have been erected so that greeters will be afforded some protection from the elements.

Attendance at the event has climbed steadily over the years, leaving Simmons hopeful this year's edition will finally attract her long-stated goal of 20,000 visitors.

"I'm looking for my 20,000 this year," she said emphatically.

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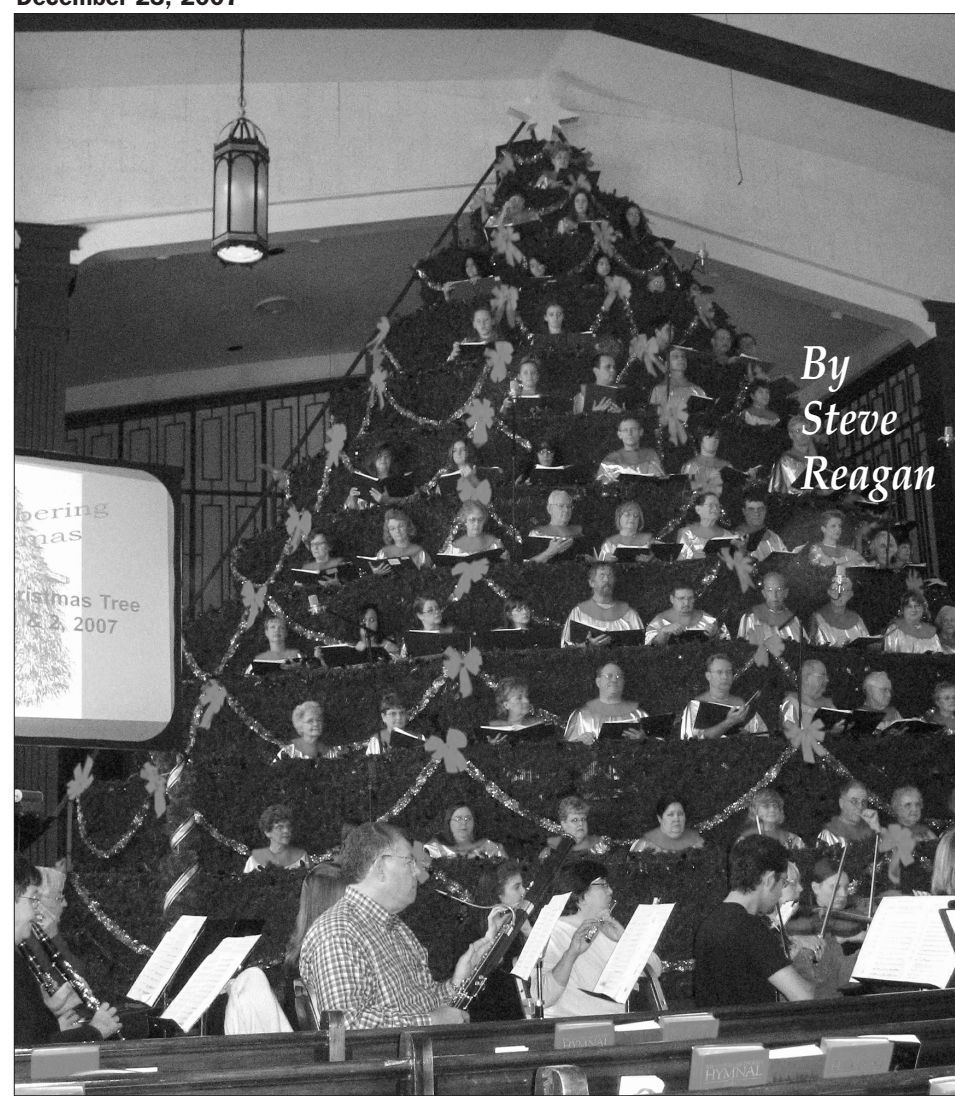
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Improving The Quality Of Life



By Steve Reagan

Symphony's annual concert a 'must see'

Whether it's Bing Crosby crooning "White Christmas," Brenda Lee belting out "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" or just about anyone "pa rum pum pum" to "Little Drummer Boy," we all have our favorite holiday music.

If it can be said that Christmas wouldn't be the same without music, then it can also be said Christmas in Howard County wouldn't be the same without the Big Spring Symphony Orchestra. Each year, conductor and music director Dr. Keith Graumann brings together exceptional talent for a "don't miss it" performance at the Big Spring Municipal Auditorium.

This year, the symphony teamed with music instructor Sandra Wallace and the Coahoma Choir Kids for an unforgettable holiday extravaganza titled "A Symphonic Christmas."

"On This Still, Silent Night,"

"The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy" and "Shepherd's Pipe Carol," were among the fare offered by the children's choir, along with full orchestra accompaniment. The children also sang an unaccompanied version of "Non Nobis Pacem."

The orchestra also performed "Silver Bells," "Carol of the Bells," "The Little Drummer Boy" and "I'll be Home for Christmas," among others.

Tenor Dann Coakwell caught the audience by surprise by walking up the aisle singing Christmas songs and Joyce Bradley topped the evening the "O, Holy Night."

The audience also "performed," getting into the spirit of the season on two medleys of favorite carols.

Upcoming performances by the symphony include "An Evening of Dvorak" Feb. 8 and "The Best of Broadway" April 26. For more information about the Big Spring Orchestra, call 264-7223 or go online at www.bigspringsymphony.com.

Issuing season in with a song

For almost 30 years, First United Methodist has ushered the Christmas season in with song.

The Living Christmas Tree, which features more than 100 local singers and a professional orchestra, was held for the 29th consecutive year earlier this month.

Organizers said that about 1,800 people attended the two scheduled performances this year, slightly down from the average attendance at the event.

The Living Christmas Tree has been a holiday mainstay for many people, but none more so than Jim Wright, music director at FUMC.

This marked the eighth year that Wright has helped produce the Living Christmas Tree, and its a task he thoroughly enjoys.

First Methodist hosts the event, but parishioners from several area

churches participate.

"Actually, the thing I enjoy about it the most is the people," Wright said. "This is one of the few opportunities for fellowship with these people. Our paths don't cross, except here ... A lot of churches take part in this, not just First Methodist."

The theme for this year's event was "Remember Christmas."

Host for the evening was Larry Russell, a music minister from Greenville who has performed across the world.

Laurie Churchwell handled staging, while the script for the event was written by Sue Partee.

The adult choir was accompanied by an orchestra composed of musicians from throughout the West Texas area.

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Festival of Lights turns park into wonderland

Take a drive through Comanche Trail Park this time of year and it is hard to argue with some people's claim that Big Spring is the "poinsettia capital of West Texas. They may be of the electric variety, but the Christmastime flower is in great abundance in the park, along with other symbols of the season. They are all part of Big Spring's brightest — if not oldest — Christmas tradition. The 11th Annual Festival of Lights, which annually transforms Comanche Trail Park into a blaze of electrified holiday decorations, debuted Dec. 15 and attracted more than 5,000 visitors during its first

week, organizers said. Admission to the event, which runs from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. nightly through Dec. 31, is free, although donations to help defray the estimated \$50,000 cost will be readily accepted. Pat Simmons, who has chaired the FoL committee since its inception, said recent rains have slowed preparations, but promised a good show, nonetheless. "Things are going great now," she said. "We won't be 100 percent ready by Saturday — we'll probably be only about 90 percent ready — but we'll get it all done soon." Name almost any Christmas dec-

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Drive Through Nativity another must

Mention Christmas to many and the first thing that comes to mind is Santa Claus, but the First Church of the Nazarine annually reminds us of the real "reason for the season" each December. For the 21st consecutive year, Texas' biggest — and many would say best — live drive-through nativity was held at the church earlier this month. The church's annual Christmas Drive-Through Nativity, featuring almost 20 scenes from the life of Jesus Christ, attracted about 2,000 visitors during its three-day run. The event began in 1987 with only seven scenes, and has grown over the years to include 17 scenes, live animals and a cast of more than 130 peopled. The scenes depict many Biblical

events pertaining to the birth and life of Christ, said P.J. Ward, executive secretary of the church. "It brings the Bible to life," Ward said. "We are creatures of sight. If we can see it, we can grasp it, and the drive-through nativity brings this great story to life." A CD or audio tape was provided to visitors and provided narration to the event. The program lasted about 10 minutes long, but visitors did wait in line for some time. "A lot of people stop off at (a restaurant) first and pick up something," Ward said. "That way, they can have a snack while they wait." Admission is free, although donations were accepted. Ward said all money raised during the event will go toward producing next year's nativity. For more information, contact the church at 267-7015.



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ANGEL TREES

Salvation Army's project means gifts for more than 500

For a child, few things in this world are as magical as waking up Christmas morning with gifts waiting for them under the holiday tree. Unfortunately, for some area low income families, that magic is simply unreachable thanks to tough financial times and the rising costs for everyday necessities. That's where the Big Spring Salvation Army steps in with its annual Angel Tree program. And it's a good thing, because the need for the program seems to grow every year.

"We have more children on the Angel Trees this year than we've seen since we've been in Big Spring," said Capt. Linda Keeney. "We're not sure what's to blame for the increase. With the oil industry so strong this year, you would think the need would be less. However, we're seeing a lot of people out there that are still struggling to make ends meet."

Paula Lafler, social worker for the local Salvation Army, said the majority of the people applying for the program this year are single parents. "The majority of the people approved for the program have been single parents this year," said Lafler. "We're seeing a lot more single parents than in the past. We're also seeing something of a trend with people who are currently unemployed or between jobs. That's also made up a big part of the need this year.

"We also got quite a few applications from single moms that are currently attending classes at Howard College. Many of them are going on a grant, and that's the only money they have coming in. And once you pay for your classes and books, there's not much left over for Christmas." Keeney said the gifts donated to area needy children through the annual program can make an amazing difference in their lives, and the lives of those that give. "It's everything," she said firmly. "A child who has everything they need provided for them has



HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins
Capt. Russ Keeney of the local Salvation Army gets a bicycle ready for distribution of toys gathered by the annual Angel Tree program during last year's program.

no concept of children out there that do without. If we, as parents, don't show our children to share and to give back, then they won't learn those things. That's why it's important, as a parent, to show these children there are others out there that are much worse off, that do without things that we take for granted everyday. If we show that to our children, I think it makes them a kinder, more giving person as they grow." Linda, along with her husband, Capt. Russ Keeney, has seen the need for the program first hand since moving to the Big Spring area. "One of our first Christmases here, right after distribution (of the Angel Tree gifts), one of my neighbors came and shared a story with Linda and I about Jane, a single mother raising three children on her own," said Russ Keeney, who has been at the helm of the program for several years now. "She had nothing to give the children for Christmas, and I mean

absolutely nothing. So Linda and I took it upon ourselves to go to this lady's house with some food and toys." The scene that greeted the pair was one of hopelessness and despair, according to Keeney. "When we pulled up to her house, it was in ruins. It looked like an abandoned house," said Keeney. "It was run down and dilapidated. There were no signs of life. No toys in the front yard, there was nothing. "We knocked on the door and talked to her for a few minutes and she let us in. It was cold, and the house was so big they were living in just one room to try to stay warm. That room was heated by a hibachi grill. We visited with her and we looked in her kitchen and she had no food at all in her cupboards." And while the small family had long since accepted the plight of a holiday without gifts, Keeney said the hope and love he saw in their eyes when he and his wife pre-

sented them with several Christmas presents was enough to bring tears to his eyes. "There were no toys for the children. There were no sounds of happiness at all in this home," said Keeney. "We told her the reason for our visit and tears began to stream down her face. We unloaded the toys for the kids, and they were running around screaming and hugging our legs. It was like we almost couldn't get away from them, they were so happy and thrilled. "When we left, they were all sitting on the seats of their brand new bicycles just waving with joy on their faces. A look of joy they may not have ever felt in their lives." Distribution of this year's Angel Tree gifts took place Dec. 18 at the Big Spring Refinery Union Hall. Contact Staff Writer Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail at citydesk@bigspringherald.com