

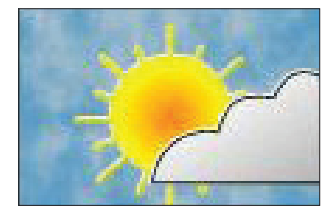
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BIG SPRING HERALD

THURSDAY
DECEMBER 11, 2008



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Officials: Kids Zone fire arson



HERALD Photo/Thomas Jenkins
 A city employee uses this back-hoe to clear away the remains of a portion of Kids Zone in Comanche Trail Park after a fire ripped through the facility late Tuesday night. According to investigators, arson is suspected.

Reward offered for information into blaze that torched park playground

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
 Staff Writer

Local officials say a fire that ripped through Kids Zone at Comanche Trail Park Tuesday night is being treated as an arson case. Big Spring Fire Marshal Carl Condray said the fire, which obliterated a portion of the facility, was reported at approximately 10:49 p.m. Tuesday and when firefighters arrived on the scene the majority of the Kids Zone's southwest corner was already in flames. "There was quite a bit involved when the fire department got on the scene," said Condray. "It took 1,100 gallons of water to get the fire out, and the firefighters worked the scene and cleared the area for about 45 minutes." Condray declined to go into details concerning how the fire was set or if

"People got out there and worked their tails off to build it because they wanted our kids to have something they could be proud of. And now you have some hoodlums come along and try to take that away from our kids. We're very, very serious about catching these people."



Carl Condray
 Big Spring Fire Marshal

Toys for the needy

Spring Tabernacle to distribute Christmas gifts to area families

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
 Staff Writer

While the holidays are a time of plenty for some, others will struggle through the season doing their best to simply put food on the table, with thoughts of Christmas gifts and other Christmas fare nothing more than a dream. One local church is hoping to brighten those dim hopes this year,



Tonn
 however, as Spring Tabernacle Ministries prepares to spread the word — and several hundred toys — to the area's low income families. "This is for the people that are having a hard

See **TOYS**, page 3A



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan
 Garth Hyder, left, and Rhonda Robertson take a break from setting up a display for use in First Church of the Nazarene's Drive-Through Christmas Nativity. The 23rd annual event will be held from 6:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. Friday through Sunday at the church, located at 1400 Lancaster.

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Report: Death penalties declining

By **MATTHEW BARAKAT**
 Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — New death sentences in the United States were at or near a three-decade low this year and the number of people executed will be the lowest since 1994, according to a new report. The nonprofit Death Penalty Information Center reports 37 executions in 2008, with no more expected for the remainder of the year. That's down 12 percent from 42 in 2007 and a 30 percent drop from 2006. The center estimates the total number of death sentences this year at 111. That is on par with the 115 death sentences imposed in 2007 that represented a 30-year low. It is more than a 60 percent drop from 1998, reflecting a steady decline over the last decade. The report from DPIC, which opposes the death penalty, also indicates that executions in the U.S. have essentially become a regional phenomenon. All but

See **REPORT**, page 3A

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Tough ride drops Fryar in standings

Herald Staff Report

LAS VEGAS — Stephanie Fryar of Big Spring had her ranking at the National Finals Rodeo drop after finishing the sixth round of the barrel racing competition with a time of 19.25.

Fryar was ranked sixth going into the frame, but has since dropped to ninth out of 15 riders.

She made up some ground in Round 7, circling the three barrels

in 14.13.

Fryar's Round 6 mark includes a five-second penalty for toppling over one of the barrels on the course.

A total of 10 rides occur to decide the national champion. The competitor with the lowest combined time from those rides wins the title.

Fryar's overall time is currently 108.98, which is more than 10 sec-

onds off the pace of 98.28 set by Jill Moody.

Moody and Maegan Reichert, who trails the leader by less than six-tenths of a point, are the only competitors to finish all seven rides without a foul.

Cassie Moseley had led the competition until Round 6, when she knocked over a barrel and registered a time of 19.03.

The NFR wraps up Sunday.

Injured Pacman might miss final weeks of season

By STEPHEN HAWKINS

AP Sports Writer

IRVING — Dallas Cowboys cornerback Adam "Pacman" Jones might miss the rest of the season because of a neck injury.

Coach Wade Phillips said Wednesday that Jones, who was injured early in the 20-13 loss at Pittsburgh, has a "herniated disk, maybe two" and will definitely miss Sunday's game against the New York Giants.

"Our people don't think it's career threatening or anything else that he would have to be operated (on) or anything like that," Phillips said. "But it is something that might put him out this year."

Jones was scheduled to be evaluated by another doctor Thursday.

"The prognosis wasn't good for him playing this year, from our people," Phillips said. "They're going to see if maybe they can re-evaluate in a few weeks or they'll say you're not going to play this year. That's what we're looking at."

For the wild-card hopeful Cowboys (8-5), Jones added to an already lengthy injury list. Running back Marion Barber (sprained right ankle), receiver Roy Williams (foot), safety Ken Hamlin (right foot) and guard Montrae Holland (ankle) were among those who did not practice Wednesday.

Jones was hurt in the first quarter Sunday when he fell on top of his muffed punt, getting caught in a scramble for the loose ball. After several players fell on him, Jones was pulled from the pile awkwardly by a Pittsburgh player. But Jones played the rest of the game.

It was Jones' first game back after a six-game suspension, the second time he has been banned by commissioner Roger Goodell for off-field issues.

Jones was not in the locker room Wednesday when it was open to reporters and not available for comment.

Phillips said he knew Jones was hurt when the coach was checking on players during the flight home.

"I ask them if they're OK, and he said, 'No, I'm not OK.' He said, 'No, my neck's hurting,'" Phillips said. "Most of them say I'm OK, I'll be OK, coach, that kind of thing. But he obviously was hurt."

See PACMAN, Page 2B

Doe signs letter with UNM



Courtesy photo

Brett Doe (sitting), a former student at Big Spring and Forsan High Schools, signed a letter of intent to play baseball for the University of New Mexico in November. Doe is a senior shortstop at Poteet High School in Mesquite. He is the son of Ronda (standing left) and Bobby Doe (standing left center). Bobby Doe is the current baseball coach at Mesquite Poteet and a former coach at Big Spring High School. He led the Steers to the state tournament in 1992 and 1994. Also pictured is Brett's grandmother Emma Doe (right) of Big Spring.

McCoy, Bradford, Tebow named finalists for Heisman Trophy

By RALPH D. RUSSO

AP College Football Writer

NEW YORK — Tim Tebow will go for two against a pair of talented quarterbacks from the Big 12 when the Heisman Trophy is handed out Saturday night.

Sam Bradford from Oklahoma and Colt McCoy from Texas joined Tebow as Heisman finalists announced Wednesday.

The last time all the Heisman finalists were quarterbacks was 2001, when Nebraska's Eric Crouch won the award and QBs held the first six spots.

Tebow, the rugged and multi-talented junior from Florida, was the first sophomore to win the Heisman last year and is trying to become the second player to win it twice.

Archie Griffin won the Heisman as a junior in 1974 for Ohio State and again in 1975.

Tebow's Gators will play Bradford and the Sooners in the BCS national championship game Jan. 8 in Miami.

"It's a good thing I don't have a vote," Bradford said while attending an event with Tebow and McCoy in Orlando, Fla., where numerous college football awards will be handed out Thursday night. "I couldn't decide. It's just an honor to be one of the guys going up to New York."

Tebow became the first college football player with 20 touchdown passes and 20 rushing touchdowns in 2007, carrying a Florida team that finished 9-4.

This season, Tebow's stats were down, but his play has still been stellar. He is fifth in the nation in passer rating (176.7) with 28 touchdown passes and only two interceptions. He hasn't been asked to run as much this season, but still has 564 yards rushing and 12 touchdowns.

Most importantly, the

Gators are 12-1 and a victory away from their second national title in three seasons.

"Tim is a winner," Florida coach Urban Meyer said during a news conference in South Florida with Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops to promote the national title game. "He wants to win. He's motivated like all of us are. But he's a team-first guy. That's why statistically he might not have the Star Wars stats like he had a year ago. However, he won 12 games. And if he could have either-or, he's going to take 12 wins and the chance to hold that crystal ball."

Tebow made a strong final case to win another Heisman, leading Florida's 14-point fourth quarter and comeback 31-20 victory in the Southeastern Conference title game against Alabama last Saturday.

See HEISMAN, Page 2B



AP file photo/Erich Schlegel

Texas quarterback Colt McCoy celebrates his second-quarter touchdown pass to wide receiver Jordan Shipley against Missouri during in an NCAA football game in Austin Oct. 18. McCoy was one of three quarterbacks named a Heisman finalist along with Florida's Tim Tebow and Oklahoma's Sam Bradford.

Sports in brief

Big Spring basketball boosters meeting Monday

The Big Spring Steers Basketball Booster Club is holding its first parents meeting at 6 p.m. Monday in the Athletic Training Center.

All parents of Steers' basketball players from junior high to varsity are encouraged to attend.

For questions, call Sam Segundo at 268-3025.

Amigo's Washer Club sets date for winter tourney

The Amigo's Washer Club is holding its Winter Washer Tournament Saturday at the La Verda

Club.

It's a two-man team competitions with the entry fee being \$20 per team. First, second and third place prizes will be given away.

All wanting to play must be registered by 12:30 p.m. the day of the tourney.

For more information, call 466-9969.

Obituaries

Jacob Burcham



Jacob Oliver Burcham, 31, of Big Spring died Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2008, from injuries in an accident. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, Dec. 12, 2008, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel with Pastor Courtney Ballard of the Cowboy Church officiating. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park.

The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. Thursday at the funeral home.

He was born Dec. 22, 1976, in Big Spring and married Cherrie McSwain Feb. 25, 2000, in Sand Springs.

He graduated fourth in his class at Lake Arthur High School and was listed in Who's Who. He was a published poet and a song writer and singer.

Jacob was a carpenter and a jack of all trades. He was a great husband, son, uncle and brother. He loved his family, kids, cars and making people laugh. Jacob had been employed by Pecos Petroleum as a truck driver for the last two years.

Survivors include his wife, Cherrie Lee Burcham of Big Spring; his father and stepmother, David and Cindy Burcham of Big Spring; his mother, Darlene Burcham of Big Spring; one brother, Joshua Burcham of Big Spring; his paternal grandmother, Jewell Burcham of Big Spring; his maternal grandmother, Melba Passmore of Big Spring; a nephew, Caleb David Burcham of Big Spring; and two step-sisters, Charlotte Carillo of Big Spring and Tracy Cooley of Gail.

He was preceded in death by his grandfathers, Phillip Burcham and R.H. Rowden, and his father-in-law, Dewey McSwain.

The family suggest memorials to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, Tenn., 38105-1942.

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

Paid obituary

Jerry Don McIntyre

Jerry Don McIntyre, 50, of Stanton died Sunday, Dec. 7, 2008, in Martin County. Funeral services will be held at 2:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 11, 2008, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel. Interment will follow at 4:30 p.m. at the Andrews North Cemetery in Andrews.

He was born Sept. 12, 1958, in Chickasha, Okla. Survivors include his son and daughter-in-law, Jeremy and Amanda McIntyre of Elizabeth City, N.C.; his mother and stepfather, Wanda and Don Williams of Mission; one brother, Johnny McIntyre of Grand Prairie; two sisters, Anita Howell of Coos Bay, Ore., and Gaye Springer of San Angelo; and one grandchild.

He was preceded in death by his father, John McIntyre. Arrangements under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring. Online condolences can be made at: www.npwelch.com

Evelyn Redman

Evelyn Redman, 77, of Big Spring died Monday, Dec. 8, 2008, in a Lubbock hospital. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Take Note

• Donnavan J. Silvas, 1, of Big Spring, died Friday, Dec. 5, 2008 in a local hospital. The parents are in need of help with burial expenses. All donations can be made at Nalley-Pickle and Welch Funeral Home and Crematory of Big Spring.

• West Texas Opportunities Inc., through a Job Access Reverse Commute project with the Texas Department of Transportation offers transportation to employment in Midland, on a limited schedule, Monday through Friday each week. This fixed route currently leaves Big Spring at 7 a.m. and makes a stop at the EZ Rider bus connection in downtown Midland. The route leaves Midland for the return to Big Spring at 4:15 p.m. As a promotional introduction, no fare is charged. Beginning April 1, the daily fare will be from \$3 to \$8, round-trip, depending on the number of passengers using the service. For more information, call Victor Enriquez, JARC coordinator, at West Texas Opportunities, (800) 245-9028.

Police blotter

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

- JUAN MORAN, 34, of 2507 Carol, was arrested Wednesday on a charge of driving while license invalid – DWI related.
- QUINCY LAMAR HENRY, 19, of 1502 Sycamore, was arrested Wednesday on charges of failure to identify as a fugitive from justice – giving false information, evading arrest/detention, fraudulent use of identifying information and a Howard County warrant.
- TIMMY WAYNE ROGERS, 29, of 3008 Chevron Rd., was arrested Wednesday on a charge of Class A assault.
- CHANCE RAY LANG, 22, of 4200 Hamilton, was arrested Wednesday on charges of Class A assault and resisting arrest.
- ROBERT GONZALEZ, 43, of 707 N. Scurry, was arrested Wednesday on charges of failure to maintain financial responsibility and driving while license suspended/invalid.
- ALEXANDER CALDERON QUINTANA, 28, of 610 N.W. 10th St., was arrested Thursday on a charge of public intoxication.
- THEFT was reported:
 - in the 1000 block of Birdwell Lane.
 - in the 900 block of Willia.
- FRAUDULENT USE/POSSESSION OF IDENTIFYING INFORMATION was reported in the 100 block of 10th Street.
- FAILURE TO IDENTIFY AS A FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE – GIVING FALSE INFORMATION was reported in the 100 block of 10th Street.
- EVADING ARREST/DETENTION was reported in the 100 block of 10th Street.
- BURGLARY OF A VEHICLE was reported:
 - in the 2000 block of Birdwell Lane.
 - in the 1900 block of 25th Street.
 - in the 2900 block of Interstate Highway 20.

Sheriff's report

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

- Note – Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 60 inmates at the time of this report.
- JUAN JOSE ACUNA JR., 25, was transferred to the county jail Wednesday by the BSPD on a Midland County warrant for bondsman off bond – driving while license invalid.
- JOSHUA LANE HOWELL, 26, was transferred to the county jail Wednesday by the BSPD on a charge of driving while intoxicated.

Fire/EMS

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

- TRAUMA was reported near the intersection of 22nd Street and Lancaster. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 3800 block of W. Highway 80. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 100 block of Cedar. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1800 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 300 block of Aylesford. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1900 block of Scurry. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 600 block of Driver Road. One person was transported to SMMC.

Support Groups

- THURSDAY**
 - Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m.; women's meeting; 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. Non-smoking closed discussion meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.
- FRIDAY**
 - AA open discussion meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at 605 Settles. Open Big Book study meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.
- SATURDAY**
 - Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. Open podium/speakers meeting 615 Settles 8 p.m. until 9 p.m. Open birthday night, no smoking meeting the last Saturday of each month at 8 p.m.

Your Local Weather

Fri 12/12	Sat 12/13	Sun 12/14	Mon 12/15	Tue 12/16
62/42	69/47	75/42	61/32	51/35
Partly cloudy skies in the morning will give way to cloudy skies during the.	Windy with a mix of sun and clouds.	Sunny. Highs in the low 70s and lows in the low 40s.	Sunny. Highs in the low 60s and lows in the low 30s.	Times of sun and clouds. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the mid 30s.

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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

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 Beacieants meets at 6:30 p.m. for a meal with meeting that begins at 7:30 p.m. at 221 Main.
- Big Spring Commandry meets at 7:30 p.m. at 221 Main.
- The Christian Motorcyclists Association meets at 7:30 p.m. at the Dragon Restaurant, 1300 S. Gregg. Everyone is welcome. Call 263-3869 for more information.

TUESDAY

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

WEDNESDAY

- Optimist Club meets at 7 a.m. in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- Free blood pressure screenings from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Salvation Army, 811 W. Fifth St., provided by InHome Care.
- Downtown Lions Club meets at noon at the Howard College Cactus Room.
- Duplicate Bridge Club meets at 1 p.m. in the Big Spring Country Club.
- Eagles Lodge Ladies Auxiliary meets at 7 p.m. in the Eagles Lodge, 703 W. Third.

THURSDAY

- Gideon International Big Spring Camp U42060 meets at 7 a.m. in Herman's Restaurant.
- Kiwanis Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.

Lottery

Results of the Lotto Texas drawing Wednesday night:
Winning numbers drawn: 9-11-22-25-41-43.
Number matching six of six: 0.

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Wednesday night:
Winning numbers drawn: 5-8-21-26-27.
Number matching five of five: 0.

The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Wednesday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 8-3-7-1. Sum It Up: 19.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Wednesday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 1-7-1. Sum It Up: 9.

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Source: Yanks, Sabathia reach agreement

RONALD BLUM

AP Baseball Writer

LAS VEGAS — CC Sabathia and the New York Yankees agreed Wednesday on the framework for a \$161 million, seven-year contract, the richest for a pitcher in baseball history.

The Yankees and Sabathia's agents still need to work out all the details, a baseball official familiar with the talks

told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal has not been completed and the pitcher must pass a physical.

Sabathia has the right to opt out after three seasons and become a free agent again.

"I'm sure every team in baseball would love to have

him. He's a guy who's an intimidating factor on the mound," Yankees captain Derek Jeter said at the winter meetings.

Yankees general manager Brian Cashman left Las Vegas on Tuesday for a quick trip to the pitcher's home in the San Francisco area, sparking the final stages of negotiations.

"There's a lot of layers in the process. Until that pro-

cess is completed I'm kind of prevented from saying too much," Cashman said. "Legally I've got to protect myself. And, you know, you're never done until you're done, and so, we're not done."

Cashman made a six-year offer to the former AL Cy Young Award winner on Nov. 14, the first possible day to negotiate with free agents,

and met with Sabathia in Las Vegas on Sunday and Monday. He had told the pitcher's agents that it would be helpful, he was willing to travel to meet with the Sabathia and his family in California.

At 3 p.m. Tuesday, Cashman received the invitation.

"I said, 'Let's go,'" he recalled. "When the opportunity was given, that's a flight I had to take."

HEISMAN

Continued from Page 1B

As a former winner, he also has a vote.

Tebow said 1996 Heisman winner Danny Wuerffel suggested he not tell people what he did with his vote.

"I'm taking his advice," Tebow said.

Bradford has directed the highest scoring team in major college football history, leading the nation in passer rating (186.3) and TD passes (48)

while throwing for 4,464 yards.

The Sooners have scored 702 points and became the first college team in 89 years to reach 60 points in five consecutive games when they won the Big 12 title game 62-21 over Missouri last Saturday.

"Players just follow him because of his commitment to them and how tough he is and how important the team is to him," Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops said.

McCoy, who had the imposing task of following Vince

Young as Texas' starting quarterback, has turned out to be a multiple threat much like his predecessor.

McCoy set a major college record with his 77.6 completion percentage, breaking the mark set by Daunte Culpepper for Central Florida, and is the Longhorns' leading rusher with 576 yards and 10 touchdowns.

Texas finished 11-1, with a victory against Oklahoma.

"If you're going to play quarterback in our league, you better be able to put a lot of points on the board,"

McCoy said. "There are just so many good offenses in this league."

That victory wasn't enough to get McCoy and Texas into the Big 12 or national championship game instead of the Sooners.

Heisman organizers generally invite three to five players, based on vote totals.

Texas Tech quarterback Graham Harrell was surprisingly not invited to the ceremony, to be held at the Sports Museum of America in downtown New York for the first time.

Harrell, the latest in a long line of prolific passers to run coach Mike Leach's Air Raid offense, leads the nation with 4,747 yards passing and has thrown 41 touchdown passes. He also led Texas Tech to a school-record 11 victories and a tie for first in the Big 12 South with Texas and Oklahoma.

AP Sports Writer Tim Reynolds in Hollywood, Fla., contributed to this report.

PACMAN

Continued from Page 1B

After starting the first six games for the Cowboys, Jones was suspended by Goodell on Oct. 14, a week after the cornerback got into an alcohol-related

scuffle with one of his bodyguards during a private party at an upscale Dallas hotel.

The bodyguard was part of a security detail employed by the team to help keep the player out of trouble.

Goodell initially issued an indefinite suspension that he said would last at least four games. Jones was allowed to return to practice Nov. 24, but wasn't cleared to play until the Pittsburgh game.

Jones missed the entire 2007 season because of multiple incidents while with the Tennessee Titans, who traded him to Dallas during the offseason. Before playing last week, Jones had missed 22 of 28 games since the end of the 2006 season because of suspensions.

Jones had 28 tackles and a team-high 13 pass breakups in his seven games with the Cowboys.

"He did play some. I think that helped some," Phillips said. "We know a lot more about him as far as the player is concerned. It's up to him now. I told him he's being tested. He is."

When asked if Jones' attitude had been different since his return to the team after being away nearly six weeks because of the latest suspension, Phillips said that had never been an issue with the Cowboys.

"He practices and meets and does all the right things," Phillips said. "We've never had a problem with his on-the-field and practice attitude. He wanted to play and I thought he played pretty well in the game. He was just getting back."

Barber, who didn't make the trip last week to Pittsburgh, worked with trainers on the side Wednesday. Phillips said he would be re-evaluated Thursday to see "how he feels and where he is."



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Santa & Mrs. Santa - Mr. and Mrs. Roger Cline
Santa Elf - Jeremy Gutierrez
Cody Hughes pulled Santa Sleigh
Tom Gutierrez provided trailer for Santa Sleigh
Rick Nunez, Jr. assisted w/line up
Reba Smith assisted w/line up
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HERALD photo/Brandy Martinez

Local Rotarian Wayland Pierce hands out a dictionary to a Marcy Elementary student this morning. This marks the third year Rotary members have distributed dictionaries as Christmas gifts to local third-graders.

TOYS

Continued from page 1A

time making ends meet," said Mona Lou Tonn, pastor of Spring Tabernacle Church. "We don't want any children to have to go without this Christmas holiday."

Tonn invited parents and "grandparents who are raising their grandchildren" to take part in the church's annual toy drive, which targets children 13 years of age and younger.

"They just need to show up at the church Friday at 10 a.m.," said Tonn. "They will be able to pick up presents for the children."

Tonn said this year's effort has even drawn some help from far

"We applaud the wonderful people of Big Spring for their generosity and giving ... It's been a lot of work, but it's so rewarding."

Mona Lou Tonn

away.

"Brother Terry Miller and his wife, Ingrid, are from Canada," said Tonn. "They have travelled here from their home just to help us get everything ready. Also, Wayne and Lois Peters are here to help, and they are also from Canada. It's really a special thing to have people

travel so far just to help brighten these children's Christmas.

"We applaud the wonderful people of Big Spring for their generosity and giving," said Tonn. "We've put together wonderful presents that have been donated for the children. It's been a lot of work, but it's so rewarding. We also give praise and honor to the Lord for all his goodness and love He's bestowed on His people. What a mighty God we serve."

The church is located at 1209 Wright St. For more information, contact Tonn at (432) 270-0160.

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

REPORT

Continued from page 1A

four of the 37 executions this year occurred in the South and Texas, with Ohio and Oklahoma providing the exceptions. Half of the executions occurred in Texas, where 18 inmates were put to death.

Virginia executed four prisoners. Georgia and South Carolina executed three each; Florida, Oklahoma, Mississippi and Ohio each executed two.

All of the executions

in 2008 occurred after April 16, when a U.S. Supreme Court decision on the use of lethal injections ended what had been a de facto moratorium in place for almost seven months.

Experts differed on the moratorium's effect. Richard Dieter, the DPIC's executive director, had feared the numbers would spike in 2008 as states rushed to implement executions that had been on hold.

The fact that there wasn't a spike, he said, demonstrates the inherent problems with the death penalty, includ-

ing the struggle to ensure a fair appeal process.

But Richard Bonnie, a law professor at the University of Virginia and an expert on capital punishment, said it was expected that it would take some time after the moratorium was lifted for the normal pace of executions to resume, and he does not consider the drop in executions in 2008 as proof of a long-term decline in death penalties.

What is more important, Bonnie said, is the drop in death sentences. That data is unaffected

by the moratorium, which banned only executions, not death sentences handed down by judges and juries.

Death sentences have been on the decline more a decade. Bonnie said that while a majority of Americans still favor the death penalty, their fervor for it was waned.

Dieter also said that recent death-row exonerations prompted by DNA evidence have planted seeds of doubt in the public's mind about carrying out an irrevocable punishment.

On a state level, changes in the law have also made a difference. In Texas, for instance, a 2005 law gives juries the option of imposing a life sentence without parole. Before then, any sentence short of execution carried the possibility of parole after 40 years in prison, said Kristen Houle, executive director of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty.

As a result, Texas has imposed only 10 death sentences in 2008, according to Houle's organization, the fewest since the U.S. Supreme

Court reinstated capital punishment in 1976.

Other states have made changes -- North Carolina and other states have made it easier for prosecutors to seek a life sentence instead of a death penalty.

New Jersey abolished the death penalty at the end of 2007.

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Faye Harry, 94, died Sunday. Funeral Services will be at 2:00 PM Thursday at First Baptist Church in Ackerly with burial at the Ackerly Cemetery. The family will receive friends from 12:00 Noon until 1:45 PM Thursday at the First Baptist Church in Ackerly.

FIRE

Continued from page 1A

an accelerant was used, but said the individuals involved in setting the fire should be looking over their shoulders.

"We're working very hard to develop leads and suspects," said Condray. "People in the community are going to hear things, rumors about who may have done this. In an investigation like this, it's vital they report what they hear to the authorities. It's better to report it and it turn out to be nothing than to sit on their hands while this kind of reckless behavior continues."

Condray said Big Spring Area Crimestoppers has gotten involved, offering a reward of up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest and indictment of the person or persons involved in the fire, and the city of Big Spring has even upped the ante.

"The city has agreed to match the Crimestoppers reward, all the way up to the \$1,000," said Condray. "The city's leadership is

pretty angry about this.

"The damages caused by the fire are estimated between \$30,000 and \$50,000, and all of it was done with volunteer labor and money. People got out there and worked their tails off to build it because they wanted our kids to have something they could be proud of. And now you have some hooligans come along and try to take that away from our kids. We're very, very serious about catching these people."

Condray said Tuesday's fire wasn't the first reports of vandalism to come out of the park in the past few weeks, as vandals -- possibly the same vandals that set fire to Kids Zone -- destroyed a Comanche Trail Park landmark over the weekend.

"The totem pole that's been in the park for so many years was chopped down," said Condray.

"We believe it happened over the weekend, sometime between Saturday and Monday morning, when it was found. That totem pole had been a part of the park for many years, and it represented a lot of good memories for a lot of people. It's a disgrace what these vandals have done."

Condray said he hopes people in the community get angry about the vandalism and decide to step up and get involved.

"The people of Big Spring should be furious right now," he said firmly. "These people are attacking the things we know and love. They are depriving our children of what they deserve. They are destroying precious memories. It's time for people to stand up and say, 'We're not going to put up with this anymore.' Someone out there knows who did

this, now they just need to pick up the phone."

To reach Crimestoppers, call 264-TIPS (8477). Information can also be left with the Fire Marshal's Office at 264-2305, or the Big

Spring Police Department at 264-2550.

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

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Mary Lee Carson and Jenna Ware cordially invite old friends and new to our open house a party! Thursday, December 11 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Dahmer's Building, 204 S. Main to celebrate the season, each other and their really fun oh-so-cool super fun, super groovy very neat well come see for yourself, brand new adventure(s), labeled alphabetically, lost dog literacy and Madagascar.

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EXP. 12/30/08

AN ENCOURAGING WORD

By Eddy Pitchford

Ask twenty people about peace and you may receive thirty answers. Peace, to some, means working for relief agencies and public charities. Others think of personal peace and therefore, desire solitude and meditation. Yet others reflect on marital harmony brought on by marriage counseling. Certainly, some individuals equate peace with the ongoing negotiations between nations.

While peace means different things to different people, the Prince of Peace exceeds all human peace efforts. Jesus Christ invites people to experience peace with God, thereby bringing an inner peace that passes all understanding. The peace offered by Jesus is received when we give glory to God through faith, praise and obedience.

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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.

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OTHER VIEWS

U.S., Mexico must focus on drug war

President-elect Barack Obama's new national security team has no end of challenges before it, but here's one that's both very close to home and very easy to overlook: the war on drugs.

The war is expensive for us - the federal and state governments spend about \$50 billion a year combating drug abuse and incarcerating dealers and users - but it is becoming increasingly deadly for our neighbors.

In the past year, some 4,000 Mexican citizens have died in drug-related killings, most of them in battles for control of drug shipments to the United States.

Mexico not only produces heroin, methamphetamine and marijuana, but it also is the shipment point for most of the drugs smuggled into the United States from other countries.

Powerfully corrupt and ruthless drug organizations battling for dominance of the illegal drug trade and money-laundering continue to spread domestic terror in Mexico. Nightmares continue with unabated brutality.

And all of this — to say nothing of like tragedies here at home — to feed the habits of drug users in the United States. Perhaps Obama's national security team finally will rethink three decades of drug war futility. The focus must be on reducing demand, which means treating drug users instead of locking them up for years, and making drug treatment programs available to everyone who asks.

Two events in recent weeks should shock people on both sides of the border, even those calloused by decades of drug violence and corruption.

•Armando Rodriguez, a crime reporter for El Diario de Juarez in Ciudad Juarez, was fatally gunned down Nov. 13 outside his home as he was preparing to take his daughter to school. He recently had started working out of the Mexican newspaper's bureau across the border in El Paso, Texas, after receiving death threats.

•The Mexican government arrested its own former drug czar, Noe Ramirez, and accused him of taking some \$450,000 in bribes from drug lords for passing them secret information about drug investigations. Ramirez was among seven Mexican federal officials arrested in a crackdown ordered by Mexican President Felipe Calderon.

The Committee to Protect Journalists reports that 24 journalists in Mexico, including Rodriguez, have been killed since 2000 and that seven were slain because of their investigations. Five Mexican journalists have been killed this year alone.

Drug cartels have stifled the news media with threats and violence.

Editors of Mexican newspapers and American journalists working there speak privately about how they have withheld inflammatory information or withdrawn reporters from stories for fear of violent reprisals. But many journalists, like Rodriguez, have refused to be cowed.

In Mexico, the word *la mordida* — literally, "the little bite" — is used to describe the petty bribes that grease the system or avoid the law. Ramirez, the former drug czar, and some of his former colleagues are accused of turning the little bite into a gigantic mouthful.

America's war on drug is linked inextricably with Mexico's, and that makes it a national security issue of the first order. Obama said little about the war on drugs during his campaign, except to express general support for more drug treatment and more enlightened sentencing guidelines.

He should order his new national security team into the breach. Yes, there's the Palestinian question and Afghanistan and Iraq and Korea and other international hot spots. But the war on drugs is being fought, and lost, very close to home.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

My grown-up Christmas list

Ah, it's Christmas time in the Crossroads area.

I recently sat down with my daughter and helped her prepare her list of requests for ol' Saint Nick, a list she was more than happy to make in two rather lengthy parts since it

would be going to two households instead of just one. Yet another of the many joys of being a single dad, right next to explaining the female biological rights of passage, but I digress.

Despite my hopes, world peace and goodwill toward man failed to take up any slots on her list, and while she's certainly cognizant of the meaning of Christmas and the necessity of these things, she also has a very keen sense of commerce. She even mentioned to me she was leaving one of the pricier items off her list this year because she had heard tough economic times had reached the North Pole, as well.

As we finished up her lists — one for me to send to Santa, and the other for her mother to mail off — it occurred to me how long it had been since I had made a Christmas list of my own. Of course, when you're a father there's really no need for a list because you already know what you're going to get: cologne,

socks and drawers (the kind you put your rear-end in).

So I decided it was time to make my own grown-up Christmas list, and while the chances of Saint Nick taking pity on this old newspaper reporter is slim, I figure I have nothing to lose. So, here it is.

Purple states

OK, so I'm not really all that sure you get purple if you mix red and blue — it probably looks more like stage blood — but it's the best I could do on short notice. Haven't we had enough of the fighting? The election is over, people. Just like every other competition, there had to be winners and losers. Obama won. Get over it.

Let the bailouts rain down

It all started with \$700 billion dollars, and just like many analysts feared, the rest of the nation is heading to Capitol Hill with their pockets turned out and hands open wide.

Current discussions seem to be headed toward a \$15 billion bailout for the Big 3 automakers, a far cry from what the companies asked for in the beginning. Of course, there is always the chance they knew the government would look for a way to downsize their share of the U.S. fat cash and simply asked for much more than they really needed. Isn't that what the electric and gas companies do every time they want a rate increase?

And all of that's just well and dandy, but I have one question: Where the heck is my

bailout? After years of paying massively inflated utility and gasoline prices and marked-up tallies at the grocery stores with no real cost-of-living increase in my pay, I think it's safe to say I'm closer to going under than Chevrolet or Ford.

Bailouts? Why not. Helping out the big guys — remember, these are the folks that took private jets to their first set of meetings on Capitol Hill — with money from the little guys isn't just a way of life, it's the American Dream. Right?

Crack the Yuletide whip for my sis

My sister, Melinda, likes to complain about how I never write columns for or about her, so I figure I can kill two birds with one stone here. Embroiled in what I can only describe as a bitter divorce that could honestly have her and her soon-to-be ex-husband cutting coffee tables in half, she could certainly use some of that magical stuff Santa uses to motivate his elves and reindeer to use on her attorney.

Granted, there is something basically wrong with asking Santa to intervene in a divorce of all things, and this may very well land me back on the naughty list. However, a lifetime ago my sister saved my life, and if I didn't add her to my grown-up Christmas list, either my sister or karma will most likely find me, and the results won't be pretty. Love ya, sis.

Help people "get it"

Vandals tried to burn

down Kids Zone in Comanche Trail Park Tuesday night, and while this trespass will warrant prayers for their souls from the forgiving, there's no such luck for this cynical writer.

They pretty much obliterated the southwest corner of the play area, destroying the one of the first slides my daughter ever got up the courage to travel down alone. I can still see her in my mind, all bundled up and looking at me for reassurance, gently stooping down to make her trip. So forgive me if I'm unable or unwilling to turn the other cheek.

Maybe Santa can find a non-violent way of dealing with these hoodlums. Maybe he can interject some Christmas spirit in their cold hearts and help them see the error of their ways.

Santa sees and hears everything, right? He knows who did it. Maybe he'll drop a dime on these idiots before they hurt someone. Of course, if he doesn't, I'll have to talk to the district attorney about filing charges against him for aiding and abetting these dimwits. Some time in the hole might loosen ol' Mr. Claus' tongue.

All the sarcasm and cynicism aside, I hope everyone — except maybe the Kids Zone vandals — have a safe and happy holiday.

Merry Christmas West Texas.

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



THOMAS
JENKINS



DAVID
LIMBAUGH

Fighting the relentless liberal tide

If there's one thing I've learned in my 55 years, it's that liberals are relentless and will win through sheer persistence if conservatives abandon the fight.

The incoming U.S. government stands poised to forever alter the balance between governmental power and individual liberties and to replace the free market economy with socialist planning.

And what do we hear from many conservatives? That we should be encouraged that President-elect Obama has announced certain key centrist appointees and that we should convince ourselves this means he will not pursue the agenda he plainly tells us he will pursue. Savvy liberals must be laughing themselves silly.

Pro-life forces have made inroads into the collective consciousness and against the abominable practice of abortion, and they've been gratified by the appointments of two strict constructionist

justices in Roberts and Alito. That said, Americans have just elected the most life-hostile president in our history, who got a complete pass on social issues during the campaign and who might be in a position to appoint three or more liberal activist judges.

But what are many conservatives saying? That Republicans got trounced because of the Christian right's uncompromising positions on social issues. That analysis doesn't square in theory (the majority of Americans are not pro-choice) or in reality (social issues were on the backburner in the national election, and social conservatism triumphed in state ballot initiatives, even in the liberal California).

Liberal secularists tell us Christians are insinuating themselves into government and thereby are threatening our liberties by intruding on the sacred prohibition against church-state interaction. They say our liberty tradition is grounded in secularism.

The depth of their historical and constitutional misapprehensions are only exceeded by the blindness today on both sides of the ide-

ological spectrum as to what is actually going on in this area. Secularists continue virtually unchecked in their indefatigable quest to purge Christianity from the public square.

Those who accused me of hyperbole for arguing in my book "Persecution" that secular liberals are waging war against Christianity should look at what's going in our nation's "godless" Capitol Visitor Center and in state capitols throughout the land. Many secular activists openly admit their hostility to Christianity; they find it offensive and intolerable. The New Atheists blame it -- and other religions -- for most of the evils and violence in history and the present. All the while, secularists insist on imposing their worldview into the policy mix. And the response from many "enlightened conservatives" is that we need to keep our faith in the closet.

This same feckless conservative response has occurred with the war on terror, including Iraq. Largely because of the poll-ignoring statesmanship of President Bush, we have not suffered a

major terrorist attack on our soil since 9/11 and have almost consummated our victory in Iraq. Yet conservatives can't wait to join the liberal narrative that President Bush made a mess of the whole thing. I'd hate to see what our fair-weather friends would have said if we'd sustained additional terrorist attacks at home and lost in Iraq.

Those of us who keep fighting against the unyielding liberal tide are not motivated by partisanship or blind ideology but a commitment to preserving America's freedom tradition. If we give up the fight because we lack the stomach for political warfare or swallow the seductive lie that "getting along" is more important than fighting for principles, the demise of the nation is all but a foregone conclusion.

With the financial meltdown and other factors, a perfect storm has developed for Obama to bring his socialist shock and awe to this country, and we're told not only that we can't complain but also that we must rejoice along with him.

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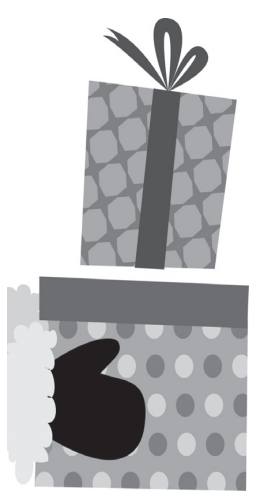
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BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

If you were sleepwalk-ing through a certain part of your life, you will now a w a k e n . Mars and U r a n u s square off to startle and jolt us from our comfort-able groove. This is not an aspect known for its pleasing and benevo-lent effect; however, its significance is indisputable. We have to know what's not nor-mal to appreciate what's normal.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You have nerve and verve. It's a matter of picking your battles. Not every situation has the potential to bend to your



HOLIDAY MATHIS

Legals

The Coahoma Independent School District will hold a public hearing on the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) on Thursday, December 18, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. The AEIS is an annual rating of school districts by the Texas Education Agency. The state agency looks at criteria such as attendance figures, dropout rates, and student achievement on TAKS exams. This report will be available over the Internet at: www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2008/district.srch.html. The hearing will give the public a chance to discuss the report. Re-view copies of the report will be available as well at the administra-tion office. #5995 December 4 & 11, 2008

Legals

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION AND INTENT TO OBTAIN WATER QUALITY PERMIT PROPOSED PERMIT NO. WQ0004872000

APPLICATION. Colorado River Municipal Water District, P.O. Box 869, Big Spring, Texas 79721, which operates a water reclamation facility, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for a proposed Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimina-tion System (TPDES) Permit No. WQ0004872000 (EPA I.D. No. TX0131857) to authorize the dis-charge of reverse osmosis concen-trate effluent at a volume not to ex-ceed a daily average flow of 525,000 gallons per day. The facility is located west of the Big Spring Wastewater Treatment Plant on the north side of Eleventh Place, ap-proximately 800 feet east of the in-tersection of Farm-to-Market Road 700 and Eleventh Place, and ap-proximately 0.6 mile south of the intersection of Farm-to-Market Road 700 and Interstate Highway 20 in the City of Big Spring, How-ard County, Texas. The discharge route is from the plant site to Beals Creek; thence to the Colorado River below J.B. Thomas Reser-voir. TCEQ received this applica-tion on November 14, 2008. The permit application is available for viewing and copying at the Colo-rado River Municipal Water District Office, 400 East 24th Street, Big Spring, Texas.

ADDITIONAL NOTICE. TCEQ's Executive Director has determined the application is administratively complete and will conduct a techni-cal review of the application. After technical review of the application is complete, the Executive Director may prepare a draft permit and will issue a preliminary decision on the application. Notice of the Applica-tion and Preliminary Decision will be published and mailed to those who are on the county-wide mailing list and to those who are on the mailing list for this application. That notice will contain the deadline for sub-mitting public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ PUBLIC MEETING. You may submit public comments or request a public meeting on this application. The purpose of a public meeting is to provide the opportunity to submit comments or to ask questions about the application. TCEQ will hold a public meeting if the Execu-tive Director determines that there is a significant degree of public in-terest in the application or if re-quested by a local legislator. A public meeting is not a contested case hearing. OPPORTUNITY FOR A CON-TESTED CASE HEARING. After the deadline for submitting public comments, the Executive Director will consider all timely comments and prepare a response to all rele-vant and material, or significant public comments. Unless the ap-plication is directly referred for a contested case hearing, the re-sponse to comments, and the Executive Director's decision on the application, will be mailed to everyone who submitted public comments and to those persons who are on the mailing list for this application. If comments are received, the mailing will also provide instructions for request-ing reconsideration of the Ex-ecutive Director's decision and for requesting a contested case hearing. A contested case hearing

Tomorrow's Horoscope

vision. But there is one area that might be easy to fix and you can start there.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You've been so gener-ous lately. Can you go a whole day without volun-teering yourself for thankless tasks? Consider that taking on the prob-lems of the world might be a symptom that you're dodging a personal issue.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're not dreaming it -- the pressure is on. Someone is checking you out or pushing to see how well you can perform on the spot. Walk tall and straight, stay calm and smile only if it feels natu-ral to you.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You very well might be able to change the world just by being happy. Someone will not only be charmed by your joie de vivre, he or she will take on that buoyant energy and pay it for-ward.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your intuition is so sharp that it nearly pains you not to act on it. Besides that, your timing is flaw-less. So get moving, espe-cially if the thing you want to do seems at all frightening. This is as bold as you're going to be for weeks.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Some people are afraid to fail, and others are afraid to succeed. The

only thing you're afraid of is status quo. The idea of staying static and not improving gives you the shivers. So you're getting busy and thinking bigger today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Forgiveness is for you. Use your evanescent sense of power to help you break a stalemate you have been experienc-ing with someone, despite the current circumstance, really is dear to you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You have a special brand of care that only you can give. A partner is needing your attention and is too proud to ask for it directly. Address this person using your renowned sensitivity and you will be rewarded in kind.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're burning brighter. You're able to do more in the first three hours of being awake than you did all day yes-terday. You are able to see how things are con-nected in a way you did-n't notice before.

C A P R I C O R N (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The French word "ennui" best describes the mild degree of weariness you may be feeling this morning. However one powerful conversation changes all of that. Suddenly life gets vibrant again.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You don't

have to be busy every day. There's a fine line now between productivity and wasted energy. If you feel like hibernating, let yourself do it. Positive change follows this fallow time.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Much is attempted on this ambitious day by you and your team, and there will be a few memorable successes to celebrate. There will also be mis-takes, so be sure to make yours a spectacular one.

CELEBRITY PRO-FILES: If you find your-self "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" you just might be listening to Brenda Lee. In the '60s she had more charted hits than any other woman. This fiery Sagittarian earned the nickname Little Miss Dynamite because of the surprising power of her voice and petite stature. Sagittarians have a global mindset, which Lee shows by recording songs in four different lan-guages.

If you would like to write to Holiday Mathis, please go to www.cre-ators.com and click on "Write the Author" on the Holiday Mathis page, or you may send her a post-card 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.

Annie's Mailbox

Dear Annie: During the 30 years I have been mar-ried to "Wayne," he has cheated on me several times. He was always remorseful and I tried to forgive him. He stares at young women to the point where it embarrasses me. He doesn't feel he should have to tell me where he goes, nor does he call when he's going to be late. Lately, his verbal aggres-sion has become worse. I gained a lot of weight when I went through menopause, and although I have since lost 50 pounds, Wayne tells me he doesn't like fat women. He says horrible things to me, and I am now sleep-ing in the spare bedroom.

I know I should leave him, but I just can't do it. I am a very spiritual per-son and have put this in God's hands. However, I want to explain to my older children why I have been depressed. Wayne says it is none of their business. I want to get past this, but I no longer know how. He will not go for counseling. Should I let my children know what is going on? -- Lost in California

Dear California: No. Unburdening yourself to your children will not be in their best interests. Wayne has not been a good husband to you, nor is he likely to become one. If he won't get coun-seling, you can still ben-efit from discussing your problems with a profes-sional on your own. Talk to your clergyperson, or ask your doctor to refer you to a counselor.

Dear Annie: My 31-year-old daughter, "Claire," lives in California with my ex-wife. When Claire went through her own divorce, she told my wife and me that we were no longer permitted to talk to her ex or his parents. We took offense at this. We like her ex-husband very much and get along well with his parents. They always send us cards for the holidays and call just to chat.

Our daughter found out that we had spoken to them, and now she will no longer talk to us. She said we were rude not to take her wishes into consid-eration. We have tried to

talk to her about this, but she won't discuss it. She says she's too hurt. Yet, she had a new boyfriend as soon as she left her husband and expected us to take a liking to him. We've never met him.

We feel Claire is in the wrong. She is acting like a child and should not be telling us what to do. How do we handle this? -- Hurt and Confused

Dear Hurt: Claire is wrong and should not be dictating whom you can be friends with. But being right isn't going to help you. You can tell your immature daughter "tough luck" and risk an estrangement, hoping she'll get over it eventual-ly. Or you can stop speak-ing to the ex-husband and his parents. The choice is yours.

Dear Annie: "Embarrassed Daughter-in-Law" wrote complain-ing of her mother-in-law's grammar. She said her children used to visit their grandmother for extended stays. It sounds as if Grandma really loves these children.

My wonderful mother also misspeaks in front of my kids. This past Easter, I zoomed in too closely when taking photos of the egg hunt because I disap-proved of Mom's clothing. When I looked at the pic-tures, I saw the leg of this wonderful woman who was helping her youngest grandchild find eggs. I don't have any photos of the sweet bond between Grandma and grandchild because I was too busy trying to keep her outfit out of the photo. When my daughter is older, she will miss the beautiful sight of her grandma holding her hand. Will those clothes really mat-ter then?

"Embarrassed" should be thankful Grandma has been around all these years giving her children lots of love. -- Thankful Mom is Still With Us

Dear Thankful: You are so right -- and many read-ers wrote with similar sentiments.

Annie's Mailbox is writ-ten by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column.

BARCELONA APARTMENTS \$299 MOVE IN SPECIAL + APPLICATION & SECURITY DEP. ALL BILLS PAID 538 Westover 263-1252 Housing Assistance Accepted

Rogue choice

Nissan's small crossover designed for utility drivers who want it all

It has the functionality of a five-passenger sport utility vehicle with available all-wheel drive.

It has the ride and handling characteristics of a car while also earning the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's high-

RIDE & DRIVE
with Neal White



est rating (5 stars) for side-impact crash safety.

And, with a base price starting below \$20,000, it has an EPA fuel economy rating of 27

mpg on the highway. OK, I know it's cliché, but what's not to like about the five-passenger Nissan Rogue? Oh, I forgot to mention that it's also available with a lot of premium features, like Bluetooth hands-free phone system and Nissan's Intelligent Key, meaning you never have to take the key out of your purse or pocket — just touch the door to lock or unlock and turn

the ignition fob to start the engine.

Powered by a 2.5-liter I-4 engine generating 170 horsepower and mated to a Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT), the Rogue is rated as a Low Emissions Vehicle requiring regular unleaded gasoline.

Available in both front- and all-wheel drive configurations, it has an EPA fuel economy rating of 22 mpg city, 27 mpg highway for front-wheel drive models (1 mpg less for all-wheel drive models).

First introduced as a 2008 model, the Rogue enters its second model year with only a few enhancements, including:

- New vehicle speed-sensing power auto door locks
- Fold-down passenger seat, driver seatback pocket, dual-level center console tray and mood lighting for SL models
- Drive computer and outside temperature display added to SL models
- Two luggage side

cargo hooks and dual visor vanity mirror illumination for SL models

• Leather package option now available for front-wheel drive SL models

• Bluetooth hands-free phone system and Nissan Intelligent Key added to front-wheel drive premium package.

Since its launch, the Rogue has earned a number of awards, including "Best New Small Crossover" by Kiplinger's magazine, "Best Family Cars for 2008" by Parents Magazine, AutoPacific Vehicle Satisfaction Award for its segment and MotorWeek's "Driver's Choice Award for Best Small Utility."

And yes, they are well deserved.

With choice of the S or SL trim line, the Rogue delivers an outstanding ride with exceptional handling and solid performance in a five-passenger platform.

It's also loaded with value, in terms of base price, equipment and

features and the all important affordability factor when it comes to daily operation.

While the base Rogue S trim line is nicely equipped, the SL is absolutely loaded with features that you would expect in a premium SUV costing thousands of dollars more.

As a gadget guy, I loved the amenities. But I liked the ride and handling even more.

For drivers needing a good commuter vehicle with crossover versatility for family needs, the 2009 Nissan Rogue is an absolute must for the test drive list — especially for drivers needing to stretch their transportation dollars as far as possible.

Neal White has been covering the automotive industry for more than 15 years and is affiliated with the Texas Auto Writers Association and the Midwest Automotive Media Association. Comments may be sent to Neal at neal.white@waxahachiedailylight.com.

LETTERS TO SANTA

Don't Miss This Section
Sunday, December 21, 2008

Area Schools Students, Submit
Their Letters To Santa Claus

"DEADLINE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2008"

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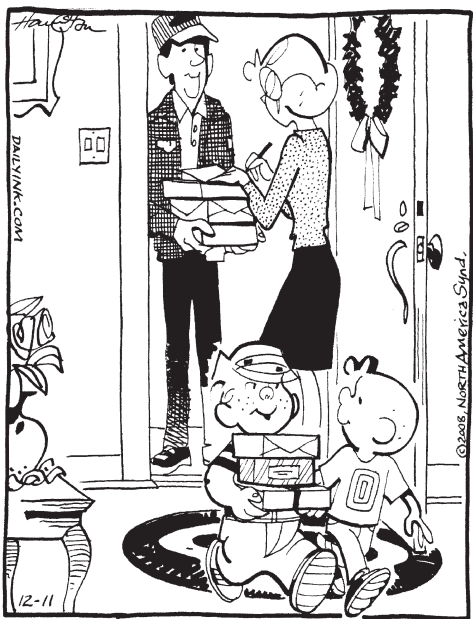
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December

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5:PM	News ABC	News ABC	Locura	Lopez	News CBS	Noticiero	News NBC	Raymond Brad	Granger	BBC Business	Cash Cab	Posse, Charles Lane	CSI: NY	Law & Order	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live	Wizards	Horn	SportsCenter	
6:PM	Entertain	Jeopardy!	Tontas Cielo	Two Men	News CBS	12 Corazonas	News NBC	Friends	Sanchez	News-Lehrer	Made	CSI: Crime Scn	Law & Order	Wizards	Interrupt	Baseball Tonight	2008 ESPN College Football Awards		
7:PM	Ugly Betty	Ugly Betty	Cuidado-Angel	Two Men	Entertain	Survivor: Gabon	Doña Barbara	Name Friends	Hagee	Old House Hr.	HowStuff-Works	Movie: The Day the Earth Stood Still	CSI: Crime Scn	NBA Basketball: Celtics at Wizards	Movie: Tales From the Hood	Phineas	College Basketball Year	High School Football	
8:PM	Grey's Anatomy	Grey's Anatomy	Fuego en la Sangre	You Smarter?	CSI: Crime Scn	El Rostro de Analia	Office 30 Rock	Friends	Light of the Southwest	To Be Announced	Destroyed	Movie: Star Trek: Nemesis, Brent Spiner	TNA IM-PACT!	American Gangster	Wizards	2008 ESPN College Football Awards	Life De	SportsCenter	
9:PM	(:01) Private Practice	(:01) Private Practice	Rosa Gaudalu	TMZ	(:01) Elev-enth Hour	Sin Senos	(:01) ER	Friends	Van Impe	Charlie Rose	Mining the Moon	Movie: Close Encounters of the Third Kind, Teri Garr	The Ultimate Fighter	NBA Basketball: Portland Trail Blazers at Utah Jazz	Hatchett	So Raven	Rodeo: 2008 PRCA National Finals -- Eighth Round.	NFL Live	
10:PM	News	News	Impacto	Raymond	News	Noticias	News	Friends	Israel	Smiley	HowStuff-Works	Movie: Married... Jackass	Jackass	Rock	Inside the NBA	Movie: The Deal	Dragon	SportsCenter	
11:PM	Nightline	Nightline	Noticiero	King-Hill	Late Show	Titulares	Decisiones de Famosos	Late Night	Sex & Swallow	Israel	LightWrld	Movie: The Running Man, Richard	Jackass	Rock	Inside the NBA	Movie: Judge Dred, Diane Lane			
12:AM	Insider	Insider	Mañani	Law Order: CI	Late Late Show	Programa Pagado	News	Poker After Dark	LightWrld	LightWrld	Mining the Moon								
1:AM	Jiminy Kimmel Live	Extra	Las Mañanitas a la Virgen de Guadalupe	RENO 911	RENO 911	Insider	Friends	Friends	LightWrld	LightWrld	Mining the Moon								
	G. Keith	Basco	Basco	Basco	Basco	Basco	Basco	Basco	Basco	Basco	Basco								
	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid	Paid								

DENNIS THE MENACE



"THIS IS THE BEST TIME OF THE YEAR TO HAVE AUNTS AN' UNCLAS."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Do you think your mother will be offended if I email her the children's sizes?"

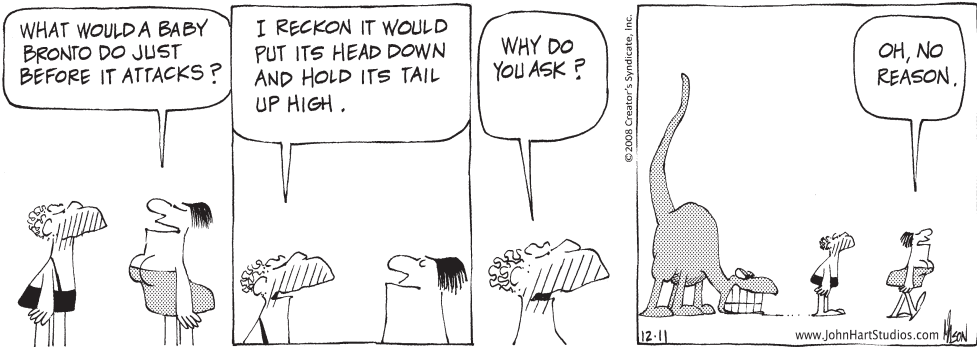
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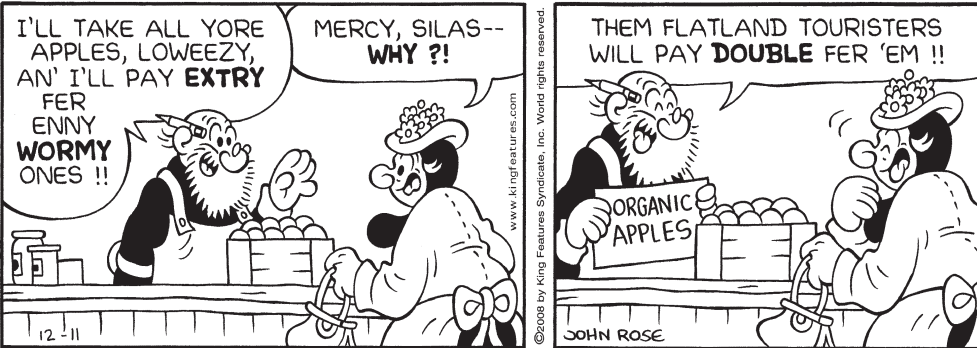
HI AND LOIS



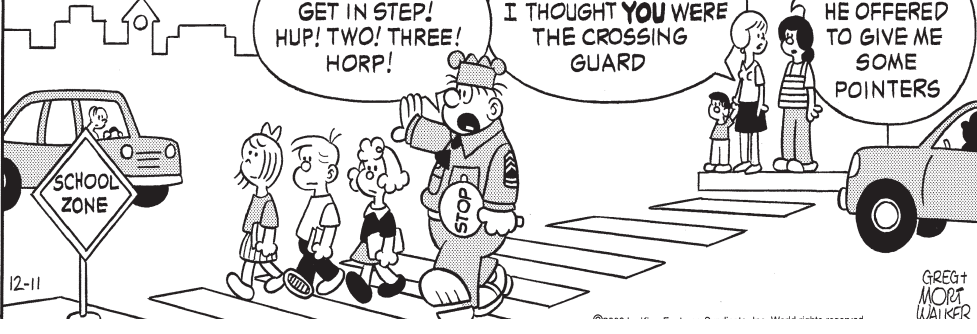
THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BEETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Thursday, Dec. 11, the 346th day of 2008. There are 20 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On Dec. 11, 1936, Britain's King Edward VIII abdicated to marry American divorcee Wallis Warfield Simpson. On this date: In 1792, France's King Louis XVI went before the Convention to face charges of treason. (Louis was convicted, and executed the following month.) In 1816, Indiana became the 19th state. In 1882, Boston's renamed Bijou Theatre, the first American playhouse to be lighted exclusively by electricity, gave its first performance, of Gilbert and Sullivan's "Iolanthe, Or The Peer and the Peri." In 1928, police in Buenos Aires, Argentina, announced they had thwarted an attempt on the life of President-elect Herbert Hoover. In 1937, Italy announced it was withdrawing from the League of Nations. In 1941, Germany and Italy

declared war on the United States; the U.S. responded in kind. In 1946, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was established. In 1981, the U.N. Security Council chose Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru to be the fifth secretary-general of the world body. In 1983, Pope John Paul II visited a Lutheran church in Rome, the first visit by a Roman Catholic pontiff to a Protestant church in his own diocese. In 1997, more than 150 countries agreed at a global warming conference in Kyoto, Japan, to control the Earth's greenhouse gases. One year ago: Two car bombs in Algeria, including one targeting the U.N. refugee agency's offices, killed 37 people, 17 of them U.N. employees; Al-Qaida's self-styled North African branch claimed responsibility. Today's Birthdays: American composer Elliott Carter is 100. Actor Jean-Louis Trintignant is 78. Actress Rita Moreno is 77. Former California state lawmaker Tom Hayden is 69. Pop singer David Gates (Bread) is 68. Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., is 67. Actress Donna Mills is 66. Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., is 65. Singer Brenda Lee is 64. Actress Lynda Day George is 64. Music

producer Tony Brown is 62. Actress Teri Garr is 60. Movie director Susan Seidelman is 56. Actress Bess Armstrong is 55. Singer Jermaine Jackson is 54. Rock musician Mike Mesaros (The Smithereens) is 51. Rock musician Nikki Sixx (Motley Cru) is 50. Rock musician Darryl Jones (The Rolling Stones) is 47. Singer-musician Justin Currie (Del Amitri) is 44. Rock musician David Schools (Gov't Mule, Widespread Panic) is 44. Actor Gary Dourdan is 42. Actress-comedian Mo'Nique ("The Parkers") is 40. Rapper-actor Mos Def is 35. Actor Rider Strong is 29. Thought for Today: "A technical objection is the first refuge of a scoundrel." - Heywood Brown, American journalist (1888-1939).

Answer to previous puzzle

CPAS	LAST	TACKS
ROSH	ALTO	EGRET
ILIE	MOAN	NOONE
MAD	ABOUT	YOU SOW
PRETEND	URIS	
HAT	DETESTED	
UPSET	ROVE	HALO
MOO	SLIDERS	LSU
PERT	EGGS	POKER
STEERAGE	SIP	
TEEN	STEPDAD	
ASH	STEAMED	RICCE
CAUSE	ALAN	ETTE
RAMEN	SOLO	STUD
EBBED	EELS	SOPS

Newsday Crossword

NATIONAL LEAGUE by Shirley Soloway Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS	62 Separate-checks arrangement	8 Workday start, often	33 Chop finely
1 Northwest capital	64 Stead	9 Black cats and such	34 Counting everyone
6 Half of AD	65 Birth of a notion	10 Exemplar of accuracy	37 Surreptitiousness
10 Shows sorrow	66 Of a Gulf State	11 Swearing-in statement	40 Napoleon's home, 1814-15
14 Building adjunct	67 Mess maker	12 Roquefort relative	43 Mother of Zeus
15 Hurt severely	68 Big Apple's finest: Abbr.	13 Tractor-trailer	47 Overcast
16 Corduroy feature	69 Public Citizen founder	18 What Mensans have	48 English physicist
17 Tree with green-blue needles	DOWN	22 Main point	50 Something extra
19 Part of a list	1 String-section member	24 Shortened preposition	52 Pointy tools
20 Judo instructor	2 Fairy-tale opener	26 Things to cast	53 Bridal accessory
21 Chinese decorating philosophy	3 A party to	27 City on the Missouri	54 Contents of some tubs
23 Snorkel, e.g.: Abbr.	4 TVs	28 Cruise ship	55 Part of a procedure
25 Yard-sale phrase	5 It's too much	29 Exercise equipment	57 Writer Bombeck
26 Holiday-dinner entrée	6 Current unit	30 The vowels	58 Checked, as a gauge
31 Hindu teacher	7 Babe in the woods	32 Author Walker	59 Window insert
35 Erstwhile African dictator			60 Fuss
36 "Seeing red" feeling			63 Ill-mannered man
37 Yalta VIP			
38 South African currency			
39 Library byword			
41 Musical Turner			
42 His and hers			
44 Corrida cry			
45 350, to Tacitus			
46 Fergie's first name			
47 Flamenco dancer's footwear			
49 Country singer McCoy			
51 Bar order			
52 Essence of guacamole			
56 Pipsqueaks			
61 Jack and Jill's destination			

News in brief

Hard-fought auto bailout deal in peril

WASHINGTON (AP) — A House-passed bill to speed \$14 billion in loans to Detroit's automakers stands on shaky ground in a bailout-weary Congress, undermined by Republican opposition that could derail the emergency aid in the Senate.

Republicans are challenging lame-duck President George W. Bush on the proposal, arguing that any support for the domestic auto industry should carry significant concessions from autoworkers and creditors and reject tougher environmental rules imposed by House Democrats.

The House approved the plan late Wednesday on a vote of 237-170. It would infuse money within days into cash-starved General Motors Corp. and Chrysler LLC. Ford Motor Co., which has said it has enough cash to make it through 2009, would also be eligible for federal aid.

Supporters cited dire warnings from GM and Chrysler executives, who have said they could run out of cash within weeks, and concerns that a carmaker collapse would erase tens of thousands of jobs and jolt an already bleak economy.

Democrats and the Bush White House hoped the Senate would vote on the legislation as early as Thursday. But based on concerns raised by GOP senators — and a still-uncertain level of support even among Democrats — they had a lot of work to do.

Illinois leaders consider ousting embattled governor

CHICAGO (AP) — With Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich defying calls for his resignation, state officials pondered reducing his power or forcing him from office amid an intensifying criminal investigation that has made him arguably the most toxic politician in America.

Legislative leaders in the state capital moved forward Wednesday with several fronts to deal with Blagojevich, who returned to his office in downtown Chicago a day after he was arrested on charges that he put President-elect Barack Obama's U.S. Senate seat up for sale.

The first fallout from the scandal also emerged, with U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. denying any misconduct while confirming that he is the Senate candidate mentioned in the federal charges as someone Blagojevich thought would pay money to be appointed to the seat. Jackson, the son of the Rev. Jesse Jackson, said he had been assured by prosecutors he was not a target of the investigation.

Blagojevich's decision to show up for work like it was another day at the office angered much of the state's political establishment, and Obama and U.S. Senate leaders demanded that he step down. The pro-

spect that the second-term Democratic governor might still try to appoint someone to the Senate also loomed.

"He appears to listen to no one, and his conduct becomes more outrageous as time goes on," said Steve Brown, spokesman for Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan.

Pakistani charity facing sanctions says it will fight decision in court

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP) — The head of the Pakistani charity accused of being a front for militants blamed for the Mumbai attacks said Thursday the group will fight the U.N.'s decision to declare it a terrorist organization.

A U.N. Security Council panel said Wednesday that Islamic charity Jamaat-ud-Dawa is a front for Lashkar-e-Taiba, the group India says trained and steered the Mumbai gunmen.

Jamaat-ud-Dawa chief Hafiz Mohammed Saeed told reporters in the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore that the move was an attempt to target religious groups.

Saeed said his group would fight the decision in Pakistani and international courts. He challenged Indian and U.S. officials to produce evidence against it.

At the prompting of India and the U.S., a Security Council panel late Wednesday declared Jamaat-ud-Dawa a terrorist group subject to U.N. sanctions including an asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo.

Gates: Pentagon moving to put 3 brigades in Afghanistan by summer

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP) — The Pentagon is moving to get three of the four combat brigades requested by commanders into Afghanistan by summer, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Wednesday as he traveled here to meet with military leaders.

In his most specific comments to date about how soon he will meet the call for up to 20,000 more troops in Afghanistan, Gates said he will not have to cut troop levels further in Iraq to free up at least two of those three brigades for Afghan duty.

At the same time, Gates said a key "course correction" in the Afghanistan war for the administration of President-elect Barack Obama will be to build the Afghan army and better cooperate with Kabul on security operations.

"I think there's a

concern on the part of some of the Afghans that we sort of tell them what we're going to do, instead of taking proposals to them and getting their input and then working out with them what we're going to do, so it's a real partnership," Gates told reporters traveling with him to Afghanistan. "That's an important aspect of this, that I think we need a course correction."

Gates was scheduled to meet with Gen. David McKiernan, the commander of U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan, and to gather with U.S. troops in Kandahar.

Wall Street sees jobless claims rising amid recession

WASHINGTON (AP) — Wall Street expects the government to report that new claims for unemployment benefits increased last week as companies ramped-up layoffs amid the recession.

The jobless claims report comes a day after the federal government said the monthly budget deficit reached a record in November, in part because of increased spending on programs such as unemployment insurance and food stamps.

The number of new claims for jobless benefits is projected to increase to a seasonally adjusted 525,000, up from 509,000 the previous week, according to Wall Street economists surveyed by Thomson Reuters.

Claims late last month reached 543,000, their highest level in 16 years. Economists said the drop to 509,000 was partly due to volatility from the Thanksgiving holiday week.

Last week's report showed the number of people continuing to claim unemployment benefits reached nearly 4.09 million, the highest level since December 1982.



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

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select varieties
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Sirloin End Pork Roast
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Chuck Roast
preferred trim
boneless beef
\$2.49 lb.

Chuck Steak
preferred trim
boneless beef
\$2.69 lb.

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boneless beef
\$3.99 lb.

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select varieties
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• 20 ct infant saline drops
• 2 oz pure natural saline mist
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\$3.99

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select varieties
24-56 ct.
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Alka-Seltzer Plus
select varieties
6 oz. liquid or 12-20 ct.
\$3.99

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select varieties
16-24 ct.
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18 ct.
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