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BIG SPRING

HERALD

WEDNESDAY

DECEMBER 26, 2007



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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

Police Blue Christmas not a sad one

Big Spring 'boys in blue' make the holidays bright

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

Officers with the Big Spring Police Association are putting a new hue on a holiday favorite, as the group delivered Christmas presents to a half-dozen families Monday morning, part of the Blue Santa program.

Adam Binnix, vice president of the Big Spring Police Association, said the program — which provides Christmas gifts to area low-income families — is the officers' way of giving back to the community they help safeguard.

"We get enough throughout the year, and God knows there's plenty of needy people here in Big Spring," said Binnix. "As peace officers, we're public servants, and this is our way of giving back to the public by helping some kids and families that might not otherwise

"The real payoff is when you see the children and their smiling faces. That's what it's all about. It's what Christmas is all about, giving to others who need help."

—Adam Binnix,
police association vice president

have a Christmas. Many of these families wouldn't even have a Christmas if we didn't intervene.

"A lot of hard work went into this program throughout the year. We held fund-raisers, like the golf tournament, and this is the fruit of our labor. The real payoff is when you see the children and

See **POLICE**, Page 3A



Big Spring Police officer Adam Binnix — along with Officer Scott Knight, who donned the blue Santa Claus suit — prepare for Operation: Blue Santa early Monday morning, as officers delivered holiday gifts to six local families.

County to secure land for new jail

By **STEVE REAGAN**
Staff Writer

Preliminary work connected with construction of a new jail will highlight discussions when Howard County commissioners hold a special meeting at 1:30 p.m. Thursday in the county courthouse.

Commissioners are expected to finalize purchase of about four acres of land in west Big Spring for about \$89,000 and hire an engineer to conduct a soil survey of the site, located on W. Highway 80.

County Judge Mark Barr said county crews have already begun preliminary site preparation but that a soil study is required before actual construction begins.

Voters approved construction of the \$11 million jail in November. The new 96-bed jail will replace the current facility, which has been beset with a number of compliance issues during the past several years.

The next step toward construction will occur Jan. 14, when the court formally issues the bonds, Barr said.

"After we do that, it will take about a month for us to get the money," he said. "We're looking to start actual construction sometime in the middle of March ... It's on its way."

Also Thursday, commissioners will discuss upcoming vacancies on the senior citizens center board of directors.

Barr said four directors'

See **COUNTY**, Page 3A

'Chefs' still needed for cook-off

By **VALERIE AVERY**

Special to the Herald

Cooks are still needed for the Sixth Annual Chili Cook-off sponsored by the Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 3188 to benefit the West Texas Centers for MHMR Children In Need Fund.

The Sixth Annual Chili Cook-off will be Jan. 5, beginning at 8 a.m. at the Eagles building, located at 703 W. Third Street.

Judging begins at noon.

Cost is \$10 per chili team and \$5 for people entering the area to sample the chili.

Proceeds from the tasting and entry fees benefits the Children in Need fund, which helps purchase school supplies, clothing, tuition for summer camps and helps meet other financial needs of special children who are receiving services from West Texas Centers for MHMR.

The Children in Need fund is used to assist children served by the West Texas Center who need material items that don't fit into a "one-fit catchall" that often is required by government organizations.

Teams are limited to two people, said Landon Sturdivant, Fraternal Order of Eagles member.

Trophies are awarded to the top chef. Cooks only need an endless

pot of chili and an even larger supply of enthusiasm.

West Texas Centers for MHMR is the state-designated Mental Health Authority for 23 counties in rural West Texas. Mental Health and Mental Retardation services are provided to more than 2,000 consumers and their families each month.

For more information, call 263-6862.

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NOT THE REAL SANTA

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Some gifts from Kris Kringle are better kept wrapped.

A man in a Santa hat was arrested Sunday night for investigation of drunken driving after he was spotted outside Grauman's Chinese Theater in Hollywood wearing a wig, a red lace camisole and a purple G-string, police said.

"We are pretty sure this is not the Santa Claus," Deputy Chief Ken Garner said.

The suspect was booked into jail after his blood-alcohol level measured just above the state's legal limit of .08, police said. The man, who is 6 feet 4 inches tall and weighs 280 pounds, also wore black leg warmers and black shoes.

SURPRISE WEDDINGS

WATERFORD, Wis. (AP) — Some people get surprise birthday parties. Ilda Ruth Southey gets surprise weddings.

Twice in her life Southey was surprised with a wedding ceremony on Christmas Eve, both times to Francis Southey.

Her future husband planned their original wedding for Christmas Eve 1942 while awaiting orders to ship off to Europe during World War II.

On Monday, staff at the Waterford Senior Living facility arranged the same surprise for their 65th anniversary. The couple renewed their vows in front of three generations of teary-eyed family and friends.

HOOPS TURNS HOT



See Page 1B



The **Big Spring Herald Delivery Deadlines Are:**
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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
Wednesday, December 26, 2007**

IN BRIEF

Individuals needed to referee area basketball games

Individuals are needed to referee area university 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

TODAY
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)

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

Experts worry about bowl game security

By **CHRIS TALBOTT**

Associated Press Writer

HATTIESBURG, Miss. — After more than a decade in counterterrorism, Jim McGee can no longer relax and enjoy watching a sports event.

The fans look like potential victims of terrorism to the former FBI agent turned college instructor. The players are possible targets and the security gaps are easy to detect.

"It's always in the back of my mind, even when I'm watching

them on TV," McGee said. "You're kind of looking at things. The thing is if I can sit there or any spectator can sit there, and think, 'Hmmm, that doesn't look right,' that's probably a little bit of a risk there."

It was long McGee's job to worry about security at stadiums and arenas. Now, as part of the University of Southern Mississippi's Center for Spectator Sports Security Management, it's his job to teach others the concerns that face

event managers in the post-9/11 era.

While professional leagues and NASCAR appear to be taking security seriously, officials worry enough isn't being done at college sports events.

Those contacted about the issue believe it's only a matter of time before another domestic or international terrorist attack targets a sports event. This time of year is especially worrisome because of all the high-profile games during bowl season.

Bill Flynn, head of Homeland Security's protective security coordination division, said stadiums and arenas are "a concern, something that we want to pay attention to. Why? Because we've seen attacks overseas in resorts, hotels and arenas, so obviously while al-Qaida and the terrorists have attempted to hit hard targets like refineries, soft targets and commercial facilities become more of a target of oppor-

See **SECURITY**, Page 2B

NFL in midst of tight end revolution

By **JAIME ARON**

AP Sports Writer

IRVING — Before Tony Romo had Jason Witten, before Troy Aikman had Jay Novacek, the Roger Staubach-led Dallas Cowboys had a different breed of tight end.

"A Western Union guy," then-star Billie Joe DuPree recalled. His role: "A little messenger, run plays in from the sideline to Roger."

The Cowboys were no exception, either. Throughout the NFL, tight ends used to be blockers who could catch a little or pass-catchers who could block a little. Rare was the guy big enough to hold his own as a blocker and nimble enough to be part of the passing game.

My, how things have changed.

The position has evolved so much that we're in the midst of a revolution. Rare is the team that doesn't have a Witten or a Jeremy Shockey, an Antonio Gates or a Tony Gonzalez. And, quite often, woe is the offense that's missing one of these hybrid studs.

"You got guys who are 6-foot-5 or 6-4 who can run a 4.5 and put them at tight end with good ball skills and you've got a pretty good tight end," said one of the best, Cleveland's Kellen Winslow, whose dad is widely considered the standard by which all tight ends are judged — apologies to Mike Ditka and John Mackey. "Every team is trying to find those guys because it's a mismatch."

The prototype tight end these days is too big to be covered by a defensive

back and too fast for a linebacker. His hands are as reliable, if not more, than the best receivers.

As for blocking, well, you can't have everything. Guys are still labeled either blocking tight ends or receiving tight ends, but the gap between them has narrowed. Besides, size alone makes receiving TEs an obstacle and most take some pride in blocking so they can be considered all-around players.

Such requirements border on freak-of-nature status, yet the NFL rosters are stocked with them — so much that we're in the midst of a golden age for tight ends, with 2007 easily the Year of the TE.

Witten recently tied the tight-end record for catches in a game with 15 and he has 94 receptions this season, giving him a shot at Gonzalez's single-season record of 102. Yet he's not the only one who might break it. Gonzalez himself is at 92.

Even if Gonzalez only makes it 95, that'd be enough to put him No. 1 on the career list for tight ends, ahead of Shannon Sharpe's 815. He's already tops in touchdowns with 66.

Should Witten and Gonzalez hit 100, it would be the first time in NFL history two tight ends crack the mark in the same season. Heck, it's only happened once, period.

This also might be the first season with four tight ends gaining more than 1,000 yards. Witten, Gonzalez and Winslow already have done it, and

See **TIGHT END**, Page 2B



AP photo

Dallas Cowboys tight end Jason Witten (82) carries Philadelphia Eagles cornerback Sheldon Brown (top) and linebacker Takeo Spikes (51) in the Cowboys' 10-6 loss Dec. 16. Witten recently tied the tight-end record for catches in a game with 15 and he has 94 receptions this season, giving him a shot at Tony Gonzalez's single-season record of 102.

Kobe, LeBron win; Blazers extend streak

By **The Associated Press**

Soon after LeBron James and Kobe Bryant finished up, the surprising Portland Trail Blazers went to work on prolonging their winning streak.

No big-name stars, just another impressive performance.

Brandon Roy and Jarrett Jack each scored 17 points, and Portland won its 11th straight game with an 89-79 victory over the visiting Seattle SuperSonics on Tuesday night.

The Blazers (16-12) own the longest current winning streak in the NBA — their best run since winning 12 in a row during the 2001-02 season. It's the first time a team has won 11 straight one season after losing 50 games. Portland went 32-50 in 2006-07.

"Everybody has just jelled. Everybody is talking on defense, communicating. No one is complaining," forward Channing Frye said. "This is a really unique team to be on."

Of course, James and Bryant were the marquee attractions for a Christmas tripleheader, and both delivered.

First, James scored 25 points and got help from Drew Gooden and Daniel Gibson in host Cleveland's 96-82 victory over Dwyane Wade and the Miami Heat.

Later, Bryant put up 38 points and the Los Angeles Lakers got a huge game from 20-year-old center Andrew Bynum to beat the Phoenix Suns 122-115 at Staples Center for their ninth win in 11 games.

"The best thing about it

is he's put in so much work over the summer and now," Bryant said. "The biggest thing for him is he's seeing results. The sky's the limit for him."

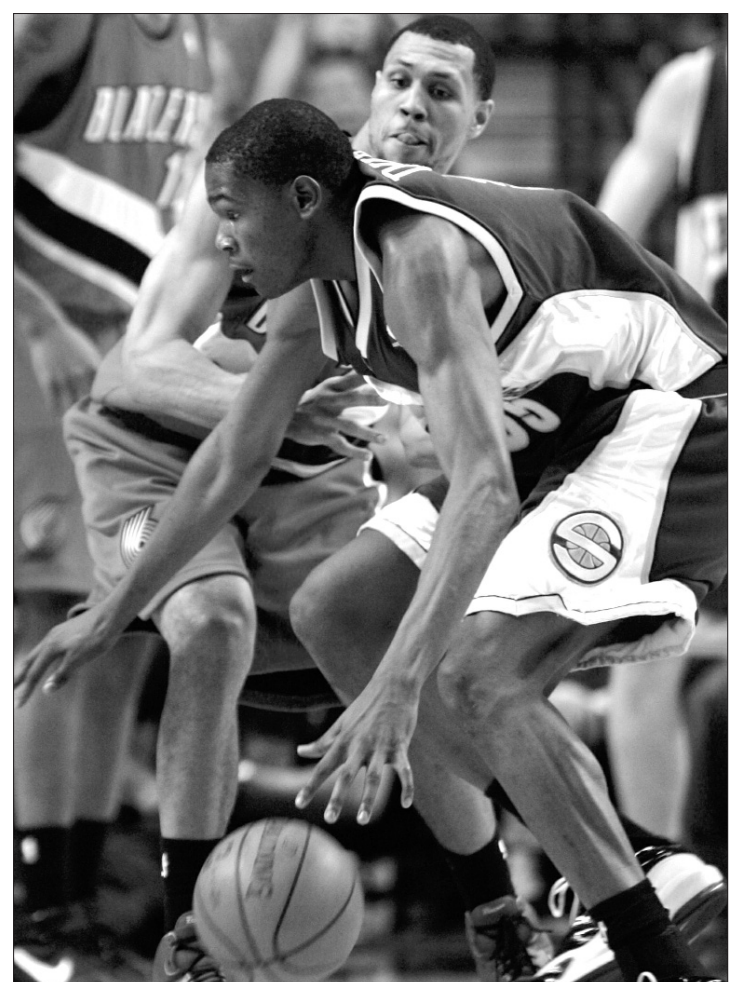
After Christmas dinner, fans hungering for more holiday hoops clicked over to cable TV and saw a workmanlike effort by the Blazers. They forced 13 turnovers, held Seattle to 41 percent shooting and improved to 13-3 at the Rose Garden this season.

Rookie sensation Kevin Durant scored 23 points for the Sonics on 8-of-20 shooting from the field. Wally Szczerbiak added 19.

Portland has played 13 times on Christmas, with a 12-game winning streak.

When the NBA schedule came out, this matchup

See **NBA**, Page 2B



AP photo/Don Ryan

Seattle SuperSonics guard Kevin Durant (front) drives on Portland Trail Blazers guard Brandon Roy in Portland, Ore., Tuesday. Durant led the Sonics with 23 points and Roy led the Blazers with 17 points as the Blazers beat the Sonics, 89-79.

TIGHT END

Continued from Page 1B

Gates is 78 yards away. The position isn't merely top-heavy with stars. As a group, NFL tight ends have 1,959 catches, 20,789 yards and 172 touchdowns this season, according to Stats LLC. With one game left, they've crushed the records for receptions and touchdowns, each set within the last two years, and are 19 yards from breaking the yardage mark that's stood since 1984.

For a comparison, go back to 2002, when the Houston Texans made the NFL a 32-team league. That season, tight ends combined for 1,678 catches, 17,534 yards and 134 TDs. That's roughly 15 percent fewer catches and yards and 22 percent fewer TDs — and it was only five years ago.

Gonzalez is the pioneer of this new era, followed by a wave of guys who already are between

25th and 40th on the career TE receptions list, yet are still in their prime: Shockey, Witten, Baltimore's Todd Heap and Gates.

The list of up-and-comers includes Winslow, Pro Bowler Chris Cooley of Washington, Indianapolis' Dallas Clark and Pittsburgh's Heath Miller. Another guy probably known only to fantasy football players is Houston's Owen Daniels; he has more catches and yards than Cooley.

The tight end revolution isn't for every team, though. Look at Cincinnati, where Reggie Kelly leads tight ends with just 18 catches.

St. Louis and Oakland are lagging, too, but at least tried getting into the mix.

The Rams signed Randy McMichael from Miami after he averaged 65 catches the last three years, but injuries that wiped out their line forced them to use McMichael mostly as a blocker.

The Raiders spent a second-round pick on Zach Miller and

have started him every game, but he's managed only 36 catches.

Notice something else those teams have in common? None is going to the playoffs.

Now look at those that are.

Of the 10 that have clinched a spot, four have a tight end among their top two in receptions or yards. It'll be 6-for-12 if Cleveland (Winslow) and Washington (Cooley) make it as wild cards.

So, how did this happen? How did the tight end go from afterthought to vital piece?

The complicated answer involves two trends: offenses throwing more and defenses using the "Cover 2" scheme, which puts more defenders deep, leaving open the middle and underneath routes where tight ends flourish.

Another factor is the popularity of the NFL.

In this era of kids picking one sport at an early age and sticking with it, more talented big guys are opting for football over basketball or baseball. Seeing

tight ends flourish further feeds the cycle. Plus, there are simply more guys with freakish combinations of size and speed, just like there are more 300-pound linemen than there used to be.

The roots of this TE revolution can be found in recent draft history.

Again, the lists show both quality and quantity.

Quality comes in terms of first-round picks: 13 since 2000 after only 15 from 1980-99. Things were so bad in those years that there wasn't a single tight end taken in the first two rounds of the 1987 draft — and that was an improvement from the previous year, when none went in the first three rounds.

The shallowest talent pool was 1980, when only six tight ends were taken in the entire 12-round draft. There were 16 tight ends taken in the seven-round drafts of 2004 and '06, and 23 in '02.

But Gonzalez has a quibble with the way things are going. He's seeing too many guys who

are called tight ends but are really just receivers considering how seldom they block.

"I'm of the old school," he said. "We're supposed to be able to do both."

Tennessee coach Jeff Fisher is a big advocate of splitting the job. Part of his reasoning is supply and demand.

"The perfect world is a guy that runs 4.4 who can block," Fisher said. "Those guys are kind of hard to find. Most of them are in the NBA."

Cooley acknowledges he's "not an overpowering blocker," but he works hard at it and does his best. Witten isn't quite the caliber of blocker that he is a receiver, but no one should question his toughness after the play he made against Philadelphia earlier this year.

After catching a pass over the middle, Witten absorbed a blow that pried off his helmet, then turned upfield for a 53-yard gain — the longest of his career. He also came away with a bloodied nose and a highlight for the ages.

NBA

Continued from Page 1b

was expected to feature the top two draft picks: center Greg Oden, who went No. 1 to the Blazers, and Durant, who went second to the Sonics. But Oden had microfracture surgery on his right knee and was lost for the season before it started.

Still, Portland's winning streak brought renewed interest in the game. Oden watched from the bench wearing a fes-

tive red jacket.

After a close first half, Portland pulled away in the third quarter with a 16-2 run capped by Roy's 3-pointer that put the Blazers ahead 66-50. Portland won despite shooting a season-low 38.7 percent (36-for-93) from the floor.

Lakers 122, Suns 115

At Los Angeles, Bryant scored 26 points in the second half, while Bynum finished with a career-high 28 points to go with 12 rebounds and a season-high

four assists. He shot 11-for-13 in outplaying Phoenix center Amare Stoudemire.

The Lakers (18-10) are a season-high eight games over .500 and within one game of the Pacific Division-leading Suns (19-9), who lost for the fifth time in eight games.

After matching his career high by playing 42 minutes, Bynum said he felt great.

Derek Fisher added 19 points for the Lakers, Lamar Odom had 15 points and 14 rebounds and Trevor Ariza scored 14

points in his first start since being acquired from Orlando last month.

Steve Nash led the Suns with 24 points and 14 assists. Six of his teammates scored in double figures including Stoudemire, who had 19 points but only six rebounds. Shawn Marion had 15 points and 10 rebounds.

Cavaliers 96, Heat 82

At Cleveland, Gooden scored 18 points, Gibson added 16 and the Cavaliers' defense arrived in time for the holiday.

James, who left Quicken Loans Arena in disgust following an embarrassing loss to Golden State on Sunday, added 12 assists and outshined Wade, who scored 22 points but didn't make his first field goal of the second half until there was only 4:01 remaining.

By then, the Cavs were already up by 12 points and they went on to win for just the fourth time in their past 14 games. Anderson Varejao scored 15 points and Zydrunas Ilgauskas 13 for Cleveland.

SECURITY

Continued from Page 1b

tunity." U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, said basic procedures followed by professional sports security managers aren't followed by all colleges, leaving vulnerable those who cut corners because of cost or other reasons.

The Southern Miss program is beginning to fill that need. The security management program, created in October 2005, is believed to be the only program of its kind in the nation and is offered as part of the sports management master's degree program.

The school recently won a \$3.5 million grant from the Department of Homeland Security to conduct 95 training seminars around the nation to train and certify security professionals.

The program's director, Lou Marciani, said there are significant research opportunities for students in the program, and qualified security professionals are in demand across the country. The school also can help certify retiring federal agents and military personnel for second-career security jobs in the private sector.

Marciani said the center's research quickly showed that college sports events were among the most vulnerable, with hundreds of venues, varying security emphasis and a high emotional impact. More than 48 million people attend at least one NCAA football game a season, offering an easy target.

Researchers discovered most schools had never conducted an emergency evacuation drill or a threat assessment.

By far the largest variable, however, was training. Law enforcement and private security guards aren't the only employees in need of training for a venue to be safe. Everyone from ticket takers and ushers to the people approving credentials must be vigilant.

"In our lifetime you saw Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts being ushers," Marciani said. "The new

usher is the first responder. Big difference, huh? Sixty-two percent of NCAA schools use an outsource company to manage their security. So the question is, 'Who are these people coming in to manage their security?'"

NCAA officials turned down repeated requests to discuss the issue, even in the broadest terms.

Marciani said certification of credentialing processes, stadiums and risk management plans will quickly harden so-called "soft targets." But one factor that will continue to limit security is money for operations, physical protection equipment and vulnerability assessments.

The best security plans include a buffer zone around the stadium or arena, a hard shell at the fence and enough personnel inside the facility to divide the crowd into small groups for easier monitoring.

The precautions seem standard, but surprisingly are not universal.

"Some stadiums aren't fortunate enough to attract 30,000," Marciani said. "Some only attract 17,000. So where are you going to get the money to offset the black hole called security?"

There have been very

few terrorist attacks on sports or entertainment events on U.S. soil. The most prominent was Eric Rudolph's attack at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta to protest abortion.

Several security professionals said the Virginia Tech killings and the murders of Mississippi and Memphis athletes this year helped push security into a new light.

su | do | ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

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

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

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

The End Justifies the Means

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.
NORTH
 ♠ A K 10 5 3
 ♥ K Q 9 2
 ♦ J 4
 ♣ J 9
WEST
 ♠ J 9 8 4
 ♥ 8 5 3
 ♦ A K Q 10 7
 ♣ 7
EAST
 ♠ Q 7 2
 ♥ 10 7 6 4
 ♦ 9 6 3
 ♣ K 8 4
SOUTH
 ♠ 6
 ♥ A J
 ♦ 8 5 2
 ♣ A Q 10 6 5 3 2

The bidding:
 South West North East
 1 ♠ 1 ♦ 1 ♠ Pass
 2 ♣ Pass 2 ♥ Pass
 3 ♣ Pass 5 ♣
 Opening lead — king of diamonds.

Defenders sometimes have to be a bit creative to achieve their goal of defeating the contract. Consider this deal where West led the king of diamonds and continued with the ace, East contributing the 3-6 and South the 2-5. West then shifted to a heart, hoping to find East with the ace.

Declarer won with the ace, crossed to dummy with a spade, led the club jack and, after East followed low, finessed. When the jack held, the finesse was repeated, after which

declarer easily made the rest of the tricks and the contract.

Had the defense functioned somewhat more efficiently, though, declarer would have gone down one. True, East would have had to tell a little white lie, but there's surely nothing wrong with that if it stops declarer from getting home safely.

East should have played the nine on West's king of diamonds and the three on the ace, pretending he had a doubleton diamond and that he wanted another diamond lead at trick three. From East's point of view, his only real hope of stopping the contract is to force declarer to ruff in dummy, thereby ensuring that his king of clubs will eventually become the setting trick.

This deliberate falsecard would have fixed declarer's wagon beyond repair. Compelled to ruff the third diamond in dummy, South could then have taken only one finesse in clubs, and would later have had to lose a trump to the king and go down one.

The principle that applies is that it's perfectly OK to intentionally deceive your partner when a valid purpose is served by the deception. In the present case, your partner might be baffled when you follow suit to the third diamond, but at the end of the hand he will surely forgive you.

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Employment Announcement/ USDA Howard County Farm Service Agency

Opening date: December 28 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

DUNCAN DISPOSAL - Now hiring a driver for the Coahoma area. Need at least a Class B CDL. Experience Preferred for a driver's position. Please come by the Duncan Disposal office at 8220 West Hwy 80, Midland, TX- just east of the airport in person. Must be able to pass mandatory DOT and corporate drug testing requirements. No phone calls please. The job includes 40+ hours weekly Mon- Fri., with some Sat. mornings. An hourly rate with benefits package is available. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Ameri-Tech Building Systems

DRUG FREE WORK PLACE

Immediate openings!!!

Quality Control Manager Seeking a mature, responsible individual! Candidate must be highly motivated to handle and able to work without supervision for our fast paced growing manufacturing business.

Must have experience in building or construction; management experience a plus! Competitive pay with a full range of benefits.

EOA
Fax resume to:
Jamie White
936-598-6359
or apply online

www.ameritechbuildings.com

Help Wanted

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.

ARE YOU A GO GETTER?

Would you like to make good money? Well come join our team!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Health Insurance, 401K, mileage reimbursement, sick leave, vacation time available.

Contact or pick up application
Sweetwater Reporter
112 West 3rd.
Sweetwater, TX 79556
325-236-6677
or e-mail resume to
publisher@bigspring
herald.com
or contact
Ron Midkiff, Publisher
432-263-7331

Help Wanted

HILLCREST CDC has a Part-time Positions Available, Mon.-Fri., 3:00-6:00. If you are energetic and love kids please come apply. Must have high school diploma or GED. Hillcrest CDC, 2000 West FM 700.

IMMEDIATE OPENINGS for Roustabout Helpers, Pushers & Backhoe Operators with CDL License. Apply at Rusty's Oil-field Service in Stanton. 1 Mile West of Stanton on North Service Road of 1-20 Monday thru Friday 8-5. (432)756-2821.

Kinder Hearts Home Health, PLLC
FT LVNs Needed
in Big Spring
866-778-5778 or
www.kinderhearts
westtexas.com

NEED A job today? Come be a delivery driver for Domino's Pizza. We pay competitive hourly wages & put cash in your pocket daily! Working for the other guys? Bring your experience over to Domino's Pizza and get paid top dollar. Part time and full time positions available. Need day hours? Need night hours? We have all shifts available. We work with ALL types of schedules. **Apply now and get hired on the spot (some restrictions apply).**

2111 Greg Street
EOE, Drug Free environment

NEEDED LVN or RN 8-5 M-F Chg./tx Nurse \$18.50 + DOE/ \$25.00 DOE. 10-6 Chg. Nurse- M-F starts @ \$20.00 + DOE. Could be more. Call Tammy at Mountain View Lodge 432-263-1271.

Help Wanted

NEIGHBORS CONVENIENCE Store now hiring cooks, cashiers, stockers. All Shifts. Apply at 3315 E. FM 700.

MIDWEST FINANCE CORP now hiring assistant manager/ collector. Benefit package. Pay DOE. Apply in person, 600 S. Gregg. No Phone Calls!

PARKPLACE RETIREMENT LIVING is seeking a full time evening and weekend front desk clerk. This position is shift work from 4:30pm to 12:30am; weekends required. This position is responsible for securing the facility, facilitating activities, dining room services and light housekeeping. Apply in person at 501 W. 17th Street.

PARKVIEW NURSING & Rehabilitation

Now Hiring For Certified Nursing Aides. We have the following shifts open:
* 6am-2pm
* 2pm-10pm
* 10pm-6am
Great Working Environment and Competitive Pay. Please apply in person at 3200 Parkway Rd.

PARKVIEW NURSING & REHABILITATION

We have an immediate opening in our Laundry department. Full-time position. Split-shift. Please apply in person at 3200 Parkway Rd.

PIZZA HUT is now hiring for delivery drivers- up to \$20 per hour, cooks- up to \$8 per hour and wait staff- up to \$15 per hour. Apply in person, 2601 S. Gregg.

Help Wanted

PIZZA INN
EARN \$12-\$14 PER HOUR DELIVERING PIZZA'S. \$100 HIRING BONUS. MUST BE 18YRS. OLD WITH CLEAN DRIVING RECORD. ALSO TAKING APPLICATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT POSITIONS. APPLY IN PERSON AT 1702 GREGG. NO PHONE CALLS.

POST OFFICE NOW HIRING. Avg Pay \$20/hour or \$57K annually including Federal Benefits and OT. Paid Training, Vacations. PT/FT. 1-866-795-4058 USWA.

PROMINENT LODGE N. of Sterling City looking for hard-working, energetic, pleasant, individual to host, cook, clean for guest. **GOOD PAY** and TIPS. Will Train. Jan.-Feb. Call Monica 325-280-3675.

RADIOLOGY TECH. Big Spring. Fax resume: 1-315-388-4142. chacker@twcny.rr.com or call 1-800-841-1990.

SANDS ISD has an opening for a business manager. Send resume or letter of Interest to Attn: Wayne Blount or mail to P.O. Box 218 Ackerly, Tx. 79720. Fax to 432-353-4650, E-mail at wablount@esc17.net Will take letters until January 12, 2008.

WANTED REPAIR Maintenance Supervisor for Local Laundromat Business. 25-30 Hours per week. Pay starting at \$9.00. Mechanical experience a must, Will train. Application 1208 Gregg.

FARM HAND Wanted! Experience only apply. Call after 7:00 p.m. (432)684-5418.

BIG SPRING HERALD

710 Scurry • PO Box 1431 • Big Spring, TX 79721 • (432) 263-7331 • Fax 432-264-7205

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____ Date: _____

CLASSIFIED AD

Write one word on each line:

Up to 25 words: ___ Sunday Only \$19.50 ___ One weekday only \$12.25 ___ Two Consecutive Days \$16.50 ___ Three Consecutive days \$20.25 ___ Four Consecutive Days \$23.50 ___ Five Consecutive Days \$25.75 ___ Six Consecutive Days \$28.00 ___ Two weeks \$53.00 ___ Three Weeks \$67.50 ___ Four weeks \$79.00 ___ Garage Sales (3 days) \$16.75
Each add'l word 20-cents per word per day.

Enhancements Price per word for entire run: ___ *Bolding* \$1.00 ___ *Centering* \$1.00 ___ *Italics* \$1.00
Price for entire run: ___ *Blind Box* \$10 ___ *Photo* \$4.00 ___ *Graphics* \$1.00 ___ *Logos* \$1.00

Prices Include placement on internet at www.bigspringherald.com

Start Date _____ Classification: _____

DEADLINES:

12 noon Fri. for Sunday; 4:15 Fri. for Monday; 12 noon Mon. for Tues; 12 noon Tues. for Wed.; 12 noon Wed. for Thurs.; 12 noon Thurs. for Fri.

CLASSIFICATIONS:

Announcements; Business Opportunity; Cemetery Lots; Financial; Garage Sales; Help Wanted; Instruction; Items for Sale; Jobs Wanted; Lost and Found; Miscellaneous.; Mobile Homes; National Ads; On the Farm; Pets; Public Notice; Real Estate for Rent; Real Estate for Sale; Services Offered; Vehicles; Legals

Enclosed is \$ _____ ___ Cash ___ Money Order ___ Check
___ Credit Card# _____
Exp. Date _____ Vcode# _____

Are you a subscriber: ___ Yes ___ No



Care Home Health

RN Case Managers

Due to growth and expansion Angels Care Home Health is looking for RN Case Managers in Big Spring with or without home care experience. Call Queneth Wilson @ 877-469-6739 or fax resume to 817-801-3486

Come join a team of health care professionals dedicated to quality patient care growth and compliance.



We are currently seeking an RN field and HCA field in the Big Spring area. It is an honor to care for our employees & to serve our patients. We offer competitive salaries, benefit pkgs, supportive work environment, tuition asst and online CE courses. Opportunities for advancement are offered to all who work hard with a great attitude. Happiness & joy are cornerstones of our workplace.

Prefer an RN with 1 year Home Healthcare experience. Please call our office at:
432-264-1164 Email: GolleherV@Fms-Regional.com

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\$54.60 Per Month
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<p>BUILDINGS</p> <p>CD Metal Construction</p> <p>Custom Metal Bldgs. • Overhead Doors Concrete • Fences (Pipe, Chain Link) • Roofing</p> <p>Clay Parker Office: 432-353-4580 Cell: 432-466-3586</p> <p>Fully Insured Free Estimates</p> <p>CDMetalConstruction@yahoo.com</p>	<p>CATERING</p> <p><i>Teo's Catering</i></p> <p><i>A Taste of Elegance</i></p> <p>Big Spring's only Catering Company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Menu Design • Now Booking Your Holiday Events • Corporate Events To 750 <p>Call Theresa Andrews at 432-264-0579 Call 432-599-1689</p>	<p>CONCRETE</p> <p>J. T. Builders</p> <p>Remodeling • Drywall Ceramic Tile • Electrical Plumbing • Roofing Brick & Concrete Work Driveways • Sidewalks Fireplaces • Stucco Swimming Pool Decks</p> <p>JOHNNY TALAMANTEZ (432) 213-0882 Cell (432) 935-6310 Res.</p>	<p>CONCRETE</p> <p>All Types Concrete Work Block & Brick Repair Trenching & Tractor Service & Landscaping</p> <p>Campbell Concrete Contractors</p> <p>Call-Tommy Campbell Concrete Contractor</p> <p>(432) 466-0623 2006 Runnels (432) 939-3644 Big Spring, TX 79720</p>	<p>CONCRETE</p> <p>MARQUEZ FENCE CO.</p> <p>All types of fences, tile fence & repairs.</p> <p>Concrete work, carports, stucco work All work guaranteed. Free Estimates</p> <p>Benny Marquez-Owner 267-5714</p>	
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<p>LAWN SERVICE</p> <p>AAA CUTTING EDGE INC. Est. 1997</p> <p>Fall Cleanup</p> <p>Mowing, Edging, Weedeating Flower Bed Maintenance</p> <p>Free Estimates</p> <p>432-816-9639 432-853-1013</p>	<p>LAWN SERVICE</p> <p>FALL CLEANUP HAULING • TILLING TREE TRIMMING • ODD JOBS</p> <p>CALL 267-5460</p> <p>CELL 816-6150</p> <p>Scoggin Lawn Service</p>	<p>NAIL SALON</p> <p>Pro Spa Nail Salon</p> <p>Pedicure: \$21.99 Manicure: \$11.99 Full Set: \$20.00 & Up Refill: \$13.99 & Up</p> <p>SPECIAL Solar Nails: \$29.00</p> <p>111 E. Marcy Dr. Ste 110 (432) 263-6245 (Next To Wal-Mart)</p>	<p>YOUR AD</p> <p>PUT YOUR AD HERE</p> <p>CALL 263-7331 Herald Classifieds</p> <p>HERALD</p>	<p>OIL FIELD</p> <p>LC Sandblasting Inc.</p> <p>Tank cleaning, trailers, pipe, high pressure steamer, paint- ing, coating, fiberglass repair, tank batteries, antique cars, brick, graffiti removal.</p> <p>NO JOB TOO BIG OR SMALL</p> <p>432-213-3399</p>	<p>PEST CONTROL</p> <p>Southwestern A-1 Pest Control</p> <p>SOUTHWESTERN Since 1954</p> <p>(432) 263 - 0441</p> <p>Max F. Moore 2008 Birdwell Lane swalpc.com New Website mm@swalpc.com Check It Out !!</p>
<p>RENTALS</p> <p>VENTURA COMPANY 432-267-2655</p> <p>Houses • Storages Commercial Buildings For rent/sale</p> <p>Reduced 606 State \$10,000 Reduced 1402 Main - \$18,500 w/\$5,000 Down 1003, 1011 E. 11th</p>	<p>GARAGE SALE</p> <p>HAVING A GARAGE SALE</p> <p>CALL 263-7331 Herald Classifieds</p> <p>HERALD</p>	<p>ROOFING</p> <p>"A NAME YOU CAN TRUST"</p> <p>CONTACT: JEFF DENTON 1-806-239-0241 BURR SETTLES (432) 935-9118</p> <p>TOLL FREE: 1-888-548-1669 - Locally Owned And Operated - Insurance Claims Specialist - Licensed And Bonded For Your Protection - FREE ESTIMATES</p>	<p>ROOFING</p> <p>JOHNNY FLORES ROOFING</p> <p>Shingles, Hot Tar & Gravel. All type of repairs! Work Guaranteed.</p> <p>Specializing in Hot Tar Roofs and Doctor of Repairs!!</p> <p>Free Estimates!! Big Spring & Surrounding Areas. 267-1110</p>	<p>WEB/PRINT</p> <p>Big Spring Pack & Ship Your Wrapping, Packing, and Shipping Solution</p> <p>*No waiting Lines *Lots of help * More Shipping Choices</p> <p>FedEx DHL</p> <p>Free Shipping Supplies with all carriers !!</p> <p>Pickup Service, Moving/Packaging Supplies Copying Services, Faxing, Photo and Doc. Scanning, Office Supplies, Full Service Printing Marketing Supplies, Ad Design, Web Design,</p> <p>(432) 599-8018 808 Gregg St. Big Spring, TX 79720 bigspringpackandship.com</p>	<p>WEB DESIGNS</p> <p>Bond Web Designs web designing and hosting</p> <p>www.bondwebs.com</p> <p>Lane Bond 2605 Ann Drive Big Spring, TX 79720 (432) 263-4033 (432) 213-0391 cell lane@bondwebs.com</p>
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<p>1</p> <p>By Phone... 263-7331</p>	<p>2</p> <p>By Fax... 264-7205</p>	<p>3</p> <p>In Person... 710 Scurry</p>	<p>4</p> <p>By e-mail... classifieds@ BigSpringHerald.com</p>	<p>5</p> <p>By Mail... P.O. Box 1431</p>	<p>HERALD</p>
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Freebies

FREE PUPPIES just in time for Christmas born November 1,2007. Will be big dogs. Call 432-816-5624.

Items for Sale

FIREWOOD. PREMIUM OAK FIREWOOD. Satisfaction Guaranteed. \$285.00 Full Cord & \$175.00 Half Cord. Delivered and Stacked. Call 325-648-2818 or 512-913-8297.

RUGER SINGLE six Conv. 22/22 mag Anniversary- New \$345. Ruger Mark I Target 22 auto 5-1/2 inch bull barrel- \$325. Call 432-264-6430 leave message.

Lost and Found

LOST ON Thursday, 12/20/07 ladies gold ring with large diamonds, surrounded with smaller diamonds. Reward! Call (432)270-8368.

Miscellaneous

ELEGANT CHERRY 6 pc Louie Philippe sleigh bedroom set, \$650. takes all..... Dinette set & 4 chairs, solid light wood. Boxed, bring truck \$149. firm. 806-549-3110.

FULL SIZE mattress set \$100 TWIN \$90. For guest room BOTH NEW..... \$150 Queen Orthopedic mattress and foundation, nearly new. 806-549-3110.

GENUINE LEATHER sofa & loveseat, in original crate, can del \$785..... ZERO ACHES, NEW visco memory foam, no motion, Can del \$499. 806-549-3110.

KING 4 poster complete Queen Anne cherry solidwood bedroom suite. BRAND NEW List \$2495 Sell \$990. 806-549-3110.

On the Farm

HORSE QUALITY net-wrapped coastal 4x6 rounds. \$70.00 delivered, 17 bale minimum. (254)977-4196.

NEW MAHINDRA Tractors are located at 6011 East Hwy 80, Midland TX. (Take Exit 144, off I-20, Located North Service Rd. of Business 20.) Full service dealer. Hours 8am-7pm Monday-Friday, Saturday 8am-12noon. Low interest rates and long term financing available. Cultivate your dreams. The Tractor that out weighs, out lifts and out performs the competition. www.beenetractors.com

Pets

FREE CATS- litter trained, all shots, indoor preferred. Loveable, sweet & crave affection. Well cared for and need a home to love and care for them as well. Neutered. Call 432-264-7440.

FREE TO good home 2 dogs. Bigger than Chihuahua will be mix breed, both female, both black & white. Give away together. Both house trained. Call 432-935-0408.

GREAT COMPANION male AKC Yorkie puppy, 4 lbs.. Almost housebroken. Has shots. Loves being held. Must sell \$550.00 Firm. Due to moving. Call Sara 432-517-4009.

Real Estate for Rent

BEAUTIFUL GARDEN COURTYARD

- Swimming Pool
- Private Patios
- Carports
- Appliances
- Most Utilities Paid
- Senior Citizens Discount
- 1 & 2 Bedroom Unfurnished

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263-5555 267-5444

THE OFFICE Building, 710 Gregg Street, for lease, excellent space for a medical doctor or lab available, also have individual offices starting @ \$250. per month with bills paid. Call (432)770-5656 or (432)517-0038. Broker/ Owner.

BUSINESS OFFICE Space 900 feet- 4 Rooms Very nice. High Traffic. Plenty head-in parking. Ideal for Beauty shop, Dog grooming or CPA Shop. 307 Union Street. Call Mr. Bill Chrane (432)213-0426.

1204 STANFORD 3 bdr. 1 bth. \$400.00 a month and \$200.00 deposit. Call 432-264-6611.

Real Estate for Rent

LOVELY NEIGHBORHOOD COMPLEX

- Swimming Pool
- Carports,
- Most Utilities Paid,
- Senior Citizen Discounts
- 1 & 2 Bedrooms & 1 or 2 Baths
- Unfurnished

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267-5444
263-5555

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Efficiency, 1 & 2 Bdrms

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- Dish Network w/300+
- Channels Incl 34 Latino
- Hi-speed Wireless Internet
- Picnic/BBQ Area
- New Laundry & Vending

3304 W. Hwy. 80
(432) 714-4840

\$280/MO! BUY a 3 bed, 2 bath! 5% dn, 20 yrs, 8% apr! For listings 800-544-6258 x F086.

1 BEDROOM house, bills paid with stove and fridge furnished. \$600 with \$250 deposit. 1406 East 6th center house. Call 432-816-1746.

1206 EAST 11th Place. 3 Bedroom 2 bath, 2 car garage, CH/A, living/ dining room. \$950.00 Month plus deposit. No HUD. No Bills Paid. (432)267-2296.

1734 PURDUE 3 Bdr, 2 bath, CH/A, Tile floors, Large Kitchen and living area. \$770.00 month, \$595.00 deposit. Call 432-816-1330 after 4:00 p.m.

2 Thru 6 Bedroom Homes. Pool, 24 hour maintenance, Central Heat and Air, stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, furnished. Washer/ dryer connections. (432)263-3461 -Tom.

611 RIDGELEA- 3 Bdr, 1 bath, carport, CH/A, pergo floors. \$560. Month, \$395. deposit. Call 432-816-1330 after 4:00 p.m.

622 STATE 2 Bedroom, 1 bath, CA/CH with garage. \$500.00 month, \$300.00. No HUD. Call (432)270-3848.

DOWNTOWN 1 bedroom, Spacious Duplex. Ceiling fan, Central Heat. From \$285.00 One person. Non smoking premises or pets. Credit report qualification. McDonald/Broker 432-270-0707.

FURNISHED APT. extended stay hotel. Weekly \$245.00 plus tax, monthly \$700.00 and up. Microwave and fridge. Call 1-800-677-8175.

NICE BRICK Office Building at 2000 South Birdwell Lane, 3300 sq. feet, with 11 Offices and ample parking. \$1500 Per month. Please Contact Lucy 432-263-5000.

Real Estate for Sale

2 Thru 6 Bedroom Brick Homes. No Down Payment. Owner Financing. Bad Credit OK. 6 Month warranty. Call Maria (432)263-3461.

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BY HOLIDAY MATHIS Got enthusiasm? Jupiter, newly in Capricorn, is the CEO of the zodiac, lifting our energies with far-reaching visions about what we're ready to achieve in the new year. Mars, Jupiter's yes man, adds, "And we'll do it in half the time."



HOLIDAY MATHIS

Whether an opportunity is actually reachable isn't critical. Harnessing this big energy is.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You are sensitive to other people's imbalances, which is why the troubled ones seek you out. Lend a hand to help or a shoulder to lean on, but don't lend money. By healing others, you heal yourself.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You're motivated — you know exactly which direction to go. Don't wait to make a slight alteration in your course. (If you wait, the correction will be no longer "slight.")

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Dreams inspire you, and they also leave you wanting. Share your restlessness with a friend. Also, you should know that what you long for is not unusual, but it is definitely unique.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Intimacy issues crop up. Talking on the phone may be preferred to dating. You could learn

more about someone on the Internet than you would if you met him or her in person.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). There are clear-cut choices ahead of you. If you miss an opportunity this morning, you'll get another tonight. Whatever you decide will cause you to turn a corner.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll get what you accept. If it's not right, wave it away with a gracious, "No, thank you." You're teaching people how to treat you, so keep your standards high. Tonight, they're all counting on you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Some aspects of a new romance are far from ideal. Many problems will magically disappear when you focus on what's right and good about the situation. Tonight, you could create food that makes people fall in love.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You were taught to weed out unrealistic goals right away — forget that advice. Miracles are not only possible, they happen all the time. Getting through to difficult people is your special talent.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). It's hard for you to relate to fussy people since you're so adept at making the most of what life gives you. Demand a little more tonight though. You'll get what you ask for.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). It feels like you're walking a tightrope between what's

good for you and what benefits others. When you're on the right path, these two are one and the same.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You've been searching for something all week, and finally you'll find it. Unusual phone calls and witty social interactions with perfect strangers are part of the day's fun.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). A perfect twist of fate is featured. There's nothing like a taste of poetic justice to keep you amused. Just be careful who you tell — not everyone will appreciate the story as well as you can.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "I've been involved with a man born June 1, 1969, for five years, and it's not going anywhere. I'm tired and hurting. My head says go, but my heart wants to stay and hopeful. Should I (born Sept. 16, 1965) be hopeful or wait for the right person to come?"

You're waiting to be rescued by either a miraculous change of behavior on his part or a new love interest. A better question is: What can you do about it? Your tendency to stew in martyred anger to the point of serious resentment (Mars in Scorpio conjunct Neptune) is troubling. Gemini isn't clueless but has a hard time figuring out how exactly you want him to respond to your unhappiness — which he doesn't feel as his own. With your sun, Pluto,

Uranus and Mercury in Virgo, cataloging the endless shortcomings of your relationship is only breaking you down. Virgo, when you take personal responsibility for your happiness, instead of giving it to him, you serve love's highest calling. Love is a precious gift. When you show up in a new way, you allow him to. Own your happiness. He'll either change and grow with you, or move on.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: If an affinity for heavy-metal music can be represented in a birth chart, Metallica band member and Capricorn Lars Ulrich has the signature. On the periodic table of elements, Saturn claims lead as its heavy metal, while Mars has another, iron. In Mars's chart, these heavy-metal planets form a tight and enduring partnership, just like the band. Metallica really could stay together forever.

Holiday Mathis is the author of "Rock Your Stars." If you would like to write to Holiday Mathis, please go to www.creators.com and click on "Write the Author" on the Holiday Mathis page, or you may send her a postcard in the mail. To find out more about Holiday Mathis and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.
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Annie's Mailbox ®: Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: My husband and I have been married for 20 years. He's had several health problems during this time, but has always managed his pain.

Last year, he went to a pain management clinic and they prescribed narcotics. He takes them every day and is in a fog every night. He has gained weight, become sloppy and stopped



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caring how I feel. He sleeps like the dead, mouth hanging open, and of course our sex life has suffered. I have lost my attraction to him and feel the connection between us is evaporating.

I have suggested counseling, but he refuses, saying he has no problem with our marriage. I have seen a counselor myself, but am totally torn up by this. I'm an attractive woman who still receives attention from other men. I don't want to spend the rest of my life with someone who is continually numb. I have a solid job offer in another town close to family. Should I stick it out and accept this new version of my husband, or do I try it on my own?

— Falling Out of Love
Dear Falling: Your husband doesn't want to stop taking this

medication because he feels good for the first time in years and prefers not to give up such relief. However, if he is "in a fog," he may be overmedicated and his doctor should be informed. If you've been with him for 20 years and this latest phase has lasted only 12 months, please stick it out and give him time to adjust his medication and see if that helps. If not, insist on counseling for YOUR sake so he can understand how close he is to losing his marriage.

Dear Annie: My friend, "Liz," has been struggling a lot recently, and I found out that when she was younger, her older brother molested her when he babysat. He was 13 at the time.

Liz has always excelled in everything to try to win her parents' approval. They have no idea this happened and think their son is wonderful. They we complain she is not close to him. Fortunately, Liz is in counseling now.

I did some research and was shocked to find out how many other girls have been through similar things. I want to tell parents to be careful. Boys are very curious and hormonal. Don't put them in this type of situation. I know parents will say, "Not my son," but you never know. Hold your daughters a little closer. And if your child says this is happening, don't blame or ignore her. Deal with it and be supportive. — Just a Friend

Dear Friend: Many teenage boys make wonderful babysitters. You are right, however, that parents must teach their children to report any inappropriate touching, and that they pay attention to what their child is telling (and not telling) them, regardless of the babysitter's age or

gender. Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Please Help Me," who was unhappy in her marriage to a military man. I know exactly how she feels. I, too, was in a faraway military base, and everyone knew my business whether I wanted it or not. Unfortunately, that is the way of life on a military base.

Before going for help through military channels, she should seek private professional help. The so-called buddy system in the military is very strong and things could backfire on her. I'd suggest she reconsider her relationship with her husband, pack a very light bag, make proper and secure plans and fly home to the people who love her. You'd be surprised at the stuff high-ranking officers get away with. — Ex-Military Wife in Massachusetts

Dear Ex-Military: We were surprised at the number of readers who assumed this woman was somehow being abused. We don't know if this is the case, but we do know that counseling, even if others know about it, is worth doing, and the military offers such services for free.

Happy Kwanzaa to all our readers. 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, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, P.O. Box 118190, Chicago, IL 60611. To find out more about Annie's Mailbox, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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ANSWERS

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8	6	5	4	2	3	1	7	9

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Strong current keeps longtime Revolutionary War re-enactor from crossing Delaware

By **REBECCA SANTANA**
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON CROSSING, N.J. — This George Washington could not make it across the Delaware River.

Ronald Rinaldi III was prepared to play the role of the military leader whose daring Christmas crossing led to a rout of British-led forces and revived the downtrodden Continental forces.

Rinaldi, 45, had taken part in every re-enactment of Washington's crossing of the Delaware River since 1976, amassed more than 500 books on the American Revolution and earned a degree in U.S. military history.

But this year, he and his fellow re-enactors were done in by the river's strong currents.

As Rinaldi and hundreds of spectators watched, the first boat that attempted the short voyage from Pennsylvania got carried downstream. A rescue craft had to snare it. Three boats had trained

to cross the river this year in the 55th-annual re-enactment, and dozens participated.

"It wouldn't be a Christmas Day without going down there," Rinaldi said.

The rowing portion of the re-enactment has always been at the mercy of the river. Past events were scrapped when the river was running too fast or it was too windy.

Hilary Krueger, director of Pennsylvania's Washington Crossing Historic Park, which hosts the re-enactment, said the decision is usually made before any boats go out, but there have been times when a boat has had to be rescued.

Rinaldi, who was playing the role of Washington for the first time, was chosen by a panel of three experts on the crossing and will portray him for two years.

Prospective George Washingtons are judged on their knowledge of him and the crossing, must have a uniform

resembling Washington's and recite the first two passages from Thomas Paine's "The Crisis," a call to arms advocating independence from the British.

Rinaldi, a county crime scene investigator, became interested in Revolutionary War history after taking part in the 1976 crossing when he was 14.

"I remember I was fascinated by the muskets and the rifles and the uniforms," he said.

In Christmas 1776, some 2,400 soldiers, 200 horses and 18 cannons ferried across the cold Delaware River.

The Continental soldiers, many ill-prepared for the cold weather and poorly trained compared to the troops they were about to face, then marched eight miles down river in blizzard-like conditions.

They soundly beat the German mercenary soldiers based there, capturing 1,000 prisoners, killing 30 troops and only



AP photo/Matt Rourke
Revolutionary War re-enactors are seen before an attempt to cross the Delaware River as part of a re-enactment of George Washington's historic crossing of the river, at Washington Crossing, Pa., Tuesday. A strong current kept the re-enactors from making the crossing.

losing two Continental soldiers — and both of them froze to death.

"If they didn't win this battle, that would have been the end of the

American Revolution," Krueger said.

POLICE

Continued from Page 1A

their smiling faces. That's what it's all about. It's what Christmas is all about, giving to others who need help."

Binnix, along with several other BSPD officers — including Officer Scott Knight, who donned the Blue Santa suit, complete with PD badge and gun — made the rounds to six local families Monday morning.

Binnix said the idea for the program came almost a year ago.

"The whole idea for Blue Santa came around near the first of the year at one of our association meetings," said Binnix.

"Normally, at our Christmas banquet, we solicit for door prizes, and we get thousands of dollars in door prizes. The idea was presented that instead of going out and getting door prizes, we should use this as an opportunity to give back to the community and help the needy."

"In Austin, the sheriff's office down there does a brown Santa, where he wears a brown suit similar to the uniforms they wear. So we came up with the idea to use a blue suit and call it Blue Santa because we're the boys in blue."

Binnix said he and other members of the officers association plan to make the Blue Santa program an annual event,

and with the recent loss of one of the department's own, they will also be able to honor one of their fallen heroes.

"We're going to try to make this an annual event," said Binnix. "The family of Steve Evrard, a former Big Spring Police officer who died in Iraq, recently requested that instead of flowers for the funeral, donations be made to the Blue Santa program, and we've opened a special account at our bank specifically for the program. This year we adopted six families, and next year I'd like

to see us adopt 10.

"We'll be doing fundraisers throughout the upcoming year to build that account as high as we can, and even though we're done for this year, any money that comes in now will go toward next year. It just touches your heart that families would donate money to this account in Steve's name, and it's an honor to do that for him."

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

COUNTY

Continued from Page 1A

terms are expiring this year, but it is unlikely the county will name replacements at this time because of the uncertain nature of exactly which governmental agency will be responsible for the center.

The county is in the process of negotiating a transfer of responsibility to the city of Big Spring and Barr believes naming

new directors at this time is unlikely.

"We will probably leave those positions vacant at this time," he said. "If the city takes over the center and wants to name new directors, then they can."

Barr said he is hopeful to arrange a transfer to the city sometime in April.

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



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EDITORIAL

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

-FIRST AMENDMENT

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

Ron Midkiff
Publisher

John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

Bill McClellan
News Editor

OUR VIEWS

Please drive safely during the holidays

Area law enforcement officers have a message for would-be partygoers as we close 2007 and welcome in 2008: Don't drink and drive. Anyone who has been drinking and takes the chance of getting behind the wheel runs a better than usual chance of getting stopped because extra law officers will be on the street.

That's true for both the city and state as both Big Spring Police Department and the Department of Public Safety are taking advantage of grant money to pay overtime for peace officers to be on patrol.

As local DPS Sgt. Jason Hester noted, they have a "zero tolerance" policy for both those who drink and drive and those who are not wearing seatbelts.

But we're not asking that you don't drink and drive so that you won't wind up in jail. No, there's a lot more to it than that.

We all enjoy celebrations and the end of a year has always been an acceptable cause to celebrate. But it's not reason enough to endanger lives, and that's the point. If your driving is impaired, the chances of your having an accident are greater — that's a fact. While you may be able to keep a vehicle "between the lines" so to speak, your ability to react to sudden changes is diminished. Your defensive driving skills aren't what they should be.

It's not worth it. It's not worth the embarrassment; it's not worth the fine and jail time; it's not worth a chance having it on your record; it's not worth the chance of endangering your life, the lives of those with you or the lives of other motorists or pedestrians.

If you are planning on drinking and being out, appoint a designated driver.

Make sure you are around to celebrate again next year.

How To Contact Us

The Herald is always interested in our readers' opinions. In order that we might better serve your needs, we offer several ways in which you may contact us:

- In person at 710 Scurry St.
- By telephone at 263-7331
- By fax at 264-7205
- By e-mail Managing Editor John A. Moseley at editor@bigspringherald.com or News Editor Bill McClellan at newsdesk@bigspringherald.com.
- By mail at P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721

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- 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

May we slow down and relax with You, Lord.

Amen

Who gets to vote really matters

Win elections?
Here's the gist:
Get to pick,
Who's on the list.

It seems curious that in this high-tech and (mostly) law-abiding country, we make such a big deal of voter registration. In dirt-poor countries, peasants may walk a couple days to get to a polling place. But upon arrival there's no registration. Just show up, get your thumb inked and take a ballot. Democracy to a fault.

In such countries, the real problems tend to arise afterward. Ballot boxes disappear, ballot counters disappear and, sometimes, candidates disappear. Dictatorships employ various techniques.

The U.S. is different. We rig elections too, of course, but we tend to do it ahead of time. Our stunt is to control who gets to vote. That's feasible because our two-party system often breaks down along lines of wealth. While there remains plenty of overlap, the prosperous and the white do lean Republican, the struggling and the black, Democratic.

This distinction allows for much mischief. Republicans figured out

long ago that by strewing stumbling blocks in the voting paths of the poor, they could win. Poll taxes were useful in other times. Today it's rumors that anyone with a police record not only can't vote, but might get arrested.

Periodically, the false specter of voter fraud is trotted out. Party bosses use it to con gullible League of Women Voters members into believing that picture IDs are important to assure clean elections. The bloody shirts of Chicago and New Jersey are waved as evidence. Consequently, a couple dozen crooked ballots in each state are likely avoided each year, while thousands of poor citizens without ready access to suitable IDs never get to vote. Why is it that scoundrels are so much smarter than the rest of us?

Canada and Denmark prudently avoid this whole charade. When you turn 18 in those places your name is automatically entered on the rolls, rich or poor, black or white, Republican or Democrat, or whatever they happen to have for parties. The United States has a few states headed in that direction too, and in some, you can even register on Election Day.

One of the cutest states is Georgia, which only made its picture IDs available at Motor Vehicle offices. None of these, it turned out, were located in Atlanta. No car, no vote. Courts

have since intervened. Who needs a poll tax?

And now, reverting to more primitive times, America has once again discovered the risks to ballot integrity after the votes are cast. In 2000, Florida earned immortality for crooked tallying, and a seat in Congress for its shady secretary of state. Since then the national rush to electronic vote counting has taught us to be equally wary of those who program the counting machines. One such manufacturer promised Ohio to George W. Bush in 2004.

The other main piece of election reform is money. Federal laws have not proven to be of great value. But at the moment the Democrats are suddenly doing just fine raising cash from plutocrats too, thank you very much, so no one is complaining very loudly, other than suspicious citizens.

Luckily, state experiments with campaign finance reform are blessedly inching ahead, with pleasing successes recorded in Arizona, Maine and Connecticut.

The fat cats may still rule Washington, but fed-up voters are finally making progress at the grass roots.

Columnist William A. Collins is a former state representative and a former mayor of Norwalk, Conn.

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WILLIAM A. COLLINS

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Popular, even when they're wrong

In September, more than 3,500 Stanford University faculty members signed a petition protesting Donald Rumsfeld's appointment as distinguished visiting fellow at the university's Hoover Institute on a task force on terrorism and ideology.

Should we be surprised that Rumsfeld was hired by one of our nation's most prestigious universities for his alleged expertise on terrorism and ideology — after getting us into a disastrous and unnecessary war in Iraq? There he made all the wrong decisions on how to run it, and set up his own propagandistic intelligence group at the Pentagon when CIA intelligence did not serve his political needs. He also provided terrorists with a recruiting bonanza by approving the use of torture.

For conservative hawks, as far as the media and academia are concerned, being disastrously wrong rarely has disastrous career consequences. Take neocon Bill Kristol, a founder of the Project on the New American Century, purveyors of today's disastrous Bush foreign policy, and early advocate of attacking Iraq. His reward for being wrong? He teaches a class in public policy at Harvard, writes as a part-time "star" columnist for "Time Magazine," and has a nationwide platform from which to compound his earlier mistakes by calling for an attack on Iran.

Ann Coulter, in spite of being tragically wrong about the war, outrageously wrong about 9/11 widows and unconscionably wrong about John Edwards, still has her column distributed to newspapers across the country.

Victor Davis Hanson is a classics professor and military historian much admired — and listened to — by Dick Cheney. Hanson, who was a major advocate of

attacking Iraq, is now at Stanford's Hoover Institute. In 2004, Tribune Media Services gave him a syndicated column.

There's nothing new here. Vietnam War extender and defender Henry Kissinger, who was Richard Nixon's Secretary of State and played a key role in the secret bombing of Cambodia, has probably appeared as a foreign policy "expert" on more TV talk shows than any other former statesman.

Vehement anti-communist Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Ronald Reagan's foreign policy advisor and United Nations ambassador, favored supporting friendly right-wing dictatorships because, as she put it, "traditional authoritarian governments are less repressive than revolutionary autocracies."

The communist Soviet Union's final leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, proved this contention wrong. His policy of glasnost, or "openness," led to the end of Soviet communism and the transition to democracy of former Soviet republics and much of Eastern Europe. Yet Kirkpatrick continued to be a favorite of TV talk shows.

So if being "right" (wing) and wrong gives you prestige in the academy, broad media exposure and the ear of presidents and candidates, what happens to people who are "left" and consistently right?

The establishment media fired Phil Donahue and Bill Maher who had the courage to speak truth to power. Despite solid ratings, Donahue was dismissed by MSNBC in 2003 because of his opposition to the Iraq war. Maher was banished from his popular nightly ABC gig for uttering the obvious truth that the 9/11 terrorists were correctly described as murderers but could not be called cowards since they sacrificed their lives for their deeply misguided cause.

Why doesn't Richard Clarke, former counter-terrorism czar in the Clinton and Bush administrations, who rightly criticized the Bush

administration for not connecting the obvious dots prior to 9/11, and opposed attacking Iraq, have a "star" column in "Time Magazine?"

Why isn't World War II hero and former senator and presidential candidate George McGovern a regular on Sunday morning talk shows? Why was his op-ed on the need for the United States to lead the world in reducing nuclear weapons rejected by top-tier newspapers and finally published in the "Miami Herald?" McGovern was right in opposing the Vietnam and Iraq wars, and his 2006 book outlines a detailed plan for getting out of Iraq. What could be more timely?

The Rev. Bob Edgar, an early religious voice of opposition to the Iraq invasion and general secretary of the National Council of Churches, representing more Protestants than any other U.S. organization, was virtually ignored by the major national media. But major TV networks saturated the airwaves with pro-war religious leaders like the late Jerry Falwell.

And it's not just the media and academia that take seriously those on the right even when they're proven wrong. Bill Kristol and Henry Kissinger advise presidential candidate John McCain, while Norman Podhoretz, Charles Hill and other early advocates of attacking Iraq have the ear of Rudy Giuliani.

So the lesson is clear. If you want a platform to cheerlead for ill-advised wars, warp the minds of the future generations of policy makers now studying at our elite universities and provide disastrous advice to current and future leaders, your best bet is to be both wrong and "right."

Myriam Miedzian is the author of "Boys Will Be Boys," and writes frequently on social and political issues.

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► Nation/World briefs

Christmas: A day of prayer, reconciliation, and hope for conflict-ridden spots

ROME (AP) — Amid celebrations and signs of hope in Iraq and the West Bank, political and religious leaders marked Christmas Day by calling for peace, reconciliation and justice in places beleaguered by conflict.

In Iraq, Christians made their way past checkpoints on Tuesday to fill Baghdad churches in numbers unthinkable a year ago. And in the West Bank town of Bethlehem, where tradition says Jesus was born, Christians celebrated in an atmosphere of hope raised by the renewal of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

For them, and for all those in the "tortured regions" of the world, Pope Benedict XVI prayed that political leaders would find "the wisdom and courage to seek and find humane, just and lasting solutions."

Benedict, delivering his Christmas Day address from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, urged the crowd to rejoice over the celebration of Christ's birth, which he hoped would bring consolation to all people "who live in the darkness of poverty, injustice and war."

In violence-ridden Baghdad, venturing out in large numbers late at night is still unthinkable, so the Iraqi capital's Christians celebrated Midnight Mass in the middle of the afternoon on Christmas Eve.

Tiger escapes enclosure at San Francisco Zoo, killing 1 and injuring 2 before being shot

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Investigators trying to determine how a tiger escaped its zoo enclosure on Christmas Day — killing one man and mauling two others — plan a thorough sweep of the zoo grounds Wednesday to look for clues.

Authorities do not believe more people were attacked, but they want to inspect the area in the daylight. Zoo officials are still uncertain how long the tiger, which last year badly mauled a zookeeper, was loose before being shot dead.

The three men who were attacked Tuesday while visiting the zoo were in their 20s, police spokesman Steve Mannina said. The attack occurred just after the 5 p.m. closing time, on the east end of the 125-acre grounds.

They suffered "pretty aggressive bite marks," Mannina said.

The two injured men were listed in critical but stable condition at San Francisco General Hospital. John Brown, an emergency room physician, told the San Francisco Chronicle that they suffered deep bites and claw cuts to their heads and upper bodies.

Retailers usher in post-Christmas business with deep discounts amid signs of holiday gloom

NEW YORK (AP) — With the 2007 run-up to Christmas boosted by a last-minute sales surge, retailers are putting an extra emphasis on after-Christmas

discounts, hoping bargain shoppers and gift-card splurgers can enrich stores' holidays.

Target Corp., the nation's No. 2 retailer, warned late Monday that its same-store sales might decline for December, while a broad gauge of consumer spending released by Mastercard Inc., which includes estimates for spending by check and cash, showed a modest 2.4 percent increase for the holiday season.

So stores tried to position themselves to extend the holiday season.

Toys "R" Us Inc., which will open at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, two hours earlier than last year, will offer such deals as 40 percent price cuts on all MP3 and iPod accessories. Macy's Inc. is offering 50-75 percent off cashmere sweaters, while Saks Fifth Ave. has cut prices on fur coats by 40 percent to 60 percent.

Online stores were also slashing prices further to get rid of holiday leftovers. Potterybarn.com is having a post-Christmas sale that will offer 60 percent discounts on holiday decor and 50 percent price cuts on rugs.

Philadelphia transit officer helps deliver special Christmas present — a baby girl

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Transit officer Steven Rocher got up before dawn on Christmas to deliver a few more presents to his mother's house. He ended up delivering a very special gift indeed.

Rocher, 51, a police sergeant with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, was driving through North Philadelphia on Tuesday when he heard a woman scream.

The woman was lying on the sidewalk near a bus stop, about to give birth, and he saw a man tugging at her clothes.

"As I got closer," he says to me, "Help me, please!" Rocher said.

Rocher, a transit officer for two decades, said employees get annual CPR training "but nothing about delivering babies."

Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway to pay \$4.5B for controlling stake in Marmon Holdings

CHICAGO (AP) — Warren Buffett's investment company announced Tuesday it will pay \$4.5 billion for 60 percent of Marmon Holdings Inc., a private company of more than 125 manufacturing and service businesses.

Berkshire Hathaway Inc., based in Omaha, Neb., said it plans to acquire the remaining 40 percent of Marmon over the next five to six years depending on future earnings of Marmon, according to a statement released Tuesday by both companies.

Marmon is owned by trusts for the benefits of the Pritzker family of Chicago, the family that developed the Hyatt Hotel chain.

The deal is expected to close in the first quarter of 2008. Before the closing, Marmon said it will make a "substantial distribution of cash and certain assets to the selling shareholders," according to the statement.

Brothers Jay and Robert Pritzker acquired Marmon in 1953 when it was a

small manufacturing operation in Ohio, according to the release. In 2002, Jay's son Tom Pritzker took over as chairman.

Peers spanning across generations pay tribute to jazz legend Oscar Peterson

NEW YORK (AP) — Oscar Peterson's dazzling keyboard technique, commanding sense of swing and mastery of different piano styles could leave even his most accomplished peers awe-struck. His death brought forth tributes from jazz pianists spanning the generations.

Fellow jazz piano legend Dave Brubeck said he was "saddened by the news of Oscar's passing." Peterson died Sunday of kidney failure at his home in the Toronto suburb of Mississauga.

The 87-year-old Brubeck recalled the first time he ever heard a Peterson recording shortly after jazz impresario Norman Granz introduced the Canadian pianist to American audiences at a 1949 Carnegie Hall concert.

"I was in awe," Brubeck wrote in an e-mail Tuesday to The Associated Press. "Every jazz pianist would soon know that Oscar was a master."

Decades later, Brubeck found himself asked to help fill in at a 1993 Carnegie Hall concert after Peterson had to cancel his appearance because he had suffered a serious stroke.

Turkish warplanes strike suspected Kurdish rebel hideouts in northern Iraq

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Turkish warplanes hit eight suspected Kurdish rebel hideouts in northern Iraq on Wednesday, the third cross-border air assault in 10 days, Turkey's military said.

The warplanes struck in an "effective pinpoint operation" targeting eight caves and other hideouts being used by the separatist rebels of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, the military said in a statement posted on its Web site.

No rebel deaths were immediately reported.

On Tuesday, Turkey's military claimed that more than 200 Kurdish rebel targets in northern Iraq have been hit since Dec. 16, killing hundreds of rebels. Wednesday's strikes were the third aerial operation confirmed by the military since Dec. 16. The military also has confirmed that it sent ground troops to hunt down the rebels on Dec. 18.

The PKK has waged a war for autonomy in parts of Turkey for more than two decades. The fighting has cost tens of thousands of lives. The U.S., the

European Union and Turkey consider the PKK a terrorist organization, but the U.S. in particular has been concerned that Turkish operations affecting northern Iraq could destabilize one of the war-torn country's most stable areas.

Police: At least 34 people killed in Nigeria fuel pipeline fire

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP) — A ruptured gasoline pipeline exploded in flames, killing at least 34 people near Nigeria's main city of Lagos as they tried to scoop fuel from the gushing leak, police said Wednesday.

The explosion Tuesday morning at Agbogbo, a village near the coastal city of Lagos, occurred on a stretch of pipeline in remote swamp waters, and news of it did not filter out until Wednesday morning.

The pipeline carries gasoline, imported for domestic use, from the Lagos port to inland depots across the country.

"We counted a total of 34 bodies at the scene," Lagos police spokesman Frank Mbah told reporters.

Nigerian Red Cross official Abiodun Orebiyi confirmed dozens of deaths and injuries, but said the final toll was not yet clear.

Panama finds 3 bodies, 1 survivor in crash of plane carrying US citizens

PANAMA CITY, Panama (AP) — Rescuers in a remote, mountainous region of Panama were struggling to evacuate a 12-year-old American girl, the only survivor of a small plane crash that killed a California businessman, his teenage daughter and their Panamanian pilot.

The bodies of Michael Klein, 37, Talia Klein, 13, and pilot Edwin Lasso, 23, were found Tuesday afternoon in an uninhabited region known as Las Ovejas, 270 miles west of the capital, Panama's civil protection agency said.

The wreckage was in a hard-to-reach site on the slope of the Baru volcano, at an altitude of some 3,500 feet, the civil aviation authority said.

Rescuers were giving medical attention late Tuesday night to Francesca Lewis — a friend of Talia's who was traveling with the Kleins — in a makeshift shelter, said Jose Henriquez, a prosecutor in the Chiriqui state capital of David who is handling the investigation.

Officials said she suffered multiple injuries and hypothermia, and cold, wet weather prevented authorities from evacuating her immediately from the site. Henriquez said he didn't know the extent of her injuries or whether they were life-threatening.

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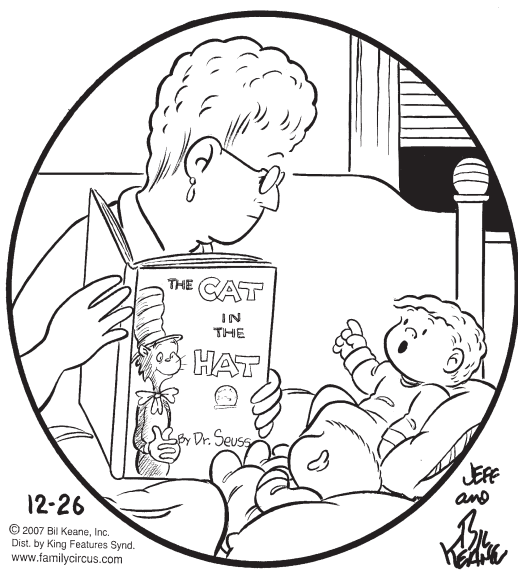
Table with 15 columns representing different TV stations and 12 rows representing time slots from 6:30 AM to 12:30 AM. Each cell contains the station call letters and the program being aired.

DENNIS THE MENACE



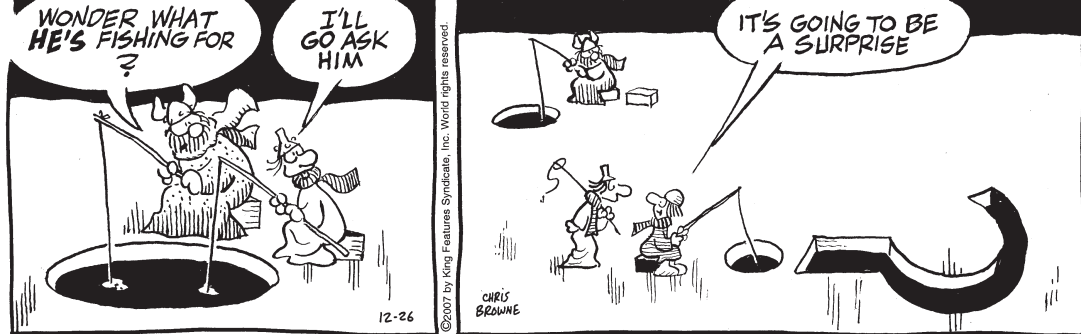
...AND PLEASE GIVE SANTA A SAFE TRIP BACK TO THE NORTH POLE.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"I tried putting a cat in a hat once and he didn't like it."

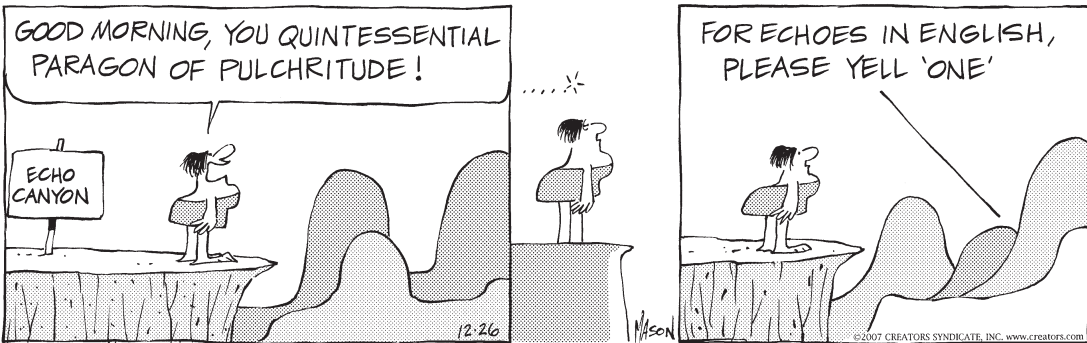
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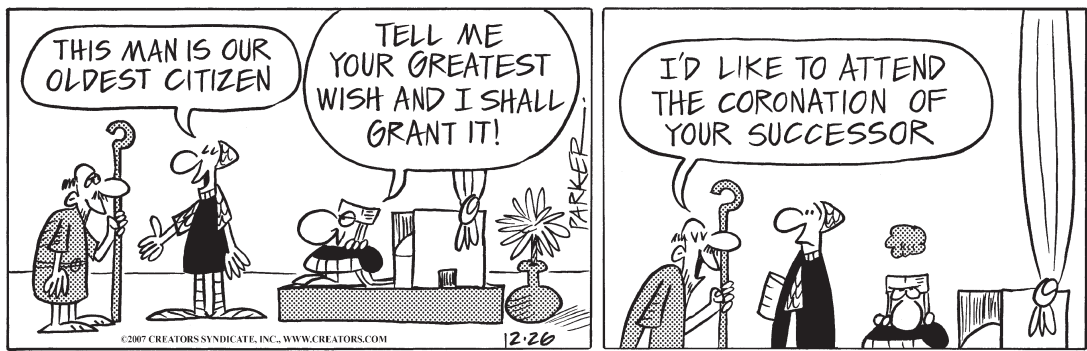
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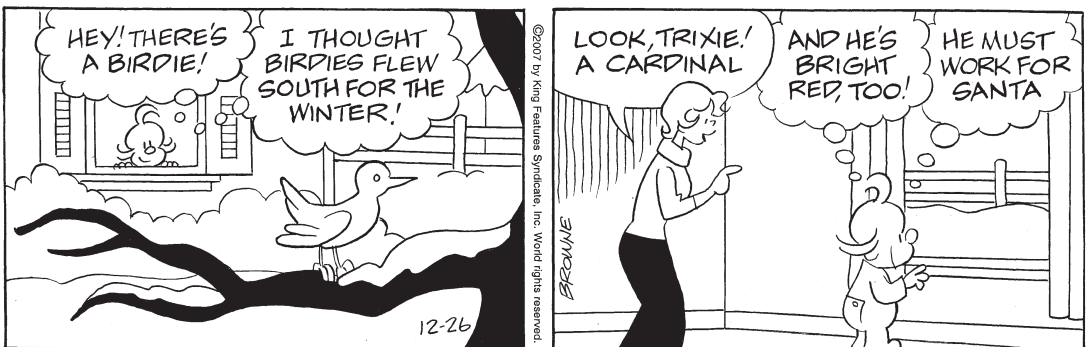
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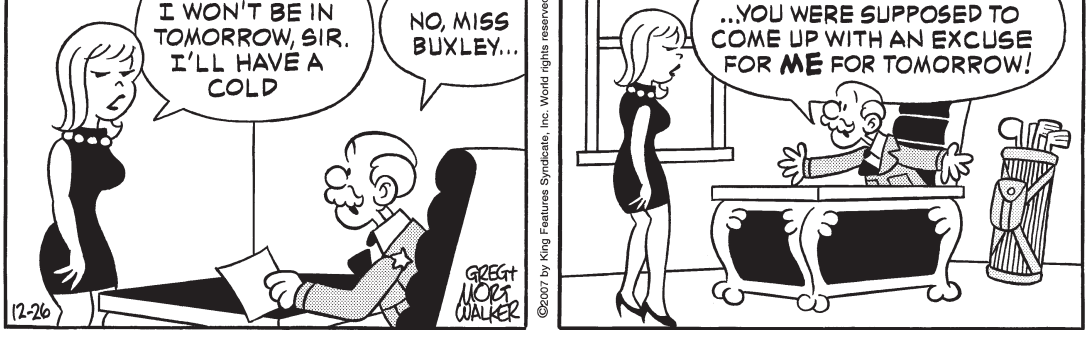
THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



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This Date In History

Today is Wednesday, Dec. 26, the 360th day of 2007. There are five days left in the year. The seven-day African-American holiday Kwanzaa begins today. This is Boxing Day. Today's Highlight in History: On Dec. 26, 2004, more than 200,000 people, mostly in southern Asia, were killed by a tsunami triggered by the world's most powerful earthquake in 40 years beneath the Indian Ocean. On this date: In 1776, the British suffered a major defeat in the Battle of Trenton during the Revolutionary War. In 1799, George Washington was eulogized by Col. Henry Lee as "first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen." In 1917, during World War I, President Wilson issued a

proclamation authorizing the government to take over operation of the nation's railroads. In 1941, Winston Churchill became the first British prime minister to address a joint meeting of the U.S. Congress. In 1944, during World War II's Battle of the Bulge, the embattled U.S. 101st Airborne Division in Bastogne, Belgium, was relieved by units of the 4th Armored Division. In 1947, heavy snow blanketed the Northeast, burying New York City under 26.4 inches of snow in 16 hours; the severe weather was blamed for some 80 deaths. In 1957, the Ingmar Bergman film "Wild Strawberries," starring Victor Sjöström, opened in Sweden. In 1996, 6-year-old beauty queen JonBenet Ramsey was found beaten and strangled in the basement of her family's home in Boulder, Colo. (To date, the slaying remains unsolved, despite a widely publicized "confession" by John Mark Karr.) Today's Birthdays: Actor

Richard Widmark is 93. Actor Donald Moffat is 77. Rhythm-and-blues singer Abdul "Duke" Fakir (The Four Tops) is 72. Record producer Phil Spector is 67. "America's Most Wanted" host John Walsh is 62. Country musician Bob Carpenter (The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band) is 61. Baseball Hall of Fame catcher Carlton Fisk is 60. Former baseball player Chris Chambliss is 59. Rock musician James Kottak (The Scorpions) is 45. Country musician Brian Westrum (Sons of the Desert) is 45. Rock musician Lars Ulrich (Metallica) is 44. Actress Nadia Dajani is 42.

Answer to previous puzzle. A crossword puzzle grid with the words: OPEC, ALTOS, SSTS, NADA, BEAUT, OPAL, TWIN, SARGE, SALE, ONTOP, OFTHEWORLD, EEL, TRI, DES, AUDI, SNAPAT, EREI, TINE, CURVE, MIDDLE, OFTHE, ROAD, OCALA, NONE, AMID, SANEST, RAYS, SLY, SAT, TUG, BOTTOM, OFTHE, HEAP, AREA, ADORE, ALLI, GENT, LONER, NAME, SODA, ESTEE, ALAS.

Newsday Crossword

ELEVATING by Daniel R. Stark Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS: 1 Type of tooth, 6 Slightly, 10 Baby chick sound, 14 Hacienda brick, 15 Arizona city, 16 Peeve, 17 Installed ceramic, 18 Campus figure, for short, 19 Bad day for Caesar, 20 Brontë hero, 22 Small coin, 23 Nationality ender, 24 Wagner works, 26 Miniature tree, 30 2000 presidential candidate, 32 Not in a whisper, 33 Defied gravity, 37 Willow, 38 Courteous, 39 Verne captain, 40 Set aside (for), 42 Once more, 43 More frosty, 44 Tips off, 45 Fireplace frames, 48 Spooky, maybe, 49 Litter's smallest, 50 Electric utility's concern, 57 Arm bone, 58 Casablanca role, 59 Mr. Spock portrayer, 60 Sedaka or Simon, 61 Online auction site, 62 Stale, 63 Difficult journey, 64 Criticizes, 65 Assuaged, 9 Vivid yellow, 10 Comparison shopper's consideration, 11 Pillow filler, 12 Helen, in Spanish, 13 Nuisances, 21 CBS cop series, 25 Household member, 26 Foundation, 27 podrida, 28 Black: Fr., 29 High-level meeting, 30 "When pigs fly!", 31 Zealous, 33 Are fond of, 34 Lacerate, 35 Give off, 36 Slips into, 38 Less soggy, 41 Top-rated, 42 Firm, as pasta, 44 Throw in, 45 Pig's noise, 46 One in charge, 47 Sharpshooter Oakley, 48 Signs off on, 51 Island near Corsica, 52 On the double, 53 Oscar winner Sorvino, 54 Left Bank chums, 55 Written reminder, 56 Changed the color of

A crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1 through 65 indicating the starting positions for the words listed in the adjacent list.

State news in brief

Girl killed on bike she got for Christmas

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A 7-year-old girl was struck and killed by a pickup truck while riding her new bicycle in front of her home on Christmas morning, police and family members said.

Jacqueline Solis rode the pink and purple bike into the truck's path as it accelerated from a stop at an intersection, police Sgt. Charlie Delgado said. Jacqueline died at the scene.

The driver was not speeding and won't face criminal charges, police said.

"She was only supposed to ride on the sidewalk," said Maria Guerra, Jacqueline's aunt.

More than 50 people held a candlelight vigil in Jacqueline's memory Tuesday evening.

Boy returned safe after being kidnapped by alleged human smuggler

HOUSTON (AP) — An alleged human smuggler was charged with kidnapping for abducting a 14-year-old boy because he wanted the boy's mother to pay more for a smuggling job, the Harris County Sheriff's Office said.

Investigators found Luis Antonio Gonsalez at an Austin apartment after he was taken Monday night from a gas station in Harris County. He was returned unharmed to his family in Houston on Tuesday evening.

Santos Vasquez, 33, has been arrested on a kidnapping charge and was being held without bond in the Guadalupe County Jail, authorities said.

Fransica Torres, Luis' mother, owed money to Vasquez, a "coyote," for bringing her 20-year-old daughter to the United States from Mexico and he was holding the boy until his mother came up with the money, Sgt. Harry Fikaris said.

Beware the lost lottery ticket

AUSTIN (AP) — Before you lose track of that old lottery ticket, consider this: Texas lottery players have

left behind \$449 million in unclaimed prizes since the state began tracking them in 1995.

Most of the unclaimed money was smaller prizes, but five of them were Lotto jackpot winners worth a combined \$46.4 million. That includes a \$7 million winning ticket sold in April in Terrell that expired in October.

Texas lottery players have 180 days from the date of a Lotto Texas drawing or the closure of a scratch-off game to claim their winnings, said Robyn Smith, a Texas Lottery spokeswoman. One exception is military members on active duty, who are given "a reasonable period of time" to claim their wins.

"Check your tickets," said Bobby Heith, spokesman for the Texas Lottery Commission. "Search your pockets, search your drawers at home."

Study of stranded dolphins inconclusive

BEAUMONT (AP) — An investigation into the deaths of 68 dolphins that washed ashore between Sabine Pass and Galveston this spring turned out to be inconclusive, an official said.

Heidi Watts of the Texas Marine Mammal Stranding Network said the dolphins' bodies were too decomposed to determine what killed them.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration declared an "unusual mortality event" and opened a special investigation after the dolphin corpses came ashore in Galveston and Jefferson counties in March.

Watts said the review included testing of genetics and testing for toxins and high chlorophyll. She said she has asked federal officials to close the case.

Army secretary says he didn't know man who crashed into home

FORT WORTH (AP) — Secretary of the Army Pete Geren said Tuesday he did not know the man who crashed his car into his kitchen over the weekend, then shot and killed himself a short time later.

Geren said he also doesn't think his house was intentionally targeted Sunday by 37-year-old Edward

McKee, who police said walked to his garage about a block away after the crash and shot himself in the head.

Geren said people were home but no one was injured. "There was a good bit of damage," Geren said. "We haven't gotten a good estimate. It's not insignificant."

Fort Worth police Lt. Dean Sullivan also said it'd doubtful McKee targeted the house. Authorities are awaiting toxicology results on McKee, Sullivan said.

Geren, a former Texas congressman, was confirmed as Secretary of the Army in July.

Family plans to turn tree farm into wildlife management area

NEW BERLIN, Texas (AP) — Some 8,000 Christmas trees and almost a decade later, one of the most popular tree farms in South Texas has sold its last evergreen.

The Jolly Elf Christmas Tree Farm near San Antonio is putting away its pruning shears and saying goodbye to customers, some of whom drove from as far as Corpus Christi to cut down their own tree.

The farm's owners, Ann and Jack Aldridge, now plan to put in a wildlife management area that families can visit.

"You come back in three years, (and) the farm won't look the same," Ann Aldridge said.

The Aldridges said the change was necessary because time has taken its toll on them. Ann Aldridge, 65, said she can't physically keep up with the task of pruning as many as 1,500 new evergreens.

They plan to keep many of the Leyland cypress, Virginia and Afghan pines on their farm, but they'll cut down some others to allow other types of trees to grow.

"We're going to miss it, and the customers tell us they're going to miss it as well," said Jack Aldridge, 69. "We really enjoyed having the public out. We ran into an awful lot of nice people. It's really a good feeling when people tell you this is part of their holiday tradition."

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2005 Ford Five Hundred Limited - Pewter w/Leather, Automatic, 6 disc MP3, Moonroof, Locally Owned. **Was \$19,995 NOW \$17,995**

2005 Ford Five Hundred Limited - Pewter w/Leather, 6 Disc CD, MP3 Player, Heated Seats, All Power, Only 23,000 Miles. **Was \$18,995 NOW \$17,995**

2005 Nissan Altima 2.5S - White w/Gray Cloth, CD Player, All Power, Automatic, 35,000 Miles. **Was \$18,995 NOW \$17,995**

2005 Toyota Matrix Wagon XR - Dk. Green w/Dk. Gray Cloth, All Power, In Dash 6 Disc CD Player, Low Miles. **Was \$16,995 NOW \$15,995**

2005 Nissan 350Z Touring - White w/Tan Leather, Fully Loaded, All Power, Like New, Only 4,800 Miles. **Was \$26,995 NOW \$25,995**

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2004 Mercedes-Benz LK C240 - Gold w/Tan Leather, Woodgrain, Moonroof, Heated Seats, 6 Disc CD, Loaded, Only 42,000 Miles. **Was \$24,995 NOW \$22,995**

2004 Mercury Grand Marquis LS - Dark Red w/Tan Leather, CD Player, Heated Seats, Like New, Low Miles. **Was \$15,995 NOW \$14,995**

2004 Ford Mustang V6 Convertible - Black w/Tan leather, CD Player, Like New, One owner, Only 19,685 Miles. **Was \$18,995 NOW \$17,995**

2004 Ford Thunderbird Convertible - Silver w/Black Leather, Loaded, One Owner, 2 Tops, Only 20,800 Miles. **Was \$27,995 NOW \$26,995**

2004 Mercury Grand Marquis LS - Lt Tan w/Tan Leather, Loaded, CD Player, Nice Car. **Was \$15,995 NOW \$14,995**

2004 Ford Taurus LX - Tan w/Tan Cloth, All Power, Nice Clean Car, Local Owner. **Was \$9,995 NOW \$8,995**

2004 Oldsmobile Alero - Silver w/Gray Cloth, Low Miles, All Power, Local One Owner. **Was \$8,995 NOW \$7,995**

2004 Nissan Altima 2.5S - Gold w/Gray Cloth, Like New, Local One Owner, Only 27,000 Miles. **Was \$16,995 NOW \$15,995**

2004 Ford Mustang - Black w/Cloth, 6 Cyl., 5 Speed, All Power, Local One Owner w/23,000 Miles. **Was \$15,995 NOW \$14,995**

2004 Nissan Maxima SL - Black w/Leather, All Power, Skylight, Local On Owner w/65,000 Miles. **Was \$24,995 NOW \$21,995**

2004 Nissan Maxima SL - Silver Metallic w/Leather, All Power, Skylight w/41,000 Miles. **Was \$24,995 NOW \$21,995**

2004 Ford Focus ZTS 4-DR - Silver w/Gray Cloth, All Power, Local One Owner w/36,000 Miles. **Was \$13,995 NOW \$11,945**

2004 Chevrolet Monte Carlo LS - Silver w/Gray Cloth, All Power, Nice Car, CD Player, Only 44,000 Miles. **Was \$11,995 NOW \$10,945**

2004 Lincoln Town Car Ultimate - Tri White w/Tan Leather, Loaded, All Power, Only 30,000 Miles. **Was \$20,995 NOW \$19,995**

2004 Lincoln Town Car Ultimate - Tri White w/Tan Leather, Loaded, All Power, In Dash CD Player, Only 32,000 Miles. **Was \$20,995 NOW \$19,995**

2003 Ford Taurus SES - Light Blue, w/Cloth, Extra Clean, Automatic, All Power. **Was \$10,995 NOW \$9,995**

2003 Honda Civic LT - Gold w/Cloth, Like New, Low Miles, Automatic, All Power. **Was \$13,995 NOW \$12,995**

2003 Ford Escort ZX2 - Black w/Cloth, Automatic, All Power, Great Gas Car. **Was \$9,995 NOW \$8,995**

2002 Honda Accord Special Edition Coupe - White, All Power, Local One Owner w/64,000 Miles. **Was \$14,995 NOW \$12,995**

2002 Ford Focus ZX5 - Silver, w/Cloth, Automatic, All Power, 39,000 Miles. **Was \$11,995 NOW \$10,995**

2002 Chevrolet Cavalier - Blue w/Gray Cloth, Like New, One Owner, Only 38,000 Miles. **Was \$10,995 NOW \$9,995**

★★★ TRUCKS ★★★

2004 Ford F150 Supercrew XLT - White w/Gray Cloth, CD Player, All Power, Like New, Bedliner, Only 19,000 Miles. **Was \$27,995 NOW \$24,995**

2007 Ford F150 Supercrew XLT - White w/Gray Cloth, CD Player, All Power, Like New, Bedliner, Only 19,000 Miles. **Was \$27,995 NOW \$24,995**

2005 Chevrolet 1500 Silverado 4X4 - White w/Gray Leather, Crew Cab, CD Player, One Owner, All Power. **Was \$25,995 NOW \$24,995**

2005 Ford F-150 Supercab XL 4X4 - White, V-8, Air, Automatic, Local One Owner w/60,000 Miles. **Was \$20,995 NOW \$19,995**

2005 Ford F150 Supercrew XLT - Gray w/Cloth, Local One Owner. **Was \$18,995 NOW \$17,995**

2005 Ford F350 Crew Cab V-10 L-Series w/Leather, One Owner, Like New, Very Nice, Ready To Be Sold. **Was \$27,995 NOW \$26,995**

2004 Ford F150 Supercrew XLT - White w/Gray Cloth, In Dash CD Player, All Power, Like New, One Owner, Low Miles. **Was \$17,995 NOW \$16,995**

2004 Nissan Frontier Crewcab XE - White w/Gray Cloth, In Dash CD Player, All Power, Only 23,000 Miles. **Was \$17,995 NOW \$16,995**

2001 Ford F250 Supercab XLT - White w/Gray Cloth, Nice Truck, One Owner, All Power. **Was \$13,995 NOW \$12,995**

2000 Ford F350 DRW 7.3L Diesel - White w/Black Leather, Lariat, 6 Disc In Dash, One Owner. **Was \$20,995 NOW \$19,995**

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2007 Ford Escape XLT - Titanium Gray w/Black Cloth, Power Seat, Alarm, Privacy Glass, 12,000 Miles. **Was \$23,130 NOW \$17,995**

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2007 Ford E350 15 Pass. XLT 5.4 - Pueblo Gold w/Pebble Cloth, Remote Keyless Ent/Panic Alarm, Only 12,000 Miles. **Was \$32,350 NOW \$22,995**

2007 Ford F350 15 Pass. XLT 5.4 - White w/Gray Cloth, Remote Keyless, Panic Alarm, Only 20,000 Miles. **MSRP \$32,350 NOW \$22,995**

2006 Nissan Xterra XE - Red w/Gray Cloth, Like New, One Owner, CD Player, Only 13,900 Miles. **Was \$19,995 NOW \$18,995**

Ford Expedition XLT 4X4 - Silver w/Gray Leather, All Power, One Owner, Nice, Low Miles. **Was \$21,995 NOW \$20,995**

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2004 Nissan Xterra XE - Gold w/Gray Cloth, CD Player, One Owner, Super Clean, Only 19,024 Miles. **Was \$19,995 NOW \$17,995**

2004 Nissan Xterra SE - Gold/Tan Cloth, All Power, One Owner, CD Player, Only 28,000 Miles. **Was \$18,995 NOW \$17,995**

2004 Nissan Murano SE - Silver w/Black Cloth, Heated Seats, All Power, Moonroof, Only 23,000 Miles. **Was \$25,995 NOW \$24,995**

2004 Nissan Quest 3.5 SL - Gold w/Black Cloth, CD Player, All Power, Heated Seats, Only 30,000 Miles. **Was \$18,995 NOW \$16,995**

2004 Nissan Xterra SE - Silver, Cloth, All Power, Local One Owner w/35,000 Miles. **Was \$19,995 NOW \$16,995**

2004 Ford Explorer XLT - Silver w/Gray Cloth., 3rd Row, All Power, 4-Dr., One Owner, 23,000 Miles. **Was \$14,995 NOW \$13,995**

2004 Ford Explorer Sport Trac XLT - Green w/Tan Cloth, All Power, One Owner, CD Player, Nice SUV. **Was \$16,995 NOW \$15,995**

2004 Honda CRV 4WD - White w/Gray Cloth, Nice SUV, Like New, One Owner. **Was \$14,995 NOW \$13,995**

2002 Chevrolet Suburban LT - Pewter w/Leather, All Power, Local One Owner w/64,000 Miles. **Was \$20,995 NOW \$18,995**

2001 Lincoln Navigator 4X4 - White w/Leather, All Power, Local One Owner w/81,000 Miles. **Was \$16,995 NOW \$14,995**

1999 GMC Suburban LT - Tan w/Leather, All Power, Locally Owned, Over 100K Miles. **Was \$11,995 NOW 9,995**

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Big Dig comes to a quiet conclusion

BOSTON (AP) — When the clock runs out on 2007, Boston will quietly mark the end of one of the most tumultuous eras in the city's history: The Big Dig, the nation's most complex and costliest highway project, will officially come to an end.

Don't expect any champagne toasts.

After a history marked by engineering triumphs, tunnels leaks, epic traffic jams, last year's death of a motorist crushed by falling concrete panels and a price tag that soared from \$2.6 billion to a staggering \$14.8 billion, there's little appetite for celebration.

Civil and criminal cases stemming from the July 2006 tunnel ceiling collapse continue, though on Monday the family of Milena Del Valle announced a \$6 million settlement with

Powers Fasteners, the company that manufactured the epoxy blamed by investigators for the accident. Lawsuits are pending against other Big Dig contractors, and Powers Fasteners still faces a manslaughter indictment.

Officially, Dec. 31 marks the end of the joint venture that teamed megaproject contractor Bechtel/Parsons Brinckerhoff with the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority to build the dizzying array of underground highways, bridges, ramps and a new tunnel under Boston Harbor — all while the city remained open for business.

The project was so complex it's been likened to performing open heart surgery on a patient while the patient is wide awake.

Some didn't know if they'd

live to see it end.

Enza Merola had a front row seat on the Big Dig from the front window of her pastry shop — stacked neatly with tiramisu, sfogliatelle and brightly colored Italian cookies — in Boston's North End.

During the toughest days of the project, the facade of Marie's Pastry Shop, named after her sister, was obscured from view. The only way customers could find the front door was along a treacherous path through heavy construction.

"For a while we thought we weren't going to make it," Merola said. "But you know, we hung in there."

The Central Artery/Third Harbor Tunnel Project — as the Big Dig is officially known — has its roots in the construction of the hulking 1950's era elevat-

ed Central Artery that cut a swath through the center of Boston, lopping off the waterfront from downtown and casting a shadow over some of the city's oldest neighborhoods.

Almost as soon as the ribbon was cut on the elevated highway in 1959, many were already wishing it away.

One was Frederick Salvucci, a city kid for whom the demolition of the old Central Artery became a lifelong quest.

Rather than build a new elevated highway, Salvucci and others pushed a far more radical solution — burying it.

Easier said than done.

Those who built the Big Dig would have to undertake the massive highway project in the cramped confines of Boston's narrow, winding streets, some dating to pre-Colonial days.

Of all the project's Rubik's Cube-like engineering challenges, none was more daunting than the first — how to build a wider tunnel directly underneath a narrower existing elevated highway while preventing the overhead highway from collapsing.

To solve the problem, engineers created horizontal braces as wide as the new tunnel, then cut away the elevated highway's original metal struts and gently lowered them onto the braces — even as cars crawled along overhead, their drivers oblivious to the work below.

It was the just one of what would be referred to as the Big Dig's "engineering marvels."

The Big Dig's long history is also littered with wrong turns — some unavoidable, others self-inflicted.

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