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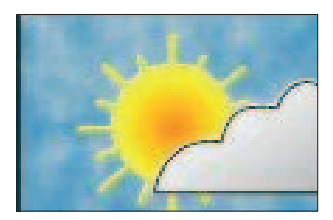
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# BIG SPRING HERALD

**SUNDAY**  
DECEMBER 30, 2007



VOLUME 103, NUMBER 24      COPYRIGHT 2007      50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

## LIGHTING UP THE HOLIDAYS



More than 15,000 people have viewed the Festival of Lights this year, but time is running out. The festival, which runs from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. nightly, ends Monday. HERALD photo/Bruce Schooler

## Opportunities to enjoy Festival of Lights draw dim

**By STEVE REAGAN**  
Staff Writer

Visitors have a few more days — or nights, to be exact — to view one of Big Spring's best holiday traditions.

The Festival of Lights will conclude its 11th annual run Monday evening and officials are still hoping to attract a record number of visitors.

The event, which has run from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. nightly since mid-

December, has drawn more than 15,000 attendees this year, FoL Chairman Pat Simmons said.

"We've had 15,411 people view the festival through Thursday," Simmons said. "That includes visitors from 38 states and 12 countries ... We're still hoping to get 20,000 visitors."

Simmons, who has been the dri-



Simmons

ving force behind the festival since its inception, said visitors have used words such as "spectacular," "exciting," and "awesome" to describe this year's event, which has brightened Comanche Trail Park in the glow of more than 1 million lights.

The kind words and number of visitors have been a nice surprise, especially since this year's event

See **LIGHTS**, Page 3A

## Hopefuls jump into political fray

*Sheriff, commissioner seats drawing plenty of attention*

**By STEVE REAGAN**  
Staff Writer

More candidates are stepping up to the electoral plate.

With the deadline to file candidacy less than a week away, local political officials report a mini-flurry of filings for the March primary.

Most of those filing did so for the Republican Party, but at least one Democratic candidate announced for office this past week.

**"Howard County finances are in a mess right now. And I believe I can help straighten that mess out."**



—Sheriff candidate Pat Carter

Pat Carter, a former deputy with the Howard County Sheriff's Office, has decided to challenge incumbent Dale Walker in the race for sheriff.

Carter, currently employed as a security officer at Big Spring State Hospital, said he could help bring financial stability to the sheriff's office.

"Howard County finances are in a mess right now," Carter said. "And I believe I can help straighten that mess out."

Carter's entry into the race brings the number of challengers to three — Charles Morgan and Stan Parker previously declared for the

Republican primary.

Walker had still not filed for re-election as of Friday, but has named a campaign chairman, a legal prerequisite to running for office, said Sandra Bloom, county election coordinator.

Margarita Durand-Hollis, chairman of the Howard County Republican Party, announced three candidacy filings late in the week.

• Former Department of Public Safety trooper Kneel Stallings, now self-employed, became the first Republican candidate to announce for the

See **RACES**, Page 3A

## Bush seeks to ease economic worries of American families

**By BEN FELLER**  
Associated Press Writer

CRAWFORD (AP) — President Bush tried Saturday to assure many families that he knows they are struggling to

pay bills, even as he again defended the economy's strength.

"Some of you worry about your ability to afford health care coverage for your families," Bush said in his weekly

radio address, recorded at his Texas ranch.

"Some of you are concerned about meeting your monthly mortgage payments," Bush said. "Some of you worry about the impact of rising energy

costs on fueling your cars and heating your homes. You expect your elected leaders in Washington to address these pressures."

Bush said he and Congress recently came to terms on some

ways to help, including an energy bill and a measure to help families avoid a tax hit when they refinance a mortgage.

But he also chided lawmakers

See **BUSH**, Page 3A

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**To reach us:**  
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Find us online at:  
[www.bigspringherald.com](http://www.bigspringherald.com)

**TO ALL WHO WAIT**

BROWNSVILLE (AP) — For nearly seven years Melina Salazar did her best to put on a smile and tend to the every need of her most loyal and cantankerous customer.

She made sure his food was as hot as he wanted, even if it meant he burned his mouth. And she smiled through his demands and curses. The 89-year-old Walter "Buck" Swords obviously appreciated it, leaving the waitress \$50,000 and a 2000 Buick when he died.

"I still can't believe it," the Luby's cafeteria employee said in an interview during which she described Swords as "kind of mean."

**HULL PICKS THE BOWLS**



See Page 1B

**The Big Spring Herald business office will close at noon Monday for the New Year's holiday and reopen at 8 a.m. Wednesday**

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# Sports

**BIG SPRING HERALD**

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

Page 1B  
Sunday, December 30, 2007

## IN BRIEF

### Individuals needed to referee area basketball games

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

Anyone interested should call Adam Rodriguez at 517-0300.

### 2007-2008 NCAA Division I-A college bowl schedule

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**JAN. 1**  
**Outback Bowl**  
At Tampa, Fla.  
Payout: \$3.1 million  
Wisconsin (9-3) vs. Tennessee (9-4), 10 a.m. (ESPN)

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

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

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

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

**Sugar Bowl**  
At New Orleans  
Payout: \$17 million  
Hawaii (12-0) vs. Georgia (10-2), 7:30 p.m. (FOX)

## Three area teams playing for holiday titles

### Herald Staff Report

**FREDERICKSBURG** — When you're right, you're right.

Turns out Big Spring Steers Head Coach Marcus Morris correctly assessed the challenge laid out for the Steers in the Hill Country Holiday Hoopfest in Fredericksburg 10 days before bracket play began.

"We'll get to play four games over two days. It's a good mix of teams in the tournament. There are teams from Houston, Austin and San Antonio and there are both public and private schools. We're going to be playing up in competition again if we win a game or two," Morris said. "Hopefully,

we'll get to run into one of those teams with an established tradition. The competition will only make us better."

After winning their first two tournament games over Lytle and Copperas Cove to advance to the semifinals, the Steers ran into tougher competition. In Fredericksburg's final four, Big Spring was pounded by Pflugerville Hendrickson, 82-54.

Unfortunately for Big Spring, the third-place game wasn't any easier. Austin Lake Travis made sure the Steers finished fourth in the tournament with a decisive 71-44 victory.

The two losses drop the Steers record to 10-7. Big Spring is 5-5 in tourna-

ments this season after going 2-2 in the holiday bracket. The Steers won three games in route to winning the Gym Bice Tournament in Andrews Nov. 28-Dec. 1. However, Big Spring lost all three of its bracket games in the Midland Tall City Oilman's Tournament the very next weekend.

The Steers travel to Lubbock Cooper Wednesday to play their second-to-last non-district game at 1 p.m.

The Lady Steers continued to struggle to find their first win of the season, falling to Hamilton 58-32. Big Spring played its third and final game in the West Texas Invitational in Slaton against Sundown at 12:30

p.m. Saturday.

Bracket play in Slaton has been kind to another Howard County girls basketball team. Coahoma's Bulldogettes were slated to face the host Slaton Lady Tigers in the championship game at 6:30 p.m. Saturday. The Bulldogettes earned the chance to play for the holiday title by beating Tahoka, 41-33.

The Bulldogettes aren't the only team headed to a finals appearance in a holiday tournament. The No. 15 Forsan's Buffaloes have punched their ticket for the title game in the Sterling City Tournament. Forsan played Crossroads rival Stanton in a hardwood Battle of the Buffs at 8

p.m. Saturday.

Forsan has coasted through bracket play thus far, defeating both Colorado City and San Angelo Lake View's junior varsity by more than 20 points.

The Cotton Classic being hosted by both Grady and Klondike will feature one of its host teams in the finals. Justin Tubb has powered the Grady Wildcats past all competition and led the Wildcats into the title game against a familiar foe — Rankin's Red Devils. That game took place at 6 p.m. Saturday.

Pick up Monday's edition of the *Herald* for full results of the title games.

See **HOLIDAY**, Page 3B

## Bowl season proving to be memorable

If you haven't watched any of the first 11 games of the bowl season, then you're missing out on the beginning of what could be the most memorable college football post-season ever.



JONATHAN HULL

After much research, it's hard to find another year to rival the entertainment value found through the first 10 days. Three games have been decided by a last second field goal and one of those field goals was blocked.

In the Las Vegas Bowl, BYU held a 17-16 advantage over the UCLA Bruins. The Bruins, however, had set themselves up for a field goal attempt that was essentially a chip shot for their kicker. The snap was good. The hold was fine. However, the kick was blocked with no time left on the clock and BYU held on for the one-point victory.

That hasn't been the only thrill. Even games that most viewers probably gave up on turned out to be memorable.

Purdue led Central Michigan 34-13 at halftime of the Music City Bowl. Change the channel, right? That would've been a mistake.

Central Michigan, led by sophomore quarterback Dan LeFevour, scored 28 points in the third quarter, tying the game at 41. Purdue simply couldn't escape the Chippewas as an early fourth-quarter touchdown was answered by LeFevour, who finished with four passing touchdowns and two rushing, with 1:09 left to play.

Unfortunately for the Chippewas, they left too much time on the clock for Purdue quarterback Curtis Painter, who finished with 546 passing yards. Painter took the Boilermakers within field goal range and Chris Summers nailed the 40-yard kick to break the 48-48 tie with no time left on the clock.

Still not satisfied? Yeah, me either. After all, what's bowl season without a close, thrilling game featuring Boise St.?

The Broncos' last four bowl games have been decided by six points or less, including an unforgettable 43-42 overtime win over Oklahoma in the 2006 Fiesta Bowl.

Boise St. didn't let us down. It appeared as if the Broncos were going to make another memorable comeback against East Carolina after overcoming a 24-point deficit to tie the game at 38-all with 1:25 left on the clock.

However, the Pirates weren't going to let Boise St. collect their booty. What happened? You guessed it. Yet another game was decided by a field goal with no time left, courtesy of ECU's Ben Hartman nailing a 34-yard kick.

I know many of you have lives that don't allow you to be bowl crazy like the *Herald's* sports guy. Regardless, if you find yourself with some extra time, take my advice and sit down to watch some of the great matchups lined up over the next few days. After all, what's New Year's day without bowl games?

Here's a quick look at the matchups set for Sunday and Monday:

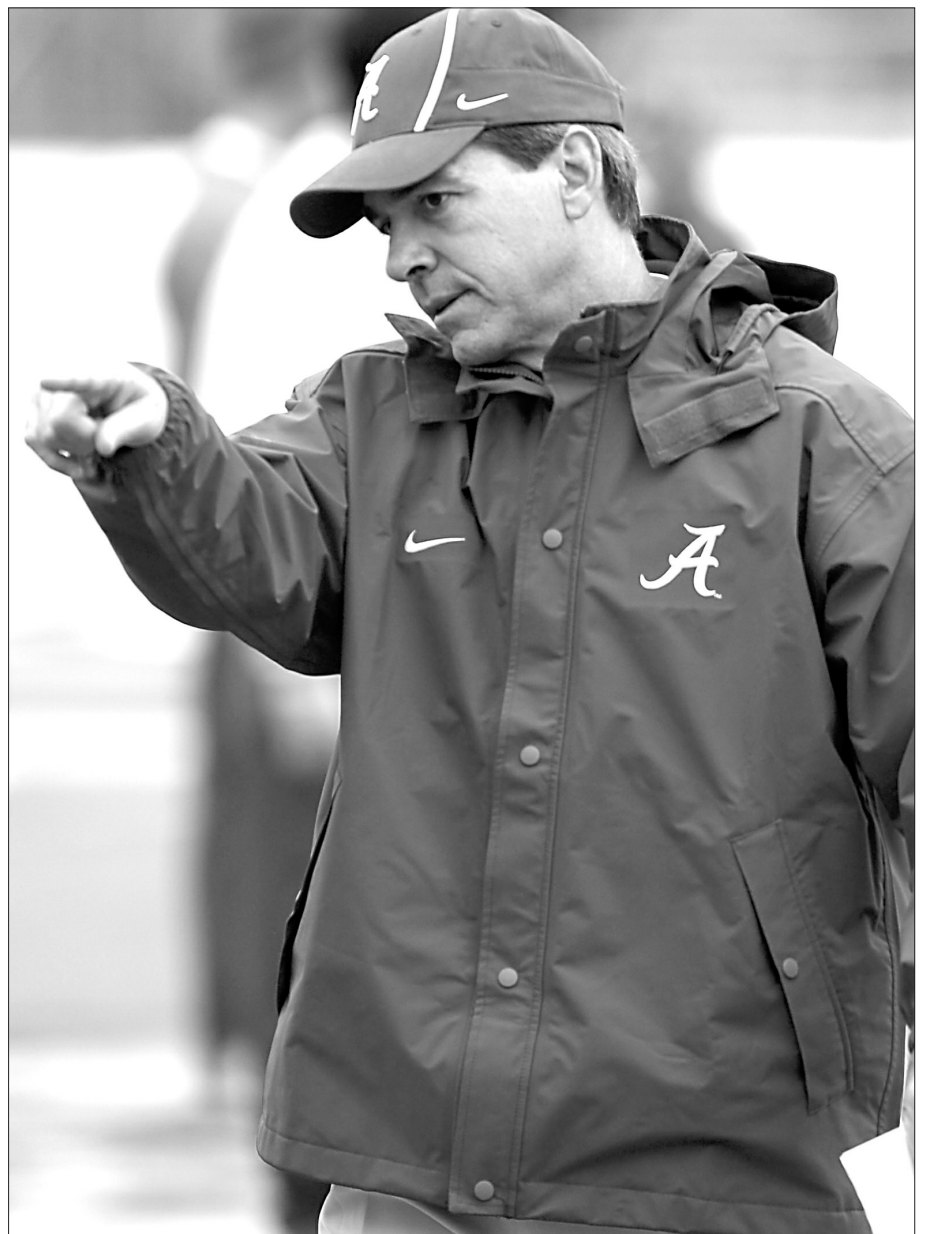
**Independence Bowl**  
**Alabama (6-6) vs. Colorado (6-6)**  
**7 p.m. Sunday (ESPN)**

**Last bowl appearances:**  
Oklahoma State 34, Alabama 31 (2006 Insight); Clemson 19, Colorado 10 (2005 Champs)

**Synopsis:** There is probably more excitement about what these two teams might accomplish in the next two years as opposed to the mediocre seasons each had this year.

Both teams had incredible highs this season. For Colorado, it was beating then No. 2 Oklahoma 27-24 as Kevin Eberhart with a game-winning field goal with no time left on the clock.

Alabama's highest point of the season was a 41-17 thumping of Tennessee. However, the Crimson Tide proceeded to lose four straight after that victory,



AP photo/Greg Pearson/The Shreveport Times

**Alabama coach Nick Saban instructs his players during football practice Thursday at Independence Stadium in Shreveport, La. The Crimson Tide take on Colorado in the Independence Bowl Sunday. A loss to the Buffaloes and the 'Bama faithful might be pointing Saban to the door.**

including two 7-point losses to LSU and Auburn. Falling to those two SEC powerhouses is understandable, but also mixed into that 4-game losing streak were pitiful displays against Mississippi State and, even worse, Louisiana-Monroe.

Colorado also had its lows, though. The Buffs never showed up in games against Kansas St. and Missouri and then, lost to Iowa State in a game they led 28-0 at halftime.

However, it's the flashes of

brilliance that have fans excited about the future in Colorado. Second-year head coach Dan Hawkins is on the verge of bringing in the best recruiting class the Buffs have had in more than a decade.

All the talk in Alabama is of disappointment. Coach Nick Saban's journey to the Crimson Tide is well documented. Also, very well noted is the fact Saban is the highest-paid coach in the country. The Crimson Tide

See **BOWLS**, Page 2B

## Redskins in must-win game against Cowboys

### By JOSEPH WHITE

AP Sports Writer

**LANDOVER, Md.** — The Washington Redskins have endured six close losses, several ugly wins, season-ending injuries to five starters, a four-game losing streak and the death of a teammate.

Yet here they stand, needing only to beat a team short on motivation to make the playoffs.

They are the NFL equivalent of a golfer who has to sink the simple 5-foot putt after struggling through wind, rain, a sand trap and a broken club just to get the ball on the green.

"Those putts are hard," linebacker Marcus Washington said. "You can't relax. You've got to go through your technique and go

through everything. That's how this week is going to go; it's not going to be any different."

In other words, now is not the time to blow it, not after all they've been through. Unbeaten since the funeral of safety Sean Taylor and with a focus that would have been unimaginable at the start of the season, the Redskins (8-7) will attempt to complete a sweep of what has essentially become four must-win games when they host the Dallas Cowboys (13-2) on Sunday.

"After the funeral, I think we got a lot of closure and we moved forward," defensive end Phillip Daniels said. "I think everybody wanted to move forward and do it for him. After this last game, instead of thinking about Christmas, everybody was think-

ing about Dallas."

The Redskins can also clinch if Minnesota and New Orleans both lose — and, given the state of the NFC, that might be a more fitting way to end the regular season — but coach Joe Gibbs is fed up with scoreboard watching and wants his players to earn their spot on the field.

"If we don't do it ourselves, we are going to be in real trouble," Gibbs said. "You have to do it yourself. I would never look at the scoreboard and think someone else is going to help me. For me, it has never worked and it is not going to work this time."

The Cowboys, meanwhile, have secured home-field advantage throughout the playoffs. Sure, there's the motivation of getting a club-record 14th win or break-

ing a few other team or personal records, but the more important goal is to win the home playoff game — which could be a rematch against the Redskins — on the weekend of Jan. 12-13.

Coach Wade Phillips has been cagey out his approach, but he said it's safe to assume that anyone considered questionable from an injury standpoint won't be playing this Sunday.

"Say if I do twist my ankle in this game, obviously, I don't think you will see the trainers send me back out there," linebacker Greg Ellis said. "I don't think you do that because we have to be responsible and mature about the situation."

See **COWBOYS**, Page 3B



# Slow and Steady

## Win the Race With Slow Cooker Meals

### FAMILY FEATURES

After a long day at work or running errands, don't you wish that dinner was cooked and would magically appear on your table? Chances are, you already have a slow cooker collecting dust on a kitchen shelf, just waiting to make suppertime a cinch. With family schedules busier than ever, slow cooking is quickly making a comeback.

Commonly, slow cooker recipes contain few steps and ingredients, which are tenderized by cooking at a low temperature for an extended period of time. By taking just minutes in the morning to get dinner underway with a slow cooker, you can leave for hours and still have a hearty and flavorful dish at the end of the day that you'll feel good about feeding your family. It is truly the meal that cooks itself!

The folks at Campbell's Kitchen understand the need for a warm and satisfying supper — especially after a busy day. Their must-have slow cooker recipes will definitely become a regular part of your weeknight repertoire in no time.

Doubt you can prep a home-cooked meal in just 10 minutes? This crowd-pleasing pot roast dish takes only that long to prepare. *Savory Pot Roast* starts with a base of Campbell's Cream of Mushroom soup, which turns into a savory sauce for the roast. The addition of hearty potatoes and carrots makes this dish a well-rounded main course.

If you're craving a rich and creamy meal, *Slow-Cooker Chicken and Dumplings* will hit the spot. This easy recipe evokes the flavors of a chicken pot pie and promises to become a fast family favorite.

*Golden Mushroom Pork and Apples* — another recipe that can be prepared in just 10 minutes — offers the unmistakable sensations of savory and sweet. The perfect combination of pork with apples and brown sugar will make your home smell good all day while it simmers away.

For slow cooking success, take note of these two tips:

- Leave the lid on! This will keep the heat in and ensure proper cooking time.
- Also, while it seems urgent now and then, it's not necessary — so resist the urge!

The next time you have a hectic day ahead and dinnertime is likely to be a rush, plan to make one of Campbell's warm and filling slow cooker recipes. You'll be hooked on slow cooking in no time.

For more tasty recipes, visit [www.campbellskitchen.com](http://www.campbellskitchen.com).



*Golden Mushroom Pork and Apples*

### Slow-Cooker Savory Pot Roast



### Slow-Cooker Savory Pot Roast

Prep: 10 minutes Cook: 8 to 9 hours  
Makes: 8 servings

- 1 can (10 3/4 ounces) Campbell's Cream of Mushroom Soup (Regular, 98% Fat Free or 25% Less Sodium)
- 1 pouch (2 ounces) Campbell's Dry Onion Soup Mix
- 6 medium potatoes, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 6 medium carrots, thickly sliced
- 3 1/2 to 4-pound boneless beef bottom round or chuck pot roast

1. Stir soup, soup mix, potatoes and carrots in 3 1/2-quart slow cooker. Top with roast and turn to coat.
2. Cover and cook on LOW 8 to 9 hours (or on HIGH 4 to 5 hours) or until roast is fork-tender.

### Golden Mushroom Pork and Apples

Prep: 10 minutes Cook: 8 to 9 hours  
Makes: 8 servings

- 2 cans (10 3/4 ounces each) Campbell's Golden Mushroom Soup
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves, crushed
- 8 boneless pork chops, 3/4 inch thick
- 4 large Granny Smith apples, sliced
- 2 large onions, sliced

1. Stir soup, water, brown sugar, Worcestershire and thyme in 3 1/2-quart slow cooker. Add pork, apples and onions.
2. Cover and cook on LOW 8 to 9 hours (or on HIGH 4 to 5 hours) or until pork is cooked through.

### Golden Chicken With Noodles

Prep: 5 minutes Cook: 7 to 8 hours  
Makes: 8 servings

- 2 cans (10 3/4 ounces each) Campbell's Cream of Chicken Soup (Regular or 98% Fat Free)
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 1/2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 8 large carrots, thickly sliced
- 8 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
- 4 cups medium egg noodles, cooked and drained
- Chopped fresh parsley

1. Stir soup, water, lemon juice, mustard, garlic powder and carrots in 3 1/2-quart slow cooker. Add chicken and turn to coat.
2. Cover and cook on LOW 7 to 8 hours (or on HIGH 4 to 5 hours) or until chicken is cooked through. Serve with noodles. Sprinkle with parsley.

### Slow-Cooker Pulled Pork Sandwiches

Prep: 15 minutes Cook: 8 to 10 hours  
Stand: 10 minutes  
Makes: 12 sandwiches

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 3 1/2 to 4 pounds boneless pork shoulder, netted or tied
- 1 can (10 1/2 ounces) Campbell's French Onion Soup
- 1 cup ketchup
- 1/4 cup cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 12 Pepperidge Farm Classic Sandwich Buns with Sesame Seeds, split

1. Heat oil in 10-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add roast and cook until well browned on all sides.
2. Stir soup, ketchup, vinegar and brown sugar in 5-quart slow cooker. Add roast and turn to coat.
3. Cover and cook on LOW 8 to 10 hours (or on HIGH 4 to 5 hours) or until meat is fork-tender.
4. Remove roast from cooker to cutting board and let stand 10 minutes. Using 2 forks, shred pork. Return shredded pork to cooker.
5. Divide pork and sauce mixture among rolls.

### Slow-Cooker Tuscan Beef Stew

Prep: 15 minutes Cook: 8 to 9 hours  
Makes: 8 servings

- 1 can (10 3/4 ounces) Campbell's Tomato Soup
- 1 can (10 1/2 ounces) Campbell's Beef Broth
- 1/2 cup Burgundy, other dry red wine or water
- 1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 can (14 1/2 ounces) diced Italian-style tomatoes, undrained
- 3 large carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 pounds beef for stew, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 cans (about 16 ounces each) white kidney (cannellini) beans, rinsed and drained

1. Stir soup, broth, wine, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, tomatoes, carrots and beef in 3 1/2-quart slow cooker.
2. Cover and cook on LOW 8 to 9 hours (or on HIGH 4 to 5 hours) or until meat and vegetables are fork-tender.
3. Stir in beans. Turn heat to HIGH. Cook 10 minutes more.

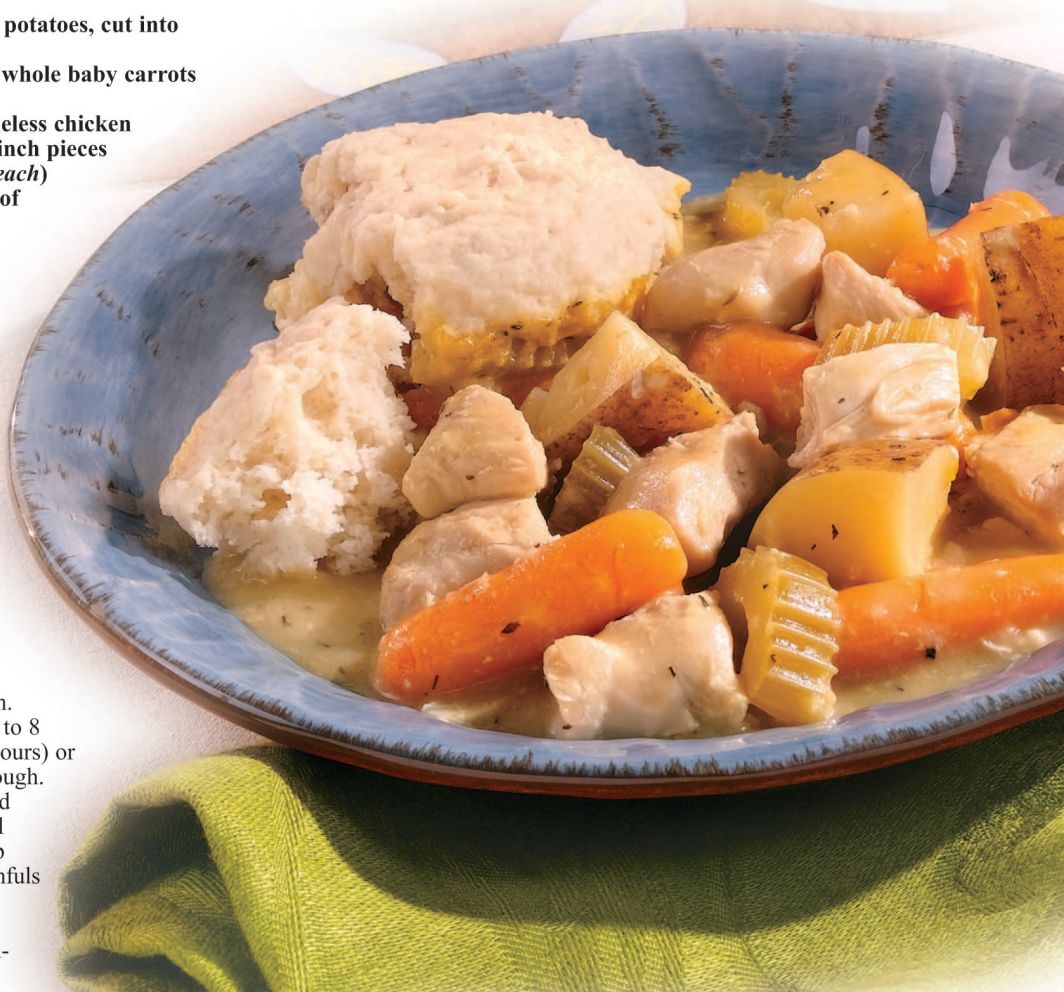
### Slow-Cooker Chicken and Dumplings

Prep: 20 minutes Cook: 7 to 8 hours  
Makes: 8 servings

- 2 medium Yukon gold potatoes, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 cups fresh or frozen whole baby carrots
- 2 stalks celery, sliced
- 1 1/2 pounds skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 cans (10 3/4 ounces each) Campbell's Cream of Chicken Soup (Regular or 98% Fat Free)
- 1 cup water
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves, crushed
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 cups all-purpose baking mix
- 2/3 cup milk

1. Place potatoes, carrots, celery and chicken in 6-quart slow cooker.
2. Stir soup, water, thyme and black pepper in bowl. Pour over vegetables and chicken.
3. Cover and cook on LOW 7 to 8 hours (or on HIGH 4 to 5 hours) or until chicken is cooked through.
4. Stir together baking mix and milk with fork in bowl until ingredients are mixed. Drop batter by rounded tablespoonfuls over chicken mixture. Turn heat to HIGH. Tilt cooker lid to vent and cook 30 minutes or until dumplings are cooked in center.

### Slow-Cooker Chicken and Dumplings





Obituaries

Anita McElreath



Anita Louise McElreath, 67, of Allen, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2007, at Baylor Medical Center of Plano. She was surrounded by her family at the time of her passing. Memorial Services will be at 4 p.m. Saturday at Myers & Smith Chapel with the Rev. Craig Felty officiating. The family will receive friends from 5 p.m. until 6 p.m. Saturday following the service.

Louise was a lifelong resident of Big Spring. She was born in Shamrock Nov. 4, 1940, to Pauline Waits and the late Louie Waits. Louise and Little Bit (her little dog) relocated to Allen in 2005 following the passing of her husband Clem, so she could be close to her beloved son, Gary, and his family, and her sister Cheryl.

Louise loved her three granddaughters — the term, "If Mom & Dad say no, ask Granny" was 100 percent Louise! They were very close to her and loved her very much. Louise also had many friends and loved to talk to them frequently.

Any time Louise encountered any military personnel in restaurants, airports or malls, she would offer to pay for their meal. She and her granddaughter, Haley, also sent many care packages to the soldiers.

She had an amazing zest for life and will be missed every single day, but we know she is free from the chains of the arthritis that tried to keep her down. Though at times it was very difficult for her to maneuver, she always made it a point to do her best. She always loved to shop!

Louise is survived by her son, Gary Hopper, and his wife Debra, of Allen; three granddaughters, Cassie Hopper of Dallas, Brittany Hopper of Lubbock, and Haley Hopper of Allen; her mother, Pauline Waits of Lubbock; two sisters, Cheryl Piper of Dallas, and Teresa Self and husband Frank Self of Lubbock; and four nieces Michele Dawson, Brandi Oglethorpe-Waits, Paula Self and Lou Ann.

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

The family requests in lieu of flowers, Louise would have been honored if donations were to made to the Arthritis Foundation, P.O. Box 96280, Washington, DC 20077-7491 to help find a cure against the disease she battled for more than 20 years.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at [www.myersandsmith.com](http://www.myersandsmith.com)

*Paid obituary*

Jackie Zitterkopf



Jackie Zitterkopf 68, of Big Spring, died Friday, Dec. 28, 2007, evening in a Midland hospital. Funeral services will be held at 10 a.m. Monday at the Midway Baptist Church, with the Rev. Jim Binix, pastor, officiating and Raford Dunagan assisting. Graveside services will be held at 2:30 p.m., Monday, Dec. 31, 2007, at the Rosehill Cemetery in Merkel. The family will receive friends at Mrs. Zitterkopf's home at 110 Terry Road in the Midway Community.

She was born June 8, 1939, in Celina to W.A. and Vivian Wilson. She came to Coahoma with her family in 1948. The moved later to Garden City where she graduated as high school valedictorian. She attended Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene where she received her degree in 1957. She taught elementary school in the fourth and fifth grades in the Coahoma School District.

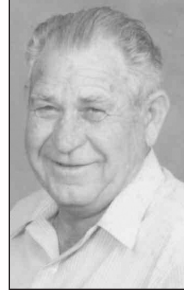
She was a member of the Midway Baptist Church. She is survived by two sons, Darren Zitterkopf of Arlington and Brent Zitterkopf and his wife Mary of Big Spring; a granddaughter, Brooke Michelle Zitterkopf and a grandson, Blake Michael Zitterkopf, both of Big Spring; a brother and his wife, Andy and Gloria Wilson of Ozona; a sister and her husband, Carolyn and Bob Smith of Clearlake, Calif.; and many nieces and nephews. She was also preceded in death by two infant daughters, Allison Kay in 1961 and Cecelia Dianne in 1965.

The family suggests memorials be made to Midway Baptist Church Building Fund, 6200 S. Service Rd., Big Spring 79720 or to the American Diabetes Association — Midland Chapter, 10 Desta Dr., Suite 220 E, Midland, 79705.

Arrangements are under the direction of Nally-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring. Online condolences can be made at: [www.npwelch.com](http://www.npwelch.com)

*Paid obituary*

Raymond Willis Jr.



Raymond "Ray" Willis Jr., 84, of Sweetwater, died Thursday, Dec. 27, 2007, in Sweetwater. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 29, 2007, at McCoy Funeral Home Chapel under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Harvey Tingle. Military graveside rites will follow in the Garden of Memories cemetery.

Mr. Willis was born Nov. 25, 1923, in Midland. He married Jean May Storch in 1945 in New York. He was a Methodist.

Survivors include a son, Barry Willis and his wife Marketa of Canyon Lake; two grandchildren, Raye Anne Gomez and husband Roy, and Bradley Ray Willis and wife Sheri, all of Big Spring; and eight great-grandchildren, Kody, Bryson, Roy Jr., Alexis, Mary, Nickolas, Gabriela and Mateo.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Jean Willis, on Oct. 16, 1985, and a daughter, Donna Ann Willis, in 1998.

Pallbearers will be Doyle Miles, Arthur Ray Boyd, Calvin Boyd, Ray Cornutt, Bill Kennedy and Ken Pierce.

Arrangements are under the direction of McCoy Funeral Home of Sweetwater.

*Paid obituary*

Vivian F. Cockrell

Services for Vivian F. Cockrell, 81, of Big Spring will be held Monday, Dec. 31, 2007, at 2 p.m. at the Second Baptist Church in Lamesa, with the Rev. Tom Koger, the Rev. Clifton Igo and the Rev. Rush Coffman officiating. Burial will follow in Mount Olive Cemetery in Big Spring under the direction of Branon Funeral Home of Lamesa.

Vivian passed away peacefully Thursday, Dec. 27, 2007, at 2 p.m. at Parkview Nursing Home, surrounded by her family.

Vivian married Forrest E. Cockrell in Seattle, Wash., in 1945. She was a devoted wife and mother, working tirelessly beside Forrest, taking countless hot meals to the fields, gardening and canning. After Forrest passed away in 1971, she began working outside the home. Vivian worked for Lamesa ISD Food Services until her retirement in 1999.

Survivors include son Ervin Cockrell of Odessa and his children, Lorrie Hummell, Janai Smith, Leah Coffey, Becca Clark, Jamie Cockrell and Ross Cockrell; daughter Margaret Newsom and husband Dan of Big Spring and children Paige McClusky, Dana Allen, Chad Newsom and Lacy Newsom; son Wes Cockrell and wife Della of Lamesa and their daughters, Mallory Nye and Darcy Cockrell; and son Doug Cockrell and wife Mary Kaye of Big Lake and their children Sallye, Tom and Makemma Cockrell, Brianne Langdon and Cameron Lee. Sue is also survived by 11 great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the Dawson Senior Citizens.

We want to thank the staff at Parkview Nursing Home, especially Susan, for their loving care and compassion of Mother.

Pallbearers will be her family, carrying Mom to her final resting place.

Visitation will be held at Branon Funeral Home from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

*Paid obituary*

Loyd McGlaun

Loyd "Bud" McGlaun, 82, of Big Spring died Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2007, at the VA Medical Center in Big Spring. Graveside services will be at 11 a.m. Monday, Dec. 31, 2007, in the Snyder Cemetery, in Snyder.

Arrangements are under the direction of Bell-Cypert-Seale Funeral Home of Snyder.

Weather

Sunday...Sunny. Highs in the mid 60s. Southwest winds 10 to 20 mph.

Sunday night...Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 30s. Southwest winds around 10 mph.

Monday...Sunny...Cooler. Highs in the lower 50s. Northwest winds 10 to 15 mph shifting to the north in the afternoon.

Monday night...Mostly clear. Colder. Lows around 20.

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

Tuesday night...Partly cloudy. Lows around 18.

Wednesday...Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s.

Wednesday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 20s.

Thursday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the mid 50s.

Thursday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 30s.

Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity:

- **JASON LUERA**, 23, 5709 Cedar, was arrested on a charge of public intoxication.
- **JOSHUA MATHEWS**, 22, 610 E. 17th, was arrested on three local warrants.
- **LARRY RAMIREZ**, 41, 1104 Austin, was arrested on a charge of driving while license invalid.
- **ASSAULT BY CONTACT** was reported in the 400 block of Aylesford.
- **BURGLARY OF A VEHICLE** was reported in the 800 block of Interstate 20.
- **CRIMINAL TRESPASS** was reported in the 1800 block of Gregg.
- **DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED** was reported in the 200 block of Circle.
- **THEFT** was reported in the 1200 block of 11th Place, the 300 block of Owens, the 200 block of Marcy, the 2400 block of Gregg and the 800 block of W. Interstate 20.

Lottery

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Friday night:  
Winning numbers drawn: 3-4-21-29-31  
Number matching five of five: 1.  
Prize: \$27,972.  
Winning ticket sold in: San Antonio.

The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Friday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 4-3-0-6. Sum It Up: 13.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Friday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 2-2-0. Sum It Up: 4.

Take Note

• Pediatric flu vaccinations for children ages 6 months to 35 months are now available at the Texas Department of State Health Services clinic in College Park Shopping Center. Cost is \$10, although no one will be turned away for inability to pay. For more information, call 263-9775.

• St. Mary's and friends of St. Mary's are holding a lap blanket drive to place approximately 400 lap blankets in the hands of every nursing home patient in Big Spring. Blankets can be taken to the church office, 1001 Goliad, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Friday or call Connie Fowler at 267-2713.

A beginning crochet class is being held at 6 p.m. Wednesday in the church's Parish Hall.

• Bring joy and kindness to others by becoming an Odyssey Healthcare volunteer. Help those at the end of life's journey. Make a difference in someone's life. Call 263-5999 to begin your journey.

• All creatures Sanctuary and Rescue has an account set up with Big Spring Salvage at 3608 N. Hwy. 87 for all types of metals and aluminum cans. Please tell them that your donations are for All Creatures Sanctuary and Rescue. All Creatures Sanctuary and Rescue is also still taking weight circles off of all Purina brand dog foods. Send your Purina Weight Circles, to A.C.S. & R. at P.O. 871, Coahoma 79511. All Creatures Sanctuary and Rescue is still accepting old and used cell phones and ink jet cartridges, for drop off locations in Big Spring and Coahoma, Call Melanie at 267-7387.

• Christ Community Fellowship is collecting infant car seats and carriers. These are given to new mothers who cannot afford them. To donate your old or new car seats and carriers, call Karen Allen at 263-3517 or leave a message at Christ Community Fellowship, 263-love. All donations are appreciated.

• Road to Recovery, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, seeks volunteers to drive cancer patients to treatment in Midland. This requires just a few hours commitment each month. To volunteer, or to request a ride for treatment, call Nancy Koger at 267-7809.

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**BOWLS**

Continued from Page 1B

faithful expected results better than an Independence Bowl berth because of that.

**Prediction: Colorado 27, Alabama 24** – Both teams can get extremely stagnant offensively, but Cody Hawkins has been a more efficient passer for Colorado than 'Bama quarterback John Parker Wilson has.

Both of these teams should be playing more meaningful bowl games within the next two years.

**Armed Forces Bowl Cal (6-6) vs. Air Force (9-3) 11:30 a.m. Monday**

**Last bowl appearances:** Cal 45, Texas A&M 10 (2006 Holiday); Virginia Tech 20, Air Force 13 (2002 San Francisco)

**Synopsis:** This was supposed to be a year for Cal's Golden Bears to compete for a Pac-10 title and maybe even a national title. Early in the season, it appeared that's what they'd do, but then a disappointing loss to Oregon St. changed everything.

The Golden Bears were ranked No. 2 before the loss. After the loss, they went on to lose five of their last six games, including embarrassing performances against Stanford and Washington.

Chad Hall is Mr. Everything for the Falcons. He leads the No. 2 ranked run offense in rushing yards and is also the team's leading receiver and kick returner. He ranks third in the nation in all-purpose yards.

Stop Hall and the Falcons offense is thwarted. However, no opponent has kept him from gaining less than 180 total yards since he took over as the feature back in week 6.

**Prediction: Cal 36, Air Force 31** – Hall will give Cal's defense fits. The Golden Bears allow 151 yards a game on the ground.

However, it's hard to believe

that Tedford – one of the game's best coaches – won't have his team prepared after such a long layoff. Cal is obviously the more talented team. Focus has been the problem for them this season.

**Humanitarian Bowl Georgia Tech (7-5) vs. Fresno State (8-4) 1 p.m. Monday (ESPN2)**

**Last bowl appearances:** West Virginia 38, Georgia Tech 35 (2006 Gator); Tulsa 31, Fresno St. 24 (2005 Liberty)

**Synopsis:** No coach in the country that was fired this season deserved to keep his job more than now former Georgia Tech head man Chan Gailey. The Yellow Jackets' 7-5 record is disappointing, but look at the losses they suffered this season. All of them came against bowl teams – Boston College, Virginia, Maryland, Virginia Tech and Georgia.

However, Georgia Tech does bring in a very deserving Paul Johnson from the Naval Academy to take over for Gailey. Unfortunately, Johnson is inheriting a team that is losing a ton of talent to graduation, particularly on the defensive side of the ball.

Georgia Tech possesses one of the most dominant defenses in the country that is just as good against the pass as it is the run. The Yellow Jackets lead the nation in sacks and are second in tackles for loss. Seven Yellow Jackets have at least four sacks this season.

Despite missing the postseason last year, Fresno State has been a mainstay in the bowl season for the past decade. The Bulldogs rely heavily upon the run game with freshman Ryan Matthews getting most of the carries.

Fresno State has won three of its last five bowl games. That streak began with a 30-21 win over Georgia Tech in the Silicon Valley Classic in 2002.

**Prediction: Georgia Tech 28, Fresno State 13** – Both schools use the run game as its main offensive weapon. The

Yellow Jackets have the edge in running the ball with Tashard Choice as well as defending a good rushing attack.

**Sun Bowl South Florida (9-3) vs. Oregon (8-4) 1 p.m. Monday (CBS)**

**Last bowl appearances:** South Florida 24, East Carolina 7 (2006 Papajohns.com); BYU 38, Oregon 8 (2006 Las Vegas)

**Synopsis:** Both South Florida and Oregon were ranked No. 2 in the nation at some point this season. Each lost three straight game after losing that ranking, too.

For Oregon, the self-destruction was more significant. The Ducks lost Heisman-contending quarterback Dennis Dixon in a win over Arizona State and proceeded to lose their last three games of the year to Arizona, UCLA and Oregon St.

South Florida came very close to becoming one of the best stories in college football history. Instead, the Bulls lost three straight games to Rutgers, Connecticut and Cincinnati. However, the combined margin of victory in those three games was 15 points.

Offensively, the Bulls are dependent upon the play of quarterback Matt Grothe, who leads South Florida in rushing as well as passing.

**Prediction: South Florida 31, Oregon 14** – Oregon is such a different team without Dixon. In my mind, the Ducks would be playing for a national championship had their starting quarterback not gotten injured.

Without Dixon, the Ducks don't match up well against the Bulls, who do a great job defensively of stopping the run.

**Music City Bowl Kentucky (7-5) vs. Florida State (7-5) 3 p.m. Monday (ESPN)**

**Last bowl appearances:** Kentucky 28, Clemson 20 (2006 Music City); Florida State 44,

UCLA 27 (2006 Emerald)

**Synopsis:** The story of this game isn't about anything on the field, but instead what's happening at Florida State off the field. Thirty-six players have been suspended for the Music City Bowl due to a cheating scandal involving an online class.

Funny, I thought that was why students took online classes in the first place.

I doubt Bobby Bowden has ever faced more troubling times than what he's about to endure.

Not only are these players – including significant team members such as quarterback Xavier Lee – suspended for the bowl game, but also for the first three games of next season, setting Florida State back considerably heading into next year.

Everyone knows Kentucky has a great passing game fueled by quarterback Andre Woodson, but few realize how well the Wildcats run the ball. After Woodson, running back Rafael Little is the team's biggest playmaker. He's a dual-threat back, showing good hands out of the backfield.

**Prediction: Kentucky 49, Florida State 21** – It doesn't matter how bad an opponents' defense might be, Florida State struggles to score more than 21 points. Tailback Antone Smith will find some success running the ball, but not enough.

The Seminoles were a bad pass defense before these suspensions. There might not be a word strong enough to describe how dismal they'll be now.

**Insight Bowl Indiana (6-6) vs. Oklahoma State (6-6) 4:30 p.m. Monday (NFL Network)**

**Last bowl appearances:** Virginia Tech 45, Indiana 20 (1993 Independence); Oklahoma State 34, Alabama 31 (2006 Independence)

**Synopsis:** Almost no defense in the country can stop OSU's offense. The problem is the

Cowboys' defense can't stop anyone, either.

Anytime Oklahoma State is involved in a game then get ready for a shootout. This matchup is no different.

It will be a shootout featuring two of the best playmaking receivers in the country – Oklahoma State's Adarius Bowman and Indiana's James Hardy. Both players could be first-round draft picks if Hardy decides to come out early.

**Prediction: Oklahoma State 45, Indiana 41** – The x-factor in this game is Indiana sophomore defensive end Greg Middleton, who has 16 sacks and 17 tackles for loss. If he can keep a steady presence in the Oklahoma State backfield, then the Hoosiers could win their first bowl game since 1991.

**Chick-Fil-A Bowl Clemson (9-3) vs. Auburn (8-4) 6:30 p.m. Monday (ESPN)**

**Last bowl appearances:** Kentucky 28, Clemson 20 (2006 Music City); Auburn 17, Nebraska 14 (2006 Cotton)

**Synopsis:** Like defensive battles? Then the Chick-Fil-A Bowl provides your kind of matchup. Clemson is ranked sixth nationally in total defense, while Auburn ranks fifth.

Stopping the run is the priority against these offenses that rely heavily upon the run game for production. Auburn relies on sophomore tailback Ben Tate, who averages 71 yards a game.

Clemson definitely has the advantage with two game breakers at the running back position. Junior James Davis racks up 83 yards a game, while sophomore speedster C.J. Spiller averages 55 yards a game.

**Prediction: Clemson 21, Auburn 13** – There will be little opportunity for big plays in this game. Clemson is simply better equipped to take advantage of those chances in this battle of Tigers.

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- 2007 Ford Focus ZX4 SE - Liquid Gray/Cloth, All Power, CD/MP3, Remote Keyless, Only 18,000 Miles. Was \$16,995 **NOW \$14,995**
- 2007 Ford Focus ZX4 SE - Cloud 9 White/Cloth, All Power, CD/MP3, Remote Keyless. Was \$16,995 **NOW \$14,995**
- 2007 Mercury Grand Marquis LS - White w/Tan Leather, All Power, 6 Disc CD, Heated Seats, Nice Car, Like New, 16,000 Miles. Was \$22,995 **NOW \$21,995**
- 2006 Ford Fusion S - Oxford White, Stone Cloth, All Power, 2-3-4 Cyl., 12,000 Miles. Was \$20,995 **NOW \$18,995**
- 2006 Ford Taurus SEL - Dark Red, Gray Leather, 3.0, V-6, Moonroof, All Power, 12,000 Miles. MSRP When New \$24,870. Was \$16,995 **NOW \$13,995**

★★★ CARS ★★★

- 2007 Lincoln Town Car Signature LTD - Vibrant White w/Lt. Camel Leather, All Power, Fully Loaded, Power Moon roof, 6 CD In Dash Player, Only 16,000 Miles. Was \$48,075 **NOW \$29,995**
- 2007 Lincoln Town Car Signature LTD - Lt. French Silk w/Lt. Camel Leather, All Power, Fully Loaded, Power Moonroof, 6 CD In Dash Player, Only 18,000 Miles. Was \$47,120 **NOW \$28,995**
- 2007 Lincoln MKZ - Vivid Red w/Sand Leather, Fully Loaded, Wood Trim, Heated & Cooled Seats, Sirius SAT Radio, 6 Disc CD Player, only 16,000 Miles. Was \$27,995 **NOW \$26,995**
- 2007 Ford Taurus SE - Gold Ash w/Dark Pebble Cloth, All Power, Loaded, Rear Spoiler, Power Seat. Was \$22,120 **NOW \$14,995**
- 2007 Ford Focus SE - Gray w/Gray Cloth, One Owner, All Power, Nice Car, Only 19,000 Miles. Was \$15,995 **NOW \$14,995**
- 2006 Ford Taurus SE - Tungsten Metallic w/Cloth, All Power, Locally Owned w/32,000 Miles. Was \$14,995 **NOW \$13,995**
- 2005 Nissan Altima 2.5S - White w/Gray Cloth, CD Player, All Power, Automatic, 35,000 Miles. Was \$18,995 **NOW \$17,995**
- 2005 Toyota Matrix Wagon XR - Dk. Green w/Dk. Gray Cloth, All Power, In Dash 6 Disc CD Player, Low Miles. Was \$16,995 **NOW \$15,995**
- 2005 Nissan 350Z Touring - White w/Tan Leather, Fully Loaded, All Power, Like New, Only 4,800 Miles. Was \$26,995 **NOW \$25,995**
- 2004 Mercedes-Benz LK C240 - Gold w/Tan Leather, Woodgrain, Moonroof, Heated Seats, 6 Disc CD, Loaded, Only 42,000 Miles. Was \$24,995 **NOW \$22,995**

★★★ CARS ★★★

- 2004 Ford Mustang V6 Convertible - Black w/Tan leather, CD Player, Like New, One owner, Only 19,685 Miles. Was \$19,995 **NOW \$17,995**
- 2004 Ford Thunderbird Convertible - Silver w/Black Leather, Loaded, One Owner, 2 Tops, Only 20,800 Miles. Was \$27,995 **NOW \$26,995**
- 2004 Mercury Grand Marquis LS - Lt Tan w/Tan Leather, Loaded, CD Player, Nice Car. Was \$15,995 **NOW \$14,995**
- 2004 Ford Taurus LX - Tan w/Tan Cloth, All Power, Nice Clean Car, Local Owner. Was \$9,995 **NOW \$8,995**
- 2004 Oldsmobile Alero - Silver w/Gray Cloth, Low Miles, All Power, Local One Owner. Was \$8,995 **NOW \$7,995**
- 2004 Nissan Maxima SL - Black w/Leather, All Power, Skylight, Local One Owner w/65,000 Miles. Was \$24,995 **NOW \$21,995**
- 2004 Nissan Maxima SL - Silver Metallic w/Leather, All Power, Skylight w/41,000 Miles. Was \$24,995 **NOW \$21,995**
- 2004 Lincoln Town Car Ultimate - Tri White w/Tan Leather, Loaded, All Power, Only 30,000 Miles. Was \$20,995 **NOW \$19,995**
- 2004 Lincoln Town Car Ultimate - Tri White w/Tan Leather, Loaded, All Power, In Dash CD Player, Only 32,000 Miles. Was \$20,995 **NOW \$19,995**
- 2003 Ford Taurus SES - Light Blue, w/Cloth, Extra Clean, Automatic, All Power. Was \$19,995 **NOW \$9,995**
- 2004 Ford Ford Focus SE - LT Green w/Gray Cloth, One Owner, Loaded, Like New, Only 50,000 Miles. Was \$10,995 **NOW \$9,995**
- 2004 Cadillac CTS - Red w/Tan Leather, Fully Loaded, Moon Roof, One Owner, Only 34,000 Miles. Was \$22,995 **NOW \$20,995**
- 2004 Ford Focus ZTS - Black w/Gray Cloth, Nice Car, Great on Gas, One Owner, Only 36,000 Miles. Was \$12,995 **NOW \$11,995**
- 2003 Cadillac Deville - Gold w/Tan Leather, Like New, Very Nice Car, All Power, Low Miles. Was \$15,995 **NOW \$14,995**
- 2003 Ford Escort ZX2 - Black w/Cloth, Automatic, All Power, Great Gas Car. Was \$9,995 **NOW \$8,995**
- 2002 Honda Accord Special Edition Coupe - White, All Power, Local One Owner w/64,000 Miles. Was \$14,995 **NOW \$12,995**
- 2002 Ford Focus ZX5 - Silver, w/Cloth, Automatic, All Power, 39,000 Miles. Was \$11,995 **NOW \$10,995**
- 2002 Chevrolet Cavalier - Blue w/Gray Cloth, Like New, One Owner, Only 38,000 Miles. Was \$10,995 **NOW \$9,995**

★★★ TRUCKS ★★★

- 2007 Ford F150 Supercrew XLT 5.4 V8 - Pueblo Gold w/Tan Cloth, Running Board, Captain Chairs, Bedliner, All Power, Nice Truck, Only 12,000 Miles. Was \$31,665 **NOW \$24,995**
- 2007 Ford F150 Supercrew XLT 5.4 V8 - Red Fire w/Gray Cloth, Running Boards, Captain Chairs, Bedliner, All Power, Nice Truck, only 20,000 Miles. Was \$31,665 **NOW \$24,995**
- 2006 Ford F150 Supercrew 4x4 XLT 5.4 V8 - White w/Gray Cloth, Long Bed, One Owner, CD Player, Nice Truck, Only 34,000 Miles. Was \$25,665 **NOW \$24,495**
- 2005 Chevrolet 1500 Silverado 4X4 - White w/Gray Leather, Crew Cab, One Owner, All Power. Was \$25,995 **NOW \$24,995**
- 2005 Ford F-150 Supercab XL 4X4 - White, V-8, Air, Automatic, Local One Owner w/60,000 Miles. Was \$20,995 **NOW \$19,995**
- 2005 Ford F150 Supercrew XLT - Gray w/Cloth, Local One Owner. Was \$18,995 **NOW \$17,995**
- 2004 Ford F150 Supercrew XLT - Blue w/Gray Cloth All Power, CD Player, One Owner, Like New. Was \$17,995 **NOW \$16,995**
- 2004 Ford F250 Super Duty Crew Cab Diesel - Blue w/Gray cloth, CD Player, Short Bed, Great Truck. Was \$23,995 **NOW \$22,995**

★★★ TRUCKS ★★★

- 2004 Nissan Frontier Crewcab XE - White w/Gray Cloth, In Dash CD Player, All Power, Only 23,000 Miles. Was \$17,995 **NOW \$16,995**
- 2003 Ford Ford F150 Supercab Flareside XLT V6 - Red w/Gray Cloth, All Power, Like New Only 37,000 Miles. Was \$16,995 **NOW \$15,995**
- 2002 Ford F150 Supercab Sport V6 - White w/Gray Cloth, 5-Speed, CD Player, Like New, Bedliner. Was \$20,995 **NOW \$11,995**
- 2001 Ford F250 Super Duty Supercab Lariat FX4 - Green w/TAN Leather, 7.3L Diesel, Loaded, All Power, One Owner. Was \$20,995 **NOW \$19,995**
- 2001 Ford F450 XL 7.3 Diesel Flat Bed - White w/Gray, Work Truck Seats, Great Work Truck, Very Nice, Only 75,000 Miles. Was \$20,995 **NOW \$19,995**
- 2000 Ford F350 DRW 7.3L Diesel - Black Gold w/Tan Leather, Lariat, 6 Disc In Dash, One Owner. Was \$20,995 **NOW \$19,995**

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- 2008 Ford Escape XLT - Black w/Gray Cloth, CD Player, All Power, Fog Lamps, Power Seat, Privacy Glass. MSRP \$20,995 **NOW \$19,995**
- 2008 Ford Escape XLT - Silver w/Gray Cloth, CD Player, All Power, Fog Lamps, Power Seat, Privacy Glass, Only 14,000 Miles. MSRP \$20,995 **NOW \$19,995**
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- 2006 Nissan Xterra XE - Red w/Gray Cloth, Like New, One Owner, CD Player, Only 13,900 Miles. Was \$19,995 **NOW \$18,995**
- 2006 Jeep Wrangler SE - Tan w/Tan Cloth, 5 Speed, CD Player, AC, Nice Unit, Only 14,000 Miles. MSRP \$18,995 **NOW \$17,995**
- 2005 Ford Expedition XLT 4X4 - Silver w/Gray Leather, All Power, One Owner, Nice, Low Miles. Was \$21,995 **NOW \$20,995**
- 2005 Toyota Sequoia SR5 - Silver w/Cloth, CD Player, One Owner, Nice SUV, 44,000 Miles. Was \$27,995 **NOW \$25,995**
- 2005 Ford Explorer Sport Trac XLT - Red w/Gray Cloth CD Player, All Power, One Owner, Like New. MSRP \$18,995 **NOW \$17,995**
- 2004 Nissan Xterra XE - Gold w/Gray Cloth, CD Player, One Owner, Super Clean, Only 19,024 Miles. Was \$19,995 **NOW \$17,995**
- 2004 Nissan Xterra SE - Gold/Tan Cloth, All Power, One Owner, CD Player, Only 28,000 Miles. Was \$18,995 **NOW \$17,995**
- 2004 Nissan Murano SE - Silver w/Black Leather, Heated Seats, All Power, Moonroof, Only 23,000 Miles. Was \$25,995 **NOW \$24,995**
- 2004 Nissan Xterra SE - Silver, Cloth, All Power, Local One Owner w/35,000 Miles. Was \$19,995 **NOW \$16,995**
- 2004 Ford Explorer XLT - Silver w/Gray Cloth, 3rd Row, All Power, 4-Dr., One Owner, 23,000 Miles. Was \$14,995 **NOW \$13,995**
- 2004 Ford Explorer Sport Trac XLT - Green w/Tan Cloth, All Power, One Owner, CD Player, Nice SUV. Was \$16,995 **NOW \$15,995**
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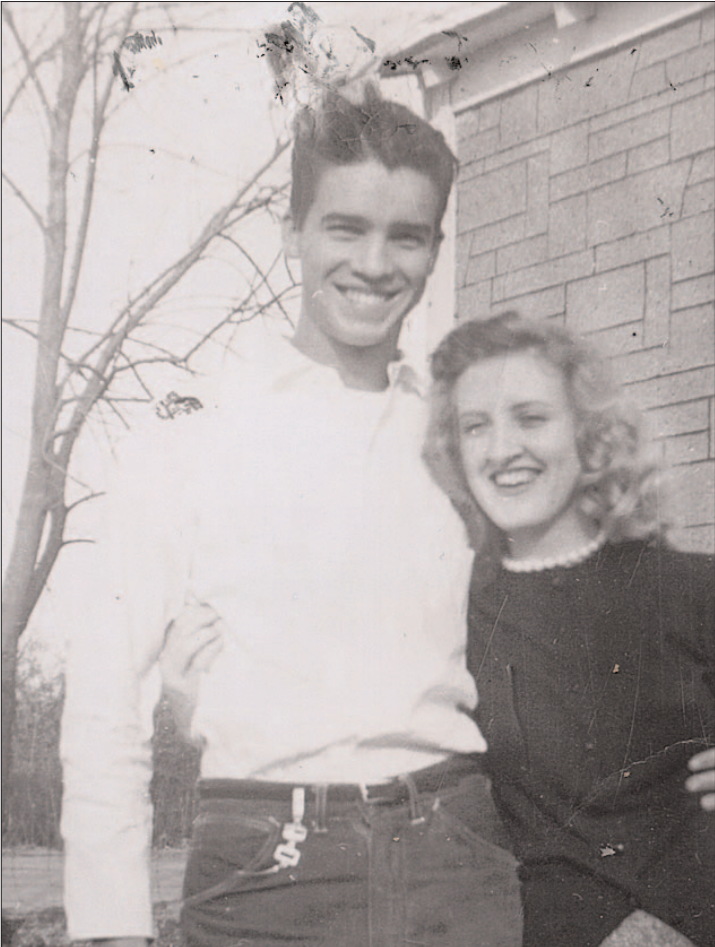


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**Begleys celebrate 50 years of marriage**

Jim and Barbara Begley recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a surprise barbecue party with friends and family. The party was hosted by daughter Becky Eckert. The couple met at J.C. Food Store, a supermarket where Jim was employed. He was born in Levi, Ky., while his bride-to-be, Barbara Rice, was born in Saul, Ky.

They got married Oct. 22, 1957, at Underwood Baptist Church. They have three daughters, Becky and husband Fred of Lomax, Brenda Hardin and husband Billy of Lovington, N.M., and Sheila Ward and husband Billy of Big Spring. They have 10 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. The couple has resided in Illinois, New Mexico, Texas, Florida,

California and Germany. He is a Vietnam veteran and retired from the U.S. Air Force. Barbara is a homemaker. They are Baptists. They enjoy garage sales, race cars and being with their children and grandchildren. Their marriage has lasted, they said, because of patience, love, trust and a belief in God.

**Manners matter:  
Parents are on call**

If parents would see the home as God's design, a training and learning base for their children, and would make it a job as diligent and as important as they are about their outside jobs, we would not see the divorce rate increasing as we do today. Whether you know it or not, your children matter. They actually count. Apart from a parents' relationship with God and with each other, your children are next in priority. They should be treated as human beings, because they are. No child should be yelled at since they become what they live.



JERRIE STOCKS

it. What is the best way to work through this? Kaydee

**Hello Kaydee,**  
It's really too bad that some children want to poke fun at others for being polite and well-mannered. I feel sure that deep in the cousin's hearts they would like to be just like your daughter, but have not had the good fortune of parental training as she has. Since they are related, try to help her understand that they probably admire her and would like to be more like her. I would not make an issue of the problem, but tell your daughter she is a role model for her cousins. Encourage her to be strong and look past the hurtful words. Someday they will probably thank her for the things they learned from her.

The secret of a successful marriage and family life is simpler than most believe it to be. The answer lies here: how successful do you want it to be? If each partner gave to the family as much as God gave to each of us, His all, how successful would your marriage and family be? No marriage can succeed when one person puts himself at the center. Selfishness is not a part of God's plan.

**Hi Jerrie,**  
I'm a 23-year-old male, with four years of college. I never heard anything about etiquette until I saw your column in the *Big Spring Herald*. Believe me, I had to go to the dictionary to look up the word before I knew what it meant. Now that I do, I have a question. I have just started dating a girl I went to high school with. She is really beautiful and has a great body — wow! But gosh, the profanity that comes out of her mouth makes me blush. I could get serious about her, but I'm not sure I can go along with all the profanity and bad table manners. What's your suggestion? R.W.

Our children need role models and parents should be the first role models in their child's life. Apart from God first, your family must be your top priority....not your job, hobbies, or best friends, but family — your very own family!

**Dear Jerrie,**  
Cheers to you for the wonderful column you give us in the *Big Spring Herald*. Our 9-year-old daughter has been taught good manners all her life by my husband and me. Most of her friends are well-mannered children as well. However, some of her cousins are not. They tell her she is a snob and a spoiled brat, and none of this is true. This hurts her feelings and she often cries about

**Hello R.W.**  
My suggestion is, do what you already know to do. Run and don't look back. Now look, R.W., just the fact that you are writing me about this girl tells me you have big questions already. Can you honestly say that you would want a girl who has a filthy mouth and has bad table manners for a wife and mother of your children? See **MANNERS**, Page 3C

**Peace of paper**

By **DIANA MARCUM**  
McClatchy Newspapers

FRESNO, Calif. — In the aftermath of an angry student's murderous rampage on the Virginia Tech campus last April, people tried to make sense of the senseless — and offered their help. What can we do? What can we send? The university's response: Send paper cranes. Send symbols of peace and hope. In Japanese tradition, the person who folds 1,000 origami cranes is granted a wish, such as for prosperity or good health. They're given at weddings and to the gravely ill. Paper cranes appeared in victims' hospital rooms. They flew in the Squires Student Center and at the Virginia Tech

graduation ceremonies. They came from all over the world. Thirty-three thousand of them came from Hanford, Calif. It all started with Ray Thomas. At Fresno City College a few days after the shootings, Thomas taught people at the college's annual Asian Fest how to fold cranes to send to Virginia. A paper crane is usually one of the first things a child makes when learning origami, the ancient Japanese art of paper-folding. Its simple shape holds every fold used in origami. It's one of the oldest-known forms — passed down through countless generations. "Once you can make a crane, you can go on to make anything," says Thomas, a press operator

for Hanford's local paper, *The Sentinel*. Hundreds of cranes were packed and sent to Virginia from that Asian Fest. But Thomas — an origami expert who has created original forms that have been registered in Japan — wanted to take it further. He vowed to send 33,000 paper cranes to Virginia by the end of the summer. A thousand for each victim and the shooter. "The tradition says folding 1,000 cranes grants you a wish. It's not the crane itself that's of any value, but the diligence. It's a form of honor to fold 1,000 cranes," he says. "Not everyone can do it." Hanford's cranes are aloft now at Virginia Tech in an art exhibit designed to honor students and faculty who

were killed April 16. The paper cranes swirl in 33 circles, the lighter colored birds flying closest to the ceiling. Some have prayers written on their wings and bodies. Mary Tartaro, Virginia Tech's arts program coordinator, finds most intriguing those that were folded after a prayer was written, showing only a few of the words within. Thomas held workshops to teach others how to fold paper cranes and help him in his quest. More than one person pronounced him crazy.

See **PAPER**, Page 3C



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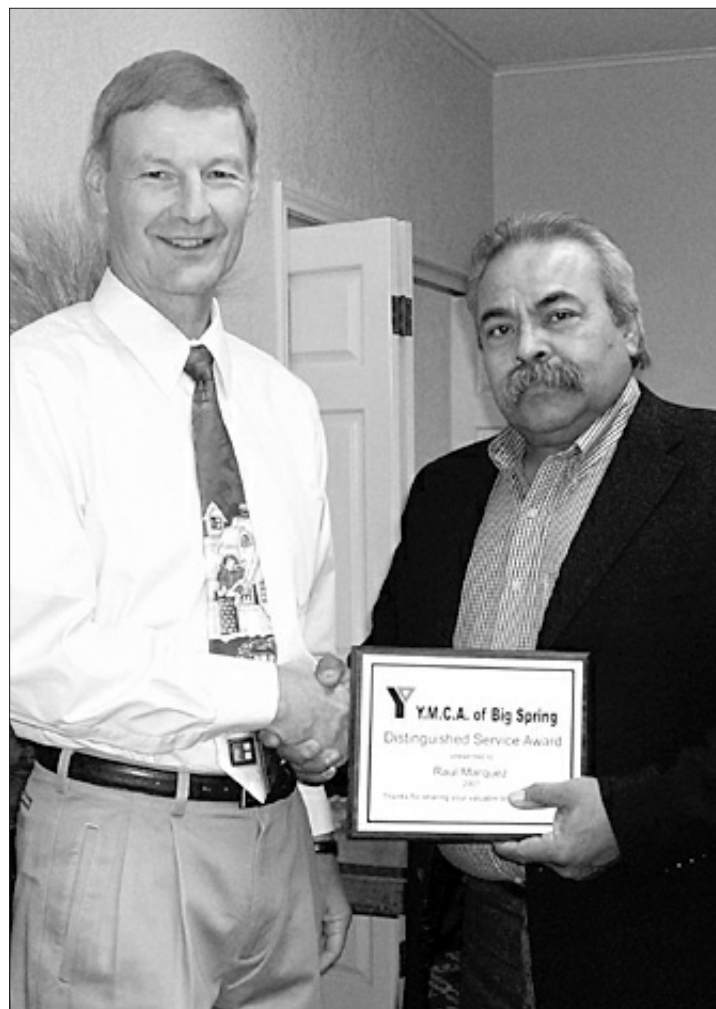
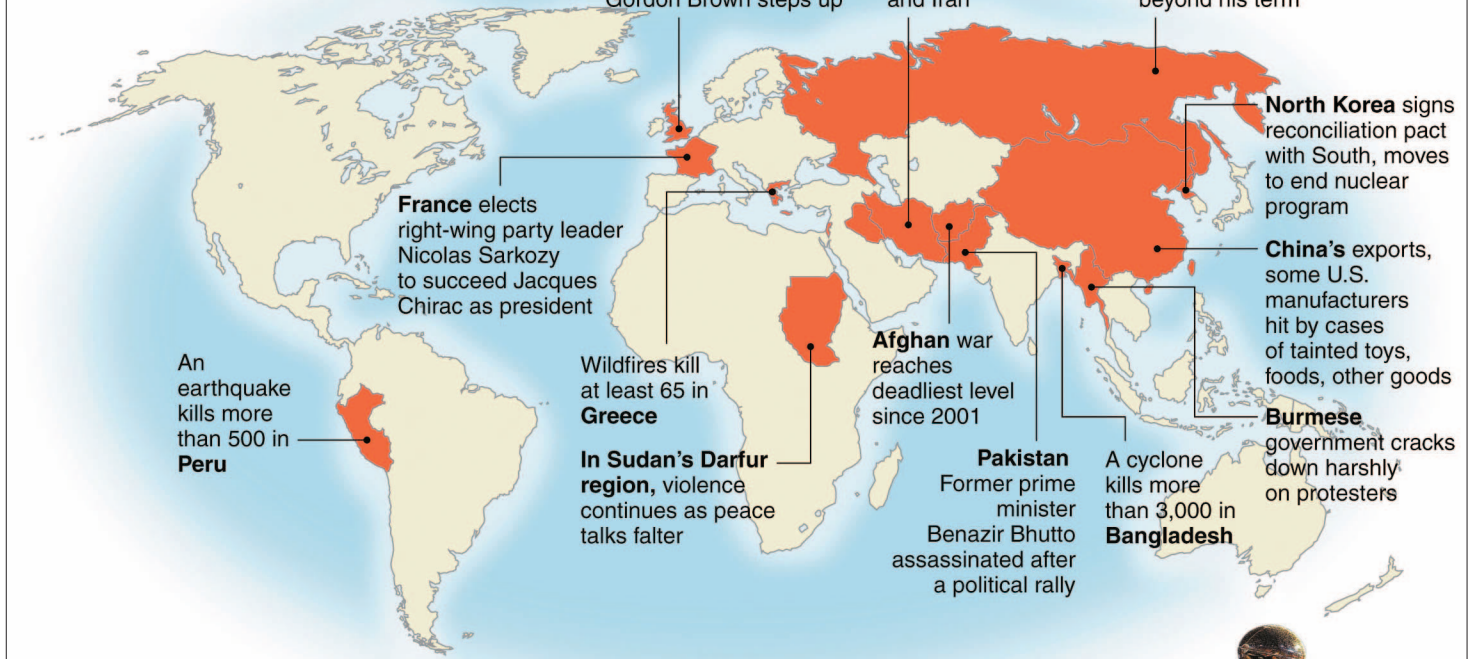
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# 2007 LOOKING BACK



Courtesy photo  
**YMCA Executive Director Pete Thiry, left, presents the YMCA Volunteer of the Year Award to Raul Marquez. Marquez received the award for serving on the YMCA Board of Directors for 12 years, including the past eight as president.**

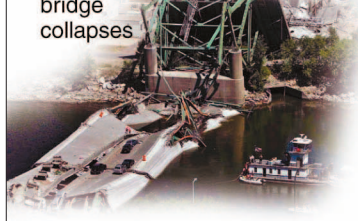
### At home

The presidential race heats up after its earliest-ever start

Democrats do raise minimum wage, lower student loan rates, fail to end Iraq war, solve immigration problems

Wildfires ravage southern California; drought wracks Southeastern states

Accidents kill six miners in Utah, 13 people in Minnesota when a bridge collapses



### Low points ...

Shoddy conditions at **Walter Reed Army Medical Center** shame the military

Former White House aide **I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby** convicted in CIA leak

**Alberto Gonzales** quits as attorney general amid controversy; **Sen. Larry Craig** refuses to quit despite guilty plea in airport sex sting

Mercenary group **Blackwater USA** investigated by FBI for killings of Iraqis

### Business

Thousands lose homes as a result of a mortgage crisis, which batters the U.S. housing, home-lending sectors, triggers a global credit crunch

Oil prices flirt with \$100 a barrel, stock prices swing wildly, the dollar sinks

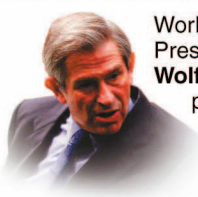


Federal Reserve lowers key rates four times trying to calm markets

Bancroft family sells financial icon **Wall Street Journal** to Rupert Murdoch; Daimler sells automotive icon **Chrysler** to private equity firm Cerebus

**CEOs at Citigroup, Morgan Stanley** shown the door because of credit crisis

World Bank President **Paul Wolfowitz** resigns, pressured by critics



Source: AP, BBC, Facts on File, MCT Photo Service

### Science and society

Former Vice President **Al Gore** wins the Nobel Peace Prize and an Academy Award for his work on global warming; scientists deliver new warnings

In major breakthrough, scientists create the equivalent of **embryonic stem cells** from ordinary skin cell

Among those we lost: Lady Bird Johnson, former Russian President Boris Yeltsin, writers Norman Mailer, Kurt Vonnegut and David Halberstam, director Ingmar Bergman, tenor **Luciano Pavarotti**



**Gunman**, a fellow student, kills 32 at Virginia Tech, the deadliest shooting rampage in U.S. history

**Teen gunman** opens fire in an Omaha, Neb., shopping mall killing eight

Graphic: Pat Carr, Angela Smith

### Sports

**Indianapolis Colts** defeat the Chicago Bears, 29-17, to win Super Bowl XLI

**Rags to Riches** is the first filly to win the Belmont Stakes in more than a century

**Boston Red Sox** sweep the Colorado Rockies in four games to win the World Series

**David Beckham** leaves Europe to play soccer in the U.S. for the MLS' LA Galaxy

MLB sullied by steroid investigation; **Barry Bonds** indicted for lying to a grand jury, other baseball greats named in Mitchell report

**Spain's Alberto Contador** is the youngest Tour de France winner in 10 years, but the race is marred by doping suspicions

Atlanta Falcons quarterback **Michael Vick** pleads guilty to dogfighting charges

## LIGHTS

Continued from Page 1A

had a few roadblocks — rainy weather hampered last-minute preparations and the somewhat inevitable power prob-

lems also occurred, Simmons said.

With the problems behind them, however, organizers have still described this year's show a success.

Aside from the omnipresent poinsettia decorations — Simmons'

favorite — there are also displays reflecting this year's theme of recognizing the military. The biggest and brightest display in that area has to be a huge U.S. flag decorated with more than 7,000 lights, she noted.

Admission to the festi-

val is free, although donations to help defray costs are welcome, Simmons noted.

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

## BUSH

Continued from Page 1A

again for slipping an estimated 9,800 pet projects, known in Washington lingo as earmarks, into a massive spending bill at the end of their session. Bush signed the bill this week.

"Among the earmarks Congress approved was one for a prison museum and another for a sailing school," Bush said. "In the last election, congressional leaders ran on a promise that they would reform earmarks. They made some progress, but not nearly enough."

Bush has asked his budget director to review what the White House can do about the special-project spending, although its options are limited. Meanwhile, in his final radio address of the year, the president spun the economic theme into a personal resolution.

"My resolution for the New Year is this: to work with Congress to keep our economy growing, to keep your tax burden low, and to ensure that the money

you send to Washington is spent wisely — or not at all," Bush said.

As the economy has been battered by a mortgage crisis, a credit crunch and low consumer confidence, Bush has sought to show he is in touch with the typical family's concerns. He also has cited a range of indicators — such as export numbers and unemployment rates — to back up

his view that the underlying economy is strong and resilient.

"Economic statistics are important indicators," Bush said. "Yet it is more important to remember that behind all these numbers are real people."

Democratic leaders suggest Bush has been in denial about the economy, offering an overly rosy portrait while many families deal with soaring

costs. Delivering the Democratic radio address, Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York said that her party has delivered results for working families during its year in charge of Congress.

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## RACES

Continued from Page 1A

Precinct 1 Constable race. Democrat Bill Holden previously announced his candidacy.

• Steve Gray, employed by the city of Big Spring, has filed for the Precinct 3 seat on the county commissioners court.

• Also filing for the Precinct 3 commissioner race is Fred Green, who is self-employed.

The race to succeed long-time Precinct 3 commissioner William Crooker is becoming quite a crowded field. Gray and Green join Jimmie Long and Paschal Odum in the Republican primary, while Dick

Dubose is the lone Democrat to have filed to date.

Deadline to file for the March primary is 6 p.m. Wednesday, Bloom said. Candidates must file with their respective county party chairmen — Durand-Hollis (264-0973) for the Republicans, and Ro Gore (466-3073) for the Democrats.

Candidates must also file preliminary paperwork with Bloom, who may be contacted at 264-2273.

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

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**COWBOYS**

Continued from Page 1B

These two rivals have acted out a similar scene before. In 1996, the Redskins desperately wanted to win the final game played at RFK Stadium, and the Cowboys didn't want to get anyone hurt because they had clinched their playoff seed. Dallas lost 37-10 fielding a B-team minus Troy Aikman and

Emmitt Smith. This year, it's Tony Romo and Terrell Owens who are expected to do more spectating than watching. Owens, who scored all four touchdowns in the 28-23 win over Washington at Dallas on Nov. 18, is definitely out with a sprained ankle. Romo, who has been nursing a bruised thumb, has been lobbying to play the entire game, but it's not hard to read between the lines and prepare

for the sight of backup Brad Johnson throwing his first passes of the season. "I definitely anticipate playing some," Romo said. "To what extent, it's up to the coaches." Perhaps the best stimulus for the Cowboys — the starters and the backups — is that no one in Dallas ever wants to make anything easy for the Redskins. "The thing that works into our favor is that it's a rival game," Ellis said. "Every time

you step on the field as a football player, obviously you want to do your best. But the rivalry that Washington and Dallas have against each other kind of negates the fact that we can't improve our playoff standings." Actually, anyone who hadn't followed the teams during the regular season would think the Redskins were the team holding back. They're having to make do without Jason Campbell, Randy Thomas, Jon Jansen, Carlos

Rogers, Rocky McIntosh and Taylor. But, at least this week, they have two big advantages: momentum and incentive. "The feeling now, it's real good," receiver Antwaan Randle El said. "We're playing well — when everybody expects us to just get shellacked. For us, we understand, 'Yeah, we're doing good, but we've got to keep going.' We can't get too high up on the horse."

**HOLIDAY**

Continued from Page 1B

**Buffaloes 67, Colorado City 44**  
STERLING CITY — The Buffs held Colorado City to two points in the first period and appeared to be coasting to another easy victory Thursday. However, the Wolves still had some fight left in them, outscoring Forsan 18-9 in the second period. Forsan led 25-20 at the intermission and finally put the game away in the fourth period courtesy of a 25-11 advantage. **Forsan 16 9 17 25-67** **Colorado City 2 18 13 11-44** **Leading scorers:** Forsan - Jeremy Robbins 21, Adam Bailey 17; Colorado City - Espinoza 12.

**Buffaloes 66, SA Lake View JV 42**  
The Buffs had three players score in double digits and 10 different players put points on the scoreboard in a rout of the junior varsity Chiefs Friday. Forsan led 33-13 at the half and was up 52-23 heading into the fourth period before Lake View tightened up the score some during garbage time. The two tournament wins improves Forsan's record to 13-1. **Forsan 14 19 19 14-66** **Lake View 6 7 10 19-42** **Leading scorers:** Forsan - Camerson Parker 12, Nathan Atkerson 12, Robbins 10; Lake View: Lozano 10.

**Bulldogettes 54, El Paso 35**  
SLATON — The Bulldogettes started a recurring theme in their opening game of the West Texas Invitational Thursday. They let their opponents hang in the game until intermission and then diminish all hopes of victory in the second half. El Paso, a Class 4A squad, trailed by just seven points at halftime. However, the Bulldogettes put the game away in the

third period, pushing their lead to 13 points. Coahoma outscored El Paso 12-6 in the final stanza just for good measure, giving the Bulldogettes the 19-point victory. "We seem to just feel our way through the first half," said Bulldogettes Head Coach Chris Sumrall. "We're really good at making halftime adjustments, but I'd like us to play stronger in the opening half. We're getting wins, though, and that's the important thing." **Coahoma 13 14 15 12-54** **El Paso 10 10 9 6-35** **Leading scorers:** Coahoma - Laci Sterling 22, Heather Sheppard 10; El Paso - Ramos 14.

**Coahoma 52, Hamilton 35**  
With an almost identical final score to their first round game, the Bulldogettes advanced to the semifinals of the West Texas Invitational with a decisive victory Thursday. The Bulldogettes essentially put the game out of reach for Hamilton in the first period, outscoring them 18-11. Hamilton never recovered as Coahoma extended its lead with each period.

Coahoma's frontcourt trio of Sterling, Sheppard and Christie Rich led the way with all three reaching double figures in scoring. Sumrall noted how it always seems to be a different player leading Coahoma in scoring every matchup. "It seems that someone else is always leading us in points every game," he said. "We have the ability to go to whoever has the hotter hand or has the better matchup and take advantage of it." **Coahoma 18 11 12 11-52** **Hamilton 11 8 10 6-35** **Leading scorers:** Coahoma - Sheppard 17, Sterling 14, Rich 13.

**Bulldogettes 41, Tahoka 33**  
In the semifinals matchup Friday night, it

was Rich's turn to lead the Bulldogettes in scoring. She put up 19 points in Coahoma's most hotly contested victory of the tournament. Coahoma jumped out to an early 6-point lead courtesy of two Shelbi Paige 3-pointers that opened things up inside for the Bulldogettes, according to Sumrall. Coahoma had an 8-point lead after the first period, but couldn't ever quick shake the Lady Bulldogs.

Tahoka trimmed the lead to three points heading into the fourth stanza, but Coahoma was able to hold on and with a 13-8 advantage in the period, setting up a trip to the title game against Slaton. "Tahoka was a very disciplined and well coached team and we're expecting to see the same thing from Slaton," Sumrall said. "If we go in and play our game, then there's no reason we can't win this tournament." **Tahoka 3 9 13 8-33** **Coahoma 11 9 8 13-41** **Leading scorers:** Tahoka - Vega 15; Coahoma - Rich 19, Shelbi Paige 8, Sterling 7, Sheppard 7.

**Ballinger 54, Bulldogs 47**  
BIG LAKE — Coahoma's Bulldogs hung in against a talented Ballinger Bearcats squad, but could never overtake them at the Reagan County Tournament Friday. Coahoma trailed by just four points at halftime, 35-31. However, the Bulldogs had a bad stretch in the third period where they couldn't put the ball in the basket, allowing Ballinger to pull away with a 7-point advantage. Ballinger never led by more than 9 points, but the closest Coahoma could get to the Bearcats was 4 points. Only 14 total fouls were called in the game with just one being called in the first half. No free

throws were shot in the opening half either. Coahoma played Monahans in the third-place game at 3 p.m. Saturday. **Ballinger 21 14 10 9-54** **Coahoma 17 14 7 9-47** **Ballinger:** Bux Kemper 18, Halfman 3, Travis 10, Eagan 15, Fry 8 **Coahoma:** Mikey Mendoza 6, Josh Paniagua 3, Colter Morgan 11, Logan Stone 2, Matthew Tatum 7, Jovi Paniagua 12, Cody Sheppard 6.

**Wildcats 74, Southland 23**  
LENORAH — Justin Tubb put up 20 points against Southland and 26 against Wink to lead Grady past the first two rounds of the Cotton Classic Thursday and Friday and into the title game against Rankin at 6 p.m. Saturday. Grady led 35-10 at halftime of the Southland game and added to that in the third period, outscoring Southland 25-2. Nine Wildcats scored with Jacob Rodriguez contributing 15 points and Leighton Fields adding 10. **Southland 6 4 2 11-23** **Grady 21 14 25 14-74** **Southland:** Nava 7, Loyd 2, Martinez 6, Munoz 4, Mahanay 4. **Grady (6-1):** Tommylee Rivas 4,

Dylan Cox 9, Roy Rodriguez 2, Justin Tubb 20, Jacob Rodriguez 15, Santos Montoya 5, Leighton Fields 10, Casey Shands 3, Lane Shands 6.

**Wildcats 57, Wink 52**  
Wink provided the Wildcats with their toughest challenge since suffering their only loss of the season to Forsan's Buffaloes Dec. 11. The score was even at 32-all at intermission, but Grady started fast in the second half, pulling away just far enough to hang onto the victory. Dylan Cox complimented Tubb's 26 points with 16 of his own. **Wink 16 16 6 14-52** **Grady 17 15 10 15-57** **Wink:** Sellers 23, Medina 7, Lujan 11, Richardson 5, McGuire 2, Casteel 2, Thomas 2. **Grady (7-1):** Tommylee Rivas 2, Dylan Cox 16, Justin Tubb 26, Jacob Rodriguez 5, Leighton Fields 6, Lane Shands 2.

**Southland 34, Lady Wildcats 29**  
Grady's girls held a 3-point advantage at halftime and 2-point lead heading into the fourth period. However, Southland outscored the Lady Wildcats 16-9 in the final stanza to pull off the

upset. Eva Dyck led Grady with nine points and Kenzi Madison added six. **Southland 7 6 5 16-34** **Grady 6 10 4 9-29** **Southland:** Arguillo 13, Buckner 7, Rackler 7, Zeleznikar 7. **Grady:** Eva Dyck 9, Lindsey Chavez 4, Kandace Schuelke 4, Lauren Robinson 2, Kenzi Madison 6, Rachel Romine 4. **Grady 66, Klondike JV 11**  
The Lady Wildcats bounced back from a disheartening loss by overpowering Klondike's junior varsity. Grady never trailed and led 46-8 at halftime. Klondike failed to score in the third period and managed just three points in the final stanza. Eight Lady Wildcats scored with Lauren Robinson leading the way with 13 points. Sam Rodriguez added 12 and Kandace Schuelke had 10. **Klondike JV 4 4 0 3-11** **Grady 28 18 10 12-66** **Klondike JV:** Corde 3, Archer 2, Jones 4, Richards 2. **Grady:** Eva Dyck 6, Lindsey Chavez 8, Kandace Schuelke 10, Kaitlyn Blocker 6, Lauren Robinson 13, Sam Rodriguez 12, Kenzi Madison 9, Rachel Romine 4.

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PAPER

Continued from Page 2C

But soon an unlikely cross-section of people in small Central California towns were putting their thoughts and wishes into tiny pieces of folded paper.

Bette Thayer, 81, of Hanford saw an announcement for a workshop and called her neighbor, Ethel Funchess, 86. They're both widows. They take classes at the recreation center, play mah-jongg, and have coffee together every Sunday.

They joined a group folding cranes every Friday afternoon at the Kings Art Center in Hanford.

"There were people our age all the way down to grade school. There was one family who came with the grandmother, mother and kids," says Thayer, a retired nurse. "It became a real interesting summer. A thousand cranes is a lot of cranes. But we didn't do it as individuals. We did it as a group."

As she folded, Thayer made new friends. She also remembered old friends. She first learned to make a crane from a Japanese high school friend who went to her boarding school in the Midwest to escape being sent to a relocation camp in California during World War II.

During a family vacation in June to Montana, Thayer had all her nieces and nephews folding cranes on a hotel room floor. They went back to their respective states, taught their friends how to fold, and sent hundreds of cranes back to Hanford.

"It was an emotional thing for all of us this summer," Thayer says, beginning to cry. "When something like that hap-



Ray Thomas, of Hanford, looks over a memorial to the victims of the Virginia Tech massacre in the library at Fresno City College. Thomas helped get a memorial of 33 strands of 100 paper cranes done with the help of the community.

MCT photo/Craig Kohlross

pens, you want to do something. But what is there to do? This keeps your hands busy while you're praying."

Takako Cameron, 63, of Lemoore, Calif., grew up in Tokyo. She left 32 years ago when she married an American military man. She learned from her mother how to fold a perfect crane before she was old enough to read.

After she read about the project, Cameron started folding cranes. Every time she had 100 she would hold all the paper in her arms and say the Lord's Prayer, before folding some more.

She taught her Monday night women's craft group at the Lemoore United Methodist Church to fold cranes. Most of the women struggled. So they would do the first simple folds, and Cameron would add the finishing touches.

She thought about what a steadfast presence the crane has been in her life.

"The crane is also for when there is something

to celebrate — weddings, birthdays. A crane is said to live 1,000 years, so they are a symbol of life. All my life, the crane has been with me. I wanted to send cranes to Virginia to wish them peace in their minds."

At Lemoore High School, Robyn Mote was none too thrilled to be making up classes with summer school.

Then Thomas came to her class to explain the tradition of the paper cranes.

Robyn, 16, folded 20 that first day and two more every day for the rest of the summer.

"I found a kind of discipline, that I really needed, and an ability to focus when I was folding," she said.

World events have touched her high school years. Lemoore's a Navy town, and many of Robyn's classmates have parents serving in the Iraq War. She found that the Virginia Tech tragedy stuck in her mind.

"When you're so close in age, it hits you. I kept thinking ... how it could happen here?"

But Robyn says she believes there is power in a paper crane.

"It's a little teeny piece of paper, but folding it made me feel like I was saying 'I care,'" she says. "It makes you think while you're folding. And then everyone folds theirs a little differently, so when you see all the cranes, it's all these people saying, 'If we look within ourselves and are aware of the world around us, we can have hope that something like this doesn't happen again.'"

By August, the crane makers had 33,000 to send — and more that stayed home, says Luanne MacDougall of Hanford.

MacDougall says she had tried not to dwell too much on the Virginia Tech shootings: "If you feel too much, you're going to go crazy."

Carey Takasaki, a math teacher, brought the pro-

ject to her classes at Lemoore High.

Takasaki's mother, Ayako, is from Hiroshima, Japan, and now lives in Hanford. Ayako was 5 years old when the United States dropped an atomic bomb on her hometown.

When Takasaki lived in Japan for two years, she went to Hiroshima to see where her mother was from and to visit a well-known peace monument dedicated to a young victim of the bomb blast.

Sadako Sasaki was 2 when Hiroshima was bombed. At 11, she was diagnosed with leukemia — "the bomb disease."

She prayed to live. A friend told her the legend of the 1,000 cranes. Sadako folded more than 1,000. She died at the age of 12, but her friends kept folding cranes and raised money for a memorial to Sadako, a statue of the girl holding a golden crane. At the bottom is inscribed the wish of her childhood friends: "This

is our cry. This is our prayer. Peace in the world."

Around the park are thousands of paper cranes folded by people from all over the world.

Takasaki remembers standing at the once-ravaged site and looking at the small pieces of folded paper swaying in the breeze.

"There's discipline in folding a crane. It takes concentration," Takasaki says. "It looks like such a simple thing. But every fold can have meaning. When you see a paper crane, it's someone saying to everyone else, 'I'm committed to peace. I care.'"

▶ **Menus**

**Spring City Senior Citizens Center**

- Tuesday  
Closed for holiday
- Wednesday  
Chicken  
Fajitas/Tortillas  
Spanish Rice  
Cheese/Lettuce/Tomatoes  
Guacamole/Chips  
Ambrosia
- Thursday  
Pork Chops/Brown Gravy  
Corn Casserole  
Baby Carrots  
Biscuits  
White Cake/Chocolate icing
- Friday  
Cheeseburger  
Lettuce/Tomato/Onion Pickle  
Tater Tots  
Banana Cake with icing

**JACK & JILL DAYCARE**  
Open 7 days a Week 5 am-Midnight  
Birth to 12 years old  
1708 S. Nolan 267-8411

MANNERS

Continued from Page 2C

If you want my advice — here it is! You're young; you're a college graduate with a good job and benefits. Take a few years and get settled. Save your money and

buy yourself a house. Don't rent if at all possible. Get involved in church, in your community, and become a role model for other young men your age.

You don't just marry a girl because she has a scrumptious-looking body and pretty face. Marriage

is one of the most serious decisions you will make in life. The choices you make today are the choices you will have to live with tomorrow. You still have lot of time, spend it wisely. God bless!

Jerrie Stocks has for a

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

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**Will Close**  
**Monday, Dec. 31**  
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**closed Tuesday,**  
**January 1, 2008**  
**For New Year's Day**

A special tour for a special event.

**BirthPlace Tour:**  
Monday, January 7 at 7:00pm

For over fifty years, little Midlanders and their families have called Midland Memorial Hospital home. Meet us at the first floor lobby to take part in our special BirthPlace Tour. Visit our Postpartum, Labor, Delivery, Nursery, and our unique Breast Feeding Shoppe, Beautiful Beginnings. Meet our outstanding staff and find out what to expect when your special time arrives.

The smallest details matter most to us. Labor, Delivery, Recovery, and Beautiful Beginnings in The BirthPlace at Midland Memorial Hospital West Campus.

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4 PK. 16 oz.

Mario Cocktail Onions 3/\$1.00  
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4-OZ BAG

ALL DRY DOG FOOD TAPED BAGS 15¢  
LB

**BING CHERRIES**  
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GWALTNEY POLISH SAUSAGE \$1.79  
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BREAKSTONE COTTAGE CHEESE 2/\$1.00  
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YOPLAY YOGURT 6/\$1.00  
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# EDITORIAL

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

-FIRST AMENDMENT

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

Ron Midkiff  
Publisher

John A. Moseley  
Managing Editor

Bill McClellan  
News Editor

## OUR VIEWS

### Don't miss out on Big Spring's Festival of Lights

If there was ever any doubt, Pat Simmons has proof that something magical has happened at Comanche Trail Park again this holiday season with the 11th annual Festival of Lights.

"Everyone we're hearing from keeps saying that this is the best one we've ever had," Simmons, the president of the Festival of Lights, said Friday afternoon. "Of course, I look at it and see holes where I'd like to see something done a little better, but everyone else is using words like 'terrific' and 'fantastic,' and one person even said it was 'the best display I've ever seen.'"

There's no doubt the Festival of Lights is now a tradition and a major attraction for Big Spring during the holiday season.

But if you haven't seen this year's display yet, or would just like to see it again this season, you'd better do so quickly. Only a couple of nights — tonight and Monday night — remain in the festival's run.

And Simmons said she'd like to see more than 4,000 more visitors in the next few nights.

That's right, thousands of people have already toured the Festival of Lights — well more than 15,000, as a matter of fact — but Simmons says she won't be satisfied until a target of 20,000 visitors is reached.

And we're with her on this.

Let's face it, if people from 40 different states and more than a dozen other nations — some even hailing from Russia — find it necessary to wind their way through the brilliant light display inside the park, certainly we should do so as well.

The giant poinsettias, arranged around and reflected in the waters of the historic Big Spring and those lining the dam along U.S. 87 grab the eye, but they are just a few of the festival's attractions.

Don't forget that the main attraction this year is recognizing our nation's military. To that end, there is a huge U.S. flag, with more than 7,000 lights, in the diorama area adjacent to the community center. And that, visitors to the festival tell us, is worth the price of admission.

Did we tell you there is no admission? That's right, this show is free to all comers, although donations will be accepted and are most assuredly appreciated.

Those donations make it possible to not only maintain the displays, but expand them each year.

Be sure to take a few moments during the next two days, pack up the family or even a few friends and take a tour through the park and enjoy the almost magical display volunteers have created.

We've already said it this season, but we're still sure that you'll be pleased with what you see and glad you took the time.

## 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

## LETTER POLICIES

- The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.
- Limit your letters to no more than 300 words.
  - Sign your letter.
  - Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street address for verification purposes.
  - We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity.
  - We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per 30-day period per author.
  - Letters that are unsigned or do not include a telephone number or address will not be considered.
  - Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

## A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

*May we gain understanding and growth through the study or Your word and our prayers, Lord.*

Amen

# Pinky — a true woman of courage

I met her in a green room, which, like so many others, wasn't even green. The woman doing makeup had no idea who she was and neither did the camera man, but they knew I was going on first, to discuss some OJ-like topic of no real importance, so they asked her to get out of the makeup chair so I could be "done" first.



SUSAN ESTRICH

Reverse order of importance, I said, apologizing, but she shook her head, unconcerned. It didn't matter. She had manners, grace and patience.

She had gone to school with my ex-husband, and I'd heard stories of her from him. I mentioned his name and she smiled.

He knew her as "Pinky." I should give him her best.

Did we have kids? We did, almost the same age as hers. And off we went, on the topics women talk about, even, maybe especially, powerful and ambitious women — about our kids and the burdens on them, and trying to balance the different levels of responsibility you feel.

She was raising her children alone in Dubai.

It was safer for all of them there

and the children liked it, but she longed to return to Pakistan, to resume her role in politics, to engage in the struggle that she hadn't so much chosen as been born into.

She waited. But the time was never quite right.

The man who was with her asked if they could possibly change the station to see if they could find some international news, news of the troubles in their part of the world. Switch away from the latest coverage of a guy who got away with murder and kept getting in trouble, or a blonde from somewhere in Middle America who was missing? Sure, we said. Anything you want. Somehow they found a station broadcasting pictures of fighting and bloodshed. This is it, the man said. We all watched for a few minutes. It wasn't the sort of place children growing up in safety would long to be. Or have their mother be. That was the problem.

I had just finished writing a book about Hillary Clinton, which I promised to send her and did. The book tour had been tough; even I was surprised by how much antipathy there was to the idea of Hillary as president. Did Americans really have so much trouble with the idea of a strong woman leader? Did they really see ambition in a woman as being so

different from that in a man? Even here, where it was — almost — safe?

She went to the ladies room and the crew asked me who she was. I'm always nice to people, but with her I had been more than nice: deeply respectful, intentionally deferential. You think I've got a lot on my plate, that I take a lot of abuse, I said. My life is easy. I saw my father die at the same age she lost hers, but I didn't see mine executed. I have tried to follow in my father's footsteps, in the sense of pursuing justice, but the path is not crowded with killers willing to risk their lives to kill me.

That's Benazir Bhutto, I explained. That's what her life is. Or was. May she rest in peace. She was a courageous woman and a mother who loved her children. Her country will miss her, and so will they.

Pinky. Such a girlie name for a woman of courage. Such a clear testament to the fact that little girls who get their nicknames from their rosy complexions can grow up to be women who are willing to risk their lives for their country.

It was not just another day in the green room. Or just another rally that went bad in Pakistan.

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## YOUR VIEWS

TO THE EDITOR:

On Friday, Dec. 21, I arrived at the Midland airport at 10:30 p.m., eagerly awaiting the arrival of my child coming home for the holidays. I noticed five police officers from the Big Spring Police Department pacing back and forth; at first I became nervous until I noticed the somber look on their faces. Also present were some ladies and deputies from the Midland County Sheriff's Office.

I recalled from the news that a former police officer, Steven Evrard, had been killed in Iraq and they were there to take him home.

My heart saddened when I saw a small cardboard box with a label that said "human remains" handed to a gentleman who was not only the fallen hero's brother in blue, but also his father-in-law. He gently held the box and boldly walked, fighting back the tears, with his young daughter at his side sobbing. Unable to watch, one of the women stood at a distance with tears rolling down her cheeks.

I continued to watch as they delicately placed the remains in the hearse.

There was not a large gathering or media attention for this small town hero, but he was taken home with dignity and honor as 10 law enforcement vehicles led an escort to take him home to his final resting place.

When I saw my child, I embraced him with all my might and said, "I love you very much."

My deepest sympathies to the family of Steven Evrard. God bless your family for not only supporting him when making the streets of Big Spring safer, but sacrificing his life overseas for our freedom and the freedom of others.

I'd also like to thank all the families of law enforcement and military for allowing your loved ones to go out every day and protect us.

M.J. JONES  
MIDLAND

TO THE EDITOR:

I would like to thank the lady who attempted to hand me money on Dec. 20 in the Wal-Mart parking lot! I was in Big Spring for the day as a Vets Services driver, bringing patients from Abilene to the VA Hospital there.

To pass a little time while waiting for my riders to complete their VA visits, I walked over to the nearby Wal-Mart store. On my way back, I was approached by a nice lady in a black car (with a small dog) who wanted to "help someone out" by giving them a small donation at Christmas time.

Due to either my own stupidity, or my complete lack of sensitivity to her good intentions, I basically brushed her off by telling her I did not need her offering.

I sincerely hope I did not turn you off from your desires to do good for others again, and am sorry I was not more polite in telling you I was not in need. Please continue

to be nice to others despite me!

ROGER SELLERS  
ABILENE

TO THE EDITOR:

An article recently appeared in the *Herald* in which I was incorrectly quoted as saying that the sudden resignation of Cynthia Scott may have affected our fundraising efforts. The article was not accurate in that regard.

Cynthia gave ample notice of her resignation as executive director of the United Way in February of 2007. She went above and beyond the call of duty in attempting to effect a smooth transition into new leadership at the United Way.

It was Cynthia's successor, not Cynthia, who resigned suddenly. Cynthia continues to be a great friend and supporter of the United Way.

TIM YEATS  
VICE PRESIDENT  
UNITED WAY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO THE EDITOR:

Well the city finally cleaned off a couple lots that were a eyesore, which is great.

The thing is, they forgot to take the trash. They left garbage all over the lots but took the grass and tree branches.

We, as Big Spring citizens, are expected to keep our yards and so

See **LETTERS**, Page 5A

# Let me know and watch this space

This column may well be the last example of my writing you find on these pages. Whether that's a good thing or a bad thing depends to a great degree on you, dear readers.

When my good friend, a newspaper publisher, invited me to write a weekly column earlier this year, it took me about a minute to agree to give it a try. How often could I ever expect to have a newspaper publisher reach out and ask me to clutter up his op-ed pages, giving me a blank check to rant, vent or elucidate on any topic of my choosing? I was sure I'd never run out of material, and if the effort met with even a small measure of success, we'd both benefit from the exercise.



MIKE SULLIVAN

So for the past eight weeks running, yours truly joined the ranks of ink-stained wretches everywhere who help to fill out the space in newspapers not already occupied by ads from car dealers and grocery stores. Perhaps you've seen some of my earlier columns on matters great and small, ranging from noting how few people actually inhabit our planet, to how

the simple skill of making change has vanished from our society in less than a generation. It's possible that not every column I submitted ran in the newspaper you're reading, but with this submission I have kept my promise to my publisher friend to turn in eight columns for publication.

The editors have been kind enough to run a note with my e-mail address at the end of each column, and I'm grateful to have heard from readers from Kansas to Texas with their thoughts about my words. And now with this eighth and possibly final column appearing in this space, I'm asking specifically to those of you who care one way or another to send along a quick note. Just let us know if you'd like to keep these weekly columns coming, or if you'd be much happier with other writers filling this space every week.

You won't hurt my feelings either way, but whatever you send will help us decide whether we'll continue this column. I promise a personal reply to every e-mail that is received and my friend the publisher will also get a copy so he can see what his readers think of our little experiment.

Regardless of the outcome, I enjoyed the challenge and the experience of writing this column for you, and it is an opportunity I

am glad I didn't pass up. If today's column is my last that ever makes it into print, I'll have the satisfaction of saying that, yes, I was once a syndicated newspaper columnist. Being able to provide a small diversion in the day, a moment of thought, or a smile to any of the readers who invested their time in seeing what I had to say is a nice bonus to the whole bargain.

I have many more columns "in me," to be sure. Whether any of them make it into these pages depends on what you, the readers of this newspaper, have to say about your like or dislike of what you've seen so far. Eight or so columns is not much to go on, to be sure, but perhaps it's enough for you to know whether you've seen quite enough already or if you wouldn't mind at least a few more coming your way.

So please, let the publisher know what you think with a quick note to him at publisher@bigspringherald.com and, if you please, a copy to me at newspapercolumnist@mac.com

I thank you for your response, and no matter what happens, it has been my honor to write for you these past few weeks.

Mike Sullivan is a freelance writer from Carrollton. He can be reached by e-mail at newspapercolumnist@mac.com.





# A World of Thanks

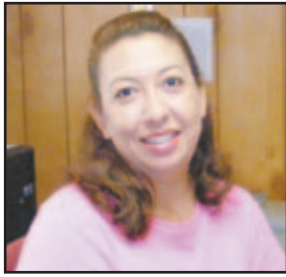
## To Our Readers and Advertisers

We love delivering news from around the neighborhood and around the world, and we couldn't do it without the support of our loyal readers and advertisers. Thank you for making us your newspaper of choice. We look forward to reporting to you in the new year!

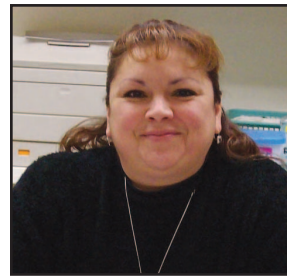
From all of us to all of you, Happy Holidays!



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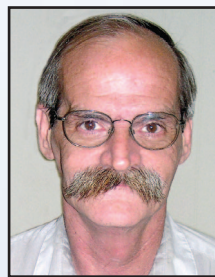
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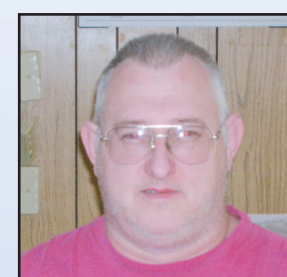
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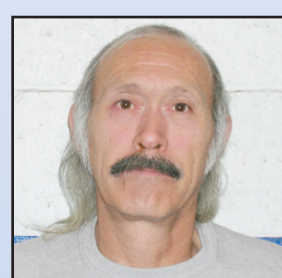
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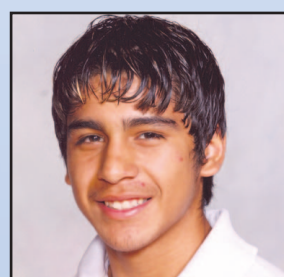
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*Happy New Year!!!*

# The Big Spring Herald

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# BUSINESS AND AGRICULTURE

Do you have an interesting item for the Business and Agriculture pages? Call John Moseley, 263-7331, Ext. 230, or leave a voice mail.

**BIG SPRING HERALD**

**Page 4C**  
**Sunday, December 30, 2007**

## Mexico's protection for farm goods runs out, squeezing farmers

By **MARK STEVENSON**

Associated Press Writer

MEXICO CITY (AP) — For 15 years, Mexican farmers have feared the day when the last import protections end for the country's ancestral crops of corn and beans.

But as Jan. 1 draws near, farmers say the damage has already been done: Mexico has plunged deeply into a model of globalized agriculture where farmers are ill-prepared to compete, and even people who don't farm for a living are suffering.

Nobody knows that better than Vicente Martinez, who grows corn, beans and some coffee in the green mountains of Tepetlan, Veracruz. In July, his daughter Felictas died trying to cross the desert to enter the United States. Martinez blames a combination of free trade and dwindling government farm-support programs that leave rural families with little choice but to migrate; his daughter found no work in their farming town to support her four children, other than cleaning houses for little pay.

"The only thing left to do is run for the United States ... or sit around looking like idiots, because there's nothing to do here, nothing," said Martinez, whose daughter was abandoned by a people smuggler in Arizona.

Corn, beans, sugar and milk were granted special 15-year import protections when the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, was negotiated in 1993, time that was supposed to be used to prepare Mexico for competition. But many say that didn't happen.

And while global prices for these commodities are boom-



AP Photo/Gregory Bull  
**Javier Castro harvests corn near Serdan, Mexico. As Jan. 1 approaches, marking the end of a 15-year import protections measure for the country's corn and beans crops, farmers affirm Mexico has already plunged deeply into a model of globalized agriculture where farmers are ill-prepared to compete.**

ing, Mexico's farm parcels tend to be tiny and only marginally productive, so higher prices internationally have done little to improve peo-

ple's lives here.

Farmers like Juan Antonio Lopez, who plants corn on about 7.5 acres in Pino Suarez, Durango, have little

corn left over to sell, and often must buy grain at higher international prices for their families and animals.

Even somewhat larger farms have trouble storing crops and getting them to market, in part because the government has allowed state purchasing agencies, granaries and distribution networks to wither, preferring instead to rely on market forces.

Mexico also has been slow to modernize to take advantage of ethanol demands and genetically-modified crops.

Martinez was among a group of farmers demonstrating this month in Mexico City to demand the government take a greater role in assuring farmers a fair price, as well as networks to store and sell their grain.

But even that wouldn't benefit most Mexican farmers, whose plots are so small — under 6 acres — that they engage in subsistence agriculture, not even producing enough to eat.

"It isn't enough to live on, and besides, we have to plant with mules and a hand plow, because there have not been any programs to provide us a tractor," Lopez said.

It wasn't supposed to be this way. Officials in 1993 said the 15-year transition period would give farmers here a chance to modernize, diversify their crops and begin to export them, or at least find seasonal work at a new wave of factories the trade pact was expected to bring to the Mexican countryside.

None of that happened, says Victor Suarez, the leader of a farm cooperative group that works to start storage silos

See **NAFTA**, Page 5C

## A year to remember for Texas producers

By **BETSY BLANEY**

AP Agriculture Writer

LUBBOCK (AP) — Kevin Crooks was one of many in Texas agriculture who couldn't resist.

A full-time rancher in recent years, the Tulia cattle producer eyed the high prices for wheat and corn and returned to farming both.

His winter wheat fields harvested in June were "phenomenal."

"It was by far the best wheat crop that I've ever produced and I've farmed since 1984," Crooks said. "I think I could have s k a t e d through the rest of the year."

A c r o s s Texas, the nation's No. 2 agriculture state, this year's high grain prices and wet spring and early s u m m e r resulted in a record \$100 billion in economic impact. In July, state officials declared a nearly decade-long drought ended.

The previous high, \$85 billion in 2004, was followed by back-to-back drought years, with 2006 bringing a record \$4.1 billion in livestock and crop losses.

Crop damage this year came from too much moisture — ironic in Texas — from the Rio Grande Valley to the Gulf Coast, hampering grain sorghum and cotton harvests.

Some of the largest increases came from a 440 percent increase from a year ago in production of grain sorghum, while corn production rose 91 percent. Both commodities are feeding the nation's new appetite for alternative fuels and have made Texas the leader in biodiesel production.

The state also leads the nation in production of cattle, cotton, sheep, wool, goats, mohair, horses, hay and

See **CROPS**, Page 5C

**Some of the largest increases came from a 440 percent increase from a year ago in production of grain sorghum, while corn production rose 91 percent. Both commodities are feeding the nation's new appetite for alternative fuels and have made Texas the leader in biodiesel production.**

## Public Records

### Howard County Justice of the Peace Outstanding IBC Warrants:

Richard Arley Acuff, 1504 Sycamore, Big Spring  
Sonia M. Barlow, 4209 Parkway, Big Spring  
Casey D. Bernal, 901 Grand, Hereford  
Richard Henry Burk, PO Box 171933, Arlington  
Latonya Campbell, 5948 Callaston Lane, Fort Worth  
Lenard Carson Jr., 102 S. Peach, Pecos  
Scott S. Carter, 3223 Cornell, Big Spring  
Andrea Clardy, 2401 Ave. L, Snyder  
Jared Coby, 901 S. High St., Longview  
Patrick C. Criss, 8030 Catalpa, Texas City  
Susan Cuellar, 2301 N. Pecos, Midland  
Ramona Davila, 2143 Texas Ave., San Antonio  
Randy James Ellis, PO Box 391, Snyder  
Hilda L. Fuentes, 502 S. Seventh, Lamesa  
Aldo Gustavo Galindo, 922 Jeter, Odessa  
Claudet Garza, 3106 E. Elm, Laredo  
Naomi Gonzales, 1606 E. Fifth, Big Spring  
Raul Gonzales, 2106 Johnson, Big Spring  
Jeffrey Grams, 224 Lelon Lane, Springtown  
Nora Gutierrez, 606 N. Eighth Street, Lamesa  
Dana L. Havink, 600 Star Linda Ct., Arlington  
Gerald R. Hodges, 4312 Crane, Houston  
Allan J. Hoey, 1401 N. Highway 87 Apt. 2, Big Spring  
Lucas Shane Hughes, #1 Courtney Place No. 7, Big Spring  
Jeanie Renee Ivey, 5326 Old State Hwy. 7, La Grange  
Sharon Annette James, 1215 Cedar, Colorado City

Brandy Johnson, 24327 Pleasonton, San Antonio  
Rene M. Johnson, 9205 W. County Road 174, Midland  
Alana Marie Lee, 2711 66th Street, Lubbock  
Patricia Lutrell, 2726 Redwood, Odessa  
Carol Lee McNeil, 2601 Westridge, Snyder  
Ebaline Flores Mendoza, PO Box 291, Mertzson  
Melissa Merket, 402 W. Eighth, Colorado City  
Elizabeth Rose Mills, 1204 Mulberry, Big Spring  
Angela Moreno, 1712 N. Third Street, Lamesa  
Anna Marie Moreno, 4656 St. Frances Ave., Dallas  
Jerry Musquiz, 2609 Cotton Flat Road, Midland  
Michael Todd McClinton, 1003 S. Midkiff, Midland  
William Leslie Neal, 2100 Alabama, Big Spring  
Katherine Hardin Perez, 4908 Parkway, Big Spring  
Richard Wayne Rains, 4501 Parkway, Big Spring  
Michael Dewayne Renteria, 1810 Owens, Big Spring  
Keyana Cooley Rincker, 1905 Wasson Apt. 56, Big Spring  
Alfredo Riojas Jr., 255, S. 11th St., Lubbock  
Gustabo Alfredo Rios, of 1804 Scurry, Big Spring  
Frances Rodriguez, 603 Steakley, Big Spring  
Veronica Rodriguez, 3010 Cherokee, Big Spring  
Sofia Romero, 409 N. Ave. G, Lamesa  
Robert Rosamond, 801 Lancaster, Big Spring  
Jennifer Ann Rositas, 1429 E. Sixth, Big Spring  
Steven G. Ross, 60 Cinamon Lane, San Angelo  
Rudy Salazar, PO Box 1275, Stanton  
Crystal Ann Schneider, P.O. Box 844, Coahoma  
Harl Bradford Shaffer, 5603 Gail Hwy., Big Spring

Syretta Diane Shellman, 1101 N. Goliad, Big Spring  
Janie Spurgeon, 1212 Wadley, Midland  
Shawn Spurgeon, 106 N. Adams, Denver City  
James Sutton, 2225 Oakland, Abilene  
Tonya Taylor, 1111 Moseley Circle, Hobbs, N.M.  
Tiffney Lee Tindol, 2206 Morrison, Big Spring  
Jimmy Vasquez, 4000 W. Illinois, Midland  
Brenda Vera, 1901 Ave. N, Snyder  
Alicia N. Vernon, 9614 Dover Ridge, San Antonio  
Tyler J. Voss, Fannin Co. Rd 4925, Leonard  
Christina Williams, 400 Macarthur, Odessa  
Bernest Elgen Woolridge, 4110 S. Jackson, Amarillo  
Jerry Lee Wrightsil Jr., 2816 Ridge Road, Fort Worth

**Warranty Deeds:**  
Grantor: Lazy J. Ltd.  
Grantee: Terry and Dorothy Nichols  
Property: Tract of land out of Section 10, Block 32, T-1-S, T&P RR Co. Survey.  
Date: Dec. 20, 2007

Grantor: Lela Pearl Maness  
Grantee: Bill and Erma Baker  
Property: Tract of land out of Section 48, Block 32, T-1-N, T&P RR Co. Survey  
Date: Dec. 21, 2007

Grantor: Phyllis Sparks  
Grantee: Larry Sparks  
Property: Lot 12, Block 2, Sunset Place Annex.  
Date: Dec. 21, 2007

Grantor: Susan Gaston  
Grantee: Rusty and Jessica Baker  
Property: Lot 12, Block 36, Original Town, Forsan  
Date: Dec. 26, 2007

Grantor: Brett and Leslie Kinman  
Grantee: Relocation Advantage LLC  
Property: Lot 30, Block 6, Highland South Addition.  
Date: Dec. 26, 2007

**Warranty Deeds With Vendor's Lien:**  
Grantor: Sunset Ridge Partners, LP  
Grantee: MRJ Leasing LP  
Property: Tract of land out of Section 31, Block 33, T-1-N, T&P RR Co. Survey.  
Date: Dec. 21, 2007

Grantor: Muy Properties, Ltd.  
Grantee: Kenneth R. Agostinho  
Property: Lots 3-6, McDowell Heights Addition.  
Date: Dec. 21, 2007

Grantor: Kenneth and Jennifer Noble  
Grantee: John Wagenman  
Property: Lot 8, Block 13, North Park Hill Addition.  
Date: Dec. 21, 2007

Grantor: Charles D. Rosenbaum  
Grantee: Kenny and Tami Davis  
Property: Lot 8, Block 12, North Parkhill Addition  
Date: Dec. 21, 2007

**Marriage Licenses:**  
Major Kenas, 28, and Paige Sandell, 28, both of Big Spring  
James Devaney, 41, and Jessica Ann Word, 38, both of Big Spring  
Todd Davis, 45, and Glenda Jean Halverson, 49, both of Big Spring

**District Court Filings:**  
Larry Ray Carter vs. Tara Leigh Carter, divorce  
Americredit Financial Services vs. Juana Fierro, accounts, notes and contracts

## Techno Tanning Salon opening in Big Spring Mall

HERALD Staff Report

Techno Tanning Salon is moving to the Big Spring Mall and adding a complete fitness center, said Danielle Ramirez, mall manager.

Blake Toland, Techno owner, has been working on the site since early October when he signed the lease to move in at the mall. He has designed his own layout, according to Ramirez, and put a number of contractors to work for the completion of the electrical, plumbing needs and reconstruction of the walls.

He and his wife, Tracy, have designed and decorated the salon and fitness center.

The expansion project will cover more than 11,000 square feet and will be located next to the Family Dollar. Techno will utilize half of the former Burke's outlet building.

The hair and tanning salon will open Jan. 2 with the fitness center to follow soon, Ramirez said.

The public is encouraged to come by anytime.

"I am absolutely thrilled to have this new business at the mall," said Ramirez. She added that she is working with the mall management company for future expansion projects.



# Boost children's self-esteem, curb 'gimme' attitude

By JULIE DEARDORFF

Chicago Tribune

Last month, my 3-year-old lost it in a toy store because I didn't buy Max and Monty, an overpriced pair of dump trucks from the Thomas the Tank Engine series.

"Sweetie, you don't need Max and Monty," I tried. "You have lots of Thomas trains."

When he threw himself on the floor and began screaming, "But I want it! I want it!" I began to worry. Yes, it was fairly typical — albeit ugly — behavior for a U.S. preschooler, but was I also witnessing an ominous sign of things to come?

Social scientists — and plenty of parents — have labeled the nation's tweens and teens "the most brand-oriented and materialistic generation in history."

Parents who hope to teach their children how to live simply have tried turning off the TV or muting the ads. They've joined groups such as Commercial Alert, Commercial-Free Childhood or Center for a New American Dream that advocate reducing U.S. commercialization. And they've

modeled the behavior they want to see.

But since it's impossible to shield a child from their everyday environment and the influence of friends and peers, researchers who study materialism are now suggesting an additional antidote: work on raising your child's self-worth and sense of accomplishment.

Low self-esteem can create materialistic tendencies in children, according to Lan Nguyen Chaplin, an assistant marketing professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who co-authored a new study that looked at how materialism develops in youngsters.

Chaplin and her colleague found that between the ages of 8 to 13, a child's level of self-esteem drops, in part because of physical changes. The self-conscious tweens turn to material goods to make themselves feel better. Then, surprisingly, as self-esteem rebounds by the end of high school, roughly between the ages of 16 and 18, the need for consumer goods goes down, according to the work published in this month's Journal

**Experts say to raise a child's self-esteem, key in on an interest — drawing, music, sports, fantasy play, debating — interact with him and give him positive, supportive messages. But don't overdo it, either.**

of Consumer Research.

If a child has a stronger sense of self during these downswings, the researchers believe, they're less likely to see material goods as the key to happiness and popularity.

"It's the strongest evidence to date that self-esteem is actually a cause of materialism; all past evidence has been correlational and thus has left open the possibility that materialism causes low self-esteem, or there's some third variable," said Knox College psychology professor Tim Kasser, who has studied materialism and values for 20 years but was not involved in Chaplin's study. What's impor-

tant, he said is that their finding "opens the possibility of future interventions designed to focus on low self-esteem children and help them resist the problematic influences of consumer culture."

Experts say to raise a child's self-esteem, key in on an interest — drawing, music, sports, fantasy play, debating — interact with him and give him positive, supportive messages. But don't overdo it, either. "Don't drown him in praise, and make sure your words are genuine and honest," said Stanley Greenspan, a clinical professor of psychiatry and pediatrics at George Washington University Medical School and author of "Great Kids" (De Capo, \$22.95).

"It should not be empty praise," he added. "And you don't have to say a word. It can be the smile on your face, the gleam in your eyes."

Focusing on family activities rather than material things can also help, said Beth Casarjian, a mother of three and co-author of

"Mommy Mantras" (Broadway, \$16.95). "Kids will remember the time you made a snowman for them

a lot longer than the plastic toy that gets broken or lost shortly after it's opened," she said.

Also, give your child the opportunity to serve others in need. "Younger children can choose or wrap a gift for a child while adolescents might help in a food pantry," Casarjian said. "Focusing on those with less gives a sense of perspective that can become part of a larger family dialogue of gratitude. Most important, helping others contributes to a child's genuine sense of well-being and self-worth."

Though preschoolers won't appreciate this, it might also help to remember Kasser's 2002 study in the Journal of Happiness Studies that discovered what really makes for a "Merry Christmas." He found that family and religion were the two factors most closely tied to holiday happiness.

What caused the most dissatisfaction? Spending money and receiving gifts.

E-mail Julie Deardorff at [jdeardorff@tribune.com](mailto:jdeardorff@tribune.com) or visit her blog, *Julie's Health Club*, at [chicagotribune.com/julie](http://chicagotribune.com/julie)

## LETTERS

Continued from Page 4A

forth trash free and mowed. My question is: Why is it that the city cannot do the same?

I have always been taught to lead by example. Is the city of Big Spring doing that?

I just ask that they do what they require us Big Spring citizens are expected to do. We all pay our taxes which pays for the city to do what it requests of us.

TAMMY ADAMS  
BIG SPRING

TO THE EDITOR:

My name is Mike Maxwell and I've recently been released from prison after serving 21 years. I was fortunate enough to have a family that has supported and loved me and helped me get back up on my feet.

Upon my release, I moved to Big Spring and my oldest brother and his wife helped me adjust to living on the outside.

I needed a job and went out to Basic Energy Services with my resume and filled out an application. I talked to Sydney Shoop and he looked over my application which explained my past. He talked to the terminal superintendent, Bobby Wigington. They bent over backwards to take a chance on me and gave me a job.

I just wanted to let the community know what a good company Basic Energy Services is and how fortunate Big Spring is to have it.

I would also like to thank Bill, Ray and Andrew for helping train me and to learn the paperwork. Thanks again for taking a chance on me and believing in me.

MIKE MAXWELL  
BIG SPRING

TO THE EDITOR:

I learned a lesson. When you write a public letter about any subject, know all the facts first.

I wrote a letter about our senior center using the word "officials," implying that the senior center board or some city officials were responsible for double standards in management of our senior center. Not so! I repeat, not so! My apologies to you.

JoAnn Staulcup called me and corrected my misconception. Thank you,

JoAnn. As a matter of fact, after the first of the year, we are getting a new dance floor!

Thank you, city of Big Spring, for looking after our safety.

MARGIE MYERS  
BIG SPRING

TO THE EDITOR:

What do you call it when a health care provider is overpaid by Medicare and does not pay the money back?

Medicare fraud. Once discovered, government authorities will come take the provider's records and likely close the business. The provider will very likely be fined and charged interest in addition to what is owed, and will possibly be jailed. Isn't that true?

Then what do you call it when a large insurance company is overpaid by Medicare and doesn't pay back the money?

Apparently it is called good business. According to the Office of the Inspector General, approximately 80 percent of the insurance companies who are sponsors of Medicare Part-D were overpaid in 2006 to the tune of \$4.4 billion. In the same report, the OIG noted that Medicare has no plan at present to get that money back and believes it will likely continue to over pay Medicare Part-D sponsors "through 2008 and beyond."

My question is: How does Medicare justify continuing to pay these big businesses huge sums of money they have not earned, while in the same breath cutting coverage to our elderly and cutting reimbursements to healthcare providers?

Congress is threatening to cut reimbursements to healthcare providers by 10 percent this next year. I wonder who will be able to afford that.

Why are the insurance companies not treated like all other providers? You do the work, submit the bill to Medicare, then in a month or two, you might get paid.

Why should the insurance companies get such preferential treatment — payment in advance and at taxpayers' expense? Much less extra money for nothing in return.

SUSAN ROBERTS  
BIG SPRING

TO THE EDITOR:

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thoughts as we close another holiday season. For many, Christmas is a time of family, friends and food. But for others, this time is one of financial stress, anxiety and a feeling of desperate loneliness.

As I make my daily rounds checking my post office box to see how many bills I have that will not be paid on time and worrying about health insurance (or lack thereof) for my child, I can't help but think just how lucky I really am.

I see the faces of the elderly who did not hear from their children or grandchildren this

Christmas, or who longed for their deceased husbands and wives embrace this time of year. It saddens my heart to see the grungy little faces of the children who did not get enough to eat on Christmas Day and whose stockings were not filled. I extend a smile and wonder just what lies beneath their ragged exteriors.

While our military men and women spend the holidays away from their family I can't help but feel confused and frustrated at the way many of our government leaders mince words about what is really important.

It doesn't matter that our car is dirty, or that our shoes aren't as fashionable as the person in the office next to ours. There are so many people who would love to have a chance at a good-paying job or a home with central heat and air conditioning. How many people do we pass on the street everyday that have so much less than we do?

We complain about waiting 15 minutes in a check-out line when there are those who don't have enough money to buy a gallon of milk for their 2-year-old. We get angry with the person who cuts us off in traffic when there are those who walk 18 blocks to buy a single loaf of bread. We yell at our kids when they make a mess when there are

those who have lost their children to sickness. Each day we number our worries and complain about the balance in our checking accounts, not once thinking of those less fortunate than ourselves.

As you take down your Christmas tree this year, take a moment and think about those who have no home to put a tree up in. Think about those who had no presents wrapped and waiting on Christmas morning. Take a second to stop and hold the door for the elderly person carrying a load that is far too heavy for their weakened body. Say hello to the little child whose coat is much too thin to keep out the cold.

Swallow your pride and give the man or woman in military fatigues a pat on the back and tell them "Thank You" for risking their lives for total

strangers. Give the tired waitress a \$10 tip for your 50-cent coffee.

God works in mysterious ways. If you stretch out your hands to others there's no telling just how much you may have when you pull them back. So as this season comes to a close, remember those less fortunate and give of yourself in ways that show kindness and compassion for others. The Bible tells us that we have entertained angels, unaware. Hug your children too much, laugh too often, give more than you take and smile even when you don't feel like it.

I wish you all a wonderful New Year and extend a prayer for those in need. Remember, God does not promise a calm passage, only a safe landing.

KELLY MYRICK  
BIG SPRING

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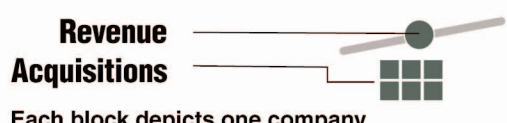
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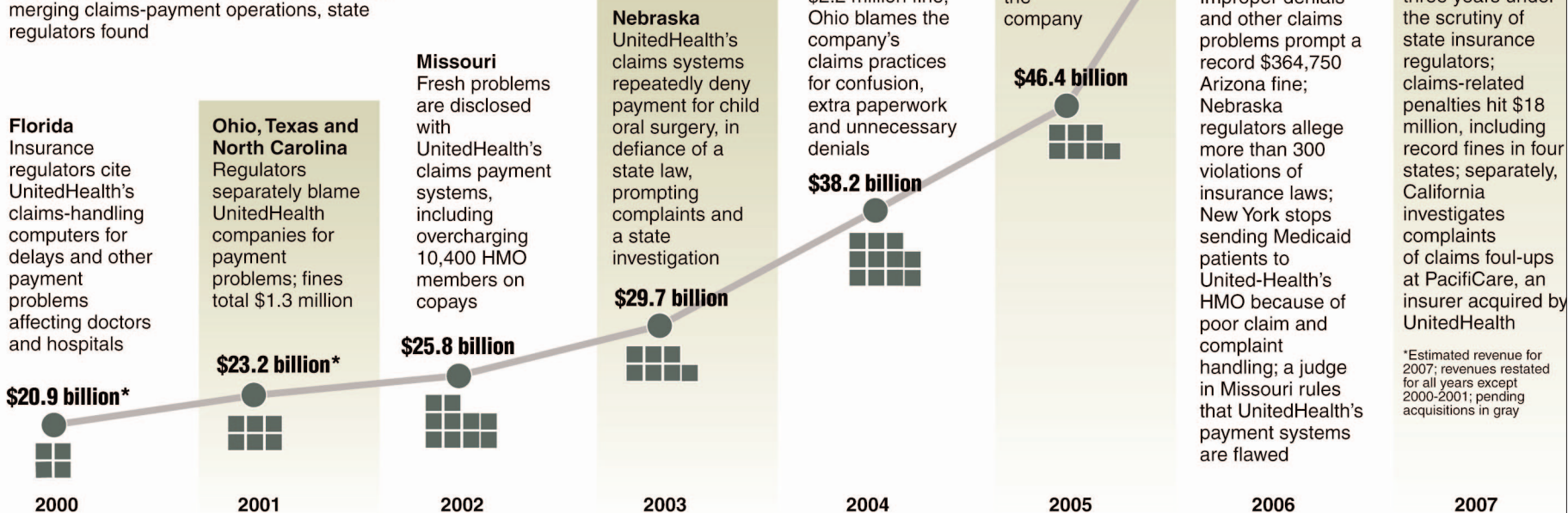
## Insurer UnitedHealth racked up penalties as it grew

UnitedHealth Group tripled in size by acquiring other companies since 2000, but insurance regulators in many states found the company often paid medical claims late or not at all - and didn't do enough when people complained. The problems are rooted in the computers that process claims, regulators say.



Each block depicts one company

As it acquired 70 companies, including many health plans, UnitedHealth often had trouble merging claims-payment operations, state regulators found



© 2007 MCT  
Source: Financial data from Bloomberg and UnitedHealth Group; regulatory actions from Star Tribune research  
Graphic: Minneapolis Star Tribune (Minn.)

**Judge asks to review UnitedHealth settlement**  
MINNEAPOLIS (MCT) — A landmark settlement between UnitedHealth Group and its former chief executive William McGuire may be delayed or possibly derailed after a judge asked if he could review its merits.

In an unexpected move, U.S. District Court Judge James Rosenbaum asked the Minnesota Supreme Court to clarify whether state law allows him to review a record \$420 million settlement brokered earlier this month. His ruling, filed late Wednesday, also maintains a freeze on McGuire's \$874 million in remaining stock options.

Rosenbaum is required to approve any settlement. But the fact that he is seeking guidance from the Minnesota court on how far he can go in reviewing it is unusual.

"This was not anticipated by anybody in this litigation," said Karl Cambronne, lead attorney in the consolidated shareholders lawsuits against UnitedHealth, which was part of the settlement.

## CROPS

Continued from Page 4C

deer. Industry-wide, nearly two million jobs and about 9 percent of the gross state product come from agriculture.

Other cotton growers followed Crooks' lead, planting 20 percent fewer acres of the fluffy fiber in Texas and growing corn or grain sorghum instead.

Even with fewer acres, Texas cotton growers are predicted to harvest 8.14 million bales, the second-largest crop. That's the result of improved genetics, which brought record yields to the South Plains, the world's largest con-

tiguous growing patch.

Timely and adequate rains also helped, said Steve Verett, executive vice president of Plains Cotton Growers, which serves a 41-county region on the South Plains.

"It would have been even bigger if the extreme rains in South Texas had not damaged the crop late in the season," he said.

Next year, demand for corn will lead some cotton producers in parts of the nation where there's higher than average rainfall to plant the biofuel crop. That has led to the prediction that Texas will plant half of the nation's cotton acreage next year, Verett said.

The cattle and dairy

industry also will continue to feel the impact from higher grain prices, Travis Miller, a drought specialist with the Texas Cooperative Extension, said.

"It's changed the whole way we look at it," he said. "I look at it every day and I'm still puzzled by it."

But it was the escape from drought that saved the year for ag producers.

"It's been a very good year," said David Baltensperger, head of the soil and crop sciences at Texas A&M University. "We can envision better but we're extremely pleased."

The first seven months were the wettest on

record in Texas, nearly 11 inches above the norm of 16.21 inches. That gave cattle raisers a break from having to buy hay from out of state.

Just less than half — 45 of the 109 lakes monitored by the Texas Water Development Board — were at least 95 percent full, according to the agency's November report.

But the state has since seen far less rain, with the last four months below average, said Victor Murphy, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Fort Worth. A month ago, only 30 of the state's 254 counties had burn bans. That number has nearly tripled

to 115 counties, as of Dec. 14.

"The tap got shut off and it actually went very much on the dry side," he said. But, "there was enough moisture for (farmers) to get their harvest out of the ground."

The statewide average for the first 11 months was 35.96 inches, still 9.94 inches, or 38 percent, above normal and the sixth wettest span on record.

As of mid-December, the recent dry spell has left about 52 percent of the state abnormally dry and 6 percent in moderate drought.

Murphy couldn't promise improvement in

coming months. Due to a moderate La Nina projected to last into spring, the entire state has a much greater chance than normal for above average temperatures and below average precipitation.

"We really haven't had normal around here for four years," he said. "It's been either feast or famine around here since '04."

For now, though, farmers and ranchers can enjoy the past 12 months.

"This is a banner year because we've had good yields and good prices," Miller said. "Those don't often match."f

## NAFTA

Continued from Page 4C

and direct farm-to-consumer sales of corn tortillas.

"There was no transition period like they promised 15 years ago," Suarez said. "We are not ready (for the trade opening), the only ones who are ready are the 20 big agribusiness corporations."

In fact, Mexico's government has already allowed global market forces to be strongly felt in Mexico. For years, it has allowed more corn imports under lower tariffs than NAFTA requires. This is why the U.S. ethanol boom caused a spike in tortilla prices early this year, which in turn sparked street protests in Mexico.

For a country long used

to a highly regulated agricultural market, the "tortilla crisis" was a bitter taste of the power of agribusiness consortiums that allegedly hoarded corn and speculated with prices.

But the spike in corn prices has given Mexico's beleaguered farm sector is "a little more breathing room," said Cruz Lopez, leader of the National Farmers Confederation.

It has also reduced the apocalyptic talk and strengthened the realization that Mexican farmers may have to depend on themselves.

"We have changed our rhetoric. Remember that 15 years ago, we were saying that on Jan. 1 ... we would be flooded with corn, that all the corn farmers in Mexico would disappear," said Hector Salazar, secretary of the National Corn Producers

Federation. Now, instead of talking doom, his group is trying to get farmers to join together to sell their crops on a contract basis to large consumers, like food companies.

Such efforts to build agricultural cooperatives — similar to the Grange halls and dairy cooperatives formed in the United States in the 1800s and 1900s — may be key to Mexican farmers' survival.

"They have only one way to survive, and that is by understanding the need to organize," said Hugo Garcia, an academic and co-author of the book "The Corn and Tortilla Crisis in Mexico." Mexican farming is important for environmental and social reasons as well as a brake against emigration. When forced to work odd jobs or

migrate, many rural residents lose their farming skills, making them poorer stewards of the land precisely when Mexico faces threats of erosion, desertification and deforestation.

And Joost Martens, the regional director for Oxfam, notes that what happens in Mexico may presage the fate of farmers in much of the developing world.

"NAFTA has been the model not only for the United States, in negotiating with Andean nations, Central America and the Caribbean, but the European Union, as well, is following the NAFTA model in its 'association agreements,'" said Martens. "The basic thing has been 'NAFTA parity.'"

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# Program gives dogs, inmates new lease on life

By KELSIE HAHN

Waxahachie Daily Light

VENUS, Texas (AP) — The Paws in Prison Program class gathered as one excited, nervous pack at the Sanders Estes Unit.

Ten dogs tugged at their leashes, ready to graduate and be adopted into new homes as inmates in orange jumpsuits stroked their heads and hugged their necks, telling them to sit and hush when they showed too much enthusiasm.

But even with the excitement, the dogs were unrecognizable from the unruly bunch that arrived at the unit eight weeks earlier.

For the men in orange, these animals have been more than just dogs: They've been companions, bunkmates, wards and friends. The inmates smiled and watched like proud papas as they showed off what the dogs have learned under their patient care. Some of the canines can sit, roll over and play dead.

For some, just sitting quietly is a major feat in a room full of people and chairs and cake.

Paws in Prison places dogs that need training and affection with inmates who need something to care for. In the process, they form an unusual, loving pack.

The dogs show traits of half-a-dozen breeds and all are rescued locally. Scout, a curious little beagle, is the self-appointed leader of the pack. Dark-furred Starr is the herder, Gwyn is the vocal one and German shepherd-mix Mercury is the guardian, not to mention Copper, Betsy, Victor, Jazzie, Millie and ultra-shy Dusty.

Victor, a soft-eyed mix, was one of this class' biggest success stories.

"He was so shy when he first came here it was unbelievable," Warden David McComis said.

Charles Fletcher of Dallas, one of Victor's trainers, saw the dog's transformation firsthand. When Victor first arrived, he was afraid to come out from under the stairs.



AP Photo/Waxahachie Daily Light, Kelsie Hahn  
**Bobby Tatum hugs Betsy, his dog at the Paws in Prison program at the Sanders Estes Unit in Venus Thursday. Paws in Prison places dogs that need training and affection with inmates who need something to care for.**

"We don't know why he was the way he was, but it seemed like something had happened to him," Fletcher said.

Now, Victor calmly greets friends and strangers alike.

The dogs aren't the only ones who change over the eight weeks.

"It's had a great impact," McComis said.

"We've seen significant drops in disciplinary problems." He estimated that disciplinary issues have dropped by 80 percent among the inmates in the area where the dogs are kept.

"It's even made a positive impact on the staff," he said.

K-9 Program Director Mabelle Gaconnet said many of the unit's staff members, even some of the released inmates, have adopted dogs from the program.

The inmates say they see the change in themselves.

"It's given us some responsibility, given us something to do," Fletcher said. "It takes our focus away from where we are."

David Cleboski of Tyler, like Victor, had never socialized with his fellow inmates even after several years in prison — until he took care of a floppy-eared, long-legged German shepherd-mix

named Jazzie.

"This is the first person I've ever opened up to is this dog," he said. "She was real skittish when we first got her. She loves everybody, she's very smart." Before getting involved with Paws in Prison, Cleboski, a self-described animal lover, said he never thought he'd share his cell with a dog.

"To be able to have something you care about, it put me back in a different mindset," he said. "These dogs, they're getting a second chance. We all need a second chance."

Paws in Prison began in 2006 at the Bill Clayton Detention Center in Littlefield. The recent graduation marks the end of the second round of the program at the Sanders Estes Unit, the third GEO Group Inc. correctional facility to begin the program.

Sanders Estes' first program had eight inmates training six dogs. The most recent program had 23 inmates caring for 10 dogs.

Inmates spend two weeks learning how to care for and train their dogs and eight more weeks with their canine companions under the direction of Jean-Paul "JP" Bonnelly of the Republic of Dog, who volunteers his time.

"I was really impressed at the level of commitment the offenders had," he said. "I looked forward every day to coming."

The dogs arrive in varying states of mind — all of them need basic training and human socialization.

"Some are real shy, some are just scared, some are wild and crazy," Gaconnet said.

Both the dogs and the trainers go through a rigorous selection process. The offenders must have no disciplinary actions for six months prior to the program and they can't have violent

records. The dogs must get along well with each other and are housed together to get used to one another before going to the unit.

Once the program begins, each dog is assigned two trainers who share a cell with the dog. The inmates are responsible for taking the dogs on "potty breaks" and training them in basic obedience. Bonnelly uses rewards-only training to encourage the dogs' good behavior. He hopes both the human and canine graduates of the program will remember the lessons learned about the power of positive reinforcement.

Cleboski and Barry Don Baird of Quitaque worked together to train Jazzie and teach her to play dead and roll over. Although they didn't always agree on how the training should be done or whose turn it was to take her out, they always found a compromise.

The animals and equipment are provided by a local shelter, Gaconnet

said. For the Venus program, the dogs come from Camp Wolfgang, a German shepherd rescue north of Ennis.

Founder Wally Swanson said he's pleased and proud to participate in the program.

"This is one of those programs where everybody wins," he said. "Frankly, those are dogs that but for this program would have spent their entire lives at Camp Wolfgang." Some of the dogs, like mixes Betsy and Mercury, have been at the dog shelter for over two years.

Thanks to Paws in Prison, Betsy has a new home and Mercury is much more likely to find one too.

One of Mercury's trainers, Rodney Ryker of Jacksonville, Fla., said he thought the dog might be deaf and blind at first.

"He was just ignoring me," he joked. But, more seriously, "He wasn't used to interacting with

See PAWS, Page 7A

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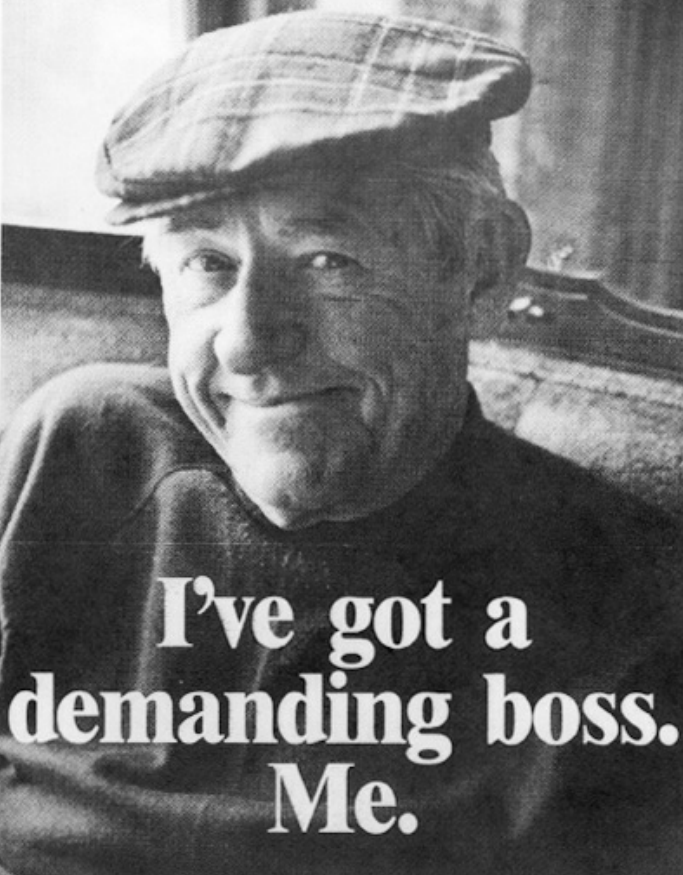
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**EQUIPMENT OPERATOR** needed. Part-time or Full-time. Great for retiree. 432-213-6802 or 432-264-1959

**FAST GROWING** company looking to expand for the New Year now hiring in the Big Spring Area for Class A CDL Drivers, and Heavy Equipment Operators with experience on Backhoe and Trackhoe Machinery. Our Company offers competitive wages, health benefits, retirement investment plan, vacation time and a great working environment. Applicants must pass pre-employment drug test and have a good driving record. If interested please come by Cowboys Construction our office in located at 9400 South Service Rd. 1-20 in Coahoma.

**WHITTEN INN** now hiring the following positions: **Housekeepers, Maintenance, Desk Clerks.** Apply in person, on I-20 next to TA Truck Stop.

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**Gill's Fried Chicken** looking for Management positions and Cooks. Experience a plus. Competitive wages. Benefits package includes health, vision & dental. Apply in person, 2100 S. Gregg. No phone calls.

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**NOW SEEKING** Part time LVN position for Martin County Home Health. If interested please contact Allison Williams, RN @ (432)756-3259 or fax resume to (432)756-4510.

**Help Wanted**  
**PARKVIEW NURSING & REHABILITATION**  
We have an immediate opening in our Laundry department. Full-time position. Split-shift. Please apply in person at 3200 Parkway Rd.

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**SATURDAY:** January 5 9am-1pm Only. American Limestone has stone panels, bits & pieces at low cost. Corner of 1st Ave. and Wright Ave., Southeast side in Air Park.

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**FOUND DOG** in front of the High School on Owens Street. Call 432-231-5122 to identify.

**FOUND LARGE** yellow lab mix in Oasis Addition. Neutered and needs to get back home. Owner please call 432-263-6570 or 432-264-7731 to claim your baby back.

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

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

**1212 MULBERRY.** 2 Bedroom 2 bath with CH/A. \$425.00 month, \$250.00 deposit. Call (432)263-3375 or 816-6992.

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

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

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

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**BEAUTIFUL- CUSTOM** Built 2002 home on 9 acres. 4/5 Bdrm, 3.5 bath, inground pool, 1200 sq. ft. Storage/shed, horse stalls. Price Reduced. Call 361-492-0270.

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**Newsday Crossword SATURDAY STUMPER** by Doug Peterson Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

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48 Rooter's remark			
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**Legals**

**CITATION**

**THE STATE OF TEXAS NOTICE TO: Unknown Heirs of Willy M. Scott, Deceased**

The application of Robert Cox, applicant, was filed in the Probate Court of Howard County, Texas on the 30th day of October, 2007, for the probate cause numbered P-13492, and entitled "Application to Determine Heirship." The application requests the court to determine the heirs of the decedent, Willy M. Scott.

The Court will hear such application at 10:00 AM on the first Monday after the expiration of 10 days, exclusive of the day of publication, from the date this citation is published, which will be Monday, the 24th day of December, 2007, in the County Courtroom in the County Courthouse of Howard County in Big Spring, Texas.

All of the persons named or identified above and all persons interested in the aforesaid estate are commanded to appear at or before the time set for said hearing by filing a written contest or answer to said application should they desire to contest it.

Said written contest or answer shall be filed in the office of the County Clerk of Howard County, Texas in Big Spring, Texas.

The officer serving this citation shall, in compliance with the law, serve it by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in this, the county in which such proceeding is pending, for not less than 10 days before the return day hereof, exclusive of the day of the publication, and the date of publication said newspaper bears shall be the date of publication.

If this citation is not served within 90 days after the date of issuance, it shall be returned unserved.

**ISSUED AND GIVEN** under my hand and seal of office this 10th day of December, 2007, at office in Big Spring, Texas.

**Donna Wright, County Clerk Howard County, Texas**  
By: Nancy Porter Deputy #5634 December 16, 23 & 30, 2007 and January 6, 2008.

**Legals**

**Notice of Public Hearing**

The Glasscock County Commissioners Court will conduct a public hearing at a meeting on January 14, 2008 to consider (1) the application of Airtricity Panther Creek Wind Farm, LLC, for designation of certain property located in Glasscock County as a Reinvestment Zone eligible for property tax abatement under Chapter 312 of the Texas Tax Code, (2) the application of Airtricity Panther Creek Wind Farm, LLC, for tax abatement, and (3) Airtricity Panther Creek Wind Farm, LLC's proposed tax abatement agreement.

The property designated by Airtricity Panther Creek Wind Farm, LLC, is intended for use as a wind power generation facility, electrical substations, associated transmission facilities and lines, and operations facility by Airtricity Panther Creek Wind Farm, LLC, and consists of:

\*All of the real property located in Glasscock County and contained in sections 13, 24, 25, 35, 36, 37, 38 and 48, Block 33, TWP 2-S, T & P R.R. Co. Survey, Glasscock County, Texas.

\*All of the real property located in Glasscock County and contained in sections 1, 2, 11, 12, and 13, Block 33, TWP 3-S, T & P R.R. Co. Survey, Glasscock County, Texas.

\*All of the real property located in Glasscock County and contained in sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, Block 32, TWP 4-S, T & P R.R. Co. Survey, Glasscock County, Texas.

\*All of the real property located in Glasscock County and contained in sections 1, 2, and 14, Block 32, TWP 3-S, T & P R.R. Co. Survey, Glasscock County, Texas.

\*All of the real property located in Glasscock County and contained in sections 1 and 7, Block 31, TWP 4-S, T & P R.R. Co. Survey, Glasscock County, Texas.

\*All of the real property located in Glasscock County and contained in sections 189, 190, 215, 216, 217 and 218, Block 29, W & NW R.R. Co. Survey, Glasscock County, Texas.

\*All of the real property located in Glasscock County and contained in sections 23, 25, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 49, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59 and 60, Block 30, W & NW R.R. Co. Survey, Glasscock County, Texas.

In determining whether to designate the Reinvestment Zone, the Commissioners Court will consider whether such designation would contribute to the retention or expansion of primary employment or would attract major investment in the Zone that would benefit the land to be included in the Zone and would contribute to the economic development of the County.

If created, the property would become "Glasscock County Reinvestment Zone 3." The public hearing will take place at 1:30 PM on January 14, 2008, in the Commissioners' courtroom of the Glasscock County Courthouse in Garden City, Texas.

All interested persons may appear and present testimony regarding designation of the Reinvestment Zone and the proposed tax abatement. If further information is needed, please contact the office of County Judge Wilburn Bednar, Glasscock County, 117 E Currie St, P.O. Box 67, Garden City, TX, Phone: 432-354-2382. #5645 December 30, 2007

**Answer to previous puzzle**

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RAPT GOTMAD AFR
ARIA AMOEBA FRO
NDAK FATHERHOOD
DONE FRET TBONE
BROTHERRAT OTTO
WAS ISM
ARGON UNCLEBUCK
MBA DEVIATE MOE
SISTERACT TOPSY
ELM DHS
FALA AUNTIEMAME
EXECS NOIR OBIS
MOTHERLODE NODS
UNA GUISES DUDE
RST ATTEIST SITYX
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**su | do | ku**

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**ANSWERS**

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

**BY HOLIDAY MATHIS**

Venus enters Sagittarius today with the gusto of an Italian aria. The people and situations we're attracted to are romantic and exciting. They may not be obtainable or permanent, but we're swept up in the melody of their song, and we sing along, too. A second influence, Saturn, assures the sun that New Year's resolutions will stick.



HOLIDAY MATHIS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You can afford to say no. Your time is precious! However, think carefully before you do. Volunteering makes you feel great! And for those out of work, it leads to employment.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Financial issues aren't first on your mind, but make an effort to calculate expenses or they'll quickly get away from you. The best money tips come from your mother.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Money and luxuries come from learning what's new. Dive in to software programs and other technology. Clear three- to five-hour blocks in your schedule. Learning it all at once is most effective.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The cliches of the New Year holiday may sound worn and boring, but don't let yourself get

cynical. This is the time of year when miracles can happen, and right now, they are very likely to happen to you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). All it takes is a little excellent P.R. to bring fast results to both your business and your personal life. Surround yourself with those friends who constantly point your strengths and talents out to you and everyone else.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You bring on the good cheer with your unique gift for connecting people (especially people very different from one another) through exuberant conversation. True-life stories are better than fiction; share experiences.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The spirit that abounds is one of comfort and joy, two of your favorite words. You'll be asked to supply what others might have overlooked. The more responsibility you take, the better your day is.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Money does not make the world go around — love does. Remind yourself and loved ones of this fact and the day goes easily. This afternoon, memories are made. Take pictures.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Zero in on the one thing you really want — for loved ones to be happy. Because when there's peace at home, it feels to you like there's peace on Earth. Your laughter is the buffer that eases all tension.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-

Jan. 19). A simple equation works so well for you that you repeat it over and over: Big Risk equals Big Reward. You're on the lookout for opportunities to put it all on the line and win.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Attend as many gatherings as you can fit in. Being in groups of people makes your mind spin. When you take action, you get a new perspective. Reality can be even better than romantic fantasies.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Your confidence on the social scene is an opportunity magnet. Walk your talk. A loved one (especially someone younger) learns by your example. Tonight brings a chance to rekindle a flickering flame.

FORECAST FOR THE WEEK AHEAD: Happy New Year! The New Year always cycles with the sun in Capricorn — the time of year to lift past restrictions, to see our situation clearly and to set ourselves free. Saturn is the planet ruled by Capricorn, aka Janus in Rome. Janus was a two-headed god guarding doorways, life's transitions and crossroads.

Looking forward and backward at the same time, he facilitates smooth transitions. May we never lose sight of last year's lessons, may we use the past to inform a wiser future! The doorway out is also the doorway in. In a future time, we will pass this way again. If this all

sounds rather serious, Capricorn makes mirth out of melancholy. Laughter melts the weather of our icy-cold, too-serious moods. The absurdity of life is reason enough to lighten up! With Saturn's continued passage through body-mind-spirit Virgo, we can change our thinking and change our physical reality. Our earthly limitations are the (mental) chains that bind us. Do we realize they're always loose, that we can lift them at any time? Celebrate clearly seeing the truth of a situation in 2008, and the limitations of 2007 will disappear.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: One-woman show Tracey Ullman is a mirth-making Capricorn and a bit of a loudmouth. Capricorns have a fabulous sense of humor, and that's born of necessity for Tracey: Performing her first comedy skits at age 6, she cheered up the family after her father's death. Tracey's famous for her mimicry. Her Mercury (voice) is a firecracker powerhouse with Mars and Jupiter in blunt Sagittarius.

*Holiday Mathis is the author of "Rock Your Stars: Your Astrological Guide to Getting it All." If you would like to write to her, please go to [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com) and click on "Write the Author" on the Holiday Mathis page. To find out more about Holiday Mathis and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).*

**Annie's Mailbox®: Advice for those in need**

Dear Annie: My wife and I recently celebrated our 43rd wedding anniversary. It was not a happy occasion for me.

My wife was an alcoholic for years. She left our children and me on three different occasions, and I took her back each time because I wanted to keep my family together. Once, she went with co-workers to a bar after work and was brought home five hours later by two men who had gone through her purse to find her address. My wife finally got treatment and has been sober for 20 years. Things in our marriage became OK, but not great.

Ten years ago, I found out she'd had an affair when she told me I needed to be tested for a venereal disease. The guy was a co-worker and someone I'd known for years. Since that time, things have gone downhill. It doesn't help that she gets mad at me for just about everything. Our relationship has become cold at best. I have forgiven her for the affair, but I can't erase the tapes running through my head.

I am now thinking of leaving her and living alone, but I'm afraid our children, who know nothing about her affair, will blame me. I don't want to hurt them, but I am so unhappy, my doctor had to put me on antidepressants. I have no intention of abandoning her entirely. She's not in the best of health, and if we separate, I will be there if she needs my support during a health crisis.

What should I do? — Hurting

Dear Hurting: You have put your wife and children first for 43 years and this is commendable, but at some point, you deserve to consider your own happiness. Medication shouldn't be the only way you can tolerate your wife. Try



KATHY MITCHELL MARCY SUGAR

counseling, and if that doesn't improve the situation, we recommend a legal separation, especially if you continue to support your wife financially and through her health crises. The children may be disappointed, but we suspect they understand more than you think.

Dear Annie: Last summer my son became engaged. They set a wedding date for late summer. However, she became pregnant, so they are now planning to marry sooner at the local courthouse. But they still want to have their marriage blessed in church, so they intend to renew their vows on the original wedding date, with the minister who had planned to marry them.

What do people do? By the time of the vow renewal, the baby will be 3 weeks old. They are going to do the white dress, bridesmaids (dresses are already bought), guys in tuxes and 200 guests, with an informal reception at a park. I am not sure their plans are in good taste or appropriate for the circumstances. Am I being too old-fashioned? — Woes in Washington

Dear Woes: A little. An unplanned pregnancy used to mean a forced shotgun wedding, but that isn't the case here. Your son isn't hiding his marriage, but the couple would still like to

celebrate and the arrangements have already been made and, in some cases, paid for. Renewing their vows is a perfectly legitimate way to do this. Stop worrying about what others will think and enjoy the moment.

Dear Annie: "Brother-in-Law" was upset that his newlywed sister and brother-in-law were showering together when they slept over. I just want to tell you that my husband and I have been married for 56 years. Because of a back problem that does not allow me to lean backward, I am unable to have my hair washed by my hairdresser, so my husband does it in the shower. We have been showering together for years. He washes my back, I wash his, and it's easier for both of us. I see nothing wrong with it, whether or not you're a newlywed. And besides, it conserves water, which is increasingly important. — Reader from Massachusetts

Dear Reader: We suspect it was the, um, intriguing sounds emanating from the bathroom that annoyed the brother-in-law, but we agree that showering together is not unusual.

Dear Annie: I have an aunt, "Bess," who works as a loan officer. My grandmother mentioned recently that Bess had looked up another family member's financial history. She said Bess discovered that this family member had recently taken out a \$135,000 bank loan. Grandma also told me that a few years ago, Bess had looked up another family's information after they purchased a new car and said, "They can't afford that!"

My grandmother insists this information is available to anyone and that Bess has done nothing wrong. I don't see how this can be legal,

and I am concerned that my own information and credit history have been viewed by my aunt. She is just a busybody.

These family members have no business contact with her bank. Is Bess abusing her right to privileged information as a loan officer? How can I find out if she's been looking at my financial records? — Tired of Snoops

Dear Tired: Aunt Bess should not be disclosing confidential credit information obtained through her bank job. However, you'd be surprised how much financial data is available to anyone who knows how to look for it. A great deal of what you might consider private information is available on the Internet. It would be highly improper if Aunt Bess is using her contacts at the bank to look up your information, but if she is getting this simply by accessing public records, it's perfectly legal. But plenty nosy.

Dear Annie: This is for "Aging with Dignity," whose husband was subjected to mocking comments about his baldness.

I am also bald. I relish the moment someone makes a comment about my head. My reply is simple. I look them in the eye and say, "I am not bald. What you are seeing is a solar panel for a sex machine." That usually leads to a quick change of subject. — Old Baldy

Dear Old Baldy: We are laughing out loud and suspect many of our follicularly challenged readers will be using your excellent comeback at the first opportunity.

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



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HERALD photo/Steve Reagan  
One person required medical treatment after this two-vehicle accident at the intersection of N.W. Ninth and Main streets Friday afternoon. No other details were available at press time.

**PAWS**

Continued from Page 6A

people very much — he's made a lot of progress." Now instead of ignoring Ryker's voice and affection, "He listens to me pretty well," he said.

Mercury's other trainer, Marc Loftis of Mansfield, said the program has helped him and Mercury get a new outlook on life.

"He's not a real playful dog, but he has his moments," he said. "It has made my time here easier. I've been locked up for a while. (It's) something for me to look forward to waking up to."

Ryker said Mercury has a penchant for sneaking food that wasn't part of the program — he even once stole a pecan pie from an inmate's locker.

"We didn't teach him this," Ryker said with a laugh.

Still, he says, the program has been a good influence.

"The biggest thing is being able to see people who aren't doing much in their life to do something positive. I feel a sense of accomplishment," he said.

For Ryker, seeing the other inmates interact with their dogs also gave him a new perspective.

"It really helps to think you're part of something good," he said. "This helped me have a better opinion of most of the people I come in contact with."

Sgt. Jason Sparks with the Sanders Estes Unit was responsible for making sure the dogs were cared for and taking the trainers out for their dogs' restroom breaks. Sparks said he was skeptical at first.

"When I first heard about the program, I wasn't too sure about it, but now I'm a big supporter," he said.

Many of the inmates have requested to participate in the program again in January.

**News in briefs**

**Bush signs extension of children's health program**

CRAWFORD (AP) — President Bush on Saturday signed legislation that extends a popular children's health insurance program after twice vetoing attempts to expand it.

Politically, the move was a victory for Bush, although Democrats say it will come back to hurt Republicans at the polls.

The extension of the State Children's Health Insurance Program is expected to provide states with enough money to cover those enrolled through March 2009. Bush and some Republican lawmakers say the program will still serve those that it should: children from families who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but cannot afford private insurance.

Yet many Democrats — with help from other Republicans — wanted to give the program a significant cash infusion and broaden coverage to an estimated 4 million children. They overwhelmingly supported use of a tobacco

tax increase to pay for the expansion.

**Five hospitalized after Hunt County house explosion**

ROYSE CITY (AP) — Five young people were hospitalized after a house exploded early Saturday morning in North Texas.

The explosion may have been caused by a propane leak, Hunt County Fire Marshal Richard Hill said.

Seven people were in the house when it exploded at about 1 a.m. A 16-year-old female and four males — ages 17, 18, 19 and 20 — were taken by air to Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas with burns on 30 to 60 percent of their bodies, Hill said.

A second 20-year-old man had minor cuts and an 18-year-old female was uninjured, Hill said.

He said that an eighth person had just arrived when the house exploded.

All of the windows and a couple of walls at the three-bedroom house were blown out, and all of the house's bricks were knocked off, he said

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Aiden pictured with Grandmother Glenda Low - Parents are Peter and Barbara Weiler

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Visit [www.bigspringherald.com](http://www.bigspringherald.com) to vote in January's contest





AP Photo/Family Photo

An undated photo released by the Solanki family shows Anu Solanki, 24, of Des Plaines, Ill. Solanki disappeared Monday after going alone to a forest preserve in Wheeling, Ill.

# Police: Missing woman alive, well

By MICHAEL TARM

Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — Family members arranged a meeting at an undisclosed location between investigators and a married woman from Illinois whose disappearance on Christmas Eve prompted a costly search.

Anu Solanki, 24, met with law enforcement officials at an undisclosed location Friday, said Cook County sheriff's police spokesman Steve Mayberry.

"I don't care why she left," her brother, Dhiren Patel, told reporters. "Hey, she's alive. That's the most important thing."

Cell phone records indicated Solanki had left voluntarily with a 23-year-old male friend from California, authorities said earlier

Friday. Mayberry did not know whether the friend, Karan C. Jani, had returned with Solanki.

"As far as I'm aware her physical condition is fine," Mayberry said. "At this time she hasn't been charged with anything."

Solanki's husband, who lived with his wife near suburban Des Plaines, was not aware of her friendship with Jani, Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart told reporters.

Anu Solanki's car was found Monday in a forest preserve parking lot, triggering the search by police and relatives, who distributed flyers with her picture. A sheriff's department helicopter was also used in the search.

Authorities spent about \$250,000 on the search and in investigating Solanki's disappearance, Dart said.

Her family had expressed relief and asked Solanki to contact them.

Her husband, Dignesh Solanki, had said his wife may have been placing a religious statue in the Des Plaines River on the day she went missing. The statue of the deity Ganesh, revered as the Hindu god of good fortune and wisdom, had broken and a religious leader told them that placing it in the water would ward off bad luck.

Authorities said earlier this week that they feared Solanki might have slipped underwater and drowned while placing the statue in the current and divers also searched the river for signs of a body.

The Solankis were born in India's Gujarat state, and were married Oct. 6, 2006.

# Pakistan government blames Taliban, al-Qaida for Bhutto's death

By ASHRAF KHAN

Associated Press Writer

GARHI KHUDA BAKHSH, Pakistan (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of mourners thronged the mausoleum of Pakistan's most famous political dynasty on Friday in an outpouring of emotion for Benazir Bhutto. The government said al-Qaida and the Taliban were responsible for her death, claiming it intercepted an al-Qaida leader's message

of congratulation for the assassination.

But many of Bhutto's furious supporters blamed President Pervez Musharraf's government for the shooting and bombing attack on the former prime minister, his most powerful opponent. They rampaged through several cities in violence that left at least 23 dead less than two weeks before crucial parliamentary elections.

"We have the evidence that al-Qaida and Taliban were behind the suicide attack on Benazir Bhutto," Interior Minister Hamid Nawaz said.

Thursday's attack on Bhutto plunged Pakistan into turmoil and badly damaged plans to restore democracy in this nuclear-armed nation.

Interior Ministry spokesman Javed Iqbal

Cheema said that on Friday, the government recorded an "intelligence intercept" in which militant leader Baitullah Mehsud "congratulated his people for carrying out this cowardly act."

Cheema described Mehsud as an "al-Qaida leader" who was also behind the Karachi bomb blast in October against Bhutto that killed more

than 140 people. He also announced the formation of two inquiries into Bhutto's death.

Bhutto was killed Thursday when a suicide attacker shot at her and then blew himself up as she left a rally in Rawalpindi. Authorities initially said she died from bullet wounds, and a

surgeon who treated her said she died from the impact of shrapnel on her skull.

But Cheema said she was killed when she tried to duck back into the vehicle, and the force of the blast smashed her head into a lever on the sunroof, fracturing her skull, he said.

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**ASHLEIGH'S MY PAGE!**

**Christmas/New Year's Wish List**

**Mrs. Wells**  
I would like for all our young men and women serving their country in the Middle East to come home happy and Safe.

**Amanda Lopez**  
I want a car! I also would like a life time supply of Gold FISHES!

**Ms. Willbanks**  
My wish is for everybody to have a safe and happy holiday, and an AWESOME 2008!

**Baylea Fox**  
I want a new camera, DVD player and winter clothes!

**John Ontiveros**  
I want to spend time with my grandma and grandpa! I would also like to play with Frosty in the snow! Take a ride with Santa in his G-sleigh, and share some milk and cookies with him!

**Jared Wilkerson**  
I want a new suit and clothes!



# Is it mind power or a miracle?

By **DELTHIA RICKS**  
Newsday

MELVILLE, N.Y. — In 1995, debris from a burning church collapsed on Buffalo, N.Y., firefighter Donny Herbert, depriving him of oxygen for six minutes and consciousness for 10 years.

But in what has been described as a medical miracle, Herbert became fully lucid a decade after that tragedy, defying a dim prognosis and allowing him enough time to express love for his wife and four sons. He died just as unexpectedly in May 2005, a month after re-awakening.

Herbert's experience evokes the question: Can the human mind provide the power to will a man from a near-comatose state?

Some experts believe the mind is not only pow-

erful, it isn't even "local" to the body.

Dr. Larry Dossey, a physician and the former editor of a journal on alternative medicine, has lectured worldwide on the power of the mind. On his Web site, he goes even further, noting that Western medicine doesn't prepare physicians for "miracles," even though most doctors have witnessed the inexplicable.

"Almost all physicians possess a lavish list of strange happenings unexplainable by normal science," he said.

The medical literature is replete with reports of tumors that have vanished or patients who say they've floated away from their bodies.

But Dr. Kevin Tracey, director of the Feinstein Institute for Medical Research in Manhasset, N.Y., takes a more ratio-

nal approach, noting that a sharp difference exists between the lexicon of mystics and scientists, even when they are witnessing the same phenomena. What some people may deem miraculous is an issue in need of study to others.

"Science doesn't embrace mystical explanations. The basis of science is explaining observations in reproducible ways," Tracey said. Reviving after years in a near-vegetative state, he said, probably has a rational explanation.

Rich Blake, author of the book "The Day Donny Herbert Woke Up", said a Buffalo doctor had given Herbert an experimental medication in hopes of reviving the firefighter. Doctors were unable to say whether the drugs worked.

Blake, a financial maga-

zine journalist in Manhattan, is the first cousin of Linda Herbert, Donny's wife.

He's also steeped in the lore of Buffalo's Catholic community.

For decades, residents have attributed the inexplicable to Father Nelson Baker, a priest whom many say performed — and still performs — medical miracles. Baker died 71 years ago.

At the nursing home where Herbert resided, Blake said many patients have reported seeing Baker entering their rooms. Upon re-awakening, Herbert told his wife that he, too, had seen the priest.

"To think that he could be in this stupor for 10 years and just start talking and return to them, what way could you describe this other than to say this was a mira-

cle," Blake said.

Linda Herbert, he added, attributed much of her husband's reawakening to his own willpower. "I don't want to overplay the miracle angle," Blake said, "because people can't pray for miraculous cures. They also have to fight with their insurance companies, and work with their doctors. But I do think miracles ... do happen every day. There are things that have absolutely no explanation."

In November, Dr. Dirk De Ridder of University Hospital Antwerp in Belgium wrote about a patient who had out-of-the-body experiences during treatment for tinnitus, ringing in the ears. De Ridder's research was reported in the New England Journal of Medicine.

The ringing had defied medical and psychiatric treatments. So De Ridder resorted to a maverick therapy that involved placing electrodes in the area of the brain believed to be the ringing's source. An out-of-the-body experience was elicited, De Ridder noted, each time a specific brain region was stimulated.

The 63-year-old patient reported floating away from his body, viewing De Ridder as he attempted to fix the ear problem. The ghostly state was clocked as lasting about 17 seconds, each time.

Tracey describes the human brain as largely unexplored terrain, which may help put into perspective why a near-comatose man can re-awaken after a decade, or a patient can float away.



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

**Contract Bridge**  
By Steve Becker  
**The Telltale Heart**

East dealer. Neither side vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
♠ K Q 10 3  
♥ A Q 8 7 6 3  
♦ A 8  
♣ 8

**WEST**  
♠ 6  
♥ J 10 5 4  
♦ Q J 7 6 4 3 2  
♣ 6

**EAST**  
♠ 9 7 5  
♥ —  
♦ K 10 9  
♣ A Q J 9 7 5 4

**SOUTH**  
♠ A J 8 4 2  
♥ K 9 2  
♦ 5  
♣ K 10 3 2

The bidding:  
East South West North  
1 ♠ 1 ♣ 2 ♦ 3 ♣  
Pass 3 ♠ Pass 6 ♣  
Dble  
Opening lead — four of hearts.

**Hard-luck stories** are a dime a dozen in bridge, but every time someone cries on your shoulder about his bad luck, it means someone else had good luck. So maybe it all comes out even in the end.

**This hand occurred** in a match between England and the United States. The American team had bad luck on the deal, which in turn means that the British team had good luck. But the English first had to capitalize on the opportunity they were given.

**The British East** opened the bidding with one club, over which South said one spade and West two dia-

monds. Considering the values North had and the three bids made before he had a chance to speak, North must have thought he was playing with a pinochle deck.

**However**, showing more faith in partner than in the opponents, North first cuebid diamonds and then contracted for a slam, which East doubled.

**The British West** read the meaning of the double perfectly. He interpreted it — the double of a slam — as lead-directing and calling for an unusual lead.

**The only unusual lead possible** on the bidding was a heart. West's normal lead without a double would be either a club, the suit his partner had bid, or a diamond, the suit he himself had bid.

**Since East had barred** the lead of either suit by doubling, West led a heart, paying blind obedience to East's command. East ruffed the heart and cashed the ace of clubs, and that was that.

**If West had made** the tempting lead of his singleton club, the American declarer would have made the slam. West's heart lead was a shining example of confidence in his partner's bidding.

**The American team** was certainly unlucky to go down in the excellent slam contract. But it was doubly unlucky when, at the other table, the British North-South pair conservatively stopped at only a game contract, which they easily made.

55 years...  
54,385 ears.

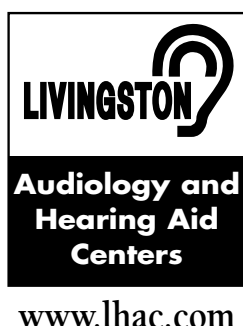


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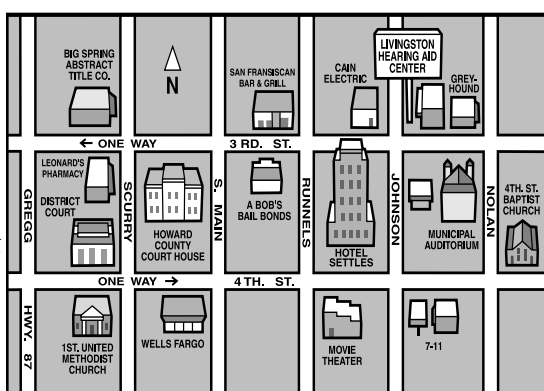
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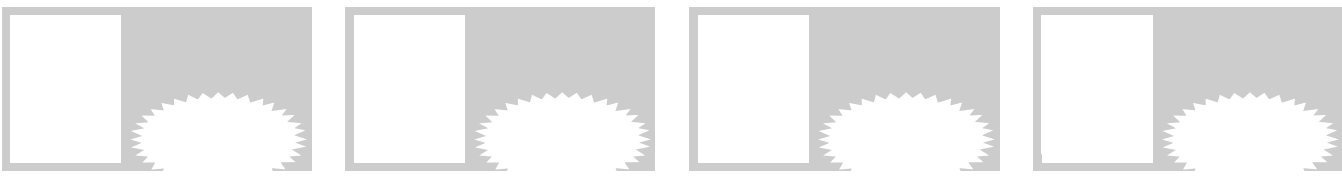
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