

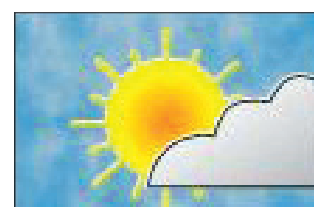
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BIG SPRING HERALD

WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 3, 2008

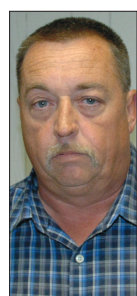


VOLUME 104, NUMBER 2

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Homicide investigation continues



"There haven't been any arrests at this time, but we're working very closely with the district attorney's office on this matter. Once we have all the loose ends tied, we'll turn it over to them to prosecute."

Sgt. Tony Everett, Big Spring PD information officer

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

The investigation into the May 4 shooting death of two Big Spring residents has yet to yield an arrest or indictment, but local law enforcement officials say the investigation is still moving forward, at least behind the scenes. Sgt. Tony Everett, public in-

formation officer with the Big Spring Police Department, said detectives investigating the double homicide are making progress.

"Right now it's a matter of tying up some of the loose ends in the investigation," said Everett. "There haven't been any arrests at this time, but we're working very closely with the district at-

torney's office on this matter. Once we have all the loose ends tied, we'll turn it over to them to prosecute."

Valerie Garcia, 20, and Michael Cardona, 21, both of Big Spring, were pronounced dead at Scenic Mountain Medical Center shortly after a drive-by shooting

See **HOMICIDE**, Page 3A

Productivity growth foils expectations

By **MARTIN CRUTSINGER**
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — Worker productivity slowed in the summer while wage pressures increased, but both developments were better than expected and are unlikely to raise inflation alarms at the Federal Reserve.

The Labor Department reported Wednesday that productivity, the key ingredient for rising living standards, rose at an annual rate of 1.3 percent in the July-September quarter. That's down from the 3.6 percent growth rate in the second quarter, but slightly higher than the 1.1 percent increase initially reported a month ago and better than the 0.9 percent rise economists expected.

Wage pressures, as measured by unit labor costs, rose at an annual rate of 2.8 percent, after having declined at a 2.6 percent rate in the second quarter. The rate of increase in the third quarter was the biggest jump since a 4.5 percent rate in the fourth quarter of last year, but was below the 3.6 percent advance originally reported and that economists expected.

The Fed closely monitors

See **LABOR**, Page 3A

'ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS...'



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Little Abigail Huffstetler smiles as she describes her Christmas wish list to Santa Claus during Howard College's annual Luminaria ceremony Tuesday evening.

Holiday spirit is on the way

Museum Kid's Day, parade, Living Tree all planned Saturday

By **LYNDEL MOODY**
Features Writer

It's going to be looking a lot like Christmas in Big Spring Saturday as a plethora of events to celebrate the holidays are set to take place.

First up is the Heritage Museum's Kids Day.

"With such a wonderful turnout for last year's event, we are very excited about providing another child-oriented program again," said Nancy Raney, museum director.

And this year, it's all about the cookies.

Professional baker Gale Pittman, former owner of Gale's Sweet Shoppe, will lead two classes in holiday cookie decorating, designed especially for children. The class begins at 11 a.m. and again at 2 p.m. Materials will be provided but space is limited, Raney said. Reservations can be made by calling the museum during normal operating hours — 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Friday — at



Raney

267-8255. Making a return appearance at the museum, Santa and Mrs. Claus will be dropping in from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to visit

with children and listen to those special wish lists, Raney said.

For parents who want to commemorate their child's visit with the man in red, Lane Bond of Lane Bond's Photography will be on hand to take photos.

Children can also sign up to win Leapster educational games during the day. Free cocoa and cookies will be provided by the museum, which is located at 510 Scurry.

And once again, the community is welcomed to watch the 23rd annual Big Spring Herald Lighted Community Christmas Parade from the museum's

See **HOLIDAY**, Page 3A

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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 Friday

Subway is this week's Dine Out Restaurant assisting the United Way for Big Spring and Howard County.



Proceeds from Friday's sales at Subway will benefit United Way. You can also send a tax deductible donation to United Way of Big Spring, P.O. Box 24, Big Spring 79721, or call 267-5201 for more information.

Hangar 25 memberships

Hangar 25 Air Museum is offering 10 percent off during its annual membership drive. The special offer runs until Jan. 1. The museum highlights Big Spring's role in aviation, honors veterans and holds various activities — many of them youth-related.

One-year memberships, with the 10 percent discount, are student, \$13.50; individual, \$27; family, \$54; sponsor, \$90; supporting, \$225; patron, \$450; and founder, \$900. Checks or money orders may be made to Hangar 25 Air Museum, 1911 Apron Drive, Big Spring 79720. For more information, call 264-1999.

22 Shopping Days Til Christmas



BIG SPRING HERALD



Santa and Mrs. Claus are returning to the Heritage Museum Saturday, Dec. 6 • 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

The Clauses will ride in the Big Spring Herald Christmas Parade that evening.

Photos of your children with Santa will be available for purchase

Sheppard lifts Coahoma to win

Herald Staff Report

SEAGRAVES — Usually Cody Sheppard does his damage from the interior of the Coahoma Bulldogs offense on the hardwood. However, Sheppard showed he has some range Tuesday and it couldn't have come at a more opportune time.

With Coahoma down by 2 to the Seagraves Eagles, the 6-6 Sheppard traveled to the 3-point line for a buzzer-beating trey, lifting the Bulldogs to a 48-47 victory as they remained undefeated for the 2008-2009 boys basketball season.

Kenny Griffin led the fourth period charge for the Eagles and finished with a game-high 21 points. Unfortunately for Griffin, he needed 23.

Josh Paniagua scored 12 with Braden Griffin hitting from behind the arc once as a part of his nine points.

Coahoma pulled out the win despite an abysmal night shooting from the free throw line. The Bulldogs made just six of 15 charity shots.

Coahoma begins the 23rd Annual Coahoma Invitational Thursday, hosting Sands, which is the 14th-ranked team in Class A, Division II. Another highly-graded team from that classification will participate in the tournament as Ira comes in ranked third.

Coahoma 8 14 16 10—48
Seagraves 11 9 7 20—47

Coahoma (4-0) — Josh Paniagua 12, Braden Griffin 9, Lane Douglass 1, Issac Garcia 8, Cody Sheppard 18.

Seagraves (2-2) — Gibson 2, Harold 4, Francis 4, Sinental 3, Griffin 21, Davis 6, Valdez 3, Thompson 4.

Free throws — CHS 6-15, SHS 3-5. 3-point goals — CHS 2 (Griffin, Sheppard), SHS 3 (Sinental, Griffin, Valdez). Total fouls — CHS 9, SHS 18. Fouled out — None.

Seagraves 46, Bulldogettes 43

It was Coahoma being heartbroken in the girls game against Seagraves Tuesday.

The Bulldogettes surrendered a five-point halftime lead, losing by a mere three points.

Berkley Iden, K'Leigh Fowler and Kylie Gee combined to score 27 of Coahoma's 43 points, posting nine points apiece. Seagraves was led by Ke'ondra Heckard's game-high 20 points.

The Bulldogettes will play host to the 23rd Annual Coahoma Invitational beginning Thursday. They'll open with Ira in the first round at 6 p.m.

Coahoma 7 18 8 10—43
Seagraves 10 10 12 14—46

Leading scorers
Coahoma (1-4) — Berkley Iden 9, K'Leigh Fowler 9, Kylie Gee 9.

Seagraves (4-1) — Ke'ondra Heckard 20, Middleton 14.

Coahoma Invitational schedule

Boys division

Thursday

Midland High JV vs. Sweetwater, 10:30 a.m.

Ira vs. Wall, 1:30 p.m.

Borden County vs. Stanton, 4:30 p.m.

Sands vs. Coahoma, 7:30 p.m.

Girls division

Borden County vs. Stanton, 9 a.m.

Idalou vs. Sweetwater, noon

Lorenzo vs. Sands, 3 p.m.

Ira vs. Coahoma, 6 p.m.

Area Roundup

Stanton opens season with impressive win

Herald Staff Report

WINK — It was a slow beginning to the 2008-2009 basketball season for the Stanton Buffaloes, but once they got started, they proved nearly impossible to stop.

Tyler Fulton led the Buffs to a season-opening win Tuesday, scoring 24 points in a 50-36 victory over the Wink Wildcats.

Fulton and the Buffs just finished the football season Friday after being eliminated by Canadian, but showed little hangover from the elongated time on the gridiron.

See AREA, Page 2B

Steers drop physical game to Central

Herald Staff Report

SAN ANGELO — Several Big Spring Steers made the transition from the gridiron to the hardwood Tuesday, but apparently wished they had brought their shoulder pads with them.

The Steers committed 41 fouls in their full team debut, losing to the San Angelo Central Bobcats 66-54.

Three of the Steers (0-4) — Tyrone Clemons, Matt Ritchey and Sidney Parker — playing in their first basketball game of the season fouled out of the game.

However, had it not been for a tough second period, the Steers played even with the Bobcats. In the first, third and

fourth quarters, Big Spring equaled Central's 46 points. Unfortunately, the Steers were outscored 20-8 in the second frame, making for the difference in the final margin.

"We fouled a lot because we pressed the whole game," said Big Spring Head Coach Marcus Morris. "We had a hard time getting into passing lanes. We'd get close, but not quite there. We played hard and physical."

Big Spring trailed by 1 midway through the second when Central went on a 12-2 run to take a 27-16 lead into halftime.

The Steers appeared ready to make a comeback when Jerrell Williams hit three

consecutive 3-pointers in a 20-second span, cutting Central's lead to 43-34 midway through the third period.

However, the Steers couldn't stay on the floor in the fourth period as three players fouled out.

Williams scored a game-high 24 points and is averaging more than 20 points a game so far this season. He was the only scorer in double



Williams

See STEERS, Page 2B



HERALD photo/Jonathan Hull

Big Spring Lady Steers guard Kallina Fletcher shoots a 3-pointer in the Lady Steers' 63-34 loss to Midland Greenwood Tuesday in Greenwood.

Lady Steers drop second straight to Greenwood

By JONATHAN HULL

Sports Editor

GREENWOOD — Big Spring's Lady Steers retook the court after the Thanksgiving break facing the same Greenwood Rangerettes team they played just before the holiday.

And the results were basically the same.

The Lady Steers hung in with Greenwood for a period and a half, but eventually gave in to the Rangerettes zone defense and fast break offense. Greenwood improved to 5-1 on the season with a 63-34 victory.

The Lady Steers fell to 2-4, having dropped their last four games after opening the season with two wins.

"It was pretty much the same thing as the first game we played against Greenwood," Lady Steers Head Coach Mike Warren said. "We played with Greenwood for a quarter and a half. We were right there

with them. Then we suddenly can't make a shot and went through that period not scoring. We've got to figure out a way to score consistently. We can't go long periods of time without putting points on the board."

The Lady Steers held a slim 16-14 lead in the second period, but watched Greenwood outscore them 18-3 over the final 3:30 minutes of the frame.

The Rangerettes simply jumped the passing lanes with their 2-3 zone each time the Lady Steers attempted to set up its half court offense. Greenwood then pushed the ball up the court quickly following a steal with the Lady Steers struggling to catch up.

Even when the Lady Steers could get an open shot, they struggled to sink it.

"Somebody has got to step up and make some shots," said Warren. "When I study

See LADY STEERS, Page 2B

Bufs, Lady Bufs sweep past Sterling City Tuesday

Herald Staff Report

STERLING CITY — It's just a matter of time before the Forsan Buffaloes flip on the switch and leave their opponent in the dust.

The Buffs improved to 4-0 on the 2008-2009 basketball season, routing the Sterling City Eagles 59-33 Tuesday.

Forsan held a 10-point lead after one period, but really laid on the pressure in the second frame, outscoring the Eagles, 26-6, giving them a 30-point advantage at intermission.

"A big second quarter really set the tempo for us for the rest of the game," said Forsan Head Coach Terry McDonald. "We used a press and it allowed us to get some quick transition baskets."

Forsan was led by guard Tristian Clay, who posted a game-high 17 points. Jeremy Freitag scored 11 of the bench, while post Nathan Atkerson scored nine from down low.

Atkerson was also a force on the defensive end, blocking four Sterling City shots. Evan Burton led the Buffs with 10 rebounds.

Forsan will participate in the Bearkat Booster Club Klassic beginning Thursday in Garden City. The Buffs play Christ the King — a private school out of Lubbock — in the first round.

Forsan 14 26 15 4—59
Sterling City 4 6 7 16—33

Forsan (4-0): Jeremy Freitag 11, Jeremy Robbins 6, Jace Sandridge 2, Tristian Clay 17, Ryan Flores 2, Evan Burton 4, Riley Wood 2, Alex Huckabee 6, Nathan Atkerson 9.

Lady Bufs 52, Sterling City 39

Forsan's Lady Buffs bounced back after losing their final game before the Thanksgiving break to Rocoe Highland with a 13-point win over the Sterling City Lady

Eagles Tuesday.

It was an impressive victory for the Lady Buffs since they played the game with out leading scorer and rebounder Amanda Longorio, who sat out with a sore lower back.

"Everyone else picked up the slack in order for us to get the win," Lady Buffs Head Coach Robert Hillger said. "I'm proud of these girls and their effort. These girls have been willing to listen and learn and that will help us reach our goal of making the playoffs."

Tori Gauer led the Lady Buffs with 14 points, while Sandi Golleher made up for Longorio's absence in the post, scoring 12 points and grabbing eight boards.

Forsan will also be playing Garden City's junior varsity in the Bearkat Booster Club Klassic in Garden City starting at noon Thursday.

Forsan 19 14 9 10—52
Sterling City 9 9 8 13—39

Forsan (4-1): Tori Gauer 14, Sandi Golleher 12, Kelsey Jones 9, Shelby McDonald 5, Faith Belew 5, Shelby Jones 5.

3-point goals: Forsan 3 (K. Jones 2, Gauer). Free throws: Forsan 15-24.

Bearkat Booster Club

Klassic schedule

Thursday

Boys division

Christoval vs. Rankin, 10:30 a.m.

Forsan vs. Christ the King, 1:30 p.m.

Grady vs. McCamey, 4:30 p.m.

Jesus Chapel vs. Garden City, 7:30 p.m.

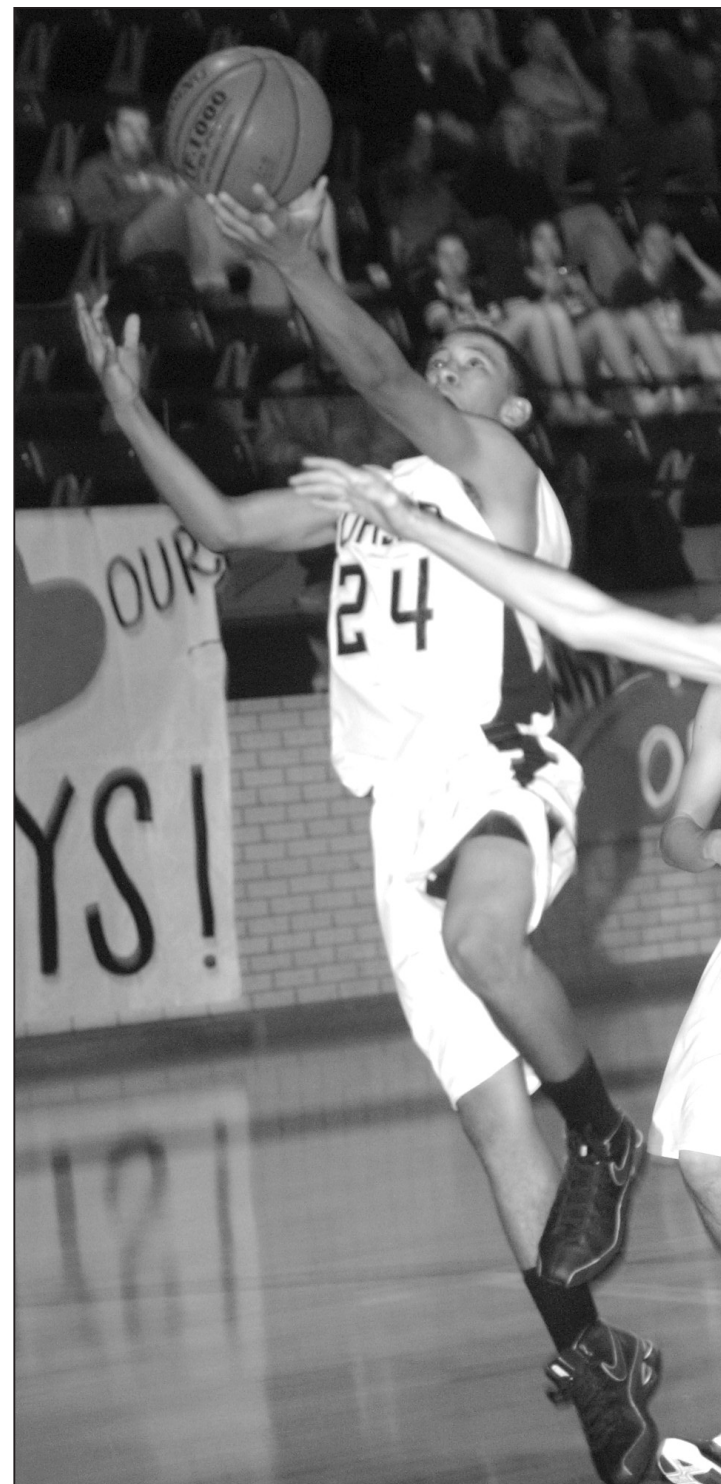
Girls division

Christoval vs. Rankin, 9 a.m.

Forsan vs. Garden City JV, noon

Grady vs. McCamey, 3 p.m.

Jesus Chapel vs. Garden City, 6 p.m.



HERALD photo/Jonathan Hull

Forsan Buffaloes guard Tristian Clay lays in two points in action from Nov. 24 vs. Water Valley at Buffalo Gym. Clay scored 17 points to lead the Buffs to a 59-33 victory over Sterling City Tuesday, helping the team improve to 4-0 on the season.

Obituaries

Charlotte H. Gilbert

Charlotte H. Gilbert, 85, of Big Spring died Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2008, in a local hospital. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home and Crematory of Big Spring.

Fire/EMS

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

- MEDICAL was reported in the 1600 block of Lancaster. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1300 block of Elm. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 3600 block of Connally. Service refused.

Support Groups

WEDNESDAY

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

THURSDAY

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

FRIDAY

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

SATURDAY

- Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. Open podium/speakers meeting 6:15 Settles 8 p.m. until 9 p.m. Open birthday night, no smoking meeting the last Saturday of each month at 8 p.m.

SUNDAY

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

MONDAY

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

Police blotter

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

- KEVIN KENDALL, 47, address unknown, was arrested Monday on charges of disorderly conduct – language, public intoxication and assault.
- BRYSON VANDERBILT, 23, of 1603 Robin, was arrested Tuesday on a charge of driving while license invalid.
- FRANCES YANEZ, 20, of 1900 Martin Luther King Blvd., was arrested Tuesday on a charge of driving while license invalid.
- MIKE TRAYNOR, 36, of 509 E. 17th St., was arrested Tuesday on two local capias warrants.
- BROOKE RIOS, 19, of 712 Lorilla, was arrested Tuesday on two local capias warrants.
- ELIJAH ALDRIDGE, 44, of 307 San Jacinto, was arrested Tuesday on a charge of no driver's license.
- THEFT OF FIREARM was reported in the 400 block of Fourth Street.
- THEFT was reported: in the 400 block of Fourth Street. in the 2500 block of Gregg Street.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported: in the 300 block of Main Street. in the 600 block of George.
- BURGLARY OF A HABITATION was reported: in the 200 block of 11th Place. in the 1000 block of Main Street.

Sheriff's report

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

- Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 63 inmates at the time of this report.
- MICAH LEVI PEARSON, 23, was transferred to the county jail Tuesday by the BSPD on a motion to revoke probation for driving while license invalid.
- STEPHANIE MICHELLE MIMS, 20, was transferred to the county jail Tuesday by the BSPD on a charge of possession of marijuana – two ounces or less.
- CYNDRY DAWN GEORGE, 24, was transferred to the county jail Tuesday by the BSPD on a charge of theft.
- GONZALO GONZALES, 30, was transferred to the county jail Tuesday by the BSPD on a charge of driving while license invalid – DWI related.
- PAMELA LEFLER, 46, was arrested Tuesday by the HCSO on a motion to revoke probation for driving while intoxicated – open container, third or more offense.
- BRANDON DEE RUSHIN, 38, was arrested Tuesday by the HCSO on a charge of bondsman off bond for driving while license invalid with a previous conviction – motion to revoke probation.

Your Local Weather

Thu 12/4	Fri 12/5	Sat 12/6	Sun 12/7	Mon 12/8
53/26	50/36	68/35	68/45	74/44
Generally sunny despite a few afternoon clouds. High 53F.	Mix of sun and clouds. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the mid 30s.	Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 60s and lows in the mid 30s.	Considerable cloudiness. Highs in the upper 60s and lows in the mid 40s.	Clouds giving way to sun. Highs in the mid 70s and lows in the mid 40s.

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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
• Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie meets at 7 p.m. in the Eagles Lodge at 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.
• League of United Latin American Citizens LULAC Chapter 4791 meets at 5:30 p.m. at the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce. The public is invited.
• Genealogy Society of Big Spring meets at 7 p.m. in the Howard County Library, 500 S. Main.
• Big Spring Masonic Lodge No. 1340 meets at 7:30 p.m. at 2101 Lancaster.

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

MONDAY
• 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 Howard County Library. 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 Beacients 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.

Lottery

The jackpot in the multistate Mega Millions lottery drawing grew to \$146 million for Friday's drawing. None of the tickets sold for Tuesday's \$128 million drawing matched all five lotto numbers and the Mega Ball. The winning numbers from Tuesday's drawing were: 2-17-22-32-51. The Mega Ball number was 35.

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Tuesday night: Winning numbers drawn: 34-23-32-4-15. Number matching five of five: 1. Prize: \$26,188. Winning ticket sold in: Houston.

The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Tuesday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 3-3-8-0. Sum It Up: 14.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Tuesday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 5-0-8. Sum It Up: 13.

Take Note

• The Big Spring Salvation Army will be conducting free blood pressure and glucose screenings Dec. 10 and Dec. 31 from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. at the Army's Corps Building, located at 811 W. Fifth St. The screenings are being sponsored by In-Home Care. For more information, contact the Salvation Army at 267-8239.

• Vendors are needed for the Christmas Bazaar to be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, at Canterbury South. Please contact Jennifer Mendez at 263-1238 or leave a message.

• The Permian Basin Foundation has awarded West Texas Opportunities Inc. \$130,000 through the Texas Resources for Iraq Afghanistan Deployment fund. WTO will assist current and former military personnel serving in Iraq or Afghanistan and their families. Funding will serve Howard, Martin, Andrews, Borden, Dawson, Ector, Fisher, Gaines, Glasscock, Midland, Mitchell, Nolan, Scurry and Upton counties. For more information, contact Diana Martinez or Debbie Wilson at 110 Johnson in Big Spring or call (432) 267-9536.

• Scenic Mountain Medical Center's Relay for Life team is selling cookbooks to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. The cookbooks can be purchased at the PBX operator's booth for \$10 apiece. For more information, contact Beverly



Laura Amanda Clark Whitley

Laura Amanda Clark Whitley, 93, a former longtime resident of Big Spring, died Oct. 24, 2008, in Clear Lake City, Texas. She moved to Clear Lake about 2 1/2 years ago following the death of her husband, M. Douglas Whitley.

Laura was born in North Liberty, Ind., on Feb. 21, 1915, to Vera and Russell Clark. She met and married Douglas in California in 1944 while he was in the Navy during WWII and moved to Texas.

After moving to Big Spring in 1956, Laura taught grade school for many years at both College Heights and Washington schools. Douglas taught chemistry and



physics at Big Spring High School and Howard Jr. College. Laura was known for her teaching, love of flowers and many creative projects.

Laura and Douglas are survived by their children, Glenn Whitley of St. Louis, Mo., Beth Whitley of Clear Lake City, Reed Whitley of Hobbs, N.M.; and Kerry Whitley of Mesquite. They also have seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

The family home which they built was located at 1500 Phillips Rd.

Paid obituary

Grant at 268-4952.

• HATS (Hope After The Sadness), an American Cancer Society Resource Room is now available at First Methodist Church. This center provides information and valuable resources for those affected by cancer. This HATS ministry, established in

BIG SPRING HERALD

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

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

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



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Baked Goods,
Christmas Decor
Arts & Crafts

Leach garners Big 12 coach of the year honor

By **BETSY BLANEY**

Associated Press Writer

LUBBOCK — Mike Leach can look back on this season and know he led Texas Tech to its best one yet.

The pirate-loving coach and his No. 8 Red Raiders did it by getting their first win over a top-

ranked team, garnering their highest national ranking and capturing their first Big 12 South trophy — the latter a shared prize due to a three-way tie.

Now Leach can add another first.

The Associated Press on Tuesday named him Big 12 coach of the year.

In balloting of reporters who regularly cover the conference for newspapers in the league's seven states, Leach got 16 votes to four for Texas' Mack Brown.

Since the conference began in 1996 it is the first time Texas Tech's coach has won the honor.

"I don't know what to say,"

said Leach, who's rarely at a loss for words. "I have good people around me. We had a good year, and I had something to do with it, too, you know."

For the man known to enjoy reading Winston Churchill, the season has seen, well, his finest hour.

Tech has for years been con-

sidered a good team, but the Red Raiders' pass-happy offense was mostly written off as a gimmicky outfit that put up gaudy numbers in Leach's spread offense. Every quarterback but one has led the nation in passing in Leach's nine seasons, yet the Red Raiders never won more than nine games.

STEERS

Continued from Page 1B

figures for Big Spring with Josh Harris posting the second-highest total with eight.

David Helton's 16 led the way for Central with Marc Campos hitting several key shots in the fourth quarter to finish with 12 points.

"We looked like we were playing our first game out of football,

but it was still promising," said Morris. "Some of the guys looked like it had been a year since they had touched a basketball. The effort was there, though, and really it's kind of what I expected being our first game out of football."

Big Spring takes part in the Gym Bice Classic in Andrews starting Thursday. Last season, the Steers won the tourney, defeating each opponent they faced by at least 19 points.

They'll open with Midland Classical, which is ranked second in the TAPPs small school poll, at 7:30 p.m.

"We won this thing last year, but we'll open with a very good Midland Classical team," said Morris. "Rankings don't mean anything, but they're a highly thought-of team and won't make anything easy for us. I'd like to get more practices in at this time of year, but this is the way it works right now. We're a little

behind, but we'll get there."

The Classic means a lot to Morris, who is a graduate of Andrews High School and idolized Bice growing up.

"This is a special tournament for me. Gym Bice was a senior in high school when I was a freshman and he went on to play at UTEP," said Morris. "He took Andrews to the state tournament his senior year. He's always been kind of a hero to me. Just going back to that gym and

knowing who the tournament honors is a pretty neat experience for me."

Big Spring 8 8 22 16-54

Central 7 20 22 17-66

Big Spring (0-4) - Darius McAllister 7, Jerrell Williams 24, Pavel Plakhotny 3, Josh Harris 8, Xavian Parnell 2, Matt Ritchey 4, Sidney Parker 6.

Central (4-3) - Kevin Bond 6, Solomon Sutton 9, Reggie Sutton 4, David Helton 16, DeMarcus Berry 3, Clayton Kafer 7, Marc Campos 12, Jon Lewis 4, Cody Bockelman 5.

3-pointers: Big Spring 5 (Williams 4, Harris 1), Central 0. Fouled out: Tyrone Clemons, Ritchey, Parker.

LADY STEERS

Continued from Page 1B

us on film, we're getting some open shots. Somebody just has to start putting the ball in the hole."

Desiree Anderson led the Lady Steers with eight points, while Kalina Fletcher scored seven and made the only 3-pointer of the game.

Greenwood was led by Danna Howard's game-high 15 points. Holly Davis had 11, while Ashley

Ricketson chipped in 10.

The Lady Steers take part in the Kristen Corbin Classic in Andrews starting Thursday. They'll face Paducah in the first round of the tournament at 3 p.m.

Contact Sports Editor Jonathan Hull by calling 263-7331, ext. 237, or by e-mailing him at sports@bigspringherald.com.

Big Spring 12 7 10 5-34

Greenwood 12 20 16 15-63

Big Spring (2-4) - Linzee Yarbar 1, Kalina Fletcher 7, LeShaunte Anderson 6,

Valerie Ross 4, Desiree Anderson 8, Bridgette Tuitt 3, Cerbi Ritchey 5.

Greenwood (5-1) - Kendall Ivie 4, Kaleena Garcia 2, Holly Davis 11, Margeaux Baumann 6, Alyssia Simmons 2, Kayla Long 4, Danna Howard 15, Katie Duran 7, Ashley Ricketson 10, Bianca Reyes 2.

Free throws - BSHS 5-13, GHS 21-30. 3-point goals - BSHS 1 (Fletcher). Total fouls - BSHS 20, GHS 16. Fouled out - Yarbar.

AREA

Continued from Page 1B

The Buffs trailed by 4 after the first period and were tied with the Wildcats, 26-26, at intermission. However, Stanton found its game in the third, outscoring Wink 18-3 in the frame.

Stanton plays in the 23rd Annual Coahoma Invitational starting Thursday, matching up with Borden County in the first round at 4:30 p.m.

Side 9, Ryan Brantley 4, Steven Reyes 3, Ramsey Fleckenstein 6, Robbie Noland 4, Sean Smith 2.

Wink - Seth Abbott 4, Tyler Abila 7, Shae Abbott 2, Tyler Richardson 6, Trevor Casteal 9, Chad Boggus 8.

Free throws - SHS 4-10, WHS 5-13. 3-point goals - SHS 6 (Side 3, Reyes, Fleckenstein 2), WHS 3 (Abila, Richardson 2). Total fouls - SHS 10, WHS 12. Fouled out - None.

Grady 50, O'Donnell 37

LENORAH — Grady's Wildcats received a memorable performance from Dylan Cox Tuesday.

Cox scored 30 points to lead the Wildcats to a 50-37 victory over

O'Donnell, improving Grady's record to 2-2. Cox nailed six treys for 24 of his 30.

The Wildcats led by 3 after the first period, but started to run away from O'Donnell in the second, outscoring the Eagles, 17-2, in the frame.

Grady will be taking part in the Bearkat Booster Club Klassic starting at 4:30 p.m. Thursday in Garden City, playing McCamey in the first round.

O'Donnell 9 2 9 17-37

Grady 12 17 9 12-50

O'Donnell (1-3) - Castillo 7, Furlow 14, Seely 3, Ramirez 9, Reyna 2, Williams 2

Grady (2-2) - Shane Teague 4, Dylan Cox 30, Tyler Matthews 2, Joe Cook 2, John Ramirez 2, Johan Wiebe 2, Jacob Rodriguez

Free throws - OHS 8-11, GHS 14-23. 3-point goals - OHS 3 (Furlow 2, Seely 1), GHS 6 (Cox 6). Total fouls - OHS 20, GHS 18. Fouled out - Castillo. Technical fouls - Castillo.

Grady 39, O'Donnell 22

Grady's Lady Wildcats evened their record to 3-3 Tuesday, blasting the O'Donnell Lady Eagles, 39-22.

The Lady 'Cats used a dominant second period, outscoring the Lady Eagles 12-4, to get the separation they needed for the win.

Ten of O'Donnell's 22 points

were scored in the first period.

Eva Dyck led the Lady 'Cats with a game-high 14 points and was complimented by Julia Schuelke's eight.

Grady faces McCamey in the first round of the Bearkat Booster Club in Garden City at 3 p.m. Thursday.

O'Donnell 10 4 2 6-22

Grady 14 12 7 6-39

O'Donnell (0-6) - Barrioz 2, Williams 5, Ochoa 4, Zepeda 2, Patridge 8, Hensley 1.

Grady (3-3) - Eva Dyck 14, Maegan Blocker 3, Julia Schuelke 8, Kaitlyn Blocker 1, M.J. Price 2, Lauren Robinson 6, Katie Meeks 3, Tasha Enriquez 2.

Free throws - O'Donnell 4-11, Grady 9-14. 3-point goals - O'Donnell 2 (Patridge 2), Grady 0. Total fouls - O'Donnell 15, Grady 15. Fouled out - None.

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Was \$23,995 **Sale Price \$21,995**

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2004 Nissan Murano SE - Black w/Cloth, All Power, Local One Owner w/69,000 Miles.

Was \$20,995 **Sale Price \$18,995**

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Was \$20,995 **Sale Price \$18,995**

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Was \$20,995 **Sale Price \$18,995**

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Was \$21,995 **Sale Price \$17,995**

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► **News at a glance**

Rice: Mumbai attacks are "the kind of terror in which al-Qaida participates"

NEW DELHI (AP) — Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice says the attacks in Mumbai are "the kind of terror in which al-Qaida participates."

Rice arrived in New Delhi on Wednesday as part of a U.S. effort to ease tensions in the region after a three-day terrorist attack killed 171 people in India's financial capital.

"Whether there is a direct al-Qaida hand or not, this is clearly the kind of terror in which al-Qaida participates," she said during a press conference.

"We are not going to jump to any conclusions about who is responsible for this although the U.S. is prepared and is already actively engaged in information sharing."

Chambliss wins U.S. Senate runoff, ending Dems' hopes for filibuster-proof majority

ATLANTA (AP) — Relieved Republicans celebrated a resounding win in Georgia's hard-fought U.S. Senate runoff, a victory that denied Democrats a filibuster-proof majority and cemented the state's reputation as a GOP bastion.

Sen. Saxby Chambliss trounced Democrat Jim Martin Tuesday night, winning his second term by a margin of more than 10 percentage points. The race dashed Democrats' hopes of a 60-seat majority immune to Senate filibusters, which would have given President-elect Barack Obama a stronger hand moving his agenda.

A Martin victory was a longshot in Georgia. A Democrat hasn't won an open statewide seat since 1998.

Martin hoped to capitalize on excitement surrounding Obama but was unable to get many of the president elect's voters back to the polls one month after the general election. Obama never came to the state to campaign for Martin, although he recorded automated phone calls and a radio ad for the former state lawmaker from At-

lanta.

Chambliss revved up the state's vaunted GOP turnout operation and kept a parade of ex-GOP presidential candidates traipsing through the state to whip up enthusiasm. He brought in Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, the former candidate for vice president, as his closer. She headlined four rallies for Chambliss across the state Monday that drew thousands of party faithful.

Big Three auto executives detail requests for \$34 billion in government help

WASHINGTON (AP) — Detroit's Big Three auto executives have ditched their corporate jets for hybrid cars and replaced vague pleas for federal help with detailed requests for as much as \$34 billion in their second crack at persuading Congress to throw their struggling companies a lifeline.

Congressional leaders are reviewing three separate survival plans from Chrysler LLC, General Motors Corp. and Ford Motor Co. as they weigh whether to call lawmakers back to Washington for a special session next week to vote on an auto bailout.

In blueprints delivered to Capitol Hill on Tuesday, GM and Chrysler said they needed an immediate infusion of government cash to last until New Year's, and both said they could drag the entire industry down if they fail. Ford is requesting a \$9 billion "standby line of credit" that it says it doesn't expect to use unless one of the other Big Three goes belly up.

But Chrysler said it needed \$7 billion by year's end just to keep running. And GM asked for an immediate \$4 billion as the first installment of a \$12 billion loan, plus a \$6 billion line of credit it might need if economic conditions worsen.

The two painted the direst portraits to date — including the prospects of shuttered factories and massive job losses — of what could happen if Congress doesn't quickly step in.

Democratic leaders voiced concern and a desire to do something to avert an automaker collapse, but they made no commitments about helping an industry that's made few friends lately on Capitol Hill.

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.

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		1			7	6		5
	9	5	6					

HOMICIDE

Continued from Page 1A

was reported at 905 E. 16th St. at 9:38 p.m. Sunday, May 4. According to police reports, Garcia was pregnant at the time of her death.

Also injured in the shooting were an unidentified 3-year-old girl, 19-year-old Philp Martinez, 21-year-old Daniel Rios and 21-year-old David Rios. According to Everett, the 3-year-old suffered a leg wound and was treated

at the emergency room at Scenic Mountain Medical Center and released.

According to police investigators, a dark-colored Ford pickup was seen leaving the scene of the shooting.

Three arrests have been made in relation to the incident, according to earlier reports from Everett. James Cole, 18, of Lamesa; Gabriel Gonzales, 21, of Fort Stockton; and Eduardo Mares, 21, of Seminole have all been charged with deadly conduct — discharge of a firearm in connection

with the shooting. However, none of the three have been arrested and charged with murder, according to police records.

Everett confirmed Cole is a member of the Latin Kings street gang and maintains the shooting — along with a slew of other shootings in the Big Spring area during the first part of 2008 — are all connected to a drug turf dispute between a Big Spring family and the Latin Kings.

Howard County District Attorney Hardy Wilkerson said it's not unusual

for an investigation of this magnitude to take several months.

"We're looking at all of the information the police have provided to us, and we're working to get it into a form we can present to the grand jury," said Wilkerson. "It's not as if this case has been wrapped up. There's still a considerable amount of work going on, it's just doing so behind the scenes."

Wilkerson said his office will examine the evidence before deciding whether the shooting should be

prosecuted as a capital murder.

"It certainly appears to have the merits necessary for capital murder, but until the details of the investigation are turned over to us its hard to say for sure," said Wilkerson shortly after the investigation began. "Anything at this point would purely be speculation."

Both Everett and Wilkerson declined to comment on the details of the ongoing investigation.

Contact Staff Writer

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

HOLIDAY

Continued from Page 1A

patio.

The parade begins at 5:30 p.m. at the intersection of Gregg and FM 700 and

will make its way north on Gregg. The Weather Channel predicts a chilly but clear evening with a low of about 36 degrees and sunset about 5:41 p.m., just in time to enhance the more than 40 lighted entries expected this year.

Grand Marshals Bill and Joyce Crooker will lead off the parade, which normally draws thousands of people.

To cap off a busy day, the First United Methodist Church presents its "gift to the community," the 30th

annual Living Christmas Tree that evening. The annual concert will be held at 8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday with a dress rehearsal at 2 p.m. that is open to the public.

The event is free but tickets are needed to attend.

Tickets are available at the church office, 400 Scurry St.. Office hours are 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. through Thursday and 9 a.m. until noon and 1 p.m. until 4 p.m Friday. For more information, call 267-6394.

LABOR

Continued from Page 1A

developments in productivity and wages to see if inflation is getting out of hand. But the central bank was likely to view the recent developments as temporary and not long-run trends.

Analysts had expected a big downward revision in productivity given the fact that overall output, as measured by the gross domestic product, was revised to show a decline of 0.5 percent at an annual rate, a bigger drop than the 0.3

percent decrease that was originally reported.

Still, the 1.3 percent rise in productivity was the weakest showing since a 0.8 percent rise in the fourth quarter of 2007.

While rising wages and benefits are good for workers, if those gains outstrip increases in productivity it can create serious inflation problems as businesses are forced to boost the cost of their products to cover the higher wage demands.

If workers are more productive, though, businesses are able to increase their pay and cover the costs with the increased output

of goods and services.

The Fed was likely to view the latest development in productivity and labor costs against the backdrop of an economy that has fallen into a recession. During a recession, output falls, which hurts productivity, but rising job layoffs keep a lid on wage pressures.

Inflation concerns practically disappeared last month after a report showed that consumer prices in October took their biggest monthly plunge in the six decades that records have been kept.

The big fall in prices in

October primarily reflected the fact that energy prices, which had been surging earlier in the year, are now declining sharply.

The Fed, trying to get the country out of the recession, cut interest rates by a full percentage point in October. The federal funds rate, the interest rate that banks charge each other, fell to 1 percent, a level seen only once before in the past half-century.

Economists believe the Fed will cut rates again at their next meeting on Dec. 15-16.

A panel of economists with the National Bureau of Economic Research an-

nounced Monday that the country has been in a recession since December 2007, making the current downturn the longest in a quarter century. The 1981-82 recession last 16 months.

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Juan Jose "J.J." Bustamante, 30, died Saturday. Funeral Services were at 10:00 AM Wednesday at Sacred Heart Catholic Church with burial at Mt. Olive Memorial Park.
Vincente C. Carmona, 58, died Tuesday. Vigil Services will be at 7:00 PM Thursday at Myers & Smith Chapel.

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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
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John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

Bill McClellan
News Editor

OTHER VIEWS

Be patriotic!
Go shopping

The retail doomsayers are predicting a cataclysmic Christmas season. The stores are bracing for the worst. The gloom is so thick that we're thinking this Christmas shopping season should be subtitled "The Day the Mall Stood Still."

But remember last holiday season? The experts tripped over themselves with conflicting predictions day by day. We got whiplash trying to keep track.

There's a good reason for this uncertainty. Experts don't really know what people will do.

They know what people say they will spend or not spend. But when it comes down to it, every day between Thanksgiving and Christmas is a laboratory of capitalism, a revelation. Millions of Americans making billions of individual decisions based on thousands of shreds of information, perceptions, fear, guilt, obligation, expectation and plain old greed. Will they, or won't they, buy a Blu-ray machine, an American Girl doll, an Xbox?

Heck if we know.

We do know enough to predict that some of the expert predictions will be wrong. There's a chance that this could be a better holiday season than anyone expects right now.

Sure, people are spooked. Yes, they feel poorer because their retirement account is ragged and panting. And yes, people are worried about layoffs. But that's the great thing about this country. We don't always follow the plan. We spend, sometimes on a whim.

The Apostles of Less preach about voluntary simplicity, of paring down one's possessions to 100 things. Intriguing ideas that have drawn small, loyal followings. But not most of America. That's because most of America is about abundance, not denial. This is the land of the designer mud room and the four-car garage. Of gadgets that plug into your computer just to keep your Diet Coke cold while you Twitter.

More is never enough.

The American consumer is a force of nature that cannot be restrained for long. There's a lull now. But were you in a mall parking lot on Friday? Bet it was jammed. Someone is in the stores. They may not be buying yet. But wait.

In recent days, Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson said that the U.S. had "turned a corner" in averting a financial collapse, even though more work needs to be done. So let's get to it.

America, do what you do best: Plunder stores like those feral brides-to-be who rush the floor at Filene's Basement to grab those deeply discounted wedding gowns.

Leave no store untrammelled.

There probably isn't one American in a million who can understand exactly how this financial mess happened. But we do know this much: America started this economic mess. And Americans can end it. See you at the mall.

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

LETTER POLICIES

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.

• Limit your letters to no more than 300 words.

• Sign your letter.

• Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street address for verification purposes.

• We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity.

• We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per 30-day period per author.

• Letters that are unsigned or do not include a telephone number or address will not be considered.

• Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

Operator: Welcome to transition hotline

Operator: Transition hotline, can I help you?
Caller: Uh, yeah, I've been reading about the transition ...

O: Yes, sir, only seven more weeks until The One takes the oath!

C: Yeah, really looking forward to it. But I wanted to double-check something.

O: Ask away, sir. We have answers you can believe in.

C: I've been reading about some of the people who are going to help Barack Obama change Washington ...

O: The One.

C: The who?

O: The One. We don't say Obama. We say The One. We want all Americans to say it, in the spirit of national unity.

C: The One.

O: You've got it. Please tell your friends.

C: You betcha.

O: Oh, now, we don't say that.

C: Say what?

O: That expression you just used.

I can't repeat it. This call is being monitored. But we're discouraging its use. We hope to have it officially banned next year, but for now it's just a request.

C: You mean, you betcha?

O: Please, sir. It hurts my ears.

But, yes, that's the one. Not The One, of course. But that's the phrase

I'm referring to. We looked back over the campaign tapes and realized that so many of the things the other side said had hateful and racial overtones. Not surprisingly, that includes pretty much everything they say in Alaska.

C: I had no idea.

O: I can't discuss all that's involved here, but the problems with that state go far beyond turkey abuse, I can assure you.

C: That was pretty freaky.

O: PETA is filing a lawsuit. But that's just a start. That poor bird was just a metaphor. We think there's a good chance we can get the Republican Party labeled a hate group and banned. In the spirit of national unity, of course.

C: Of course.

O: You betcha. ... Oh, shoot. I hope I didn't offend you.

C: I didn't know I was supposed to be offended.

O: You'll catch on. It's an education process. Now, sir, did you have a question?

C: Oh, yeah. The transition.

Obama won, right?

O: The One.

C: Sorry. The One. The One won, right?

O: Of course The One won. How could he not? We had history, fate, destiny, karma, the media and Oprah all on our side.

C: That's what I thought. So what's with some of these people he's hiring?

O: Sir?

C: Hillary for secretary of state?

Wasn't she involved somehow in the Clinton administration?

O: Very peripherally. We've determined that there was very little communication between the two, especially after a certain point in the second term.

C: That dude from Harvard who said women can't do math or science?

O: Larry Summers will head the National Economic Council. But after his diversity and sensitivity classes, he'll only be allowed to speak to The One. Otherwise, his all-female Secret Service detachment is authorized to smack him upside the head.

C: What about Bob Gates at the Pentagon? If we wanted a third term for the war criminal Bush, we would've voted for McCain.

O: Sir, you are going to have to watch your language. We don't use the B-word.

C: My dad's a conservative, and he likes these picks. My friends are talking impeachment. They tried calling Dennis Kucinich, but they can't get through.

O: There I can help. Yes, I can. You have to dial direct to the chip the aliens implanted in his head. Hold for that number. ...

Kevin Ferris is the assistant editor of the Editorial Page of the Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to him at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by e-mail at kf@phillynews.com.

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When the warmest in history isn't

Here's another reason why people don't trust newspapers. When science reporters write about, say, hormone therapy or drinking red wine, they report on studies that find that hormones or red wine can be good for you, as well as studies that suggest otherwise. Any science involving complex organisms is rarely black and white.

When it comes to global warming, newspapers play up stories that reinforce the prevalent the-sky-is-falling belief that global warming is human-caused and catastrophic. But if a study or scientist does not portend the end of the world as we know it, it rarely rates as news.

In that spirit, many papers have reported on a UC San Diego science historian who reviewed 928 abstracts of peer-reviewed articles on global warming published between 1993 and 2003, and concluded, "Remarkably, none of the papers disagreed with the consensus position."

Over 10 years, not one study challenged the orthodoxy — does that sound right to you? If that were true, it would strongly suggest that, despite conflicting evidence in this wide and changing world, no scientist dares challenge the politically correct position on the issue.

No wonder, David Bellamy — an Australian botanist who was involved in some 400 TV productions, only to see his TV career go south after he questioned global warming orthodoxy — wrote in The Australian last week, "It's not even science anymore; it's anti-science." Bellamy notes that official

data show that "in every year since 1998, world temperatures have been getting colder, and in 2002 Arctic ice actually increased." Exhibit B: Richard S. Lindzen, the MIT Alfred P. Sloan Professor of Atmospheric Sciences, recently wrote, "There has been no warming since 1997 and no statistically significant warming since 1995."

Such findings rarely are reported, even as, Marc Morano, communications director for the Republicans on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee told me, "Scientists keep coming out of the woodwork" to challenge the so-called consensus. "It's almost like a bandwagon effect."

The Global Warming Petition Project urges Washington to reject the Kyoto international global warming pact as there is "no convincing scientific evidence that human release of carbon dioxide, methane, or other greenhouse gases is causing or will, in the foreseeable future, cause catastrophic heating of the Earth's atmosphere and disruption of the Earth's climate." So far, The Politico reports, more than 31,000 scientists have signed it.

The latest skirmish in the global warming war — barely reported in America — occurred after two bloggers found that the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies data wrongly cast this October as the warmest in recorded history. It turns out that the mistake was due to an error that wrongly tapped September temperature records from Russia. Christopher Booker of The Sunday Telegraph of London found the mistake "startling" in light of other contrary climate statistics, including National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration findings of 63 local snowfall records and 115 lowest-ever temperatures for the month.

In an e-mail, Goddard researcher

Gavin Schmidt explained, "The incorrect analysis was online for less than 24 hours." (Thank bloggers Anthony Watts, an American meteorologist, and Canadian computer analyst Steve McIntyre for catching the mistake.) The error occurred because a report "had the wrong month label attached. There is quality control at NOAA and GISS but this particular problem had not been noticed before and the existing QC procedures didn't catch it. These have now been amended."

As for the snowfall records and low temperatures cited by Booker, Schmidt chalked them up to "cherry picking" data. He added, "Far more important are the long-term trends."

Now, honest mistakes happen — even in high-powered, well-funded research facilities. Just last year — again thanks to the vigilance of Watts and McIntyre — Goddard had to reconfigure its findings and recognize 1934 — not 1998, as it had figured — as the hottest year on record in American history.

Alas, it is hard to see Goddard as objective when its director, James Hansen, testified in a London court in September in support of six eco-vandals. A jury then acquitted the six Greenpeace activists on charges of vandalizing a British coal-fired power plant based on the "lawful excuse" defense that their use of force would prevent greater damage to the environment after Hansen predicted the one Kingsnorth plant could push "400 species" into extinction.

Of course, he could be wrong.

E-mail Debra J. Saunders at dsanders@schronicle.com. To find out more about Debra J. Saunders, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.



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The fund-raising mania continues

I hate to be a party-pooper, but I have come to really dislike fund-raising. Not necessarily the fund-raising that involves charitable organizations, though. Those are tolerable.



LAURA SNYDER

Charitable organizations usually raise money by sending me a sheet of self-stick address labels along with a letter telling me how badly the money is needed. Enclosed with their plea are pictures of sad-looking children because adults cannot abide sad children.

Those fund-raising techniques are tolerable except for the fact that they always come during the holiday season. They think that people are more willing to give their hard-earned cash to total strangers during the holiday season when, in fact, we could probably give more money at a time when we weren't up to our eyeballs in credit card payments. Like, say, July.

Maybe they could send the sad-children pictures during the 4th of July celebrations and make it our patriotic duty to give to the sad-children fund. Instead of address labels, send a static-cling American flag for my minivan. The motto could be something like: "Be a good American. Save the sad

children in third world countries."

Anyway, charitable organizations are, in general, worthy of my money even if their timing leaves something to be desired.

What drives me nuts is the incessant fund-raising that my own children have to do for the extra-curricular clubs they belong to and for the schools that they attend.

First, they tell the kids to go out and sell as much product as they can, but don't go door-to-door because that's dangerous. If they can't go door-to-door, who's left? Mom, Dad and Grandma. Mom and Dad are treated as two separate customers even though the money for the two orders is coming out of the same checking ac-

count.

Grandma is on a fixed income, but buys the cheapest thing being offered because she feels guilty if she doesn't buy something to support her grandchild's efforts. She doesn't really need another wall calendar with the flower of the month on it, but that's all she can afford.

In the last two months, I have been hit up for cookie dough for the band trip, T-shirts to save the rain forests, canned nuts and magazines for Girl Scouts, two cases of oranges for the 7th grade trip (if my child sells two, he gets a plastic whistle), a case of Diet Coke and a car magnet for the PTA, and, most recently, a custom-made garden flag with my son's drawing of some orange

daisies super-imposed on it ... for ... I'm not sure what that was for.

For each fund-raiser, these kids are expected to add the orders, collect the checks and keep the forms organized. Sometimes they are juggling two or three fund-raisers at a time. These are kids who still lose their lunch money. So, who needs to oversee all of these fund-raisers? Mom, Dad and Grandma. In effect, we are the sellers, the buyers and the organizers of these inspiring events.

Most of the items being sold are not even things I would normally buy either. At what social occasion would a black T-shirt with yellow poison dart frogs be acceptable attire? An Amazonian barn-rais-

ing perhaps? How many cases of oranges can a family eat before they rot? Maybe I can send some to the sad children.

I have so many magazine subscriptions that I've taken to burning them and using the ash to fertilize my garden. And who, in their right mind, buys three tubs of cookie dough and a case of Diet Coke?

I wonder ... Instead of all this fund-raising, couldn't I simply write a check? That's all the sad children are asking for.

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

Rolfe was forgotten by history but his mother is a legend

Thomas Rolfe was the product of what is probably the first interracial marriage in U.S. history. But that's not his claim to fame. Actually, he never became famous, but his mother sure did.



PAUL NIEMANN

At a time when the country was at war in the 1600s, it was Thomas Rolfe's mother who helped bring about temporary peace at Jamestown, Va.

The long-running wars between the native Indians and the British colonists, known as the Anglo-Powhatan wars, occurred near Jamestown in the 1600s. The first war lasted from 1610 until 1614, while the second war lasted from 1644 to 1646. The second war is the one which forced the Indians from their land.

In 1613, the English colonists captured the princess daughter of the Powhatan tribe's chief, and held her captive for nearly a year, causing an immediate ceasefire. When they finally met up

with the Powhatan chief, whose name was Chief Powhatan, the English and the Indians arranged for the daughter to marry the Englishman John Rolfe. The marriage improved relations between the English and the natives significantly, at least until the second Anglo-Powhatan war.

Her given name was Matoaka, but she took the name of "Rebecca" when she was baptized in 1612. If this cast of characters' names hasn't confused you enough by now, then here's one more: She is known throughout history not as Matoaka nor as Rebecca, but by a nickname that was given to her as a child.

Rebecca and John Wolfe, along with their infant son Thomas, traveled to England in 1616 to meet with British royalty in order to raise money and attract new settlers to the Virginia colony.

Thomas returned to Virginia nearly 20 years later and married Jane Poythress. By this time, his grandfather Chief

Powhatan had died and the chief's brother had succeeded him as the new chief. Rather than joining with the Powhatan Indians, Thomas joined the English military where, ironically, he helped take control of the land previously owned by the Powhatan Indians. Despite this, his mother is one of the most well-known Indians in history.

OK, so you probably don't remember studying about the Anglo-Powhatan wars in history class, but they did happen. There are probably a lot of things that you don't remember from history class, but that doesn't mean that they didn't happen.

Thomas's father John also played a role in history. John Rolfe was one of the first to introduce tobacco to the colonies. Thirteen years after John died, Thomas returned to the Virginia colony and took over his father's tobacco plantation.

It was Thomas' mother who became a household name, though. Her legacy

included descendants such as President Thomas Jefferson's son-in-law Thomas Mann Randolph Jr. (who married Martha Jefferson) and President Woodrow Wilson's wife, Edith.

I mentioned earlier that she went by a nickname that was given to her as a child. Her birth name was Matoaka, her Christian name was Rebecca, then she became Rebecca Wolfe when she married.

But you remember her as Pocahontas.

Paul Niemann is the author of the *Invention Mysteries* series of books. He can be reached at niemann7@aol.com

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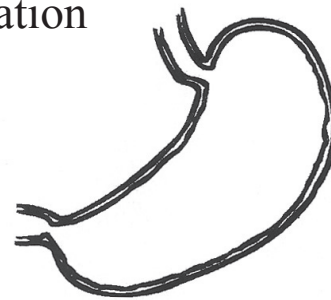
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Car's drunken drivers have NY police seeing double

EAST MEADOW, N.Y. (AP) — Police on Long Island say they've pulled two drunken drivers from one car.

Nassau County officers say they spotted a woman trying to make a three-point turn on a road in East Meadow. They say that when she couldn't complete the maneuver, she switched places with a male passenger, who took the steering wheel and completed the turn while not wearing a seat belt.

Police pulled them over and charged them with drunken driving.

As police Commissioner Lawrence Mulvey put it, "We have two individuals arrested for driving the same car intoxicated."

The man and the woman were arraigned Friday on driving while intoxicated and other charges.

The woman was ordered held on \$1,000 bail. The man was ordered held on \$5,000 bail.

They were due back in court this week.

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Dating Violence

"The person I'm going out with scares me sometimes."

What Is It?

Dating violence is controlling, abusive, and aggressive behavior in a romantic relationship. It can happen in straight or gay relationships. It can include verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, or a combination.

Controlling behavior may include:

- Not letting you hang out with your friends
- Calling or paging you frequently to find out where you are, whom you're with, and what you're doing
- Telling you what to wear
- Having to be with you all the time

Verbal and emotional abuse may include:

- Calling you names
- Jealousy
- Belittling you (cutting you down)
- Threatening to hurt you, someone in your family, or himself or herself if you don't do what he or she wants

Physical abuse may include:

- Shoving
- Punching
- Slapping
- Pinching
- Hitting
- Kicking
- Hair pulling
- Strangling

Sexual abuse may include:

- Unwanted touching and kissing
- Forcing you to have sex
- Not letting you use birth control
- Forcing you to do other sexual things

Anyone can be a victim of dating violence. Both boys and girls are victims, but boys and girls abuse their partners in different ways. Girls are more likely to yell, threaten to hurt themselves, pinch, slap, scratch, or kick. Boys injure girls more and are more likely to punch their partner and force them to participate in unwanted sexual activity. Some teen victims experience violence occasionally. Others are abused more often, sometimes daily.

If You Are a Victim of Dating Violence, You Might...

- Think it's your fault.
- Feel angry, sad, lonely, depressed, or confused.
- Feel helpless to stop the abuse.
- Feel threatened or humiliated.
- Feel anxious.
- Not know what might happen next.
- Feel like you can't talk to family and friends.
- Be afraid of getting hurt more seriously.
- Feel protective of your boyfriend or girlfriend.

You're Not Alone

- One in five teens in a serious relationship reports having been hit, slapped, or pushed by a partner.¹
- 50-80% of teens have reported knowing others who were involved in violent relationships.²
- Teens identifying as gay, lesbian, and bisexual are as likely to experience violence in same-sex dating relationships as youths involved in opposite sex dating.³
- Many studies indicate that, as a dating relationship becomes more serious, the potential for and nature of violent behavior escalates.⁴
- Young women, ages 16 to 24 years, experience the highest rates of relationship violence.⁵

Get Help

Being a victim of dating violence is not your fault. Nothing you say, wear, or do gives anyone the right to hurt you.

- If you think you are in an abusive relationship, get help immediately. Don't keep your concerns to yourself.
- Talk to someone you trust like a parent, teacher, school principal, counselor, or nurse.
- If you choose to tell, you should know that some adults are mandated reporters. This means they are legally required to report neglect or abuse to someone else.

Or Contact

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF BANKING APPLICATION TO RELOCATE BRANCH OFFICE

Notification is hereby given that Lone Star State Bank of West Texas, 2599 West 74th Street, Lubbock, Texas 79423, has filed an application with the Texas Department of Banking on or about December 2, 2008, to relocate its Big Spring, Texas branch office from 406 E FM 700, Suite 102, Big Spring, Howard County, Texas 79720 to 600 E FM 700, Big Spring, Howard County, Texas 79720. Any person wishing to comment on this application, either for or against, may file written comments with the Texas Department of Banking, 2601 North Lamar Boulevard, Austin, Texas 78705-4294, on or before the 14th day after the date of this publication. Such comments will be made a part of the record before and considered by the banking commissioner. Any person wishing to formally protest and oppose the proposed branch relocation and participate in the application process may do so by filing a written notice of protest with the Texas Department of Banking on or before the 14th calendar day after the date of this publication accompanied by a protest filing fee of \$2,500. The protest fee may be reduced or waived by the banking commissioner upon a showing of substantial hardship. #5997 December 3, 2008

Public Notice

The Glasscock County ISD will be holding a school auction on Saturday, Dec. 6, 2008 @ 8:00 a.m. School Bus Barn- West of Football Field Located at 308 W. Chambers, Garden City, Texas. Items: tires, desk, chairs, lighting fixtures, deep fryers, and many miscellaneous items. For more information contact: Tony Gomez @ 432-466-1837. #5998 December 3, 4 & 5, 2008

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BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

During this Aquarius moon, change is the norm and resistance is futile. With the wide-eyed excitement of youth you can adapt and grow with every different circumstance. Stay loose and open-minded and you won't find any of the agenda too jarring. Refuse to see anything as a chore. With the right attitude, life is a constantly thrilling adventure.



HOLIDAY MATHIS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You can't help but do some soul searching. Ask yourself a probing question or two. Spend a few minutes on this, allowing time for memories, emotions and feelings to return to you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Your budget has gotten a bit loose. You benefit from keeping closer tabs on spending. Identify unnecessary expenses and eliminate them. You'll be richer for this, and not just financially speaking.

GEMINI (May 21-June

Tomorrow's Horoscope

21). The one who has wronged you asks you to let it go. You must admit that in some way, however small, you are like the other person, and in that moment forgiveness happens.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll get together with a friend and talk about the future with hope and enthusiasm for all that it could be. In this act you honor and celebrate the higher spirit in each other.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). People need people to look up to, and you're being singled out for that position. Prepare to be raised on a pedestal and make sure that your actions are admirable. You maintain your humility in leadership.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Let yourself be pampered. You'll think better because of the break. Friends and colleagues will marvel at your ability to take such excellent care of yourself even under high-stress circumstances.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Your life is enhanced by people who communicate as well or better than you do. Arrange to spend more time with those who

are committed to the respectful and non-defensive exchange of ideas.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Can you imagine the world beyond your lifetime? It's an exercise that helps to get you into a positive frame of mind. Expanding your perspective through time requires you to engage your higher mind.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Delayed gratification is an important muscle to build. Being willing to think of the long term and build your success slowly sends a message to the universe that you are mature enough to handle all it is you desire.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Whatever challenges are ahead of you, you open your arms and declare, "Bring it on." You are a master of relaxed focus. You are able to perform strenuous tasks while remaining supple on the inside.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You can feel good about the fact that you fit in, even though appearances suggest that you're not very much like the people with whom you find a sense of belonging. You have found the com-

mon heart.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You feel that your message is so intelligent and clear that you shouldn't have to repeat it. However, not everyone around you is as receptive as you. If it's important, say it again and again.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Four-time Academy Award nominated actress Julianne Moore is a fiery Sagittarian mother. Her natal chart tells a secret about her: Mars stationed in Cancer and Uranus in Leo, the sign of creative play and children, indicate that Moore's versatility as an actress pales only next to her genius with child-rearing. She likely gains insight into her characterizations while playing with her kids.

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. © 2008 CREATORS SYN-

Annie's Mailbox : Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: The holidays are fast approaching and I need your advice. Six years ago, our youngest son was living out of state. He met a young woman, married her, and they now have two children. We met her briefly before the wedding, and she has been to our home twice for a short Christmas holiday.

Two years ago, they had three weeks of vacation during the holidays and stayed with us. It was three weeks of living hell for me. The first evening, as we were sitting down to dinner, our daughter-in-law announced that she could not eat anything we served because she was a vegetarian. This was the first I knew about it. I tried to fix something she could eat, but she ended up going to a drive-through to get her supper. The rest of their visit, we ordered out.

We were recently advised that they will be visiting us for two full months. What can I do to make this easier? My daughter suggested that I



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

fix dinner as I normally would and if she cannot eat it, we can go get her something else. That seems a bit cold to me, but I am willing to do anything. I can put up with the two of them sitting around my house doing nothing, because it's their holiday, but this eating thing is driving me crazy. Please help me out. -- M.E.

Dear M.E.: There are hundreds of delightful vegetarian dishes you could make for your daughter-in-law. Pick up a cookbook at your local bookstore or look up recipes online. Every meal should include at least two dishes that she can eat.

You also ought to ask for her help in the kitchen so you can learn how to cook what she enjoys. Take her to the grocery store with you. Let her be part of the preparations. Suggest she cook a meal that incorporates her preferences into a family dinner. Two months is an awfully long time for your son and his wife to lounge around doing nothing and taking advantage of your generosity.

Dear Annie: My husband and I recently purchased a nanny cam. However, instead of catching our nanny doing something wrong, we viewed a trusted neighbor taking our prescription pain medication. He has a key to our house and just let himself in.

What is the best way to handle this? -- Perplexed about Pills
Dear Perplexed: You could call the police, but we'd try a different tack. Tell your neighbor what you saw. You and your husband should talk to him privately.

Express your concern that stealing pain medica-

tion could indicate an addiction and that he needs help. He can discuss it with his doctor, or contact Alcoholics Anonymous (aa.org) or Narcotics Anonymous (na.org). In the meantime, get your house key back or change the locks.

Dear Annie: I'm writing about the letter from "Worried Grandmother," whose daughter owns a pit bull that has bitten four people, and now she and her dog have moved in with her sister who has a 7-month-old baby.

I've owned dogs all of my adult life, including one that was attack trained. Dogs that bite people for no reason need to be put down. Period. Although some breeds have a tendency to be more aggressive, it is my experience that the owners are inevitably at fault. There is something wrong with their upbringing when they bite like this.

Many communities have laws regarding dogs that bite and can actually force owners to put them down. That grandmother should take her concerns to the local authorities where the dog is now living and insist something be done before that baby ends up scarred for life -- or worse. -- Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Cambridge: Hundreds of readers told us the dog is a menace and should be reported to the authorities. Our thanks to all who wrote.

Dear Annie: I am a 47-year-old male, own my own business and work hard. My dad is 77, widowed and semi-mobile. He recently moved out of the busy city to live near me in the suburbs. I encouraged this so we could keep an eye on him.

The problem is, Dad comes to my house daily and is usually sitting in my driveway when I get home. The two of us didn't get along very well when I was younger and this has turned into way too much "Dad" time.

I don't want to hurt his feelings, but I'd like to lead him to other activities. My sister has told him that he is wearing out his welcome, but he says, "They are all I've got." He refuses to get involved in any of our church events and is content to spend all of his time with me. What can I

do? -- About To Lose My Mind

Dear About To: You are right that Dad needs other activities to occupy his time. He's been uprooted and has become dependent on you. Look into some programs in your area that he might like. Maybe he'd take an art class at the park district, swim at the YMCA, volunteer at the elementary school or join a seniors group. Perhaps the local community center has a photography club or he could watch a trial at the courthouse. Do a little research and then give Dad a schedule. Someone may need to accompany him the first few times until he feels comfortable, but once he starts making friends, he will get out of your hair. And when your patience gets a little frayed, ask your sister to invite Dad for a visit so you can get a break.

Dear Annie: I've been married four years. It's a second marriage for both of us. Since we've been together, I have purchased birthday and Christmas gifts for all members of his family, paid for four wedding showers and spent every Christmas Eve with them.

My son recently got married, and not one of these aunts or uncles sent him so much as a card, much less offered a bridal shower for my daughter-in-law. They have never invited them to any family functions or celebrations. Yet when my husband's sisters decided to throw an elaborate shower for yet another niece, they make all the plans and then expect me to chip in my share.

My husband says his sisters only want my company when they need something. I am tired of being called an "aunt" when the other aunts ignore my children. What should I do? There is another shower this week. -- Handout Aunt

Dear Aunt: These aunts consider you part of their family, but they don't feel the same about your children. This is not the best attitude, but it is also not unusual in second marriages. It is up to your husband to make it clear to them that you are a package deal. In the meantime, please don't stoop to their level. Be the aunt you wish they were.

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(AP Photo/Luigi Costantini)

At left, Two men wade through a flooded St. Mark's Square, in Venice, northern Italy. Above, a man with thigh-high boots walk past a gondola in a flooded in Venice.

Highest tide in 20 years floods historic Venice

By **LUIGI COSTANTINI**
Associated Press Writer

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Venice could use a bailout. The city built on water has too much of it.

Residents and tourists waded through knee-deep water Monday as they navigated the city's narrow streets and alleys, and its historic St. Mark's Square was inundated. Boxes of tourist merchandise floated inside the flooded shops around the square and even the city's famed pigeons sought refuge on rooftops and windowsills.

One of the highest tides in its history brought Venice to a virtual halt, rekindling a debate over a plan to build moveable

flood barriers in an effort to save the lagoon city from high tides.

City officials said the tide peaked at 61 inches (156 centimeters), well past the 40-inch (110-centimeter) flood mark, as strong winds pushed the sea into the city.

Alarms went off at 6:37 a.m. to alert citizens, but many residents were taken by surprise because authorities had initially not forecast such a high water level.

In St. Mark's Square, one of the city's lowest points, tourists tried to stay dry by hopping on cafe tables and chairs sticking out of the water. The water was so high that someone rowed a small speedboat

across the wide square.

"It was quite an extraordinary experience," said Michel Gorski, visiting from Brussels with his wife. "We got stuck in the hotel for half a day but we didn't suffer. We were sorry for the restaurants and stores around, but there was no panic and everyone worked really hard to clean up quickly."

Workers were unable to install the traditional raised wooden walkways used during flooding because the water rose so high the platforms would have floated away too.

"There are very few streets that are water-free," admitted city spokesman Enzo Bon.

In an ironic twist, the

flooding also idled the city's water buses because their boarding platforms were underwater.

Bon had no reports of damage to the city's architectural jewels, and the Culture Ministry was monitoring the situation.

It was the fourth highest



(AP Photo/Luigi Costantini)

People wade through high water by Venice's Rialto Bridge.

tide since 1872, when the city started keeping records. The last time Venice saw such high waters was in 1986, while the all-time record was 76 inches (194 centimeters) in 1966.

That flood forced 3,000 people to evacuate and damaged many historic buildings, but largely spared the city's art — which had long ago been removed to upper floors because of frequent flooding by tides.

"In Venice, we know how to live with high water," said Bon. "Of course there are some problems, because today's was an exceptional event."

Giancarlo Galan, the conservative governor of the surrounding Veneto region, criticized Venice's center-left administration for failing to prepare for the flood and for allegedly stonewalling a long-planned system of barriers that would rise from the seabed to ease the effect of high tides.

The \$5.5 billion project, called "Moses" after the

Biblical figure who parted the Red Sea, has been under construction for years and is expected to be completed by 2011. The company building the barriers said, had the system been in place, the city would not have been flooded Monday.

Venice Mayor Massimo Cacciari insisted the city's experts had done a good job and had revised their forecasts well before the water came in. Cacciari, who has criticized the barriers, said the government-backed project would be completed.

With low tide setting in and waters receding Monday afternoon, some tourists were charmed by the water wonderland.

"The hotel had to turn off the gas and the electricity, but they made us a nice candlelit cold lunch," said Yacob Laurent, a visitor from Paris. "They gave us boots and my wife and I went for a walk. It was a lot of fun."

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In Sunday's Big Spring Herald



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Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Stayman Stumbles

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ A K 10 8
♥ Q 7 5
♦ J 3
♣ J 10 9 4

WEST
♠ 6 3
♥ 8 6 4
♦ K 9 8 5 2
♣ A 8 3

EAST
♠ 9 7 5 4
♥ 10 9 3 2
♦ A Q
♣ 6 5 2

SOUTH
♠ Q J 2
♥ A K J
♦ 10 7 6 4
♣ K Q 7

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	3 NT	

Opening lead — five of diamonds.

Nowadays, virtually all players use the Stayman Convention to explore for a possible 4-4 major-suit fit after partner has opened the bidding with one (or two) notrump. That explains North's two-club bid in today's hand, where he knew the combined hands contained enough points for game, but first wanted to find out whether South had four spades. When South indi-

cated that he did not have four cards in either major by bidding two diamonds, North then carried on to three notrump.

While the Stayman Convention works well in the great majority of hands, it is not an undiluted blessing. It sometimes helps the opponents, as it did in this deal where West found the winning defense.

West led a diamond. East took the ace and continued with the queen, and it was at this point that West made the excellent play of overtaking the queen and continuing with the nine to force out the ten.

As a result, South went down, losing four diamond tricks and the ace of clubs. Had West played low on the queen of diamonds, declarer would have made three notrump.

West's defense, which gave declarer a diamond trick he could not have made on his own, was in part attributable to what West had learned from the bidding. Thanks to the Stayman inquiry, West knew that South could not collect more than eight tricks (four spades, three hearts and the ten of diamonds), before he would have to lead a club. It was therefore perfectly safe to overtake the diamond queen and thereby assure defeat of the contract.

Classic holiday stories inspire during tough times

By LEANNE ITALIE
Associated Press Writer

Hard times have you down this holiday season? Take a trip to the library for some inspiration from treasured stories of Christmas past.

The mortgage meltdown, job squeeze and clash between rich and poor evoke long-popular holiday tales with ghostly clarity, offering messages of hope, faith and togetherness during an intensely uncertain year, says William J. Palmer, an English professor and Charles Dickens expert at Purdue University.

"The real reason that readers have always returned to 'A Christmas Carol' year after year since the 1840s is that it provides a way of reinvigorating the spirit of Christmas that everyone wants to feel during this season, no matter how hard the times or how bleak the economic outlook," he said.

Dusty old stories mingled with more contemporary fare can touch all generations with the promise of better days ahead, says Brandon Mendelson, 25, a graduate student in history at the University of Albany in New York.

"This is how we as Americans feel in light of the recession," he said. "For my generation at least, Gen Y, we have never in our lives encountered a situation like this. We have a belief, despite evidence to the contrary, that this situation will end soon and improve for everyone. It may be childlike innocence, but we know it to be true."

A sampler of Christmas tales through the ages:

— "A Christmas Carol," by Charles Dickens, 1843.

The Tale: Ebenezer Scrooge is so consumed by greed and downright meanness that he's visited by three spirits looking to rehabilitate him at Christmas in Victorian London. They lead him on a back-and-forth journey through his past, present and future. He gets a fly-on-the-wall look at how

the Cratchit family really feels about him before he emerges kinder, gentler and joyfully tossing money around.

Lesson: It's never too late to make amends and let charity into your heart.

Notes: The story was hugely popular when released for Christmas, with an unblinking look at social injustice and gaping class disparity. By some accounts, young Dickens wrote it to pay off a debt, but high production costs cut into his profit.

— "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus," unsigned editorial in *The Sun* of New York, 1897.

The Tale: 8-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon begs for some Santa Claus truth. She follows her papa's advice to consult *The Sun*, not wanting to believe her "little friends" that St. Nick is a fraud. The newspaper's response in part: "Yes, VIRGINIA, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy."

Lesson: A little faith in the unseen can go a long way.

Notes: Written by a Sun staffer who covered the Civil War, Francis P. Church, this bit of holiday history has been reprinted in dozens of languages. The real Virginia was the daughter of a coroner's assistant who grew up to be a school teacher. She died in 1971 at 82.

— "The Gift of the Magi," by O. Henry, 1906.

The Tale: Jim and Della Young are in love, but they've hit hard times and can barely pay their \$8-a-week rent. For Christmas, she sells her prized knee-length hair to buy him a fob chain for his cherished gold pocket watch, but he sells the watch to surprise her with two fancy hair combs. Then it's time for pork chops.

Lesson: The greatest love may require painful sacrifice.

Notes: This short story inspired an episode of

"The Simpsons," a place in Steve Martin's "Cruel Shoes" and a song from the band Squirrel Nut Zippers that goes like this: "Though we've pawned away our only pleasures. These gifts we give are not in vain."

— "It's a Wonderful Life," directed by Frank Capra, 1946.

The Tale: Beset by bad luck, a bank run and shattered dreams, George Bailey (James Stewart) is about to jump off a bridge on Christmas Eve shortly after World War II. But a guardian angel in training, Clarence, grants George's wish that he had never been born. He reveals George's accomplishments and earns himself some wings to-boot.

Lesson: A person's real worth can be measured in family, friends and selfless service.

Notes: Based on "The Greatest Gift," a short story by Philip Van Doren Stern, the movie is among the most popular of all time. But it was a box office bust and fizzled at the Oscars. Some considered it communist propaganda with its indictment of the monied class and the spread-the-wealth zeal of the Building & Loan.

— "A Christmas Memory," by Truman Capote, 1956.

The Tale: "It's fruitcake weather!" 7-year-old Buddy's childlike, 60-something cousin declares after he was dumped on relatives in the rural South of the 1930s. Poor and inseparable, Buddy and Sook bake for the famous and the unsung, trek into the woods to cut down a Christmas tree and fashion kites for each other as gifts. Adult Buddy describes his grief years later over Sook's death — "a piece of news some secret vein had already received, severing from me an irreplaceable part of myself, letting it loose like a kite on a broken string."

Lesson: Friendship can offer hope and joy amid bruising poverty and social isolation.

Notes: The semi-autobiographical short story was first published in *Mademoiselle*. A young Capote wrote it before "In Cold Blood" propelled him to socialite status. A teleplay in 1966 starred Geraldine Page as Sook. In 1997, Patty Duke had the role in a Hallmark TV special.

— "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" by Dr. Seuss, 1957.

The Tale: A furry grouch of a creature lives north of Whoville and makes his way down Mount Crumpit to end infernal Christmas. He steals the gifts and trimmings of the kind and gentle Whos. But it doesn't work. Christmas arrives despite his plundering. The Grinch's heart "two sizes too

small" grows large after he meets sweet-faced little Cindy-Lou and hears the Whos singing. He returns the loot and makes new friends.

Lesson: Being together on a special day is more important than how you celebrate it.

Notes: Chuck Jones made an animated TV special in 1966 and turned the Grinch green. Jim Carrey took it live-action in 2000. Seuss has the Grinch conclude: "Maybe Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more!"

— "A Charlie Brown Christmas," 1965, TV special based on the "Peanuts" comic strip by Charles M. Schulz.

The Tale: Reliably

depressed Charlie Brown complains about the commercial corruption of Christmas as he tries to organize a Nativity play. He gets a tongue-lashing from Lucy and the gang over the puny tree he chooses as a stage set. Inspired by a reading from Linus from the Gospel of Luke heralding the birth of Christ and urging peace on Earth, the other kids learn to love the little tree as much as Charlie Brown does.

Lesson: Have the courage to stand up for those in need.

Notes: Linus says it best as he props up the overburdened tree with his precious blanket: "I never thought it was such a bad little tree. It's not bad at all, really. Maybe it just needs a little love."



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News in brief

Police unsure if Texas City woman will survive

TEXAS CITY (AP) — A bedridden woman found barely alive with maggots eating her flesh remains hospitalized at Mainland Medical Center, but police are not sure she will survive.

Retired Galveston County sheriff's deputy Linda Sue Sainz was taken to the hospital, located in Texas City, after someone called 911 late Friday night claiming to be her 38-year-old son. He said his mother had bedsores and needed an ambulance, police Capt. Brian Goetschius said. The son, who police continued to search for Tuesday, said the back door of the house would be open and hung up, Goetschius said.

Struggling with health problems, the 62-year-old woman stayed inside for weeks at a time with her son, who had lived with her almost all his life. Sainz also did not like going to doctors, her children told police.

Adult Protective Services caseworkers also are investigating.

Report: Mother of man dragged to death says autopsy shows his body was badly mangled

PARIS, Texas (AP) — The mother of a man who was dragged to death said an autopsy shows his body was so badly

mangled that it couldn't be embalmed.

Jacqueline McClelland tells Dallas-Fort Worth television station WFAA that she's seen a copy of an autopsy report on Brandon McClelland.

McClelland indicated the autopsy report says her son's skull was severely fractured and one of his legs was almost ripped off.

Authorities have said two suspects, both of them white, purposely ran over and killed the 24-year-old black man, following an argument on the way home from a late-night beer run in September.

The family has met with a special prosecutor and the case is expected to go to the grand jury next week.

Texas delegation gets proactive to stave off cuts

WASHINGTON (AP) — Members of the Texas congressional delegation say they plan to build alliances with other lawmakers as part of a campaign to head off possible deep budget cuts for NASA, officials said.

The drive comes amid expectations that billions of dollars will be shifted from various federal agencies into new programs to stimulate the economy and stabilize the financial system as President-elect Barack Obama seeks to rescue the economy, the Houston Chronicle reported Tuesday in an online story from its

Washington bureau.

Now, said Scott Pace, the director of George Washington University's Space Policy Institute, "money for space is going to be extremely tight."

"That leaves you a difficult choice," Pace added. "Change the schedule or change the program."

Adjustments are on the horizon in the Texas delegation involving Republican Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison and Democratic Rep. Nick Lampson, of Stafford.

Hutchison, a member of the powerful Appropriations Committee, has given up her leadership position in the Senate's Republican caucus and is expected to resign from Congress in 2009 to run for governor.

Also, Lampson, is leaving office in January, after he was defeated by Republican Pete Olson, of Sugar Land, in a predominantly GOP district. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi had promised Lampson the leadership of a NASA oversight subcommittee.

Woman testifies in copyright infringement lawsuit against Perry

MARSHALL (AP) — A woman testified in federal court Tuesday that a play she wrote based on her own life was taken by actor and playwright Tyler Perry and made into the blockbuster film "Diary of

a Mad Black Woman."

Donna West is suing Perry for copyright infringement in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas and wants a jury to award her family all the profits made from the film, The Marshall NewsMessenger reports for its Wednesday editions.

"I can't put my play on because the stories are basically the same and nobody wants to see that again," she said.

Perry, of Atlanta, Ga., was in court Tuesday.

West testified she developed a script titled "Fantasy of a Black Woman" based primarily on her own experiences. With West in the starring role, the play was performed in July 1991 at the Junior Black Academy of Arts and Letters at the Dallas Convention Center.

In her opening remarks to the jury, Perry's attorney, Veronica Lewis, said her client is an "immensely talented" individual "who has no need whatsoever" to use the materials of others.

Lewis noted Perry had experienced considerable success before and after the film, "so why would he need to copy Ms. West's script?"

Testimony was expected to resume Wednesday. U.S. District Judge Leonard Davis of Tyler told jurors he anticipates the case will be completed by next Tuesday.

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Thank you for the gifts th got last year. I still have m of them. I'd like a puppy, a game and a new bike. If you want to bring more stuff it's ok with me. I know I sent a letter before but this new list is what I really want. Thank you Santa.

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