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FRIDAY

DECEMBER 28, 2007



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Jail construction: Time is money

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By STEVE REAGAN

Staff Writer

When it comes to construction of a new county jail, time is money, officials said.

VOLUME 103, NUMBER 23

A month before construction bonds are even sold, Howard County officials are doing just about everything they can to smooth and speed up the process — all in the hope

of saving time and money.

County commissioners took further steps to prepare for construction of the new jail when they held a special meeting in the county courthouse Thursday afternoon.

Officials have set a target of mid-March to begin actual construction on the jail, but county and city crews have already been decided on the additional

on the W. Highway 80 site doing prepatory work.

The biggest financial matter covered during Thursday's meeting was the final approval of the purchase of four lots of land at the location for a total of \$90,000.

Commissioners had originally planned to purchase two lots on the site for a total of \$45,000, but expenses to eliminate the possibility of outside encroachment on the site, County Judge Mark Barr said.

Those costs will be covered when construction bonds are issued in mid-January, County Auditor Jackie Olson said.

Other preliminary issues were addressed, including the hiring of two Midland firms to per-

"When we start makes a ton of difference. Our charge is to get personnel into the facility as soon as possible."

—Jeff Heffelfinger, architectural consultant

form soil engineering and asbestos survey tasks. Commissioners voted to enter into negotiation

Hamilton Engineering of Midland

See JAIL, Page 3A

Senior Center board dissolved

County to begin talks with city over center's take-over

By STEVE REAGAN

Staff Writer

Howard County commissioners have decided to cut out the middle man in their dealing with the Spring City Citizens Center. Commissioners voted to

disband the center's board of directors during special meeting Thursday, an action taken in anticipation of transferring responsibility for the facility to the city of Big Spring in the next few months.

The county, which has provided the lion's share of financial backing to



the center, is about to begin formal negotiations with city officials in hopes of effecting transfer April or May.

County Judge Mark Barr said disbanding the board will allow the city when it takes charge at the center — to proceed as it sees fit.

"If the city takes over the center and wants to name new directors, it

See **SENIOR**, Page 3A



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

From left, Howard County commissioners Emma Brown and Jerry Kilgore, along with County Judge Mark Barr, give final approval to the purchase of four lots of land in west Big Spring during their special meeting Thursday afternoon. The land will serve as the site for a new county jail.

U.S. cities offer cash and perks to encourage residents to 'go green'

By BRIAN SKOLOFF

Associated Press Writer

PARKLAND, Fla. — Free hybrid-car parking. Cash rebates for installing solar panels. Low-interest loans for energy-saving home renovations. Money to tear up desert lawns and replace them with droughtresistant landscaping.

Frustrated by what they see

as insufficient action by state U.S. Green Building Council. and federal government, municoffering financial incentives to get people to go green.

"A lot of localities recognize they're going to get a lot more done using carrots and incentives rather than regulatory means," said Jason Hartke, director of advocacy for the

In Parkland, where the motto ipalities around the country are is "Environmentally Proud," the city plans next year to begin dispensing cash rebates to its 25,000 residents for being more environmentally friendly.

> "We will literally issue them a check," said Vice Mayor Jared Moskowitz. "We're sick of waiting for the federal gov

we've got to do what we can."

Residents who install low-flow toilets or shower heads will get \$150. Replacing an old air conditioner with a more energyefficient one brings \$100. Buying a hybrid car? An additional \$200 cash back. And the list goes on.

Based on an estimate of 1,000

ernment to do something, so residents participating in the rebate program during the first year, the city predicts it will cost up to \$100,000.

"Could this bankrupt the city if the program grows by leaps and bounds?" Moskowitz asked. "I can only wish that so many residents want to go green that

See **GREEN**, Page 3A

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NEW MEANING FOR 'BEER RUN'

ALBANY, Ga. (AP) — Sounds like some south Georgia crooks have been stocking up for a big holiday bash.

Thieves took tractor-trailers loaded with beer and swiped the suds twice within the past week, authorities said.

Dougherty County authorities are investigating a report of a missing 53-foot-long trailer that was loaded with more than 2,300 cases of beer. Police said the beer disappeared sometime between Dec. 21 and Thursday. Also on Dec. 21, more than 300 cases of beer were stolen from another tractor-trailer, which had a tracking device. The trailer as driven about three miles before it was emptied.

HE WAS JUST TRYING THEM ON

SANTA FE, Texas (AP) — Police arrested a neighbor after a woman reported some of her undergarments had been stolen from her house.

Charles Michael Clark, 30, has been charged with burglary.

The woman had been out of town when she returned home and found a barefoot man in the living room. The man fled.

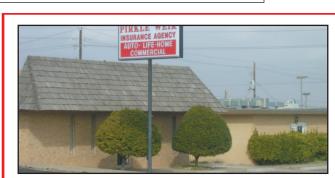
Clark was arrested Sunday outside his home, a couple of blocks away, police said. The woman reported a bra and some panties were missing.

Clark said he was "stoned and stupid," but added, "I took her bra, but I didn't know nothing about her panties."

HOLIDAY TOURNEY ROUNDUP



See Page 1B



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Sports

SPRING HERALD

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

> Page 1B Friday, December 28, 2007

IN BRIEF

Individuals needed to referee area basketball games

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

interested Anyone should call Adam Rodriguez at 517-0300.

2007-2008 NCAA Division I-A college bowl schedule **TODAY**

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 CUSA: Payout: \$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)Oklahoma State (6-6), 5 p.m. (NFLN)

Chick-fil-A Bowl

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

JAN. 1 **Outback Bowl** At Tampa, Fla.

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

See BRIEFS, Page 3B

Steers in semifinals in holiday tourney

Herald Staff Report

FREDERICKSBURG -High School basketball tournaments during the holidays are traditional throughout the country. Almost every high school basketball team in the state tries to participate in one of numerous tournaments taking place through the weekend.

For Big Spring's Steers, it's the Fredericksburg Tournament that has drawn their attention. The Steers have opened tournament play impressively as well, defeating Lidle and Copperas Cove Thursday to advance to the semifinals.

The Lady Steers didn't fair so well in the Great West Texas Invitational in Slaton. They fell to Dumas, 52-15, in the first round, remaining winless for the season.

Coahoma's Bulldogs jumped out to a strong start in the Mary Tatum Holiday Classic in Big Lake, defeating Garden City's Bearkats 59-43 in first-round action.

Coahoma's girls were also taking part in the Great West Texas Invitational in Slaton and both Forsan's boys and girls teams received invites to the Sterling City Tournament. The Herald will provide results for those games as they are received.

Holiday **Tournament** Roundup

Steers 80, Lidel 75

One of the bigger traps for basketball teams in playing games this time of year is that players are often in a holiday lull. There's no school and most squads haven't even been on the court to practice in at least a week.

It had been 10 days since the Steers had seen the hardwood and it showed, according to Big Spring Head Coach Marcus Morris.

"We had command of this game early, but we just kind of coasted to the win," Morris said. "We

See ROUNDUP, Page 3B



Big Spring's Jordan Chesworth (30) dribbles the ball past a Dumas defender in the Lady Steers' 52-15 loss in the first round of the Great West Texas Invitational in Slaton Thursday.

Texas beats ASU in wacky Holiday Bowl



AP photo/Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/Will Lester

Chris Jesse (far right), the stepson of Texas head coach Mack Brown, appears to step onto the field and touch a live football following a backwards pass by Arizona State Thursday during the Holiday Bowl in San Diego. Texas was penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct for the play, but still won 52-34.

By BERNIE WILSON

AP Sports Writer

SAN DIEGO — The Holiday Bowl has long been known for wacky plays and wild finishes. Well, add another one.

And this time, the central character wasn't a player. Texas fans will remem-

ber Colt McCoy leading the No. 17 Longhorns to a 52-34 win Thursday night over the No. 12 Arizona State Sun Devils in the first meeting between the schools and their successful coaches.

No one will forget Chris Jessie, the stepson of Texas coach Mack Brown, inadvertently becoming part of the game.

With the Longhorns leading 21-0 and the Sun Devils driving early in the second quarter, ASU's Rudy Carpenter dropped back to pass and was hit by linebacker Roddrick Muckelroy. The ball squirted backward, toward the Longhorns' sideline.

Jessie, a member of his stepfather's football operations staff, stepped about a yard onto the field and was motioning toward a player when he reached down and appeared to touch the ball with his

left thumb. Texas defensive tackle Roy Miller slapped the ball away from the sideline and defensive end Aaron Lewis recovered and returned it to about the ASU 44.

After 12-minute review, officials reversed the play. They ruled that Jessie touched the ball, which is illegal interference, an unsportsmanlike foul. The ball reverted to the Sun Devils and Texas was penalized half the distance to the goal, giving ASU fourth-and-3 at the 7. Carpenter threw a touchdown pass to Chris McGaha.

"It was just natural instinct," Jessie said. "I thought it was a forward pass. I was looking at the ball being thrown and I was waiting for a grounding penalty. When I realized the ball was in play, I jumped back."

The gaffe didn't end up costing the Longhorns (10-3), other than some embarrassment.

"I didn't touch it, I didn't touch it," Jessie said. "The focus shouldn't be on me. That was a great game."

See **HOLIDAY**, Page 3B

Lebron leads Cavs past Mavericks, 88-81

By JAIME ARON

AP Sports Writer

DALLAS — LeBron James' nig ht started with a face-full of a def ender's hand and got worse with a slip in an empty backcourt. Th en came two painful drives, the f irst leaving him with an aching wrist, the other forcing him to bl ink away stars from another pop in the face.

There was nothing easy or smo oth about this game.

Despite the bruises, foul trouble and errant shooting, James m anaged 24 points, eight rebounds and seven assists, helping the Cl eveland Cavaliers beat the Dallas Mavericks 88-81 on Thursday night in a game almost as difficult to watch as it was to play.

"I took some blows tonight," James said. "I don't come out of See NBA, Page 2B

the game. I'm fine. I shake it off and go to the next play. That didn't stop me once I got hit the first time from going back into the interior. It isn't going to stop me."

Cleveland won consecutive games for the first time in a month, yet there won't be many clips from this game on the yearend highlight film. The Cavaliers shot 36.4 percent, misfired on 14 of 16 3-point attempts and missed 10 free throws.

Still, they won in Dallas, something they hadn't done since March 23, 2000, when James was a high school freshman. The Cavs also avenged an 18-point loss to the Mavs in the season opener.



AP photo/Tony Gutierrez

Dallas Mavericks forward Dirk Nowitzki (41) attempts to get around the defense of Cleveland Cavaliers forward Ira Newble in the first half of the Mavs' 88-81 loss in Dallas, Thursday.

LOCAL

Big Spring Herald
Friday, December 28, 2007

Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity:

- **PHILLIP G. MARTINEZ,** 19, 1605 Donley, was arrested on a capias warrant, and on charges of minor in consumpion and possession of marijuana.
- **RUSSELL JACK ILLE**, 46, 509 N.W. 11th, was arrested on a charge of public intoxication.
- **GERALD RAY KING**, 28, 1604 E. 16th, was arrested on a charge of driving while intoxicated, second offense.

Sheriff's report

The Howard County Sheriff's Office reported the following activity (Note: officials reported 52 prisoners in the county jail):

- JOSHUA LELAND JONES, 19, was arrested on a charge of evading arrest with a vehicle.
- FILMORE W. JOHNSON JR., 62, was arrested by DPS on a charge of driving while intoxicated.

Fire/EMS

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

- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 2600 block of Chanute. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 800 block of W. 18th. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAFFIC ACCIDENT was reported in the 3200 block of Parkway. Two persons were transported to
- TRAFFIC ACCIDENT was reported in the 200 block of Circle. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1800 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 700 block of W. Interstate 20. One person was transported to SMMC.

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Obituaries

Francine Campbell

Francine Campbell, 92, of Hobbs passed away Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2007, in a local hospital. Funeral services will be at 10:30 a.m., Friday, Dec. 28, 2007, at Griffin Funeral Home Chapel. Interment will be at 3 p.m. CST Friday, Dec, 28 in Trinity Memorial Park Cemetery in Big Spring.

Francine was born March 26, 1915 in Lindale to Roy and Lollie Bookout Cook. She married Howard Campbell in Carlsbad, N.M., and they celebrated 44 loving years of marriage until his death in 1996.

Mrs. Campbell enjoyed sewing and quilting and loved to travel. She was a member of Taylor Memorial Baptist Church. Her parents, her husband, a sister and two brothers preceded her in death.

Survivors include her daughters, Arlene Bunch and her husband Darrel of Carrollton and Lunell Barrington of Mesquite; her sisters, Myrtle Winkler and Beatrice Crum; her brother, Col. Jetty R. Cook and his wife Wanda; four granddaughters; and seven greatgrandchildren.

Louise McElreath

Louise McElreath, 67, of Allen, formerly of Big Spring died Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2007, at Baylor Medical Center of Plano. Memorial services will be at 4 p.m. Saturday at Myers & Smith Chapel with Craig Felty officiating. The family will receive friends from 5 p.m. until 6 p.m. Saturday following the service.

She was born Nov. 4, 1940, at Shamrock to Pauline and Louis Waits. She was a lifetime resident of Big Spring until moving to Allen in 2005. She worked with her husband in the oil industry and with her brother in the car business.

She is survived by her son, Gary Hopper and his wife Debra of Allen; three granddaughters; her mother, Pauline Waits of Lubbock; two sisters: Cheryl Piper of Dallas and Teresa Self and her husband Frank of Lubbock; and four nieces.

In addition to her husband Clem, she was preceded in death by her father, Louie Waits; one brother, Jimmy Waits; and one baby daughter, Karla Jo Hopper.

The family suggests memorials to the Arthritis Foundation, P.O. Box 96280, Washington, DC 20077-7491.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at www.myersandsmith.com

Mary Ann Hall



Mary Ann Hall, 69, of Big Spring, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2007, in a Midland hospital. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 29, 2007, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel with Dr. Randy Cotton, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church and the Rev. James Mitchell, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church of San Angelo, officiating. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park. The fam-

ily will receive friends Friday from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the funeral home.

Mary Ann Hall was born July 26, 1938, in Stanton to L.E. (Red) and Laura Elizabeth Beene. She married Perry M. Hall on Dec. 26, 1956, in Big Spring. He preceded her in death on Dec. 22, 1995. Mary Ann Hall resided most of her life in Big Spring and graduated from Big Spring High School in 1957. She was employed for numerous years at Vaughn's Bakery and 20 years at 7-Eleven, retiring in 2005. Mary Ann and her family owned Hall's Bicycle Shop. She was a Christian and a member of the Baptist church.

Survivors include two sons, Perry Dean Hall of Big Spring and Tony G. Hall and wife Ginny of Richardson; one grandson, Hunter Hall of Richardson; one brother and sister-in-law, Wayne and Martha Beene of Big Spring; her brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Janette Florence of Big Spring, R.B. and Helen Hall of Austin, Letress and Mike Tavaglione of Fort Worth, Phillis and James Mitchell of San Angelo; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Memorials may be made to the Trinity Baptist Church Building Fund., P.O. Box 1448, Big Spring 79721.

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

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NBA

2B

Continued from Page 1B

"You can't overrate this win," said center Zydrunas Ilgauskas, who had 18 points and 11 rebounds. "It's a good win, but we've got a long way to go."

Dallas lost its second straight after winning five in a row. The Mavs fell to 6-6 against the Eastern Conference and have lost 11 games overall, after dropping only 15 last season.

The problems this time were much the same as the previous night in Utah. One of the biggies was that Dallas got too comfortable behind the 3point line even though the shots weren't falling; the Mavericks were 4-of-

Jason Terry was 1-of-6 on 3s and 3-of-12 overall. It was an improvement from an 0-for-10 against the Jazz, but not enough to spark a team in definite need of one. Whether it was because of the back-to-back games or iust one of those nights, Dallas just didn't have it. Once Cleveland erased an early 16-9 deficit, the Mavericks led again.

'There were stretches when we didn't have the energy we needed, but for the most part we fought hard, we just didn't make shots," Terry said. "They made plays down the stretch and we missed

some wide open 3s that usually go down for us."

Dirk Nowitzki had 19 points and 20 rebounds, his most in a regular-season game since April 2003. He played the whole game with tape around his shooting wrist and thumb, which helped explain his 1-for-8 first half.

Then he finished the third quarter complaining of a groin problem.

Josh Howard had 19 points, too, while Jerry Stackhouse and Terry both scored 11.

The game's weird tone was set early, with Mavs coach Avery Johnson getting a technical foul 22 seconds into the game. All he did was wave his hand in disgust and turn away after asking why Dallas was whistled for fouling James when James wasn't called for a foul on a similar play on the other end of the court. The call was so strange that Mavs owner Mark Cuban thought he might have been to blame, saying, "You're going to call a tech on me?"

Then James missed two of the three foul shots.

Through three quarters, the Cavs were 0-for-10 on 3-pointers and had missed 10 free throws yet led by six points.

The Mavericks got within one point early in the fourth quarter and made it 81-79 with 4:43 left and James already with five fouls. Instead of making a move, they missed a

bunch of 3s. Then James pretty much ended it with a thunderous dunk in the lane with 1:10 to go.

"I wanted to finish out the game," said James, who scored only 10 points last time against Dallas. "We were missing a lot of easy shots and we wanted to be aggressive."

Larry Hughes had 17 points and nine rebounds. Drew Gooden had seven points, nine rebounds and lots of kudos for keeping Nowitzki from taking over.

"You've got to make him work for his shots and he did that," coach Mike Brown said.

Celtics 104, **Supersonics 96**

SEATTLE Pierce scored 26 of his season-high 37 points in the second half, and

Boston held off Seattle 104-96 on Thursday night. Pierce hit 11 of 27 shots and 10 of 11 free throws. He was dominant in the closing minutes of the third quarter and into the fourth, scoring 14 points in a little more than 7

minutes to help the

Celtics win their fourth

straight and improve to

24-3. Kevin Garnett scored 14 of his 23 points in the first half, and Ray Allen added a mostly quiet 10, playing his first game in Seattle since a draft night trade that sent the seven-time

Rookie Kevin Durant led Seattle with 25 points and Delonte West, part of

All-Star to the Celtics.

the trade that brought Allen to Boston, added 19. Pierce's previous high this season was 32 against

Milwaukee on Dec. 14. Suns 108,

SPORTS

Clippers 88 LOS ANGELES Amare Stoudemire had 30 points and 15 rebounds stifling and played defense against Chris

Kaman to lead Phoenix. Stoudemire scored 20 points and had 11 rebounds in the first half as Phoenix opened a 59-40 lead. The Suns built the lead to as many as 36 points, the last time at 79-43 midway through the third quarter as they handed the outmanned Clippers their fifth consecutive loss and 14th in 17 games.

Stoudemire, who left the game with 3:25 to go in the third quarter and didn't return, finished 11-of-14 from the field and 8-of-10 from the free throw line.

Grant Hill and Leandro Barbosa both added 16 points for Phoenix, while Steve Nash had nine points and 12 assists.

Kaman, held to two points on 1-of-11 shooting in the first half, scored seven in the second half and finished with nine rebounds to end his streak of 12 consecutive double-doubles. He went 4-of-17 from the field.

Corey Maggette, back in the lineup after missing a game with a sore right knee, led Los Angeles with 21 points.



AP photo/Mark J. Terrill

Los Angeles Clippers guard Dan Dickau (10) goes up for a shot as Phoenix Suns forward Sean Marks guards during the second half of the Suns' 108-88 win Thursday in Los Angeles.



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State Briefs

Bus company must halt operations

DALLAS (AP) — A charter bus company involved in a crash that killed four people in Arkansas last month must immediately cease all operations because it is an "imminent hazard to public safety," the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration announced Thursday.

friday page 3a 12/28/07 11:47 AM Page 1 Network Macintosh HD:Desktop Folder:

According to an operations out-of-service order dated Dec. 21, Dallas-based Tornado Bus Co. must cease all operations because of its "unacceptable safety compliance," "failure to adequately establish safety management systems" and its practice of permitting drivers to exceed mandated maximum hours of service.

"Your motor carrier operation poses an imminent hazard to public safety," the order says. The company's numerous violations "substantially increase the likelihood of serious injury or death to Tornado's drivers, passengers and to the motoring public."

Officials at Tornado did not respond to a phone message left by The Associated Press.

Pakistani leader in Houston says elections should proceed

IRVING (AP) — Phone lines down in Pakistan kept Shoaib Khan from reaching a sister who lives near the violent chaos spawned there from Thursday's assassination of Benazir Bhutto.

But for many Pakistanis in Texas, the fate of their home country following the death of the opposition leader was almost as much concern as the safety of family.

"There is no future left for Pakistan," Mohammad Imitiaz Jan said. "There is no law there."

Pakistani community leaders across Texas scrambled to organize weekend memorials while grieving the loss of Bhutto, who was assassinated by an attacker who shot her after a campaign rally.

Texas is home to more than 100,000 Pakistanis, according to the Pakistani People's Party of North Texas. Most live around Houston, where Taeleem Siddiqui said his phone began ringing early Thursday from fellow Pakistanis wanting to know if the news

Woman gets to keep a few of the 237 dogs taken from her house

project.

CORPUS CHRISTI (AP) — A 70-year-old woman won't have to go without a pet dog after having 237 of the animals removed from her house. But she won't be breeding dogs any more, her lawyer said.

Corpus Christi animal control workers removed the 237 dogs from Alice Carlson's home last week after getting a complaint from a workman who made a service call to the home.

Carlson and city officials met behind closed doors for two hours on Thursday to hammer out an agreement that will allow Carlson to keep three dogs of her choosing after they are spayed or neutered.

Nine of the dogs will go back to people who showed proof of ownership and another dog will be given to Carlson's son, who lives in Illinois. The remaining 213 dogs will be sent to several area shelters.

Tiger found dead near Dallas interstate was probably a pet

DALLAS (AP) — A veterinarian at the Dallas Zoo performed a necropsy Thursday on a female tiger found shot to death near an apartment complex, a zoo official said.

The tiger did not belong to the zoo and was believed to have been someone's pet. It was found Christmas Day in a vacant lot near a busy interstate and an apartment complex, said zoo spokeswoman Susan Eckert.

The Department of Agriculture is investigating, Eckert said.

An unidentified caller phoned a city hotline on Christmas Day about a dead animal, Eckert said. A sanitation crew that arrived to clean it up found a fullgrown tiger under a blue tarp.

"They knew this wasn't a normal thing to find along the road, so they delivered it to the zoo," Eckert said.

Rabies vaccine drop begins in January

AUSTIN (AP) — Bait laced with rabies vaccine will be dropped from airplanes in 44 Texas counties next month in an effort targeting coyotes and gray foxes.

The Texas Department of State Health Services annual oral rabies vaccination drop begins Jan. 6 from the Zapata County Airport.

The second portion of the drop is scheduled to start Jan. 11 from Junction's Kimble County Airport and from the Fort Stockton-Pecos County Airport. About 3.3 million baits filled with rabies vaccine will

be dropped on 44 counties, agency officials said.

Maverick and Zavala counties are included in both distribution areas.

The first drop area includes Cameron, Dimmit, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, La Salle, Maverick, Starr, Webb, Willacy, Zapata and Zavala counties.

The second drop area has Brewster, Coleman, Concho, Crane, Crockett, Ector, Edwards, Gillespie, Irion, Kerr, Kimble, Kinney, Llano, Loving, Mason, Maverick, McCulloch, Menard, Midland, Pecos, Reagan, Real, Reeves, Runnels, San Saba, Schleicher,

law

Terracon, over Honesty Environmental Houston.

Any time saved now will be money saved in the future, Barr said.

"Every day we can save on this project saves the county \$1,500," he said.

Sutton, Terrell, Tom Green, Upton, Uvalde, Val Verde, Ward, Winkler and Zavala counties.

A&M leaders apologize over remarks about Paterno

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Texas A&M officials have apologized to Penn State leaders over an Aggie yell leader's references to needing a "casket" for coach Joe Paterno.

Paterno last week turned 81.

Penn State faces A&M on Saturday night in the Alamo Bowl.

One A&M yell leader, during a pep rally Thursday night, told the crowd that Paterno was "on his death bed" and "someone needs to find him a casket."

The remarks drew boos from the crowd. Some A&M and Penn State fans said the remarks were offensive and inappropriate.

A&M spokesman Alan Cannon says interim president Eddie Davis and athletic director Bill Byrne later apologized to their Penn State counterparts.

Paterno, a 42-year head-coaching veteran, is about to enter the last year of a four-year contract that expires following the 2008 season.

Theft of tainted meat prompts warning of roadside sales

FORT WORTH (AP) — American Fresh Foods is warning Texans to avoid possible parking lot or roadside sales of ground beef after someone stole a refrigerated truck containing 14,800 pounds of meat possibly contaminated with the E. coli bacteria.

Some of the meat had been removed from fresh commercial sale and was placed in a truck at the plant before the vehicle was stolen Thursday, company officials said Friday.

The company's products are safe to buy in grocery stores, but officials are urging people not to buy the beef under "questionable circumstances," said Tim Biela, chief food safety and quality assurance officer for American Fresh Foods.

The Fort Worth-based company is working with U.S. Department of Agriculture officials and local and state authorities to issue a public health alert and to find the stolen meat and truck.

All labels are printed with "EST. 13116" inside the USDA mark of inspection. Labels for the 1- to 2-pound packages also list the company name below the nutrition information. Labels for the bulk packages, weighing between 40 and 370 pounds, also list a date of "12-19-07" with the production information filled in by

"That's what it costs us to house jail inmates out of the county."

Construction is expected to take between nine months, and 10 Heffelfinger said.

"When we start makes a ton of difference," he said.

"Our charge is to get personnel into the facility as soon as possible."

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

SENIOR

JAIL

Continued from Page 1A

Continued from Page 1A

to perform the soil engi-

neering duties associated

Architectural consultant

the

can," he said.

Meanwhile, disbanding the board gives commissioners more direct control over center operations, he added.

Once the contract is negotiated, engineers are expected on site within 10 days. Another piece of prepatory work is the demoli-

Jeff Heffelfinger estimat-

ed the contract would cost

between \$5,000 and \$6,000.

out there, anyone is wel-

come to come see me

about it," Barr said. "We

are not abandoning the

senior center in any way,

Bebe McCasland, direc-

tor of the board, supports

the board's dissolution,

but questioned commis-

shape or form."

commissioners decided to hire the Midland firm,

tion of two structures;

requires those structures

to be surveyed for

asbestos before they are

To conduct that survey,

however, state

demolished.

matter. "To silence the board now would be questionable. When the transfer of management is complete, then it would be wise," McCasland said. "Since our next regularly scheduled meeting is in January, I believe it is

"If there is any trouble sioners' timing on the premature to disband the building. board at this time.

Tight financial times at the county has forced its officials to seek the transfer to the city. The county currently budgets \$108,000 for the center's operation, with the city kicking in \$36,000. In addition, the county maintains the

Barr is hopeful negotiations with the city go smoothly.

"I don't see any trouble right now, but everything is very preliminary," he said. "After Jan. 3 (when negotiations formal

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begin), we'll have a better about what to expect."

Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-7331.

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Louise McElreath, 67, Wednesday. Memorial Services will be at 4:00 PM Saturday at Myers & Smith Chapel. The family will receive friends from 5:00 until 6:00 PM Saturday following the service.

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GREEN

Continued from Page 1A

that becomes an issue." Many states already

offer similar rebates and incentives through tax breaks, loans and perks such as allowing hybridcar drivers to use car pool lanes.

Utilities have long provided incentives to buy energy-efficient appliances, solar panels and toilets that use less water. The federal government, too, offers tax incentives for purchases of many hybrid vehicles and energy-saving products.

Still, for many cities, it's just not enough.

"In terms of waiting for the federal government, we've waited a long time, and frankly, we haven't

gotten very much," said Jared Blumenfeld, director of San Francisco's Department of Environment. "And how

do you change someone's behavior? The simple answer is cash.' Starting next year, San

Francisco will offer homeowners rebates of up to \$5,000 for installing solar panels if they use a local contractor. Coupled with state and federal incentives, that could cut in half the \$21,000 cost for an average household, Blumenfeld said.

The city will also cover up to 90 percent of the costs of making apartment buildings more energy-efficient, and will pay residents \$150 to replace old appliances.

The neighboring city of Berkeley is financing the cost of solar panels for

homeowners who agree to pay the money back through a 20-year property tax assessment.

Nearby Marin County offers a \$500 rebate to homeowners who install solar systems.

Baltimore offers at least \$2,000 toward closing costs for people who buy new homes close to where they work. It is called the "Live Near Your Work" program.

"Just living near your job and taking transit or walking to meet your daily needs provides basically the same environmental benefit as buying a hybrid car," said Amanda Eaken of the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Residents Albuquerque, N.M., get fast-track building permits and other perks if they agree to make their homes more energy-efficient.

In Arizona, many cities pay residents to replace grass with artificial turf or plants that use less water. Scottsdale, outside Phoenix, will pay up to \$1,500.

"We're in the middle of a desert and water is absolutely the most precious resource we have," said city spokesman Mike Phillips.





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AP photo/Chris Park

Texas quarterback Colt McCoy holds the offensive mostvaluable-player trophy after leading Texas to a 52-34 victory over Arizona State in the Holiday Bowl Thursday.

ROUNDUP

Continued from Page 1B

played like it was the holidays. No one was too polished. We did enough to hang onto the win in the

Big Spring held a 29-12 lead after the first quarter, but Lidle outscored the Steers in every period after that, chipping away at the lead slowly. Fortunately for Big Spring, the 17-point deficit proved to be more than Lidle could overcome.

Nine Steers scored in the tournament opener with Jason Walker leading the way with a gamehigh 24 points. Three other Steers reached double digits with Jerrell Williams notching 14 points, Terrence Clemons contributed 11 points and Clemons' younger brother Tyrone had 10.

Big Spring improved its record to 9-5 with the vic-

friday page 3b 12/28/07 11:43 AM Page 1 Network Macintosh HD:Desktop Folder:

Big Spring 46 34-80 Big Spring (9-5): Terrence Clemons 11, Lance Gross 7, Jerrell Williams 14, Tyrone Clemons 10, Hayden Phillips 4, Jason Walker 24, Tyler Tannehill 6, Matt Ritchey 2, Sidney Parker 2.

Steers 80,

Copperas Cove 62

Another 80 points later and the Steers were headed to the semifinals. However, the game was much closer than the 18point lead Big Spring had when the final horn sounded.

Copperas Cove led for the better part of the game. The Bulldogs held a 5-point advantage at intermission and extended that lead to 10 points midway through the third period.

However, powered by its starting five, Big Spring fought back and cut the lead to six heading into the final stanza.

"We started to do a better job of rebounding the ball after they missed a shot and stopped giving **HOLIDAY** fourth-most

Continued from Page 1B

He said his stepfather told him "not to worry about it, the guys would pull it out."

Brown joked about it afterward.

"I was standing there. I didn't think he touched it, but it just shows you how badly our family wanted to win the game. He even got involved," Brown said.

"That's the most unusual play I've ever seen in college football," ASU coach Dennis Erickson said. "I was talking to the official and I said, in my 35 or 40 years — it feels like 50 right now — however many years I've coached. I've never seen anything like that."

The 86 points were the

them more opportunities to score," Morris said. "We started to execute better offensively at the same time. Defensively, we moved in and out of a press and forced a few turnovers."

The Steers took the lead early in the final period and ran away with the game from there. Big Spring held Copperas Cove to eight points in the final stanza, while scoring 27.

Walker again led the Steers with a game-high points. Terrence Clemons added 23 points and Lance Gross had 11.

Steers The faced Pflugerville Hendrickson at 12:30 p.m. today in the semifinals. A win would put Big Spring in the finals against the winner of Burney and Austin Lake Travis.

Big Spring 16 12 25 27-80 Copperas Cove 15 18 21 8—62 Big Spring (10-5): Terrence Clemons 23, Lance Gross 11, Jerrell Williams 6, Tyrone Clemons 7, Jason Walker 33.

in Holiday Bowl's 30-year history.

Texas set team records for points in a bowl game with its fourth straight postseason win.

McCoy led the way for the Longhorns, throwing for a touchdown, running for another and fumbling into the end zone at the end of a 30-yard run, with tight end Jermichael Finley recovering for a score.

times. The Longhorns recovered three and ASU got the other one.

Jamaal Charles carried two touchdowns for the Longhorns.

Brown and Erickson have been friends for years, but had never coached against each other.

Erickson won two

Copperas Cove: Baker 16, Clark

Coahoma 59, Garden City 43

BIG LAKE — Coahoma had three players reach double digits in scoring as they advanced to the second round of the Mary Tatum Holiday Classic Thursday. The Bulldogs match up with Ballinger at 4:30 p.m. today.

Meanwhile, Garden City, who was led by Wade Jansa's game-high 21 points, will play the winner of the Irion County-Reagan County JV game at 7:30 p.m. tonight.

The Bulldogs held a 27-12 advantage at halftime. Garden City couldn't ever hold the deficit to less than 10 points in the second half.

Coahoma was led by Cody Sheppard, who had 18 points. Colter Morgan and Logan Stone each had 10 and Mathew Tatum chipped in nine.

Coahoma 15 12 15 17-59 Garden City 8 4 17 14—43

JAN. 7 **BCS National** Championship At New Orleans

Payout: \$17 million Ohio State (11-1) vs. LSU (11-2), 7 p.m. (FOX)



the national championships at Miami and Brown coached Texas to the national title two years

> ASU (10-3) committed five turnovers, with Carpenter throwing two interceptions before leaving the game in the fourth quarter.

Carpenter had a horrible night, going 18-for-32 for 187 yards. He was sacked four times.

"I just couldn't step into McCoy fumbled four my throws," Carpenter said. "They were bringing a lot of pressure and they were bringing heat."

Texas cornerback 27 times for 161 yards and Brandon Foster had a huge game with two interceptions, a fumble recovery and a tipped pass that was picked off by teammate Marcus Griffin.

> McCoy was 21-for-31 passing for 174 yards, and carried 16 times for 84

Coahoma (10-3): Braden Griffin 2, Josh Paniagua 7, Colter Morgan 10, Logan Stone 10, Mathew Tatum 9, Jovi Paniagua 3, Cody Sheppard

yards.

The Longhorns raced to a 21-0 first-quarter lead, including the fastest score in Holiday Bowl history. McCoy threw a 2-yard TD pass to Derek Lokey just 1:21 in. John Chiles scored on a 4-yard run, and Charles had a 15-yard scoring run.

"When you play a team like Texas, they're too good to get in that type of deficit," Carpenter said.

After ASU's score following the bizarre play, McCoy added a 9-yard TD

It looked like he was going to score again in the third quarter when he went zigzagging through ASU's defense. But he fumbled as he was tackled at the 3 and the ball rolled into the end zone. Finley was the third player into the pile and ended up with the ball and the TD.

Garden City: Jake Schwartz 6, Clake 2, Eric Hirt 5, Wade Jansa 21, Nick Sanchez 5, Brent Chudej 4.

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U.S. Department of Justice - Federal Bureau of Prisons Notice of Availability of Finding of No Significant Impact

The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), through a third-party contractor, is proposing to install and operate an Energy Savings Performance Contracting (ESPC) project at the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) in Big Spring, TX. Principal components of the project consist of installation of programmable thermostats; HVAC modifications; energy efficient lighting upgrades; provisions of low flow toilets, shower valves and other water conservation devices; use of submeters to record utility use at the five most energy intensive buildings; and up to two wind turbine generators. Project objectives are to reduce energy consumption to meet federal energy reduction mandates, implement renewable energy technologies, improve facility infrastructure and reduce water consumption. Potential impacts of the proposed project were considered and documented by the BOP within an Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated to result from the proposed project which has lead to a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) as defined in NEPA. Copies of the FONSI are available from: Wendell L. Harris, Federal Bureau of Prisons, South Central Regional Office, 4211 Cedar Springs Road, Suite 300, Dallas, TX 75219, Tel: 214-224-3487/Fax: 214-224-3365. Thank you for your interest.

8405

BRIEFS

Continued from Page 1B

Cotton Bowl At Dallas

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

Capital One Bowl At Orlando, Fla. Payout: \$4.25 million Michigan (8-4)

Florida (9-3), Noon (ABC) **Gator Bowl**

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

Rose Bowl

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

Payout: \$17 million Hawaii (12-0)

Sugar Bowl

At New Orleans

Georgia (10-2), 7:30 p.m. (FOX) JAN. 2 Fiesta Bowl

VS.

At Glendale, Ariz. Payout: \$17 million West Virginia (10-2) vs. Oklahoma (11-2), 7 p.m. (FOX)

JAN. 3 **Orange Bowl** At Miami Payout: \$17 million Kansas (11-1)Virginia Tech (11-2), 7 p.m. (FOX)

International Bowl At Toronto Payout: \$750,000

(ESPN2)

JAN. 5

Rutgers (7-4) vs. Ball State (7-5), 11 a.m.

JAN. 6 **GMAC Bowl** Mobile, Ala. Pavout: \$750.000 Tulsa (9-4) vs. Bowling Green (8-4), 7 p.m. (ESPN)



By Steve Becker

Forcing or Nonforcing?

Below are five bidding sequences. In each case, state whether you consider the last bid in the sequence to be forcing (absolutely compelling partner to bid again), or nonforcing (allowing partner to pass). A bid that merely invites partner to bid again is

nonior	cing.	
1.	Opener 1 ♠ 2 ♥	Responde 2 ♦ 2 NT
2.	2 NT	4 NT
3.	1 ↑ 2 ↑ 2 ♥	1 ♥ 2 ♦ 3 ♣
4.	1 ♦ 3 ♦ 3 ♠	1 ♥ 3 ♥
5.	3 ♦	3 ♠

1. Nonforcing. Responder's twodiamond bid indicated 10 or more points, and his two-notrump bid now limits his point count to 10 to 12. Opener may therefore pass if he has minimum values for his first two bids. It follows that if responder had a game-going hand (13 points or more), he would bid three notrump, not two.

2. Nonforcing. This is a raise in notrump and has nothing to do with Blackwood. Responder is asking opener to bid six notrump if he has a maximum for his two-notrump opening, and to pass if he has a minimum Assuming opener's two-notrump opening shows 21 or 22 points (different partnerships play different ranges), responder should have about 11 points for his four-notrump bid.

3. Forcing. Responder's first two bids were forcing, and so is the three club bid. Responder must have a game-going hand, since he failed to pass two clubs and also failed to bid three clubs (invitational) instead of two diamonds. He is still probing for the proper game or slam contract.

4. Forcing. Opener may be inviting partner to bid three notrump with a club stopper, or he may be angling for a slam in diamonds or hearts Responder can't tell yet which it is but must make the most descriptive bid he can find at this point.

5. Forcing. When responder names a new suit below the game level opposite a pre-emptive opening, that bid is unconditionally forcing. If this were not so, there would be no way to explore for the correct contract, and responder would be reduced to taking a wild stab at the right spot

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OPINION

Troy

Brewer

"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

Friday, Page 4A, 12-28-07 12/28/07 11:42 AM Page 1 Network Macintosh HD:Desktop Fo∤der:

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

> Ron Midkiff Publisher

John A. Moseley Managing Editor

Bill McClellan News Editor

OUR VIEWS

We salute:

Each week, the Herald salutes individuals and groups from our community and area who have been recognized for special achievements or accomplishments.

We recognize these special people for working to help make our region a better place to live, work and play

This week we salute:

- The Settles Hotel Development Co. on the announcement that a \$12 million renovation of the historic Settles Hotel will begin in earnest around Feb. 1.
- All of those who work so diligently to protect us — law enforcement personnel, fire department and EMT workers — who gave up their Christmas, or most of it anyway, while most of us were enjoying being with family. We don't say it enough, but we do appreciate you.
- And speaking of law officers, thanks, too, to the Big Spring Police Association and its Blue Santa program. This year, the effort helped provide a wonderful Christmas for six local families. Best of all, the organization plans on increasing that number next year.
- Churches throughout the Crossroads area. During all the gift-giving and receiving, the good food and merriment, it was in church where we were reminded of the reason we celebrate Christmas.

Is there an individual or organization in our community that you feel should be saluted? If so, please send us their name and why you think they should be recognized. We must have your name and telephone number and you must provide it in writing.

How To Contact Us

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

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

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A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

May we not trip over our own feet, Lord, but stand firm in Your love.

Amen

Fast times ... a year in review

indsight is 20-20, they say, so let's take a rather clear look at a year that's gone by in a blur. The Brewer must be getting old because it seems like it ought to be March or April. The calendar

pages are turning faster than I can keep up with. I don't think it's my high doses of caffeine, I really think the days are accelerated somehow.

In the fury of our race around the sun, more than a million people a week spun off into infinity and are no longer with us in body. The seventh

year of the new millennium saw the last of some people we all recognize and lots of people we never had the privilege of knowing.

A Year of Leaving Dan Fogelberg and Ike Turner are two fairly famous musicians who passed away. I doubt if Tina will miss Ike, but I will definitely miss Dan. Evel Knievel jumped into eternity and Don Ho sang "Tiny Bubbles" for the last time in Hawaii. Anna Nicole Smith took her reality show to the other side and we all said farewell to Jerry Falwell. Yes, 2007 was an interesting year.

A Year of Living The year didn't kill everybody. Edna Parker lived to be 114 years old and holds the distinction of being the oldest living person in the world, as of Aug. 13. Edna is a retired teacher who saw the world truly change during her extraextended time. Her husband, Earl, died way back in 1938 and she never remarried. Edna is the oldest of the 74 known supercentenarians (people older than 110 years old) in the world and the Brewer tips his coffee cup to her. You go girl!

A Year of Craziness

Other notable events include that while Chavez lost his election in Venezuela, more than 1500 people lost their homes in California wild fires. Britney lost her mind and "Lost" was in season three.

Gas prices hit the roof, Barry Bonds hit his 756th home run and Bishop Weeks hit his wife, Juanita Bynum, in a hotel parking

In 2007, the Cowboys rocked the house while the housing market hit the rocks.

Michael Vick was kicked out of the doghouse and into the "big house" for a sentence of 23 months for dog fighting.

A Year of Disgrace

It seems like there were several high-profile disgraces, including Marion Jones losing her Olympic medals, which I was really sad about. Ted Haggard fell out of the pulpit and onto the national "gaydar" after vehemently protesting all things homosexual. God help high-profile preachers to remain vertical and with their wives!

Then there was U.S. Sen. Larry Craig getting caught trying to pick up a fling in the men's bathroom of an airport. Nothing says class like an adulterous, homosexual escapade in a public toilet. Thanks for being such a great leader and example, Senator.

A Year of Stepping, Passing and Heroes

Bob Barker stepped down as the host of The Price Is Right and handed Drew Carey a steady paycheck. O.J. Simpson stepped into trouble one more time and celebrities stepped into a dance-off.

Toys with lead were passed back to China while Marie Osmond passed out all together on national television. It's worth noting that my son Benjamin passed his report cards for the first time ever. You rock, Ben!

While heroes were avoiding bombs and tracking down terrorists in Iraq and Afghanistan, America was watching "Heroes" on NBC. It's amazing how big of a priority entertainment is when so much is on the line.

The Wind Up

For me personally, it was another adventurous year and anything but boring. I married some friends and buried a few others. I got my food bank warehouse built and really feel like we made a difference this year.

I spent several months on mission trips and recorded a live album with my band. I wrote another book, "Numbers That Preach," that should be out in January.

My kids are happy and doing well. My wife is still the most amazing woman on the planet. 2007 was a really good year for me.

No matter where you are at or whatever you are doing, I pray that you know the love of God more than ever before. I pray that you grow in happiness, thankfulness and just flat out prosper in the New Year. Blessings on you, Texans, and thanks for sipping with me.

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3 John 1:2

The Rev. Troy Brewer welcomes your comments. E-mail him at troy@OpenDoorMinistries.org.

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263-2566. **GARY SIMER** — Home:

263-0260.

Holiday anticipation can change

t's amazing how much Christmas can change to someone over the years. I remember when I was a child back when dinosaurs roamed the Earth, according to my daughter — the anticipation leading up to the Christmas holiday was physically painful.

I would sit in my room, staring at the calendar, as if by some form of telepathy I could make Christmas Eve come faster.

This, of course, was due to my unabashed need for Christmas presents.

JENKINS What, would you prefer I lie and say it was the spirit of the holiday, or the prospect of trudging through the snow and freezing rain to sing — badly, I might add — carols to

strangers? And, when all the presents had been unwrapped — not to mention the determination they needed batteries that were nowhere around — and the mess squared away, the thought would immediately enter my head: It's 364 more days until Christmas.

Boy, have times changed. Now, I get just as anxious as the holiday season rolls around, but with dread, not anticipation. Christmas songs on the radio serve as a reminder I have yet to complete my Christmas shopping, and the box of Christmas cards I was so anxious to send out is still sitting, unopened, on my desk.

Don't get me wrong, I still love the holidays from the standpoint of watching my daughter prepare, wrapping presents and cutting ribbons and bows.

I honestly think that's one of the greatest feelings a parent will ever

However, the packed shopping

centers and mall, horrible traffic and endless array of holiday commercials telling me and my daughter what we simply can't live without this Christmas season is harrowing, at best.

A friend of mine put it best: Christmas has been over-commercialized.

Making gifts by hand has given way to Amazon.com, which will even wrap your presents and deliver them for one tidy charge. Christmas carols have given way to scantily clad pop singers, and even Santa Claus needs a background check to make sure he's not a pedophile before handing out presents to all the good — and lets be honest, because the naughty kids are getting gifts too — little

boys and girls. And, as with all problems, everyone wants to know who is to

blame. According to many Christian organizations, it's Santa's fault. Our dear Saint Nick has desensitized the children to the real message of the holiday, which is to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the promised Messiah.

Other groups scream and point their fingers at the media, who have assaulted us with every Christmas special under the sun, animated, claymation and otherwise. Let us not forget they are the purveyors of the Cartoon Network commercials that have turned our lives into a living... Well, you get the point.

Jehova's Witnesses will continue to disallow their children to color pictures of Santa — at least that's how it was when I was a kid -Mormons will argue Jesus was actually born in April and those of the Jewish faith will continue to spin the dreidel and have what Adam Sandler has deemed "eight crazy nights."

But, in all honesty, who really screwed up Christmas in

We did.

We, the American people, who have tried to analyze and dissect everything to death, be politically correct at every turn, and, in the end, quietly walk the perimeter of our own perverted sense of worth waiting on an attack from the other guy.

Lighten up, people. Spend less time judging others and finding all their faults and problems, and concentrate on correcting the problems in your own house.

Christmas is too commercial? Lay down a parental mandate that at least half the gifts given this year have to be handmade by the giver. Spending is out of hand? Put a limit on how much each person in the family is allowed to spend, then stick to it.

Hey, if a salary cap can work for the NFL, it can work for us at Christmas time.

But most of all, stop complaining, pointing fingers and playing the blame game. Turn off the Bugs Bunny Christmas special, throw on some Bing Crosby — even if he beat his kids, the man knew how to sing Christmas songs — light a few candles and gather the family around the tree.

Talk about what the holiday means to each of you.

Turn off the iPods, unplug the televisions and disconnect the Internet. OK, I can't believe I actually said that last one.

But most of all, let's put the joy back in the holidays for us adults. Let's have some fun, drink some egg nog and spread Christmas cheer.

Happy Holidays, everyone, from me and my family to each and every one of you.

Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by email at citydesk@bigspringherald.com.

Contact Staff Writer Thomas



4B

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paperwork makes fine

ARIES (March 21-April

boundaries are always

changing, and you can

expect the same from

your nearest and dearest.

Be sensitive. What was

just fine yesterday might

TAURUS (April 20-May

20). Hold your head up

high. You attract people

who respect themselves

and respect you. Tonight,

everything works out

brilliantly as long as you

remember to put love

You've

concessions in the name

of friendship. Further

compromise could make

Explain your position in

that charming way that

CANCER (June 22-July

22). Your loyalties will be

directions. Surrender to

your own truth. Tonight,

it's the wildly silly side of

love that keeps you

entertained and wanting

in

feel

GEMINI (May 21-June

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resentful.

different

be offensive today.

before money.

only you can.

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Your

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project. For

those still on

focus

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	ANOVIENO								
Ш	2	9	6	8	1	7	4	3	5
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П	9	7	5	4	3	8	2	6	1
	6	4	3	2	7	1	5	8	9
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Tomorrow's Horoscope

Some admirable souls

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Celebrate your unique Tonight, attributes. children (or childish people) do crazy things to get your attention. This can be curtailed if you focus on these guys before they need it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You've figured out how to maneuver a system, but now, it's better just to forget it. Going by the rules isn't going to work because everything is rapidly changing. Access your creativity instead.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There's so much to know about the world. Be grateful for any situation that points out a hole in your education. You'll be filling in a few blanks over the next three weeks.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Even if you think your heart's desire (to skydive, paint, travel, etc.) has nothing to do with a relationship right now, taking steps to fulfill your dream will make your relationships much stronger.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Be careful not to over-think passionate impulses. Get back to the childlike immediacy you used to act out. Sure, this has gotten you burned a few times, but you're wiser now and better at assessing risk.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). One of the agreements you made long ago is in need of an amendment. This is the perfect day to update and refresh

commitments. The other party will be amenable to your suggestions.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Make sure the loved ones in your life are sufficiently honored. Or realize who you love, and show it with your actions. Tonight, to avoid becoming dreadfully serious, adopt a "if it's no fun, it's not getting done" policy.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You'll be called on to entertain. If you can't dazzle 'em with brilliance, baffle 'em with whatever comes off the top of your head. You are captivating either way. WEEKEND LOVE

FORECAST: ARIES: Your relationship deserves a breath of fresh air, so follow that whim of yours together. You learn more about each other in the process. TAURUS: Let love change you, or be changed by love. It only gets better. GEMINI: You're so good at giving your loved ones all the freedom in the world. So what will you do with all their undivided attention? CANCER: The difference between healthy giving and selfsacrifice is the spirit of being in this partnership together. LEO: Your creativity is at an all-time high, and so is your friskiness. Go ahead, be fabulous. VIRGO: The planets set your social life abuzz and send at least one unexpected suitor calling. LIBRA: You don't have to look far for love. It's less than a hop, skip and a jump away. SCORPIO: You feel your like springing

something fabulous. Talk with your partner first. **SAGITTARIUS:**

Surrounded by an aura of intrigue irresistibility, your popularity is only topped charm. your CAPRICORN: Your love life has been far from quiet the past months. Finally, you get to relax. AQUARIUS: You find yourself at the periphery of a swirling group of fascinating people who bring you back to center. PISCES: The beauty of a stable relationship is that it helps you reach for very real goals and grasp them.

COUPLE OF WEEKEND: Is there a love expert in the house? If we were to hire a sun sign to, say, study the formulas and theories of love, we could enlist the detailed mind of Virgo who spends much of her researching life question for herself. As she precedes Libra on the astrological wheel, Libra willing is love's apprentice. Hooked on Libra, Virgo's devotion is provable quantifiable.

Holiday Mathis is the author of "Rock Your Stars." If you would like to write to her, 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, theCreators visit Syndicate Web page at for www.creators.com.

Annie's Mailbox .: Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: I have been happily married for many years and have always had a great relationship with my widowed mother-in-law.

Recently, my mother-inlaw has had a few outbursts about seemingly minor things, almost like Jekyll & Hyde, very scary. Most of these outbursts have been directed at me.

Mom's income dwindling to the point where she is barely making ends meet, and her son recently left a well-paid job to start his own business, yet he has major expenses. I think these financial changes are weighing heavily on Mom and she is taking it out on me. But a friend also warned us to watch early signs dementia, which can include a personality change. He suggested we press my mother-in-law to see a doctor, but I am afraid she will be insulted and may further distance herself.

Do you think my mother-in-law is just suffering from normal anxiety about aging and finances, or is something more serious? - Concerned Son-in-Law

Dear Concerned: Stress can cause these problems, as can dementia, and the only way to find out is to have Mom see a doctor and be evaluated. Your wife should be the one to broach the subject by simply suggesting to her mother that it may be time for a complete checkup. She can offer to make the appointment and go along, and should alert the doctor privately beforehand to look for signs of dementia. And if there is anything you can do in the meantime to alleviate her financial

concerns, please try. Dear Annie: Several years ago, I had a serious relationship with a man who had the human papillomavirus (HPV). He hadn't had an outbreak in a long time, so he didn't



KATHY MITCHELL MARCY SUGAR

feel the need to tell me. I found out the hard way, when my gynecologist told me I had cervical cancer.

Although I received topnotch treatment, I ended having a total hysterectomy at the age of 36. That was 10 years ago. I recently heard that my ex and his wife are expecting their first child. I can't help but wonder if, had he been straight with me, I might have been able preserve my fertility and had the family I'd always dreamed about.

I've been seeing a therapist about these renewed feelings of depression. I understand I'm actually grieving for the children I never had. Please let your readers know that using a condom is essential, not just to prevent an unwanted pregnancy, but to save your life and the lives of your unborn children. — Empty Arms in California

Dear Empty Arms: According to the American Social Health

Association (www.ashastd.org), there are more than 70 different types of HPV, some causing benign genital warts while others are linked to abnormal cell changes leading cervical cancer. Because HPV is spread through contact, skin-to-skin condom cannot use completely prevent the disease, although it lowers the risk.

your boyfriend should have told you about your exposure, but there is no result guarantee the been would have different. Our hearts ache for the loss you feel, but there are many ways to have a family and we hope you will look into adoption. You have a lot of love to give and there are many children who need you. Dear Annie: I have

another solution for "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," who was torn about giving a friend's sculpture to her daughter or to the friend's widow, who also wanted it.

One option you didn't mention is to create a recast or second sculpture using sculpture she currently has. She could then give original to daughter and the recast the to widow. Thinking Outside of the

Dear Thinking: If the cost is affordable, we think this is a wonderful solution.

Dear Annie: I worked with a small group of people for many years. We were like family and I truly enjoyed my time there. All of us did things together, went to dinner, movies, took trips and special celebrated occasions one another's homes. Then, three years ago, I retired. You would think I'd fallen off the face of the earth.

I have made efforts to stay in touch with my exco-workers. I've dropped in to visit, sent e-mails, etc. When I see them, they always greet me warmly. They'll say they are planning something and why don't I join them? I say, sure, let me know where and when and I never hear from them again. I have even e-mailed to follow up, but no response.

Annie, these are people I worked with for 20

years. Now invisible. I can't figure out if I'm doing something wrong or if this is just what happens when you are out of the loop. Do these people know how much it hurts to be ignored like this? Should I just write them off and get on with my life? — M.M.

Dear M.M.: Either your co-workers weren't as close as you thought and only maintained the friendship for the sake of office harmony, or more likely, "out of sight, out mind." of Office friendships often don't last beyond the expiration date. The next time you will be in their vicinity, call ahead and ask about meeting for lunch. Then get on with your life.

Dear Annie: My brother says he is on the phone all day at work so he doesn't like to answer his phone at home. When I leave a message, he either doesn't pick it up for days, or he'll call back in two seconds and say, "Did you call?"

Often the messages I leave require a quick response. I feel this is a control issue on his part. When I mention it, he gets angry. How can I handle this? — Sister Dear Sister: This could

passive-aggressive behavior, but if your brother doesn't admit there's a problem, there's not much you can do. You can only control own response. your Would your brother pick up an e-mail? Otherwise, leave him whatever messages you need to, but assume he won't respond in time and work around him. Perhaps if he is left out of enough dinner invitations and family decisions, he'll make a greater effort to stay in touch.

Annie's Mailbox written by Kathy Mitchell andMarcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column.

friday page 5a 12/28/07 11:36 AM Page 1 Network Macintosh HD:Desktop Folder:

Florida pastor plays the clown to teach about Christ

By MATT SEDENSKY

Associated Press Writer

TAMPA, Fla. — The clown walked into church like he owned the place.

KoKoMo stood proudly in the sanctuary of Carrollwood Baptist, his huge white shoes planted firmly, his head-to-toe sequins glimmering, his nose and wig as red as a Christmas

It was no joke. KoKoMo was decked out for God.

The Rev. Tom Rives adopted his alter ego about 35 years ago and has used it ever since. The message delivered in his highpitched voice is weighty for a clown: It is of love and salvation.

Rives believes clowning is a means to teach about Christ. "People who wouldn't talk to a preacher will talk to a clown," he says.

KoKoMo and a troupe of clown friends have also shown up at prisons, hospitals, fairs and shopping malls here. The King's Clowns, as they call themselves, aim to proselytize while entertaining, disarming their audiences with their silly characters.

Carrollwood's sanctuary is dotted this night with red and white poinsettias and rows of chairs filled with people. Out of sight, Rives and 10 other clowns gather in a circle while the pastor prays.

"Father, may the message get across," he says in a deep voice



Pastor Tom Rives, costumed as KoKoMo the clown, left, and Kim Fults, as Paisley, perform a skit during a Christmas show at the Carrollwood Baptist Church about the real meaning of Christmas in Tampa, Fla. Rives has performed as KoKoMo for some 35 years to spread the Gospel.

with a slight Southern drawl. Within moments, Rives appears before the congregants,

his face caked in white, a tiny blue hat perched crookedly on his head.

KoKoMo the Clown!"

What follows is an hour-long series of skits performed by the clowns, each with a Christmas theme and a Christian message: Be thankful. Honor Christ daily. Remember it is more blessed to give than receive.

between acts. KoKoMo enlists the help of children to pull off magic tricks. He transforms a giant playing card into one displaying an image of Christ. A stuffed dove is brought to life. A little girl's jaw drops when KoKoMo turns numerous colored scarves into one multicolored piece of fabric.

Vicki Musser, 50, who came to watch the clowns' show, said children and adults alike can take away something positive.

"It's not so formal in this kind of service. You can relax a little more," she said. "And I think they can understand a little better."

The act was born in Tennessee around 1970, when Rives was new to ministry and attended a workshop sponsored by

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey clowns.

He never expected to pair his

"Hi!" he squeals. "I'm work with his love of the circus, but before long, it just made sense.

Rives sometimes incorporates clown skits in his regular services. A couple of times a year, there's a full clown service, and the troupe regularly visits other places.

Clowning, the 61-year-old pastor says, has allowed him to reach people who otherwise would not be reached. Some have accepted Christ. Others leave with questions about their faith. And many simply experience an innocent joyfulness the clowns see as an expression of Christ's love.

"You can be at a red light dressed as a clown and the people next to you will just be smiling and waving," said Robin Singleton, 45, who has been performing as Skittles for two years while wearing a rainbowcolored jumpsuit and wig. Rick Racki, aka Riff-Raff, the

troupe's only hobo clown, said the outfits make people more receptive to a spiritual mes-

"There's something inside them that just opens up," the 43-year-old said. "They're more open. They're less afraid."

When the skits have ended, the clowns have stopped making balloon animals and no one else asks to compare the size of their shoes, Rives walks silently to his office and drapes his costume over a mannequin. The show is over, but his work is never done.

Church News

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Worship service is at 9 a.m.; Sunday school and adult Bible classes begin at 10:15 a.m.

The congregational picture board is being updated. Watch for Bruce Schooler as he begins to take pictures; He'll appreciate your cooperation. This is a great opportunity for all of us to have pictures taken of our family. You can even buy some if you want. We did!

December On Going items Support Athlete's foot medicine (Lotrimin), instant cup of soup and red licorice. Don't forget the AT&T phone card fund.

Happy New Year to everyone. Go with God!

First Presbyterian Church, Coahoma

their annual Christmas Party, the Presbyterian Women of Coahoma were surprised by a phone call from Pam Hicks from the hospital in San Antonio. Pam is recovering from a serious ATV accident and will be in rehabilitation for some time. The group gave thanks that she is making progress and is able to communicate.

The Session will meet at 5:57 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 3, at the home of Rae Nell

The Scriptures for the Sunday after Christmas are Isaiah 63:7-9; Psalm 148; Hebrews 2:10-18; and Matthew 2:13-

First Presbyterian Church, Big Spring

At the 11 a.m. worship service Dec. 23, Susan Dawes sang the recitative "Behold, a Virgin Shall Conceive" from Messiah" by G. F. Handel as the introit. Elder Mike Robinson preached on "Telling Unlikely Things.

At the Christmas Eve Communion Service Monday, Ethel and Allan Guthrie lit the Christ candle in the Advent wreath. Janie Conley and Karen Schaedel, from Big Spring First Presbyterian, and Paulette and Elmer Lindsey, from Coahoma

First Presbyterian, assisted in serving communion. Tom Koger, CLP at Coahoma, presented "Let's Keep Christmas" by the late Peter Marshall as the sermon.

Beginning Sunday, Jan. 6, an additional Sunday school class will be offered for adults, including the older youth. The first six-week session, which uses DVDs and study guides, is titled: "If you want to walk on water, you have to step out of the boat." This is an exciting study about learning to trust God. Leaders for the class will be Paschal and Lucy Odom, Rip and Claudie Patterson, Helen Glass, and Marj Carpenter. The class will meet in the theater room at 9:45 a.m. each Sunday.

Preaching Sunday will be former pastor Flynn V. Long Jr. The lectionary for the day is Isaiah 63:7-9; Psalm 148; Hebrews 2:10-18; Matthew 2:13-23.

The church office will be closed Dec. 31.

Birdwell Lane **Baptist Church**

If you are looking for a church home consider us at 1512 Birdwell Lane. Sunday worship is at 10:55 a.m. and 5 p.m. Midweek service is at 7

Wednesday. p.m. Children's church is 11 a.m. Sunday for ages 4 to 9. Nursery is provided. For a ride to church, call 264-9924 or 267-7157.

Due to Monday new year services, there will no Sunday be Wednesday night services next week.

The Monday evening night watch will be from 8 p.m. to midnight with a Black-eyed Pea fellowship, fun, games and praying in the new year. For information, 7157 or 267-8214.

First United Methodist Church

First United Methodist Church issues a special invitation to services of worship Sunday, your last opportunity in 2007. Dr. Jim Smith will deliver the message at both 8:30 a.m. and 10:50 a.m.

And no sooner than we say good-bye to 2007 we welcome the new year with a New Year's Day Brunch sponsored by the Senior Adult Ministry (SAM).

It will begin at 9:30 a.m. in Garrett Hall and be a full breakfast including the traditional black-eyed peas.

There will be no noon Bible study and lunch Jan. 2; regular schedule will resume Wednesday, Jan. 9.

The Living Christmas Tree take down is scheduled for Jan. 5. Check with the office regarding times and phases.

We ask for prayers as our Mission Team prepares for the trip to Nicaragua.

Jan. 20. Our District Ramsey's Financial Peace

Superintendent, Namiga Shipman, will present "Islam, Separating Fact from Fiction," based on her first-hand, life-long association with the Islamic faith.

This presentation is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. that Sunday.

February 4, our church Mark your calendars for will be sponsoring Dave

University. This is a 13week series, most valuable in these times. o to daveramsey.com-Watch class to see the preview video.

First United Methodist Church is looking forward to welcoming you in the new year. You'll find us at Fourth and Scurry in the heart of downtown Big Spring..



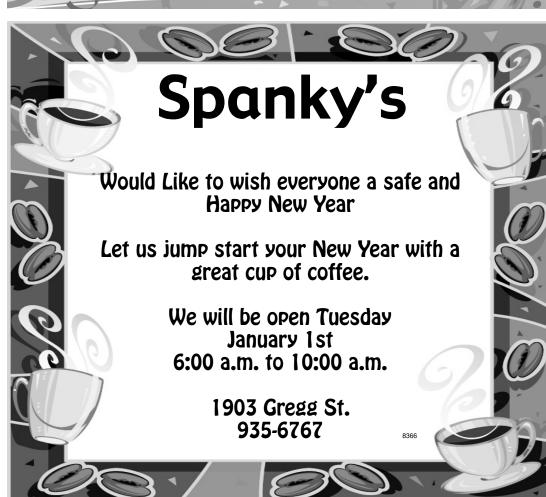
In Observance of New Year's Day Holiday The Big Spring Herald will observe the following deadline schedule

Deadline For Tuesday, Jan. 1st Edition

Retail: Ad copy due 3 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 27 Classifieds: 11:59 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 27

Deadline For Wednesday, Jan. 2nd Edition

Retail: Ad copy due 3 p.m. Friday, Dec. 28 Classifieds: 11:59 a.m. Friday, Dec. 28



News in brief

Hundreds of thousands throng Bhutto's burial, unrest in Pakistan turns violent

GARHI KHUDA BAKHSH, Pakistan (AP) -Hundreds of thousands of mourners paid last respects to Benazir Bhutto as the opposition leader was buried Friday beside her father at the mausoleum of Pakistan's most famous political dynasty. Furious supporters rampaged through several cities to protest her assassination less than two weeks before a crucial

Some wept, others chanted "Benazir is alive," as the plain wood coffin went into the ground inside the cavernous hall of the vast, white marble mausoleum.

Thursday's killing of the former prime minister – President Pervez Musharraf's most powerful political opponent — plunged Pakistan into turmoil and badly damaged plans to restore democracy in this nucleararmed U.S. ally.

Angry Bhutto supporters torched cars, trains and stores in violence that killed at least 10 people. The attack on Bhutto also killed 20 others.

Bhutto was targeted by virtually all militant groups in Pakistan, including al-Qaida

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — Benazir Bhutto was the target of threats from virtually all of the militant groups who make Pakistan their home — from al-Qaida to homegrown terrorists to tribal insurgents on the Afghan border.

Her assassination after a rally in the garrison city of Rawalpindi — where the country's military and intelligence services are based — also focused anger and suspicion on the government of President Pervez Musharraf.

The former prime minister blamed al-Qaida. the Taliban and homegrown militants for an Oct. 18 suicide bombing that tore through a procession welcoming her back from exile to lead her opposition party in parliamentary elections. But she accused militant "sympathizers" in Musharraf's administration of backing the attempt on her life. Bhutto's supporters chanted "Killer, Killer, Musharraf!" outside the hospital where she was pronounced dead Thursday.

Musharraf blamed Islamic terrorists, pledging that "we will not rest until we eliminate these terrorists and root them out."

Al-Qaida No. 2 Ayman al-Zawahri decried Bhutto's return in a video message this month and called for attacks on all the candidates in the Jan. 8 elections. And according to Bhutto, several Pakistanis arrested in an assassination attempt during her second term in the mid-1990s said they were following Osama bin Laden's orders.

Documents: Washington woman, boyfriend admit killing family on Christmas Eve

SEATTLE (AP) — Court documents detail six methodical killings that began on Christmas Eve when a woman and her boyfriend shot her parents at their rural home, dragged their bodies to a shed, then gunned down the woman's brother, his wife and their two young children.

What the documents don't say is why.

Michele K. Anderson and Joseph Thomas McEnroe, both 29, were ordered held without bail after a court hearing Thursday. Formal charges had not yet been filed, but prosecutors scheduled a news conference for Friday morning to discuss the case.

In police affidavits filed in court Thursday, sheriff's Detective John Pavlovich described the horrific killings he said McEnroe outlined to authorities, but the detective made no mention of motive.

First, Pavlovich wrote, McEnroe and Anderson shot her parents, Wayne Anderson, 60, and Judy Anderson, 61, using large-caliber pistols and dragged the bodies to a shed. A short time later, the Andersons' son, Scott, his wife, Erica — both 32 — and their children, Olivia, 6, and Nathan, 3, arrived for a Christmas Eve visit.

Group: Osama Bin Laden to release Internet message on Iraq, al-Qaida linked insurgent group

NEW YORK (AP) — Terror leader Osama bin Laden will release a new Internet message that focuses on Iraq and an al-Qaida linked insurgent group, a terrorism monitoring group said Thursday.

The SITE intelligence group said the al-Qaida leader will discuss Iraq and the group the Islamic State of



AP photo/Shakil Adil

Supporters of Pakistan's former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto mourn their leader's death during Bhutto's burial at her family's mausoleum, in Garhi Khuda Bakhsh, near Larkana, Pakistan on Friday.

Iraq, a longtime foe of the Iraqi government and U.S.

SITE, which provides counter-terrorism information to government and private groups, said the announcement of the impending message was posted to Islamic militant Web sites earlier in the day.

The posting said the message - titled "The way to contain conspiracies" — would last 56 minutes. It did not say when it would be released, but such ads usually precede the actual message by one to three days.

The authenticity of the posting couldn't immediately be determined. But SITE said it was signed by As-Sahab, the production branch that releases al-Qaida messages. The Internet message didn't say if bin Laden's statement would be in a video or just audio

San Francisco Zoo director says wall around tiger pen was lower than recommended height

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The last minutes of a 17year-old boy's life were spent trying to save his friend from a brutal tiger mauling at the San Francisco Zoo, only to have the animal turn on him, police and family members said.

Carlos Sousa Jr. and his friend's brother desperately tried to distract the 350-pound Siberian tiger, but the big cat instead came after Sousa.

"He didn't run. He tried to help his friend, and it was him who ended up getting it the worst," the teen's father, Carlos Sousa Sr., said Thursday after meeting with police.

The heroic portrait of Sousa and a timeline of the dramatic Christmas Day attack emerged as officials revealed that the tiger's escape from its enclosure may have been aided by walls that were well below the height recommended by the accrediting agency for the nation's zoos.

San Francisco Zoo Director Manuel A. Mollinedo acknowledged that the wall around the animal's pen was just 121/2 feet high, after previously saying it was 18 feet. According to the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, the walls around a tiger exhibit should be at least 16.4 feet high.

Mollinedo said it was becoming increasingly clear the tiger leaped or climbed out, perhaps by grabbing onto a ledge. Investigators have ruled out the theory the tiger escaped through a door behind the exhibit.

Millions of votes being counted in Kenya's tight presidential race

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Kenyan election officials counted ballots Friday in the country's closest-ever presidential race after an election praised as orderly and peaceful despite sporadic violence.

Thursday's contest pitted President Mwai Kibaki against his former ally, opposition candidate Raila Odinga. Lines at polling stations stretched for miles in some areas, a sign Kenyans are increasingly confident their votes count.

Results were coming in from around the country and counting could stretch into Saturday in a vote deemed too close to call, the electoral commission said.

Kibaki urged Kenyans on Friday to wait for the official results.

"We wish to remind all Kenyans that the responsibility for counting the votes and for announcing the election results rests solely with ECK (Electoral Commission of Kenya)," he said in a statement.

Clinton's campaign resembles family business as she seeks to close the sale in lowa

LAWTON, Iowa (AP) — Democrat Hillary Rodham Clinton's campaign took on the appearance of a family business as she headed into the final week of the race for Iowa's leadoff precinct caucuses, driving home to activists the stakes in those caucuses and her view that she's ready for the job.

"Next week the eyes of the country and the world will be on Iowa, the world will be holding its breath," said Clinton. "We know that this decision you face is so important, you are picking a president and there isn't any more significant decision for you to make as a citizen."

Clinton opened her campaign day Thursday with a rally before about 300 people jammed into a high school in western Iowa.

She joked about a landing at a foggy airport that delayed her arrival by half and hour.

"We weren't sure we were going to be able to land," said Clinton. "Right after we landed they closed the airport again. I think that's a good omen."

Forget Florida and Arizona: More baby boomers are heading to the Rocky Mountain West

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo. (AP) — John Kerr wasn't dreaming of palm trees and balmy winters when he retired from WGBH, the Boston public TV station known for producing such hits as "Antiques Roadshow." His thoughts had gone West.

The 69-year-old put on a green uniform and Smokey Bear hat and became a seasonal ranger in Yellowstone National Park, where snow can fall every month of the year, including July.

"That's why they have wood stoves and furnaces," Kerr said. "Warm weather isn't the issue for me. It's keeping vital and interested and involved.'

Demographers say thousands of people like Kerr are heading to the Rocky Mountain West in their later years. Forget the warmth of Florida and Arizona. Baby boomers, in particular, are gravitating toward the peaks and sagebrush basins of Wyoming and Montana, promising to turn these states from relatively young into two of the nation's oldest.

They're drawn by low crime, fresh air, little traffic and abundant outdoor activities, said Larry Swanson, an economist and director of the Center for the Rocky Mountain West in Missoula, Mont.

Jessica Alba: First expecting, now engaged to baby's father, producer Cash Warren

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Pregnancy has been an engaging experience for Jessica Alba.

The 26-year-old actress, who announced earlier this month that she's expecting, is now engaged to her boyfriend and the baby's father, producer Cash Warren.

"I can confirm that they are engaged," Alba's publicist, Brad Cafarelli, said in an e-mail to The Associated Press on Thursday.

The couple is expecting their first child in late spring or early summer, Cafarelli said.

Alba stars in the thriller "Awake," and recently appeared in "Good Luck Chuck" and "The Ten." The sex symbol first gained fame as an action star on TV's "Dark Angel," then in films including "Fantastic Four" and "Sin City."

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Chihuahua chases suspect after stolen van crashes in California town

AUBURN, Calif. (AP) mix named Tink helped the clink.

The dog's Christmas Day adventure began when four suspects who were fleeing police crashed a stolen minivan into a hillside in this Sierra foothill town east of Sacramento, and one of them fled.

Tink, a Pomeranian and Chihuahua mix, found him hiding under a neighbor's motor home and chased him into the woods, said Wendy Anderson. The dog belongs to her son.

Her son and husband directed a law enforcement helicopter to where the 20-year-old man was hiding.

"The Chihuahua gave up," California Highway Patrol officer Jeff Herbert said.

The three other sus-A three-pound Chihuahua pects, including the driver, were juveniles from police put a fugitive in the San Francisco Bay area, Herbert said. The suspect who fled was arrested on suspicion of public intoxication and

resisting arrest.

The driver was arrested on suspicion of vehicle theft, felony evading, driving without a license and resisting arrest, Herbert said.

The other two suspects

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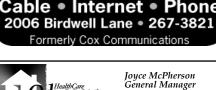
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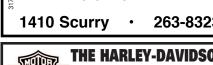


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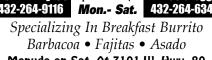


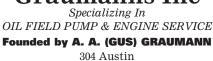
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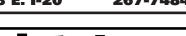
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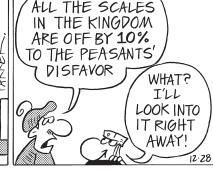
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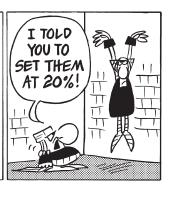


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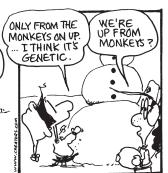




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This Date In History

Today is Friday, Dec. 28, the 362nd day of 2007. There are three days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 28, 1917, the New York Evening Mail published "A Neglected Anniversary," a facetious essay by H.L. Mencken supposedly recounting the history of bathtubs in America. (For example, Mencken "claimed" the American bathtub made its debut in the Cincinnati home of grain dealer Adam Thompson on Dec. 20, 1842, and that the first White House bathtub was installed in 1851 at the order of President Millard Fillmore.) On this date:

In 1694, Queen Mary II of England died after more than five years of joint rule with her husband, King William III.

In 1832, John C. Calhoun became the first vice presi-

dent of the United States to resign, stepping down over differences with President Jackson.

In 1846, Iowa became the 29th state to be admitted to the Union.

1973, Alexander Solzhenitsyn published "Gulag Archipelago," an expose of the Soviet prison system.

In 1982, Nevell Johnson Jr., a black man, was mortally wounded by a police officer in a Miami video arcade, setting off three days of race-related disturbances that left another man dead.

In 1987, the bodies of 14 relatives of Ronald Gene Simmons were found at his home near Dover, Ark., following a shooting rampage by Simmons in Russellville that claimed two other lives. (Simmons was later execut-

Today's Birthdays: Actor Lou Jacobi is 94. Bandleader Johnny Otis is 86. Comic book creator Stan Lee is 85. United Former Auto Workers union president Owen Bieber is 78. Actor Martin Milner is 76. Actress Dame Maggie Smith is 73.

Rock singer-musician Charles Neville is 69. Rock singer-musician Winter is 61. Rock singermusician Alex Chilton (The Box Tops; Big Star) is 57. Actor Denzel Washington is 53. Country singer Joe Diffie is 49. Country musician Mike McGuire (Shenandoah) is 49. Actor

Chad McQueen is 47. Country singer-musician Marty Roe (Diamond Rio) is 47. Actor Malcolm Gets is 43. Actor Mauricio Mendoza is 38. Comedian Seth Meyers is

Thought for Today: "When you are right, no one remembers; when you are wrong, no one forgets.",Äî Irish proverb.

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Newsday Crossword

- **5** Lost it
- **14** Diva's notes
- **15** Pond denizen
- 17 Sask. neighbor
- of '93
- 21 Guitar feature
- 22 Steak selection
- 23 Reagan film
- of A Tale of Two Cities
- 30 Rare gas
- of '89 39 Harvard deg.
- 40 Go astray
- companion
- 43 Maggie Smith
- 45 Stowe
- 48 Some AL
- 49 '40s White
- 52 Russell film
- of '58
- officers
- **61** Roulette bet
- of '82 65 Agrees, in a
- **66** Argentine article

67 Assumed

appearances

ranch

70 Bear witness

71 Underworld

DOWN

1 Music genre

3 André Watts'

instrument

4 Second shot

5 Social errors

6 Horoscope

columnist

8 Bombay-born

conductor

9 Simpsons

grandpa

movement

7 Carrier

10 Sudden

river

2 Fire

ACROSS

- 1 Absorbed
- 11 Part of RSA
- **16** Away
- **18** Swayze film
- 20 Wrapped up

- of '38
- **26** Comics
- bulldog 27 Second word
- 28 Theory
- 33 Culkin film
- 42 Curly
- film of '92
- character
- **47** Shade source
- batters
- House resident
- 59 Certain naval
- **62** Kimono sashes **63** Heston film
- way

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38 Pivotal

aunt

44 Train

41 Cope Book

46 Utah group 48 Most dreadful

49 Longest bone

in the body

- 11 In progress **12** Where armies
- meet **69** Alphabet string **13** Calgary Stampede
 - is one 19 Cold War
 - concern 24 Water Music
 - composer 25 Joust
 - 29 Do a slow burn 53 Still to be
 - **30** Some times **31** World Series
 - stat 32 Empty talk
 - 33 Katie Couric alma mater
 - **34** Cage, familiarly
 - 35 Medical acronym
 - **36** Tennis judge

37 Trig. function

- **50** Neural transmitters **51** ", c'est moi"
- **55** Meteorology concerns **56** In the vicinity

burned

54 Lariat loop

- **57** Annapolis student
- **58** County in England
- 60 Nintendo competitor
- **64** Furrow 11 12 13

