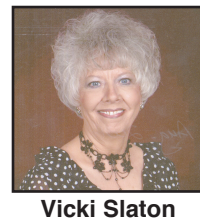




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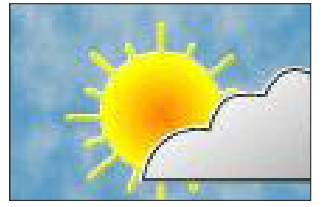


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BIG SPRING HERALD

WEDNESDAY

JULY 23, 2008



VOLUME 103, NUMBER 201

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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY



Sharon White sorts through school supplies at the local Salvation Army office on West Fifth Street this morning. The Salvation Army is collecting the supplies for distribution to area school children in August.

Dolly front edge hits Gulf Coast

By **ELIZABETH WHITE**
Associated Press Writer

BROWNSVILLE — Hurricane Dolly's leading edge blew down signs, damaged an apartment complex and knocked out electricity to thousands as it hit the Gulf Coast on either side of the Texas-Mexico border early Wednesday.

Dolly gained strength as the center of the Category 1 hurricane neared landfall, expected around midday. Forecasters warned of up to 15 inches of rain that could produce flooding and breach levees in the heavily populated Rio Grande Valley.

Dolly had sustained winds of 95 mph, just short of becoming a Category 2 hurricane. At 9 a.m. EDT Wednesday, the storm's center was about 40 miles east of Brownsville, moving northwest at about 8 mph.

A hurricane warning was in effect for the coast of Texas from Brownsville to Corpus Christi and in Mexico from Rio San Fernando northward.

In Mexico, fields were filling with water, palm trees were bent over in the wind and beaches were closed to the public.

"I don't know if my poor house will withstand the rain and wind," said

102-year-old Maria Miguel Selso as she fled her wooden shack in the fishing community of Higuera late Tuesday. Selso left with seven family members, including her great-grandchildren, to spend the night at a convention center-turned-shelter in Matamoros.



The sign outside Bahia Mar Resort sits on the ground after being blown over as Hurricane Dolly makes landfall in South Padre Island.

On Texas' South Padre Island, an apartment complex roof partially collapsed early Wednesday, though the extent of the damage wasn't immediately clear. Residents said they didn't believe anybody was injured, but there was no immediate information available from officials.

The causeway linking

City turns Oncor request over to steering committee

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

A proposed rate increase from Oncor Electric Delivery will simply have to wait, as the Big Spring City Council approved a resolution Tuesday night that will suspend the \$275 million hike pending further review.

The council — Mayor Russ McEwen and council members Stephanie Horton and Manuel Ramirez Jr. were absent — approved the resolution by a unanimous vote, with the matter expected to be handled by a steering committee comprised of other cities facing the same increase.

"The rate increase would affect all cities that retained origi-



Walker

nal jurisdiction over rate increases," said City Finance Director Peggy Walker. "Those increases would have gone into effect Aug. 8, so this council had until that date to either deny or suspend the increase.

If the council had taken no action, it would have gone into effect automatically.

"The city has chosen to suspend the increase. We're not at the point of denying because we haven't checked to see if it's truly a valid rate increase. We knew Oncor would be looking at a full rate review study and we expected that, but we want to have time to actually

review it and see if its infrastructure they are raising rates for, if it's operating costs or some combination of the two. That way we can determine if those rate increases are valid based on their (Oncor's) expenses."

Understanding the impact the rate increase would have on the citizens of Big Spring is no easy matter, according to Walker, especially when the documentation Oncor has provided doesn't seem to match up.

"The rate increase would effect every citizen in the city that uses Oncor. They (Oncor) sent an information packet to the city of Big Spring to try to get us onboard,"

See **CITY**, Page 3A

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Forsan ISD feels crunch of rising costs

By **STEVE REAGAN**
Staff Writer

FORSAN — Belt-tightening is in vogue for many school districts this year, and Forsan ISD is no exception.

Rising costs, led by spiraling gasoline expenses, combined with stagnant revenue streams means Forsan officials will present a leaner budget for trustees' approval later



Johnson

this summer.

Superintendent Randy Johnson said a cap on state aid — state officials will pay local districts the same amount per student as they have the past two years — will not offset the increase in prices, leaving many schools in the financial lurch.

"The current financial system ... is really going to clamp down on school systems in the next few years," Johnson said. "Someone said that a lot of schools will go bankrupt in the next five years if changes aren't made. We're not going belly-up by any means, but we do share concerns a lot of other districts have."

Compounding Forsan's financial headache is that the

district is starting its first fiscal year as a "property-rich" district under the state's Rob-in Hood school finance system, meaning that the district will have to send a portion of its revenue to the state for distribution to poorer school systems.

Johnson said the preliminary FISD budget features

See **FISD**, Page 3A



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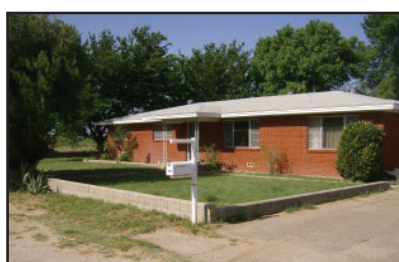
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719 CRAIGMONT COURT



AP Photo/Louie Traub
LeBron James, of the Cleveland Cavaliers, lies down on a training bench following a USA Basketball team practice Tuesday at Valley High School in Las Vegas. James sprained his ankle in the practice, making him the latest victim in a series of injuries that have beleaguered the team.

Injury bug

Lebron latest Team USA member suffering injury

By **BRIAN MAHONEY**
AP Basketball Writer

LAS VEGAS — LeBron James limped from the trainer's table to a nearby folding chair, careful not to put any pressure on his sprained right ankle.

A few feet away, Dwyane Wade conducted interviews with ice packs on both knees, with Kobe Bryant striking the same pose to his right. To Wade's left, Carmelo Anthony was getting his shoulder wrapped by a trainer.

This didn't look like a team ready to conquer the basketball world.

However, Wade said playing in pain is nothing new for himself or his teammates.

"I don't think for a lot of players," he said after practice Tuesday. "Look at Kobe over there, he's got two bags of ice

See **INJURY**, Page 2B

Buehrle baffles Rangers again

White Sox cream Rangers, 10-2, behind pitcher's inspiring start

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — With a lot on his mind and not much rest, Mark Buehrle managed to be his vintage self.

The White Sox ace pitched 7 1-3 innings and Alexei Ramirez hit the first grand slam of his career to help Chicago beat the Texas Rangers 10-2 Tuesday night.

Nick Swisher hit a three-run homer, Jermaine Dye had three hits and Jim Thome reached base four times as the White Sox snapped a three-game losing streak.

Pitching on three days rest so he could attend his grandfather's funeral in Missouri, Buehrle (8-8) gave up a leadoff triple to Hank Blalock in the second inning and then retired

15 of the next 16 batters.

"I said in pregame he was going to do something special today," Swisher said. "Dealing with a loss like that, definitely puts a damper on yourself and your family and he went out there and pitched a great game. We wanted to be behind him a hundred and fifty percent and we got him some runs early and he was the traditional Mark Buehrle."

Buehrle's last start against the Rangers was his no-hitter on April 18, 2007. His only blemish on Tuesday night came in the eighth when he gave up a solo shot to Chris Davis.

"Pitching stops hitting," Rangers manager Ron

See **RANGERS**, Page 2B

The Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Nebraska's Joe Ganz wasn't highly recruited out of high school, told he was too small to play quarterback on the college level.

Any other conference, maybe that holds true.

Not in the Big 12.

As Missouri's Chase Daniel and Kansas' Todd Reesing showed last season, bigger isn't



AP Photo/M. Spencer Green
Texas Rangers catcher Jarrod Saltalamacchia talks with pitcher Luis Mendoza after Mendoza gave up an RBI double to the Chicago White Sox outfielder Jermaine Dye during the first inning of an AL baseball game Tuesday in Chicago.

always better, particularly in the Big 12, the conference that gives hope to little guys all across the country.

"What Chase and Todd have done, they've kind of opened the door for smaller guys to hopefully get recruited more," Ganz said. "Hopefully, we can open the door for a lot more coaches to realize you don't have to be the typical 6-4, 230 to have success in college. I know that's

what the pro guys look for, but you don't need that big size, that big stature to be successful in college."

Nowhere is that more apparent than the Big 12, land of the little quarterback.

Ganz is 6-foot-1, 210 pounds. Daniel is a stout 6-0, 225. Colorado's Cody Hawkins is not bigger than some high school

See **BIG 12**, Page 2B

Astros acquire Padres pitcher

By **CHRIS DUNCAN**

AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON — The Houston Astros, believing their season can still be saved, acquired pitcher Randy Wolf from San Diego on Tuesday in exchange for minor leaguer Chad Reineke.

Wolf, an NL All-Star in 2003, is 6-10 with a 4.74 ERA in 21 starts for the Padres this season. The 31-year-old is in his 10th season and will play for his fourth team. He previously played for Philadelphia (1999-2006) and the Los Angeles Dodgers (2007) before joining the Padres this season.

The left-handed Wolf will start for the Astros in Milwaukee on Sunday, general manager Ed Wade said.

Wolf, in Cincinnati where the Padres were playing the Reds, was caught off-guard by the trade.

"When it ultimately happens, you're shocked a little bit," Wolf said. "I didn't really think about it. I think any team would have been, in some way, a surprise."

See **TRADE**, Page 2B

Size doesn't matter for Big 12 QBs

Sports in brief

Correction from Tuesday's story about new coaches in Big Spring

In Tuesday's edition of the Herald, it was reported that former Lady Steers Head Volleyball Coach Amanda Whitaker had been reassigned to the junior high.

To clarify, it was a personal choice of hers to be reassigned to the junior high in agreement with former Athletic Director Mike Ritchey. Whitaker and Ritchey each felt she could benefit the volleyball program more by working with younger girls on their volleyball skills, preparing them for the level of play found in high school.

Steer football season ticket sales to begin

Big Spring High School 2008 football season tickets go on sale July 28 at the Athletic Training Center.

Only people who have previously owned season tickets are able to buy from Monday through Aug. 7.

Sales for the general public begin Aug. 11 and end Aug. 22.

Tickets can be bought Monday through Thursday between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. at the ATC.

Call Kay Cook at 264-3662 with any questions.

City of Big Spring Tennis Camp starts July 28

Big Spring tennis pro Ted Olesen and Big Spring Junior High coach Jason Fisher are hosting a second City of Big Spring Tennis Camp Monday through Thursday, July 31, at Comanche Trail Park's Figure 7

Tennis Center.

Cost is \$100 and includes a lunch each day.

The camp is for all ages and ability levels and is held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day.

Participants do not have to take the full week of camp.

For more information, visit www.bigspringtennis.com.

Big Spring Boxing Club taking sign-ups, donations and volunteers

The Big Spring Boxing Club has opened its doors and continues to take sign-ups for any male or female from ages 9-26.

Those interested can register for the club's training services from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday at Morgan Park, which is on Father Delaney St. on the north side of town. There is no cost for the training.

Also needed is anyone willing to volunteer time as a trainer, conditioner or as a sparring partner.

Some equipment donations are also needed. Anyone with questions or wanting to volunteer or donate can call Lee at 816-7995 or Willie at 935-0273.

UIL-required physicals due for some athletes

UIL requires all incoming seventh, ninth and 11th grade athletes to have a physical before they are allowed to participate in any sport.

This includes practices and games. All local athletic departments are encouraging athletes and their parents headed into the grades listed above to make an appoint-

ment with their doctor and get this physical before the start of the school year.

Football and volleyball players would want to get this taken care of before the start of two-a-days.

Contact your school's athletic department with any questions.

Rose Magers-Powell volleyball camp scheduled

Big Spring native and former Olympian Rose Magers-Powell will hold a volleyball camp from Monday through July 30 at Big Spring Junior High.

The camp will be held from 9 a.m. until noon all three days.

Cost is \$125 per camper.

For more information, visit www.gotrosevolleyball-camps.com.

Crossroads Youth Football Association sign-ups start Aug. 2

Crossroads Youth Football Association begins sign-ups for both football and cheerleading for the 2008 season Saturday, Aug. 2, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Big Spring Mall.

Subsequent sign-up dates will be held Aug. 9, 16 and 23 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the mall. Late sign-ups for football only is Aug. 30 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There are no late sign-ups for cheerleading.

For more information, visit www.freewebs.com/cyfa. For questions regarding football, call John Sotelo at 816-3060, and for cheerleading, contact Trish Hobby at 393-5647.

Obituaries

Helen Schlindwein Boling



Helen Schlindwein Boling, 101, went home to be with the Lord July 21, 2008.

She was born April 28, 1907 in Kewanee, Ill., the youngest of nine children. She married Clarence Boling July 8, 1930, and he preceded her in death July 28, 1999. Mrs. Boling operated a beauty shop for many years in Kewanee and later worked in the offices of the Kewanee Boiler Company, Hyster Trailer Company and Boss Manufacturing. After they retired, they moved to Mesa, Ariz. She moved to Big Spring Oct. 1, 1999, after the death of her husband of 69 years.

A memorial celebration of her life will be held at 10 a.m., Thursday, July 24, 2008, at Myers & Smith Chapel in Big Spring. Her ashes will be interred beside her husband in Kewanee, Ill., at a later date.

She is survived by a daughter, Marianne DePauw of Gilbert, Ariz.; and three grandsons and their wives, Jim and Tammy Newsom DePauw of Big Spring, David and Nicole DePauw of Chandler, Ariz., Steve DePauw and Rebecca Litz of St. Charles, Ill. Her five great-grandchildren include Darby DePauw of Big Spring, Ciera Grace DePauw of Durango, Colo., Bryan and Dylan DePauw of Chandler, Ariz. and Kyle Stambaugh of Avondale, Ariz. She is also survived by a special nephew, Jim Schlindwein of Sanibel, Fla.; a special niece, Marjorie Mason of California; a life-long friend who is also 101, Geneva Williams of Arizona; and special friends Jim and Georgie Newsom of Big Spring.

If she ever met you, you were considered her friend. She had a catch phrase while she lived in Big Spring, "Everybody is so good to me!" She leaves behind scores of friends in Illinois, Arizona and Texas.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorials to Trinity Baptist Church Building Fund, 810 E. 11th Place, Big Spring 79720.

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

Paid obituary

Fire/EMS

The Big Spring Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services reported the following activity:

- MEDICAL was reported in the 200 block of W. Third Street. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRANSFER was reported in the 1700 block of Main. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2000 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 1400 block of Sycamore. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2600 block of Ent Street. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 1000 block of Second Street. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1800 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1800 block of Lincoln Avenue. One person was transported to SMMC.
- GRASS FIRE was reported in the 2500 block of Wasson.

• The Howard County Court under Judge Mark J. Barr has cancelled the jury panel called for Friday.

• The Big Spring Independent School District Board of Trustees would like to invite the public to a reception honoring Steven Saldivar, assistant superintendent, from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. July 31 in the Big Spring High School Library.

• BSHS Class of 1978 30-year reunion is Sept. 12-13. Contact Kent Rice at 870-918-5875 or kent_rice@murphyoilcorp.com

• A medical expense account has been established at Cosden Federal Credit Union for Kody Jackson, who was recently diagnosed with lymphoma in his right knee. He has no medical insurance and must start chemotherapy and radiation treatment as soon as possible. Kody is the son of Susan and Johnny Jackson. For more information, contact Cosden FCU at 264-2600.

• The Texas Department of State Health Services is conducting a community health survey. The information will be used to study barriers to health care and other public health issues. Your personal information will not be used, other than the comments portion of the survey. You will not be asked for your name. The survey is available online and takes about 15 minutes to complete. For the English survey, go to www.question-pro.com/akira/TakeSurvey?id=929625. For the survey in Spanish, go to www.questionpro.com/akira/TakeSurvey?id=929626.

Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity between 7 a.m. Tuesday and 7 a.m. today:

- FRANK LEE JACKSON, 49, of 202 E. 24th Street, was arrested Tuesday on a charge of criminal trespass of a habitation.
- LINDA SMITH, 56, of 1210 Main Street, was arrested Tuesday on a charge of public intoxication.
- TRINA NICOLE NEWTON, 23, of Lafayette, La., was arrested Tuesday on a charges of possession of marijuana – two ounces or less, and unlawfully carrying a weapon.
- MARVIN JOHN MALVEAUX II, 23, of Lafayette, La., was arrested Tuesday on a charges of possession of marijuana – two ounces or less, and unlawfully carrying a weapon.
- SMYTHIA MAE HILARIO, 41, of 1401 N. Highway 87, was arrested Tuesday on a charge of possession of marijuana – two ounces or less.
- ELIJAH ALDRIDGE, 44, of 309 W. Fifth Street, was arrested Tuesday on a charge of possession of marijuana – two ounces or less.
- ASSAULT BY CONTACT was reported Tuesday in the 1900 block of Highway 87.
- ASSAULT CAUSING BODILY HARM was reported Tuesday in the 1400 block of Sycamore.
- BURGLARY OF COIN OPERATING/COLLECTING MACHINE was reported Tuesday in the 3200 block of Rickabaugh.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported Tuesday in the 1800 block of FM 700.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported Tuesday in the 500 block of Seventh Street.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported Tuesday in the 300 block of Second Street.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF OF A PUBLIC/PRIVATE SCHOOL was reported Tuesday in the 600 block of Sixth Street.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported Tuesday in the 1400 block of E. Sixth Street.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported Tuesday in the 1300 block of E. Sixth Street.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported Tuesday in the 2600 block of Dow.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported Tuesday in the 400 block of Fourth Street.

Sheriff's report

The Howard County Sheriff's Office reported the following activity:

- Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 62 inmates at the time of this report.
- RICHARD NORMAN RAMIREZ, 42, was arrested Tuesday by the HCSO on a charge of possession of marijuana – two ounces or less.
- MICHAEL LEE MUNOZ, 25, was transferred to the county jail Tuesday by the BSPD on charges of failure to identify – fugitive gives false information, and parole violation.
- GREGORIO ALVAREZ, 34, was arrested Tuesday by the HCSO on a charge of failure to appear.
- CHRISTOPHER TEICHMA BEASLEY, 35, was arrested Tuesday by the HCSO on a charge of public intoxication.

Take Note

• Ex-Students Homecoming at Forsan High School will be held Aug. 2. For more information, contact Jimmy Anderson at Professional Pharmacy at 267-2546 or at his residence, 267-6143.

• Mobile Meals needs volunteers to deliver meals Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. The organization delivers approximately 70 meals each day and needs drivers to donate just one hour per week. Mobile Meals also needs back-up volunteers to fill in when regular drivers can't make it. For more information, contact Macaria Cantu at 263-4016.

• 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.

• The purpose of life is a life of purpose. Join Nurses' Hospice of Big Spring volunteer program and become an "Angel" or "Teen Angel" in someone's life today. Come by 1008 E. Third St. or call (432) 517-4073 to register.

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

Your Local Weather

Thu 7/24	Fri 7/25	Sat 7/26	Sun 7/27	Mon 7/28
92/68	90/68	94/67	95/69	96/70
Partly cloudy. High 92F. Winds ESE at 10 to 20 mph.	Slight chance of a thunderstorm.	Sunshine. Highs in the mid 90s and lows in the upper 60s.	Sunshine. Highs in the mid 90s and lows in the upper 60s.	Plenty of sun. Highs in the mid 90s and lows in the low 70s.

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Bulletin Board

If you have items for the Bulletin board, contact the Herald news room at 263-7331 or email editor@bigspringherald.com

TODAY
• Eagles Lodge Ladies Auxiliary meets at 7 p.m. in the Eagles Lodge, 703 W. Third.

THURSDAY
• Gideon International Big Spring Camp U42060 meets at 7 a.m. in Herman's Restaurant.
• Kiwanis Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room.
• League of United Latin American Citizens LULAC Chapter 4791 meets at 5:30 p.m. at the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce. The public is invited.

FRIDAY
• Signal Mountain Quilting Guild meets from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. at 1019 Nolan St. Call 267-1037 or 267-7281 for more information.
• AMBUCS meet at noon in La Posada Restaurant.
• Greater Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon at the Howard College Cactus Room.
• Dance at the Senior Center, 1901 Simler, from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

SATURDAY
• Eagles Lodge Dance at 8:30 p.m. at 703 W. Third.

Lottery

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Tuesday night:
Winning numbers drawn: 5-13-24-26-36.
Number matching five of five: 1.
Prize per winner: \$28,412.
Winning tickets sold in: San Antonio.

The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Tuesday night by the Texas Lottery: 0-0-4-9. Sum It Up: 13.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Tuesday night by the Texas Lottery: 2-3-8. Sum It Up: 13.

Support Groups

WEDNESDAY
• RSD (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, a chronic pain disease), a new support and informative group meets at 213 Circle. Call Lucy at (432) 517-9207 for more information.

THURSDAY
• Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m.; women's meeting; 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. Non-smoking closed discussion meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

FRIDAY
• AA open discussion meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at 605 Settles. Open Big Book study meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

SATURDAY
• Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. Open podium/speakers meeting 615 Settles 8 p.m. until 9 p.m. Open birthday night, no smoking meeting the last Saturday of each month at 8 p.m.

SUNDAY
• Alcoholics Anonymous meets from 11 a.m. to noon at 615 Settles. Open meeting 5 p.m. until 6 p.m.

MONDAY
• Encourager's Support Group for all widows and widowers meets the first and third Monday of the month. For more information, call Nancy Hale at 398-5239.

ANNOUNCING THE CLOSING OF THE LAW OFFICES OF GWENDOLYN K. DUNSON, P.C.

EFFECTIVE AUGUST 15, 2008

Any client wishing to pick up his or her file prior to August 15, 2008, may do so by calling (432) 263-2100 to make arrangements to pick up the file

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The Big Spring Herald is a member of The Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce, Texas Press Association, West Texas Press Association, Texas Daily Newspaper Association, The Associated Press.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, TX 79721. Periodicals postage paid at Big Spring, Texas.

USPS 1431-48 USPS 0055-940 ISSN 0746-6811
BY THE MONTH HOME DELIVERY: \$8.65 monthly; \$93.42 yearly (includes 10% discount). MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$12.50 monthly Howard & Martin Counties; \$13.25 elsewhere.

RANGERS

Continued from Page 1B

Washington said. "I keep saying that. Nobody's listening. Pitching stops hitting. How can you keep scoring seven runs a night. Nobody does that in the game of baseball."

Washington took notice of

Buehrle when he stranded Blalock in the second inning as the left-handed veteran retired Brandon Boggs, Davis and Jarrod Saltamacchia.

"You got three young kids and he took them to school. Cut that fastball in on their hands and wouldn't allow them to extend," said Washington.

Buehrle left to a loud standing ovation after allowing one run

on six hits and no walks.

"Obviously, I had a feeling why the crowd was going crazy. But not as much as I thought they would. The next couple of days will be a little bit more emotional," said Buehrle.

Buehrle is 6-2 with a 1.76 ERA in his last nine starts.

"This is one of the better stretches I have been on in my career for this amount of time. I

had some good games, some good stretches, but for this many games in a row I have thrown the ball pretty well," Buehrle said.

Luis Mendoza (2-4) gave up an RBI double to Dye in the first inning and got roughed up in the fourth, allowing Swisher's three-run homer and A.J. Pierzynski's RBI single to put Chicago up 5-0.

Mendoza was pulled after giving up consecutive singles to Dye and Thome in the fifth. He allowed six runs on nine hits in four-plus innings.

After getting the first two outs in the seventh inning, Justin Nippert walked Thome and Swisher around a single by Konerko before Ramirez's slam.

BIG 12

Continued from Page 1B

freshmen at 5-11, 190 pounds, Reesing only a little bigger at 5-11, 200. Texas Tech's Graham Harrell is listed at a generous 6-3, 200 pounds.

There are a few more in the prototypical mold — Kansas State's Josh Freeman is 6-5, 250 pounds, Oklahoma's Sam Bradford 6-5, 213 — but nearly half the returning quarterbacks in the Big 12 are considered undersized by today's standards.

The thing about these little guys, though, is they know how to make the most of their abilities and how to lead a team.

Take Daniel. The senior was Missouri's first Heisman Trophy

finalist and was seventh in the nation in total offense with 325.64 yards per game. He completed 68 percent of his passes — not bad for someone who supposedly couldn't see over his linemen — for 4,306 yards and 33 touchdowns, leading the Tigers to one of the best seasons in school history.

Reesing was nearly as good, guiding the Jayhawks to 479.8 yards per game, second-best in the country, while setting numerous school records, including most yards (3,486), touchdowns (33) and completions (276) in a season. The junior also completed 61 percent of his passes, leading Kansas to its first BCS Bowl win — over Virginia Tech in the Orange Bowl — and the first 12-win season in school history.

There was a time when the

undersized quarterback was an anomaly — Fran Tarkenton and Doug Flutie being two of the few successful examples — but that's not the case anymore, at least in the Big 12.

"They say a guy has to be 6-4 so he can drop back 10 yards and throw over a guy that's 6-7, that's a bunch of falsehoods," Texas Tech coach Mike Leach said. "It's more about passing lanes anyway. It's better to be short and be on target than tall."

The prevalence of the spread offense in the Big 12 has made a difference.

The conference used to be about power, teams running the option or over opponents with massive linemen. If a quarterback wasn't relatively tall, he'd have a hard time seeing over defenders to pick out receivers.

The spread has opened things

up — not just for the teams, but for their smaller quarterbacks.

By lining up in the shotgun and fanning players out at the line of scrimmage, the quarterbacks have more avenues to throw, more places to see through the wall of linemen. Throw in the rollouts and swing passes that are a part of the spread, and it's easy to see why smaller quarterbacks have thrived in this system.

"It's fun to play in the shotgun when you're not 6-5," Daniel said. "You're throwing through lanes; we almost have hash-to-hash splits on our offensive line, so it gives me a lot of different opportunities to see through and really make plays with my feet as well."

Smaller quarterbacks also seem to have another, less discernible trait: will.

Because they've always been told that they're too small, undersized quarterbacks often have that extra little something inside that pushes them to prove everyone wrong.

Flutie had it. He was 5-10, yet he never stopped believing in himself, winning the Heisman Trophy in 1984 at Boston College and going on to a long career in the NFL and Canadian Football League.

Daniel and Reesing seem to have it, too, and the rest of the Big 12's little QBs could be soon to follow.

"I think guys saw that I had the confidence in myself, and that's half the battle, believing in yourself," Reesing said. "Once you have that, you've got to go out there and just prove to your teammates that you're the one to lead them."

TRADE

Continued from Page 1B

The Astros entered Tuesday's game against Pittsburgh with a 46-53 record, 12 games behind Chicago in the NL Central. Wade said the move shows the team isn't ready to give up on this season.

"We still think the club we have is good enough to play better than it's played," Wade said. "We've got a million games left in our own division at this point in time. Our fate rests in our hands and I think it's important for us to do whatever we can, from the baseball ops side, to give our guys as much support as we possibly can."

The Astros' pitching staff came into Tuesday's game with a 4.50 ERA, fourth-worst in the NL. The ace of the rotation, Roy

Oswalt, has a 7-8 record and is currently on the disabled list with a strained hip and another regular starter, Brandon Backe, is 6-10 with a 4.79 ERA.

Padres general manager Kevin Towers said the Astros were intent on acquiring Wolf.

"Houston was pretty aggressive, probably more aggressive than any other club," Towers said.

Wade told Wolf that he still thinks Houston can turn things around.

"He still believes in the Astros," Wolf said. "I think he still thinks there's a shot. With a little more than two months left in the season, there's an opportunity there he's trying to take advantage of. He's not giving up hope. I'm up for the challenge."

Wade was the Phillies' general manager from 1998-2005. He tried to sign Wolf for the Astros in December, but Wade said Wolf

wanted to play closer to his home in California.

"I've known Randy since the day he signed his first professional contract," Wade said. "I can say without hesitation that he brings every quality that you'd want in a member of your team, both on and off the field."

Wolf had Tommy John surgery in 2005 and missed the second half of the 2007 season with pain in his throwing shoulder. His 21 starts this season were tied for the major-league lead and Wade has been assured by athletic trainers that Wolf is healthy.

"The feedback we got, trainer-to-trainer discussions that took place today, confirmed that he's 100 percent," Wade said.

Wolf has lost six of his last seven starts. He gave up four runs on eight hits in Saturday's 6-5 loss in St. Louis, his third straight road loss.

"In the time I had here, obvi-

ously we didn't win a lot of games," Wolf said. "Part of that is definitely my fault. I wasn't as consistent as I wanted to be. But I did have a great time here."

The deal gave the Padres the opportunity to get a prospect and save some money. Wolf signed a one-year contract last December that includes a \$4.75 million base salary and a chance to make up to \$9 million overall if he reaches all of his incentives.

"I'm not going to lie," Towers said. "Certainly from a financial standpoint, the club is going to save some money."

Reineke, a right-hander, is 5-9 with a 4.41 ERA in 19 starts for Triple-A Round Rock this season.

He was originally selected by the Astros in the 13th round of the 2004 draft and he is 28-32 with a 3.72 ERA in five minor league seasons in the Houston

system. He has yet to pitch in a major league game.

Wolf will become a free agent after this season.

Wade said Wolf could earn up to \$3.5 million this season with performance bonuses and the Astros may look to re-sign him for 2009.

"If nothing else, this gives us the short-term help that we need," Wade said. "It also gives us an opportunity to get our foot in the door with Randy and if he pitches well enough that we want to extend the contract, all that's done against the backdrop of what's going to be a pretty thin pitching market out there."

Wolf said he'd also be interested in returning to San Diego next season, if the Padres would take another chance on him.

"I'm not leaving here with any sour taste in my mouth," he said. "I have a lot of good memories here."

INJURY

Continued from Page 1B

and his feet in an ice bucket. Everybody's used to bumps and bruises. That's

our game. You only get to play it for 15, 16 years if you're lucky, so you can suck it up."

James' injury, though called mild, is the biggest concern for now.

The superstar forward

was hurt when he landed on Kevin Durant's foot during a closed scrimmage between the U.S. team and a select squad of young NBA players at Valley High School.

Coach Mike Krzyzewski said he would know more on Wednesday, after James has had a chance to rest.

"He thinks it's a mild sprain," Krzyzewski said. "Our trainers think it's a mild sprain. So we'll find out tomorrow. But I don't think it's anything serious. Obviously, we'll look and see what happens tomorrow."

James could possibly

practice Wednesday, but the team would surely prefer to let him rest for now with still a few weeks until the Olympics.

"We got time," Anthony said. "I think it's just a little mild ankle sprain. We got time. We need him to rest. We don't need him right now. We need him on Aug. 10."

The Americans have already dealt with an injury to another starter, center Dwight Howard, who is returning from a stress fracture to his sternum. And Wade, one of the top reserves, is coming back from left knee surgery.

Team officials have been encouraged by Howard and Wade during training camp this week. They seemed equally optimistic about James.

"You never want to see anyone hurt, but he's had this sprain before," managing director Jerry Colangelo said. "We're being told it's a minor deal. Obviously, he's got to take care of it."

In January, James missed a game with the Cleveland Cavaliers because of an ankle sprain. He returned to score 28 points in a victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Feb. 2.

A few weeks later, James left a game against Boston late in the first half with an ankle injury. X-rays were negative and James returned for the start of the second.

On Tuesday, trainers wrapped the ankle in a

black brace, and James hobbled off the court without speaking to reporters.

The U.S. can replace injured players until a final roster is submitted Aug. 7.

But no one was talking about James being left off the squad.

"I ain't concerned about that guy," Wade said. "That guy is a professional. I've seen that guy get hurt one time in the NBA and come back in the second half and score 30-something. I'm not worried about him. He's going to get healthy and it'll take care of itself."

The Americans have two more workouts before facing Canada in an exhibition on Friday. Then the squad leaves for Macau, where it opens a four-game exhibition tour. The Olympic opener is Aug. 10 against host China in Beijing.

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Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

To Win or Not to Win?

South dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ Q J 10 4
♥ 7 5 4
♦ A J 6
♣ 10 8 3

WEST
♠ 6 5 3
♥ Q 10 8 6 2
♦ 5
♣ Q J 7 4

EAST
♠ A 9 8 2
♥ J 9 3
♦ K 7 4 2
♣ 9 5

SOUTH
♠ K 7
♥ A K
♦ Q 10 9 8 3
♣ A K 6 2

The bidding:
South West North East
1♦ Pass 1♠ Pass
2NT Pass 3NT
Opening lead — six of hearts.

Whether or not to win a trick is often a matter of using good judgment. There is no magic rule that provides a simple answer. You have to deal with each situation, as it arises, on its merits.

Suppose you're East and partner leads a heart against three notrump. Declarer wins your jack with the king and plays the king of spades, West following with the three. Do you win the trick or not?

Many contracts stand or fall on questions of this type, so it pays to be careful in such a situation. West's play of the three shows an odd number of spades — he would begin to play high-low with an even number — so you know that West has three spades and South two.

You may therefore feel tempted to duck the king, planning to take the ace on the next round. But if you succumb to this temptation, you will have a lot of explaining to do later on after declarer shifts his attention from spades to diamonds, forcing out your king. South would then finish with nine tricks — one spade, two hearts, four diamonds and two clubs.

Ducking the king of spades is a futile play, since you know declarer can compel you to take the ace if he wants to, or abandon the suit if it's to his advantage to do so. You shouldn't give declarer this sort of option — it can do you no good and may do you some harm.

You should therefore take the ace of spades at once and return a heart, hoping partner started with five hearts, in which case you have an excellent chance to defeat the contract. As it happens, if you defend this way, South must go down one.

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In **Sunday's**
Big Spring Herald

American Profile

Built for SPEED

Drivers find their speed on the Bonneville Salt Flats

INSIDE:
• Behind the scenes
• Live up the Big King
• American Speedster
• America's baby shoes
• Italian cream cake

The need for speed

Each August, since 1949, driving enthusiasts from across the United States come to the famed Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah to satisfy their need for speed during Speed Week. Plus, bronzing baby shoes and Italian cream cake.

American Profile

sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9 with no repeats. That means no number is repeated in any row, column or box.

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

FISD

Continued from Page 1A

\$7.8 million in expenditures, a \$400,000 increase from last year. Factor in the half-million-dollar payment under Robin Hood, however, and the district is actually facing a decrease in expenditures this year, he said.

"The bottom-line budget we had last year will be very similar to this year's bottom-line budget," he said. "We have a lot less flexibility in this budget and a lot less extra items

than we've had the previous few years."

The news is not totally gloomy — Johnson said the budget is balanced, so reserve funds will remain untouched, and the debt service tax rate should decrease by 2 or 3 cents. In addition, a \$1,000 increase is planned for the local supplement paid to FISD teachers, while other district employees will receive a 5 percent salary increase.

Forsan ISD trustees are expected to approve the new budget during a meeting Aug. 18, Johnson said.

CITY

Continued from Page 1A

said Walker. "According to that literature, the rate increase would translate into a 2.7 percent — which amounts to \$5.09 to the average consumer — increase for residential customers. However, in the information they provided to the state's utility commission shows the residential rate increase as 17.6 percent. So it's really hard to say at this point what the effect will be on customers."

Walker said the matter will be turned over to the Lloyd Gosselink Law Firm, which represents the steering committee, but whether or not the increase is approved, local customers can expect their bills to begin going up Jan. 1.

"We'll just have to wait and see what happens with the rate increase," said Walker. "However, regardless of what happens with this, Oncor will be raising its rates Jan. 1 to support an advanced metering program, which was approved by the state. That increase will cost residential customers an additional \$2.29 per month

and non-residential customers \$3.90 per month, and will remain in effect for the next 11 years."

Also during the meeting, the council unanimously approved:

- Final reading of a resolution authorizing expenditures from the Capital Revolving Fund for water and wastewater treatment plant renovations.

- Minutes from meetings of the Zoning Board of Adjustments and Appeals and the Howard County Appraisal District Board Directors.

- Late homestead exemption refunds for the month of June 2008.

- An agreement for audit services with Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss LLP, authorizing mayor or mayor pro tem to execute the agreement.

- An agreement for assessment and collection of property taxes, authorizing mayor or mayor pro tem to execute the agreement.

- A subscription renewal agreement with LexisNexis for online legal research, authorizing City Attorney Linda Sjogren to execute the agreement.

- The investment report for the quarter ending June 30, 2008.

DOLLY

Continued from Page 1A

the island to the mainland remained closed early Wednesday.

Dan Quandt, a spokesman for South Padre Island emergency operations, said winds were picking up to around 50 mph and were expected to increase later Wednesday morning. He said there was a steady rain falling, but no reports of flooding. A sign on a hotel blew off, but no one was injured and it did not pose a hazard, he said.

Power was knocked out to more than 13,000 customers in Cameron County, where Brownsville is located, utility company AEP Texas said.

In Brownsville, palm trees leaned and small debris was strewn across the all-but empty streets. The windows and doors of shops were boarded up with plywood and most businesses — including gas stations — were closed. At one gas station, workers were pelted by horizontal rain as they scrambled to lock pumps and close down.

A tornado watch was in effect for several counties in the area until 10 a.m. CDT Wednesday.

Cities and counties in the Rio Grande valley

were preparing as officials feared heavy rains could cause massive flooding and levee breaks.

Texas officials urged residents to move away from the Rio Grande levees because if Dolly continues to follow the same path as 1967's Hurricane Beulah, "the levees are not going to hold that much water," said Cameron County Emergency Management Coordinator Johnny Cavazos.

Charles Hoskins, deputy emergency management officer for Cameron County, said there were nearly 2,000 people in six shelters in the county late Tuesday.

In Hidalgo County, a little bit farther inland, six shelters holding about 900 people were open, said Cari Lambrecht, a county spokeswoman. She said people living in low-lying areas were encouraged to come to shelters.

"It's so much easier for them to go now instead of us having to pull them out later," she said.

In Mexico, Tamaulipas Gov. Eugenio Hernandez said officials planned to evacuate 23,000 people to government shelters in Matamoros, Soto La Marina and San Fernando.

The U.S. Census Bureau said that based on Dolly's projected path, about 1.5 million Texans could feel

Cap Rock deal terminated for now

Continental Energy Systems LLC and PNM Resources Inc. announced Tuesday they have mutually agreed to terminate PNM Resources' pending acquisition of Cap Rock Energy Corporation, a subsidiary of Continental.

Continental, a utility holding company, will retain Cap Rock Energy. The parties will focus their efforts

on completing the pending acquisition by Continental of the natural gas business of PNM Resources' subsidiary, PNM, officials said in a press release.

Melissa Davis, president and chief executive officer of Cap Rock Energy, said, "Customers will see no change in operations and will continue to receive the same great ser-

vice that they have come to expect from Cap Rock Energy."

Cap Rock Energy Corporation transmits and distributes power to residential and commercial customers in 28 counties, including Howard. Cap Rock owns no generation facilities and instead purchases power through long-term wholesale power supply contracts.

Suspect in pregnant teen death had baby obsession

By DAN NEPHIN

Associated Press Writer

PITTSBURGH — A woman accused of slicing open a pregnant woman's belly and taking her baby was obsessed with getting an infant and even had hallucinations of hearing babies cry after a February 1990 miscarriage, according to court records.

A few months later, Andrea Curry-Demus allegedly stabbed one woman in an apparent plot to steal her newborn; the next day, she allegedly kidnapped another baby from a hospital.

Curry-Demus, 38, of Wilkinsburg, was charged Sunday with homicide, kidnapping and related offenses in the death of Kia Johnson, 18.

Johnson's decomposing body, with her wrists and ankles bound by duct tape and layers of tape and plastic covering much of her head, was found Friday in Curry-Demus' apartment. A day earlier Curry-Demus had taken the baby to a hospital, claiming first that she was the mother and later that she paid for the child.

Court records show a preliminary hearing has been scheduled for Friday. Curry-Demus' attorney, Angela Carsia, told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review that her client plans to plead not guilty.

Authorities say the two women met at the Allegheny County jail

on July 15 while visiting different inmates.

Court records for Curry-Demus' 1990 criminal cases paint a picture of a woman apparently unable to deal with the loss of her own child in her seventh month of pregnancy. She was 21 at the time, and told authorities she also had miscarried at age 12.

"While she admitted committing the offenses, she had great difficulty in verbalizing her feelings or motivations other than to mention the loss of her own child due to a miscarriage several months prior to the present offenses," according to a presentence report prepared for the two criminal cases.

According to court records, Curry-Demus visited Magee-Womens Hospital in Pittsburgh in the spring of 1990 and she befriended a woman who had recently given birth there.

They exchanged numbers and Curry-Demus called the woman a few days later, telling her she wanted to visit the baby and bring some clothes. She spent the day with the woman, her husband and the baby and even asked to stay overnight.

The woman wasn't comfortable with that and a jitney was called for Curry-Demus in the early morning of May 5. While the woman was looking out the window for the jitney, Curry-Demus grabbed her from behind and stabbed her in the

back. Curry-Demus fled when the woman called for her husband.

Hours later, Curry-Demus visited another hospital and met a young mother whose 3-week-old baby was being treated for meningitis. The next day — May 6 — several nurses saw Curry-Demus at the hospital and later noticed the baby was missing.

Police located Curry-Demus by tracing calls made from the hospital to Curry-Demus' mother. The baby was recovered unharmed.

Curry-Demus pleaded guilty in January 1991 to kidnapping, concealment of the whereabouts of child and related offenses and was sentenced to 3 to 10 years in state prison for taking the baby from the hospital. She also pleaded guilty to aggravated assault in the stabbing case and received 10 years' probation. She was released in 1998.

While awaiting resolution of the 1990 cases, Curry-Demus was twice briefly committed to a state mental hospital. An examination found her to be "in the midst of a major depressive episode."

She also reported auditory hallucinations — that she kept "hearing babies cry."

She was found competent to stand trial, but also diagnosed with major depression and a mixed personality disorder. She graduated high school, but tests showed she had a "borderline intelligence level."

the storm's effects.

Tropical storm warnings were issued for areas adjacent to the hurricane zone and Gov. Rick Perry declared 14 south Texas counties disaster areas, allowing state resources to be used to send equipment and emergency workers to areas in the storm's path.

The storm, combined with levees that have deteriorated in the 41 years since Beulah swept up the Rio Grande, pose a major flooding threat to low-lying counties along the border. Beulah spawned more than 100 tornadoes across Texas and dumped 36 inches of rain in some parts of south Texas, killing 58 people and causing more than \$1 billion damage.

"We could have a triple-decker problem here," Cavazos told a meeting of more than 100 county and local officials Tuesday. "We believe that those (levees) will be breached if it continues on the same track. So please stay away from those levees."

Around Brownsville, levees protect the historic

downtown as well as preserved buildings that were formerly part of Fort Brown on the University of Texas at Brownsville campus. Outside the city, agricultural land dominates the banks of the Rio Grande, but thousands of people live in low-lying colonias, often poor subdivisions built without water and sewer utilities.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement was evacuating its Port Isabel Detention Center, said spokeswoman Nina Pruneda. Fewer than 1,000 people were being sent to other detention centers in Texas.

In the Gulf of Mexico, Shell Oil evacuated workers from oil rigs, but said it

didn't expect production to be affected. It also secured wells and shut down production in the Rio Grande Valley, where it primarily deals in natural gas.

Mexico's state-run oil company, Petroleos Mexicanos, said it had evacuated 66 workers from an

oil platform off the coast of the port city of Tampico. Pemex said in a statement that it had readied a team and the resources needed in case of damage to oil installations in the region.

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Helen Boling, 101, died Monday. Memorial Services will be at 10:00 AM Thursday at Myers & Smith Chapel.

Alice Ballentine, 93, died Monday. Funeral services will be at 10:00 AM Friday at Myers & Smith Chapel with burial at Coahoma Cemetery.

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Training is offered, free of charge, beginning July 29th. Hospice training is invaluable for those who have a desire to make a difference to someone in need of a blessing.

Training location and schedule:

Compass Hospice - Team Room 1003 E. FM 700 Big Spring, Texas 79720. Tues., Wed., & Thurs., July 29, 30 & 31. 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Must attend all three days to become a Hospice Certified Volunteer.

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Compass Hospice Hospice Volunteers Needed, Compass Hospice is in need of your help. If you would be interested in offering your love & God's comfort to those who are suffering, or to their families, please contact Michelle Coutermarsh at 263-5999.

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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
PublisherJohn A. Moseley
Managing EditorBill McClellan
News Editor

OTHER VIEWS

Inspection
of our food
must improve

Federal officials have declared that all kinds of tomatoes are officially OK to eat once again, following the well-known salmonella scare. Now, we're being warned not to eat jalapenos.

Questions about the safety of the American food supply are leaving a bad taste in many people's mouths.

An Associated Press-Ipsos poll found that most consumers want a way set up to trace produce, a desire generated by the salmonella outbreak that was first linked to tomatoes and now to hot peppers.

A whopping 86 percent of poll-takers said there should be a way to label produce so that it can be traced from the farm through processors, packers, shipper and sales outlets.

It only makes sense.

Look at the salmonella outbreak that has sickened more than 1,200 people in 42 states. No one is really sure what caused the outbreak.

And we've already seen the biggest beef recall in history.

The government has long been condemned for a dangerously inadequate food inspection system. The salmonella scare has done nothing to help the feds' image, and indeed speaks loudly for a radically modernized and improved food inspection system.

Outbreaks of food-borne disease don't affect only the people who get sick.

There's also a chain-reaction economic effect as, suddenly, the consumption of a product goes down, farmers can't sell all their crop, processors and shippers have less to work with, and retailers lose potential sales.

Food inspection and tracking must be improved.

THE EL PASO TIMES

Who can fix immigration?

It is a political minefield so dangerous that no one dares to lead us through it. The presidential candidates dance around it as if we don't notice, but both Sens. Barack Obama and John McCain clearly are avoiding one of the most important and controversial issues in the minds of most Americans.

What are they really going to do about illegal immigration? Does anybody know?

Regardless of which side of the immigration debate you stand on, you probably can think of two dozen questions these candidates haven't answered.

How do they intend to deal with the 12 million illegal immigrants who are living among us? Regardless of whether you favor deportation or compassion and whether you call that amnesty or legalization, none of us has any idea exactly when or how Obama or McCain expects to do any of this.

From both camps, all we get are immigration talking points, and they simply aren't saying enough.

When they spoke to national Hispanic organizations recently, Obama said he would make comprehensive immigration reform a top priority, and McCain said Latinos should just trust him to do the right thing.

That's reassuring, right? Could they be any vaguer?

Obama accused McCain of backing away from the McCain-Kennedy comprehensive immigration reform plan for fear of alienating GOP conservatives. But you don't hear

him explaining just how "President Obama" would persuade Congress to approve a legalization plan that has been rejected consistently on Capitol Hill. For a candidate who promotes "change," you don't hear him offering any new ideas. You don't hear him criticizing the growing number of Democrats who oppose legalization, at least until after the U.S. borders are secured — which is exactly what McCain is proposing.

McCain says his position is more realistic because Congress will not go along with any form of legalization plan until the American people are reassured that such "amnesty" would not encourage more illegal immigration. But you don't hear him describing just how "President McCain" would secure the borders or how long it would take him to sign a legalization law. You hear him constantly repeating that he would get the governors of each border state to verify that the border has been secured, but that would be like opening a can of political worms.

What constitutes a secured border, a reduction of illegal crossings? By how many? Down to zero? And if that were even possible, what's to stop a couple of hawkish governors from refusing to verify anything or saying they need to see zero illegal crossings for several years? Wouldn't that make such a governor a hero among immigration hawks, and wouldn't it give McCain an excuse for failing to keep his promise?

The immigration issue is so radioactive that you see both Obama and McCain sticking to their scripted rhetoric and refusing to explain the details of how they intend to imple-

ment their proposals.

Obama sounds like a broken record, repeating the same lines about how the immigration system is broken without explaining how he would fix it and how illegal immigrants need to be brought out of the shadows without telling us how he would bring them into the light. He keeps saying they need to be on a path to citizenship without showing us how he would clear a new path.

McCain, the other side of the broken record, keeps trying to please both sides of the immigration debate. Depending on his audience, he either emphasizes his past pro-immigrant credentials or his new border-security-first stance. And then he asks American voters to trust him on the details.

Even at the conferences and conventions that clearly favor one particular side of the immigration debate, both Obama and McCain have been able to stick to their vague rhetoric on immigration, and the time for detailed answers is running out.

Unless Obama and McCain get down to some serious face-to-face debating and unless serious journalists get to ask them some important immigration questions, many American voters may go to the polls in November without a clear picture of which candidate gives best with their stances on immigration.

It's as if these two candidates are running away from the immigration minefield instead of leading us out of it.

To find out more about Miguel Perez and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.



MIGUEL PEREZ

ADDRESSES

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Wonder how Obama will do in dear old Dixie

At the start of every presidential race, the Democrats perform a masochistic ritual. They promise to take a stand in Dixieland, get in touch with their inner NASCAR, sweet-talk the Southerners with a heavy emphasis on faith and flag. The aim, every time, is to capture some of those states and thereby clinch the election. Care to guess how well the Democrats have fared lately?

Eleven southern states compose the Old Confederacy. The last Democratic nominee, John Kerry, won zip and lost 11. The previous nominee, Al Gore, won zip and lost 11. Indeed, all the Democratic nominees since 1980 have combined to win nine and lose 68 — a record of failure not seen in the annals of competition since Casey Stengel's '62 Mets.

Yet Democrats persist in thinking they can score on the GOP's home turf — as evidenced, this time around, by Barack Obama's decision to spend roughly \$8 million (and that's just his initial outlay) to sell himself in TV ads in four southern states. Last weekend, Obama opened 20 campaign offices in Virginia, a state that hasn't voted Democratic since 1964. Either he's smart to make these moves, which are designed to expand the battlefield, or he's merely the latest Democrat to play Captain Ahab in a futile pursuit of the party's great white whale.

Lots of Democratic strategists believe it's nuts to whistle Dixie; one prominent commentator-academic, Thomas Schaller, has insisted for years that the reflexive Democratic urge to look southward is a "counterproductive exercise"

and that the party should instead look westward in its quest to tally 270 electoral votes. Even southern-born President Clinton — while winning four Dixie states in his '96 re-election race — barely finished first in the tally of all southern voters, performing far better outside his own region.

On the other hand, consider this factoid: No Democrat has ever won the presidency without capturing some southern states. This year, the Old Confederacy holds 153 electoral votes. Nationwide, there are 538 electoral votes on the table. Do the math. If Obama cedes Dixie, he has to win 72 percent of the electoral votes everywhere else. And that's one reason Howard Dean, the party chairman, has long been touting the importance of a "50-state strategy" to ensure a broader playing field.

The hitch, however, is contemporary Dixie's antipathy toward national Democrats. It all started with race. President Lyndon Johnson's signing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act triggered massive white flight into the Republican Party. In subsequent decades, the GOP built southern dominance by masterfully exploiting that sentiment — stoking white hostility toward welfare and affirmative action. A top party leader, Ken Mehlman, acknowledged this a few years ago, while addressing the NAACP: "Some Republicans gave up on winning the African-American vote, looking the other way or trying to benefit politically from racial polarization. I am here today, as the Republican chairman, to tell you we were wrong." (Now he tells us.)

But the Democrats face a number of cultural obstacles. Dixie is ground zero for the evangelical Christians. Dixie is far more inhospitable to labor unions

than other regions; in North Carolina, one of the states Obama is currently targeting, roughly 3.7 percent of the workers are unionized — which puts North Carolina last in the national rankings. Dixie is also festooned with military bases, which host roughly half of all U.S. military personnel situated stateside. Dixie is also home to millions of service retirees.

So it's fair to wonder: How can a black upstart from Chicago, with scant national security credentials, expect to pick off any of these states? The South hasn't broadly supported a northern Democrat since JFK in 1960, before the fallout over civil rights.

Obama, to his credit, is plucking the right chords in his new ads. A commercial playing in Virginia, Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida seeks to place Obama's personal journey at the heart of the American dream, thereby echoing what North Carolina Democratic chairman Jerry Meeks told me two years ago, when he sought to describe his ideal '08 nominee: "We need to hear a life story that Southerners can appreciate. A life story that embodies the theme of America as a land of hope and opportunity."

Notably, Obama's ad buy has targeted only four Dixie states. The region is not monolithic, and he hopes to take advantage. For instance, Virginia has been trending Democratic since the dawn of the Bush era; Democratic voters, notably upscale non-Southerners and newly arrived Hispanics, now dominate the increasingly populous Washington suburbs. Obama is particularly focused on Fairfax County, a large suburban county west of Washington, where he has reportedly placed paid workers in each of the nine districts.

North Carolina has a huge black popu-

lation, and millions of transplanted Northerners in the academic triangle near Chapel Hill — perhaps enough to give Obama a real shot, although the state hasn't voted Democratic since 1976. Georgia, too, has a huge black electorate, plus it has home-boy Bob Barr, the former congressman now running as the third-party Libertarian candidate, who could bleed conservative votes away from John McCain. At the least, Obama might force McCain to expend precious resources just to defend a state that would normally be a slam dunk.

And, as for Florida, perhaps the zeitgeist has changed. New Democratic voter signups have outpaced their GOP counterparts by a 7-to-1 margin since the start of the year — and that's without the Obama camp trying to register anybody. Besides, you know already that Florida is not a typical southern state, especially if you've ever stood in line for the early-bird special in Fort Lauderdale.

There's no way to know whether Obama will stick in the region, or pull out early as Kerry did. It ultimately could depend on southern reaction to the most important news event of the campaign — the first Obama-McCain debate — and whether Obama hits the themes Dixie holds dear. He may ultimately find more fertile turf in the newly blue-trending western states of Colorado, Nevada, and New Mexico. But it's safe to say that if a black guy with a liberal record can penetrate Dixie, this election truly should be considered transformative.

Dick Polman is a columnist for the Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to him at Philadelphianquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by e-mail at dpolman@phillynews.com; blog: <http://www.dickpolman.blogspot.com>.



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What makes chicks and pups and lives in the garden?

By VIRGINIA A. SMITH
MCT

More than two decades ago, after their grown-up kids had — yet again — overwatered or underwatered the houseplants while Rita and Rich Hojnowski were away on vacation, Rita got religion.

To heck with those dried-up, bloated — and boring — houseplants. She would grow succulents instead. They're freaky and fun and, best of all, need little water.

"If nobody waters them, nothing happens," says Hojnowski, a retired medical technician in Blackwood, Pa.

Like most gardeners in the throes of plant infatuation, Hojnowski downplays the depth of her involvement with these water-storing geniuses, things like sedum, snake plant and sempervivum, agave, cactus and ice plant.

First, she confesses to having "a lot" of succulents, then "750 inside and a few more outside." Turns out she's pushing 1,000, down from a onetime high of 1,500.

You'd never guess from the front of the house, which features grass and uniform rows of purple and red annuals. But in the back, her succulents reach across the greenhouse aisle like vines in a jungle. They weave a chunky tapestry in the perennial beds and around the gazebo.

Even the humble woodshed near the pool is topped with a succulent green roof. In late June, it was a rainbow crew cut up there; Hojnowski, a member of the Philadelphia Cactus and Succulent Society, spends many an hour standing on concrete blocks fussing over it.

"This is my main interest now," she says, indulging in understatement once again.

Must be contagious, because succulents — both the tender ones that come inside for the winter in our region and the hardy ones that can take frost — seem more popular than ever. That's certainly true at the Philadelphia Flower Show, where succulent entries in competitive classes jumped from 357 in 2001 to 1,356 this year.

And it's true at garden centers like Marano's, a fixture in Fort Washington, Pa., for 48 years, says Joe Marano Jr., whose mother, Joanne, won many flower show awards for her succulents. He sells and grows lots of varieties, including "the darkly dramatic burgundy-black *Aeonium arboreum* Zwartkop, the chalky blue *Senecio* and the rosy-gold, chubby-cheeked *Sedum nussbaumerianum*."

Succulents are adored for their texture and architecture. They can be spiked or matted, shiny or frosted, hairy, prickly, velvety or webbed. Some curl into tiny, elegant rosettes or huge paddles; others form wide fans, fat spears, or sharp pirate swords.

The colors are memorable, too: chartreuse, pink and rust, cream and sage, magenta and pearly blue-gray. And the flowers — though mostly small, un-complicated, and anathema to fans of "flower flash" — are a bright blink in the sunshine, nonetheless.

"Succulents are just fun. They're different. They look like aliens," Marano says, noting that the growing interest in drought-tolerant plants and water-wise, xeriscape gardens has fueled the public appe-

tite for succulents.

"And people lead such busy lives," he adds. "They don't have time to take care of containers. They want to put them on the patio. No fuss."

Or, at least, little fuss. And not just in containers.

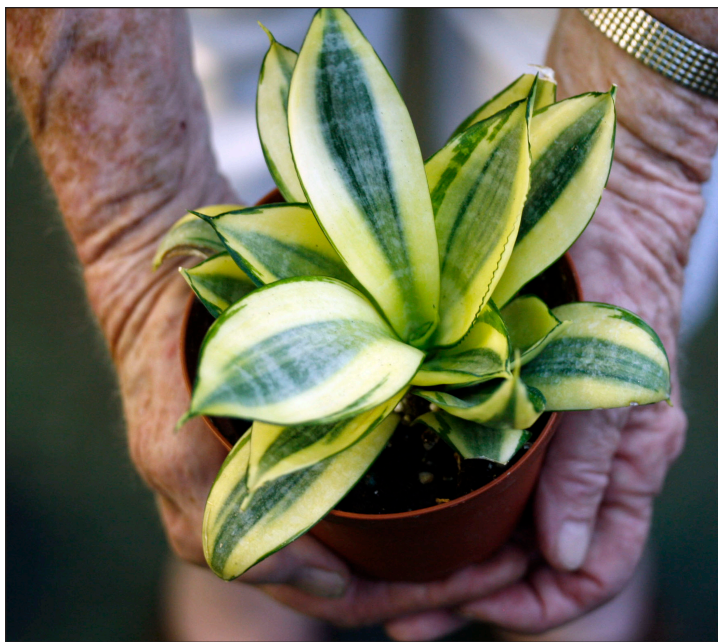
Though sun-loving succulents have shallow roots that dry out quickly, they can withstand long dry spells, even drought, by storing water in their fleshy leaves and stems. They're remarkably free of disease and pests and thrive in well-draining, otherwise poor, soil.

Among the most popular hardy succulents are sedums, commonly called stonecrops, and sempervivums, known as hens and chicks or simply "semps."

There are more than 800 sedums out there. Many, like the needle-shaped,



Rita Hojnowski, in the greenhouse at her home in Blackwood, N.J., holds one of her prized plants, a variety of snake plant, or mother-in-law's tongue.



Philadelphia Inquirer photo/Bonnie Weller

Rita Hojnowski holds one of her prized plants, a *sansevieria golden hahnii*, in Blackwood, N.J.

golden yellow 'Angelina' and the aptly named 'Blue Spruce,' are prolific ground covers. Others, like the salmon-flowered 'Autumn Joy' and the newer, purple 'Black Jack,' bloom late in the season. They're tall, well suited for the back of a border.

"They're hardy performers, they're beautiful, they bloom their hearts out, are fairly easy to reproduce, and they spread easily through your garden," says Debra Lee Baldwin, author of "Designing With Succulents," published last year by Timber Press.

The same could be said for "semps," of which there are about 4,000 kinds. Like sedums, they're also natural candidates for green roofs and rock gardens.

In fact, says rock-garden expert Gwen Moore Kelaidis, "Sempervivums are essential to the rock garden. You can stuff them anywhere. They will fill any spot ... and they're good for 'knitting' the rocks, making them look like they're closer together than they are."

Kelaidis, author of "Hardy Succulents: Tough Plants for Every Climate," published in March by Storey, has 30 border sedums in her small Denver garden and 200 sempervivums, many in containers.

And just as Hojnowski

is smitten with her green roof, Kelaidis is enamored of her burgeoning "sempervivum lawn." She's filling a former grass patch 30 feet long and 3 feet wide with hens and chicks. Few tasks, for her, are more delightful.

Says Kelaidis: "You have to buy green ones and red ones, green ones with red tips and red ones with green tips, ones with little rosettes and ones with big rosettes, ones with fuzzy tips on leaves and ones that are velvet or have little hairs."

It's not as expensive as it sounds, for succulents are easily divided. Hens and chicks, especially so. Just pluck the chick from the hen and plant it or give it away.

Cheap (you might say "cheep") trick, one that comes in handy when rationalizing one's horticultural spending habits.

"Compared to going out to dinner, plants are cheap," says Kelaidis. "So you make tuna casserole for dinner and buy yourself some more sedums."

...

Like Gwen Moore Kelaidis, who's building a "sempervivum lawn" in Colorado, Rita Hojnowski is converting more and more lawn to succulent garden.

"Pretty soon my husband won't have anything to mow," she says.

Hojnowski's a hopeless lawn-grabber because she can't resist new sedums and "semps," delospermas (ice plant) and jovibarbas. And because they easily divide or make babies, called chicks or rollers or pups, she's got a ready supply of plants for her green roof.

"Pup, in the succulent world, is even a verb. Here's Debra Lee Baldwin's description of the *Agave parryi*: "It looks like an enormous artichoke, and it'll pup for you. You get babies. Then you have a mother artichoke and baby artichokes. Imagine a giant gray artichoke with black margins and a black terminal spine."

"That's your statement plant," she says.

Statements like that help explain succulents' appeal. They're such fun.

To propagate a border sedum, just pull it apart and replant. For a sempervivum, take a chick from the mother hen and lay it on top of the ground. Or pluck a chick with about an inch of runner attached. Make a hole in the soil with a pencil, stick the chick with runner into the hole, and crimp as you would a pie crust.

What could be easier? Certainly not pie crust.

Forgo water-retaining, organic mulch in favor of

crushed rock in a natural color, pea gravel, marbles or beads. Kelaidis uses shredded pine needles the first year to suppress weeds.

Don't water, except to get new chicks settled in, and don't be afraid to "mulch plants with plants," Kelaidis says. That means putting low-growing succulents "cheek to jowl" with other plants to help with weeds and water evaporation.

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In a review from Publisher's Weekly, journalist Lily Koppel found the inspiration for this book, after discovering Florence Wolfson's diary in a Manhattan dumpster. Koppel eventually locates Florence in Florida and surprises the 90-year-old with this artifact from her past, which reveals her views on growing up as an intelligent, ambitious and creative teenager on the Upper West Side of Manhattan in the 1930s. Florence received the diary as a present on

her 14th birthday. She recorded everything from her first kiss (with a boy) to her passion for writing and art. The diary acts as a window into a fascinating and privileged world, one that Koppel tries to recreate by writing in a novelistic way, using no more than snippets of text from Florence's diary and, we can presume, multiple interviews as support. The result, which some readers may find frustrating and others rewarding, is that the original inspiration—the diary itself—becomes no more than a starting point for a much larger story: that of Florence's life. "The Red

Leather Diary" (B HOW F) by Lily Koppel is available for checkout.

As the U.S. attorney general from 1969 to 1972, John Mitchell was at the center of the upheavals of the late 1960s. As AG, he championed law and order, desegregated the South's public schools and restored calm after the Kent State killings. He would be undone, however, by Watergate. James Rosen, in "The Strong Man" (B MIT J), traces Mitchell's life from childhood to a prison cell in Montgomery, Ala., where ironically he is welcomed to federal custody by a man he had appointed. A riveting tale, the book is based on some sources that are heard from for the first time. For those who watched the presidency take a tremendous hit, you will find this book most interesting.

Just published in June of this year is "Black Out by Lisa Unger (she wrote "Beautiful Lies"). Annie Powers leads the perfect life in Florida with her husband Gray and their 4-year-old daughter in this stellar, character-driven, stand-alone novel. Less than a decade earlier, however, Annie was Ophelia March, the teenage captive — or accomplice — of spree killer Marlowe

Geary. Gray, a partner in his father's private security consultant firm, tracked Marlowe and rescued Ophelia after sending the killer's car over a cliff. Reinventing herself with Gray's help, Annie can't remember all that happened during her years with Marlowe, and she's prone to panic attacks and blackouts. When a strange man appears on her property, Annie's sure Marlowe is back. As a shady police detective digs into her past, Annie must try to recover the memories she buried if she's ever going to be free from Marlowe. Unger expertly turns what could have been a routine serial-killer story into a haunting odyssey for Annie, dropping red herrings and clues along the way until the reader feels as unsettled as Annie. This review is from Publisher's Weekly.

For a light, refreshing book, check out Beth Webb Hart's "The Wedding Machine." Welcome to Jasper, S.C., a place where Southern hospitality thrives and where social occasions are done right. And where, for generations, the four most upstanding ladies of this community ensure that the daughters of Jasper are married in the proper

manner. Friends from school days, "the gals" have long pooled their silver, china and know-how to pull off beautiful events. They're a force of nature, a well-oiled machine. But the wedding machine's gears start to stick during the summer their own daughters line up to tie the knot. In the low-country heat and humidity, tempers flare, old secrets leak out and both love and gardenias bloom in unlikely places. This is a celebration of life-long friendship — the kind that endures death and divorce, accidents and alligators, hot flashes and hurricanes. Even the drama of small-town Southern weddings done exactly right.

The library is closed Saturdays through August. Howard County Library hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Internet/Video room is closed from noon until 2 p.m. and closes one-half hour before closing. The library is located at 500 S. Main St. Our phone number is 264-2260. The Web site is www.howard-county.lib.tx.us.

Hollis McCright is director of the Howard County Library.

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On my pillow cloud

You know that place where you are truly asleep, not just lying down with your eyes closed and your ears open, waiting for a crisis? It happens so rarely. Your pillow transforms into a soft cloud, cradling your head, and the sheets feel like heaven. You are neither too hot nor too cold and every brain cell is enveloped in a dreamy haze.

That's where I was this morning. I was blissfully unaware of the daylight creeping through my window and never heard my husband get up. So deep was my slumber that drool was dribbling down

my cheek and saturating my pillow-cloud.

Through the pastel-colored haze of my dreamless sleep, a voice thundered.

"Are you sleeping?"

To be fair, my husband probably spoke in his normal tone of voice, but it sounded like a sonic boom.

Startled, all the muscles in my body tensed at the same time and I jumped about a foot off the bed. That movement let a blast of cold air into my cozy blanket-cave. I became aware of the drool on my pillow-cloud and I vaguely remember thinking, "Did someone spill milk on my pillow?"

When you sleep so deeply, your brain temporarily empties itself, so upon awaking, you initially think you have absolutely nothing on your schedule today. What a great feeling that is! You think you can somehow capture that

pastel-colored fog again and stay there all day.

Except...there's this sonic boom in my bedroom that won't go away.

"Are you hungry?"

I throw my wet pillow at him. "Are you insane?" Maybe I am, I thought. Now I have no pillow-cloud on which to cradle my empty head.

"Get up will you? We have to sign papers at the bank in 45 minutes."

I groaned as I felt the pain of hundreds of pieces of information flooding into my brain. I just wanted my pillow-cloud back so I could cover my head and stop the flow. First the bank, then grocery shopping, dentist appointment, pay bills, drum lessons and what can I make that everyone will eat for dinner? If I can hunt down a babysitter, my husband and

See **LAURA**, Page 7A



LAURA
SNYDER

Thanks to our advanced medical imaging, disease can't hide. But his grandpa still can.

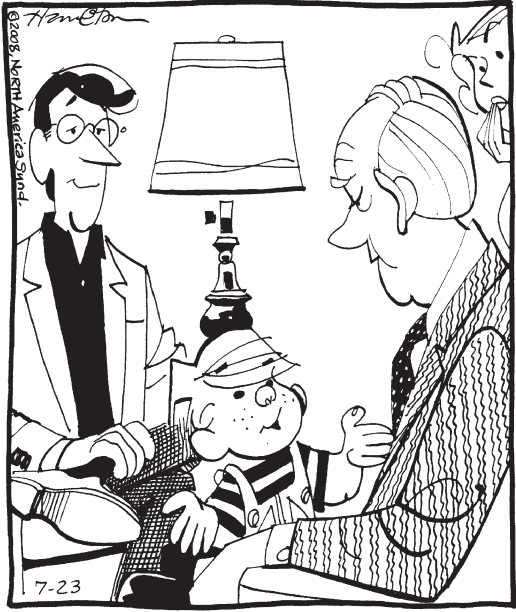


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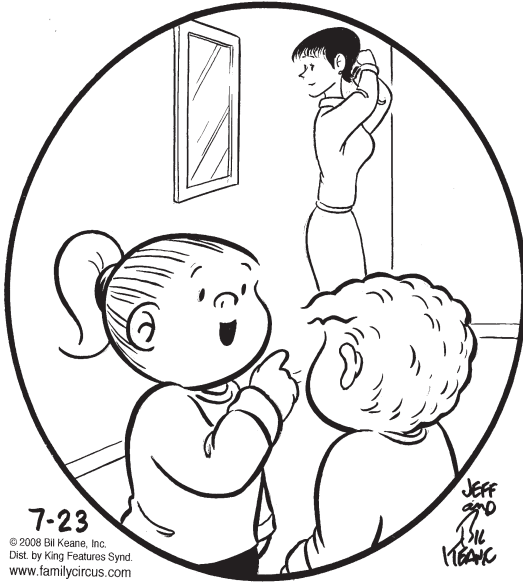
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5:30 PM	News ABC	News	Locura	Simpsons	News	Noticias	News	Friends	Cortes	News	Cash Cab		CSI: Crime Scn	Law & Order	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live	Wizards of Waverly	Football	SportsCenter
6:30 PM	Entertain	Jeopardy!	Fortune	Simpsons	News	12 Cora-zones	Millionaire	Raymond	Prophecy	News-Lehrer	Deadliest Catch		CSI: Crime Scn	Law & Order	Heil Date	Movie: Life Is Ruff	Series of Poker	MLB Baseball: Teams to Be Announced.
7:30 PM	Wife Swap	Wife Swap	Diablo-Guapos	So You Think You Can Dance	Big Brother 10	El Juramento	The Baby Borrowers	Fam. Guy	Israel	Click & Clack	Deadliest Catch	Movie: The Hunt for Red October, Scott Glenn	CSI: Crime Scn	Law & Order	KeAnth Baldwin	Montana	Series of Poker	
8:30 PM	Supernanny	Supernanny	Fuego en la Sangre		Criminal Minds	Victoria	The Baby Borrowers	Payne	Light of the Southwest	Nova sciencenow	Deadliest Catch		UFC: The Final Chapter	Law & Order	Movie: Hustle & Flow, Taryn Manning	Montana Suite Life Wizards of Waverly	Boxing: Wednesday Night Fights.	Baseball Tonight
9:30 PM	Primetime: Crime	Primetime: Crime	Don Francisco	TMZ	CSI: NY	Sin Senos	(:01) Law & Order	Payne		Carrier (DVS)	Deadliest Catch			Cold Case		Life De		
10:30 PM	News	News	Impacto	Two Men	News	Noticias	News	Friends	Israel	Charlie Rose	Deadliest Catch	Movie: U.S. Marshals, Robert Downey Jr.	MAN	Cold Case		Montana	Boxing	SportsCenter
11:30 PM	Nightline	Nightline	Noticiero	Raymond	Late Show	Pecaditos	Tonight Show	Friends	Dr. Young		Deadliest Catch		Factory	Cold Case	Diff Wrd	So Raven	NASCAR	Baseball
12:30 AM	Insider	Jimmy Kimmel Live	La Hora de la Risa	Law & Order	Late Late Show	Decisions	Late Night	Sex & Scott	CCM	Smiley	Deadliest Catch		CSI: Crime Scn	Cold Case	Diff Wrd	Phil	Boxing	NFL Live
1:30 AM	Paid	Paid	Clasicos	RENO 911	Lopez	Programa Pagado	News	Movie: Di-vine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood	Israel	Sanchez	Deadliest Catch		Star Trek: Voyager	Cold Case	Comicview	Replace Kim	Boxing	SportsCenter
	Paid	Paid	Humor	King-Hill	Paid	Pelicula:	Poker After Dark	Light of the Southwest			Deadliest Catch	Movie: The Hunt for Red October	Deep Space 9	Without a Trace	BET Late	Emperor Dragon	Boxing: Wednesday Night Fights	SportsCenter

DENNIS THE MENACE



"WOULD YOU LIKE TO STAY FOR DINNER? YOU CAN HAVE MY VEG-TABLES."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Mommy's new blouse was made by two ladies - Polly and Esther."

HAGAR

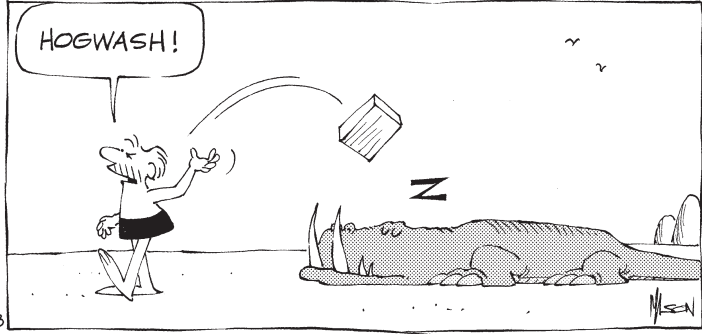


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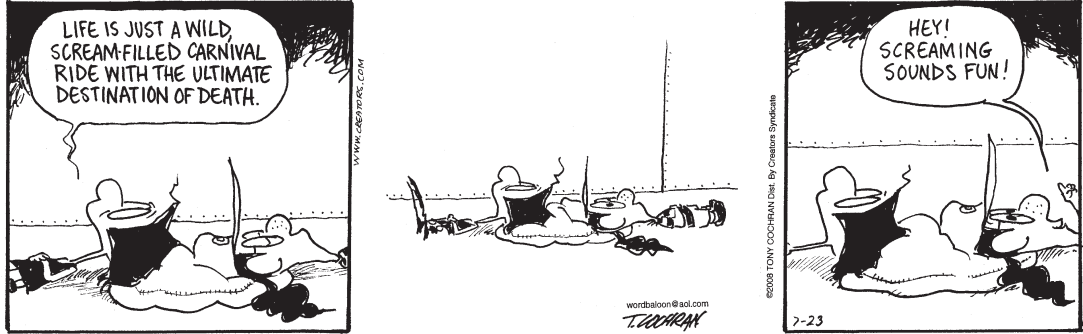
AQUARIUS: YOU MAY FIND YOURSELF VERY ACTIVE TODAY.



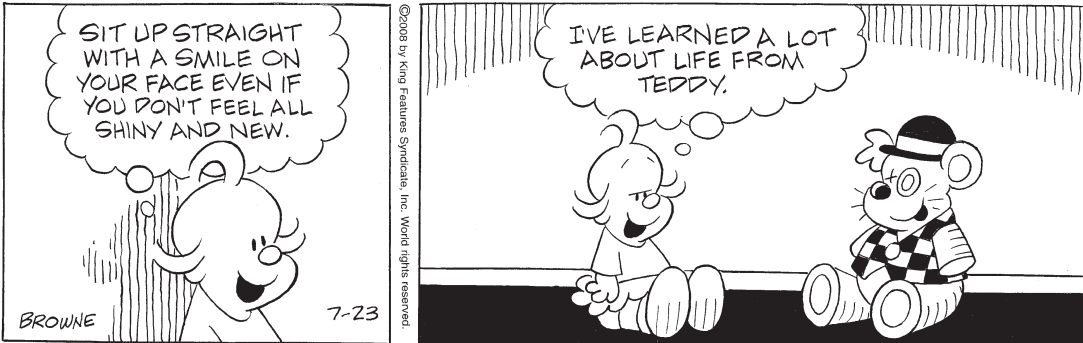
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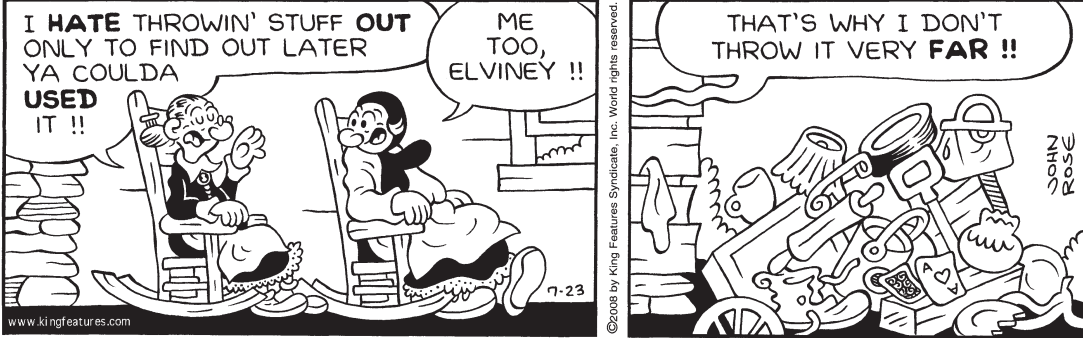
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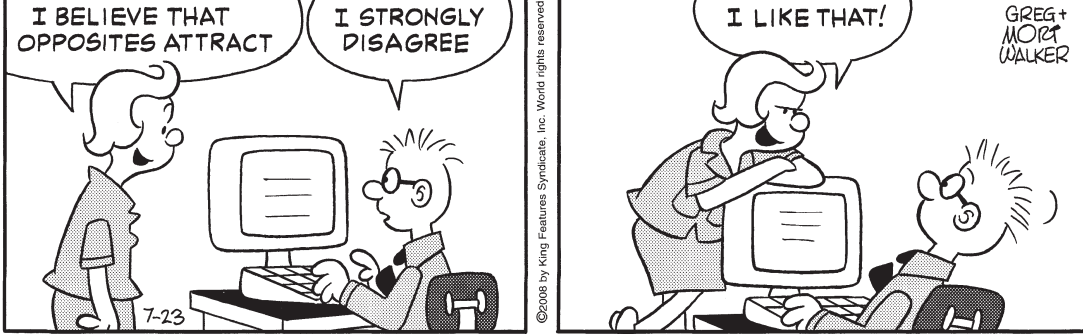
THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BEELE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Wednesday, July 23, the 205th day of 2008. There are 161 days left in the year.
Today's Highlight in History:
 On July 23, 1967, a week of deadly race-related rioting that claimed 43 lives erupted in Detroit.
 On this date:
 In 1885, Ulysses S. Grant, the 18th president of the United States, died in Mount McGregor, N.Y., at age 63.
 In 1892, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia was born.
 In 1914, Austria-Hungary issued an ultimatum to Serbia following the killing of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by a Serb assassin; the dispute led to World War I.
 In 1945, French Marshal Henri Petain, who had headed the Vichy government during World War II, went on trial, charged with treason. (He was condemned to death, but his sentence was commuted; Petain died in prison on this date in 1951.)
 In 1948, American pioneer filmmaker D.W. Griffith died in Los Angeles at age 73.
 In 1952, Egyptian military offi-

cers led by Gamal Abdel Nasser launched a successful coup against King Farouk I.
 In 1958, Britain's Queen Elizabeth II named the first four women to peerage in the House of Lords.
 In 1977, a jury in Washington convicted 12 Hanafi Muslims of charges stemming from the hostage siege at three buildings the previous March.
 In 1982, actor Vic Morrow and two child actors, 7-year-old Myca Dinh Le and 6-year-old Renee Chen, were killed when a helicopter crashed on top of them during filming of a Vietnam War scene for "Twilight Zone: The Movie." (Director John Landis and four associates were later acquitted of manslaughter charges.)
 In 1986, Britain's Prince Andrew married Sarah David Ferguson at Westminster Abbey in London. (The couple divorced in 1996.)
Today's Birthdays: Actress Gloria DeHaven is 83. Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy is 72. Actor Ronny Cox is 70. Radio personality Don Imus is 68. Country singer Tony Joe White is 65. Rock singer David Essex is 61. Actor Larry Manetti is 61. Singer-songwriter John Hall is 60. Actress Belinda Montgomery is 58. Rock musician Blair Thornton (Bachman Turner Overdrive) is 58. Actor Woody Harrelson is 47. Rock musician Martin Gore (Depeche Mode) is 47. Actor Eric LaSalle is 46. Rock musician Yuval Gabay is 45. Rock musician Slash is 43. Actor Philip Seymour Hoffman is 41. Rock musician Nick Menza is 40. Model-actress Stephanie Seymour is 40. Actress Charisma Carpenter is 38. Rhythm-and-blues singer Sam Watters is 38. Country singer Alison Krauss is 37. Rhythm-and-blues singer Dalvin DeGrate is 37. Rock musician Chad Gracey (Live) is 37. Actor-comedian Marlon Wayans is 36. Country singer Shannon Brown is 35. Actor Omar Epps is 35. Baseball player Nomar Garciaparra is 35. Actress Stephanie March is 34. Country musician David Pichette (Emerson Drive) is 31.

Answer to previous puzzle

HELPS	ASPS	ATMS
EXERT	FORT	WHOA
AEIOU	FAIR	OARS
PCS	CHIP	COOKIES
CCIX	EDGE	
PATRON	FLED	TOE
OREO	GLUE	EARNIS
ICE	CREAMS	SUNDAES
SENSE	NESS	DINE
EDS	GODS	AMENDS
	FINS	AGED
MOUSE	CACKES	FYI
APPT	TAXI	SALON
NATO	OPEN	UTURN
SLOP	NERD	PEEKIS

Newsday Crossword MUSICAL BEGINNINGS by Randall J. Hartman Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Part of CST
 4 Earlier
 9 Kid-lit
 14 Longstocking
 15 Corporate VIP
 16 Golf practice place
 17 Continental separator
 18 Diane Keaton Oscar role
 19 Back in style
 20 Calendar page
 21 Relativity name
 23 Come before
 26 Common Market letters
 27 Supposed hangerover remedy
 33 Quick to learn
 36 Short-term employee
 37 Harsh
 38 Shout 5 Down, maybe
 40 NRC predecessor
 42 "I'll say!"
 43 Investor's goal
 46 Capital of Italia
 49 Tic-tac-toe nonwinner
 50 World Cup of Softball locale
 53 Inventor Whitney
 54 Scale ranges
 58 Hot pepper
 63 Cream of the crop
 64 Suspect's story
 65 Auto mechanic's device
 68 Passed out
 69 Jumped
 70 Freudian concepts
 71 Lots of land

DOWN

1 Little rascal
 2 Vocal range
 3 "No man is an island" poet
 4 Prepare, as an oven
 5 Cheerleader's shout
 6 "Not ___ million years!"
 7 Gawk at
 8 Help from the bullpen
 9 Ferrari alternative
 10 "The Coldest Rapper" rapper
 11 Tennis pro Sampras

72 ___ Park, CO
 73 Crooklyn director

12 ___-mutuel betting
 13 Aware of
 18 Poison-ivy symptom
 22 Ends up with
 24 Casino cube
 25 Humorist Bombeck
 28 La Scala show
 29 Actress ___ Longoria Parker
 30 Promo tape
 31 Black-and-white cookie
 32 Baby boomers' babies
 33 Golden Fleece ship
 34 Fried-rice additive
 35 Implement
 39 Pan Am rival

41 Designer Chanel
 44 Something awful
 45 Sock flaw
 47 Boom-box abbr.
 48 Certifies
 51 Work the room
 52 Ivy League school
 55 Sentry's watch
 56 Chopin piece
 57 Touch or taste
 58 Actress ___ Pinkett Smith
 59 Baldwin of 30 Rock
 60 Fish-story teller
 61 Up to the task
 62 Bauxite and galena
 66 Dig in
 67 King Kong, for one

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
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71					72							73	

CREATORS SYNDICATE © 2008 STANLEY NEWMAN STANXWORDS@AOL.COM 7/23/08

LAURA

Continued from Page 6A

could go out for dinner and the kids could eat the TV dinners. Let's see, Susie has Driver's Ed tonight. Wendy's on vacation. Eliza has a boyfriend...

Stop! I just want to stay in my blanket-cave a little longer. It's so...yummy. But no, it's too late. The brain-haze has been penetrated. I have to get up.

Still lying on my stomach, I swing both legs over the side of the bed with a groan, unwilling to leave the incredibly warm softness. Okay legs are out. Now comes the tough part: Raising the rest of my body from its coma-like state.

Using super-human strength, I push on the bed until I am upright and sit on the bed, rubbing the sleep out of my eyes and the drool off my cheek. One last regretful glance at my little piece of heaven and I'm off to start my day.

It worries me, sometimes, how much I wanted to stay in that bed. It makes me think that if I were ever bed-ridden for some reason, I might not mind so much.

You can reach Laura at lsnyder@lauraonlife.com Or visit her Web site www.lauraonlife.com for more columns and info about her books.

News in brief

Air Force B-52 crash kills Austin-born pilot

AUSTIN (AP) — Maj. Christopher Cooper, a 33-year-old Austin-born pilot, was among those killed this week in the crash of a B-52 bomber, 30 miles northwest of Guam's Apra Harbor, his father said.

Cooper was among the six-member crew that crashed Monday morning as the unarmed Air Force bomber was making a swing around the island from Andersen Air Force Base, as part of Guam Liberation Day celebrations. The holiday marks the observance of the U.S. military's arrival to retake the island from Japan.

"He was 4-years-old when he realized he wanted to fly. I have a picture of him in a cockpit with his uncle, who was a B-52 pilot," Mike Cooper said in a story in Wednesday's online edition of the Austin American-Statesman.

Air Force authorities said two bodies were found after the crash but they did not release the names of any of the crew members. The two crew members were wearing their life vests when their bodies were recovered. An extensive military and civilian search continued to scour vast expanses of ocean on Tuesday for any sign of the remaining crew

members, said the 36th Wing Commander, Brig. Gen. Douglas Owens.

The Air Force said a board of officers will investigate the accident.

In 1997, Cooper completed his studies at the University of Texas, finished the Air Force's ROTC program and became a second lieutenant, his father said. The Air Force major had been awarded a bronze star for his liaison work with the Army in Iraq. He had served there and in Afghanistan, his father said.

The plane that crashed Monday was based at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana and deployed to Guam as part of the Department of Defense's continuous bomber presence mission in the Pacific.

The accident is the second for the Air Force this year on Guam, a U.S. territory 3,700 miles southwest of Hawaii. In February, a B-2 crashed at Andersen shortly after takeoff in the first-ever crash of a stealth bomber. Both pilots ejected safely.

Inmate set to die for slaying mom, child

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — Condemned prisoner Derrick Sonnier was being returned to the Texas death house Wednesday, seven weeks after a court order spared him from lethal injection and returned him to a cell on death row. Sonnier, 40, was set to die for the slayings of a suburban Houston woman and her 2-year-old son almost 17 years ago.

Melody Flowers, 27, was stabbed, strangled and beaten with a hammer until the handle of the tool snapped. Her young son, Patrick, was stabbed eight

times. Their bodies were dumped in a bathtub.

Unlike June 3, when a late appeal to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals stopped his scheduled punishment about 90 minutes before it could have been carried out, lawyers said there were no appeals pending in the courts.

"We are not going to be filing anything on his behalf at this point," said Maurie Levin, a University of Texas law professor who works with the Texas Defender Service, a legal group that represents death row prisoners.

The attorneys then had raised questions whether the state's lethal injection procedures were legal. The following week, the Court of Criminal Appeals rejected the appeal and a judge in Harris County set his new death date for Wednesday.

Sonnier would be the third Texas inmate to die this year and the 13th nationally. Executions were on hold around the country for more than seven months until the U.S. Supreme Court in April rejected an appeal from two Kentucky prisoners who argued lethal injection was unconstitutionally cruel.

Now Sonnier is among at least 16 prisoners with execution dates — including six in August — in the nation's most active death penalty state.

Sonnier, who described himself as a "moorish American" on a Web site where death row inmates seek pen pals, declined to speak with reporters in the weeks preceding each of his execution dates.

Man admits abusing teen killed in Oregon

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — A 22-year-old man has pleaded guilty to sodomy in a case involving a Texas girl strangled after an all-night party last summer in Oregon.

Shon Jerrod Estes had charges of sexual abuse and attempted rape dropped in exchange for his plea Tuesday in Clackamas County Circuit Court.

Estes was sentenced to 45

days in jail, followed by 24 months of probation.

The state might call on Estes as a witness in the death of Dani Countryman, who was visiting relatives when her body was found at an apartment complex in the Portland suburb of Milwaukie.

Alejandro Rivera Gamboa and his cousin Gilberto Javier Arellano are awaiting trial on charges of aggravated murder, attempted rape and attempted sexual abuse.

It was during the homicide investigation that detectives learned the 15-year-old had been victimized even before her death.

Texas grand jury indicts polygamist sect members

ELDORADO (AP) — Polygamist sect leader Warren Jeffs, already convicted in Utah of rape as an accomplice and awaiting trial in Arizona on other charges related to underage marriages, is now accused of assaulting a girl in Texas in January 2005.

A grand jury in this tiny western Texas ranching community indicted Jeffs and four of his followers Tuesday on charges of felony sexual assault of a child. Another was indicted for failing to report child abuse.

The charges came nearly two months after the Texas Supreme Court ruled that child welfare officials overstepped when they took all the children from the polygamist sect's ranch in a separate child custody case. The state had accused the sect of forcing underage girls into marriage and motherhood.

While authorities sorted out the custody dispute in civil court, law enforcement continued a criminal investigation by sifting through hundreds of boxes of documents, photos and family Bibles seized from the Yearning For Zion Ranch during an April raid.

State Attorney General Greg Abbott said

five members of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints are charged with one count of sexually assaulting girls under age 17, a felony. One of them, not the 52-year-old Jeffs, faces an additional charge of bigamy.

Abbott said a sixth member of the FLDS is charged with three counts of failure to report child abuse.

"Our investigation in this matter is not concluded," said the attorney general, whose office is acting as the special prosecutor in the case.

The grand jury will continue consideration of other possible criminal charges on Aug. 21, according to a person who spoke on the condition of anonymity because proceedings of the panel are secret by law.

The identities of the Jeffs' followers who were indicted were not released Tuesday because the indictments remain sealed until authorities can arrest the men. Jeffs is in custody in Arizona.

"There will be an aggressive effort to apprehend them," Abbott said when asked whether he was concerned the men might have fled Texas.

FLDS members have historically lived around the Arizona-Utah line and bought the YFZ ranch in Eldorado about five years ago.

ConocoPhillips profits soar

HOUSTON (AP) — Oil giant ConocoPhillips says record crude prices helped its second-quarter profit dwarf year-ago results, when the company incurred a \$4.5 billion charge related to its former assets in Venezuela.

The Houston-based company said Wednesday net income rose to \$5.44 billion, or \$3.50 a share, for the April-June period, from \$301 million, or 18 cents a share, in the year-ago quarter. Revenue increased to \$71.4 billion from \$47.4 billion a year ago.

On average, Wall Street analysts surveyed by Thomson Financial expected earnings per share of \$3.40.

ConocoPhillips, the third-largest U.S. oil company, is the first of the oil majors to report second-quarter earnings. Exxon Mobil Corp. and Chevron Corp., among others, are scheduled to report results next week.

Jail escapee nabbed swimming in Houston hotel pool

HOUSTON (AP) — A slimmed-down murder suspect who fled jail by slipping through a vent has been caught after a dip in a hotel pool on a hot summer night in Houston.

Houston police say Darryl Layne Norris was back in custody Wednesday.

Norris escaped early Saturday from the Waller County Jail in Hempstead.

Sheriff Randy Smith said Norris, described as 6-foot-1 and usually about 160 pounds, had lost weight in recent months. The air conditioner vent he went through is less than one foot wide.

Police say Norris was captured Tuesday night after swimming at a Red Roof Inn. Further details on what led police to the moderately priced hotel were not immediately available.

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News in brief

Rice meets N. Korean diplomat in Singapore

SINGAPORE (AP) — Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice met North Korea's top diplomat here Wednesday, ending a four-year hiatus in cabinet-level contacts between the Bush administration and the Stalinist state over its nuclear program.

Rice and North Korean Foreign Minister Pak Ui Chun smiled for photos as they greeted each other and their counterparts from the four other nations — China, Japan, Russia and South Korea — involved in the effort to get the North to abandon atomic weapons. The diplomats were accompanied by dozens of aides, and reporters couldn't see if Rice and Pak shook hands.

"I think this is quite significant," said Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi. "It shows the six parties have the political will to move forward with the six-party talks process."

"We should all continuously contribute to the progress of this process," Yang added. "When we look back we find that because of this spirit of mutual benefit and win-win progress, we have been able to overcome quite a few difficulties and we have completed the implementation of the initial phase."

Blacks still rare in top military ranks, just 10 earn four-star rank

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sixty years after President Truman desegregated the military, senior black officers are still rare,



AP photo
Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, right, and Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., left, meet in the West Bank town of Ramallah, Wednesday. A senior Palestinian official says Obama has assured Palestinian leaders he'll get involved in the Mideast conflict quickly, if elected U.S. president.

particularly among the highest ranks.

Blacks make up about 17 percent of the total force, yet just 9 percent of all officers. That fraction falls to less than 6 percent for general officers with one to four stars, according to data obtained and analyzed by The Associated Press.

The rarity of blacks in the top ranks is apparent in one startling statistic: Only one of the 38 four-star generals or admirals serving as of May was black. And just 10 black men have ever gained four-star rank — five in the Army, four in the Air Force and one in the Navy, according to the Pentagon.

The dearth of blacks in high-ranking positions gives younger African-American soldiers few mentors of their own race. And as the overall percentage of blacks in the service falls, particularly in combat careers that lead to top posts, the situation seems unlikely to change.

Still, officials this week can point to some historic gains by blacks in the services as the Pentagon commemorates Truman's signing of an executive order on July 26, 1948, mandating the end of segregation in the military.

sponsored mortgage companies an unlimited line of credit and buy an unspecified amount of their stock, if necessary to prop up Fannie and Freddie. The two companies back or own \$5 trillion in U.S. mortgages — nearly half the nation's total.

Congressional analysts estimated Tuesday that the rescue could cost \$25 billion, but predicted there's a better than even chance it won't be needed at all.

Christian Bale arrested on assault; actor issues denial

LONDON (AP) — The darkness around Batman has deepened: While audiences were shattering weekend box-office records in the U.S., Christian Bale was in London, where his mother and sister reportedly leveled assault allegations against the star of "The Dark Knight" that have yet to become clear.

Bale said the allegations were false Tuesday, hours after the Wales-born actor was arrested, questioned by London police and released on bail. The 34-year-old actor spent four hours talking with authorities but was not charged.

British media reported that Bale's mother and sister told police he assaulted them at the Dorchester Hotel in London on Sunday night, a day before attending the European premiere of "The Dark Knight." The Sun newspaper said the complaint was filed by sister Sharon Bale and mother Jenny Bale.

"Christian Bale attended a London police station today on a voluntary basis," read a statement from Bale's lawyer, Simon Smith, of the London-based firm Schillings. "Bale, who denies the allegation, cooperated throughout, gave his account in full of the events in question, and has left the station without any charge being made against him by the police."

A woman thought to be Bale's sister Sharon told reporters "it's a family matter" from her home in

Corfe Mullen, 110 miles southwest of London. A man who answered the door at the home of Jenny Bale in nearby Bournemouth said she did not want to comment.

Interrogators instructed not to advise detainees of rights, FBI agent says

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, Cuba (AP) — An FBI agent testifying at the first Guantanamo war crimes trial said interrogators did not advise detainees here of any rights because the military prison is dedicated to intelligence gathering, not law enforcement.

Agent Ali Soufan, an al-Qaida expert and star witness for the prosecution, said Tuesday the Guantanamo Bay Navy base is the only place in the world where he has not informed suspects of a right against self-incrimination.

"The way it was explained to us is Guantanamo Bay is an intelligence collection point," he said.

Defense lawyers asked the judge in Salim Hamdan's trial to throw out all the Guantanamo interrogations, arguing that intelligence-gathering sessions should not be used against him in court.

But Judge Keith Allred, a Navy captain, ruled Monday that constitutional protections against self-incrimination do not apply to the man declared an "enemy combatant."

Hamdan, a former driver for Osama bin Laden, is charged with conspiracy and aiding terrorism.

His lawyers have cast him as a low-level employee of the terrorist leader without any role in al-Qaida.

Alaska House approves natural gas pipeline license for TransCanada

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — The Alaska State House of Representatives has approved a state license for a Canadian company to pursue a natural gas pipeline project that could unlock 4.5 billion cubic feet of North Slope gas reserves daily.

The House backed the plan on a 24-16 vote Tuesday. A reconsideration vote is planned Wednesday, but that's usually a formality. If approved then, the bill will go to the state Senate, which must approve or reject it before Aug. 2.

Lawmakers in Alaska's House voted to support Gov. Sarah Palin's proposal to award TransCanada Corp. an exclusive license to pursue federal certification for the 1,715-mile pipeline estimated to cost between \$26 billion and \$30 billion.

TransCanada Vice President Tony Palmer wasn't ready to celebrate just yet, nor would he make any predictions on how the Senate's vote will play out.

House to vote on mortgage aid, Fannie Freddie rescue to calm housing market

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government would help struggling homeowners get new, cheaper loans and be allowed to offer troubled mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac a cash infusion as part of legislation that aims to calm the chaotic housing market.

The House was expected to vote on the bill Wednesday, and it could become law as early as this week.

The Bush administration and lawmakers in both parties teamed to negotiate the measure, which pairs Democrats' top priorities — federal help for homeowners facing foreclosure and \$3.9 billion for neighborhoods hit hardest by the housing crisis — with Republicans' goal of reining in Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac while reassuring financial markets of their stability.

It hands the Treasury Department power to extend the government-

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