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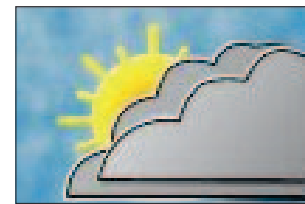
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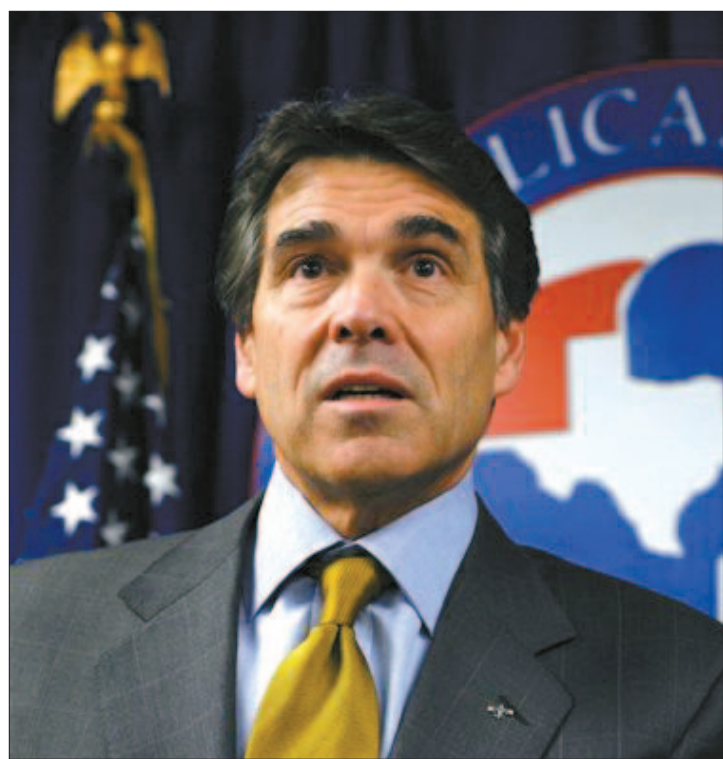
THURSDAY
DECEMBER 27, 2007



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AP Photo/Harry Cabluck

Texas Gov. Rick Perry speaks after filing candidacy papers for Republican Presidential hopeful Rudy Giuliani in this Dec. 11 photo. Texas could have been a contender in the presidential sweepstakes, but legislators didn't move up the March 2008 primary date when they had the chance.

Politically speaking...

Texas behind the pack now

By **KELLEY SHANNON**

AP Political Writer

AUSTIN — Texas could have been a contender in the 2008 presidential nomination race, with Republicans and Democrats who want to occupy the White House descending on the state to win over voters.

But it wasn't to be. Instead of all-out campaigning, Texans are getting only glimpses of presidential hopefuls as they zip through collecting campaign cash then return to places where primary voting happens sooner.

Legislators decided not to move up the March 4 primary when they had the chance last spring. That left Texas behind more than two dozen states holding primaries in January and February — California, New York and Florida among them — that could decide the

party nominees.

"I was very much a proponent of Texas being engaged," Gov. Rick Perry said. "All we are right now is an ATM machine, rather than a place where people will come and spend their time talking about the issues."

The Republican governor, who endorsed former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani for president, wasn't so strident a few months ago when lawmakers were in session.

Then, he voiced concerns about Texas being used only for money but didn't make the primary proposal one of his main legislative goals. Perry's aides said at the time he wouldn't oppose the primary bill if it reached his desk.

Aside from the presi-

See **POLITICS**, Page 3A

Prints mandated

BSISD, other schools to require fingerprinting for employment

By **STEVE REAGAN**

Staff Writer

Big Spring school officials applaud the theory behind a new state program, but they question its particulars.

Starting Jan. 1, almost everyone hired by the Big Spring Independent School District will have to submit to state-mandated fingerprinting.

The program, designed to enhance security on school campuses and help districts avoid hiring persons with criminal records, covers almost every new hire the school district will make in the coming year.

Persons covered under the new law include:

- All certified educators not currently fingerprinted.
- All non-certified school employees (maintenance and sup-

port staff).

- All substitute teachers.
- Contract employees who have direct contact with students.
- Student teachers and volunteers, with certain exceptions.

Carie Dunnam, BSISD assistant superintendent, said a criminal history record will be required of any non-certified employees hired after Jan. 1.

See **PRINTS**, Page 3A



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Law enforcement and emergency response personnel investigate the scene of a one-vehicle rollover on Highway 87 south of Big Spring Wednesday afternoon. No major injuries were reported in the accident.

Family escapes serious injury in wreck

By **STEVE REAGAN**

Staff Writer

An Amarillo family escaped serious injury after they were involved in a one-vehicle accident south of Big Spring Wednesday afternoon.

The accident occurred just before 3 p.m. on U.S. Highway 87 near the intersection of Wildfire Road, officials said.

The family of four was traveling southbound on Highway 87 when the driver lost control of the vehicle. The minivan entered the cen-

ter median and flipped several times before coming to rest in the northbound lane of the highway, Howard County Sheriff Dale Walker said.

No other vehicles were involved.

Personnel from the sheriff's office, Department of Public Safety, Emergency Medical Service and Big Spring Fire Department responded to the scene.

The vehicle suffered extensive damage and the Jaws of Life had to be utilized.

EMS records state all four fami-

ly members were transported to Scenic Mountain Medical Center, but Walker said all were treated for minor injuries and released.

Road conditions were good at the time of the accident, he added.

DPS personnel are continuing an investigation into the accident this morning.

No other details were available as of press time.

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

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TEXAS TOPS 23.9 MIL

WASHINGTON (AP) — Census Bureau figures show Texas with just over 23.9 million people as of July.

The estimate is reached by measuring births, deaths and migration into and out of each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

The fastest-growing states continue to be in the Rocky Mountain region and the Southeast.

Texas had the seventh-fastest growth by percentage — at 2.1 percent — having drawn about 500,000 new residents since July 2006. California remains the nation's most populous state with nearly 36.6 million people, followed by Texas.

BOWL SEASON HEATS UP

See Page 1B

BRONZE, NOT BRAINS

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) — Thirty stolen bronze sculptures are valued at \$1 million — not by the scrap yards where most of them ended up.

Police say three people arrested Monday in the thefts of the hefty artwork were after the raw materials rather than their artistic value. Bronze contains copper, which has skyrocketed in value from about 75 cents per pound in 2004 to more than \$3 today.

Authorities recovered 23 sculptures weighing a total of about 3,000 pounds from a scrap yard, which paid more than \$4,000 for them. Three people have been arrested.

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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

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Thursday, December 27, 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

Holiday Bowl

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

FRIDAY

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)

SATURDAY

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)

SUNDAY

Independence Bowl

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

MONDAY

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)

Chick-fil-A Bowl

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

See **BRIEFS**, Page 2B

Inspired Jazz thwart Mavs, 99-90

The Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Jerry Sloan has been coaching the Utah Jazz for 20 seasons and has never seen his team play more inspired to start a game.

"Our defense was about as good in the first quarter as I've seen since I've been here. If you can play defense like that the whole time, we'd be pretty good," Sloan said.

Alas, after taking a 16-0 lead, the Jazz squandered the advantage by halftime. But they reversed their trend of weak finishes and beat the Dallas Mavericks 99-90 on

Wednesday night.

Carlos Boozer scored 21 points, including six of Utah's last seven. Although he was hampered by foul trouble, Boozer finished strong for the Jazz, who had been struggling in the closing moments of games.

Andrei Kirilenko and Deron Williams had 17 points apiece as the Jazz improved to 10-2 at home.

The Jazz led by 10 points in the fourth quarter before Devean George made back-to-back 3-pointers. The Jazz, bolstered by steals by Kirilenko and Ronnie Brewer, then held the Mavericks

scoreless for almost 4 minutes.

Dallas stayed close with 3-pointers until Boozer made a mid-range jumper and a dunk that put Utah ahead 97-89 with 1:28 to play.

Dirk Nowitzki had 20 points for Dallas but made just 3-of-10 from 3-point range as the Mavericks abandoned any attempt at an inside game in the fourth quarter. Devin Harris and Josh Howard each had 17 points for the Mavericks, who had their five-game winning streak snapped.

The Mavericks didn't score until Brandon Bass' jumper 5:12

into the game.

But Dallas whittled away at the lead and actually passed the Jazz just before the end of the first half. Kirilenko's dunk before the buzzer regained the lead for the Jazz, 47-46.

Dallas and Utah seemed to be headed in opposite directions since their last meeting on Dec. 8, when Howard and Williams reached career highs in points. Williams had 41, but Howard scored 47 points and led Dallas to a 125-117 victory. The Mavs were winning and the Jazz became mired in their worst streak of the season.

Bowl season starting to heat up

So the first week of the bowl season did nothing for

you? Well, as Terrell Owens would say, "Get your popcorn ready."

The first marquee matchup of the bowl season occurs at 7

p.m. tonight when the No. 17 Texas Longhorns and No. 12 Arizona State Sun Devils meet in San Diego for the Holiday Bowl.

The Longhorns are playing in their ninth consecutive bowl game and have won five of their last six postseason contests, including three straight. However, the last time Texas lost a bowl game was at the 2003 Holiday Bowl when Washington State handed the Longhorns a 28-20 defeat.

Texas' last three bowl wins have been decided by three points or less. In 2004, Vince Young put his name on the national radar with an incredible performance in a 38-37 win over Michigan.

Of course, no one who watched the 2005 BCS Championship game between the Longhorns and USC will ever forget Young's encore for the granddaddy of them all. Young scored in the final minute of the game, clinching the 41-38 win and a national title for Texas — its first since 1969.

Two years later, the Longhorns aren't playing in a BCS bowl for the second-consecutive season. Last year, they narrowly defeated an Iowa team they greatly out-matched talent-wise.

Playing down to their opponent has been a theme for the Longhorns' 2007 season. They have allowed notably inferior teams such as Arkansas St., Central Florida and Nebraska to hang in until the end. Texas also took a drubbing to a 6-6 Kansas St. squad and lost to a disappointing Texas A&M team two years in a row.

Head Coach Mack Brown is guilty of falling in love with a spread offensive system without the proper personnel to run it. I have defended quarterback Colt McCoy in this space several times over the season. If it wasn't for McCoy, the Longhorns would've lost to Arkansas St., TCU and UCF, meaning they would've started the season 0-3.

Unfortunately for McCoy, Brown appears immune to taking any heat for the Longhorns' struggles. McCoy doesn't fit the system Young ran. Brown needs to overcome his love with this offense and go back to the more run-oriented offense used when Cedric Benson was in the backfield.

Junior tailback Jamaal Charles is every bit as talented as Benson and is the most explosive offensive weapon Texas has. The Longhorns need to

See **BOWLS**, Page 2B



MCT photo/Khampha Bouaphanh/Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Texas quarterback Colt McCoy scrambles in the third quarter against Baylor Oct. 20 in Waco. McCoy leads the Longhorns into the Holiday Bowl to take on the Arizona Sun Devils at 7 p.m. tonight.

NFL simulcasting Pats game on NBC, CBS

By RACHEL COHEN

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK — After weeks of insisting they wouldn't cave in, NFL officials did just that Wednesday. Now all of America can see the Patriots' shot at history.

Saturday night's game between New England and the New York Giants on the NFL Network, which is available in fewer than 40 percent of the nation's homes with TVs, will be simulcast on CBS and NBC.

The Patriots could become the first NFL team to go 16-0 in the regular season.

"We have taken this extraordinary step because it is in the best interest of our fans," commissioner Roger Goodell said in a statement after the league announced it was reversing course. "What we have seen for the past year is a very strong consumer demand for NFL Network. We appreciate CBS and NBC delivering the NFL Network telecast on Saturday night to the broad audience that deserves to see this potentially historic game. Our commitment

to the NFL Network is stronger than ever."

NFL Network spokesman Seth Palansky said officials would have no further comment Wednesday.

The NFL had claimed that the onus of making the game widely available fell on the major cable providers with which the league has bitterly feuded. Companies such as Comcast and Time Warner have declined to carry the network as part of basic packages.

But lawmakers have pressured the NFL to ensure more viewers could see the game. Last week, two prominent members of the Senate Judiciary Committee sent a letter to Goodell threatening to reconsider the league's antitrust exemption.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., who co-wrote the letter with Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., said he was "delighted" by the NFL's concession.

"I think it was a smart move on their part," he said in a phone interview.

Leahy expected to speak with Goodell again next month about the ongoing question of how

many fans will be able to see games on the channel. Saturday's matchup wraps up the NFL Network's second season of airing live contests, with eight per year. This one and a key Thursday night game between Green Bay and Dallas last month drew widespread complaints about the lack of availability.

Local TV affiliates in the Boston, Manchester, N.H., and New York areas that were already set to simulcast the game under NFL policy will still air it. That means viewers in those markets will have four channels to choose from if they get NFL Network.

That did not make officials at WWOR in New York happy.

"The NFL is in clear violation of their agreement with WWOR/My9," the station said in a statement. "We fully expect the league to honor their commitment to My9 as the exclusive free over-the-air broadcaster for Saturday's telecast of the New England Patriots at New York Giants game."

Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., who had urged cable and NFL execu-

tives to settle the dispute, had a much more positive reaction to the league's announcement.

"The best news of all is that now no die-hard Pats fans will be shut out from watching their team take aim at football history," Kerry said in a statement.

This will be the first three-network simulcast in NFL history and the first simulcast of an NFL game since the inaugural Super Bowl in 1967, when CBS and NBC televised the meeting of the champions of the newly merged National Football League and American Football League.

"We're happy to accommodate the NFL's request for a joint national simulcast of this potentially historic game to make it available to the widest possible audience," said Dick Ebersol, NBC Universal's chairman for sports and Olympics.

NBC was scheduled to air "Dateline NBC" and a repeat of "Law & Order: SVU" during the time slot. CBS was set to broadcast the movie "Good Night, and Good Luck" and "48 Hours: Mysteries."

Obituaries

L.E. 'Doc' Malone



December 21, 2007, L. E. "Doc" Malone of Midland went to sleep and left this earth peacefully. He will spend Christmas this year with his heavenly father. Daddy will be missed. He was born Nov. 9, 1924, in Big Spring. After graduating from high school in Big Spring, he joined the Army and served in World War II. He served in Europe with the 89th Chemical Mortar BN., 9th Army.

After discharge from the service, he attended Southern Methodist University where he received his bachelor's degree in geology in 1950. Doc married Melba Tallant in Abilene on July 24, 1954. They moved to Midland in 1956. He worked for Union Producing Co., Skelly Oil Co. and independent Clayton Williams.

After retirement in 1986, he and his wife traveled extensively until he developed Macular Hole which compromised his eye sight. Later he developed Parkinson's and cancer.

He was preceded in death by his brother, G.E. Malone of Lubbock; and Sister Frances Irene Engle.

Doc is survived by his wife, of Midland; son, Scott Malone and his wife Diane of Odessa; daughter, Suzanne and her husband James Kyle, of Fort Worth; and daughter, Sandra Malone of Midland; and five grandchildren, Kristine, Katherine, Kelly and Karolyne of Odessa and Mason of Midland.

Doc was an avid golfer, bowler and card player. He was also involved with Toastmasters, Meals on Wheels and served two years as a PTA president. He is a Texas Life Member; Member of A.A.P.G. and W.T.G.S.

We would like to recognize all the nursing staff on Hall 2 of the Mabee Unit at Manor Park for all your sincere concern and care for Doc over these past years. Special appreciation to James Meeks, Belinda Lee, Danielle and Lisa, and to the nurses with Hospice of Midland this past month, for being so gentle with him and making him as comfortable as possible.

It was Doc's wish to further medical research, therefore his body has been donated to the Texas Tech School of Medicine.

A Memorial Service has been scheduled for 11 a.m. Friday, Dec. 28, 2007, at Bellview Baptist Church. Honorary pallbearers will be Clayton Williams, Bernie Scott, Chuck Dougherty, John Robertson, Earl Allen and Vic Bartlett.

In lieu of flowers please send donations in honor of Doc to Hospice of Midland, 911 W. Texas, 7970, or Bellview Baptist Church, 1710 N. Big Spring, Midland 79701.

Arrangements are under the direction of Ellis Funeral Home.

Paid obituary

Margie Weaver

Margie Weaver, 72 of Clyde, died Dec. 25, 2007, at her home.



Services will be at 10 a.m. Friday at First United Methodist Church in Clyde with the Rev. James Holman officiating. Graveside services will follow at 4 p.m. Friday at Trinity Memorial Park in Big Spring. Visitation will be from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Thursday at Bailey Funeral Home in Clyde.

Mrs. Weaver was born June 22, 1935, in Big Spring to J.T. and Irene Pearl (Graham) Cook. She attended Sands High School. She married Walter Ray Weaver in Ackerly on July 14, 1955. They moved to Clyde from Big Spring in 1970.

Mrs. Weaver was employed by First State Bank in Big Spring and Abilene for over 25 years. She later worked for the Abilene Reporter-News for over 10 years. Mrs. Weaver was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Clyde.

Survivors include her husband, Walter Ray Weaver of Clyde; one son, Tony Weaver and wife Lynda of Sabinal; one daughter, Darla Marre' of Clyde; one brother, Joe Cook of Granbury; two sisters, Joyce Grigg of Forney and Jane Cook of Clyde; three grandchildren, Bucky Weaver of Uvalde, Justin Marre' of Abilene and Tara Weaver of Kinippa; and one great-granddaughter, Cassidy Besinaiz of Kinippa.

She was preceded in death by one brother, James Cook of Coahoma.

Paid obituary

Darrell Jay 'D.J.' Thomas

Darrell Jay "D.J." Thomas, 37, of Coahoma, died Tuesday, Dec. 25, 2007, at his residence. Services will be held at a later date.

He was born March 30, 1970, in Colorado City and married Amy Ward on April 17, 1992 in Colorado City. She preceded him in death in June, 2006.

Darrell graduated from Colorado City High School in 1988 and attended TSTC in Sweetwater and received his associate degree in electronic robotics. He had worked at Alon.

He was a Baptist.

Survivors include his children, Krissy Thomas and Cody Thomas; his parents, Velinda and Steve Edwards of Colorado City; and one brother, Justin Edwards of Big Spring.

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

Velma Leona Taylor Baird



Velma Leona Taylor Baird, 96, died Tuesday, Dec. 25, 2007, in Graham. Funeral services will be held Friday, Dec. 28, 2007, at 2 p.m. in Morrison Funeral Home Chapel. Burial will follow in Pioneer Cemetery under the direction of Morrison Funeral Home.

Velma was born Sept. 24, 1911, in Young County in the Flint Creek Community to Joe T. and Turpsy L. (Walker) Taylor. She married J.G. "Jake" Baird on Jan. 17, 1931. He preceded her in death on Oct. 15, 1999.

She was an active member of the First Baptist Church in Graham. She was a Sunday school teacher, G.A. counselor and involved in W.M.U. at Iraan First Baptist Church. She was a charter member of Ridglea Baptist Church in Fort Worth. Velma was a member of Order of Eastern Star Chapter 668.

Survivors include two sons, James Baird and wife Patsy of Big Spring and Jerry Baird and wife Mickey of Snyder; two daughters, Juanell Howard and husband Phillip of Schulenburg and JoAnn McQueen and husband Bobby of Graham; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and six great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by a brother, Robert Taylor; a grandchild; and one great-grandchild.

The family will receive friends Thursday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the funeral home.

Memorials may be made to the scholarship fund at SouthWest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf in Big Spring or the Graham Regional Hospice.

Lorene Brown



IOWA PARK — Lorene Brown, 85, died Wednesday, December 26, 2007, in Wichita Falls.

Services will be 1 p.m. Friday, Dec. 28, 2007, at Dutton Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. Charles Reed of Burkburnett and the Rev. John Hare of Iowa Park officiating. Burial will follow at Highland Cemetery under the direction of Dutton Funeral Home.

Mrs. Brown was born July 31, 1922 in Quitaque to John and Esther McAlester Wolf. She and Chester Brown were married Feb. 26, 1938, in Big Spring. She had lived in the Iowa Park area for 57 years. She was a homemaker and a Methodist.

Lorene was preceded in death by her parents, husband and five brothers, William, Charlie, Buren, John and Calvin Wolf and a sister, Francis Self.

She is survived by a daughter, Glenda Stevens of Iowa Park; two sons and daughters-in-law, Lindsey and Sharron Brown of Iowa Park and Jerry and Mona Brown of Randlett, Okla.; sisters, Edna Ray of Runaway Bay, Texas, Patsy Burke of Wichita Falls, Wilma Walker and Helen Davis of Big Spring, a sister and brother-in-law, Wanda and Hilton Wilson of Lamesa; a brother, Lloyd Wolf of Sweetwater, a brother and sister-in-law, Burel and Linda Wolf of Lancaster; three grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, five-great-great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

The family suggests memorials to Friendly Door Senior Citizens, 810 North 3rd Street, Iowa Park 76367.

The family will receive friends from 6 until 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 27, 2007, at Dutton Funeral Home.

Devlan Mann

Devlan Mann, 59, of Big Spring, died Monday, Dec. 24, 2007, in a local hospital. Private family services will be held at a later date.

He was born June 18, 1948, in El Paso, and married Donna Allison on March 23, 1985, in Nixon.

Mr. Mann was raised in El Paso. He came to Big Spring in 2006 from Burleson. He worked as a professional truck driver most of his life until he retired. Mr. Mann served in the United States Army.

He was a member of the Church of Christ.

Survivors include his wife, Donna Mann of Big Spring; three daughters, Bonnie Kay Centofanti and husband Pete of Holly, Mich., Kelsey Marie Mann of Big Spring, and Cynthia Lightfoot of Frisco; one son, Jimmy Joe Allison of Amarillo; four sisters, Bonnie Eddleton of Fair Oaks, Carla Kaiser of Marrero, La., Susan Fickers of Pacifica, Calif., and Kay Arthur of Big Spring; and five grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents and step father, Elmer Gaines.

The family suggests memorials be made to the Salvation Army, 811 W. Fifth, Big Spring 79720.

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

Louise McElreath

Louise McElreath, 67, of Allen, formerly of Big Spring died Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2007, at Baylor Regional Medical Center in Plano. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Mary Ann Hall

Mary Ann Hall, 69, of Big Spring, died Dec. 26, 2007. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity:

- **RAYMOND SOSA**, 44, Lubbock, was arrested on three capias warrants.
- **TERRY E. SHIRLEY**, 43, no address given, was arrested on a charge of criminal trespass.
- **ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE** was reported in the 1400 block of Sixth.
- **CRIMINAL MISCHIEF** was reported in the 800 block of Interstate 20 and the 1800 block of Gregg.
- **CRIMINAL TRESPASS WARNING** was reported in the 700 block of Interstate 20.
- **HARASSMENT** was reported in the 1400 block of Sycamore and the 1200 block of Monticello.
- **THEFT** was reported in the 200 block of Marcy and the 800 block of Interstate 20.

Sheriff's report

The Howard County Sheriff's Office reported the following activity (Note: officials reported 62 prisoners in the county jail):

- **JODY DAWDY**, 43, was transferred from BSPD after being arrested on warrants from Potter and Randall counties.
- **ZACK MONROE TURMAN**, 30, was arrested on a cahrgre of tampering with a governmental record.
- **JOSHUA LELAND JONES**, 19, was arrested on a cahrgre of evading arrest or detention with a vehicle.

Fire/EMS

The Big Spring Fire Department/Emergency Medical Service reported the following activity:

- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1400 block of Princeton. One person was transported to VAMC.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 200 block of Nolan. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **TRAFFIC ACCIDENT** was reported at Wildfire Road and Highway 87. Four persons were transported to SMMC.
- **TRAFFIC ACCIDENT** was reported at the 171 mile marker of E. Interstate 20. Service was refused.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1500 block of Scurry. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1400 block of Runnels. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **TRAUMA** was reported in the 800 block of Marcy. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 500 block of Westover. One person was transported to SMMC.

Weather

Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows in the upper 20s. West winds 20 to 25 mph decreasing to 10 to 20 mph after midnight.

Friday...Sunny. Highs around 50. Northwest winds 10 to 15 mph.

Friday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 20s. Light and variable winds.

Saturday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the mid 50s. South winds around 10 mph.

Saturday night...Partly cloudy. Lows around 30.

Sunday...Mostly sunny. Not as cool. Highs in the mid 60s.

Sunday night...Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 30s.

Monday...Sunny...Cooler. Highs in the mid 50s.

Monday night...Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 20s.

New years day...Sunny...Colder. Highs in the mid 40s.

Tuesday night...Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 20s.

Wednesday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 40s.

Lottery

Results of the Lotto Texas drawing Wednesday night: Winning numbers drawn: 2-4-16-35-43-52 Number matching six of six: none.

...

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Wednesday night: Winning numbers drawn: 12-15-26-27-35

Number matching five of five: none.

...

The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Wednesday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 2-3-5-4. Sum It Up: 14.

...

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Wednesday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 2-5-3. Sum It Up: 10.

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College Bowl Forecast

2007 NCAA Bowl Games



Jonathan Hull



Thomas Jenkins



Bill McClellan



John Moseley



Steve Reagan



Robert Smith



Jeff Lane

Poinsetta: Utah 34, Navy 32
New Orleans: Fla Atl 44, Memphis 27
Papajohns: Cincinnati 31, So. Miss 21
New Mexico: New Mexico 23, Nev. 0
Las Vegas: BYU 17, UCLA 16
Hawaii: East Carolina 41, Boise St. 38
Motor City: Purdue 51 Cen. Mich. 48
Holiday: Arizona St. vs. Texas
Champs: Boston College vs. Mich. St.
Texas: TCU vs. Houston
Emerald: Maryland vs. Oregon St.
Meineke: UConn vs. Wake Forest
Liberty: UCF vs. Mississippi St.
Alamo: Penn St. vs. Texas A&M
Independence: Alabama vs. Colorado
Armed Forces: Cal vs. Air Force
Humanitarian: Ga. Tech vs. Fresno St.
Sun: South Florida vs. Oregon
Music City: Kentucky vs. Florida St.
Insight: Indiana vs. Oklahoma St.
Chick-fil-A: Clemson vs. Auburn
Outback: Wisconsin vs. Tennessee
Cotton: Missouri vs. Arkansas
Gator: Texas Tech vs. Virginia
Capital One: Michigan vs. Florida
International: Rutgers vs. Ball St.
GMAC: Bowling Green vs. Tulsa
Rose: Illinois vs. USC
Sugar: Hawaii vs. Georgia
Fiesta: Oklahoma vs. West Virginia
Orange: Virginia Tech vs. Kansas
BCS Championship: LSU vs. Ohio St.

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Record to date

4-3

6-1

5-2

4-3

3-4

4-3

6-1

BOWLS

Continued from Page 1B

utilize him in order to defeat the Sun Devils.

However, Arizona St. won't make that easy. The Sun Devils boast the 13th ranked defense to go along with the bitter feeling of being left out of the BCS.

Despite being ranked higher than Illinois in the BCS poll, Arizona St. was left out of one of the higher paying bowl games, largely due to the Rose Bowl's insistence to honor tradition.

I can understand the Sun Devils' bitterness. Forget tradition, USC and Illinois is not going to be a very competitive game. It will probably be the most lopsided of all BCS bowls with USC holding a decisive advantage. The Big 10 was a weak conference and in no way deserved to have two teams selected for the BCS bowls.

Obviously, Arizona St. wouldn't have gotten a rematch with USC in the Rose Bowl, but the Sun Devils could have easily been put in the Fiesta Bowl, guaranteeing a large pull for the Tempe, Ariz., game. Then, Oklahoma or West Virginia could've been moved to the Rose Bowl to take on USC. Who wouldn't rather see Oklahoma and USC play on New Year's Day anyway?

However, the schedule is set and instead, we're treated to a matchup featuring two of the better run defenses in the country. It also features two of the worst pass defenses in the nation.

Prediction: Texas 32, Arizona State 28

**Alamo Bowl
Penn State vs. Texas A&M
7 p.m. Saturday (ESPN)**

Last bowl appearances: Penn St. 20, Tennessee 10 (2006 Outback); Cal 45, Texas A&M 10 (2006 Holiday)

Synopsis: In this region of the country, there isn't a more disappointing college football team in the past three years than the Texas A&M Aggies. However, in the northwestern reaches of the country, most fans feel that Penn St. has been the most disappointing squad in the nation.

Since defeating Florida St., 26-23, in triple overtime in the 2005 Orange Bowl, the Nittany

Lions have failed to live up to preseason expectations and have struggled against elite teams.

Likewise, Texas A&M has shown flashes of greatness over the past few seasons, but has never linked together any form of consistency to take the next step into the Big 12's elite. The Aggies have been blown out in their last two bowl games — 45-10 by Cal in the 2006 Holiday Bowl and 38-7 by Tennessee in the 2004 Cotton Bowl.

However, changes are on the horizon as Dennis Franchione has been fired as head coach after four underachieving seasons and former Green Bay Packers head coach and Aggies assistant coach Mike Sherman has been brought in to replace him.

Personally, I feel the Aggies moved much too quickly in hiring Sherman. It was as if the administration just wanted to bring in a coach linked with legendary coach R.C. Slocum. If they wanted a Slocum associate so badly, then why not rehire Slocum himself?

Consistency in the coaching ranks hasn't been a problem for Penn St. for decades. Joe Paterno is second on the all-time victories list behind Florida St.'s Bobby Bowden.

The game being played in San Antonio provides a significant advantage for the Aggies, whose trip from College Station is obviously shorter than the Nittany Lions travel from Pennsylvania.

However, "Joe Pa" has overcome those odds before. Penn St. shutout A&M, 24-0, in the 1999 Alamo Bowl.

Prediction: Penn St. 24, Texas A&M 10 — A&M's offense is a dominant rushing attack. That's all the Aggies do well, though. If they fall behind early, then the Aggies struggle to catch up.

Unfortunately for A&M, Penn St. has the sixth ranked run defense nationally and give up a mere 88 yards a game on the ground. The Nittany Lions secondary can be made suspect, but the Aggies don't have the ability to attack Penn St. vertically.

**Texas Bowl
TCU (7-5) vs. Houston (8-4)
7 p.m. Friday (NFL Network)**

Last bowl appearances: TCU 37, Northern Illinois 7 (2006 Poinsettia); South Carolina 44, Houston 36 (2006 Liberty)

Synopsis: How about a bowl that is appropriately named? For just the second time in its eight year history, the Texas Bowl features two teams from its title state. The first time occurred in 2001 when Texas A&M defeated TCU, 28-9. The Horned Frogs are playing in their third Texas Bowl — the most of any other school in the game's history. They're 1-1 without their win coming in 2005 over Iowa St., 27-24.

This matchup pits one of the nation's best offenses (Houston) against one of the country's top defenses (TCU). The Cougars will perform without Coach Art Briles, who left to take the head coaching job at Baylor. Briles is highly responsible for the resurgence of the Houston program and will be sorely missed.

Prediction: TCU 24, Houston 22 — Something's got to give. TCU can't allow this game to turn into an offensive shootout. That favors Houston hugely.

However, if the game's pace remains slow and TCU can control the ball and not turn it over, then their defense should be able to stop the Cougars enough for the victory.

**Champs Sports Bowl
Boston College (10-3) vs. Michigan State (7-5)
4 p.m. Friday**

Last bowl appearances: Boston College 37, North Carolina 24 (2007 Meineke Car Care); Nebraska 17, Michigan State 3 (2003 Alamo).

Synopsis: Boston College opened the season 8-0 and was ranked No. 2 in late October. The Eagles — now ranked 14th — lost three of their last five games, including the ACC Championship game 30-16 to Virginia Tech.

So, instead of playing for a national championship or even in a BCS bowl, the Eagles find themselves in the Champs Sports Bowl against Michigan State.

As far as recent history, these two teams come from completely different experiences. Boston College currently holds the longest bowl-winning streak in the nation at seven games. Meanwhile, Michigan St. hadn't played in a bowl since 2003.

Prediction: Boston College 41, Michigan St. 35 — At one time, Boston College quarterback Matt Ryan was considered the top Heisman contender. Ryan's fortunes for the

award went the same way as his team's, proving as an indicator that the Eagles are only as good as their signal caller.

An aerial shootout is expected and that favors Ryan and the Eagles.

**Emerald Bowl
Maryland (6-6) vs. Oregon State (8-4)
7:30 p.m. Friday (ESPN)**

Last bowl appearances: Maryland 24, Purdue 7 (2006 Champs); Oregon St. 39, Missouri 38 (2006 Sun)

Synopsis: Maryland's Terrapins do nothing exceptionally well. This is a case where a team's record points to exactly how good the team is. The Terrapins have a mediocre record and, frankly, they're a mediocre squad.

The Beavers started the season losing three of their first five games. However, they posted a 6-1 record to finish the year 8-4.

Oregon St. features one of the most underrated running backs in the country — Yvenson Bernard. Bernard has struggled at times this season due to the complete lack of a passing attack, but still ranks 28th nationally in rushing yards. He's also the team leader in interceptions.

Prediction: Oregon St. 21, Maryland 15 — For whatever reason, Maryland simply sticks in most games. Seven of Maryland's games were decided by 10 points or less. The Terrapins will scheme well to slow down Bernard enough to keep the game close, but will find it close to impossible to mount any consistency against Oregon St.'s superior defense.

**Meineke Car Care Bowl
UConn (9-3) vs. Wake Forest (8-4)
Noon Saturday (ESPN)**

Last bowl appearance: UConn 39, Toledo 10 (2004 Motor City); Louisville 24, Wake Forest 13 (2007 Orange)

Synopsis: If these two schools were playing basketball, it would be considered a marquee matchup. However, this game is taking place on the gridiron instead of the hardwood.

Don't be surprised if there are at least five interceptions thrown in this game with Wake Forest's Riley Skinner being responsible for a majority of them.

Both defenses do a fantastic job of picking the ball off. The Demon Deacons feature the nation's individual leader in

interceptions — Alphonso Smith, who has eight picks this season and has returned three for touchdowns.

Meanwhile, UConn is led defensively by sophomore Robert Vaughn, who is tied for seventh nationally in interceptions with six.

Prediction: UConn 23, Wake Forest 20 — This game features two of the nation's best kickers — UConn's Tony Ciaravino and Wake's Sam Swank. Expect them to be put in situations late in the contest to kick game-deciding field goals. UConn gets a slight edge because it will create fewer opportunities for Wake's offense to get on the field.

**Liberty Bowl
UCF (10-3) vs. Mississippi State (7-5)
3:30 p.m. Saturday (ESPN)**

Last bowl appearance: Nevada 49, UCF 48 (2005 Hawaii); Mississippi St. 43, Texas A&M 41 (2000 Independence)

Synopsis: Like to witness history? Central Florida's junior running back Kevin Smith is 181 yards away from breaking Barry Sanders' single-season record for rushing yards.

He enters this matchup with 2,448 rushing yards and 30 touchdowns.

And don't think he has done all of that against inferior competition. He torched Texas' 10th ranked run defense for 149 yards and two touchdowns Sept. 15.

Mississippi St. allows an average of 159 yards on the ground a game.

The Bulldogs did, however, keep Arkansas' Darren McFadden to less than 100 yards earlier this season.

Unfortunately for Mississippi St. — which is making its first postseason appearance since 2000 — UCF's prowess in the ground game essentially negates the Bulldogs top defensive player, defensive end Titus Brown.

Prediction: UCF 38, Miss. St. 13 — This is a fantastic matchup for the Golden Knights. The bigger prediction in this game is whether Smith will break the record. I think he will. Don't be shocked if he tops 200 yards in this contest. Bulldogs Head Coach Sylvester Croom's ability to turnaround the Mississippi St. program is a great story, but he'll have to wait another year to grab his first bowl victory.

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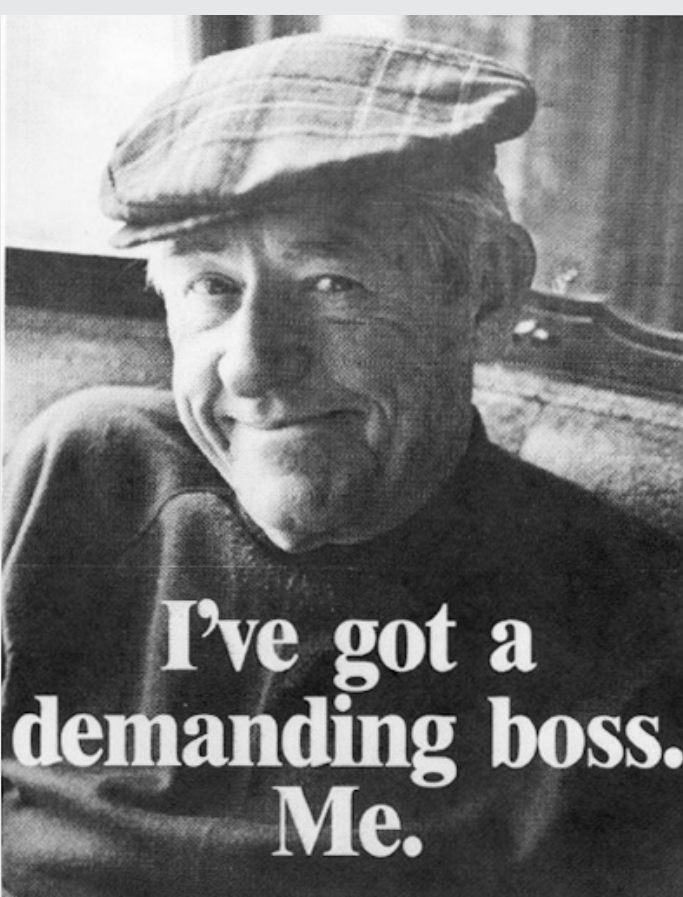
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Real Estate for Rent

1734 PURDUE 3 Bdr, 2 bath, CH/A, Tile floors. Large Kitchen. **RENTED** \$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, carpet, CH/A, 900 sq. ft. \$560. **RENTED** \$535. 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.

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.

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.

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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.

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OWNER FINANCE TOUGH CREDIT OK ONLY 2% DOWN 3726 Adams, 3 bed, 1 1/2 bath, CH/A. \$53,900. Recorded info. 432-687-2696.

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OWNER FINANCED Houses for Sale. 1413 Sycamore and 508 State. Easy Terms. Call Reagan at 432-634-6818.

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2003 MERCURY Grand Marquis LS, only 15,000 miles, light blue, 4-door sedan, V-8, auto, air, power, cruise, leather, like new, \$13,000. Sale by owner. (432)267-7273

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Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE
The Howard County Auditor will accept sealed bids until 10:00 A.M. on January 10, 2008 for Office and Printing Supplies.

Specifications may be obtained in the Auditor's Office, 300 S. Main, Room 203, Big Spring, TX or by calling (432)264-2210.

Bids will be presented to the Commissioners' Court at 10:00 A.M. on January 14, 2008 for their consideration.

The Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids.
#5644 December 27, 2007 & January 2, 2008

NOTICE OF INTENT TO SELL REAL PROPERTY AND INVITATION TO BID

The Board of Trustees of the Big Spring Independent School District (BSISD) hereby serves notice that BSISD will receive sealed bids from persons interested in purchasing the following real property located in the city of Big Spring, Howard County, Texas:

Lot 4, Block 90; Lots 2, 3 and 4 Block 91; Lots 1, 2 and 3, Block 96; Lot 1, Block 97; all appearing in the plat of the Original Town of Big Spring

The property is commonly known as the Big Spring Independent School District Runnels Junior High School site and located at 200 East Tenth Street, Big Spring, Texas.

Interested parties may contact BSISD Business Office, 708 East 11th Place, Big Spring, Texas 79720-4648, phone number (432)264-3620, to arrange for inspection of the premises and for review of the sales contract and Special Warranty Deed.

This property houses buildings that are known to contain asbestos and/or asbestos containing material. A copy of BSISD'S Asbestos Management Plan setting forth the location and identity of all known hazardous materials will be provided to bidders upon request. Bidders will be required to assume by contract all current and future responsibilities, costs, abatements, and liabilities of all hazardous materials.

Interested bidders may obtain a bid packet from Sandra Waggoner, at the office of the Big Spring Independent School District's Business Office, 708 East 11th Place, Big Spring, Texas 79720-4648. The bid packet contains: a full legal description of the Property, bid instructions and the District's "Contract of Sale." Bidders shall return a completed "Contract of Sale," with the required earnest money, in a sealed envelope marker "Real Property Bid," to office of the Big Spring Independent School District's Business Office, 708 East 11th Place, Big Spring, Texas 79720-4648, Attention Sandra Waggoner. Sealed bids will be received until 3:00 p.m. on January 15, 2008. All bids received at or prior to such time will be opened and read aloud. Bids received after such time will not be opened or considered. The apparent best bid or bids will be presented to the Board of Trustees for review and possible approval at its next regularly scheduled meeting on January 17, 2008, at 5:15 p.m.

The property will be conveyed by Special Warranty Deed and will be subject to reversion to the BSISD in the event the property is used for the purpose of establishment or operation of a segregated school system in accordance with standing orders entered in *United States v. Texas*, Civil Action No. 5281, (E.D. Tex., August 9 and 15, 1973). The conveyance is contingent upon review and approval by the Texas Commissioner of Education.

Bids must be based on a lump sum cash payment (net of all closing costs), payable not more than 30 days following approval of the sale by the Board of Trustees. Bidders will be responsible for arranging any desired surveys, title insurance, other inspections of the premises, and all other "closing costs" without cost to BSISD. Bids, which specify other payment terms, will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered. Big Spring Independent School District reserves the right to reject all bids and to waive any formalities.

WAIVER OF CLAIMS: BY TENDERING A BID TO THIS INVITATION TO BID, THE BIDDER ACKNOWLEDGES THAT IT HAS READ AND FULLY UNDERSTANDS THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMITTING A BID AND THE PROCESS USED BY THE DISTRICT FOR SELECTING A BEST BIDDER. FURTHER, BY SUBMITTING A BID, THE BIDDER FULLY, VOLUNTARILY AND UNDERSTANDINGLY WAIVES AND RELEASES ANY AND ALL CLAIMS AGAINST THE DISTRICT AND ANY OF ITS TRUSTEES, OFFICERS, AGENTS AND/OR EMPLOYEES THAT COULD ARISE OUT OF THE ADMINISTRATION, EVALUATION, OR RECOMMENDATION OF ANY BID SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO THIS INVITATION TO BID.

#5638 December 20 & 27, 2007

BY HOLIDAY MATHIS
We continue appreciating and sharing our Christmas gifts as the moon spends most of the day languishing in fun-loving Leo. How many ways can you say adorable, delightful or useful? As traditional and fun as a celebration



HOLIDAY MATHIS

are, holiday sales and returns can be fun, too -- the latter more than the former, possibly.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Though you have common experiences with your family, everyone sees what happened differently. So it's absolutely normal to find yourself wondering, "What planet are you on?"

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). When you can see the finish line, that's no time to slow down. Though you've journeyed long and hard, reach down in your soul and find the energy to sprint until you've broken through the ribbon.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Assume that people are relating to you in a genuine manner. Financial backing is in the works -- trust it. Be cool and persistent. Tonight, an invitation is worth accepting.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There is scientific proof that good love is a boost to your immune

Tomorrow's Horoscope

system. And support from friends breeds fabulous health. Chuck the vitamins, and hang around generous spirits.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Assess priorities on paper. When you chart it out, you may realize that you're spending time on something you really don't care much about -- to the detriment of someone or something important.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You're just trying to have fun, but the effect is that you razzle-dazzle 'em. Your audience is hooked and would have you continue your "act" forever if you allowed it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Partner up with someone who has a different skill set from yours. Your collaboration is impressive. Together, you'll deftly deal with the handcrafted mischief of your villain du jour.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Good, old-fashioned manners are underrated by some, but not you. The classiest people around will appreciate your attention to social rules. You go down on an "A" list of sorts.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Three cheers for letting go, for letting the universe support you, for being excited about the way your life is unfolding! Your open mind gives you great freedom of choice.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're highly inspired and driven to do what you said you would

do. Experimentation leads you to the best methods, so don't assume that you already know all you need to know.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Relax with family now because the week gets so busy later you may not have the time. Do this even though you're privately longing to get back to work on a project that was stalled by the holidays.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Creativity is on the rise. Make the most of it by sharing your poetic mood. When others applaud or laugh, you'll feel triumphant -- your whimsy is someone else's delight.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "I'm in love with a Leo born Aug. 21, 1960. We broke up five months ago. Should I try to get back with him? My birthday is Oct. 22, 1963."

You can try. It looks like you initiated the break up and pulled the rug out from under him -- he didn't expect it. Leo's devotion is unlimited in supply until his heart is broken. Dear Libra, you may have injured his pride to the point where he's unable to reignite the spark of love. Now you're second-guessing your decision. It's a Libran dilemma. Librans love the idea of being in a committed relationship, but when they are, commitment wavers. Believing that things would be better "if only O" gives Libra an escape clause. That's why Libra

needs marriage -- when there's no way out, the deeper work of growing up begins. With Venus and Neptune in Scorpio and angled by Saturn, you need to get curious about the disappointments and disillusionment you experience in love. No one person can cure your loneliness, take away your sorrow and be everything you expect that person to be. It'll take some major effort to earn back his trust.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Capricorn Oscar winner Denzel Washington may play producer as often as he plays actor this year, and in the process, he'll earn an even bigger salary working behind the scenes than he does on camera. Capricorn people are business minded, but with his moon in Aquarius and Mars in Pisces, Washington is also a philanthropist who wants his work to make a difference in the world.

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: I am in the sixth grade, and other kids make fun of me. Last week, I didn't go to school because I had a headache. I'm sure it's stress and it's making me afraid and affecting my schoolwork.

It started in the first grade. I don't know why, but they "just felt like it." Last year was the worst of my life. The kids called me (get ready for a list) fat, stupid, idiot, dumb, worthless, that I am not fit to live and so many other things, I lost count.

One of those girls said in front of the only two friends I have, "Wow, you finally got some friends in what? Five years?" I thought I would just curl up and die. But my friends said they didn't care what anyone said.

My mom works long hours and always comes home tired, so I don't want to burden her with what is happening at school. I am 11 and don't think I can take it much longer. Please help. — Stressed Out in Texas

Dear Stressed: These classmates are bullying you, and you have the right to make it stop. Talk to your mother. She needs to know. Then both of you should talk to the principal and school counselor. (If your mother cannot go with you, do it by yourself.) You are obviously a smart girl, and we can sense a great deal of strength inside. You also have two loyal friends who will stand by you, so please do this, not only for yourself, but for other girls who are being bullied. You can get more information and suggestions through stopbullyingnow.com and bullyonline.org.

Dear Annie: One of my mother's main goals in life was to instill good, solid religious values in her children. This is an admirable thing. The problem is the way she carried out this goal. It was nothing short of stifling.

I cannot recall any single thing in my life



**KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR**

that turned me off to religion more than my mother's efforts. Why can't parents realize that shoving religion down the throats of their children will only make them want to run from it?

After much counseling, I am now able to say that my faith is strong, but it is in spite of my mother, not because of her. — Religiously Scarred

Dear Scarred: The best way to instill religious values in one's children is to set a good example at home and let them see that you live what you preach. Forcing religion on a child invariably creates a backlash, as you have so astutely pointed out. Wise parents know that children are more drawn to what provides comfort and a sense of belonging.

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "This Violet is Blue," whose husband plans to be buried next to his first wife. I wanted to pass along a suggestion, since this is also a concern of mine.

My husband also has two crypts, one of which his first wife is now buried in. I did not want to be left out in the cold either, so here is what we decided to do. When my husband dies, his body will be put in the crypt next to his first wife. When I die, I will be cremated and my ashes will be put inside my husband's coffin. This way, my husband is near his first wife and she is not alone, and my remains will be in the same coffin with my

husband so we will be together.

I am content with this solution and hope your reader will be, too. — Feeling Better in Sarasota

Dear Sarasota: Although you are content to be in your husband's coffin, next to his first wife, this is not a feasible option for all spouses. Many suggested the husband be cremated as a way to be in two places at the same time.

Dear Annie: This past year was one of the hardest years of my life. I finally came out to my parents about being a lesbian and admitted that the friend I spend all my time with is my girlfriend.

This month will mark 10 months that "Susan" and I have been together. It's a serious relationship, but she still has not told her parents. I can't help but feel hurt when I'm invited to her family gatherings and introduced as a "friend," since I've made the leap to introduce her as my girlfriend in my home.

I know this isn't an easy thing for her, but I had to do it. Why can't she? I have been very patient and understanding, but now I feel my patience growing short and my heart being torn. Please help. — Sad in California

Dear Sad: You should not force Susan to confront a situation if she isn't ready. And you may be giving her reluctance to come out to her parents more significance than it deserves. You had the courage to tell your parents, but the fact that Susan hasn't yet reached that level doesn't mean she never will. Suggest she contact one of the many gay community centers in California or PFLAG (pflag.org), 1726 M Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20036. They will give her encouragement and help her find ways to talk to her family when she's ready.

Dear Annie: Each year, the company my wife

works for hosts a holiday dinner party at a local restaurant. What used to be an enjoyable meal with a handful of employees has become a large, drunken event lasting late into the night. One year, two employees had a fistfight outside the entrance. Last year, they actually set fire to one of the tables.

I am not opposed to drinking, but this is out of control and the boss leads the pack by buying repeated shots for everyone. While my wife and I have a designated driver, we are the exception. It is only a matter of time before someone is arrested for drunk driving or killed.

The spectacle is viewed by other patrons of the restaurant. I am well known in our small community and often have contact with the judges and police. Each year, my wife talks about not going, but always does and insists we stay to the bitter end. This year, I've suggested we have cocktails, dinner, thank the hosts and leave. I think we would be setting a good example and other employees would follow. My wife insists it would be rude. What do you think? — Embarrassed Out West

Dear Out West: We're with you. It is not rude to stay for cocktails and dinner and then make your farewells, as long as you do so in an unhurried manner and don't give the impression that you are in a rush. The ones who get drunk may not even notice you're gone. More importantly, you may give other uncomfortable employees the courage to do the same, and perhaps if enough of them walk out, the boss will find another way to celebrate the holiday.

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.

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ANSWERS

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News in brief

2 arrested in slayings of 6 people near Seattle, likely 3 generations of the same family

CARNATION, Wash. (AP) — A postal worker worried about an absent colleague came across a horrific scene: six people, likely three generations of the same family, shot to death on their rural property.

Within hours, the family's tragedy only deepened when police arrested the property owners' daughter and her boyfriend, according to a law enforcement official.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release the names, said the pair were Michele Anderson, 29, and Joseph McEnroe, 29, her boyfriend.

King County sheriff's Sgt. John Urquhart said the suspects went to the crime scene after investigators had arrived, were questioned and then arrested. No motive had been determined and investigators had not found a weapon.

The sheriff's office did not release the names of the suspects or the victims, but the owners of the property are Wayne Anderson, 60, and Judy Anderson, 61, according to public records. Multiple media reports said the couple, along with their son, Scott; his wife, Erica; and their two children, Olivia and Nathan, were the victims.

Urquhart would only say the victims were a boy about age 3, a girl about age 6, a man and woman in their 30s and a man and woman in their 50s, and "likely three generations" of one family.

Pakistani opposition leader Bhutto killed in suicide attack on campaign rally

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan (AP) — Pakistan opposition leader Benazir Bhutto was assassinated Thursday in a suicide attack that also killed at least 20 others at the end of a campaign rally, aides said.

"The surgeons confirmed that she has been martyred," Bhutto's lawyer Babar Awan said.

A party security adviser said Bhutto was shot in the neck and chest as she got into her vehicle to leave the rally in Rawalpindi near the capital Islamabad. A gunman then blew himself up.

"At 6:16 p.m. she expired," said Wasif Ali Khan, a member of Bhutto's party who was at Rawalpindi General Hospital where she was taken after the attack.

Her supporters at the hospital began chanting "Dog, Musharraf, dog," referring to Pakistan's president Pervez Musharraf.

Some smashed the glass door at the main entrance of the emergency unit, others burst into tears. One man with a flag of Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party tied around his head was beating his chest.

In Washington, the State Department said it was seeking confirmation of Bhutto's condition.

"Certainly, we condemn the attack on this rally," deputy spokesman Tom Casey said. "It demonstrates that there are still those in Pakistan who want to subvert reconciliation and efforts to advance democracy."

The United States has for months been encouraging Musharraf to reach an accommodation with the opposition, particularly Bhutto, who was seen as having a

wide base of support in Pakistan. Her party had been widely expected to do well in parliamentary elections set for next month.

At least 20 others were killed in the blast that took place as Bhutto left the rally where she addressed thousands of supporters in her campaign for Jan. 8 parliamentary elections.

Bhutto served twice as Pakistan's prime minister between 1988 and 1996. She had returned to Pakistan from an eight-year exile Oct. 18.

On the same day, her homecoming parade in Karachi was also targeted by a suicide attacker, killing more than 140 people. On that occasion she narrowly escaped injury.

U.S. troops kill 11 members of Shiite splinter group southeast of Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AP) — U.S. troops killed 11 members of a Mahdi Army splinter group early Thursday, American officials said. The military also announced that it had detained two more suspects in the capture of three U.S. soldiers earlier this year.

One of the suspects is thought to have "facilitated" the kidnapping of the American soldiers taken during a May ambush near Youssifiyah, about 12 miles south of Baghdad, and to have used his house to hide the soldiers, the military said in a statement.

A weapon belonging to one of the soldiers was found at the residence of the other suspect. The men were detained on Monday and Tuesday in Ramadi, the military said.

Spc. Alex R. Jimenez of Lawrence, Mass., and Pvt. Byron W. Fouty of Waterford, Mich., were seized May 12 when insurgents attacked and overran a checkpoint in the volatile area south of Baghdad known as the "triangle of death."

A third soldier, Pfc. Joseph Anzak Jr., of Torrance, Calif., also was captured during the raid and his body was found May 23 floating in the Euphrates River. Four U.S. soldiers and an Iraqi translator were killed during the ambush.

Venezuela to send helicopters to pick up 3 hostages held by rebels

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez prepared to send planes and helicopters into neighboring Colombia to pick up three hostages who have been held for years by leftist rebels.

The hostages' release would be the most important in the Colombian conflict since 2001, when the FARC freed some 300 soldiers and police officers it had captured and held.

Colombia's largest rebel group announced last week that it would unilaterally hand over the three hostages to Chavez, demonstrating the guerrillas' affinity for the socialist leader.

Chavez said he hoped the hostages — including a mother and her young son — could be on Venezuelan soil by sundown Thursday, while the international Red Cross said the release could take a few days.

The release would be an international boon for Chavez, allowing the self-styled revolutionary to out-

shine Colombian President Alvaro Uribe — a U.S.-backed leader with whom his relations have grown hostile — on the Colombian leader's own turf.

Increases in traffic accidents and shootings lead to deadly year for police officers

WASHINGTON (AP) — A record number of fatal traffic incidents and a double-digit spike in shooting deaths led to one of the deadliest years for law enforcement officers in more than a decade.

With the exception of 2001, which saw a dramatic increase in deaths because of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, 2007 was the deadliest year for law enforcement since 1989, according to preliminary data released jointly by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund and Concerns of Police Survivors.

The report counted the deaths of 186 officers as of Dec. 26, up from 145 last year. Eighty-one died in traffic incidents, which the report said surpassed their record of 78 set in 2000. Shooting deaths increased from 52 to 69, a rise of about 33 percent.

"Most of us don't realize that an officer is being killed in America on average every other day," said Craig W. Floyd, chairman of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund.

Officer fatalities have generally declined since peaking at 277 in 1974, the report said. Historically, officers have been more likely to be killed in an attack than to die accidentally and shootings outnumbered car crashes. But those trends began to reverse in the late 1990s. This year, about six of every 10 deaths were accidental.

EEOC: Employers can continue coordinating retiree health benefits with Medicare coverage

WASHINGTON (AP) — Employers may continue the long-standing practice of taking Medicare into account when structuring the health care benefits voluntarily provided their retired workers, says the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in a rule published in response to a 2000 court decision.

In essence, the ruling says employers can spend more on benefits for retirees under 65 years of age than those over 65 without running afoul of age discrimination laws.

The idea is that retirees in both age groups get essentially the same benefits, but employers can shift some or all of the tab over to the government once a retiree becomes eligible for Medicare.

"Implementation of this rule is welcome news for America's retirees, whether young or old," Commission Chairwoman Naomi C. Earp said in a statement posted Wednesday on the commission's Internet site. "By this action, the EEOC seeks to preserve and protect employer-provided retiree health benefits which are increasingly less available and less generous. Millions of retirees rely on their former employer to provide health benefits, and this rule will help employers continue to voluntarily provide and maintain these critically important benefits in accordance with the law."

PRINTS

Continued from Page 1A

"This will necessitate the applicant to submit fingerprint identification information ... before beginning employment," Dunnam stated in a letter

to school trustees.

While school officials applaud efforts to enhance security at schools, they do have a particular objection to this new mandate — cost.

Dunnam said the fingerprinting will cost approximately \$52 per employee, with the state picking up

the tab for certified personnel. Other new hires, however, will be expected to pick up the tab themselves.

Superintendent Michael Downes said this could prove to be a burden, especially for those hired to low-paying part-time positions.

"We have a hard enough time filling these positions," Downes said. "And if you add this \$52 cost up front, those positions will be even less appealing."

Another roadblock, Downes added, is that the fee must be paid by credit card.

Two possible solutions

were discussed during this month's school board meeting.

Dunnam suggested that the district pay the \$52 fee for all non-certified employees, while trustee Mike Dawson suggested that the district reimburse the employee once his or her criminal

history check comes back clear.

The matter will be discussed further in coming months, officials said.

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

POLITICS

Continued from Page 1A

dential election, the biggest race on Texas' ballot in 2008 will be the contest for U.S. Senate as incumbent Republican John Cornyn faces an expected challenge from Houston state Rep. Rick Noriega.

State legislative races will also be in the spotlight. If enough of Republican House Speaker Tom Craddick's allies win their elections they could select him for another term in January 2009. Craddick batted down two attempts by fellow lawmakers to oust him in 2007.

During the five-month legislative session, the state Republican and Democratic parties both supported a proposal to move the primary to Feb. 5, which would have placed Texas in the "Super Duper Tuesday" lineup on that date. The bill seemed to be rolling

along but stalled in the final days of the session and failed to make it through the Senate.

"Texas right now would be a vastly different place if we had moved up the primary election date," said state Republican Party spokesman Hans Klingler, in a comment echoed by his Democratic counterpart. "Presidential campaigns would have put more of a premium on an actual physical presence in Texas."

Amber Moon, state Democratic Party spokeswoman, also blamed Senate Republicans for spending too much time trying to pass a voter identification bill, which she said would suppress votes had it been passed.

The late primary hasn't stopped Texas' elected leaders from endorsing presidential candidates. Perry and state Comptroller Susan Combs are backing Giuliani, and Perry has been campaigning for him in other states. Giuliani supports

abortion rights and gay rights, so Perry's endorsement irritated some in his own social conservative base.

Perry insists he's not interested in being selected as a vice presidential nominee. Both Perry and U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison are seen as possible running mates, depending on who is at the top of the GOP ticket.

Attorney General Greg Abbott and Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson are supporting Republican Fred Thompson.

Texas Democrats in Congress and the Legislature are spread out in backing John Edwards, Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and Bill Richardson.

Then there's the Ron Paul faction, which proved to be a huge grassroots movement in Texas over the past year. Supporters of the Texas Republican congressman in Austin boast the nation's largest Paul

meetup group. His fundraising has broken records, and home state support could be a potent factor if the Republican nomination is still up for grabs by the time of Texas' March primary.

Presidential campaign officials and party operatives aren't willing to rule out the possibility that Texas could be a player in the primaries.

But Moon noted that her party needs 2,103 delegates to sew up the nomination and 2,842 will be decided before March 4. Even if the competition is still going, the candidate field will undoubtedly be smaller, she said.

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Klingler said "the fluidity of this race on GOP side may still mean Texas

will see more of these candidates as we get closer to March 4, 2008."

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AN ENCOURAGING WORD



By Eddy Pitchford

Gifts were given and received this past week. Many will be exchanged; others will be set aside or discarded. Frustration over wrong sizes and styles; disappointment with items that do not live up to their advertising.

To be sure, there will be much excitement as new clothes and toys are shown off at school and work. Holiday activities will give way to normal routines and schedules. Resolutions for the new year will be shared.

The attention to Jesus given over the past few weeks? I pray it will not be packed with the ornaments and decorations. I pray it will not be discarded until Easter. I pray Jesus is more than a marketing ploy for holiday celebrations. Peace, good will and the love of God need to be received and shared every day of the Year!

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EDITORIAL

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

-FIRST AMENDMENT

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

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OTHER VIEWS

Is Texas destined to become the next Kansas, where bitter evolution politics produced three changes in the science curriculum standards in six years? At one point, religious conservatives forced the study of evolution out of Kansas public schools. Outrage, ridicule and state school board elections got evolution back into the curriculum, but the fight continues.

Texas can ill afford that kind of high-profile battle over established science. But there is a good chance it will happen here because Texas is now ground zero in the battle over teaching evolution in public school science classes.

Now is the time for Gov. Rick Perry to step up and halt the bloodletting before it does serious harm to the state's reputation, economy and future.

Last month, the science curriculum director for the Texas Education Agency, Chris Comer, was ousted after she passed along an e-mail about a lecture criticizing intelligent design, the latest assault on evolution. It was an unmistakable signal of the clash looming for Education Commissioner Robert Scott, a Perry appointee.

This month, an institute that says we should rightly teach the biblical account of the creation is seeking approval to offer master's degrees in science education. The Bible-based Institute for Creation Research moved to Dallas last year from California and is seeking approval from the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Raymund Paredes, Texas' higher education commissioner, said he is evaluating the report from the team that recommended approving the science course. He's not happy with it and is actively gathering more information ahead of next month's board meeting.

Paredes want the head of the institute's science program to reconcile the appropriate teaching of science with the institute's mission to teach the creation account revealed in Genesis.

The solution, Paredes said, is to have the institute call the course what it is — creation studies, not science. There would be little objection to that, he said. All this is happening as teams from Scott's Texas Education Agency prepare to update the science curriculum for public schools. That review begins next month, though a final decision on curriculum won't be made by the State Board of Education until the summer or later.

That leaves a lot of time to fight over how to present evolution in science classes. Unfortunately for Texas, the chairman of the state board, Bryan dentist Don McLeroy, is a creationist who want evolution challenged in science classes. Perry named him chairman of the board earlier this year.

Challenges to teaching evolution themselves have evolved. Intelligent design, not the biblical account, is now the accepted alternative.

But intelligent design is based on religion, too. Ever since Kansas reaped such a whirlwind when it banned the teaching of evolution, the new tactic is to push for criticism of evolution to be taught alongside the accept theory.

That's a clever move to get intelligent design into science classes. Anti-Darwinists label evolution as "dogma" and argue that there should be alternative viewpoints. The problem is that intelligent design is a religious belief, not science.

As the debate unfolds, there is a lot at stake for Texas. Texas is investing billions of dollars in high-tech and biotech ventures, and state voters last month agreed to spend \$3 billion on a cancer research program designed to make Texas a leader in that field.

If Texas becomes the new Kansas and is viewed as retreating from teaching evolution as science, top scientists will not want to live and work here. Major companies will not want to invest in a state where religious doctrine is inculcated into public school science classes.

A curriculum that uses religious doctrine to criticize evolution would ruin this state's efforts to provide quality education. And it could wreck the drive to make Texas a leader in scientific and medical research.

Perry should not sit idly by while this potentially devastating issue unfolds in national headlines. He appointed Scott and McLeroy, and he should derail any efforts to downgrade evolution in Texas schools.

Americans who recoiled at Kansas' decision to go backward in education will be watching how Perry and Texas manage the crisis here.

THE AMERICAN-STATESMAN
AUSTIN

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

*How we view others changes, Lord, when we have You.
Amen*

Early answers on decision week

It was early decision week. If you don't know what that is, then you're not the parent or aunt or uncle or cousin or friend of anyone who's a senior in high school and waiting on pins and needles to find out whether they've been accepted at their first-choice college. But maybe you were once, or will be someday.

This column is not for the lucky few — the minority who get big fat envelopes in the mail, e-mails that begin, "Congratulations and welcome to the Class of 2012!" To the lucky ones, I'm happy to say congratulations, but you're probably hearing that right and left, more than you need, or maybe deserve.

No, this one is for the rest of us. This one is for the kids who don't get in, who did everything they could, had their hearts set and now feel them broken.

And for their parents. It's for all the kids looking around and wondering why it is that classmates with richer parents or double legacies, classmates with athletic skills or family connections got in even if their grades weren't better or their

boards weren't higher. It's for all the kids wondering whether they might have fared better had their parents had the money to hire a fancy counselor or the connections to get the right phone call made.

And for the parents who tried, and failed.

Everyone will tell you there's a right college for everyone, that it's all for the best, when having your heart broken and your dreams squashed doesn't feel that way at all.

I don't buy that. It is what it is. That's the simple truth. It's what life is like. It's full of disappointments and pain that all of us who are parents want to protect our children from, even though no one protected us, and even though, ultimately, no one can really protect anyone. All you can do is learn to survive.

I wanted to go to Radcliffe — then the girls' part of Harvard — more than anything. I did everything a girl from my school could do to get in. My parents didn't go there; we didn't have money; I needed financial aid. But I'd made straight A's my whole life, I was president of every organization I had ever joined, I volunteered, did community service, worked part time from the day I turned 16. I tried, I worked, I prayed and I got rejected.

It stung. That is the simple truth of it. It was the first huge disappointment of my life, although, of course, there were so many more to come, so much worse — the breakup of my parents' marriage, the death of my father, sickness and loss, the stuff of life. But when I was 17, rejection from Radcliffe was my first taste and there was nothing sweet about it.

So I survived. My mother had told me I could apply anywhere on the Boston subway line. Wellesley gave me a scholarship. That was that. That was where I went. An all-girls school, the last place I wanted to go, a place where I got a great education and had a terrible social life. For the best? You could never have convinced me of that. Who knows?

What I know is that this is what life is like. It's not about the hand you're dealt, but how you play it; not about who says yes, but how you cope when they don't.

What makes us, most of us, is not our triumphs but our ability to survive our failures.

I just wish childhood could last a little longer.

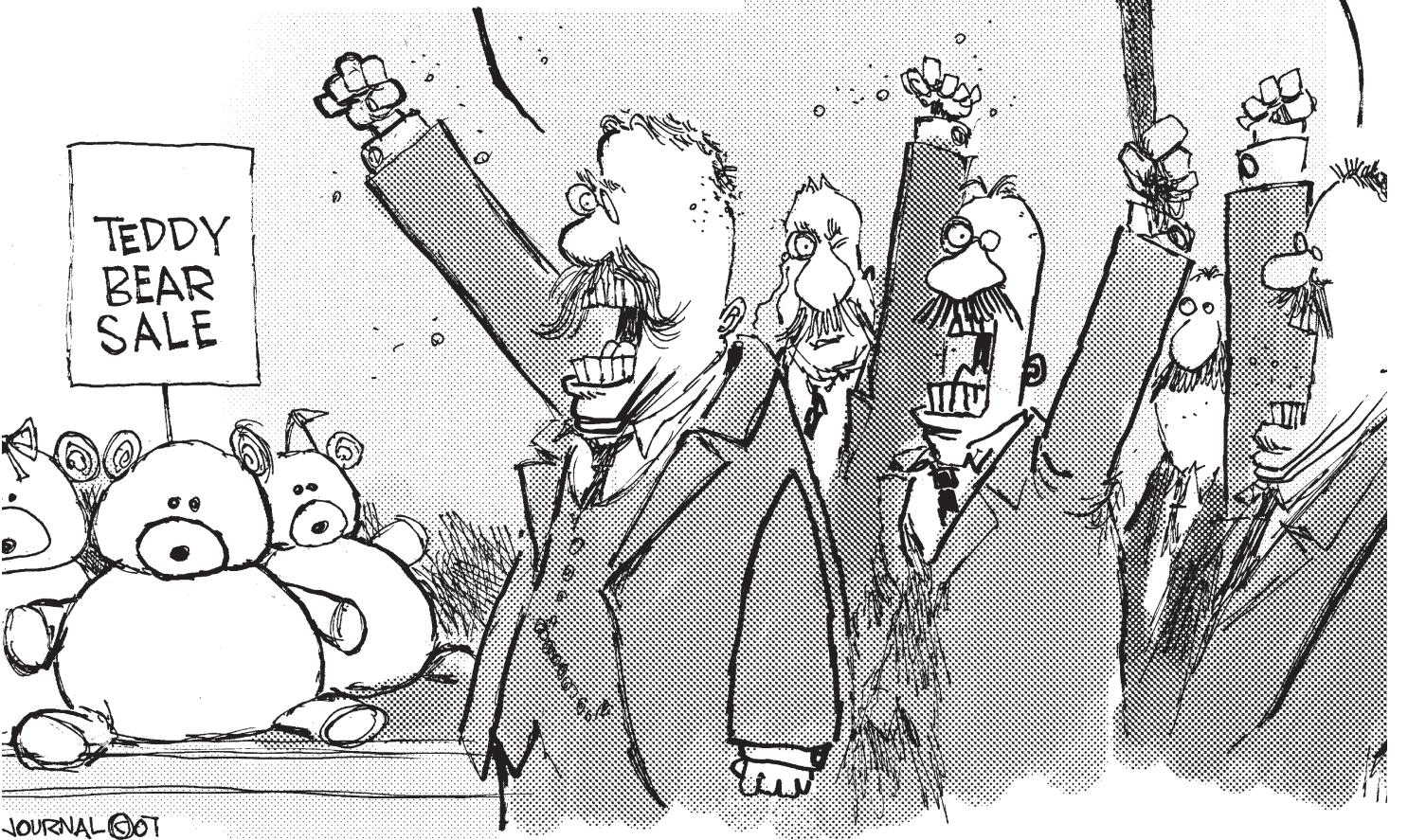
Luckily, time heals most things. Someday, it won't matter. Or at least not very much.

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SUSAN ESTRICH

DEATH TO THE INSULTERS OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT.



THE MADNESS SPREADS

Big winner: None of the above

If you have any doubts as to whether this presidential campaign season has lasted too long and soured voters on the whole political process, look at the favorable/unfavorable poll ratings of the candidates. Premier pollster Scott Rasmussen's latest polling of likely voters nationally shows that most Democrats and Republicans have higher negative than positive poll numbers. The more we see them, the less we want them as our leader.



DEBRA SAUNDERS

To borrow from existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre, 2008 could turn out to be the "Hell is Other People" election. The safest bet in politics is to wager that the next president is someone almost half of Americans don't like.

On Wednesday, Rasmussen reported that among Democrats, Hillary Clinton scored 45 favorable/54 unfavorable, Barack Obama's numbers were at 52/45, John Edwards was 48/44, Joe Biden 38/37, with all other Democrats disliked more than they were liked by as much as 23 points.

Republican hopeful John McCain showed the highest favorable rating of all the candidates of any party — 55 favorable/35 unfavorable. Fred Thompson scored 43/34. Mike Huckabee was tied at 42/42,

while the rest of the Republicans were rated more negative than positive. Giuliani scored 44/49 and Mitt Romney was 44/45. If the numbers don't change, GOP primary voters will have to ask themselves: Do we want to vote for a candidate whom most American voters don't like?

"If you're a casual observer, the things you'll remember the most are the people you don't like," Rasmussen observed. With a hyper-driven news cycle and limitless stories on candidates' gaffes and baggage, what's to like?

This too-long primary has driven Democrats further to the left and Republicans further to the right. Rasmussen noted that Giuliani had a lower unfavorable rating in the beginning of 2007, back when voters looked at him as The Mayor of 9/11.

But as Giuliani moved to the right to woo GOP primary voters, his negative numbers have grown.

There was a time when many voters boasted that they voted for the candidate, not the party. But as the nation's divide has widened, University of Virginia political expert Larry Sabato noted, many Democrats and Republicans will rank unfavorably "every single candidate of the other party."

That means that generic candidate X starts off with an unfavorable number of, say, 30 percent, before opening his mouth.

Candidates like Clinton and Giuliani are especially talented at

turning off voters from the other party. Note they've been their parties' frontrunners.

On the other hand, Sabato observed, McCain and Obama are exceptions, as they draw interest from voters outside their party.

These polls matter, because they offer primary voters a choice: They can pick a nominee who plays to their party's base, or they look to the rare candidates who just might draw independent votes in November 2008 and achieve a big victory that signals a mandate.

It's not just a matter of winning, but a question of what kind of tone will emanate from Washington in 2009.

Wednesday, Clinton's negative rating was 54 percent; on Dec. 20 it was 50 percent.

Her unfavorable numbers may fluctuate, but they will not go away.

"She has a good chance of winning," Rasmussen said of Clinton, "but she has very little chance of winning a serious majority."

Without a serious majority, the next president — whoever he or she may be — will walk into the White House hobbled.

If it's a 51-49 vote, almost as many people who elected the next president will have a stake in undermining the new commander in chief's success.

E-mail Debra J. Saunders at dsanders@sfchronicle.com.
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Bird Poop: For this pelican, no rescue necessary

A week before Christmas, it arrived. Gliding toward the pond, the bird's snowy plumage against the cold gray sky was as conspicuous as its massive size among the smaller water birds that lined the shore. After carefully folding its nine-foot wingspan, it stood silently watching a great blue heron on the other side of the water. As if frozen, the tall, long-necked wader watched the shaded water between its legs and feet. Suddenly, its beak speared the surface of the water and lifted its catch to reposition, then swallow in a matter of seconds. The new arrival was assured that its watery choice offered many meals to come.

Although appearing ungainly as it partially limped and waddled on ground, the large bird walked assuredly for several yards before entering the water. Floating lightly, it began catching minnows and small fish on or near the surface. At times, its bill barely cleared the water as it gobbled up any prey within its reach. Satisfied with its initial introduction to the pond,



BEBE McCASLAND

the bird paddled idly in this watery haven. Calling to tell us there was an injured pelican on the UTPB campus, one of our volunteers in the Midland area could hardly contain her excitement. "It has a hurt foot. Don't you think we should catch it?"

After asking her to keep her distance from the bird, I told her most pelicans would have come through our area in October or November. This pelican was probably a straggler and needed to be undisturbed while trying to replenish lost body weight due to its migration. It was obvious that the university kept the pond well stocked for such birds to find it so attractive.

As for the limp, many water birds incur injuries but continue to survive by adapting to their limitations. Assuring her I would contact the administration and seek their cooperation, she offered to continue to monitor the bird while it remained on the campus. This would provide valuable information for all of us.

When I reached the proper person at the University of Texas of the Permian Basin administrative offices, she was also concerned about the bird's situation. Although the pond attracted numerous herons and water birds, as well as mammals, this



One of the largest birds in North America, the American white pelican uses its pouch to hold newly caught fish. On its way to the Gulf of Mexico, the bird will dine on minnows and larger fish that will be grasped, tossed into the air, then swallowed head first.

was the first American white pelican. While students and faculty were enjoying this new guest, everyone had been encouraged to view but not approach the bird. Campus security officers were constantly monitoring and enforcing guidelines to protect the water fowl. With this assurance, we offered assistance only if the situation were to change.

With the Christmas holiday vacation and a deserted campus, we

anticipated that the pelican and other birds would have the peace of the season. For extra protection, we contacted another volunteer and he agreed to help monitor the bird.

A concerned call on Christmas Eve notified us that even though it had not been approached, the pelican, as if on impulse, had risen from the pond with the awkward flapping of its glossy, black-tipped wings. Lifting its heavy

body quickly and circling the pond several times, its slow, methodical expanse of wings took the bird to a soaring height. Then it was gone.

Telling the volunteer the pelican may have been ready to continue its journey, we decided to check on the bird the next day. Back on the pond in spite of a cold, blustery morning, the pelican, in its own element, exemplified part of a Christmas carol: "Heedless of the wind

and weather." For the next two weeks, the bird frequented the pond. Its orange bill, pouch and feet made the bird even more outstanding on the colorless terrain of a campus in winter beige. Its limp seemed to be permanent. For once, the best recourse we and the pelican had was no rescue. Nature had provided the answer.

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

Physicians sue over anonymous complaints

AUSTIN (AP) — The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons has asked a federal judge to stop the Texas Medical Board from accepting anonymous complaints.

The group claims the regulatory board has used anonymous complaints to intimidate and retaliate against doctors.

"The situation has reached the crisis point for patients and doctors," said Jane Orient, the national group's executive director. "Our members are too afraid of retaliation to sue the board as individuals."

The lawsuit, which was filed Friday in federal court in Texarkana, claims the board and its physician members have manipulated anonymous complaints. It also alleges conflicts of interest and privacy breaches by board members and expert witnesses hired by the board.

The medical board, which licenses doctors and investigates complaints, was closed Wednesday and its staff members could not be reached for comment.

Board officials defended their record at an October legislative hearing and

said the anonymous complaints protect whistleblowers from retaliation. They said less than 2 percent of complaints are anonymous.

Complaints against doctors have increased 39 percent since 2003, when state law was changed to give the board more authority to suspend doctors' licenses.

During the legislative hearing, physicians complained that an abundance of anonymous complaints over minor issues have unfairly cost them time and money.

The lawsuit accuses Roberta Kalafut of Abilene, the board's president, of working with her husband to file anonymous complaints against other doctors, including her competitors in Abilene.

Kalafut could not be reached for comment on Wednesday, but she has said that similar allegations are untrue. None of the anonymous complaints resulting in disciplinary action came from Abilene, she said.

"I can't influence the process. No one can. There are too many hands on this," Kalafut said in November.

Man's houseguest arrested after body found in trash can

PHARR (AP) — A 31-year-old man who was staying at an acquaintance's house for a few days has been arrested on a murder charge after the home owner returned to find a woman's body in a trash can, authorities said.

Police identified the woman as Emelda Deleon, 44, of Pharr.

Mark Anthony Estrada was arrested by San Antonio police Tuesday

after he was released from a hospital where he had been treated for injuries apparently suffered in a four-wheeler accident.

Oscar Martinez, the home owner, said in a story for Thursday's editions of *The Monitor* that he had a voice message from Estrada when he returned from a holiday trip to Mexico Tuesday night that warned him not to bring his children

into the house.

"He said he'd had an accident on my four-wheeler and that something else happened that he would tell me about later," Martinez said. "He warned me not to bring the kids into the house."

Martinez called police to

escort him into the home, where they found the Pharr woman's body stuffed in a trash can in the garage.

Justice of the Peace Rosa Trevino said Deleon had been stabbed multiple times in the chest and likely died Monday.

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

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

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Choosing Which Suit to Establish

South dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 8 7 4
♥ A 3
♦ A K 7 5 4 2
♣ Q 4

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

EAST
♠ Q 10 9 6 2
♥ J 7 6 4
♦ Q 10 8
♣ 5

SOUTH
♠ A K 3
♥ K 9
♦ 6 3
♣ K J 8 7 6 2

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

Opening lead — five of hearts.

Many deals present declarer with a choice of two different suits to develop. Sometimes the suits appear to be about equal to each other in potential, but, as in the present case, appearances can be deceiving.

When the deal was played, South won the opening heart lead with the king and, seeing very little difference in the trick-production possibilities of the diamond and club suits, elected to try to establish the clubs.

He therefore led a low club to the queen at trick two and, when this held, continued with a club to the king, on which East discarded a low spade. West took the king with the ace and returned a heart, establishing three heart tricks for the defense. Since South could not come to nine tricks without conceding either a club or a diamond, he had to go down one.

In failing to make the contract, declarer did not recognize a subtle but important difference between the two minor suits. Attacking clubs first gave him no chance to recover if the clubs turned out to be divided 4-1. The diamond suit, however, presented him with an opportunity to test for a 3-2 division while retaining the option to switch to clubs if the diamonds did not split 3-2.

Thus, if declarer had cashed the A-K of diamonds and learned that the missing diamonds were 4-1 (or 5-0), he could then abandon the suit and turn his attention to clubs. Playing clubs first did not offer the same advantage.

In the actual deal, South would have continued with a third diamond after cashing the A-K, thereby assuring nine tricks. By playing in this fashion — giving himself two chances instead of one — declarer would have gone down only if both minor suits were divided unevenly.

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All you can eat: The trouble with buffets

The next time you're overcome by the temptations of an overflowing buffet table, you can attribute at least a part of your overindulgence to natural instinct. Whether faced with an assortment of appetizers at a cocktail party or a bowl of multicolored jelly beans on the counter, research shows that being offered more variety compels us to eat more.

In fact, when provided a large selection of options, studies show that people consume from roughly one-quarter more to more than double the amount of food eaten if offered less variety. Combine this with additional research that shows that larger serving bowls result in taking bigger portions, and it's easy to see why the buffet trough can be so overwhelming.

The first battle with the buffet table is a mental one. It's natural to equate eating more with "getting more for your money" at an all-you-can-eat restaurant. In reality, you pay the same amount whether you eat what you need or overeat, so you're not actually saving any money. We face similar pressure to eat at social gatherings where frugality is not a concern; many of us nosh absentmindedly simply out of a misplaced sense of politeness.

Buffets make portion control a challenge as well. Even if you decide to merely "taste" everything, this nibbling leads most of us to consume much more food than we would normally eat at a typical meal. And, although the rules of excess apply to selecting more vegetable choices as well, many buffet lines offer a poor selection of produce or prepare them with excess fat and calories.

So how do you approach a buffet table and not over-indulge? For starters, remind yourself that a variety of choices is made available for the pleasure of choosing what you want, not as an expectation that

you will gorge. Next, look over the whole range of food selections before you begin filling your plate; decide which choices appeal to you most. And remember, this is not your last meal. Whatever selections you don't choose today, you can simply enjoy at another time.

Try to take an amount of food that will satisfy your hunger without leaving you overstuffed. While some diners are satisfied by a few bites of many different selections, others find small tasting-portions to be an exercise in frustration. Another suggestion: Try taking about one-quarter to one-third of your normal portions, but practice a bit of selectivity when choosing how many dishes to sample. As you walk away from the buffet table, your plate should not be heaped sky-high.

To assemble a healthful, satisfying meal consider the following guidelines: be sure to include a protein source, preferably poultry, fish, lean meat, low-fat cheese, beans, eggs or tofu; choose some form of complex carbohydrate, for example potatoes, noodles, bread or rice; select plenty of vegetables and fruit. For good health, experts recommend filling no more than one-third of the plate with animal protein, balanced by at least two-thirds vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans.

By approaching buffet eating situations with more logic and less impulse, you can easily avoid the pitfalls listed above and enjoy a meal that is both healthful and pleasurable. Resist the desire to reach for everything that catches your eye and avoid automatically going back for seconds. When all is said and done, you'll be unlikely to lament, "I only wish I'd eaten more."

AICR's Nutrition Hotline is a free service that allows you to ask a registered dietitian questions about diet, nutrition and cancer. Access it online at www.aicr.org/hotline or by phone (1-800-843-8114) 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday-Friday.



KAREN COLLINS
MS, RD, CDN

Dipping fruit for holiday fun

To celebrate with friends during the holiday season, forget about caviar and champagne. Treat guests instead to an elegant tray of hand dipped chocolate-covered fruit. Although these decadent treats may look like they came from an expensive chocolate boutique, dipping your own fruit is surprisingly simple and won't cost you a fortune. All it requires is some fundamental knowledge about chocolate.

For starters, pick a dark chocolate that contains from 60 to 70 percent cocoa. These varieties have a stronger, more intense flavor, thanks to a greater cocoa content. They also have a higher proportion of antioxidants that provide valuable disease-fighting potential.

Melting the chocolate in a microwave oven is easiest. However, chocolate melts at a temperature between 80 and 90 degrees and can burn quickly if not watched carefully. To prevent it from burning, heat the chocolate in 10-second bursts, stirring



after each interval.

The alternative method for melting chocolate — over hot water — requires even more care. Chocolate contains a starch that hates moisture and it will react to even a drop of water by "seizing up," turning rock hard and grainy. Once this happens, nothing can coax it to melt smoothly again. To avoid this, place the chocolate in a deep metal or heat-proof glass bowl and set the bowl in the center of a wide pan filled with hot (but not boiling) water. This method is actually more reliable than using a traditional double boiler, where steam emerges closer to the chocolate and is more like to drip onto it.

For dipping, choose the best quality fruit you can

find. Dip the fruit halfway into the chocolate to show off their color and keep the stems of the berries intact for a more dramatic presentation. Carefully let the excess chocolate drip off the fruit after dipping and allow the fruit to set in the refrigerator.

Chocolate-Dipped Fruit

- 3 ounces dark (70 percent cocoa) chocolate
- 8 large strawberries
- 16 large seedless green grapes
- 1 large banana, cut into 8 pieces
- Strong toothpicks

Line a baking sheet with baking parchment or wax paper. Set aside.

Break up the chocolate or chop it. Place in a small microwaveable bowl and heat for 1 minute on high. Stir, then microwave in 10 second bursts on medium until small pieces remain. Stir until the chocolate is completely melted. Alternatively, place the bowl in a small skillet filled with 2 inches of

simmering hot water and stir occasionally until the chocolate is melted.

Pat the fruit with paper towels to be sure it is completely dry. Holding each strawberry by its hull, dip halfway into the melted chocolate and lift out with a twisting motion. Shake the berry over the bowl for 10 seconds to let excess chocolate drip off. Place the strawberry on the prepared baking sheet. Repeat until all the berries are dipped.

Insert a toothpick into the stem end of each grape. Dip grapes until half covered with chocolate, twisting and letting the excess drip off. Lay each grape on its side on the baking sheet.

Stand each banana section on a round end and insert a toothpick in the center of the top. Dip, twist and let excess chocolate drip off, like the other fruit.

Place the baking sheet with the dipped fruits in the refrigerator until the chocolate hardens. Serve immediately, or within 6 hours.

BEALLS

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Your Eye on Big Spring

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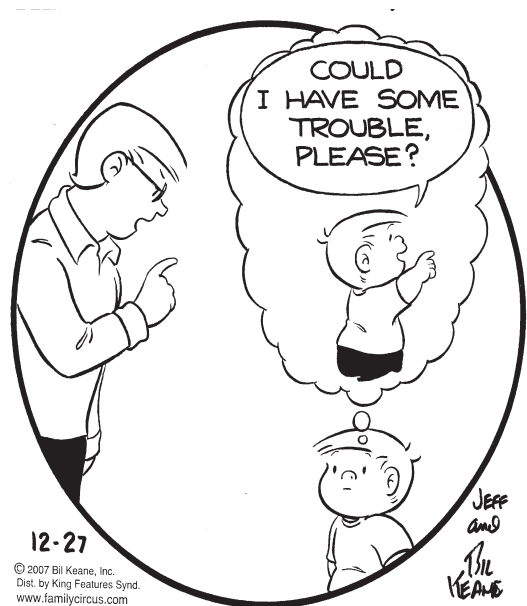
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6:PM :30	News (CC) Entertainment	Jeopardy! Wheel-Fortune	Yo Amo a Juan	The Simpsons Two-Half Men	News Entertainment	12 Corazonos	News Be a Millionaire	Raymond Raymond	Joe McGee John Hagee	News-Lehrer	Dirty Jobs (CC)		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	(CC)	Han, Montana Zack & Cody	College Basketball:	Breakdown	Movie: Something
7:PM :30	Ugly Betty (CC)	Ugly Betty (CC)	Amar sin Limites	Movie: Ice Age (CC)	CSI: NY (CC)	Madre Luna	Name Is Earl 30 Rock	Friends (CC) Friends (CC)	Update Israel Sid Roth	Holiday Home- coming-Angela	Dirty Jobs (CC)	Movie: Gothika (CC)	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	NBA Basketball:	Rip the Runway (CC)	Johnny Kapahala:	Nevada at North Carolina	College Football:	Beneath
8:PM :30	Grey's Anatomy	Grey's Anatomy	Pasion		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	Victoria	The Office Scrubs (CC)	Friends (CC) Friends (CC)	Light of the Southwest	Holidays at Murray State	Dirty Jobs (CC)		TNA IMPACT!	Cavaliers at Mavericks	Sibling Rival Steppin	Back on Board	Billiards:	Pacific Life Holiday Bowl	Movie: Eye of the Beast
9:PM :30	Private Practice	Private Practice	Aqui y Ahora	TMZ (CC) Raymond	Without a Trace (CC)	Pecados Ajenos	ER (CC)	Movie: Along Came a Spider		Craft in America	Some Assem- bly Required	Mad Men (CC)		NBA	Beach Towel Throwdown	That's-Raven Life Derek	Billiards: Int'l Challenge	-- Arizona State vs.	(CC)
10:PM :30	News (CC) Nightline	News Nightline	Primer Impacto Noiciero Univ.	Two-Half Men Raymond	News Late Show-	Noticias Mas Vale	News Tonight Show		Update Israel Jack Van Impe	Charlie Rose (CC)	Dirty Jobs (CC)	:15 Movie: Insomnia	UFC 79 Countdown	Basketball: Boston Celtics	21 Questions Inreplaceable	Zack & Cody Han, Montana	Varsity Inc.	Texas (CC) SportsCenter	Movie: Crocodile 2:
11:PM :30	The Insider Jimmy Kimmel	Jimmy Kimmel Live (CC)	La Hora de la Risa	Law & Order: Criminal Intent	Letterman Late Late	Tarde Decisiones de	Late Night	Sex and-City Sex and-City	Betty Swann Y. Salamanca	Dirty Jobs (CC)	Dirty Jobs (CC)	MANswers UFC: Access	MANswers UFC: Access	at Seattle Sonics (CC)	Hell Date Hell Date	Replacements Kim Possible	Mix Tape Tour Mix Tape Tour	(CC)	Death Roll (CC)
12:AM :30	News (CC)	Paid Program	Salome (SS)	Reno 911! George Lopez	Show The Insider	Famosos Programa	Conan O'Brien News	Update Israel Along Came a	Update Israel Light-World	Sign Off	Dirty Jobs (CC)	Mad Men	Action Sports Championships	The Corner (CC)	Emperor New American Drgn	Mix Tape Tour Mix Tape Tour	NFL Live Football Live	Twilight Zone Twilight Zone	

DENNIS THE MENACE



"I HOPE MARGARET'S NEW DOLL IS A GOOD LISTENER."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Billy, you're asking for trouble!"

HAGAR



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BLONDIE



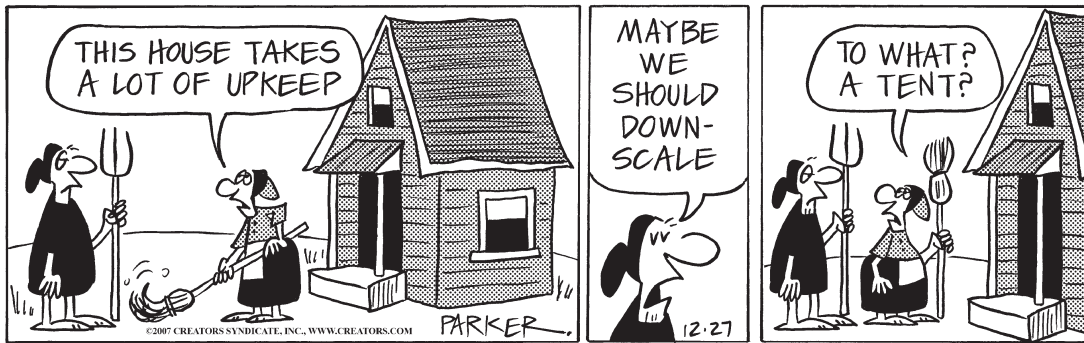
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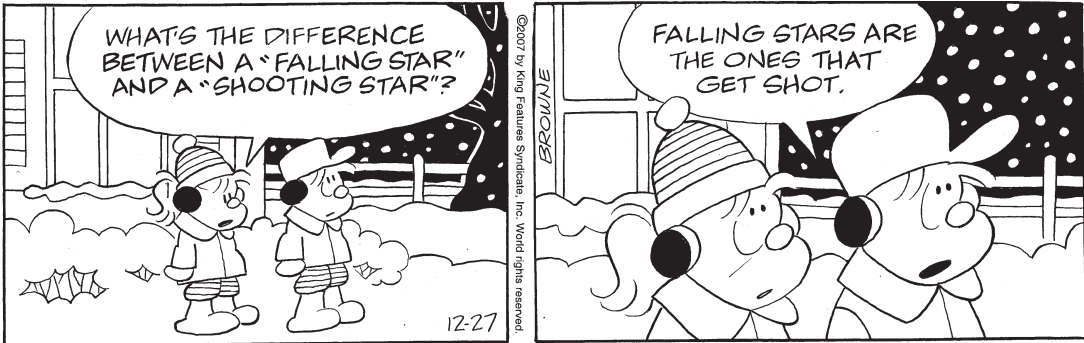
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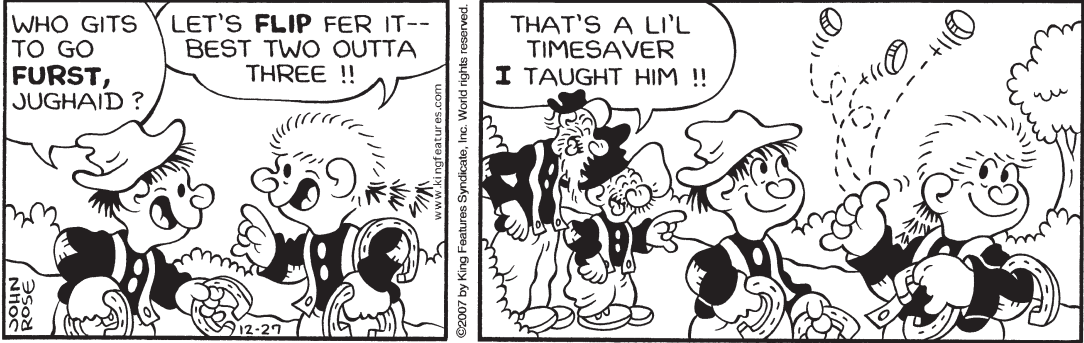
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THE OTHER COAST



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BETLE BAILEY



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This Date In History

Today is Thursday, Dec. 27, the 361st day of 2007. There are four days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 27, 1932, Radio City Music Hall opened in New York City.

On this date: In 1831, naturalist Charles Darwin set out on a round-the-world voyage aboard the HMS Beagle.

In 1904, James Barrie's play "Peter Pan: The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up" opened at the Duke of York's Theater in London.

In 1945, 28 nations signed an agreement creating the World Bank.

In 1947, the children's TV program "The Howdy Doody Show" made its debut on NBC under the title "Puppet Playhouse."

In 1949, Queen Juliana of the Netherlands signed an act granting sovereignty to Indonesia after more than

three centuries of Dutch rule.

In 1968, Apollo 8 and its three astronauts made a safe, nighttime splashdown in the Pacific.

In 1979, Soviet forces seized control of Afghanistan. President Hafizullah Amin, who was overthrown and executed, was replaced by Babrak Karmal.

In 1985, Palestinian guerrillas opened fire inside the Rome and Vienna airports; a total of 20 people were killed, including four of the attackers, who were slain by police and security personnel.

Today's Birthdays: Former U.S. Sen. James A. McClure, R-Idaho, is 83. Rockabilly musician Scotty Moore is 76. Actor John Amos is 68. ABC News correspondent Cokie Roberts is 64. Rock musician Mick Jones (Foreigner) is 63. Singer Tracy Nelson is 63. Actor Gerard Depardieu is 59. Jazz singer-musician T.S. Monk is 58. Singer-songwriter Karla Bonoff is 56. Actress Tovah Feldshuh is 55. Rock musician David Knopfler (Dire Straits) is 55.

Actress Maryam D'Abo is 47. Country musician Jeff Bryant is 45. Actress Theresa Randle is 43. Actress Eva LaRue is 41. Rock musician Guthrie Govan (Asia) is 36. Musician Matt Slocum is 35. Actor Wilson Cruz is 34. Singer Olu is 34. Actor Masi Oka is 33. Actress Emilie de Ravin is 26. Christian rock musician James Mead (Kutless) is 25.

Thought for Today: "Few things are more mischievous to good government and to 'domestic tranquility' than splendid rhetoric that doesn't pay off." —Alistair Cooke, journalist and broadcaster (1908-2004).

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Answer to previous puzzle

M	O	L	A	R	A	T	A	D	P	E	E	P
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Newsday Crossword

FETCH by Randall J. Hartman
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN | ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Cuban dance | 1 Hamster's home | 61 Church area | 11 OPEC member |
| 6 Grind to a halt | 2 Fiend of folklore | 62 Out of the woods | 12 Carry on |
| 10 Former Milan money | 3 Hud Oscar winner | 63 Deep chasm | 13 Microbrewery offerings |
| 14 Sports negotiator | 4 Econ. indicator | | 18 Close associates |
| 15 Large quantity | 5 One in training | | 23 ___ mode |
| 16 River through Kazakhstan | 6 Sudden twitch | | 24 Textile pattern |
| 17 Plotter's need | 7 Overturns | | 25 Inventory |
| 19 Candy shape | 8 Bullring cheer | | 26 Tin Pan Alley org. |
| 20 Sashimi fare | 9 Keeps going | | 27 Symbol of justice |
| 21 Glasgow girl | 10 Early TV superstar | | 28 Kitchen wrap |
| 22 Southern NFL team | | | 29 Golf-bag items |
| 24 Skipper's spot | | | 30 Pastoral poem |
| 25 Window ledge | | | 31 Pizazz |
| 26 Balance-sheet entries | | | 32 Done |
| 29 Horror-film scientist's cry | | | 34 Far from fresh |
| 33 Close shave | | | 37 Buildings with cells |
| 34 Jogging gait | | | |
| 35 Genesis spot | | | |
| 36 The Alienist author | | | |
| 37 Gator cousins | | | |
| 38 West Virginia senator | | | |
| 39 Jai ___ | | | |
| 40 Sow's squeal | | | |
| 41 Have a cow | | | |
| 42 Some streamers | | | |
| 44 Cut down | | | |
| 45 "Had enough?" | | | |
| 46 Narrate | | | |
| 47 Fit to be tried? | | | |
| 50 Fish story | | | |
| 51 ___ de deux | | | |
| 54 It's nothing | | | |
| 55 Cop club | | | |
| 58 Harness attachment | | | |
| 59 Small band | | | |
| 60 ___frutti | | | |

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