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BIG SPRING HERALD

TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 9, 2008



VOLUME 103, NUMBER 242

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No opposition to county tax hike



Howard County commissioners field questions from the audience during a public hearing Monday evening in the commissioners courtroom concerning the proposed tax rate for 2008-2009.

Commissioners plan on eclipsing rollback rate

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

"Well, no one brought a rope."
The jovial comment, uttered by County Judge Mark Barr during Monday night's public hearing on the proposed 2008-2009 tax rate, may have been an understatement as the meeting failed to draw any opposition to the rate, which is nearly 5 cents above the rollback rate.
Last month, commissioners agreed to a proposed tax rate of .5362 cents per \$100 valuation, eclipsing the effective rate of .4134 cents per \$100 valuation and exceeding this year's rollback rate of .4912 cents per \$100 valuation. The rate is expected to produce an additional levy of \$2.7 mil-



Barr

lion more than last year's rate, said County Auditor Jackie Olson.
According to Barr, ongoing litigation between Alon USA — owner of the Big Spring Refinery and one of the county's biggest taxpayers — and the Howard County Appraisal District concerning what the petrochemical company claims is inflated valuations has made the 5-cent jump in the tax rate necessary.
Alon USA paid approximately \$225,000 in taxes last year — based on an undisputed assessment of

See **COUNTY**, Page 3A

9-11 remembrance set Thursday at mall

What: September 11, 2001, remembrance ceremony.
Where: Big Spring Mall.
When: 6 p.m. Thursday.

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

Never forget.
That's the message officials with the Hangar 25 Air Museum hope to deliver Thursday, as the local facility joins forces with local residents for a special

ceremony commemorating the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001, and the many heroes that rose from the wreckage.
"Last year was our first attempt at a Sept. 11 ceremony, and we've had a lot of help from local resident Mike Tarpley this

year," said Meghan Bias, director of the local air museum. "I think it's important to remember what happened that day. It changed everyone's lives, and we need to recognize the local heroes."
"Dr. Darryl Powell, a retired

brigadier general, will be our speaker, and we'll also have presentations from the Big Spring Police Department and the Big Spring Fire Department. We're proud to be able to do this again.
See **9-11**, Page 3A

'The Rookie' to speak at college lecture series

By **CINDY SMITH**
Special to the Herald

Jim "The Rookie" Morris will be the guest speaker at the Howard College Foundation Speaker Series to be held Sept. 25 at 7 p.m. at The Dorothy Garrett Coliseum on the Howard College campus.
Morris, widely known as the high school physics teacher from Big Lake who pursued his major league baseball dreams, will be



Morris

on hand to present his engaging presentation that is sure to motivate individuals of all ages.
After having hoped only for a professional baseball career, Morris found himself facing an adult world he barely recognized. He turned away from baseball and toward the real world.

After years passed, Morris found himself in a small West Texas town teaching physics and coaching high school baseball. He believed his purpose in life was to inspire his students and players to dream bigger dreams than their harsh surroundings and homes generally allowed.
Then came the bet...
"Mr. Morris is certain to be a high energy, motivational speaker who will present a mes-

sage that we can all relate to," said Dr. Cheryl T. Sparks, Howard College president.
"We are very excited to have someone with these strong West Texas ties come to our campus and possibly help other students or adults realize their own capabilities of achieving their dreams."
Howard College Foundation serves as the host for the lecture series and will seek different

sponsors for each lecture.
"As we bring new lectures in, we hope to develop more 'Friends of the Series' to allow additional businesses and individuals the opportunity to sponsor an event," said Sparks.
The lecture is free of charge to the public. A reception will follow. A ticket is required for admission. For more information or to obtain free tickets, call (432) 264-5161.

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www.bigspringherald.com

To reach us:
Please call 263-7331. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you miss your paper, please call (432) 263-7335 before 7 p.m. weekdays and noon Sunday.

Dine Out Day

Dell's Cafe at 1608 E. Fourth St. is this week's Dine Out Restaurant assisting the United Way for Big Spring and Howard County.

Proceeds from Friday's sales at Dell's will benefit United Way. Future participating restaurants will include Papa Georgio's Pizza, Cowboy's Steakhouse, Greg's Grill and others.

Driver safety course

A senior citizen driver safety course will be taught at the Big Spring Senior Center, 1901 Simler Drive, Thursday and Friday. The course will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 1:30 p.m. each day, with a half-hour off for lunch.

There is a \$10 fee for the book. Many auto insurance companies will give a discount on insurance premiums when the course is completed.

To register, call the Senior Center at 267-1628. Class size is limited to 35. The course is for motorists age 50 and older and is especially designed for seniors.

Macmilestone

FOND DU LAC, Wis. (AP) — A 54-year-old Fond du Lac man says his obsessive-compulsive disorder drove him to eat 23,000 Big Macs in 36 years.

Don Gorske, 54, says he hit the milestone last month, continuing a pleasurable obsession that began May 17, 1972.

Gorske has kept every burger receipt in a box. He says he was always fascinated with numbers, and watching McDonald's track its number of customers motivated him to track his own consumption.

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Valle dominates ACU Classic

Steers place second in team competition

Herald Staff Report

ABILENE — It was a typical start to the cross country season for the Big Spring Steers, delivering a strong performance at the Abilene Christian University High School Classic and having the meet's top runner.

As a team, Big Spring finished second with four of its runners finishing in the top 10. However, the top five runners count for points and this is where experience played a factor for the Steers.

Seniors Jordan Valle, Shane Allen, Sammy Segundo and Kade Parker had to rely on a pair of freshmen and one sophomore for the team to claim its first win of the year. Unfortunately, the highest one of those three finished was 46, earning 32 points for the team and allowing Abilene to run away with the team title.

On a high note, Valle dominated the competition, finishing the 3-mile course in 15:22 — more than a minute ahead of second place. He is the Steers top returning

runner as he finished 12th at last year's state meet in Round Rock.

On the girls side, the Lady Steers were led by senior Catherine Leubner, who finished the 2-mile course in 13:02. Unfortunately, the Lady Steers only have four runners — one short of being able to qualify as a team.

Opal Gonzales finished a respectable 21st, coming in at 14:03.

See **BSHS**, Page 2B

Lance may ride again

Armstrong rumored to be considering a return to the Tour

By **JIM VERTUNO**
AP Sports Writer

AUSTIN — Is Lance Armstrong coming back to cycling?

A report in a prominent cycling journal suggests that may be the case. And the seven-time Tour de France champion has put himself forward for drug testing — a necessary step for any return to the highest level of the sport he once dominated.

But any Armstrong comeback won't take place with the Astana cycling team, as cycling journal VeloNews reported. Citing anonymous sources, its Web site said Monday that the 36-year-old would compete with Astana in the 2009 Tour de France and four other road races — the Amgen Tour of California, Paris-Nice, the Tour de Georgia and the Dauphine-Libere.

Team press officer Philippe Maertens denied that report Tuesday.

"There are no contacts or plans of Team Astana to take Lance Armstrong," he told The Associated Press by phone from Belgium. "As far as I know, Lance Armstrong doesn't have plans to do road cycling."

"But that's a question you have to ask Armstrong," Maertens added. "We have no plans."

Astana team director Johan Bruyneel, who was with Armstrong for all seven Tour wins from 1999-2005, said he considered it "very unlikely" that he would ride in the Tour again.

"He is a man who stays in good shape," Bruyneel said Tuesday in Sabinanigo, Spain, at the Spanish Vuelta, according to national news agency EFE. "He also does cyclocross and has run marathons. But I see it very unlikely he will compete again in the Tour of France. For me it is just a rumor, although I will have to speak with him."

The Astana team was not allowed to compete in this year's Tour after Alexandre Vinokourov was kicked out of the 2007 Tour for testing positive and the team quit the race.

Maertens said rumors that Armstrong might come out of retirement had been circulating for a few weeks.

"If it would be true that Armstrong wants to come back it would be

See **ARMSTRONG**, Page 2B

Ouch!

Entire NFL appears injury prone in 2008

Biggest winner of the first week of the NFL season? The injured reserve list.

Three major players on their team were lost for the season Sunday and several more are already banged and set to miss several weeks.

I haven't seen exact numbers or a stat on this topic, but it's hard for me to believe that the league has ever been affected this heavily by injuries so early in the season.

Of course, the biggest injury buzz is coming out of New England where Tom Brady has been lost for the season. The reaction to this injury has been huge as even news sources not dominated by sports are even leading off or at least mentioning the injury during their broadcasts.

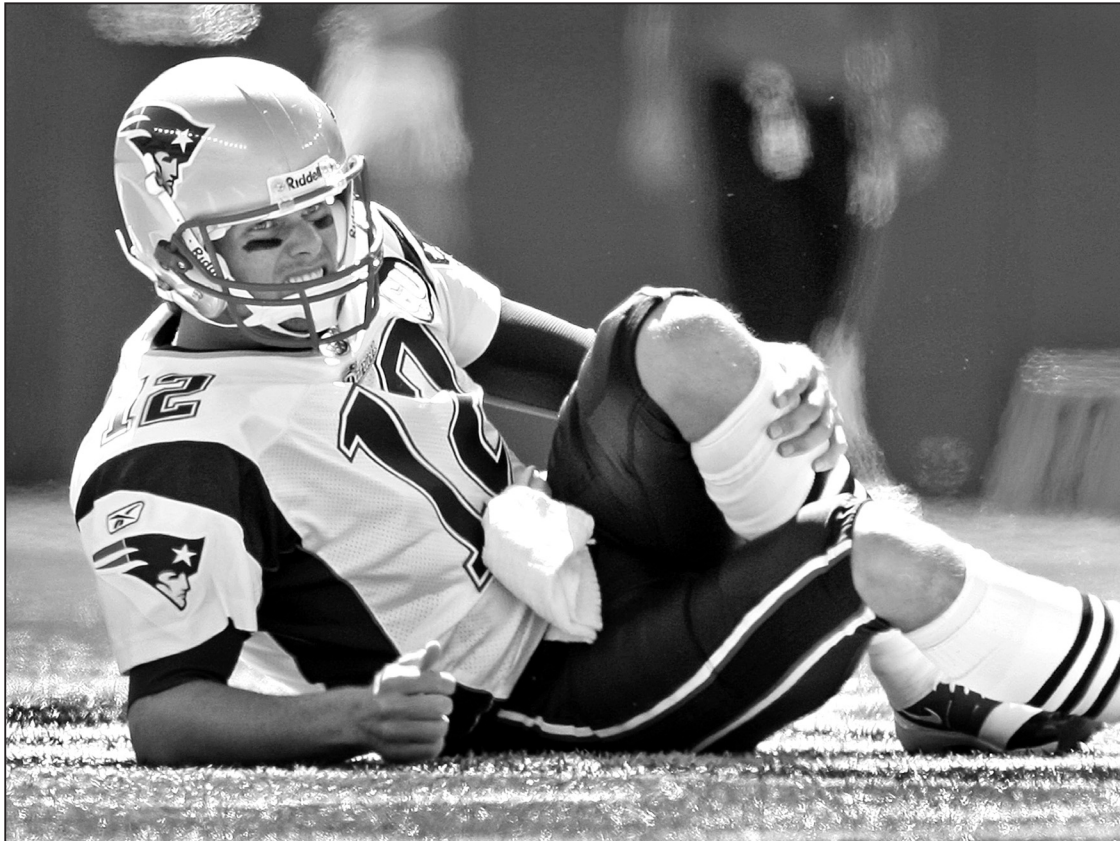
If the NFL were to have a Mount Rushmore with the faces of the 2008 season on it, Brady's image would be where George Washington's is on the real masterpiece. Joining him would be Peyton Manning, Tony Romo and Brett Favre.

However, now the NFL needs to round up some dynamite and form a new image in place of Brady's. Easier said than done, though.

Some NFL prognosticators deliberated Brady's absence would cause a drop in ratings for the 2008 season.

That's a bit much. This is the NFL, not the NBA. Brady's absence will not have the same impact Michael Jordan's did on the NBA or Tiger Woods' is currently having on the PGA.

Football is the ultimate team sport and is marketed in a way that a new face or



AP photo/Jim Davis/The Boston Globe

New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady holds his leg after being hit by Kansas City Chiefs safety Bernard Pollard during the first quarter of an NFL football game Sunday in Foxborough, Mass. Brady's season-ending injury is one of many Week 1 misfortunes that changed the complexion of the NFL.

name easily steps up to take the limelight left behind.

While the NFL would obviously rather have Brady on the field, Commissioner Roger Goodell didn't exactly reach for the panic button either.

The biggest impact Brady's injury has is on the AFC East and the conference's playoff picture. Now, the Jets and Bills move into the favorite role, meanwhile, the Dolphins, who actually looked like a real NFL team Sunday, have some sort of playoffs hope this season. That division is for the taking.

Brady's misfortune isn't the only injury having a huge impact on a team's season. Here's a quick look at a few more and how it could possibly change the NFL's outlook:

Vince Young

Titans quarterback

Young is out for 2-4 weeks with a

sprained knee. Quite honestly, this might be the best thing that could happen for the Titans.

Tennessee just went from a 6-10 team to a playoff contender. Kerry Collins is the better option for this team. I probably just offended several University of Texas' fans for bashing Young, but hear me out.

Tennessee has a championship caliber run game and defense. The only thing holding the Titans back is the play of Young.

His quarterback ratings are some of the worst in the league. He still hasn't learned how to read a defense. And he recently took offense to being booed by the home crowd and even said he didn't want to go back onto the field because of it.

Wow.

Collins is a better quarterback option simply because he's a man and Young is

See **INJURIES**, Page 2B



JONATHAN HULL

Legendary Don Haskins passes away at age 78

By **ALICIA A. CALDWELL**
Associated Press Writer

EL PASO — The glow from Don Haskins' greatest triumph was mostly a memory when Disney decided to take another look.

Then came the movie "Glory Road" and a whole new generation learned what Bob Knight already knew about his old friend's career — and legacy.

"Don got more out of his teams and players than any coach who has ever coached college basketball," Knight said.

Haskins, the Hall of Fame coach credited with helping break color barriers in college sports in 1966 when he used five black starters to win a national basketball title for Texas Western, died Sunday. He was 78.

Dr. Dwayne Aboud, Haskins' physician, told reporters Sunday that Haskins had been suffering from congestive heart failure and died at home

about 4:30 p.m. He was surrounded by friends and relatives, Aboud said.

"As many of you know, Coach Haskins has had some cardiac problems. He opted not to go back to the hospital but to remain at home," Aboud said, standing outside the University of Texas El-Paso basketball arena named for Haskins.

As word of Haskins' death spread, those who knew him were quick to sing his praises.

"The word unique does not begin to describe Don Haskins," Knight, the winningest men's coach in the sport's history, said Sunday. "There is no one who has ever coached that I respected and admired more than Don Haskins. I've had no better friend that I enjoyed more than Don Haskins."

"The myth that surrounds Don Haskins in the movie 'Glory Road' and



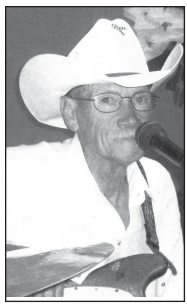
AP file photo

In this March 19, 1966 file photo, Texas Western College head basketball coach Don Haskins, second from left, and players celebrate after winning the 1966 NCAA basketball championship in College Park, Md. Haskins died Sunday at the age of 78.

See **HASKINS**, Page 2B

Obituaries

John Walter ‘Johnny’ Bates Sr.



John Walter Bates Sr. passed from this life Thursday, Sept. 4, 2008, at Hospice House of Odessa at the age of 70. He was born Nov. 11, 1937, in Roby to Joe B. Bates Sr. and Fannie Bell (Waddell) Bates. He served his country in the U.S. Air Force. He married Beverly Woodward March 19, 1982, in Odessa.

He was a musician. Music was his life and he played bass guitar for numerous bands. His latest band was “The Prowlers.” His greatest joys were his grandkids. He liked to fish and play the lottery. He played the scratch-off games and always knew he would “hit the next one.”

He leaves behind his wife, Beverly Bates of Odessa; three sons, Jack Bates of Boerne, John Bates Jr. and wife Dana of Odessa, and Ray Hollingsworth and wife Sheri of Odessa; four daughters, Joni Maness and husband John of San Antonio, Joy Lauderdale of Odessa and Tammy Hester and husband George of Odessa, and Shannon Teague and husband John of Odessa; two brothers, “Toby” Joe Bates Jr. and wife Myrna and “Cricket” James K. Bates and wife Sallie, all of Odessa; nineteen grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

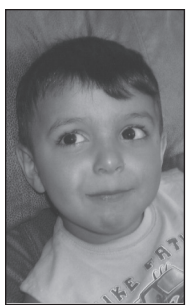
He was preceded in death by his parents and one daughter, Jana Minor, who passed away in 2006.

Funeral services were held with full military honors Monday, Sept. 8, 2008, at Acres West Funeral Chapel, officiated by Rev. Jimmy Braswell. Arrangements were entrusted to Acres West Funeral Chapel.

The family requests memorials be sent to Hospice House, 903 N. Sam Houston, Odessa 79761.

Paid obituary

Aiden Jerrett Matthews



Aiden Jerrett Matthews, 3, of Big Spring died Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008, in Big Spring. A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday at Myers & Smith Chapel with Rev. Ken McMeans, pastor of College Baptist Church, and Rev. Monroe Teeters, pastor of Salem Baptist Church, officiating.

He was born Dec. 3, 2004, in Odessa. He is survived by his parents, Jessica and Kevin Matthews of Big Spring; one sister, Danni Matthews of Big Spring; grandparents, Alveasa Antuna and Omar Gonzales, and Kathy and Gordon Daniels, all of Big Spring, and Larry and Norma Antuna of Brownfield; great grandparents, Dean and Gene Priest, Jewell and Charles “Matt” Matthews, and Jo Nell Daniels, all of Big Spring; and a number of aunts, uncles and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his grandfather, Kenneth Matthews, in 1992.

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

Carmen Osborne

Carmen Osborne, 4 months, of Big Spring died Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008, at Scenic Mountain Medical Center. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Wandalene Davis

Wandalene Davis, 78, of Big Spring died Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2008, in an Odessa hospice facility. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Jose Ybarra

Jose Ybarra, 70, of Big Spring died Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2008, at his residence. Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Support Groups

TUESDAY
• Grief share, sponsored by Home Hospice and the First Presbyterian Church, Seventh and Rannels (north end door), meets at 6 p.m.. Drop-ins are welcome. For more information, contact Sherry Hodne3tt at 264-7599.

• The Path, faith-based addiction recovery, meets at 6:30 p.m. at Spring Tabernacle Ministries, 1209 Wright St.

• Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. and closed discussion meeting 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

• Al-Anon, 615 Settles for family members and friends of alcoholics meets at 8 p.m.

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.

Police blotter

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

- DAVID CHRIS PETREE, 23, of 6508 Interstate 20 S. Service Road, was arrested Monday on a local warrant and a charge of possession of marijuana – two ounces or less.
- VERONICA LEEANN RODRIGUEZ, 22, of 5709 Cedar, was arrested Monday on a local capias warrant.
- RICARDO RUIZ, 23, of Midland, was arrested Monday on two local citations and held for immigration.
- GUSTAVO HERRERA, 47, of 1511 S. Lancaster, was arrested Monday on a charge of public intoxication and held for immigration.
- JOSE DAVID RIVAS, 44, of 1511 S. Lancaster, was arrested Monday on a charge of public intoxication.
- SERGIO DAVID ALVEREZ, 20, of 1604 E. 11th Place, was arrested Sunday on two local warrants and a Midland County warrant.
- BRANDY RENEE GARCIA, 19, of 1002 N. Main Street, was arrested Sunday on a charge of failure to identify – giving false information.
- THEFT was reported:
 - in the 1700 block of Settles.
 - in the 1100 block of Lamesa.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported in the 500 block of Westover Road.
- BURGLARY OF A HABITATION was reported in the 1200 block of Harding.
- ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE was reported:
 - in the 1400 block of Highway 87.
 - in the 1800 block of Mittel.

Sheriff’s report

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

- Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 54 inmates at the time of this report.
- ROBERT DIAZ JR., 26, was transferred to the county jail Monday by the BSPD on a charge of possession of a controlled substance.
 - BETTY JEAN MUNIZ, 42, was transferred to the county jail Monday by the BSPD on charges of driving while intoxicated with a child passenger and evading arrest/detention using a vehicle.
 - FELICIA ALDRIDGE, 22, was arrested Monday by the HCSO on charges of bondsman off bond for possession of a controlled substance (two counts), bail jumping – failure to appear (felony) and manufacture/delivery of a controlled substance in a drug free zone (two counts).
 - BRANDY RENEE GARCIA, 19, was transferred to the county jail Monday by the BSPD on a charge of failure to identify – giving false information.
 - SELESTINO HERNANDEZ III, 23, was arrested Monday by the HCSO on charges of burglary of a habitation, a bench warrant and a Midland County warrant for evading arrest with a motor vehicle.

Fire/EMS

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

- MEDICAL was reported in the 1800 block of Wallace. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1500 block of W. FM 700. Service refused.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1700 block of Wasson. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1900 block of Simler. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2400 block of E. FM 700. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2400 block of Allendave. One person was transported to SMMC.
- DUMPSTER FIRE was reported in the 1100 block of Rannels.

Take Note

• Big Spring High School Class of 1998 10-year reunion will be held Sept. 12-13 during the BSHS homecoming weekend. To get details and register, visit www.freewebs.com/bshs1998 or contact Traci Bellinghausen at (817) 308-9845 or Jacob Cordova at (432) 935-0533.

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

• Big Spring High School Class of 1988’s 20-year reunion will be held the weekend of Sept. 12-13. Contact Cheri Wyrick Reibe at 432-268-9587 or reibe1@suddenlink.net for information.

Your Local Weather

Wed 9/10	Thu 9/11	Fri 9/12	Sat 9/13	Sun 9/14
 79/66 Variable clouds with showers and scattered thunderstorms. High 79F.	 81/66 A few thunderstorms possible. Highs in the low 80s and lows in the mid 60s.	 82/66 Partly cloudy, chance of a thunderstorm.	 82/63 Isolated thunderstorms. Highs in the low 80s and lows in the low 60s.	 70/56 Showers, maybe a rumble of thunder.

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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

- Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) No. 21 meets at 5 p.m. at the First Christian Church at 10th and Goliad for weigh-in. The meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. Call 213-1342 or 263-6819.
- Big Spring Band Boosters meet at 5:30 p.m. in the Big Spring High School band hall.
- Coahoma Lions Club meets at 6 p.m. in the Coahoma Community Center at 306 North Ave.
- The Concerned Citizens Council meets at 7 p.m. at the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce. For more information, call 264-6116.
- Archeology Society for Howard and Borden counties meets at 7 p.m. in the Howard County Library Community Room in the basement. Call 270-2615 for more information.
- Prospector’s Club work night begins at 7 p.m. at 606 E. Third.
- Big Spring Society of the Order of Beacieants meets at 6:30 p.m. for a meal with meeting that begins at 7:30 p.m. at 221 Main.
- Big Spring Commandry meets at 7:30 p.m. at 221 Main.
- The Christian Motorcyclists Association meets at 7:30 p.m. at the Dragon Restaurant, 1300 S. Gregg. Everyone is welcome. Call 263-3869 for more information.

TUESDAY

- Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- The American Cancer Society meets at noon at the Home Hospice office for lunch and its monthly meeting. For more information, call Sherry Hodnett at 264-7599.
- The Powwow Committee of Big Spring meets at 7 p.m. at St. Paul Lutheran Church annex, 809 Scurry, or the fellowship hall at 810 Scurry. Call Robert Downing at 263-3255 for information.

WEDNESDAY

- Optimist Club meets at 7 a.m. in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- Free blood pressure screenings from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Salvation Army, 811 W. Fifth St., provided by InHome Care.
- Downtown Lions Club meets at noon at the Howard College Cactus Room.
- Duplicate Bridge Club meets at 1 p.m. in the Big Spring Country Club.
- 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, 1001 Birdwell Lane.

Lottery

The winning Cash Five numbers drawn Monday by the Texas Lottery: 35-2-28-27-14.

The winning Texas Two Step numbers drawn Monday by the Texas Lottery: 33-27-3-35. Bonus Ball: 29.

The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Monday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 2-9-3-9. Sum It Up: 23.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Monday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 4-0-7. Sum It Up: 11.

BIG SPRING HERALD

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HASKINS

Continued from Page 1B

what he did for black players is better said that he cared like that for all his players," Knight added. "To me that tells me more about the man than anything. ... There was never anyone like him before and there will never be one like him again."

Haskins, who was white, was an old-time coach who believed in hard work and was known for his gruff demeanor. That attitude was portrayed in the 2006 movie that chronicled Haskins' improbable rise to national fame in the 1966 championship game against an all-white, heavily favored Kentucky team coached by Adolph Rupp.

Nolan Richardson, who coached Arkansas to a national title, played for two years under Haskins.

"One of the truest legacies that he could ever leave was what happened in 1966," Richardson said. "He was never political. Those were the times and the days the black kids didn't play at other schools, but he started five and was able to win with them without worrying about what color they were."

Haskins retired in 1999 after 38 seasons at the school. He had a 719-353 record and won seven Western Athletic Conference titles.

He took the school, which would eventually change its name to Texas El-Paso, to 14 NCAA tournaments and to the NIT seven times, and briefly worked as an adviser with the Chicago Bulls.

Haskins, 19th on the Division I men's victory list, turned down

several more lucrative offers, including one with the now-defunct American Basketball Association, to remain at UTEP as one of the lowest-paid coaches in the WAC.

Former coach Eddie Sutton said Haskins "had a tremendous impact on the college game. Anybody who's been around college basketball dating back to those days, they've seen how it changed after Texas Western won the national championship."

Sutton said he hadn't talked to Haskins for at least six weeks.

"Don had not been in good health and was having a hard time," Sutton said. "He'll be dearly missed. He was a great basketball coach."

Born in Enid, Okla., Haskins played for Hall of Fame coach Henry Iba at Oklahoma State, back when the school was still Oklahoma A&M. Haskins was later an assistant under Iba for the 1972 U.S. Olympic team in Munich.

As a coach, Haskins became a star early in his career by leading his Miners to the 1966 NCAA championship game, then making the controversial decision to start five blacks against Kentucky.

The Miners won 72-65, and shortly after that many schools began recruiting black players.

"He took a school that had no reason to be a basketball giant and made it into one," Knight said.

Haskins said he wasn't trying to make a social statement with his lineup; he was simply starting his best players. The move, however, raised the ire of some who sent Haskins hate mail and even death threats during the racially charged era.

"When they won the national championship against the University of Kentucky, that changed college basketball," Sutton said. "At that time, there weren't many teams in the South or Southwest that had African-Americans playing. There was a change in the recruiting of the black athlete. It really changed after that. They've had a great impact on the game."

The coach always was focused on the game of basketball. He had a reputation for working his players hard.

"Our practices wore us out so much that we'd have to rest up before the games," said Harry Flournoy, a starter in the 1966 championship. "If you work hard all the time and if you go after every loose ball, you see things like that (championship) happen."

Haskins helped Nate Archibald, Tim Hardaway and Antonio Davis, among others, make it to the NBA.

In November 2000, Haskins was awarded the John Thompson Foundation's Outstanding Achievement Award during a tournament hosted by Arkansas.

"We couldn't think of anyone that deserves this recognition more than coach Haskins," Richardson said. "He opened the door for African-American players to play basketball."

Former UTEP and current Kentucky coach Billy Gillespie said every conversation he had with Haskins left an impression.

"I looked forward to the phone calls after each and every game. He was watching almost every game of our team," Gillespie said. "It was just like having another coach on the bench pres-

ent at every single practice. I took every single thing he said to heart. I knew he didn't have any agenda, he was just trying to help one of his friends win a game."

Doc Sadler, also a former UTEP coach and now head coach at Nebraska, said Haskins called frequently last season just to discuss strategy and outcome.

"If you were one of his guys, you were one of his guys," Sadler said. "He was bigger than life. The word I was told was that he was the John Wayne of college basketball. He had that much respect."

Haskins was hired in 1961 as a virtual unknown. Ben Collins, the school's athletic director at the time, said he consulted people who knew more about basketball than he did. And from the beginning, Collins said Sunday, he never had a second thought.

"He was a success almost from his first year," Collins said. "That in itself speaks a lot about his ability as a basketball coach."

Haskins' health had been an issue for several years, stretching back to his final season at UTEP when he was often forced to remain seated during games. The program that Haskins built struggled after twice being slapped with NCAA sanctions. Serious health concerns continued in his retirement. In the midst of a series of book signings and other appearances Haskins was hospitalized with various woes.

In recent weeks his health had declined rapidly, prompting friends and some former players to make special visits to see the ailing coach.

"It was a blessing ... for us to

go by and visit with Coach Haskins," said Togo Railey, a guard/forward for Haskins' 1966 team. "He was still full of life, as sick as he was. We talked about our old friends. Don, as sick as he was, had a little smirk on his face and was telling jokes and fibbing on one and another. It was just a blessing."

After his retirement, Haskins kept close ties with the Miners. The school's most recent hire, Tony Barbee, said he even met with Haskins just after accepting the job.

"We are losing a national treasure," Barbee said. "I am very fortunate to have had the opportunity to get to know him over the last two years. The information he shared with me was invaluable to a first-time head coach. He is a Hall of Fame coach and a Hall of Fame person."

UTEP athletic director Bob Stull called Haskins an icon.

"He has had a huge impact on the city and the University of Texas at El Paso," Stull said. "He remains one of the most revered and honored coaches in basketball history. His decision to start five black players in the 1966 national championship game ... changed college basketball and the sports world. He will always be remembered for that."

Haskins is survived by wife Mary and sons Brent, David and Steve.

A fourth son, Mark, died in 1994.

Brent Haskins said the family would likely schedule a private funeral and burial before a public memorial service at UTEP.

"My father was beloved by the city of El Paso and he loved El Paso too," Brent Haskins said. "It was a mutual relationship."

ARMSTRONG

Continued from Page 1B

stupid for us to say no," Maertens said, "but it's not the case."

Armstrong at least appears willing to submit to drug testing.

The U.S. Anti-Doping Agency confirmed Armstrong is part of its out-of-competition testing pool and would be eligible for elite competition on Feb. 1, 2009.

The Amgen Tour of California begins Feb. 14.

Pat McQuaid, the head of cycling's governing body, told The AP that he learned a couple of weeks ago that Armstrong is in the testing system in the United States.

"So, if he wants to come back to racing he's every right to come back. Good luck to him," said McQuaid, president of the International Cycling Union.

McQuaid suggested that Armstrong may be hoping to

take advantage of new, more rigorous drug-testing procedures in cycling to answer skeptics who suspect that the champion might have used drugs when he was at the top of his game.

"It may be that he has a little bit of a chip on his shoulder because of the accusations and rumors surrounding him, none of which were ever proven," McQuaid said. "And he wants to come back and show that, now that there is a new system in place which is the biological

passport which can show any type of manipulation of the blood, he wants to come back and show that he is the athlete he claims he was, that his results have shown."

Armstrong did not respond to a text message or voice mails left by the AP.

His manager, Mark Higgins, and Bruyneel also did not respond to voice mails left by the AP.

Armstrong, who overcame testicular cancer, has largely

turned his competitive juices to running marathons since he retired from competitive cycling three years ago.

In August, he finished second in the Leadville Trail 100, a lung-searing 100-mile mountain bike race through the Colorado Rockies.

"We know that Lance continued training hard after that mountain bike race," Maertens said in a separate e-mail to the AP. "He will do some cyclocross races as well in the USA."

BSHS

Continued from Page 1B

The cross country team runs in its second meet of the year Saturday at the W.T. Micro-Graphics Invitational at Mae Simmons in Lubbock.

Results
Boys

Individual: 1. Jordan Valle, Big Spring 15:22; 2. Marcus Garza, Abilene 16:26; 3. Reid Strong, Abilene Wylie 16:30; 4. Monte Murillo, Abilene 16:37; 5. Shane Allen, Big Spring 16:48; 6. Sammy Segundo 16:53; 7. Zach Smith, Abilene 17:03; 8. Nick Wargo, Lubbock Coronado

17:12; 9. Kade Parker, Big Spring 17:15; 10. Ryan Herrera, Odessa 17:19; **Notable:** 46. Sergio Torres, Big Spring 19:22; 68. Dalton Greiner, Big Spring 20:51; 91. Paul Flores, Big Spring 22:40.

Team: 1. Abilene 44; 2. Big Spring 53; 3. Odessa 69; 4. Lubbock Coronado 88; 5. Abilene Wylie 129; 6. Lubbock Monterey

152; 7. Midland Lee 154.

Girls

Individual: 1. Jourdan Ellis, Abilene 12:21; 2. McKenzie Archer, Lubbock Coronado 12:25; 3. Maddie Kauffman, Lubbock Coronado 12:28; 4. Taylor Maeker, Lubbock Monterey 12:42; 5. Lyndsie Jacobs, Lubbock Coronado 12:52;

6. Kirsten Taylor, Odessa 13:01; 7. Catherine Leubner, Big Spring 13:02; 8. Gabby Valeriano, Odessa 13:09; 9. Jessica Prestridge, Abilene 13:11; 10. Elizabeth Prestridge, Abilene 13:17; **Notable:** 21. Opal Gonzales, Big Spring 14:03; 82. Crystal Ramirez, Big Spring 15:38; 114. Tatiana Flores, Big Spring 17:39.

INJURIES

Continued from Page 1B

still apparently an immature teenager. If Collins performs well over the next 2-4 weeks, then the job should remain his.

The difference between the two on the field is obvious. Young struggled to get the offense moving the entire game. He was hurt late in the fourth quarter and Collins was brought in on a third and 15 with the Titans holding a slim 10-7 lead over Jacksonville.

The veteran quarterback hooks up with tight end Bo Scaife for a 44-yard gain, then hits Justin Gage for 19

yards to the 1, setting up a touchdown plunge by LenDale White. Collins won that game for the Titans, not Young. He's exactly the type of disciplined veteran they need.

If Vince is brought back into the starting lineup once he's healthy, despite strong play from Colling, then Jeff Fisher should be fired. One of the qualities a head coach needs to have in today's league is the ability to admit when he's wrong and to move on from that mistake.

Vince Manuwai

Jaguars guard

Jacksonville's offensive line was already fairly beat up heading into Sunday. Now, the Jags are looking at having just two of their original starting five on the field.

Manuwai is probably Jacksonville's best run blocker. He's a huge part of the success of the Jags' dynamic duo, Maurice Jones-Drew and Fred Taylor. He's also done for the year.

Now, a team I viewed as a potential Super Bowl contender and as the favorite to win that division is sud-

denly surrounded by questions. The Jags will be in the hunt for a playoff spot, but it won't be nearly as automatic as it seemed before the season.

Nate Burleson

Seahawks receiver

Receivers Deion Branch and Bobby Engram were already expected to miss a significant amount of time this year. Now, quarterback Matt Hasselbeck loses his best option remaining in Burleson. Hasselbeck is stuck with Courtney Taylor, Logan Payne and Jordan Kent to throw to. Confused about who these guys are? I bet Hasselbeck is too.

Just look at the colleges these guys went to. Taylor is an Auburn grad, Payne is from Minnesota and Kent attended Oregon. When's the last time you can remember a strong passing attack from any of those three colleges?

Things look bad in Seattle and even worse in the NFC West. That division is easily the weakest in the league. After Week 1, Arizona looks like the favorite. I still prefer the Rams, if they can get their offensive line figured out.

So, I think the question has to be asked, "Why is there an increase in injuries this season?"

I can't believe I'm going to write this next line.

I agree with John Madden's summation. Madden explained that players are bigger, faster and stronger than they've ever been. That's obvious, right?

He went on to talk about how collisions between players are more chaotic than ever and then asked a very reasonable question.

If players are moving faster and growing bigger muscles, are the joints, ligaments and tendons adapting? I think it's pretty clear that they aren't.

Maybe bigger isn't always better.

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.

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

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Estimates say fed budget deficit nearing \$407B

By ANDREW TAYLOR

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The federal government will run a near-record deficit of \$407 billion for the budget year ending Sept. 30, according to the latest Capitol Hill estimates.

The Congressional Budget Office figures released Tuesday say the flood of red ink will spill over into next year, when the deficit would reach a record \$438 billion — and could go even higher as the government takes over mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

The CBO figures for this year are slightly worse than White House predictions released in July. The White House foresees a \$389 billion deficit for 2008, growing to \$482 billion in 2009.

Next year's figure would also increase assuming Congress steps in to fix the alternative minimum tax, or AMT, which could add \$80 billion more,

according to CBO.

The numbers represent about 3 percent of the size of the economy, which is the deficit measure seen as most relevant by economists. That's considerably smaller than the deficits of the 1980s and early 1990s, when Congress and earlier administrations cobbled together politically painful deficit-reduction packages.

Still, the new figures are so eye-popping in dollar terms that it may restrain the appetite of the next president, who takes office Jan. 20, to add to it with expensive spending programs or new tax cuts. Pressure may build to allow some tax cuts enacted in 2001 and 2003 to expire as scheduled at the end of 2010, with Congress also feeling pressure to curb spending growth.

The deficit for 2007 totaled \$161.5 billion, which represented the lowest amount of red ink since an imbalance of \$159 billion in 2002. The 2002 performance marked the first

budget deficit after four consecutive years of budget surpluses.

"Today's estimates provide the latest evidence of the fiscal legacy of Republican policies: record deficits and a weak economy," said House Budget Committee Chairman John Spratt Jr., D-S.C. "It's another reminder of the dismal economy and budget that Republicans are leaving others to sort out."

Under the promises of Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama and Republican nominee John McCain — who both say they want to extend most of the tax cuts passed in 2001 and 2003 at the urging of President Bush — the deficit is likely to remain high.

Even if all of the Bush tax cuts were allowed to expire at the end of 2010, the budget would still run a considerable deficit of \$325 billion in the following year, CBO says.

The cost of extending the Bush tax cuts and other expir-

ing pieces of the tax code, along with making sure the AMT doesn't trap more and more middle class families, would reach more than \$400 billion a year by 2012, CBO says.

The worsening deficit picture is largely due to continuing weakness in the economy, CBO said. And the economy could still slide into a recession, according to the forecast.

"The economy is likely to experience at least several more months of very slow growth," the new report said. "Whether this period will ultimately be designated a recession or not is still uncertain, but the increase in the unemployment rate and the pace of economic growth are similar to conditions during previous periods of mild recession."

The nonpartisan agency, which makes economic and budget estimates for Congress, also sees unemployment averaging 6.2 percent next year.

Groups warn of more secrecy in government

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. government secrecy is on the rise by almost every measure, according to a report by a coalition of government oversight groups.

They said the U.S. is classifying more records as top secret or otherwise confidential and employing fewer workers who make federal documents available publicly.

"The open society on which we pride ourselves has been undermined and will take hard work to repair," said the report, described as a "secrecy report card" by OpenTheGovernment.org. It cited 14 different measurements to quantify government secrecy, including patents hidden from the public, secret court approvals for surveillance in sensitive terrorism and espionage investigations, and the expanding use of informal labels to keep documents from being disclosed.

The group said there was an 80 percent decline over the last decade in the number of pages of records declassified, dropping last year to 37 million pages.

Bush keeping Iraq troop levels mostly steady

By BEN FELLER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush on Tuesday plans to order 8,000 more combat and support troops out of Iraq by February, a measured drawdown that will leave nearly the same level of U.S. forces in the war zone for the rest of the year.

Bush's decision, to be delivered in a speech Tuesday, is perhaps his final stamp on the war that has defined his presidency. The scope and pace of the U.S. troop withdrawals are smaller than long anticipated, reflecting a desire by the military and the president not to jeopardize security gains in Iraq.

By the time the troops return home on the timeline Bush is proposing, someone else will be making the wartime decisions from the Oval Office.

There are about 146,000

U.S. troops in Iraq. Bush that more troops could return to the U.S. in the first half of 2009 if conditions improve.

"Here is the bottom line: While the enemy in Iraq is still dangerous, we have seized the offensive, and Iraqi forces are becoming increasingly capable of leading and winning the fight," Bush said in remarks prepared for delivery to the National Defense University in Washington.

The White House released the text of his speech in advance.

The decisions show that Bush still commands when and how troops will withdraw, despite a Congress that fiercely opposes him and a soured American public.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said Tuesday, "I am stunned that President Bush has decided to bring so few troops

home from Iraq and send so few resources to Afghanistan."

Reid, D-Nev., said, "As Democrats have been saying for years and as I saw with my own eyes last month, violence in Afghanistan has surged because Bush-McCain Republicans have all but ignored the true central front of the war on terror while keeping the bulk of our troops tied down in Iraq."

In all, about 8,000 U.S. forces will be coming back, the president said.

One Marine battalion, numbering about 1,000 troops, will go home on schedule in November and not be replaced. An Army brigade of between 3,500 and 4,000 troops will leave in February.

Accompanying that combat drawdown will be the withdrawal of about 3,400 support forces over next several months.

Senior defense officials say Bush is adopting a compromise from his military team.

Gen. David Petraeus, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, had argued to keep troop levels fairly level through next June, an even longer time frame than Bush is embracing. But others, including Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said they believed that withdrawing troops more quickly from Iraq represented a small risk compared to the gain that could be made by shifting more to Afghanistan.

Anthony Cordesman, an Iraq expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said the emerging plan reflects the concern of U.S. commanders: Rushing U.S. force reductions could lead to instability at a pivotal time for Iraqi political progress and preparedness

of Iraqi forces.

"This plan does, however, mean continuing stress on both the active and reserve forces," Cordesman added.

Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama has advocated pulling all U.S. combat forces out of Iraq within 16 months of taking office. GOP nominee John McCain has said he would rely on the advice of U.S. military commanders to determine the timing and pace of troop reductions.

Both candidates have said more troops are needed in Afghanistan, where there has been a resurgence of the Taliban and a growth in violence.

Bush argued that Iraq is in a better place now by almost any measure. He said violence is at its lowest point since the spring of 2004, "normal life is returning to communities across the country," and

political reconciliation is moving forward.

Bush was planning a low-key trip to Walter Reed Army Medical Center Tuesday afternoon to visit wounded troops.

More than half of Bush's address is devoted to Afghanistan. He outlined what he called a "quiet surge" of additional American forces there, bringing the U.S. presence to nearly 31,000.

"For all the good work we have done in that country, it is clear we must do even more," the president said.

He announced that a Marine battalion that had been scheduled to go to Iraq in November would go to Afghanistan instead, and that would be followed by one Army combat brigade.

Associated Press writers Lolita C. Baldor, Robert Burns and Jennifer Loven contributed to this report.

COUNTY

Continued from Page 1A

\$80 million that was reduced to \$54 million by abatement agreements — considerably less than the \$1 million levied against the company, county officials have said.

According to Olson, the \$2.7 million would go toward paying for the Alon

USA shortfall, as well as several cost increases in the coming year.

"The additional levy would provide for \$730,000 for new debt, \$250,000 for increases in fuel costs and \$450,000 for pay raises for full-time employees and increases in benefits and longevity," said Olson. "That includes \$3,000 per full-time employee, not including elected officials,

and a raise of \$1 an hour for the county's part-time employees.

"The loss from Alon, which is \$1.2 million, is also included in the additional levy, along with \$100,000 for new equipment and the sealcoat program."

Barr said the only elected officials who would be receiving an increase in pay in the coming year were

the justices of the peace.

"We don't want the public to think we're just spending their money wildly," said Barr.

There was some confusion, however, concerning filing deadlines for litigation that could continue to tie Alon USA's taxes up in red tape.

According to Commissioner Jerry Kilgore, there is still a chance the matter

could be resolved before the court is forced to nail down its tax rate for the coming year.

"Alon USA has a deadline they will have to file by if they are going to contest their tax," said Kilgore. "If we can wait until that deadline we'll have a better idea what's going to happen. At that point, we may be able to peel that 5 cents off the tax rate."

The court is expected to hold its second public hearing on the proposed tax rate Monday at 10 a.m., according to Barr.

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

9-11

Continued from Page 1A

It's important to thank the people that work so hard to keep us safe."

The ceremony will be held at the Big Spring Mall, near the entrance to Sears, at 6 p.m.

"It will be about 45 minutes long and we'll end it with a draping ceremony," said Bias. "We'll honor the men and women who have given their lives for their country, as well as their families."

The September 11 attacks — often referred to

as 9/11 — were a series of coordinated suicide attacks by terrorist group al-Qaeda upon the United States. On that morning, terrorists hijacked four commercial passenger jet airliners. The hijackers intentionally crashed two of the airliners into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, killing everyone on board and many others working in the building, causing both buildings to collapse within two hours, destroying at least two nearby buildings and damaging others.

The hijackers crashed a

third airliner into the Pentagon. The fourth plane crashed into a field near Shanksville in rural Somerset County, Pa., after passengers and members of the flight crew on the fourth aircraft attempted to retake control of their plane, which was heading for Washington, D.C. There are no known survivors from any of the flights.

Excluding the 19 hijackers, an estimated 2,974

people died in the attacks. Another 24 are missing and presumed dead. The overwhelming majority of casualties were civilians, including nationals of more than 90 different countries.

For more information on the ceremony, contact the Hangar 25 Air Museum at 264-1999.

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

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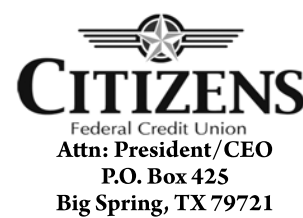
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EDITORIAL

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

-FIRST AMENDMENT

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

Ron Midkiff
Publisher

John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

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News Editor

OTHER VIEWS

And now...
the hard part

Sarah Palin's hunting skills are marvelous. Joe Biden's mom is a hoot. John McCain's wisecracks are hilarious and Barack Obama's three-point shot is deadly. So stipulated.

Also stipulated: Palin may have over-reacted to in-law troubles. Biden was at times too free in borrowing others' words and ideas. McCain's real estate portfolio is impressive, and Obama's former pastor is a kook.

We are under no illusions: In the era of the 24-hour news cycle, hyper-partisan bloggers and talk radio, attack ads, tabloid newspapers, trash television and the blurred line between news and entertainment, stories like these are going to dominate the next two months.

But the issues facing this country are too serious and the presidential election too important to get lost in trivia and gotcha stories. Here are some of the issues and questions that must be addressed by the McCain-Palin and Obama-Biden campaigns before Nov. 4:

For McCain:

—Your health care plan calls for taxing employer-provided health insurance worth more than a certain amount. That would amount to an enormous tax hike on millions of middle-class voters who get insurance through their jobs. It also would weaken, perhaps fatally, the existing system of employer-provided health insurance that covers most Americans. Why do you think this would increase access to health insurance?

—You have called for making permanent all of President George W. Bush's tax cuts, now set to expire at the end of 2010. Economists say this would reduce federal tax revenue by more than \$5 trillion over 10 years. On a yearly basis, that's about a fifth of everything the government spends outside of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, defense and interest on the national debt. Since all of those fixed costs will be going up, too, where's the money going to come from to pay for things like the FBI, air traffic control, Homeland Security and education?

—As you know, there is a debate within the Pentagon over whether the United States should focus on counter-insurgency and anti-terrorism warfare or rebuild its strategic arsenal for major conflict. Given the need to rebuild and resupply the Army after the devastation of Iraq, where should the focus of military be directed?

For Palin:

—From 2000 to 2003, when you were mayor of Wasilla, Alaska, your town received \$11.9 million in federal earmarked funds. As Alaska governor, this year you wrote, "The federal budget, in its various manifestations, is incredibly important to us, and congressional earmarks are one aspect of this relationship." Have you had a change of heart?

For Obama:

—You have touted your "comprehensive energy plan" that you claim will create 5 million new jobs over the next 10 years by "catalyzing private efforts to build a clean-energy future." That is 10 times more workers than currently employed in the U.S. automotive industry. Where will those 5 million new workers be working and at what kind of salaries?

—Health insurance premiums increased by 78 percent between 2001 and 2007. Even as the number of people covered by private health insurance decreased slightly, insurance company overhead soared. Why do you think insurance companies could play a productive role in solving the nation's health care crisis?

—In your eight years in the Illinois Senate, you maintained excellent relations with Democratic power brokers from Chicago, including U.S. Rep. (and now Gov.) Rod Blagojevich, Mayor Richard Daley, state Sen. Emil Jones and Tony Rezko, a businessman and fundraiser who has been convicted of bribery and corruption. Have you ever spoken out about Illinois' culture of political corruption?

For Biden:

You supported the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act which passed Congress in 2005, making it harder for individuals to get out from under their credit card debt. Because many credit card companies operate in your home state, you were under great political pressure from them. But you also have said you think the bill was a good idea. Do you still believe that, or would you support revisiting federal bankruptcy laws?

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Working mom: a weakened cultural icon

John McCain has often vowed to shake things up and now he's done it. But it's not Washington he's turned on its head this week. It's the long-running conversation by and about working mothers.

As we've all learned, vice-presidential nominee Sarah Palin is a supermom.

She has five children whose ages range from 19 years to 4 months. The youngest has Down syndrome. Palin manages her family and her job as governor of Alaska without a full-time babysitter. Oh, and she trains for marathons in her spare time.

She eschews maternity leave and was back at work three days after the birth of her youngest son. The kids play in her office and she carries the infant to meetings in a baby pouch.

And she fired the cook at the governor's mansion in Juneau, preferring to handle meals herself.

One can only imagine what the woman's to-do list must look like: (1) Clamp down on oil companies. (2) Buy Trig new booties. (3) Whip up a baked Alaska. (4) Fill out John McCain's questionnaire.

Palin's working ways have won the blessing of old-guard conservatives who once warned darkly that the foundations of family and marriage would crumble if mothers picked up a briefcase.

Phyllis Schlafly herself, the woman who derailed the Equal Rights

Amendment and laid a guilt trip on a generation of working moms, called Palin "the best possible choice" to be McCain's running mate.

This turnabout seems extraordinary until you consider that the stay-at-home mom is a badly weakened cultural icon. Simple economics are driving women of all political persuasions into the work force.

Palin represents much else the conservative movement holds dear. She opposes abortion under all circumstances.

She favors abstinence-only sex education.

She's a lifelong member of the National Rifle Association.

In other words, Palin is a dream standard-bearer for the conservative movement, but she needs the job to carry the banner. The ideal of the stay-at-home mother is easily sacrificed for the good of the other causes.

Palin's fans describe her as an optimum role model for young women.

And who is taking issue with that claim? None other than working mothers.

Just as the stay-at-home mom has faded as a symbol, so has the working supermom.

Older women have found the role is difficult to sustain over the long haul. Younger women simply aren't buying into the concept.

In a survey released last year by the Pew Research Center, six of 10 working mothers said part-time work would be their ideal situation.

Of the remaining women surveyed, one in five said they would prefer not to work outside the home at all.

That leaves only two in 10 of the

women surveyed who aspire to Sarah Palin's world - the juggling act of family and demanding full-time job.

To be sure, destiny calls only a chosen few. And a Vice President Palin would have help the average working mom can only fantasize about.

One imagines an entire corps of well-vetted babysitters. Cooking, housecleaning - forget about it.

One can envision Palin, fresh from breaking a tie in the U.S. Senate, sprinting into school for parent-teacher conferences. She could pull it off. Heck, she's already pulled it off.

But don't expect the working women of America to swoon over feats worthy of Kate Reddy, the harried superwoman in Allison Pearson's best-selling book, "I Don't Know How She Does It."

Funny things have happened on the way to this forum. The stay-at-home mom went to work and the working mom went home.

The new role model is the woman who can find a way to place the needs of the family first while participating in the work force in a meaningful fashion.

Would we be having this conversation if John McCain had selected a man with five children?

Nope. Is a double standard at work? Yep.

Is that inevitable? Absolutely.

In the shifting debate, that's the one constant. It's always about the mother.

Barbara Shelly is a member of the Kansas City Star editorial board. Readers may write to her at: Kansas City Star, 1729 Grand Blvd., Kansas City, Mo. 64108-1413, or by e-mail at bshelly@kcstar.com.

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Petraeus on achievements in Iraq

As John McCain and Barack Obama gin up their campaigns, a general of importance to both of them is winding down his job.

This month, Gen. David Petraeus will end his tenure as top commander in Iraq. He moves to an equally challenging job this fall as chief of U.S. Central Command, overseeing the entire Middle East, Afghanistan and Pakistan. In that post, he'll be confronting the growing jihadi threat on the Afghan-Pakistan border.

Yet the improvements in Iraq security on his watch have dramatically changed the Iraq options the next president faces.

In an hourlong phone interview from Baghdad, I talked with Petraeus last week about what's been achieved and what lies ahead.

The general was proud of achieving goals set in 2007 for bringing down violence in Iraq. Daily attacks, civilian deaths and coalition casualties have all sharply dropped.

It is important to understand how Petraeus achieved these gains. Some attribute them to "the surge" — an increase of about 30,000 U.S. troops. Others credit the "awakening" of Sunni tribal groups in Anbar province who turned against al-Qaeda before "the surge."

Petraeus points out, however, that "the surge encompassed many actions." Indeed, the credit for Iraqi security gains lies with a broad strategy developed by the general that focused on protecting civilians who wanted to turn against al-Qaeda and other sectarian militias but had been too fearful to act.

"We had intellectual constructs that allowed us to exploit opportunities that came along," Petraeus

says. "One was the concept of 'reconcilable' and 'irreconcilable.'" When former Sunni insurgents who had fought U.S. troops decided to change course, Petraeus backed them — and put 100,000 of them on the U.S. payroll. That accelerated changes in Anbar, and undercut al-Qaeda.

"The al-Qaeda brand in Iraq is discredited now," Petraeus says, helped by an information campaign that dramatized the group's hideously violent attacks on civilians.

Similarly, the Petraeus strategy sought to isolate the most violent Shiite militiamen and establish relations with those who were 'reconcilable.' "Once (the Shiite public was) no longer worried about car bombs," Petraeus said, "people wanted JAM (the radical Shiite militia) out of their neighborhoods."

Yet the general is quick to admit that the gains are "fragile or reversible." Why so? "Because security gains are necessary but not sufficient for a self-sustaining situation," he says. His strategy pacified neighborhoods and towns, but at the national level, sectarian politicians have still not reconciled.

One key example: The Shiite-led government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is supposed to take responsibility for hiring or retraining 54,000 Sons of Iraq (SOI) as of October. But Shiites remain mistrustful of SOI groups, which contain many former Baathists; many SOI members fear arrest or dismissal, and some are threatening to fight again.

"Maliki has personally committed to me he will look after the Sons of Iraq," Petraeus told me. "They (the Iraqi government) know if they don't look after the SOIs they could have an insurrection on their hands." This could help revive al-Qaeda in Iraq.

This brings us to the question of what future role American troops

should play in Iraq. Listening to Petraeus, it's clear that Americans still provide a buffer between sectarian groups.

The general, who wants withdrawals to be "conditions-based," says: "There are many reasons why the U.S. presence remains valuable. We provide enablers, advisors, mentors, technological expertise and on occasion act as an honest broker."

Yet Maliki has yet to sign an agreement to govern the U.S. troop presence after a United Nations mandate expires in December. Maliki wants a full U.S. troop withdrawal by the end of 2011.

Petraeus says that Maliki's position is "explained by domestic politics and an enormous sensitivity toward Iraqi sovereignty." Iraqis have provincial elections this year and national elections next year, and Maliki is courting voters fed up with a large American presence. Other Iraqi leaders are privately nervous about Maliki's timetable but won't say so in public.

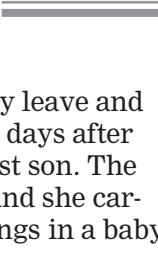
Whoever wins the U.S. elections will face political pressures at home and in Baghdad for a speedier U.S. exit. Too rigid a withdrawal timeline could jeopardize gains. But growing Iraqi nationalism will limit any extended U.S. presence.

Petraeus sees the longterm goal as an Iraq at peace with itself and its neighbors, but substitutes the word "Iraq-crazy" for "democracy" as a political objective. That goal — an Iraqi political system that's fairly stable, but doesn't match past U.S. visions — might just be possible, due to the strategy shifts that the general wrought.

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to her at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by e-mail at trubin@phillynews.com.



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BIRD POOP

Freeing a tern

The drive to Andrews was one of his favorites. Surrounded by natural and man-made terrain, he relished being away from the noise and congestion of an interstate. Watching the countryside change from mesquite, cactus, and scrub oak to grass lands and plowed fields, he always looked forward to the fenced range land that seemed endless.

The lull in truck traffic gave him time to wonder about the families that had occupied the old, deserted frame houses along the way. On one trip he had discovered a large, round water tank hidden among fairly tall trees, knee-high dried nettle, and seeding grasses. Its rusted sides were indicative of the moist ground that had encouraged the growth of the now towering foliage.

The morning offered little traffic on the two lane highway. As he neared the area he knew to be north of Natural Dam Lake, he noticed from a distance what he thought to be another wind-blown plastic bag caught in a mesquite.

Having checked the weather reports before leaving, he had expected a calm, cloudy morning. Then he realized that only one part of the tree was moving in the still morning air. Before he drove into the bar ditch, he knew what a branch had snagged.

To reach the pale, grayish-white creature that was hanging upside down, he parked his truck underneath the limb that held it captive. Climbing into the bed of the pickup, he realized he lacked a few inches of reaching the struggling bird.

Moving his truck backward several more feet, he climbed atop the cab. With one hand around the bird, he provided slack in the monofilament line that held it captive. Afraid of trying to unravel the plastic nightmare from the bird, he used his other hand to break the branch.

As he slid from the cab into the truck bed, he was already thinking of how to contain what he thought was a gull. Opening a large sealed box with one hand, he emptied the merchandise on the floor of the pickup. Then he proceeded to punch holes in the box with a screwdriver he had retrieved from his tool box. Gently placing the bird and the branch inside, he closed the cardboard with duct tape.

On the way back to town, he rethought the bird's identification. Stopping by his home to let his wife see his find, he called to say he was headed our way.

"At first, I thought it was a gull," the man offered as he opened the box. Inside was a Forster's tern. As a member of the gull family, the bird could easily have been thought to be one of several sea gulls migrat-

ing through our area.

Although it was the first week of September, the tern was still attired in its breeding colors. Its long, orangish-red bill was tipped in black. In contrast to the black cap that reached from its beak to cover its eyes and part of its neck, the rest of its face, neck, breast, and body were white.

Folded pale gray wings, with darker primaries underneath, led to a long, deeply forked tail that had pale gray feathers with white tips. As we spread the wings and tail in the late morning light, the tern's silvery white feathers gave it an ethereal, almost ghost-like aura.

Soon, the black cap would be replaced with a simple black eye patch for winter plumage. The striking bold orange of its beak would disappear as it turned completely black.

Thanking the man for the rescue and delivery, we hurried to remove the fishing line from the tern. Having clipped the plastic from the branch, we started to unwind the coiling snare. How the bird had flown any distance was a mystery.

As we worked, we realized that the bird had probably acquired this mess in one of three ways. In its search for food, the Forster's tern might have hovered over an inland lake or reservoir. With its bill pointed downward, it would have looked for food floating on the surface. Plunging from overhead, it would readily dive into the water.

Another way of hunting would be to fly just above the water's surface. Without getting its feathers wet, it could have easily picked up floating insects and small, dead fish. Its other choice of dining would have been to catch dragonflies and other insects in flight.

Because of careless habits, monofilament line had been left either in or on the water, or dangling from a tree. The unsuspecting tern had been subjected to an entangling, environmental danger. Only the observant and quick thinking driver had changed its outcome.

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



BEBE MCCASLAND



Courtesy photo

Forster's terns are quite social with their own specie, and often called "sea swallows," they migrate from inland freshwater lakes to salty coastal waters.

News in brief

Hurricane Ike kills 4 in Cuba, takes aim at US gulf coast

HAVANA (AP) — Hurricane Ike roared toward Cuba's densely populated capital of fragile historic buildings after forcing 1.2 million people to evacuate, killing at least four and ravaging homes elsewhere on the island nation.

Meanwhile, U.S. residents from Florida to the Texas border with Mexico braced for Ike's next wallop.

The hurricane, which raked the Bahamas and worsened floods in Haiti that have killed at least 331 people, made landfall on eastern Cuba as a terrifying Category 3 hurricane, then weakened Monday as it ran along the length of the Caribbean's largest island.

It was a Category 1 storm Monday afternoon, but forecasters expected it to strengthen again before hitting Louisiana, Texas or northern Mexico this weekend.

On the narrow streets of Camaguey, falling utility poles crushed cars and the roaring wind transformed buildings of stone and brick into piles of rubble. Colonial columns were toppled and the ornate sculptures on the roofs of centuries-old buildings were smashed in the city, a UNESCO world heritage site.

Congress weighs the fate of Fannie, Freddie

WASHINGTON (AP) — Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson said Congress should view the next few months as a "time out" in the highly charged debate over what to do with mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

But lawmakers already are sketching plans for what the two troubled government-sponsored companies should look like in the future — from taking them private, to nationalizing them or turning them into a public utility, to letting them continue to operate as private entities with government backing.

It's up to a new president and a new Congress to decide what happens next. Republican presidential nominee John McCain's campaign says Fannie and Freddie should be smaller, while Democratic nominee Barack Obama said their private and public roles have to be clarified.

The Bush administration announced Sunday it was seizing the two huge mortgage companies, which together own or guarantee about \$5 trillion in home loans, about half the nation's total, in a bid to help reverse a prolonged housing and credit crisis. They're being placed in a government conservatorship, a move that could end up costing taxpayers billions of dollars.

Only limited progress in reducing terrorists' access to weapons of mass destruction

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States remains "dangerously vulnerable" to chemical, biological and nuclear attacks seven

years after 9/11, a forthcoming independent study concludes. And a House Democrats' report says the Bush administration has missed one opportunity after another to improve the nation's security.

The recent political rupture between Russia and the U.S. only makes matters worse, said Lee Hamilton, the former Indiana Democratic congressman who helped lead the 9/11 Commission and now chairs the independent group's latest study.

Efforts to reduce access to nuclear technology and bomb-making materials have slowed, thousands of U.S. chemical plants remain unprotected, and the U.S. government continues to oppose strengthening an international treaty to prevent bioterrorism, according to the report produced by the bipartisan Partnership for a Secure America.

The group includes leaders of the disbanded 9/11 Commission, the bipartisan panel that investigated government missteps before the 2001 terror attacks on the United States.

"The threat of a new, major terrorist attack on the United States is still very real," concludes the report to be released Wednesday, the same day a congressional commission will hold a hearing in New York on nuclear and biological terrorism threats.

Zardari sworn in as Pakistani president following Musharraf's resignation

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — The widower of assassinated former Pakistani leader Benazir Bhutto took office as the country's new president Tuesday, facing immediate pressure to crack down on Islamic militants and address daunting economic problems.

Pakistan's top judge swore in Asif Ali Zardari at a brief ceremony in the presidential palace recently vacated by Pervez Musharraf, who resigned under pressure last month.

With his three children among the well-wishers and dignitaries packing a cavernous hall, Zardari, wearing a pinstriped business suit, beamed as the ceremony ended and shouts of "Bhutto is alive!" rang out.

But in the front row sat an imposing reminder of his task ahead: Afghan President Hamid Karzai, whose government accus-

es Pakistan of failing to take action against — even colluding with — Taliban militants based around the countries' common border.

The inauguration of Zardari, 53, completes Pakistan's return to civilian rule nearly nine years after then-army chief Musharraf seized power in a bloodless military coup.

Obama: Palin may be cool, but she's just another politician

FARMINGTON HILLS, Mich. (AP) — Listening to Barack Obama, it can seem like Republican vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin is the main person standing between him and the White House instead of John McCain.

Obama is putting as much heat on Palin as he is on the man at the top of the GOP ticket, objecting to the Republican Party's portrayal of her as a reformer who can bring change to Washington.

That is supposed to be Obama's distinction, and he's not taking kindly to Palin trying to claim it. Especially when it appears the new star on the GOP ticket is helping boost its standing: McCain has jumped to a dead heat or narrow lead over Obama in the latest national polls since choosing Palin as his running mate.

Obama said last week's Republican National Convention did a good job of highlighting Palin's biography — "Mother, governor, moose shooter. That's cool," he said. But he said Palin really is just another Republican politician, one who is stretching the truth about her record.

Gulf Coast finds itself in crosshairs of another hurricane

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — The Gulf Coast watched anxiously as Hurricane Ike trudged toward areas still cleaning up after Gustav, with disasters pre-declared in much of eastern Texas and Louisianans urged to stock up — again — on supplies. Texas Gov. Rick Perry

spurred storm preparations with the declarations in 88 counties, and the National Hurricane Center warned the storm could make landfall this weekend in Texas — possibly not far from Corpus Christi. Perry also put 7,500 National Guard members on standby.

However, storm paths are hard to predict several days in advance, and forecasters said the storm could come ashore anywhere from Louisiana to Mexico.

"While Hurricane Gustav is still fresh on the minds of coastal residents, we must now turn our attention to Hurricane Ike as it poses a potential threat to the Texas coast," said Perry, who also requested a presidential disaster declaration for the counties.

In Louisiana, where thousands remain without power after Hurricane Gustav hit last week, Gov. Bobby Jindal urged residents to start stockpiling food, water, batteries and other supplies. The state also was readying shelters and making plans for trains, buses and planes in case a coastal evacuation is called later in the week.

KFC's secret recipe to be removed from headquarters for security upgrade

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — Pssst. The secret's out at KFC. Well, sort of. Colonel Harland Sanders' handwritten recipe of 11 herbs and spices was to be removed Tuesday from safekeeping at KFC's corporate offices for the first time in decades. The temporary relocation is allowing KFC to revamp security around a yellowing sheet of paper that contains one of the country's most famous corporate secrets.

The brand's top executive admitted his nerves were aflutter despite the tight security he lined up for the operation.

"I don't want to be the president who loses the recipe," KFC President Roger Eaton said. "Imagine how terrifying that would be."

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Tomorrow's Horoscope

occasion to tear up. You're likely to be moved by things like old photographs, notes stashed away in a drawer or well-crafted commercials.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're a lover, not a fighter. But when it comes down to it, you'll fight for what you love. Just make sure that there hasn't been some kind of a miscommunication before you get too feisty.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Relationships and projects are ripe to move forward and only need the slightest push from you. Make the phone call, send the check, take the next exciting step. The force is with you!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You may be enticed by a spontaneous someone to follow a fickle trend. If you're going to go in, do it big, without hesitation. Hop on like a surfer riding a wave and enjoy the thrill of your precarious position.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Feeling slightly delicate, you need to know that your base of supporters is strong. Reach out and make a few phone calls. What you'll find out is that your loved ones not only care for you, they know you really well.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're not at the center of the fire, but you sure can feel the heat. The things that they are getting up in arms about just don't have the same effect on you. You recognize that getting involved is optional.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your powers of

persuasion are tempered by a strong sense of fairness. You could ask for the world and get it, but if someone else is losing, it's not worth it to you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Too many choices are overwhelming on an "anything goes" kind of day like this. Narrow down your options. And when you're leading others, to eliminate confusion, show them only one way.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Negotiate fine details. Work out the little problems while they're still small. Remember to communicate specifically, especially with familiar people. Your inner circle needs extra care.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "I've been the girlfriend of a Scorpio man (11/4/65) for a little over a year, and it has been very loving and very rocky.

He has been running his whole life, and I call him "The Seeker" among other things. He is constantly pushing me away, knowing that I'll come back. I just want him to pick someplace and settle down; we've lived in four different places in eight months! My birthday is 7/13/73."

Your relationship with the seeker reflects how you rank your desires (second) to his (first). Keeping your relationship and his life in perpetual motion serves him in some way.

So when do you get your needs met — trip No. 5? Accommodating a partner's move is part of

any relationship, though it's more satisfying when you both have a plan.

Be forewarned, as a Cancer, ignore your own needs and you do so at your peril. Consider this: Scorpio men find powerful women sexy, but it's a powerful and unyielding woman who can hold her own that brings a Scorpio man to his knees.

Are you that woman? Tell him you need more stability than what he's offering. Then let him come running back to you.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Pink, like others born in '79, will experience her Saturn return this year. As the nuts and bolts of reality take precedence over all else, one day she'll look back upon this self-defining year as a monumental one. Luckily for Pink, her Saturn return receives the broadening assistance of Jupiter!

This helps her view endings and beginnings as clear opportunities that, with effort and vision, equal a bright future.

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

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As Jupiter angles fanciful Venus, we weigh the price of pleasure. Is that four-star dinner really the way to impress your date? Is an asking price overvalued? Mama may need new shoes, but at what cost? Money doesn't



HOLIDAY MATHIS

equal happiness, yet pleasure is a real human need. Today's influences suggest we be responsible with our indulgences.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You're in a dreamy mood, but chances are you don't have the luxury of indulging yourself in an afternoon of musing. That's fine because the dreaming that happens after you've gone to bed is truly magical.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). It's one of those times when the most productive thing you could do is to slow down to a grinding halt. Some people won't understand. Don't try and explain. They'll get it when you hop back into action and are simply amazing.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're generous, but you're not daft. You know when someone is asking for what they clearly can provide for themselves, but don't want to. Steer clear of codependent situations.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You're sweetly sentimental and could even find the right

Annie's Mailbox ®: Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: I have been married to "Dan" for a year. My mother-in-law, "Mabel," has never accepted me and let me know it at our wedding. She showed up in a black dress complete with mourning veil.

Dan told me that was just her way and asked that I let it pass, which I did until she sent us an anniversary card addressed to Dan and me, with my first name followed by my maiden name, even though she knows I use Dan's last name.

Last week she sent me a birthday card addressed the same way. This time she included a note saying I should get my junk out of her house because her property is not a yard sale.

Mabel has nothing in her home that belongs to me. To top it off, she told a good friend that I am not her daughter-in-law, but only "that trash across town her son made the mistake to marry."

The next day, Mabel had a doctor's appointment and I was the only one able to drive her, so suddenly I turned into her best friend. I do not want to associate with this woman anymore, but feel I should for my husband's

sake. What do you say?

Unwanted Daughter-in-Law

Dear Unwanted: We say allow a little more time to win her over. Mabel sounds like a major

pain in the behind, but she is your husband's mother, and if you can find a way to get along with her, you will be better off.

If you are unfaithfully kind and helpful, especially if she is forced to rely on you, it will make her less likely to be malicious. Your husband should take your side if Mom badmouths you, making it clear, nicely, that the price for nastiness is less contact.

It will take some time to reach the point where Mom appreciates you, but we hope you'll give it a shot.

Dear Annie: My husband has a home-based machinery business that involves a lot of dirt and grease.



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

Every day, he, his son and grandson come in for lunch (which I make) with filthy clothes, shoes, hands, etc. I finally got them to remove their shoes. But after they eat, they sprawl out on our good furniture and nap. I've had to cover the sofas and chairs so they aren't ruined.

These men have no concept of cleaning up after themselves or taking care of the furnishings. They've promised to eat in the shop, but it hasn't happened, and when I keep asking, it makes me look like the bad guy.

Our family room is no place for dirty workers. Please help. — Frustrated in Indiana

Dear Indiana: It serves no purpose to keep asking for something you apparently aren't going to get.

You have a couple of choices. You can bring their lunch to them, keeping them out of the house. Bolt the door if you think they'll come in for a nap. You could even set up lawn chairs in the shop so they'll have a place to lie down.

Or, you can cover the furniture with plastic sheets so they don't stain the sofas. Work with whatcha got.

Dear Annie: I read the

letter from "Shell Shocked," who said his wife of 25 years left abruptly, and he learned of nine other wives doing the same. I am one of them. I've been married 16 years and recently left. It was not planned. I had a good marriage, but felt I had lost myself. There was something missing — me.

I went on a journey of self-discovery, lost weight, went back to school and am looking for a job. On the surface, my husband supported me, but behind closed doors he was different. "Shell Shocked" should wish his wife the best of luck and move on. — Found What Was Missing

Dear Found: Several women have said they left because they needed to "find themselves." We just think it would be nice if Hubby had an inkling that they were looking.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, P.O. Box 118190, Chicago, IL 60611.

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

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News in brief

Perry issues disaster declaration for Texas

AUSTIN (AP) — As Hurricane Ike whisked toward the Gulf of Mexico, Gov. Rick Perry issued disaster declarations Monday for 88 Texas counties, allowing officials to initiate preparedness efforts.

"While Hurricane Gustav is still fresh on the minds of coastal residents, we must now turn our attention to Hurricane Ike as it poses a potential threat to the Texas coast," said Perry, who also requested a presidential disaster declaration for the 88 counties. "Hurricanes by their nature are unpredictable, and although we cannot predict to a certainty where Ike will make landfall, we continue to monitor this storm and prepare for any potential impact on our communities."

Up to 7,500 National Guard members and 19 aerial resources were on standby, Perry's office said.

Perry urged coastal residents to heed warnings from local officials.

Forecasters at the National Hurricane Center warned that, after passing into the Gulf of Mexico sometime Tuesday night, Ike could make landfall in the U.S. over the weekend, possibly not far from Corpus Christi, Texas. However, storm paths are hard to predict several days in advance, and forecasters warned the storm could come ashore anywhere from Louisiana to Mexico.

While it's now a Category 1 hurricane, it is expected to strengthen once it reaches the gulf's warmer waters.

In Louisiana, where thousands remain without power after Hurricane Gustav hit last week, Gov. Bobby Jindal urged residents to start stockpiling food, water, batteries and other supplies. The state also was readying shelters and making plans for trains, buses and planes in case a coastal evacuation is called later in the week.

Texas counties covered by the proclamation are:

Anderson, Angelina, Aransas, Archer, Austin, Bee, Bell, Bexar, Bowie, Brazoria, Brazos, Brooks, Calhoun, Cameron, Cass, Chambers, Cherokee, Collin, Colorado, Comal, Dallas, Denton, DeWitt, Ellis, El Paso, Fort Bend, Franklin, Galveston, Goliad, Grayson, Gregg, Hardin, Harris, Harrison, Henderson, Hidalgo, Hill, Hopkins, Hunt, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Jim Hogg, Jim Wells, Kaufman, Kenedy, Kleberg, Lamar, Lavaca, Liberty, Lubbock, Matagorda, McLennan, Montgomery, Nacogdoches, Navarro, Newton, Nueces, Orange, Panola, Parker, Polk, Potter, Randall, Refugio, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, San Patricio, Shelby, Smith, Starr, Tarrant, Titus, Tom Green, Travis, Trinity, Tyler, Van Zandt, Victoria, Waller, Walker, Webb, Wharton, Willacy, Williamson, Wise and Wood

San Antonio police say gunman killed himself; six-hour standoff ends

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A man police said shot two officers who were trying to serve a domestic violence arrest warrant, which sparked a six-hour standoff, was found dead inside his South Side home.

Police identified the gunman as Andres Vargas who they say killed himself. He was found dead on the second floor early Tuesday morning after the SWAT team threw tear gas to gain entry into the home around midnight. Police did not say exactly when Vargas may have killed himself but said they heard a gunshot as SWAT

was throwing the tear gas.

On Monday evening, Officers Brandy Roell and Lawrence Robarts went to the home to serve a warrant on Vargas, who was accused of shooting at his ex-wife on Saturday. When the officers entered the home, the man opened fire, hitting Roell in the back and Robarts in the leg and shoulder, police said in Tuesday's online edition of the San Antonio Express-News.

Robarts was able to drag himself out the back door, where he collapsed in the yard. Roell, however, lay injured near the staircase, all as the shooter continued firing from above.

Fort Worth diocese reports abuse of minor

FORT WORTH (AP) — The Roman Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth says it has recently learned a priest, now dead, sexually abused a minor in 1978 in Decatur.

The Rev. Kevin Vann, bishop of the Fort Worth diocese, said in a statement Monday that Father Francis A. Zimmerer allegedly abused an 11-year-old male that year at the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church in Decatur.

The diocese was contacted on Aug. 25 by the spouse of the man, who is now 42. The statement said the diocese determined the 30-year-old allegation was credible and offered the man, who lives out of state, counseling.

Diocese officials said the matter was referred to the diocesan Conduct Review Board and the Decatur Police Department.

Prior to working in Decatur, Zimmerer had worked in the Catholic Diocese of Dallas when Fort Worth was part of the Dallas diocese.

He left Decatur in 1981 and returned to the Benedictine Order's Subicaco Abbey and died in Jan. 1983.

4 suspects indicted in man's death

ODESSA (AP) — An Ector County grand jury indicted four people Monday on capital murder charges in the death of an Odessa man, whose burned body was found dumped in a ditch on an oilfield lease road near Goldsmith earlier this summer.

Ector County District Attorney Bobby Bland said he's not sure if the state will seek the death penalty in the cases against Derek Elms, 21; Willie Hurst, 18; Heather Mitchell, 19, and Kathleen Newbury, 20.

Bland said the four originally faced murder charges in the death of Robert Clayton Thornhill Jr., but that changed. Thornhill had been missing since May 21.

"During the course of preparation for grand jury and reviewing recently developed evidence, I determined that this murder took place during the course of a robbery," Bland said in Monday's online edition of the Odessa American.

A correction officer at the Ector County Detention Center said all four suspects had attorneys. Calls by The Associated Press seeking comment from the attorneys Monday night were not immediately returned.

The four were arrested in June and have been in custody on \$500,000 bond each. Bland filed a motion Monday to deny bonds for the four.

Thornhill's throat was slashed during a fight and he was shot by a crossbow, according to a police affidavit.

Thornhill's body was placed under the carport of a house and covered. The four then went back to an apartment complex, but later, Hurst and Elms allegedly returned to dispose of Thornhill's body at an oilfield lease road, according to the affidavit.

2nd man on trial for 5 killings at Kilgore

BRYAN (AP) — About 140 prospective jurors assembled Monday as trial got under way for the second of two men accused in the notorious murders of five people abducted from an East Texas Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant a quarter-century ago.

Darnell Hartsfield, 47, went on trial almost a year after his cousin, Romeo Pinkerton, took a plea bargain midway through his own trial on five capital murder charges for the 1983 fatal shootings outside Kilgore.

If convicted, Hartsfield faces an automatic life prison term because prosecutors have said they won't seek the death penalty. The convicted burglar and drug dealer from Tyler already was serving life for perjury when DNA testing tied him to the KFC killings.

He traded his prison whites Monday for a white open-collar shirt and black slacks as he sat at the defense table in a courtroom in Bryan, facing prospective jurors as State District Judge Clay Gossett qualified them and considered reasons why they may not be able to serve.

Gossett introduced the defendant and the lawyers in the case to the prospective jurors. Hartsfield rose briefly but said nothing.

The case was moved to Bryan from Henderson, about 150 miles to the northeast, because of publicity in East Texas.

Gossett said some 600 Brazos County residents had been summoned as possible jurors. Less than a quarter of that number showed up and of those who did, only eight were black. Hartsfield is black.

So the judge ordered Brazos County sheriff's deputies to seek out remaining potential jurors and order them to appear in court, although Gossett did not demand that deputies physically bring jurors to the courthouse. Gossett, who said he didn't believe all races adequately were represented among those who appeared Monday, instead asked that deputies make every reasonable effort to contact people who ignored the jury summons and have them report Wednesday morning.

At Pinkerton's trial that had been moved last year to New Boston in far northeast Texas, Gossett asked for a second jury pool when not enough jurors could be selected from the initial pool.

"I understand this is not something you like to hear or want to hear," he told jurors who were in court Monday, advising them the trial could last up to five weeks. "It's just the reality of this."

A panel of 14, including two alternates, likely would be selected by Friday, the judge said. The jury prospects filled out 13 pages of questions and were asked to return Thursday for additional questioning by lawyers.

Gossett said attorneys would deliver their opening arguments on Sept. 15.

The five victims were found dead along an oilfield road about 15 miles from the KFC restaurant in Kilgore where they were abducted during a holdup the previous night, Sept. 23, 1983.

Judge orders dispositions in death row case

McKINNEY (AP) — The judge and prosecutor from a condemned man's murder trial were ordered Monday to testify under oath about allegations that they were romantically involved during the case.

The ruling by District Judge Greg Brewer two days before convicted killer Charles Dean Hood's scheduled execution

stemmed from requests by his attorneys to investigate claims of an improper relationship between retired state District Judge Verla Sue Holland and former Collin County District Attorney Tom O'Connell.

O'Connell's deposition took slightly less than two hours Monday evening. He declined comment as he left the courthouse car-

rying some files and was greeted by well-wishers. Attorneys for Hood also declined comment. Holland's deposition was scheduled for Tuesday morning.

Hood's attorneys also were working to postpone his execution in order to have more time to pursue their claims of judicial bias. They filed a request for a stay of execution and also asked Gov. Rick Perry to grant a 30-day reprieve.

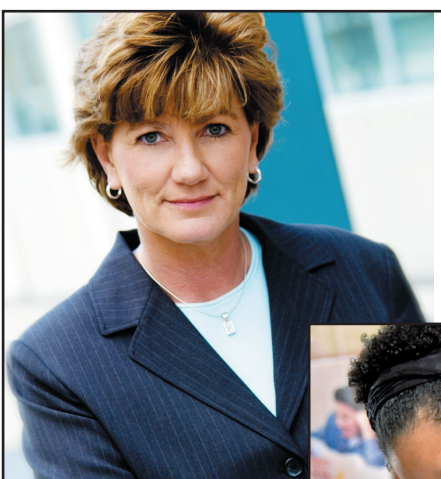
Hood is a former bouncer at a topless club who was 20 when he was arrested in Indiana for the fatal shootings of Tracie Lynn Wallace, 26, an ex-dancer, and her boyfriend, Ronald Williamson, 46, at Williamson's home in Plano in 1989.

Brewer's decision to order depositions came after a federal judge stymied attempts by attorneys for Holland and O'Connell to move the case to federal court. Over the weekend they filed motions that took the case out of Brewer's hands.

Bill Boyd, Holland's attorney, said he believed Hood's attorneys intended to pursue a federal claim that Hood's civil rights were violated. U.S. District Judge Richard Schell agreed with Hood's attorneys that their request was a preliminary step that should remain in state court. Schell sent the case back to Brewer.

In a filing for a stay of execution with the Court of Criminal Appeals in Austin, Hood's attorneys claimed that between 1997 and 2001 — when Holland served on the appeals court — she recused herself in four of every five cases from Collin County.

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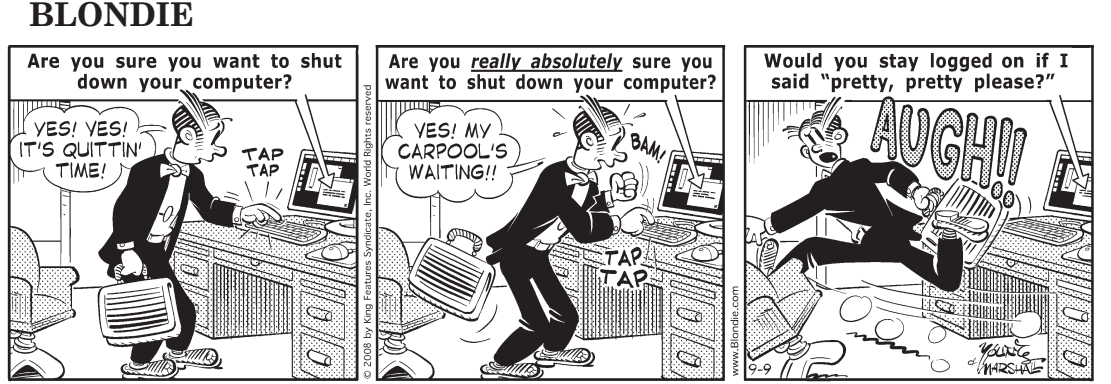
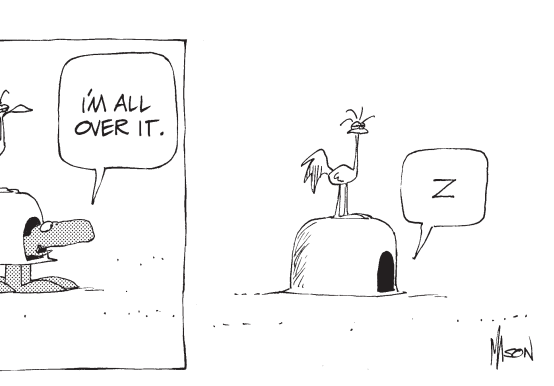
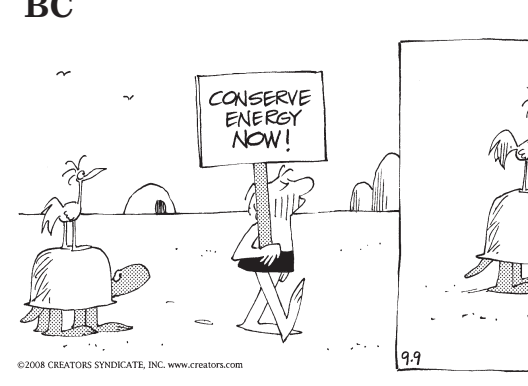
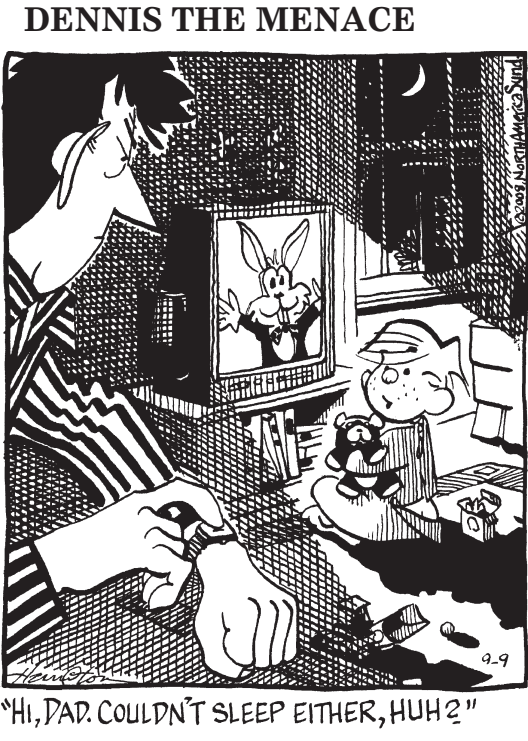
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5 :PM	News	News	Locura	Lopez	News	Noticias	News	Friends	Scrivner	News	Cash Cab			Law & Order	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live	Phineas	Horn	SportsCenter
6 :PM	ABC	Jeopardy!	Querida	Lopez	CBS	Noticiero	NBC	Raymond	Uri Harel	Business	Cash Cab			Law & Order		Phineas	Interrupt	
7 :PM	Entertain	Fortune	Enemiga	Two Men	News	12 Cora-zones	News	Raymond	Dr. Young	News-Lehrer	Made			Law & Order	Movie: ATL, Mykelti Williamson	Suite Life	WNBA	E:60
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10 :PM	News	News	Impacto	Raymond	News	Noticias	News	Frank TV	Israel	Charlie Rose	Made			Without a Trace	Raising the Bar	Suite Life	E:60	SportsCenter
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12 :AM	Insider Jimmy Kim-mel Live	Extra Amarte-Pecado	RENO 911	RENO 911	Late Late Show	Programa Pagado	News	Movie: Batman & Robin, Chris O'Donnell	Israel Church	(Off Air)	Dirty Jobs			Without a Trace	Star Trek: Voyager	Kim	Series of Poker	SportsCenter
1 :AM	Paid	Paid	Clasicos	Friends	Entertain	Paid	Pelicula:	Poker After Dark	Light of the Southwest		Smash Lab			Without a Trace	Deep Space 9	Emperor Dragon	College	



This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, Sept. 9, the 253rd day of 2008. There are 113 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:
On Sept. 9, 1776, the second Continental Congress made the term "United States" official, replacing "United Colonies."

On this date:
In 1830, Charles Durant flew a balloon from New York City across the Hudson River to Perth Amboy, N.J.
In 1850, California became the 31st state of the union.
In 1893, Frances Cleveland, wife of President Cleveland, gave birth to a daughter, Esther, in the White House; it was the first time a president's child was born in the executive mansion.
In 1926, the National Broadcasting Co. (NBC) was incorporated by the Radio Corporation of America.
In 1948, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea) was declared.
In 1956, Elvis Presley made the first of three appearances on "The Ed Sullivan Show."

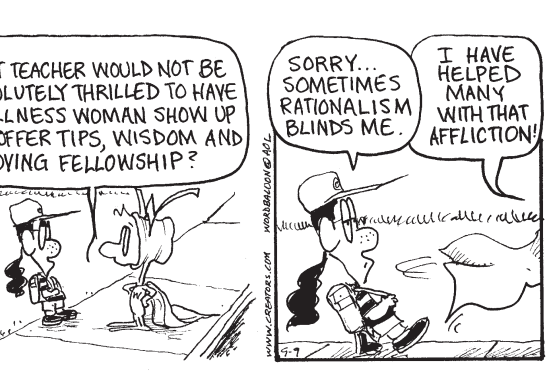
Rhythm-and-blues singer Luther Simmons is 66. Singer Inez Fox is 66. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Alphonso Jackson is 63. Singer Dee Dee Sharp is 63. Rock singer-musician Doug Ingle is 62. Country singer Freddy Weller is 61. Football commentator Joe Theismann is 59. Actor Tom Wopat is 57. Actress Angela Cartwright is 56. Musician-producer Dave Stewart is 56. Actor Hugh Grant is 48. Actor Adam Sandler is 42. Actor David Bennet is 42. Rock singer Paul Durham (Black Lab) is 40. Model Rachel Hunter is 39. Actor Goran Visnjic is 36. Pop-jazz singer Michael Buble is 33. Latin singer Maria Rita is 31. Actress Michelle Williams is 28.

Thought for Today: "Neurosis is the way of avoiding non-being by avoiding being." — Paul Tillich, American theologian (1886-1965).

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Answer to previous puzzle

T	V	A	D	H	A	R	P	W	I	P	E	R
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Newsday Crossword

ACROSS

- Juicy fruit
- Baseball hats
- Picket-line crosser
- Attract
- Well qualified
- Parcel out
- Shirt-sleeve fillers
- Yuletide
- Make fun of
- Toy on a string
- Where the President's desk is
- Slangy refusal
- Statistics: Abbr.
- Yellow songbird
- Deceitful person
- More than
- "Not guilty," for one
- Norway's capital
- Steel or silver
- Emcee's amplifier
- Fairy-tale second word
- A portion of
- Jury member
- Recipe amts.
- Broadway show
- Money in France
- General's troops
- Vibrant sound quality
- Awning relative
- More than
- "Not guilty," for one
- Be a retailer in
- Had done, as one's portrait
- Music-score markings
- Jai
- Type of
- 1 Across
- Golf-ball platform
- Radio-studio sign
- Vocal
- Hidden supply
- Opera solos
- Gumption
- Barns' upper levels
- Knowledge, for short
- Pasta like ziti
- Less than
- Pursuit group in westerns
- On one's (alert)
- Omits
- Tennis great Chris
- Chilled down
- Interfere
- Sorority member
- Hour after midnight
- Gave a speech
- CD—
- (computer disc)
- Is indebted to
- Biblical preposition
- Highway exit
- Nastase of tennis
- Poisonous snakes
- Fall into a chair
- Boy babies

DOWN

- 1 Broadway
- 2 Money in France
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- 8 Be a retailer in
- 9 Had done, as one's portrait
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