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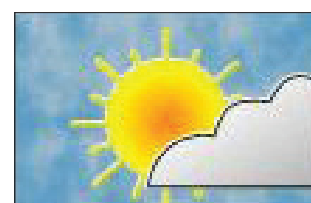
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H BIG SPRING HERALD

VOLUME 104, NUMBER 17

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HERALD Photo/Thomas Jenkins

Area motorists may have noticed a rather tubular addition to the side of the Settles Hotel this week, as the Settles Hotel Development Company continues the asbestos abatement at the local landmark. Renovations to the structure began in August.

Hamming it up for the holidays

Salvation Army to serve up a Christmas Eve feast

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

A traditional Christmas dinner will be just a phone call away for the area's homebound residents, as the local Salvation Army prepares to finish off the holiday season with a special dinner Tuesday.

Paula Lafler, a social worker with the local charity, said the Salvation Army staff and administration will

Homebound residents can call 267-8239 before 4 p.m. Monday to have a meal delivered.

be kicking the holiday cooking into high gear Tuesday morning.

"This is just our way of

See **FEAST**, Page 3A

Suspension strongest action TEA can take, spokesperson says

By **BILL McCLELLAN**
News Editor

Allegations against former Big Spring Independent School District Superintendent Michael Downes will go unanswered — at least as far as the Texas Education Agency is concerned.

When Downes voluntarily surrendered his Texas educator certificate Tuesday,

the TEA's investigation ended.

"The most severe sanction that we have is to revoke an educator certificate, or have it surrendered. Since that is what happened — he surrendered his certificate — that makes the investigation process null and

See **TEA**, Page 3A

Routine items on agenda for commissioners

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

Howard County commissioners will hold their last meeting of 2008 Monday morning, with routine items topping the court's agenda.

County Auditor Jackie Olson is expected to go over invoices and purchase requests



Barr

with commissioners, as well as budget amendments.

The court is also expected to take care of several agenda items pertaining to the construction of the new Howard County Jail, as Olson will present

with a review of financial statements for the facility.

"Jackie and Jeff (Heffelfinger, project architect) will be there, and we just want to go over the finances for the jail with the commissioners," said County Judge Mark Barr. "We're going to look at what we've spent so far and how we're looking for the

project."

The court will also open and read bids for furniture, fixtures and equipment for the new jail, but Barr said the court won't be considering the bids until Heffelfinger has had time to compare them.

Commissioners will also look at budget amendments for the jail construction fund.

Olson is also expected to discuss surplus property with commissioners, as well as the possible approval of a purchasing cooperative amendment.

County Treasurer Teresa Thomas is to discuss personnel considerations, while

See **COUNTY**, Page 3A

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Find us online at:
www.bigspringherald.com

To reach us:

Please call 263-7331. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Chili cooks needed

HERALD Staff Report

Chili, anyone?

Cooks and chili enthusiasts of every walk of life will get a chance to stir the pot Jan. 3, as the seventh annual Chili Cook-off to benefit the West Texas Centers for MHMR Children In Need Fund prepares to get under way.

With cooking set to begin at 8

Cooking begins at 8 a.m.

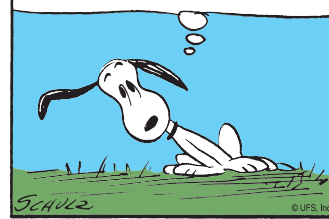
Jan. 3 at the Eagle's Lodge.

a.m. and judging kicking off at 11:30 a.m. at the Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie #3188 building — located at 703 W. Third St. — cook-off organizers say their mouths

See **CHILI**, Page 3A

4 Shopping Days Til Christmas

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8 area footballers named to All-Academic team

By JONATHAN HULL

Sports Editor
Eight senior Crossroads high school football players were named to the Texas High School Coaches Association's All-Academic team last week, including three from Big Spring and Stanton and two from Forsan.

Representing the Steers were Chris Brooks, Lanny Hall and Jimmy Watson. Brooks was named to the second team, while Hall and Watson were given honorable mention.

Big Spring Head Coach Phillip

Ritchey says the honor these three guys received is just an indication of the effort put forth by the entire program to work hard in the classroom.

"I'm extremely excited about this honor for these guys. I get just as pumped for a player making all-state for academics as I do for the ones who make it for

their play," said Ritchey. "Academics are our biggest emphasis. We want our players to have success after they leave school. The kids have done a great job of not being on the failure report this season. From junior high up, we've seen a lot of improvement on the amount of kids on the failure list. We don't have to worry about kids not being on the field because of grades."

Brooks saw significant playing time at outside linebacker and was named



Brooks

See **ACADEMIC**, Page 2B

Forsan sweeps Rankin

Herald Sports Report

RANKIN—Forsan's Buffaloes and Lady Buffaloes ended the first half of their season impressively Friday night as they went on the road to dominate Rankin.

The Lady Buffs used a huge second period to coast to a 30-point victory, 64-34.

The usual scoring leadership of Amanda Longorio (15 points, nine rebounds) and Tori Gauer (13 points, five steals) was there for the Lady Buffs, but they also received a significant contribution from senior guard Faith Belew.

Belew connected on four of five 3-point tries, scoring 22 total points.

"Faith really shot the ball well. We knew she could do it. She just needed some confidence," said Forsan Head Coach Robert Hillger. "I think she got it today. We came out in the first period with a little less intensity than I like and Faith really got us going in the second."

As a team, the the Lady Buffs shot 51 percent from the field and 83 percent from the free throw line.

"I'll take those numbers any day of the week," said Hillger. "I am proud of these girls. They work really hard."

The Lady Buffs get 10 days off for the Christmas break and return to action at noon Dec. 29 in the Sterling City Tournament, opening against Miles.

Forsan 9 28 15 12-64

Rankin 13 3 8 10-34

Forsan: Faith Belew 22, Amanda Longorio 15, Tori Gauer 13, Shelby Jones 6, Miranda Park 4, Shelby McDonald 2, Sandi Golleher 2.

Bufs 51, Rankin 35

The Buffs were led by Jeremy Robbins' 18 points in a 51-35 victory. Tristian Clay scored 15 with all of his points coming from five 3-point field goals.

Evan Burton chipped in with nine.

The Buffs improve their record to 12-1 on the season and now have 10 days before their next game, which is at the Sterling City Tournament Dec. 29. They'll open bracket play vs. Miles.

Forsan 14 11 14 12-51

Rankin 6 7 6 16-35

Jeremy Freitag 2, Jeremy Robbins 18, Jace Sandridge 1, Tristian Clay 15, Evan Burton 9, Nathan Atkinson 6. 3-point goals - Clay 5, Robbins 2.

Steers rally by Monahans

Big Spring overcomes late deficit for 58-54 win

By JONATHAN HULL

Sports Editor
Big Spring's Steers finally have some momentum going in the 2008-2009 basketball season.

The Steers won their third straight game Friday with a thrilling, come-from-behind victory, 58-54, over the Monahans Lobos at Steer Gym.

For three periods, the Steers struggled to make any shot, making just 10 shots from the field. The result left the Steers down 40-33 heading into the final frame.

However, the shots started to fall when it counted most as the Steers made seven field goals and made 10 of 17 free throws in the fourth. With the rally, Big Spring overcame a 9-point deficit for the 4-point victory.

"We played with a sense of urgency in the fourth," said Big Spring Head Coach Marcus Morris. "We didn't want to lose. The guys stepped up and made some steals. The press was really good for us in certain spots. We did enough to win."

Keying the Steers comeback was a press defense that forced 31 turnovers in the game. Tyrone Clemons led with eight steals, while Jerrell Williams and Sidney Parker each had seven.

Clemons also led the fourth quarter scoring attack for Big Spring. He made five consecutive points with 4:24 left to play, including a 3-pointer that tied the game at 43.

"We did a great job of taking chances and stealing the ball," said Morris. "We still have a lot of work to do defensively, though. We don't transition well from our press to our half court defense. We were just watching these guys make layups tonight. We've got a lot of work to do there."

Clemons finished the game with 18, while Williams chipped in with 15.

The Steers get 10 days off before traveling to Kerrville for a round robin tournament Dec. 29. It's a much-needed break, according to Morris.

"A lot of these guys came straight from football to basketball," he noted. "These

See **STEERS**, Page 2B



HERALD photo/Tony Claxton

Big Spring's Tyrone Clemons (20) is fouled by a player from Monahans as he goes to the hoop in Big Spring's 58-54 victory Friday in Steer Gym. Clemons keyed the Steers' come-from-behind victory, scoring 18 points and coming up with eight steals.

Lady Steers head into break with third consecutive loss

By JONATHAN HULL

Sports Editor
Comfort isn't always a good thing.

Big Spring's Lady Steers dropped their third straight game Friday as the visiting Monahans Lady Lobos held on for a 43-36 victory in Steer Gym.

Big Spring's last win came over District 4-4A rival San Angelo Lake View at the Clyde Tournament. Since then, the Lady Steers haven't played with the same intensity, according to Head Coach Mike Warren.

"We haven't been the same team since that Lake View win," Warren said. "Our girls are young and get flustered. We turned the ball over too much. Even with that, we had some opportunities with offensive rebounds and at the free throw line to win this game. We just couldn't put the ball in the bucket. I'm disappointed tonight."

"Lake View beat Monahans. I think that tells us that we've maybe gotten a little full of our selves since we beat Lake View," he continued. "We've got to play with some earnest. We took a step forward with that Lake View win, but have taken two steps backwards since."

The Lady Steers committed 27 turnovers in the contest. Monahans took the lead early in the second period and didn't come too close to surrendering it.

Big Spring was able to rally within 3 points early in the final stanza, but Monahans shot 17 free throws in the fourth period alone, converting on 10 of them.

Desiree Anderson led the Lady Steers with 11 points, while Cerbi Ritchey chipped in seven along with eight rebounds.

Amy Rose had a game-high 12 for Monahans.

The Lady Steers take part in the Greater West Texas Tournament in Slaton beginning Dec. 29. They'll face the host team Slaton to start bracket play.

"We're not getting much respect from tournament hosts as Slaton has scheduled us for their opener," said Warren. "This tournament is going to be very important. We're going to have earn respect and I think it's coming. Those three tourney games are going to be big for us and then we play Cisco before

See **LADY STEERS**, Page 2B



HERALD photo/Tony Claxton

Big Spring's Bridgette Tuitt (32) pulls down a rebound as teammate LaShaunte Anderson looks on Friday in Steer Gym. The Lady Steers fell to the Monahans in a non-district basketball game, 43-36.

Do-It-Yourself Goes DIGITAL

Holiday Gifts at Your Fingertips

FAMILY FEATURES

Whether you are crafty or not, creating personalized and professional gifts this holiday season is simple. All it takes is a few photos, clips of your favorite home movies and a pinch of do-it-yourself digital magic to make memorable gifts the whole family will treasure.

Picture Perfect

Digital cameras take great photos. Instead of sharing one or two framed photos as a gift, share dozens with a digital frame. It is possible to upload hundreds of photos to the frame, producing a virtual photo gallery.

- Wireless digital photo frames, such as the Samsung SPF-85V and SPF-105V, sync directly with Windows Live Spaces and update any new photos to the frame automatically, so there is no need for a memory card.
- Windows-based PCs work beautifully with many types of digital cameras and provide users with a step-by-step process for saving, editing and organizing photos.

You can also turn photos into other shareable gifts.

Photo Books

Self-publish the story of a vacation, a baby's first year or favorite family memories with a hardbound photo book. At SmileBooks.com, create a custom book with pictures and captions. It's simple to download the free software, create the layout and then place an order.

Calendars

Create an entire year of smiles with a photo calendar. Online sites enable you to design calendars that showcase the grandkids or celebrate the family tree with photos and images from the past. Or customize your calendar with birthdays and anniversary reminders — and even place a photo of the birthday girl on her birth date to ensure it won't be missed.

Accessories

Show off your photos on mugs, mouse pads, T-shirts, purses, totes and stationery. It's easy to upload pictures to online sharing sites and put an image on just about any accessory imaginable.

Works of Art

Your little one's artwork is priceless. Make sure these creations last forever by scanning each piece and uploading it to your PC.

- For two-dimensional artwork, such as drawings, paintings or construction paper creations, you'll need to scan them on a flatbed scanner.
- Once they are scanned, you can import and manage the images.
- For three-dimensional creations, you'll need to take a photo. Put the artwork on a flat surface in a room with lots of natural light. If possible, mount the camera on a tripod and shoot straight down. (You'll usually get a better image without a flash.) If you have to shoot at an angle, try to avoid flare, shadows and reflections.

Movies

Believe it or not, you can make a digital movie — even if all you have is video tape footage. Both Windows Vista Home Premium and Ultimate allow you to use DVD Maker to burn home videos to a DVD-Video disc. Edit the footage and add music with software such as Windows Movie Maker to produce a gift friends and family can enjoy while relaxing at home.

Another way to share your movies is to visit a video-sharing Web site. Upload your creation and e-mail the link to as many people as you want, or post it to your blog.

Other Ideas

You can use your computer to create other kinds of gifts, too.

"The computer can be a great creative resource," says Microsoft Corp. spokesperson Danielle Adams,

savvy mom and crafter. "I'm not a digital wizard, but I've been able to make some very special gifts with just a few clicks."

Adams recommends the following:

- Let the kids turn their school pictures and artwork into holiday cards or ornaments to share with family.
- Use recipe card templates to save family favorites. Print them and put them in recipe holders so that everyone knows just how to make Mom's famous spaghetti.
- Create a family cookbook, complete with photos, recipes and stories about the food and the people who made it. You can share your cookbook online or have it printed in a hardbound photo book.

Making your own digital gifts is not just a budget saver, it's a memory saver. Unique holiday gifts are just a few clicks away.



Stay connected even when you're far apart

Just because the whole family can't get together, it doesn't mean you can't share the holidays with each other.

With Windows Live, you can stay in close contact in several different ways:

- Let everyone in on the holiday fun through Web-based e-mail and easy photo sharing via your computer or phone.
- Compare gift ideas and share funny stories instantly with Messenger. You can chat in text, hear their voices on a PC call or see each other in video.*
- Create a family holiday blog. Keep everyone current on your holiday activities, share photos and post video for the whole family to see.

For more information on the services listed above, visit www.windowslive.com.

*To place a PC-to-PC call, both users must have Windows Live Messenger installed, a compatible microphone and speakers or a headset, and Internet access. (A webcam and broadband are required for video.)

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Obituaries

Ellis Poitevint



Ellis Poitevint, 86, of Big Spring died Friday, Dec. 19, 2008, in a local hospital. Funeral services will be held at 4:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 22, 2008, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel with the Rev. Jess Colegrove and the Rev. Steven King officiating. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park.

The family will receive friends from 3:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. Sunday at the funeral home.

Ellis was born July 15, 1922, in Balmorhea and grew up in the Pecos area. He married Betty Adams Brown Oct. 25, 1958, in Pecos. The couple had celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Oct. 25, 2008.

He served in the United States Army Air Corps from 1940 until 1945 and was a civil service employee until he retired at Webb Air Force Base in September of 1977.

Ellis was a member of Birdwell Lane Baptist Church, where he served as a Sunday School superintendent for 11 years and was treasurer for more than 20 years.

Survivors include his wife, Betty Poitevint of Big Spring; two sons, David Poitevint and wife Linda of Albuquerque, N.M., and Stephen Poitevint and wife Cheryl of Big Spring; one daughter, Patricia Sims and husband John of Fort Worth; two step sons, Adrian Brown and wife Pam of Snyder, and Calvin Brown of El Paso; one brother, Duane Poitevint and wife Janella of Pecos; three sisters, Joyce Bingham and husband Charles of Big Sandy, Darlene Cantrell, and Gay Camp and husband Joe, all of Temple; six grandchildren, Brian Poitevint, Chris Poitevint, Cheryl Lynn Poitevint, Leanne Sosebee, Jennifer Brown and Melissa Brown; and six great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents and four brothers.

The family suggests memorials be made to Birdwell Lane Baptist Church, 1512 Birdwell Lane, Big Spring 79720; or to the American Heart Association, 3205 W. Cuthbert, Ste A-5, Midland 79701.

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

Billy Odell Rawls



Billy Odell Rawls, 61, of Big Spring, died Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2008, in a local hospital. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Monday, Dec. 22, 2008, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel with Mona Lue Tonn, pastor of Spring Tabernacle, officiating. Interment will follow at Mt. Olive Memorial Park.

The family will receive friends from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday at the funeral home.

He was born May 29, 1947, in Big Spring.

Billy was a lifetime resident of Big Spring and was a self-employed property rental manager. He was a member of Spring Tabernacle.

Survivors include a son and daughter-in-law, Gary and Laura Rawls of Big Spring; a step-daughter, Donna Malone of Pecos; and four brothers, David Rawls, Bobby Rawls and Dean Rawls all of Big Spring, and Harold Rawls of Houston.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Rhonda Bledsoe; his parents, John Wesley and Mary Bell Whitney Rawls; a stepson, Jackie Morris, one sister, Barbara Rawls; and two brothers, Wesley Rawls and Ricky Rawls.

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

Willie 'Lito' L. Armendariz

Willie "Lito" L. Armendariz, 71, of Big Spring, died Friday, Dec. 19, 2008, at his residence. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Monday, Dec. 22, 2008, at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church with Father Ariel Lagunilla officiating.

A vigil service will be held at 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 21, 2008, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel.

He was born July 23, 1937, in Mertzon and married Oralia Martinez June 23, 1953, in Mertzon.

Lito worked as a mechanic for WesTex Auto Parts for more than 20 years, retiring in 1999. He had also worked as a farmer and rancher for many years. He was a member of Holy Trinity Catholic Church.

Survivors include his wife, Oralia Armendariz of Big Spring; three daughters, Vickie Gonzales of Grand Prairie, Teresa Martinez and husband Victor III of Big Spring, and Monica Armendariz of Bastrop; two sons, Arturo Armendariz of Odessa and Marcus Armendariz of Big Spring; two brothers, Jose Lara Armendariz of Grape Creek and Gregory Charles Armendariz of San Angelo; 15 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Jesus Armendariz and Esther Lara Armendariz and one son, Jesse Armendariz.

The family suggests memorials be made to Holy Trinity Catholic Church, P.O. Box 951, Big Spring 79721-0951.

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

Marilyn Hull Brewer

SAN ANGELO — Marilyn Hull Brewer, 69, formerly of Big Spring died Thursday, Dec. 18, 2008, in an Abilene hospital. Family visitation will be at 428 E. 24th St., 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 21, 2008. Arrangements are by Shaffer Funeral Home.

Survivors include her daughters, Belinda Weddell of Water Valley, Bobbie Heath of San Angelo and Becky Banks of Brady.

Lola Graves

Lola Graves, 80, of Stanton died Saturday, Dec. 20, 2008, in a Midland hospital. Her services are pending with Gilbreath Funeral Home of Stanton.

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.

• The purpose of life is a life of purpose. Join Nurses' Hospice of Big Spring Volunteer program today. We request potential volunteers not to volunteer for one year after a significant loss. Come by 1008 E. Third St. or call (432)517-4073.

• The mission of CASA of West Texas is to promote and support quality volunteers who speak for the best interest of abused and neglect children in court in an effort to find each child a safe, nurturing and permanent home. CASA currently has 10 active volunteers to serve the 55 plus children of Howard County in foster care. A class is forming in Howard County and 20 volunteers are needed. For more information on becoming a CASA volunteer, please contact Robyn LaForge at (432) 683-1114.

• The Big Spring Salvation Army will be conducting free blood pressure and glucose screenings 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.

Police

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity between 7 a.m. Friday and 9 a.m. today:

Note: An arrest report for the corresponding time period was not available at press time.

- THEFT was reported in the 600 block of Drake.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported in the 300 block of Ninth Street.

- BURGLARY OF A VEHICLE was reported:
 - in the 1200 block of 16th Street.
 - in the 1300 block of Park.
- ASSAULT CAUSING BODILY INJURY was reported in the 1700 block of FM 700.
- ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE was reported in the 1000 block of Birdwell Lane.

Your Local Weather

Sun 12/21	Mon 12/22	Tue 12/23	Wed 12/24	Thu 12/25
45/20 Mainly sunny. High around 45F. Winds ENE at 10 to 20 mph.	44/32 Times of sun and clouds. Highs in the mid 40s and lows in the low 30s.	66/39 Considerable cloudiness. Highs in the mid 60s and lows in the upper 30s.	65/42 Plenty of sun. Highs in the mid 60s and lows in the low 40s.	71/42 Mainly sunny. Highs in the low 70s and lows in the low 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

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.

• The Concerned Citizens Council meets at 7 p.m. at the Howard County Library. For more information, call 264-6116.

• Prospector's Club work night begins at 7 p.m. at 606 E. Third.

TUESDAY

• Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room.

• 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.

Support Groups

TUESDAY

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

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

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

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

WEDNESDAY

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

THURSDAY

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



Holy Trinity Catholic Parish 2008 Christmas Season Liturgical Celebration Schedule

Christmas Eve Masses

Wednesday, December 24, 2008

5:00 p.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus

7:00 p.m. Saint Thomas

9:00 p.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus

11:00 p.m. Immaculate Heart of Mary
(Preceded by Christmas Carols at 10:30 p.m.)

Christmas Day Mass

Thursday, December 25, 2008

10:00 a.m. Immaculate Heart of Mary

New Year's Eve Mass

Wednesday, December 31, 2008

7:00 p.m. ~ Immaculate Heart of Mary
(Virgin Mary, Mary of God)

New Year's Day Mass

January 1, 2009

10:00 a.m. Sacred Heart of Jesus
(Virgin Mary, Mother of God)

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Rookie RBs highlight Texans/Raiders game

By **JOSH DUBOW**

AP Sports Writer

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Steve Slaton had to wait an entire day after Darren McFadden was drafted before he heard his own name called, missing out on all the hype and the riches from being a first-round pick.

When it comes to making an impact in the NFL as a rookie, McFadden has been the one who has had to wait, while Slaton has become one of the surprises from the latest draft class.

“Everybody wants to be in the first round,” said Slaton, who was picked by Houston in the third round. “So, I was a little disappointed. But I just strived to make up ground and to show the reason why I should have been in the first round.”

Slaton has done just that, leading the Texans (7-7) with 1,124 yards rushing heading into Sunday’s game against McFadden and the Oakland Raiders (3-11).

Slaton needs just 64 yards in his final two games to break Domanick Williams’ single-season franchise record for rushing in a season.

“The whole time during the draft they were saying that you would get a running back late that would be a real good player,” receiver Andre Johnson said. “Sometimes things just turn out that way. We were very fortunate that he came to our team. I

watched Steve play a lot when he was in college. I’ve always been a fan of his and he’s helped us out a whole lot.”

McFadden hasn’t had nearly the success as a rookie despite being the first running back taken in the draft when Oakland selected him fourth overall. He is seventh among all rookie backs in yards rushing this season, having been slowed by a pair of turf toe injuries that forced him to miss three games.

But even when McFadden has been healthy in recent weeks, the Raiders have struggled to find ways to get their most explosive offensive player the ball.

McFadden has taken the lack of work in stride, always smiling when asked about it and never complaining about his use.

“You really want the ball, but at the same time you know the coach is going to make his decisions and you’ve got to go with it,” McFadden said. “With me, it’s just like I go out there, work hard and run the ball when I’m called on. I’ve just got to do what I can.”

McFadden has 100 carries for 451 yards and four touchdowns this season.

He has also caught 22 passes for 234 yards, leaving him second on the team in yards from scrimmage.

But he has also gone long stretches

without getting the ball. In one seven-quarter span beginning with the second half against Kansas City on Nov. 30, McFadden had just four touches.

That included the entire first quarter of last week’s 49-26 loss to New England, when McFadden was wearing a jacket on the sideline while the Raiders quickly fell behind 21 points.

“If we weren’t going three-and-out, he would have been involved,” interim coach Tom Cable said, not addressing whether using McFadden would have avoided any of those three-and-outs on the first three drives.

By the time McFadden did enter the game, he ended up with 114 yards from scrimmage, turning some short passes into long gains that took some pressure off quarterback JaMarcus Russell.

Russell said he planned to lobby to get McFadden even more involved this week against the Texans, and Cable has seemed amenable to it.

“That’s on coach. He’s seen that,” Russell said. “A lot of people have probably been talking about it. When the ball is in No. 20’s hands, it is fun to watch. I’m pretty sure he might work on getting him some touches early in the game and go from there. Because once he got the ball in his hands last week you saw some turning points in the game.”

While McFadden has been unable to displace Justin Fargas as Oakland’s

primary back, Slaton has benefited from injuries to take the job in Houston. He was originally penciled in to be a third-down back, but veterans Chris Brown and Ahman Green are both out for the season with injuries.

Slaton has made the most of his opportunity, shifting easily from the spread offense at West Virginia to a more conventional one in the NFL.

“It’s been a dream of a first season,” Slaton said. “You set your goals as high as you can, but the way everything panned out this year for me is truly a blessing.”

Slaton’s success has been a big part of Houston’s turnaround this season. After starting the year 0-4, the Texans have a chance to finish with a winning record for the first time in franchise history if they beat Oakland and then win the season finale at home against Chicago.

“To get a kid like that in the third round that has carried the load like he has and look toward the future at what type of player he can become, it’s panning out as one heck of a draft,” Texans coach Gary Kubiak said. “If you’re going to get a young organization going, you can’t miss on those players, and fortunately we’ve been pretty darn good in the draft.”

AP Sports Writer Kristie Rieken in Houston contributed to this report.

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ACADEMIC

Continued from Page 1B

defensive player of the game by KBST radio multiple times this season.

Watson was a first-team All-District guard this season and graded highest of all Big Spring offensive linemen on the field with a mark of 86 percent.

Hall didn’t see a lot of playing time, but was recently rewarded for his efforts, being named the

recipient of the Antwoyne Edwards Memorial Award given each season to a Steers’ player who demonstrated heart and dedication to his team.

Stanton had the only two first teamers in the area as Michael Church and Stephen Reyes each qualified. Receiver Ramsey Fleckenstein was named to the second team.

At Forsan, quarterback Alex Huckabee headlined the list, being placed on the second team, while top receiver Jeremy Robbins received honorable men-

tion.

The Academic All-State teams are selected by a point system that awards points for grade point average, class rank and SAT or ACT scores.

Criteria required to be nominated is to be a senior with an overall GPA of 92 or above, including grades 9-11 and the first six weeks of grade 12; be a member of the team in good standing at the time of nomination and to be of good moral character. More than 2,000 students were nominated across the state.

STEERS

Continued from Page 1B

guys have been getting coached since football two-a-days started. You can tell they need a break men-

tally. We’ll be a little rusty in the tournament, but we’ll get back on track before district play starts.”

Monahans	7	14	19	14-54
Big Spring	9	15	9	25-58

Monahans (4-6): Titus 1-3 0-1 2, Roark 0-1 0-3 0, Owens 1-7 5-8 7, D’Pasquale 5-6 2-5 12, Hughes 4-8 2-4 11, Anderson 3-6 1-2 7, Rose 2-3 1-3 5, Childress 4-7 2-4 10, Totals 20-41 13-30 54.

Big Spring (4-8): Sammy Segundo 1-4 0-0 2, Darius McCallister 0-2 4-6 4, Jerrell Williams 3-17 9-16 15, Jon Benavides 0-4 0-0 0, Zamir Linton 1-1 0-1 2, Tyrone Clemons 5-22 7-8 18, Pavel Plakhotny 2-4 0-0 4, Xavian Parnell 2-4 0-2 4, Sidney Parker 2-7 1-3 5, Josh Harris 1-3 2-3 4, Totals 17-68 23-39 58.

Three-point goals: MHS 1 (Hughes), BSHS 1 (Clemons). Rebounds: MHS 35 (Anderson 7), BSHS 29 (Williams 6). Assists: MHS 2 (D’Pasquale 2), BSHS 7 (Williams 3). Steals: MHS 7 (D’Pasquale 3), BSHS 26 (Clemons 8). Total fouls: MHS 28, BSHS 24. Fouled out: Childress.

LADY STEERS

Continued from Page 1B

starting district play. We’ve got some work to do before district starts.”

Monahans	10	11	10	12-43
Big Spring	11	8	6	11-36

Monahans (9-4): Abby Marquez 1-3 2-2 4, Michelle Azauea 1-6 3-7 5, Kristi Holly 3-9 1-1 7, Kourtney Marquez 0-1 1-2 1, Quen Carter 1-3 6-4 6, Amy Rose 4-10 4-4 12, Margie Vidana 0-1 0-0 0, Ashton Haynes 0-1 0-0 0, Kali Lewis 2-6 2-7 6, Erin Fisher 0-2 2-4 2, Totals 12-40 19-33 43.

Big Spring (6-8): Linzee Yarbar 0-2 0-0 0, Taylor Seaton 0-1 0-0 0, LaShaunte Anderson 0-3 0-0 0, Valerie Ross 3-11 0-0 7, Dominique Green 1-3 2-2 5, Desiree Anderson 5-8 1-3 11, Bridgette Tuitt 0-6 2-3 2, Cerbi Ritchey 2-9 3-5 7, Crystal Woodson 1-4 0-0 2, Lauren Porras 0-0 2-2 2, Totals 12-47 10-15 36.

Three-point goals: MHS 0, BSHS 2 (Ross, Green). Rebounds: MHS 29 (Holly 10), BSHS 28 (Ritchey 8). Assists: MHS 3 (Azuaje, Holly, Marquez), BSHS 3 (Ritchey 3). Steals: MHS 10 (Holly, Azuaje 3), BSHS 10 (Tuitt 4), Free throws: MHS 19-33, BSHS 10-15. Total fouls: MHS 15, BSHS 24. Fouled out: Tuitt.

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(AP Photo/John Bazemore)

A worker picks grapes at Persimmon Creek Vineyards in Clayton, Ga.. Persimmon Creek Vineyards is part of a rapidly expanding winery industry across the South, where lands once given over to tobacco now produce a more tourist-friendly crop.

Land of sweet tea sees its wine industry flourish

By DORIE TURNER

Associated Press Writer CLAYTON, Ga. (AP) — In the same mountains where generations of Georgians distilled corn into moonshine, the Hardman family is fermenting a libation of another flavor.

Along the banks of a babbling creek are acres of twisting grape vines that will yield bottles of riesling, cabernet franc, seyval blanc and merlot.

The Hardmans' winery, Persimmon Creek Vineyards, is part of a rapidly expanding winery industry across the South, where lands once given over to tobacco now produce a more

tourist-friendly crop.

"It's not something you can only grow in France and California," says Mary Ann Hardman, who runs the winery from her home on 100 acres of picturesque farmland. "I believe wine is the taste of a place."

And in the American South, the taste ranges from sweet, wet whites from the local scuppernong grapes (a muscadine variant) to Euro-style like chardonnays and merlots.

The Hardmans began producing wine six years ago on the cusp of an explosion in the region's viticulture industry, which has

begun drawing tourists from across the globe to the rural South.

Today there are 433 wineries across the region, a nearly 50 percent increase from just three years ago, according to the National Association of American Wineries. That's almost four times as many wineries as 15 years ago.

The growth mirrors a national trend, with every state now boasting at least one winery — even Alaska.

Southern vintners are particularly proud that their region finally has developed a foothold in the U.S. wine industry after years of connoisseurs looking down

their noses at vintages from below the Mason-Dixon line.

Not that the stigma has completely vanished. But experts say the South is making a place for itself in the wine world.

"I have had some good Southern wine and some interesting Southern wine," says Lettie Teague, executive wine editor for Food & Wine magazine. "There is reason to look forward to the Southern wines of the future."

Southern wines tend to go the way of the region's tea — incredibly sweet —

See WINE, Page 3C

Births



Destinee Mae McDonald
11-23-08

Jeffrey and Rebekah McDonald of Big Spring announce the birth of their daughter, Destinee Mae McDonald, born at 9:23 a.m. Nov. 23, 2008, weighing 4 pounds, 14 ounces and was 19 inches long. Her grandparents are Brenda and Gene Robertson of Midland. She welcomed home by big sister Courtney.

Area Menus

Spring City Senior Citizen's Center
Monday
aloha chicken/ rice pilaf, stir fried vegetables, sliced tomatoes on lettuce left, rolls, margarine, fruit cocktail.
Tuesday
beef brisket, pinto beans, okra & tomatoes/

carrot coin, salad, rolls, margarine, banana pudding.
Wednesday
chicken and dumplings, green peas, rolls, margarine/tossed salad, dressing, pound cake with peaches.
Thursday-Friday
Closed for the holidays

Coverage of two Howard County youths who recently had their wish come true by the Make-A-Wish Foundation scheduled for this Sunday's edition of the Big Spring Herald will instead run in the Sunday, Dec. 28th edition.

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Courtesy photo

Volunteers with the annual Festival of Lights program pose in front of the Spring at Comanche Trail Park following several days of hard work preparing for the holiday season.

Boy crushed by tombstone

PEARLAND (AP) — The family of a 2-year-old boy who died after being crushed last week by a headstone has filed a lawsuit against a Pearland cemetery.

Giovanni Rodriguez died Dec. 13 when police say he and a group of children may have been playing on headstones at the cemetery. His parents, Francisco Rodriguez Cardenas and Maria De Los Angeles Yanez Laura, filed a lawsuit Tuesday against the Southpark Funeral Home-Cemetery-Crematory.

The lawsuit alleges the funeral home operator was negligent for not ensuring the headstones were more stable, the Houston Chronicle reported in its online edition

Friday.

Cardenas and Laura were at a funeral service when the Pearland Police Department received a 911 call at the cemetery. Rodriguez died of his injuries later that day.

The family's lawyer, John Padilla, said he had no evidence the children were playing on the headstones and believes other grave markers at the cemetery would also be loose.

"We feel strongly the evidence will show there were numerous other headstones there not affixed to a base," Padilla said.

"Loose headstones pose an extreme risk to children, older people, even praying people who could reach up and touch one."

Judge declines to free boy whose conviction was reversed

HOUSTON (AP) — A judge ruled Friday that even though the conviction of a 14-year-old boy accused of shooting his father four years ago was reversed last week, the teen will have to stay behind bars.

The teen's attorneys argued that he should be released from the Texas Youth Com-

mission on bond while waiting for prosecutors to appeal the decision, according to a story on the Houston Chronicle's Web site Friday.

Last week, Houston's 14th Court of Appeals ruled he should get a new trial because the trial judge didn't let jurors hear evidence that

he thought he was defending himself and his brother.

Rick Lohstroh, a doctor at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, died in the 2004 shooting outside the Katy home of his ex-wife.

Court records show that the boy met with a psychologist hours before the shooting and

told authorities several times that he was scared of his father.

Jurors decided in 2006 that the boy committed an act of delinquent conduct, which is similar to a guilty verdict in an adult criminal court, and he was committed to the Texas Youth Commission for 10

years. He is set to be eligible for parole next year.

Lohstroh, 41, had gone to his ex-wife's home to pick up the boy and his younger brother. The boy got into his father's SUV with his mother's .45-caliber pistol in his backpack and fired through the driver's seat.

COUNTY

Continued from Page 1A

Road and Bridge Administrator Eddy Jameson will present pipeline crossings and a report on county road maintenance.

County Clerk Donna Wright will discuss setting the terms of court, while Charlene McBride, representing the U.S. Census Bureau, is expected to meet with the commissioners court.

The meeting will get under way at 10 a.m. Monday in the commissioners courtroom.

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

FEAST

Continued from Page 1A

saying thanks to the community for another year of support," said Lafler. "It's going to be a traditional Christmas dinner with ham and all the trimmings. Area residents who are shut-in or homebound can all before 4 p.m. Monday and order a plate, which will be delivered Tuesday between 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

"For those who would like to break bread with us here at the Corps office, we'll begin serving at 11:30 a.m. and continue through 1:30 p.m. It's always nice to get to sit down with people in the community and enjoy a meal. It makes all the hard work leading up to it worth while."

There is no charge for the meal, according to Salvation Army officials, which is open to anyone in the community.

Lafler said preparations for

the Christmas Eve dinner aren't nearly as involved as those leading up to the charity's Thanksgiving effort, but volunteers are always welcome in the Salvation Army kitchen.

"We don't turn away volunteers around here. There's always something that needs doing," said Lafler. "Anyone who wants to help with the Christmas Eve dinner just needs to show up here at the Corps building at around 9 a.m. Tues-

day. Since we're cooking ham, it's a lot less labor intensive than boning the turkeys at Thanksgiving."

To place a takeout order or for more information, Lafler said residents can call 267-8239, or come by the Corps office building, located at located at 811 W. Fifth St.

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

CHILI

Continued from Page 1A

are already beginning to water.

"A chili cook-off is only as good as the number of cooks who attend," said Landon Sturdivant, one of the organizers of the event who also serves as chief operating officer for West Texas Centers for MHMR. "Luckily, we have had a very good track record for this event because of our past success. It is very well-organized, well-run, well-attended, distributes great prizes — and most of all — its lots of fun. That's one of the most important things to keep in mind when hosting a chili cook-off."

Proceeds from the tasting and entry fees benefit the Children in Need Fund, which

helps purchase school supplies, clothing, tuition for summer camps and helps meet other financial needs of special children who are receiving services from West Texas Centers for MHMR.

The Eagles group — which sponsors the annual contest — has donated more than \$30,000 to the fund through its chili cook-offs over the past six years, West Texas Centers for MHMR CEO Shelley Smith, LMSW, said.

"These funds have been instrumental in helping to address the unmet financial needs of children with mental illness and emotional disorders in West Texas," Sturdivant said. "These funds help the kids whose parents can't afford the specialized camps or other items that the kids need. Without the funds

raised by the Eagles, most of these children and adolescents would go without these needs being met. The funding is absolutely critical to these kids."

Sampling of the chili begins soon after judging, according to event organizers.

"Most people who attend chili cook-offs do so to sample the culinary skills of all the cooks, but watching the rivalry and competition among the cooks is downright entertaining," Sturdivant said. "It's a great time to meet up with good friends, have a lot of laughs and eat some of the best chili in Texas."

Those who have attended past chili cook-

offs, but never stirred a pot of chili at a cook-off should take the first step at the January event, Sturdivant said. "It's very low-key and there are a lot of people around who can help you out. And it's for a good cause."

It's really not as difficult as some people think, he said.

"Anyone can participate in a chili cook-off. All you need is the proper cooking equipment, ingredients and a great recipe. All of these items vary, as much as the taste of the chili. Some cooks bring their state of the art kitchens that they have taken years to build on a trailer. Yet, others only need only to bring an electric skillet

and grandma's recipe to cook up an award-winning pot of Texas chili."

Team ribbons will be presented to the top 10 finishers. A Showmanship Award also will be presented.

Team participation is limited to two members, at a cost of \$10 a team. Contest-goers that would like to sample the chilis can purchase tasting tickets for

\$5. For more information, call (432) 263-0007, ext. 256.

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ECU
Alabama
UConn
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Rhythm of the Cuban kitchen is now star of new cookbook

By **DAMIAN GRASS**
Associated Press writer
MIAMI BEACH (AP) — He's a Grammy-winning record producer. She's known as the Queen of Latin Pop. Together, Emilio and Gloria Estefan have become one of the most powerful couples in the music industry.

But in the world of celebrity cookbook authors, where Rachael Ray and Paula Deen reign, the Estefans have found their spot with a growing niche, 'Ai Cuban food.

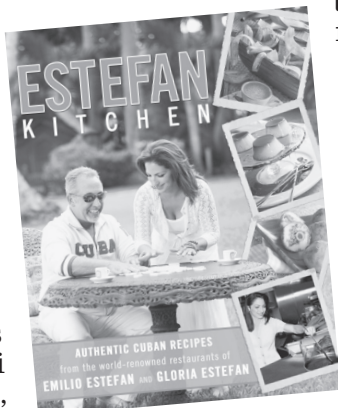
"We have a big hardcore following of the Cuban food, and we were getting so many questions from people that go to our restaurants, asking us 'How do you make this?' and 'How do you do that?'" Gloria Estefan said. "We knew we had to come up with something."

That something was "Estefan Kitchen," a compilation of over 60 traditional recipes, from

yucca frita (cassava fries) and boliche (Cuban pot roast) to pudin de pan (bread pudding) and mojitos, all selected from dishes of their restaurants, Larios on the Beach and Bongo's Cuban Cafe, with locations in Miami Beach, Orlando and Mexico. There's also recipes from the couple's home kitchen.

"They can take the book home with them and learn to make the food in their own kitchen, even if they're not Cuban," Estefan said. "It was a fantastic way for me to be able to promote our culture through food the way I do through music."

Fan of the Estefans also will appreciate personal anecdotes and family photos sprinkled throughout the book.



"Whenever I have time with my kids, I love to whip something up for them because I make it with a lot of love," Estefan said. "I take a little extra time in the kitchen,

because you really want to make the people you love as happy as possible — something my grandma did for me."

The book is dedicated to the couple's older relatives, a nod to the strong culinary current that runs through the family.

Estefan's great-grandfather served as the chef for two Cuban presidents, while her paternal grandfather managed one of the first Cuban restaurants in Miami. Meanwhile, her

grandmother, Consuelo Garcia, shortly after arriving from Cuba in the 1960s started a business serving homemade pan con lechon (roasted pork) sandwiches, ham croquettes and tamales to little leaguers at a Miami park in Miami. Before long, she was earning about \$5,000 a weekend.

With the cookbook behind her, Estefan has turned her attention to a screenplay project with and about legendary pop singer Connie Francis. She also is writing the third installment of her best selling children's book series, which centers on the adventures of a kind-hearted bulldog named Noelle.

"Deep down inside, I think being a writer is probably my biggest identification in this career," Estefan said. "It's been a great way for me to communicate more with my fans."

WINE

Continued from Page 2C

especially from scuppernong grapes.

"There is an exceptionally good sparkling scuppernong being made in southeast Georgia. There's a good chardonnay being made in North Carolina, as well," said John T. Edge, contributing editor at Gourmet magazine and head of the Southern Foodways Alliance at Ole Miss. "The diversity of topography and the diversity of grapes lends itself to the South emerging as a contender on the international stage."

Regional wine sales are tough to track because most Southern wineries are small and mostly sell directly to customers.

Tourism has played a key role in the boom. As at wineries in California, tasting rooms welcoming visitors are common. Some wineries even have built rental cottages for travelers wishing to rest among the vines.

The South was a leader in the U.S. wine

industry during the early part of the 20th century, but Prohibition devastated the nation's industry. While other parts of the country bounced back, recovery has been slower in the South.

For decades after prohibition, farmers in the heart of the Bible Belt shied away from wine grapes. But modern vintners have discovered the cool weather in southern mountain towns is ideal for many varieties.

They've also needed to find new uses for land once dominated by tobacco.

"The industry we've been depending on in the South is no longer here," says Kim Myers, president of the North Carolina Winegrowers Association and owner of Laurel Gray Vineyards in Hamptonville, N.C. "People are looking for alternative things to do with farm land."

California remains the country's largest wine producer, with 2,600 wineries. North Carolina has just 91 wineries, but that's up from just 54 three years ago. Virginia went from 122 to 169 in that time.

But for states that are

infants in the business — such as Georgia, which has tripled its vineyard acreage to 1,100 during the last five years — wine making is as much about proving prowess in the vineyard as it is about opening a business.

Rob Beecham was planning to retire from his contracting business in Roswell, Ga., and move to Italy or California to grow wine. Then he discovered his home state's wine country in the verdant northeast Georgia mountains.

So two years ago he opened Georgia's newest winery, Montaluce Winery & Estates, on 400 acres in Dahlonega. The farm previously had produced apples.

"Wine has so much personality and character," he says. "It was really a romantic idea to be in the industry, to me, and be a part of something creative and challenging."

Down the road at Persimmon Creek winery — one of Georgia's 26 — the first harvest in 2002 produced about 200 cases. Now the vines produce 10 times that and the winery sells out every year.

"People are skepti-

cal," says Hardman. "The way of overcoming that skepticism is quality. That gets their attention and makes them know we're not all redneck bootleggers."

On the Net:
Persimmon Creek Vineyards: <http://www.persimmoncreekwine.com/>
Laurel Gray Vineyards: <http://www.laurelgray.com/>
Food & Wine magazine: <http://www.foodandwine.com/>
National Association of American Wineries: <http://www.wineamerica.org/>

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Fried plantain chips with a spicy Cuban mojo sauce

Fried plantain chips, sometimes called "Cuban potato chips," are delicious paired with traditional mojo dipping sauce. If you can't find naranja agria (sour orange juice), substitute a blend of 1 part orange juice to 2 parts lemon juice.

Start to finish: 30 minutes
Servings: 6 to 8

- 10 to 12 garlic cloves
- Salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 3/4 cup naranja agria (sour orange juice)
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 4 large green plantains
- Vegetable oil, for frying
- Heat the oven to 200 F.

Using a mortar and pestle or garlic press, crush the garlic and place in a small bowl. Add 2 teaspoons of salt, the pepper and oregano. Stir in the juice and olive oil. Set aside.

Peel the plantains. Use a peeler or mandolin to slice the plantains as thin as possible (think potato chip). The plantains can be cut crosswise or lengthwise.

In a large, deep skillet or Dutch oven over medium-high, heat about 1 inch of vegetable oil to 360 F.

In batches, fry the plantain chips, turning occasionally, until lightly browned on both sides, about 5 to 7 minutes. Don't crowd the pan or the chips will stick together.

Use a slotted spoon to transfer the chips to a paper towel-lined plate. After several minutes, sprinkle the chips with salt, then transfer to an oven-safe serving plate or bowl. Place the chips in the oven to keep warm while frying remaining chips.

Serve chips with mojo sauce for dipping.
)Recipe from Emilio and Gloria Estefan's "Estefan Kitchen," Celebra, (2008)

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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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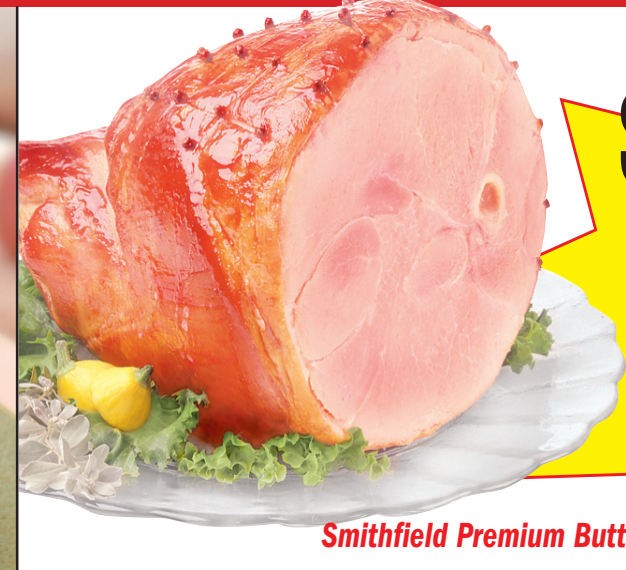
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- Jimmy Dean Breakfast Sausage 16 oz., assorted varieties
- Fresh Express American or Italian Salad Mix, 10 - 12 oz.
- H-E-B Soft Drinks 12 pk., 12 oz. cans assorted varieties
- H-E-B Specialty Series Barbecue Sauce 14 oz., assorted varieties
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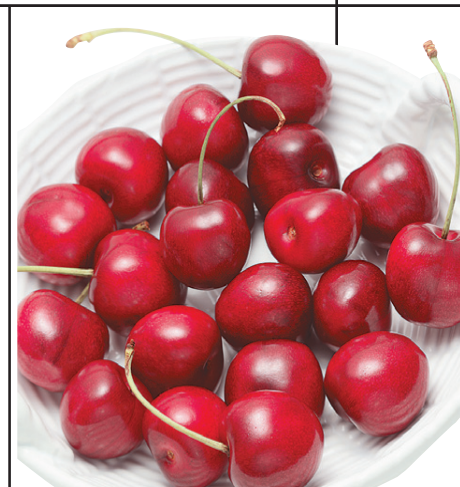
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EDITORIAL

YOUR VIEWS

Kids Zone vandals: Punish 'em good!

TO THE EDITOR:

Howdy folks. Someone help me understand what motivates a person to tear up something that isn't theirs. You've got to be a sorry person to draw pleasure from burning down a play ground or chopping down a landmark that has been standing in the same place longer than some folks have been alive.

Think of all of the storms, hot summers, freezing winters, hail storms and dust storms you have seen in your lifetime. Now think about this: That totem pole stood tall through all of that, but in just a few minutes some dumb jerk chopped it down.

What's the matter with these people? What? Mom and Dad didn't give you enough attention when you were growing up? Please. Mom and Dad should have given you a whipping. Mom and Dad should have taught you a little respect for things that don't belong to you. Mom and Dad should have taught you a little respect for yourselves and others.

I bet Mom and Dad are going to be really proud of you when you get caught and the family name is all over the news, in the paper and on the radio.

My hope here is that the Howard County criminal justice system will make a shining example of the hoodlums who destroyed the totem pole and burnt down Kids Zone. I hope that Howard county will send a message that says clearly, "We will not tolerate this and when we catch you, we will prosecute you."

I like the idea of positive correction. I think if you destroy something, you ought to be a part of putting it back. I think if you paint on something, you should be a part of cleaning it off. Remember when they flogged that kid over in Singapore for spray painting on cars? I know, some of you are shouting at me that corporal punishment doesn't work. Oh Yeah? I bet that kid didn't spray paint anymore cars.

I digress.

I am a citizen of Howard County. I'm also a paid fireman. Burning down Kids Zone not only makes me angry, it scares me. It makes me angry because the Kids Zone is a clear representation of what a community can do collectively. There were a lot of people involved in building it. It required a lot of time and effort on the part of ordinary citizens and it was done for the greater good of the community.

It scares me because this fire required a plan and it required materials. This wasn't as simple as accidentally dropping your cigarette and causing a fire. This required some effort on the part of the ac-

tors. Someone went to town, with the intent of destroying something, obtained the necessary items, then drove to the Kids Zone and set it on fire.

These people have to be caught and punished. This time it was the Kids Zone; maybe next time it'll be someone's house or a school. This isn't a childhood prank. Childhood pranks are harmless. Annoying yes, but harmless. Ringing someone's doorbell and running away is a childhood prank. Setting fire to a play ground, on the other hand, is a crime. It's arson and it's not funny. The culprits not only destroyed something that is near and dear to many people in our community, but they caused our community's emergency responders to react, and it's never 100 percent safe them. No matter what they are responding to, there are always hazards. The folks who started this fire are lucky no one got hurt.

I hope the culprits have to pay for the damages and I hope they have to help rebuild what they destroyed. I hope they have to get on the news and apologize to the people of Big Spring and Howard county. If they are juveniles, I hope mom and dad have to foot the bill for the damages and have to help rebuild what their kids destroyed.

I have no doubt that law enforcement will make the arrest(s), but an arrest is only part of the puzzle. You still have to hope that the DA's office will not drop the ball.

CHRIS HOGG
BIG SPRING

TO THE EDITOR:

I am so sorry about the Kids Zone. I remember how the community pulled together for this project. I hope the city will be able to rebuild. One of our greatest assets is our park.

NELDA REAGAN
BIG SPRING

TO THE EDITOR:

OK, I have to put my opinion on the bad deeds done at the park. Shame on you, you punks whom burned the Kids Zone. These poor kids in this town did nothing to you to cause you to be so hateful towards them, and I hope your Christmas present is time spent in jail.

Ok for those who might know something, I am asking you to please turn them in. They are the evil rotten ones who need to get counseling and whatever comes their way and think the perk is a good reward that can be spent on buying Christmas presents/X-Box/ or anything you want to buy for yourself.

Be a good, honest person, and I guarantee you will be a hero to all if you turn the punks in whom did the bad deeds.

See **LETTERS**, Page 5A

Calling out of kettles?

They were little more than "filler" items, thought to be less important than newspapers' major stories which featured headlines in letters big and bold. Yet, they were strong commentaries on the human condition.

Both were items about the Salvation Army. One heralded new donation techniques for several "test" cities; the other revealed multiple lawsuits against the organization in opposition to its bell-ringing.

Founder William Booth, whose heralded work for the broken, down-trodden, disenfranchised and ignored masses of humanity began in England almost two centuries ago, would have been taken aback.

One announced acceptance of gifts by debit and credit cards at selected kettle locations; the lawsuits call for bell-ringers to become sign-carriers, as if such a silent appeal could replace the gentle reminders provided by the peals of bells across the years.

My guess is that General Booth would have given the go-ahead for the charge card project. He might have taken a "meet you at the courthouse" tack on the litigation issue.

Meanwhile, some bell-ringers' eyes cross at the thought of repetitive questions that go with charge card procedures. Debit or credit? May I see your driver's license? Is all the info on the license still current? Etc. Etc. Etc.

Booth, greatly influenced by Methodism's John Wesley, was said to have "gone straight for the souls" in his roving ministry

that eventually impacted the world.

Fatherless while still a lad, he was a teen pawnshop apprentice. This experience provided vivid pictures of lives fractured by deep hurts and shattered dreams.

Thus was launched his life of service. At age 15, he knelt at a bare table in Nottingham's Broad Street Chapel, vowing that "God should have all there was of William Booth." Rotten-egged, rebuked and ridiculed by many in an uncaring world, he persevered, convinced that the ground at the foot of the cross is exceedingly level.

He went where few others wanted to go, doing what few others wanted to do. Still, his ministry grew as others caught the vision of helping those who couldn't help themselves.

Booth personified the admonition, "Don't give 'til it hurts, give 'til it feels good!"

His response today might well be: "Charge cards? Fine, we'll take whatever we can get." And to naysayers to the ringing of bells, he might have observed: "Our God is in the life-changing business. These protestors may one day be bell-ringers themselves."

The General, whose favorite processional hymn was "Onward Christian Soldiers," pressed on until all energy was gone. He died at age 83, three days after becoming totally blind.

Only three months earlier, a crowd of some 10,000 filled London's Albert Hall to hear his greatest speech: "While women weep as they do now, I'll fight; when little children go hungry as they do now, I'll fight; while there yet remains one dark soul without the light of God, I'll fight—I'll fight to the very end."

And he did.



DR.
DON
NEWBURY

Obama must engage creatively with China, India and Russia

As I made my way from one national-security discussion to another, the conversation never strayed far from an imposing topic: the 21st century's emerging or renaissance powers. Whether Americans like it or not, they must share influence with several countries that have risen in prominence, notably China, India and Russia.

The incoming Obama administration should think expansively and deeply about long-term, proactive, multilateral strategies that emphasize creative engagement with those nations.

Yes, it is possible to accomplish that goal without slighting traditional priorities in Asia, such as the special U.S. relationship with Japan, or elsewhere.

As President-elect Barack Obama's team contemplates official visits during the early part of his term, they should include stops in Beijing, New Delhi and Moscow.

For more detailed ideas on how the Obama administration should begin dealing with emerging or renaissance powers, I turned to veteran strategic studies and arms-control specialist Jack Mendelsohn. He offered the following:

— China. Beijing was the first to reach emerging-power status as a result of its sweeping economic reforms. Will this result in a push for the superpower realm and world domination? Mendelsohn thinks not, especially if the United States remains constructively engaged. We basically have two sticking points with China, he contends. One is Taiwan. There is nothing to gain from focusing on issues that

divide Beijing and Taipei. We ought to support 100 percent the position of the new leadership in Taiwan, which is pursuing improved relations. Forget about directly or indirectly encouraging separatist impulses. The other sticking point is the issue of China's military intentions. Mendelsohn does not believe that the Chinese have territorial ambitions beyond their borders. He is attentive to, but not necessarily concerned about, China's military modernization. They are not exactly surrounded by friends, he notes, and they have internal challenges. By the way, he adds, it appears that China is finally being helpful with North Korea, which underscores the power of cooperation.

— India. New Delhi's decision to open its economy early in the 1990s placed it on the fast track to success, especially in the high-technology and service sectors. All of that should be welcomed, Mendelsohn explains. Like China, India shows no signs of global designs in the sense of superpower ambitions. New Delhi is following a largely economic agenda, although it inevitably will gather political influence along the way. India wants to be seen as a major player and feels as if it has been denied this in the past. Mendelsohn worries, though, about nuclear weapons in India and neighboring Pakistan. He urges the Obama administration to tackle the admittedly difficult task of bringing them into the nuclear-regulatory system. He also points out that the United States has a significant interest in moderating historical tensions in South Asia. Terrorism of the kind that we have seen lately in India is a cause for tensions, he says, but tensions can also lead to terrorism. The Obama administration should coordinate much more closely

Upon his death, this simple sign was placed in the window at the Army's international headquarters: "The General Has Laid Down His Sword."

The old warrior lay in state for three days as 150,000 people filed passed his casket. At his funeral, 40,000 people crowded into Exhibition Hall, where Salvation Army officers knelt in tribute—along with thieves, tramps, harlots, the lost and the outcast.

Among mourners was Queen Mary, who arrived without warning. She sat at the rear of the hall, next to a prostitute. The latter whispered, "He cared for the likes of us."

At Christmastime, may we look and listen for sights and sounds of folks who hurt and are without portfolio. May we, like General Booth, go for their souls, striving mightily to convince them of their worth. May we brandish his sword of faithfulness, loyalty, truth and love.

May the boldness of our lives, the love of our God and the heartbeat in our souls mesh into a great chorus, like a symphony of bells ringing to celebrate service to others. May His love be proclaimed. May His peace that passes all understanding comfort all of humankind. May it be noted one day, by the "least of these, my brethren," who, like the harlot, acknowledge others who "care for the likes of us."

As my Uncle Mort would say, if Americans have the least bit of gumption, they'll scour the depths of their being to find a smidgen of General Booth's spirit.

Merry Christmas to one and all.

Dr. Don Newbury is a speaker and writer in the Metroplex. He welcomes inquiries and comments. Email: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Phone: (817) 447-3872. Web site: www.speakerdoc.com

with both countries against terrorist threats.

— Russia. Here, Mendelsohn says, we have more of a renaissance power than an emerging one. Russia, once the world's second most important country, understandably dreams about recapturing the glory days. Despite Russia's oil boom in recent years, Mendelsohn cannot see a resurgence through economics, especially in light of unstable prices. So, the next best approach is for Moscow to re-exert political influence on events and security matters in Europe and other places. In truth, he argues, the Russians face a lousy set of policy options; witness their heavy-handed (but not unprovoked) action in Georgia. He urges the United States to sit down with its allies, especially the Europeans, who often do not share our dismissive attitude toward Russian anxiety. We need to figure out how to work with a Russia that has genuine interests that do not necessarily coincide with our views. We cannot simply keep expanding NATO; it will just alienate Russia. Even if Moscow is turning authoritarian, he contends, we can still work with it, just as we did during previous periods of confrontation.

Clearly, these are the kinds of ideas that should infuse the Obama administration's thought process as it considers expansively and deeply long-term, proactive, multilateral strategies that emphasize creative engagement with China, India and Russia.

John C. Bersia, who won a Pulitzer Prize in editorial writing for the Orlando Sentinel in 2000, is the special assistant to the president for global perspectives at the University of Central Florida. Readers may send him e-mail at johnbersia@msn.com.



Courtesy photo

Big Spring Air Evac Lifeteam Flight Nurse Kristin Allin provides advanced cardiovascular life support training for local emergency responders with the Big Spring Fire Department.

Advanced life support

Lifeteam holds training for first responders

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

Big Spring Fire Department firefighters and emergency medical personnel recently got a hand-up in advanced cardiovascular life support with a class provided by the area's Air Evac Lifeteam.

Members of the Air Evac Lifeteam met with many of Big Spring's first responders to present the course, according to Debra Wallace, program director for the Big Spring Lifeteam.

"The American Heart Association's Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support course is totally redesigned for healthcare providers who either direct or participate in the resuscitation of a patient, whether in or out of a hospital," said Wallace. "Through the ACLS course, providers enhance their skills in the treatment of the adult victim of a cardiac ar-

rest or other cardiopulmonary emergencies.

"ACLS emphasizes the importance of basic life support CPR to patient survival; the integration of effective basic life support with advanced cardiovascular life support interventions; and the importance of effective team interaction and communication during resuscitation."

Wallace said the course will help emergency medical personnel better recognize cardiovascular conditions that could put patients' lives at risk.

"ACLS is based on simulated clinical scenarios that encourage active, hands-on participation through learning stations where students practice essential skills individually, as part of a team and as team leader," said Wallace. "Realistic simulations reinforce the key concepts, such as proficiency in basic life support

care and recognizing and initiating early management of pre-arrest conditions.

"It also helps with managing cardiac arrest, identifying and treating ischemic chest pain and acute coronary syndromes, as well as recognizing other life-threatening clinical situations — such as stroke — and providing initial care."

Air Evac Lifeteam is a membership-supported air ambulance company that provides emergency care and rapid medical transport to rural communities throughout the central U.S. The company operates 83 bases in 14 states and is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems.

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

PS&C among best to work for

LUBBOCK — West Texas based Parkhill, Smith & Cooper has been ranked as the No. 1 and 2 Texas 2008 Best Firms To Work For in Architecture and Civil Engineering in Texas, according to a leading research firm.

The ranking is based on the Company's commitment to provide a positive work environment and challenging and interesting work opportunities for their employees.

A total of 152 firms were recognized by the management consulting and research firm of ZweigWhite, which identified the best civil engineering, structural engineering, environmental services and architecture firms to work for in an annual ranking of top industry firms in America.

Parkhill, Smith & Cooper Inc. was ranked No. 6 nationally on the 2008 Best Architecture Firms To Work For list, which repre-

sents a No. 1 ranking in firms headquartered in Texas. PSC was also ranked 28th nationally on the Best Civil Engineering Firms To Work For list, representing a No. 2 ranking among Texas firms. The 2008 rankings represent the first time in the history of the ZweigWhite study that a firm in West Texas has achieved the status.

See **BEST**, Page 5C

Physician assistant student picks Howard County to complete training

Heather Hughes, a physician assistant student enrolled at Texas Tech University Health Science Center (TTUHSC) in Midland is completing 200 hours of clinical training under the guidance of Dr. Ba Han at Big Spring State Hospital while completing her psychiatry clerkship.

While at Big Spring State Hospital, she will be working with a team consisting of a psychiatrist, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, social worker, nutritionist and activity liaison to ensure quality care for the patient.

She will also rotate between general medical services, and two treatment teams (one for males and one for females) to ensure learning in all areas of psychiatry.

Hughes is a Midland resident and a third-year physician assistant graduate. She grew up in Odessa and completed her undergraduate studies at Texas Tech University where she re-

ceived her bachelor of science degree in biology in May 2007.

"This is my third rotation out of eight, and the idea of working with a team, and rotating between medical services and two treatment teams is a great concept for learning good, quality care for the whole person, while ensuring learning in all areas of psychiatry," she said.

Meeting the health needs of rural communities continues to be a focus of Area Health Education Center (AHEC) programs in Texas. Providing the opportunity for students in health professions programs to complete clinical training in rural areas not only gives the student a glimpse of what rural medicine entails but also allows the community the opportunity to recruit health professionals for the long-term future.

See **TRAINING**, Page 5C

Energy Watch



Bhupen Agrawal is branch manager and a senior vice president of investments of A.G. Edward's Midland office. He is also a member of the Permian Basin Petroleum Association.

Bill Franks, AAMS, is a senior assistant to the branch manager. He is also a member of the Permian Basin Petroleum Association.



After two and a half weeks of rally and a dramatic 21 percent lift by the DJIA, some normal profit taking came in last week. The market rallied early but then normal fatigue showed up among the buyers and the sellers became energized. Overall, market action looked very "normal" and that in itself is good news.

It is critical to keep in mind what has been going on since the bear started in October 2007. The S&P 500 has dropped 52 percent vs. the average bear market decline since 1900 of 36.7 percent. The economic news has been about the most depressing since — you guessed it, 1929. The mood has been the worst we have ever witnessed.

The ability of the market to rally back 21 percent in only two and a half weeks was very impressive. Basically, the rally said that investors are starting to look beyond the present to a better future. One classic sign of a bottom is when the stock market acts much better than the news of the day.

We have previously mentioned the three M's — mood, money and momentum. Mood and money have been bullish for weeks while momentum, or how the market acts, has been bearish. Momentum the past two weeks has swung to the bullish side which makes all the Ms bullish.

Also helping is seasonality. We do not look for a straight up affair for the markets as too much damage has been done both emotionally and technically. However, for now it appears that momentum has reversed to the upside even as the Senate voted down the auto rescue plan and Bernard Madoff confessed to his employees that his investment advisory business was a "giant Ponzi scheme" that cost clients \$50 billion.

Regarding Madoff, at least half of his clients were hedge funds, banks and wealthy individuals. Probably a lot of leverage was involved. According to the Wall Street Journal, the two senior employees, unnamed in the FBI's complaint, are Madoff's sons, one being the chief compliance officer at his father's firm. Many questions remain unanswered, including whether Madoff's clients actually lost \$50 billion.

This news could have seriously hurt investor's confidence. Interestingly, in the past, bear markets have finally ended on shocking news like the Madoff story. The reason is that an unexpected shock can bring in complete dumping of stocks and flush out everybody who wanted to sell. However, in this case, the market while down early seemed to shrug off the event. We will be watching closely and advising.

Portions of this article were produced Dec. 11 by Al Goldman, Wachovia Securities chief market strategist. Its publication is a collaborative effort and the information is obtained from sources considered reliable, however accuracy is not guaranteed by A.G. Edwards. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results and additional information is available upon request (432) 684-7335. Opinions and estimates are as of a certain date and subject to change without notice. Investments can fluctuate in price, value, and/or income and you may get back less than you invested. A.G. Edwards is a division of Wachovia Securities, LLC.



Courtesy photo

Pat Simmons, founder of the Festival of Lights accepts a check from the Wal-Mart management team of Tito Drummond, left, Tim Walsh, center, and Val Macias.

LETTERS

Continued from Page 4A

I know you will be my hero for telling on them.

TAMMY ADAMS
BIG SPRING

A brighter city

TO THE EDITOR:

Before retirement, there was a time when a work day included visiting with city administrations and employees who manage and run their cities. In all 25 counties there was always that one or few who seemed to raise their town a step higher or knit an extra stitch to community fabric.

Through this measure it can be seen that Big Spring is fortunate. Not one or a few — but many — Big Spring city employees possess and extra sense of purpose and pride.

You can see it expressed at the Festival of Lights Comanche Trail Park or at the Interstate 20 north side water tower base. Alongside the usual volunteers, city employees installed this mass of exhibits that demonstrate exceptional community spirit and unique vitality.

Thousands tour the lighted Christmas at Comanche Trail Park. If you estimate each passing interstate highway vehicle contains two persons, then more than a million (per month) of pleasantly surprised occupants will witness the essence of Big Spring as they drive past the lighted acreage at the I-20 city water tower. Along with keeping water flowing to our faucets, the city water group spends night visits, lunch and after work hours keeping this fenced protected project going and glowing. Exceptional! Yes it is — and let us remember and celebrate this part of our community character when others chose to chop down historical artifacts or burn our Kids Zone.

This year should not end without a special tribute to Pat Simmons — destined to retire this year — or the fine group of new volunteers she's assembled to carry on the Festival of Lights tradition. Sleet down the collar, wasp-infested light timers, exploding transformers, sub-freezing inspections on wind-swept state park ledges, long work hours until the body feels like one deep ache — there and many other disappointments — never wavered her commitment and belief in this community.

She's always wanted to reach to 20,000 visitor attendance number for the Festival of Lights at Comanche Trail park, which is going on right now. This year, perhaps we can all visit there more than once and send her into retirement with a satisfied goal.

Sincerely,
BOBBY McDONALD
BIG SPRING

So many angels

TO THE EDITOR:

It is only a few days until we celebrate the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ. Our town is truly a special place to be.

Because almost everywhere you look, pretty decorations of green and red can be seen. The sound of Christmas car-

ols can be heard, too.

Greetings of Merry Christmas echo in the air and all kinds of good and thoughtful acts of kindness are taking place in our town, as countless people (angels, really) work together to make sure that no child will wake up Christmas morning without presents under their tree.

Others wrap warm sweaters, socks and other needed items for the sick and elderly who live here and who often have very little to call theirs except for memories.

Red ribbons are tied on baskets full of all kinds of good food to be given to those who live here and are having a hard time and are in need of a little kindness.

December 25 is the day we celebrate the birth of our savior. And because it's the most special day of the year, all kinds of good and kind things happen all over the world and in our town, too.

It is also the time that miracles take place and dreams come true.

This will be a special time for me, too. For a dream that I kept in my

heart for many years has come true for me. Our heavenly Father also knew of my dream and in his kind, loving way, he sent some of his special angels he lets live on earth because of the kindness that lives in their hearts to help make my dream come true.

I know that without the help of his special angels that my dream would still be just a dream. And I would like to thank all the angels at Home Realtors for helping me.

For when I told them of my dream, they did

everything they could to help me. They spent countless hours trying to find a home for me that I could afford and be proud of, too. And they did it knowing that I could not pay them for everything that they did. They truly are angels.

I would also like to thank the other angels who helped make my dream come true. They are the angels at Big Spring Housing Authority, Brenda Mercer of First Mortgage of Midland and Melisa Fowler of First Mortgage of Odessa. I would

like to thank the angels of Elrod's Furniture for their help, too. Craig Olson, Max Moore, Cindy Pittman, Jennie Cox and Brian Ivanchan are some of the angels who helped make my dream come true.

I know there are other angels who also helped but I cannot write all their names down. I know God knows of their kindness to me and I know this because he sent them to me.

I would like to wish all my angels and everyone else in our town a Merry Christmas.

LANA F. ANGUIANO

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In The Big Spring Mall

BEST

Continued from Page 4C

“PSC is truly honored to have made ZweigWhite’s list of the Best Architecture Firms and Best Civil Engineering Firms to Work For.” said Joe Rapier, P.E., president of Parkhill, Smith & Cooper. “We have worked hard to make Parkhill, Smith & Cooper the kind of firm that attracts and retains the best architects, engineers and designers in the field.

“We are particularly gratified to have achieved this positive recognition for a West Texas employer.”

Mike Moss, AIA, architecture manager of the Lubbock office added, “We’ve all known that West Texas is a great place to live and work, now we have some independent verification that it is also a great place to want to work.”

ZweigWhite is the nation’s leading source of management consulting, information, and education for the design and construction industry.

TRAINING

Continued from Page 4C

While each student who completes clinical training in a rural community may not return to that community as a practitioner, word of mouth from a positive experience goes a long way to hosting future students and compiling a list of perspective health providers for a community’s long term plans for meeting the health needs of its population.

Community based education experiences like these are a result of a partnership between communities, community health professionals, health professions training schools and The Permian Basin Area Health Education Center (AHEC).

The Permian Basin AHEC is a service of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health and the Permian Basin Workforce Development Board. For questions about the services and how your community can work with AHEC, contact Patty Murphy at (432) 685-8306 or patricia.murphy@twc.state.tx.us.

Public Records

Howard County Justice of the Peace Outstanding IBC Warrants:

- Irene Lopez Alaniz, 774 E. Highway 80 Apt. 230, Abilene
- Bryan Layton Allison, 1108 College Circle, Ranger
- Christine Avalos Bara, 1405 N. Sixth Street, Lamesa
- Sonia M. Barlow, 4209 Parkway, Big Spring
- Toby Barnett, 1713 Dwayne Barnett, Lubbock
- Casey D. Bernal, 901 Grand, Hereford
- Vern Black, 329 W Tennessee, Floydada
- Jeremy Bolton, 506 N. Avenue L, Lamesa
- Dave Bracken, 2720 42nd Street, Lubbock
- Michelle Marie Carrasco, 1704 Yale Avenue, Big Spring
- Krishna Nicole Castillo, 905 Walnut, Colorado City
- Jared Wendell Coby, 901 S. High Street, Longview
- Doyce Ray Coyle, 3301 Auburn, Big Spring
- Wesley Wayne Crow, 2400 Robb Lane, Big Spring
- Susan Cuellar, 2301 N. Pecos #238, Midland
- Wanda Cunningham, 1505 Avion, Big Spring
- Corey D. Dancer, 2605 Alamesa Drive, Big Spring

- Ramona Davila, 2143 Texas Ave, San Antonio
- Brandee A. Eberhardt, 197 Briarwood Lane, Big Spring
- Wesley Allen Edmondson, 505 E. 14th Street, Big Spring
- Randy James Ellis, PO Box 391, Syder
- James Randal Gardner, PO Box 1490, Lyons, Colo.
- Naomi Gonzales, 1606 E. Fifth, Big Spring
- Gabriel Guerrero, 411 N.E. 10th Street, Big Spring
- Kristin Hawkins, 405 N. Moss Lake Road, Big Spring
- Rickie L. Henderson, 205 Providence Road, Big Spring
- Brandy Johnson, 24327 Pleasonton, San Antonio
- Rene M. Johnson, 9205 W. County Road 174, Midland
- Robert Michael Kleck, P.O. Box 35, Rotan
- Lynda Kynam, 2503 Central, Big Spring
- Eloy Escobar Leal, 1806 E. 11th Street, Big Spring
- Joshua David Mackenstein, 414 Hickory/3417 N. Midland Drive, Midland
- Shawn G. McKay, 3107 Bonham Ave, Odessa
- Betty Jane McWilliams, 2503 Fairchild, Big Spring
- Mari Montemayor, 627 State Street, Big Spring
- Anna Marie Moreno, 4656

- St. Frances Ave., Dallas
- Michael Todd McClinton, 1003 S. Midkiff, Midland
- William Leslie Neal, 2100 Alabama, Big Spring
- Katherine Hardin Perez, 4908 Parkway Rd, Big Spring
- Lisa M. Portillo, 1200 Stanford, Big Spring
- Richard Wayne Rains, 4501 Parkway, Big Spring
- Patricia Ramos, 538 Westover Road Apt. 226, Big Spring
- Michael Dewayne Renteria, 2516 Dow, Big Spring
- Alfredo Riojas Jr., 255, S. 11th St., Lubbock
- Veronica Rodriguez, 3010 Cherokee, Big Spring
- Blanca L. Saenz, 1202 N. Sam Houston Ave., Odessa
- Rudy Salazar, PO Box 1275, Stanton
- Monica Serbine, 304 E. 20th Street, Big Spring
- Stephanie Serrato, 1203 E. Mobile, Big Spring
- Harl Bradford Shaffer, 5603 Gail Hwy., Big Spring
- Curtis W. Shelton, 3714 Millbrook Road, Big Spring
- Janie Spurgeion, 1212 Wadley, Midland
- Shawn Spurgeon, 106 N. Adams, Denver City
- Robert Lee Summers, 2404 S. Monticello, Big Spring

- Tonya D. Conner Taylor, 1111 Moseley Circle, Hobbs, N.M.
- Christina Williams, 400 Macarthur, Odessa

District Court Filings:

- Charlette M. Bradford-Maclin vs. Kenneth L. Maclin, divorce.
- Ralph D. Rollins vs. Theresa L. Rollins, divorce.
- Beverly K. Munsell vs. Jackie W. Farris, divorce.
- Loyd Nicholas DBA Nicholas Insulation vs. Raymond L. Treaque DBA Auer Corporation, accounts, notes and contracts.
- Jimmy Dale Dolloff vs. Maria Terry Dolloff, divorce.

Marriage Licenses:

- Clayton Eugene Vickers, 23, and Christine Ann Coker, 21, both of Big Spring.
- Randall Jacob Hipp, 23, and Natasha Leandra Neighbors, 20, both of Big Spring.
- Eric Lynn Herm, 35, and Alison Lee James, 35, both of Ackerly.
- Antonio Martinez Rodriguez, 29, of Big Spring, and Monica Denise Diaz, 24, of San Angelo.

Howard County Pecan Show results

The Howard County Pecan Show was held at the Extension Office Dec. 9-11.

Below are the results from this show.

COMMERCIAL DIVISION

Cheyenne
1st place - Juan Palacios

Desirable
1st place - Juan Palacios

Western
1st place - Nathan Hughes
2nd place - Nathan Hughes

Wichita
1st place - A. G. Rogers
2nd place - Dorothy Rogers
3rd place - Juan Palacios
4th place - Juan Palacios

CLASSIC DIVISION
Barton

1st place - Juan Palacios
Burkett
1st place - Geraldine Hughes

Mahan
1st place - Geraldine Hughes

Shawnee
1st place - Pat Howell

Stuart
1st place - Juan Palacios

2nd place - Jesse Saenz

NATIVE DIVISION
Native
1st place - Geraldine Hughes

Commercial Division winner - Juan Palacios (Desirable)

Classic Division winner - Juan Palacios (Barton)
Overall Grand Champion - Juan Palacios (Desirable)

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Three dead in North Dallas home

By JEFF CARLTON

Associated Press Writer

DALLAS — Police are investigating the possibility of a murder-suicide in the shooting deaths of a mother and her two young children, whose bodies were found in their Dallas home Friday.

The deaths of 49-year-old Jeanmarie Geis, her 8-year-old son and her 4-year-old daughter come after a series of alleged attacks on the family over the last two weeks, according to police reports. Police said they are now looking into whether those attacks actually occurred.

"We are looking to determine whether or not they were valid offenses and whether they occurred the

way they were reported," Lt. Craig Miller said.

No official ruling on the deaths has been made. Dallas police spokesman Senior Cpl. Kevin Janse wrote in an e-mail to The Associated Press that "we are still waiting for tests to come back to determine if it was in fact a murder-suicide."

Police answering a report of gunfire found the bodies at the family's home around 9 a.m. Friday. Each had been shot once, Miller said. He did not describe where each was wounded.

"We do have some damage to the residence. There's a window broken out, a door opened. ... But we don't know if that's old damage or new

damage," he said.

Frank Geis, Jeanmarie Geis' husband, was at a doctor's office at the time of the shootings, Miller said. The husband was questioned and released. "He's been very forthcoming," Miller said, adding that police are not calling him a suspect.

Police said there were at least three disturbance calls involving the dead woman since Dec. 6, when she reported that a gun-wielding man stole her purse and laptop computer outside the real-estate office where she worked with her husband.

Officers had visited the home twice within the past week, responding to a reported home invasion, assault and kidnapping.

On Dec. 13, 51-year-old Frank Geis was interviewed by police after

he was apparently assaulted in his home, according to police reports obtained by The Dallas Morning News. His wife told police that two men dressed in black and wearing ski masks and gloves burst into the home around 8:30 a.m. She said they beat her husband with a hammer on the right side of his head.

Frank Geis, however, told police he could not recall anything past 12:30 a.m., according to the police report.

Jeanmarie Geis said that after the assault on her husband, she was kidnapped by the two men. She told police the men tied her up with duct tape and taped her eyes shut.

Later, the men put her in a car and tried to sexually assault her. She told police that when she resisted, they pushed her out of the car and fled the scene, according to police reports.

The next day, she was in her driveway when a man

approached her, put a gun to her head and forced her into a car, according to police reports. He made her remove her shirt and rubbed the barrel of the gun across her face, she told police. The man then told her, "You're going to be mine."

Jeanmarie Geis also told police that the man said, "This is for what your sweet daddy did to my family." The woman was the daughter of the late state District Judge Mark Tolle, who presided over some high-profile criminal trials in Dallas.

According to the police reports, Geis escaped from the car.

The man chased her and pinned her to the ground but fled again when a nearby garage door opened.

Asked if those previous incidents had been staged, Miller said, "I'm not going to put anything past being a possibility."



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Lone Star State Bank



Federal financial assistance for banks

An open letter from the Staff, Officers and Directors of Lone Star State Bank of West Texas

Dear Friends in Big Spring and the surrounding area,

It does not seem possible that we have been open for a year now. With our offices in Lubbock, Odessa, and Big Spring, and now with the addition of First Bank of Brownfield, we have \$280 million in assets, we have \$210 million in loans to families and businesses across West Texas, and we have 75 employees that are your friends and neighbors. West Texas is our home.

These are tumultuous times for our national economy. Much of the turmoil ties to problems with home mortgages and declining residential property values. Our state is more fortunate than most. According to articles in various business magazines, (1) as recently as the first half of this year, Texas is one of only six states that are seeing a reduction in foreclosures from year to year, (2) Texas is leading the nation in job growth; this is expected to increase the state's population by 13 million to approximately 36.5 million by 2030, and more jobs mean a stronger residential market, and (3) most of Texas has continued to have modest gains in home prices while other parts of country are showing declines.

We, like many of you, are thankful everyday that we are Texans. Most or all of the banks in our area have had nothing to do with "Wall Street" problems such as preferred stock in Fannie and Freddie, credit default swaps and derivatives, subprime mortgage pools and exotic home mortgage products, etc. To seek to assist the nationwide banking system, Washington has devised a "capital assistance" or "bailout" program under its Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP). Many banks in the nation will apply for and receive this assistance ... at Lone Star State Bank of West Texas, we will not. Most West Texans are self reliant - we are self reliant. Our bank is profitable and growing. Our deposit and loan base is comprised of hard working, honest, "do the right thing" West Texas people. This makes Lone Star State Bank strong. For our existing and future customers and for the future of West Texas, Lone Star is moving forward.

Thank you, and Merry Christmas

Judge rejects language program

AUSTIN (AP) — A federal judge has rejected the state's request to postpone his order to develop a new language program for the 140,000 students with limited English proficiency in Texas middle schools and high schools.

In a ruling released Friday, U.S. District Judge William Wayne Justice said the program must be fixed by fall.

The state had requested the delay while it appealed the order.

"The time has come to put a halt to the failed secondary English as a Second Language program and monitoring system" in Texas, Justice wrote.

In his original order in July, he said the improvements had to be in place by the start of the

2009-10 school year. A preliminary plan is due Jan. 31.

State officials could still request a stay of Justice's order from the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

David Hinojosa of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, who represented the plaintiffs in the case, said Justice's original order gave the state more than a year to develop a new plan.

Senate Education Committee Chairman Florence Shapiro, R-Plano, said her panel is exploring legislation to upgrade instruction and improve dropout prevention programs for limited-English students.

"While our elementary school students are do-

ing very well, we recognize there are problems in our high schools that we want to address," Shapiro said in a story in The Dallas Morning News.

Problems related to limited English students include low test scores and high dropout rates.

The House's education leader, Rob Eissler, R-The Woodlands, said he will again offer legislation to provide state funding for dual-language immersion programs that would replace traditional bilingual and ESL classes. Under a dual-language program, students learn some subjects in their native languages for half a day and other subjects in English for the other half.

In bilingual education classes, students are taught core subjects in their native languages while they are learning English.

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Was \$15,995.....**NOW \$13,995**
- 2007 Chrysler Sebring 4 Cyl. Stk# J152 - Red
Was \$15,995.....**NOW \$13,995**
- 2008 Chevrolet Cobalt L4 Stk# J234 - Black
Was \$15,495.....**NOW \$14,495**
- 2008 Chevrolet Cobalt L4 Stk# J237 - Yellow
Was \$15,495.....**NOW \$14,495**
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Was \$15,495.....**NOW \$14,995**
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Was \$15,995.....**NOW \$14,995**
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Was \$23,495.....**NOW \$18,495**
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- 2006 Ford F150 Supercrew V8 Stk# H172A - Silver Birch
Was \$21,995.....**NOW \$18,995**
- 2006 Chevrolet Truck Silverado 1500 V8 Stk# J032 - Light Blue
Was \$19,995.....**NOW \$18,995**
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Was \$21,995.....**NOW \$20,995**
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Was \$21,995.....**NOW \$20,995**
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Was \$22,995.....**NOW \$21,995**
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Was \$22,995.....**NOW \$21,995**
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Good trade?

Harris, Nets pummel Mavs, Kidd, 121-97

By BRIAN MAHONEY

AP Basketball Writer

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — The New Jersey fans who showed up to thank Jason Kidd at the beginning were thanking Mark Cuban by the end.

Cuban signed off on the trade that sent Devin Harris to New Jersey — a deal that looks better for the Nets all the time.

Harris dominated his former team with 41 points, helping the Nets ruin Kidd's return with a 121-97 victory over the Mavericks on Friday night.

Harris added a season-high 13 assists in thoroughly outplaying Kidd, who spent 6½ years in New Jersey before the Nets dealt him to Dallas last February for a package highlighted by Harris, who had his second 40-point game during a breakout season.

"You always feel good for a guy that's been traded, you know, there's always something a little extra in the tank. You feel real good for him," Nets coach Lawrence Frank said. "(Devin had a) special night, but he works his tail off every night. It's good to have reinforcement with all that hard work that you can have special nights like this. But he's had a lot of special nights."

Harris was removed for good with 2:11 remaining, with fans chanting "Thank you Cuban!" to the Dallas owner who had a courtside seat to watch Harris' dazzling performance.

"I think the goal of everybody in New Jersey is to be a general manager, so I can understand why they would want to share their expertise," said Cuban, who was amused by the chants.

Vince Carter added 34 points, 10 rebounds and six assists for the Nets, who improved to just 5-8 at home. Yi Jianlian had 16 points and 10 rebounds. The Nets were 14-of-26 from 3-point range, with Harris hitting five and Carter making four.

"He played well, no question, and Carter played well. As a team they had us really on our heels from the beginning," Mavs coach Rick Carlisle said.

Kidd finished with 17 points and seven assists, but neither he nor his teammates could deal with the quickness of Harris, who recorded his eighth 30-point game, all this season. He is averaging 24.5 points.

"Obviously there's going to be added emotions whether you want it there or not, obviously with old teams and a big trade, but it was more important for us to get a home win," Harris said.

Dirk Nowitzki had 24 points and Jason Terry added 23 for the Mavs.

The Nets were a perennial NBA loser and coming off a 26-56 season when they acquired Kidd from Phoenix in the summer of 2001. They went 52-30 the next season and made the first of two straight trips to the NBA finals behind Kidd, who is their career leader in five statistical categories.

But he became unhappy early last season and the Nets decided it was time to move on without him and were able to get the promising Harris back in return.

Kidd was introduced first and was treated to a long ovation, though not particularly loud because the building was mostly empty on a night when a snowstorm made travel difficult. He waved a couple of times to the crowd but appeared uncomfortable by the long delay before the next starter was announced, motioning with his hand to get things moving.

"The weather was great, we played no defense and New Jersey was great tonight," Kidd said. "They were hot, Devin and those guys knocked down 3s, they shot the ball extremely well. They were great tonight."

Asked what he thought of the pregame introduction, Kidd said: "The first time I was in New Jersey, that's what the crowd looked like, about 3,000 people. That was the first thought, and then just all the good and bad times we had."

Harris then scored 15 points and Carter had 14 in the first quarter, giving New Jersey a 33-30 lead. The lead was two after Kidd made a pair of free throws with 3:33 left in the half, but Harris and Carter hit 3-pointers during a 12-0 spurt that made it 62-48. The Nets led 64-51 at halftime.

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7		5		3	8			
	8	4	6	2				1
	2		8					
	5				1			7
	3						2	
4	1							5
		9			3			
2		8	4	3	9			
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Schwarzenegger orders hiring freeze, worker cuts

By JUDY LIN

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Friday ordered a state hiring freeze and payroll cuts to conserve cash as California struggles to deal with a \$42 billion budget deficit.

The governor issued an executive order that requires state agencies to reduce payroll by 10 percent, which could lead to massive layoffs. He also ordered the state's 235,000 employees to take two days off a month without pay, starting Feb. 1.

Schwarzenegger also issued an executive order calling lawmakers back into session to deal with the budget for the third time in two months. On Thursday he announced he would veto an \$18 billion Democratic deficit-cutting package that he said didn't do enough to address the financial crisis.

In a letter to state workers, Schwarzenegger said California must take emergency steps that will require sacrifices from everyone.

"It is imperative that state government look inside itself and be part of the solution," the governor wrote. "We simply have no other choice."

Union officials said they were considering filing a lawsuit to prevent job losses.

"We definitely think we have grounds for filing an unfair labor charge," said Jim Herron Zamora, a spokesman for the Service Employees International Union, Local 1000, the largest state employee union.

"Our contract doesn't allow him to do this."

Officials warn that the state will run out of cash in February unless Schwarzenegger and lawmakers can reach a deal to close the budget gap with spending cuts, revenue increases or a combination of both.

Schwarzenegger ordered all state employees to take two days off a month without pay or take a similar salary cut to achieve \$1.3 billion in savings through the next fiscal year.

On top of that, the governor directed agencies that get their money from the state's largest budget account, the general fund, to achieve a 10 percent payroll savings. Officials said that could lead to an undetermined number of layoffs.

Department of Personnel Administration spokeswoman Lynelle Jolley said any workers who lose their jobs as a result of the order could seek employment at other state departments that use special state funds.

"We're hoping we can do this with the least number of layoffs possible but the goal is to address this imminent cash crisis," Jolley said.

Lawmakers adjourned for the holidays Thursday after Democrats pushed through a package of spending cuts and tax increases using a creative maneuver to bypass Republican opposition.

Schwarzenegger's decision to veto the package left Democratic leaders scrambling to save their plan. They argued that it met some of his demands

for speeding up public works projects and selling surplus state property.

Assembly Speaker Karen Bass, D-Los Angeles, said it was "mind-boggling" that the governor would throw away a package that begins tackling the state's fiscal problems because it didn't contain exactly what he wanted.

"It's like a child telling Santa if you don't bring every single item on the list, then stay out of my chimney," Bass said. "I am hoping that the governor over these next few days will really reconsider saying he will veto the budget."

Bass and Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento, said they would remain at the Capitol to negotiate with the governor or his staff, but would not call the other 118 lawmakers back until a deal could be reached.

Under the governor's special session declaration, lawmakers have 45 days to send the governor bills that address the budget crisis. If they fail to do so, the Legislature may not act

on other bills.

The governor had sought what he said was assistance for homeowners facing foreclosure, broad authority to relax environmental regulation on public works projects and more toll roads. Democrats allowed only partial waivers for a limited number of road projects and for certain state properties up for sale.

Additionally, Schwarzenegger requested deeper cuts than Democrats were willing to offer, such as reductions in welfare and senior assistance programs, greater flexibility to reduce school spending, and the elimination of two of 14 state employee holidays.

Environmental advocates also questioned why the governor would toss aside the only deficit-cutting legislation to reach his desk since he declared a fiscal emergency on Nov. 5. Paul Mason, deputy director of the Sierra Club in California, suggested that by demanding environmental exemptions, the governor was betraying his public image as a crusader against global warming.

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Illinois governor vows to stay in office, fight

By **DEANNA BELLANDI**
and **MIKE ROBINSON**

Associated Press writers
CHICAGO — Facing federal corruption charges that threaten to end his political career, Gov. Rod Blagojevich has made clear to the world what those close to him know well: He's not one to be easily fazed.

"I have done nothing wrong. And I'm not going to quit a job that people hired me to do because of false accusations and a political lynch mob," a composed yet combative Blagojevich said Friday, addressing the public for the first time since his arrest 10 days earlier.

"I will fight. I will fight. I will fight until I take my last breath," Blagojevich said. He took no questions from reporters and immediately left the room after wishing his listeners, "Merry Christmas, happy holidays."

The 52-year-old Democrat's

uncompromising pledge comes as little surprise to those who know him, but doesn't necessarily resonate.

"I just think that he is living in an alternate reality right now," state Sen. Christine Radogno, a suburban Chicago Republican said earlier Friday. "I don't think he's being realistic, probably even with himself, with respect to how much trouble he's in so he's just carrying on with what's worked for him before."

Blagojevich is charged with scheming to sell President-elect Barack Obama's vacant Senate seat for big campaign contributions or a lucrative job for himself. Prosecutors built their case on Blagojevich's wiretapped conversations.

"I'm here to tell you right off the bat that I am not guilty of any criminal wrongdoing, that I intend to stay on the job, and I will fight this thing every step of the way,"

Blagojevich said.

Acknowledging his political isolation, he recited the opening lines of the stirring poem "If" by Rudyard Kipling: "If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you ..."

What he hopes to accomplish by staying in office appears unclear. Blagojevich appears to have no political support, the Illinois House having voted 113-0 last week to assemble an impeachment committee, and his ability to govern has been crippled.

Still, following his appearance, Blagojevich issued 22 pardons. Aides wouldn't provide any information about why he granted the pardons, or what crimes the people were accused of committing, but the move served as reminder of



AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast
Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich addresses reporters 10 days after he was arrested on federal corruption charges, during a news conference at the State of Illinois building in Chicago.

the governor's authority.

Republican state Sen. Dale Righter said that if Blagojevich manages to escape impeachment, his gov-

erning will be limited to signing legislation, directing his agencies and other "house-keeping stuff." Blagojevich will not be able to work with lawmakers or energize the public to support his ideas, Righter said.

"Is this governor finished as a leader? I don't think there's any question about that," he said. "I don't think the instrument has yet been invented that can measure how little credibility he has."

After the speech, disappointed Republicans argued that if Blagojevich cannot be dislodged right away, he should at least be disarmed. They called on the Democrats in the Legislature to hold a special election to fill the Senate seat, stripping Blagojevich of the power to make the appointment.

"Anything short of resignation today from the governor was unacceptable," said Illinois GOP chairman Andy McKenna.

Democratic Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn pleaded with Blagojevich to step aside under a constitutional provision that allows him to keep his title but give his duties to an acting governor — which, under the rules of succession, would be Quinn.

"Our state cannot wait while the chief executive battles in the court of law while we have so many issues affecting safety and welfare of the state of Illinois," Quinn said.

Even before the speech, Blagojevich's lawyer, Ed Genson, a hard-charging Chicago criminal defense attorney, had made it plain the governor would not go down without a fight.

Genson challenged the Illinois House impeachment committee at every turn this week, arguing that the wiretaps were illegal, accusing some of the panel members of having already made up their mind, and complaining that Illinois law does not spell out the grounds for impeachment or what evidence should be considered.

"He'll worry about the criminal part, the governor will continue to govern," said another Blagojevich attorney, Sam Adam Jr.

The impeachment panel wants federal prosecutors to release details of their probe of Blagojevich, including copies of the taped conversations, and give the Legislature some guidance on who can be called as a witness without compromising the federal case.

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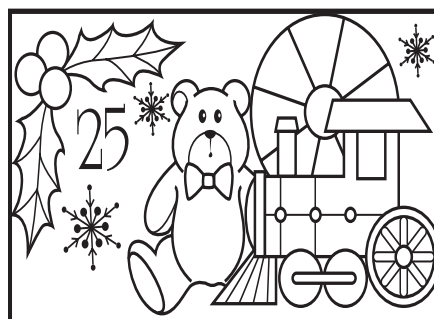
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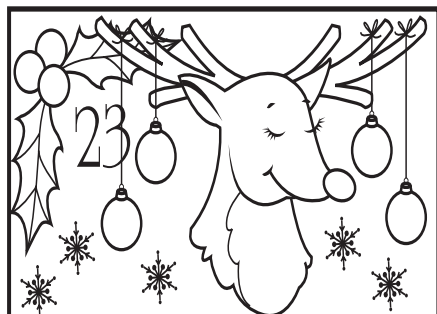
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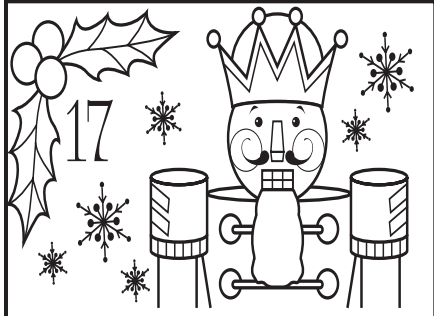
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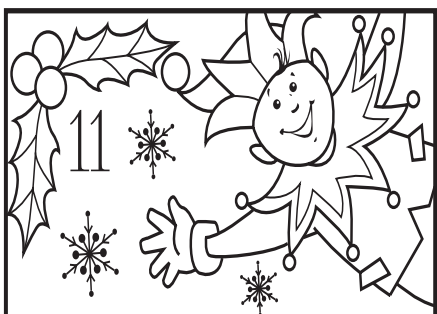
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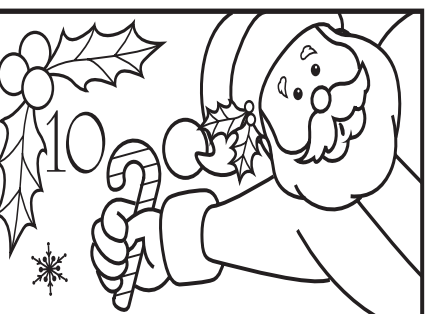
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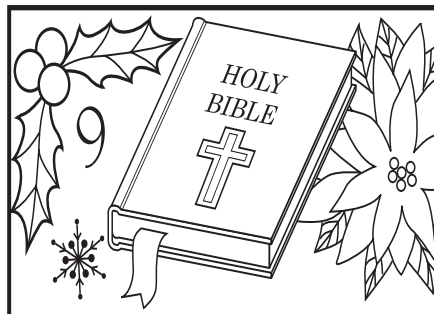
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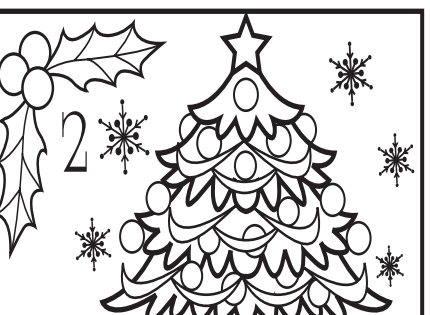
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Miscellaneous

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Answer to previous puzzle: HAWK HOMER TEAL ODIN ALAMO ELSA BASIL METABOLISM OMEGA AIRPLANE HOPI LOIS FAST TALK YEASTS APT SLEET LOUT THYME OF YOUR LIFE SILO TEMPE LTR ODETTE DECLASSE OMAN ISIS SPARERIB SNEER CUMINTHROTHERYE AMOS HIERO AGED TART ALDEN TODD

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Girl's remains offer few clues about how she died

By MARK WANGRIN

Associated Press Writer

ORLANDO, Fla. — Pieces of a tiny skeleton found in swampy woods belong to a 3-year-old who disappeared but provide few clues about what happened to her, a missing link that could make it harder for prosecutors to convince a jury her death was a homicide.

Casey Anthony, 22, has been charged with murder in the death of daughter Caylee, a case that has captivated the Orlando community where they lived.

Authorities said at a news conference Friday that DNA tests conducted on remains found by a utility worker last week less than a half-mile from where the child lived matched Caylee's genetic profile. But the only clue they give about her death is that her bones didn't suffer trauma, said Orange County medical examiner Dr. Jan Garavaglia.

"Bottom line is, folks, no child should have to go through this," said Orange County Sheriff Kevin Beary.

Without a definite cause of death, a defense lawyer can suggest to a jury that labeling Caylee's death a homicide is only speculation, said A. Russell Smith, a Jacksonville attorney and immediate past president of the Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

"Juries are particularly conscientious in homicide cases because the penalties are so severe," Smith said. "So, to the extent that there are gaps in critical evidence, it makes the prosecutor's job much more difficult."

The discovery of the child's remains came after months of searches, twists and turns in the investigation. Casey Anthony was indicted in October on first-degree murder and other charges, even though no body was found. She has insisted that she left the girl with a baby sitter in June, but she didn't report her missing until July.

A search team said they did not check the wooded area sooner because it was submerged in water from the summer's heavy rains. But the utility worker who made the tip, Roy Kronk, said he had contacted the Orange County Sheriff's office in August to report that he had seen "something suspicious, a bag, in the same area."

The sheriff's office said

he first called Aug. 11 to report the bag. A deputy responded but didn't find anything and was unable to locate him. Kronk called a crime hotline the following day and the information was passed on to the sheriff's office criminal investigation division. On Aug. 13, he called the sheriff's office a third time. He met a deputy, but authorities cleared the area as a place of interest in the search a short time later.

Beary said his department was investigating its response.

"If we missed a window of opportunity, we don't know," he said. "I'm not throwing anybody under the bus because we don't know."

It took authorities several days to analyze the remains since they were found last Thursday, and some are still undergoing tests. Some of the bones were as small as pebbles and had been scattered. Excavators searching on their hands and knees had a hard time finding the fragments.

Garavaglia — the star of cable TV's "Dr G: Medical Examiner" — said authorities concluded Caylee was killed through DNA tests and "circumstantial evidence." She said she was certain this was a homicide, not an accidental death, and didn't expect further testing to reveal a specific cause.

"I wouldn't have issued the report if I wasn't sure," she said.

A jail chaplain told Casey Anthony that the remains were her daughter at the Orange County jail just before the news conference began. Her attorney, Jose Baez, was with her shortly after.

"This is her private moment," Baez said. "This is her life she's trying to battle through right now."

Caylee has been a staple on national news as her grandparents pleaded for tips, promising the girl was still alive.

Volunteers and investigators mounted several search through the summer and fall, looking at wooded areas near Orlando International Airport, local parks and even the grounds where

the bones were found.

Caylee's grandmother first called authorities in July to say she hadn't seen the girl, whose third birthday passed shortly after her disappearance, for a month. Her daughter's car smelled like death, she said.

Police immediately interviewed Anthony and soon said everything she told them about her daughter's whereabouts was false. The baby sitter was nonexistent and the apartment where Anthony said she had last seen Caylee had been empty for months. Anthony also lied about where she worked, they said.

Other troubling details emerged: Photos surfaced of Anthony partying after her daughter disappeared. Friends said she was a habitual liar, but also a good mother.

Last month, the Orange County State Attorney turned over almost 800 pages of documents showing someone used the Anthonys' home computer to do Internet searches for terms like "neck breaking" and "household weapons."

Brad Conway, an attorney who represents George and Cindy Anthony, Casey's parents, said they will cooperate with investigators.

"They know now their precious granddaughter is safe and can serve as a guardian angel to protect missing children and their families," Conway said.

In mid-March, someone searched




AP Photo/Orange County Sheriff's Office, File

This photo released by the Orange County Sheriff's Office in Orlando, Fla., shows Caylee Marie Anthony. Orlando authorities said Dec. 19 that DNA tests confirm the skeletal remains recently found in the woods belong to the missing toddler.

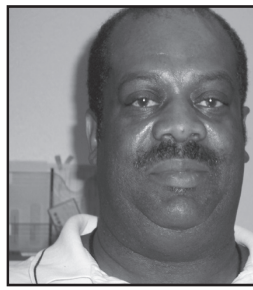
Google and Wikipedia for peroxide, shovels, acetone, alcohol and chloroform. Traces of chloroform, which is used to induce unconsciousness and a component of human decomposition, were found in the trunk of Casey Anthony's car during forensic testing, the documents say.

If convicted of first-degree murder, Anthony faces an automatic life sentence as prosecutors have announced they will not seek the death penalty. Her trial is scheduled for March.



December 2008 Employee of the Month Bobby Winters

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In observation of the Christmas Holiday,
The Big Spring Herald will observe the following deadline schedule:



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WEDNESDAY, DEC. 24TH
Deadline Monday, Dec. 22nd, 3:00 p.m.

THURSDAY, DEC. 25TH
No Paper Christmas Day

FRIDAY, DEC. 26TH
Deadline Tuesday, Dec. 23rd, 10:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, DEC. 28TH
Deadline Wednesday, Dec. 23rd, 10:00 a.m.

MONDAY, DEC. 29TH
Deadline Wednesday, Dec. 23rd, Noon

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Tomorrow's Horoscope

BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

The winter solstice is a celestial event that has long inspired the mystics of the ages, and many cultures have stories, traditions and even physical monuments erected to honor the passage of the sun into Capricorn. Let yourself be moved to a deeper connection with your fellow humans, the majesty of nature and the universe at large.



HOLIDAY MATHIS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). As busy as you have been all year, you will become even busier now. Your attention is a valuable commodity and many are after it. You will be as fortunate as you are generous, so seize all opportunities to help others.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). This is your moment to fracture an old habit that is entrenched in your psyche. It's a simple matter of making the

right choice and finding support. Leo motivates you the best.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You fear you will have to soon decide between love and money, but actually you've already made your decision, deep in your heart. You keep moving toward a person whose spirit is generous, and love is blossoming.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You woke up in a world that is in some aspects unrecognizable. This new incarnation of your former existence will take getting used to. But you are a mountain of strength and have already overcome much.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You have a surplus of good will. How you choose to spend it will greatly impact how it comes back to you tomorrow. Offer to your kindred the warmth and sincerity of an outreaching hand.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (DECEMBER 21). There are many times this year when you will be the center of the gathering and be brilliant in the responsibility. And there are just as many

times when you will revel in the experiences of others, happy to enhance their journey with your own wisdom and ideas. Finances turn for the better in June. Libra and Aquarius lend exceptional support. Your lucky numbers are: 20, 4, 14, 32 and 18.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You do prefer things to make classically good sense. And right now you dislike the idea of silly trends and think of them as gimmicks. That said, your life will be better for making a certain fashionable choice today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Those who warn you not to be silly, goofy or weird do so from a place of insecurity. If those doubters had half your spunk they would be endlessly happier. Kick up your heels and throw off their mantle of control.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You are to be commended for caring well for your body. Now that you have achieved physical improvement it is time to hit the intellectual side of life with gusto. Reading is time well spent.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Yes, you've been through a bleak situation in your personal life, but golden news comes that changes everything. With renewed hope you can get back to being carefree.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Caring for animals is, to you, worth the sacrifice it takes. Follow through with your plans involving pets. If you do not have space for all you would like to do, consider volunteering at a local animal shelter.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Love and good will surround you at every turn in the form of admirers. Just a short time ago the hullabaloo you are experiencing now would have knocked you off kilter. Today you revel in it.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Everyone around you admires how you can dream up fortunate situations and soon find yourself enjoying them. Of course you still have to go through the gritty reality of getting there. You'll take three steps before sundown.

FORECAST FOR THE WEEK AHEAD: There

are those few who will pilgrimage to an ancient monument such as Stonehenge, Newgrange or the Petroglyph of Pueblo Soyal to celebrate the winter solstice. But for most, the winter solstice passes without too much recognition. Perhaps there is a holiday party or a church service to attend or maybe some shopping will be accomplished, but mostly the shortest day of the year passes without a big hullabaloo. Even so, something shifts when the sun enters Capricorn. A reverence takes hold. A primal sense of mysticism is activated. There's a deeply rooted need to connect with the force that animates this crazy passion play we call life.

Whether you honor the passage on purpose with a self-created ritual or a prayer, or you accidentally find yourself affirming your life with a random act of kindness, generosity and connection, this week gets off to a remarkable start. The moon in Sagittarius on the 25th brings added excitement and an adventurous and worldly flair to

festivities. Mars joins the sun in Capricorn on Boxing Day and we head into the final days of the year with a strong sense of what we want to accomplish and the determination needed to follow through.

C E L E B R I T Y PROFILES: The winter solstice often falls on Kiefer Sutherland's birthday and though this second-generation superstar was born right on the cusp of Sagittarius and Capricorn, he is in fact a Sagittarius with Venus in Capricorn. The international influence of Sagittarius is well represented in Sutherland's early life, as he was born in London and was granted both an English and Canadian citizenship.

If you would like to write to Holiday Mathis, 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.

Annie's Mailbox : Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: Today I mourn the loss of a dear friend. She was vibrant, energetic and full of life, but on a crisp autumn afternoon, she committed suicide. She was only 35 and left behind two beautiful little girls.

My friend spent her life inspiring other women to get fit by opening her own women's fitness center. I do not know what transpired in the final hours of her life, but I do know she had been under a tremendous amount of stress. I have been in the health care profession for many years and am ashamed to say I missed the warning signs.

I cannot change what has happened to my friend, but I can make other people more aware of the prevalence of depression. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, major depressive disorders affect 14.8 million American adults in any given year and depression is more prevalent in women. The median age is 32. Depression knows no boundaries. It does not discriminate against sex, race, age or profession.

If you or someone you love is showing signs of depression, please seek help. The National Institutes of Health have a wonderful website (www.nih.gov) and a toll free hotline 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255). The National Mental Health Information Center (<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov>) is also an excellent resource.

There is a profound sense of emptiness in the families and friends left behind when a loved one commits suicide. I ask your readers to take the time to really listen to others and be aware of the warning signs of depression. Do not assume everything will work itself out. Most importantly, tell the people you love how much they mean to you. Life is so short. Don't wait until it is too late. I did not get to say good-bye to my friend or tell her what a wonderful person she was, but her



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

spirit will live on in the lives of all the women she inspired. -- Michelle in Greensboro, N.C.

Dear Michelle: Our condolences on your terrible loss. According to the National Institutes of Health, symptoms of depression include: persistent sad, anxious or "empty" feelings; feelings of hopelessness and/or pessimism; feelings of guilt, worthlessness and/or helplessness; irritability, restlessness; loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable, including sex; fatigue and decreased energy; difficulty concentrating, remembering details and making decisions; insomnia, early-morning wakefulness or excessive sleeping; overeating or appetite loss; thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts; persistent aches or pains, headaches, cramps or digestive problems that do not ease even with treatment.

It is easy to miss the signs if you aren't looking because your friend or family member seems fine, but depression increases during the winter months, especially around the holidays. Please tell your loved ones how much they mean to you.

Dear Annie: I am 24 years old, and I am trying to get my Social Security card so I can get a job. I have been in foster care most of my life and have no contact with my family. Therefore, I am not sure what hospital I was born in and can't get a birth certificate.

I went to my school and the group home,

and they say they no longer have my records. Can you steer me in the right direction? -- Lost in New York

Dear Lost: We contacted Kia Green at the Social Security Administration. She said you should call or visit the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state where you were born to obtain a certified copy of your birth certificate. You don't need to know the name of the hospital.

You can then complete an application for a Social Security card, which requires proof of U.S. citizenship (or immigrant status and work eligibility), age and identity. For more information, call 1-800-772-1213.

Dear Annie: I have been the bookkeeper for a small company for six months. The previous bookkeeper was embezzling money, and I now have to deal with a lot of micromanaging due to the office manager's trust issues. I do my job well and have proved myself trustworthy.

Due to my position, I am aware of how much money the embezzler was making and I am making significantly less. The owner also owns another company and recently fired the bookkeeper there for embezzling, as well. I was asked to help out until they hired someone else, and while going through the books, I discovered that she, too, was making significantly more money than I am.

I accepted a lower-than-normal wage when I began working here, with the understanding that I would be making more once I put in my time. I am coming up for my review and was looking forward to getting a raise. I have discovered through the grapevine, however, that the raise they plan to offer me is less than I was led to believe and much less than that of the bookkeepers who were embezzling. I should be worth at least as much as they were. I have more responsibility, rarely take a day off, do my work well and,

most importantly, I'm not stealing from the company.

I realize it's the owner's prerogative to pay what he feels is right, but am I justified in -- Feeling Stiffed?

Dear Feeling Stiffed: While you are honest and doing a good job, the owner isn't going to pay you the same amount after six months as someone else earned after, say, six years. If, however, your length of employment is similar, you have a legitimate beef. When your raise comes up, let the boss know what you think is fair.

Dear Annie: I am an elderly widow with a debilitating lung disease and a recent breast cancer diagnosis. I live alone in my own home.

My neighbors and I share a backyard fence. They have a row of evergreen trees that drop needles all over. Yesterday I observed my neighbor using his leaf blower to scatter those needles into my yard. They kill my grass.

I am in no condition to rake up these needles or blow them back into his

yard. Any suggestions as to what I should do? -- Tired and Upset

Dear Tired: Talk to your neighbor. He may not realize that his evergreen needles destroy your grass, or that you've noticed. If that doesn't help, contact your local homeowners or neighborhood association, or ask another neighbor to intercede on your behalf. You can, of course, call the police if he doesn't stop, but first we'd give him the opportunity to do the right thing.

Dear Annie: You told "Seoul, South Korea," the woman who enjoyed wearing perfume, to quit wearing it to work and save it for special occasions. So that means people like me now have to gag through concerts and shows?

Tell her if she enjoys wearing perfume to do so at home in the evenings and on the weekends. Chances are she's so immune to the scent, she has to wear more and more to notice it, making it even stronger for the rest of us. -- M.G.

Dear M.G.: Perfume, in very small drops, can be lovely to wear, and

many people enjoy catching a whiff. While it is never a good idea to wear it in enclosed spaces such as a work environment, a dab when going out for the evening should not cause anyone to gag.

The world is full of people who are sensitive to one thing or another, and it is not possible to accommodate every person's preferences or potential reactions. We will qualify that, however, by saying that a small drop means just that. Any more is offensive to everyone.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to annies-mailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, P.O. Box 118190, Chicago, IL 60611. To find out more about Annie's Mailbox, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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\$39.99 ea.
Usher Men's
1.7 oz. EDT spray
regular retail \$47.99 ea.



save \$15
\$39.99 ea.
Armani Attitude for Men
1.7 oz.
regular retail \$54.99 ea.

Select Designer Gift Sets for Men or Women, selection varies by store
WHILE SUPPLIES LAST!



Gift ideas that fit under the tree... and within your budget!
over 100 different cards to choose from!

Prices Good Sunday, December 21 thru Wednesday, December 24, 2008
At Your Neighborhood H-E-B Stores.
Some items may not be available in all stores. Items not valid at Central Market. Due to the popularity of our Extra Low Prices Every Day, we reserve the right to limit quantities. Limit Rights Reserved. We Accept Lone Star Card, WIC And Manufacturers' Coupons.
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WEGMAN WINS YMCA AWARD



Courtesy photo
Terry Wegman, center, accepts the YMCA Distinguished Service Award from YMCA Executive Director Pete Thiry, left, and Trev Larson, YMCA board president. Wegman has volunteered as a fitness instructor for the past six years, leading more than 700 classes.

ROTARIANS HELP CHARITY



HERALD photo/Lyndel Moody
Members of the Greater Big Spring Rotary Club presented the Salvation Army with a donation of \$500 for the Angle Tree project. Pictured from left are Rotary members Melinda Flennikan, Terry Wegman, Debbie Wegman, Capt. Ed Cheshire of the Salvation Army, Nancy Newell and Debbye ValVerde. The Angel Tree Project provides Christmas gifts for economically disadvantaged children and senior citizens.

Merry Christmas
Last Minute Stocking Stuffers
Mon, Tues, & Wed.
25% off All Merchandise
Excluding salon services & bare essentials products
Uptown Salon Day & Spa
600 Rannels 432-267-1544

Give yourself the gift of beauty.

Save up to \$100 on your Restylane® or Perlane® treatment and wear your gift everyday!

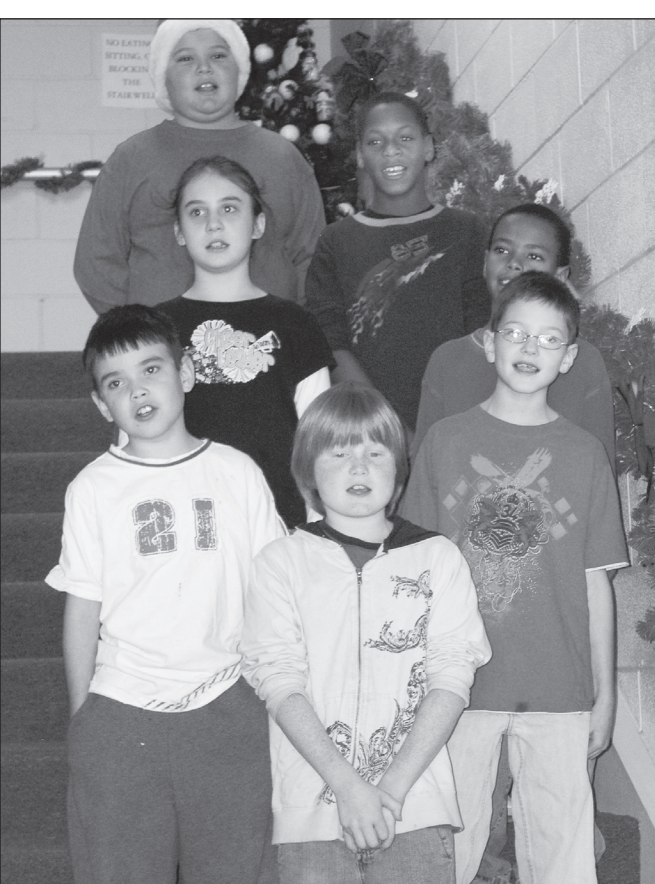
This holiday season, tell your loved ones you'll forgo gifts of fashion and jewelry in favor of Restylane®. They will be delighted to give you a gift you really want. With just one treatment, Restylane® smooths away moderate to severe facial wrinkles and folds, such as the lines from your nose to the corners of your mouth (nasolabial folds).

A Restylane® Rebate is our gift to you
We'd like to provide you up to \$100 in savings on a Restylane® or Perlane® treatment. You can receive a \$50 rebate on a 1-ml syringe or a \$100 rebate on two 1-ml syringes. To qualify, receive your treatment November 17, 2008, through January 4, 2009, and postmark your rebate submission by January 5, 2009. Your Restylane® Holiday Rebate Coupon is waiting for you at our office. For Offer Terms and Conditions, click the link below.

We look forward to helping your season be merry and bright—with the vibrant, youthful look you want. Call our office today to schedule your treatment.

Happy Holidays! Body Focus Medical Spa
1700 W. FM 700 • 264-1900

SEEN AROUND TOWN



HERALD photos/Lyndel Moody

If you stepped into the Heritage Museum Saturday you would have seen red — red dress that is. The museum held its annual Red Dress Social inviting ladies of the community to dress in their best red clothes. A cookie exchange was part of the event this year, along with samples of various coffees and a performance by members of the Marcy Choir led by teacher Stacy Barr. The choir members voluntarily gave up part of their Saturday to perform at the event. Pictured at top, back row is Cheryl Joy, Katie Cathy, Jane Jones, Margret Wise, Tammy Schrecengost, Jill Shannon, Magen Williamson, Betty McChristian, Jackie Simpson, Stacy Barr, Jeanie Hernandez, Doris Vierrege, Ruby Bruns, Ellen Austin and front row, Nancy Raney, Shirley Shroyer, Jobeth Corwin and Lucy Knox. At left, members of the Marcy Choir sing Christmas songs for the ladies. At right, Katie Cathy visits with Ruby Burns during the event.

Courtesy photos/Lane Bond

The Lane Bond home was among five homes or businesses open Sunday for public touring for the annual Big Spring Symphony Guild's Holiday Tour of Homes. Pictured above is a few examples of art provided by local artists showcased at the Bond home. Mike and Sheree Moates eye some of the delicious treats offered for visitors.



Courtesy Photo/Valarie Avery

Big Spring State Hospital volunteer Stacy Hare sorts through stacks of cards distributed to the hospital's 200 patients recently. The volunteers give each patient 10 holiday cards, hot chocolate and five Big Spring bucks that can be used for postage to mail cards to friends and family. The cards are just a prelude to a slew of holiday activities, including the Carol of Lights, the annual Christmas party and the distribution of presents on Christmas morning.

School News

Elbow Elementary earns 7th district championship



Courtesy photo/Bob Fishback

Elbow Elementary won first place in the District 1 University Interscholastic League Academic Meet at Mertzon Dec. 10-11. This marked the seventh year in a row that Elbow students have won the district academic meet. Other schools participating were Christoval, Eldorado, Irion County, Iraan, McCamey, Stanton and Wink.

Goliad Intermediate Science Fair Results

The following is the results from the Goliad Intermediate science fair held Tuesday, Dec. 16. The students placed will advance to the district science fair to be held on Jan. 22.

Sixth Grade

- Animal Science — Steve Ward, 1st.
- Biochemistry — Teodra Arguello, 1st, David Gonzales, 2nd
- Chemistry — Autumn Moore, 1st, Hannah Biemeret, 2nd, Sarah Lopez, 3rd.
- Mechanical Engineering — Kaleb Rankin, 1st, Tyler Bryan, 2nd, Joshua Brown, 3rd.
- Microbiology — Angela Garza, 1st.
- Physics/ Astronomy — Alex Trevino, 1st, Alex Byrd, 2nd.
- Environmental Management — Brycen Kiker, 1st, Tyler Narin, 2nd.
- Plant Science — Marissa Garcia, 1st, Brittany Gonzales, 2nd.
- Medicine/Health — Erin Pollard, 1st.
- Team — Charles Boling/Tobyn Tannehill, 1st, Kendra Dyer/Elizabeth Fleeson, 2nd, Danie Ortega/Alicia Redwine, 3, Julissa Gonzales/Emily MckInley, 3rd.

Fifth Grade

- Behavior/Social — Erin Wolf, 1st, Devon Craven, 2nd.
- Earth/Space — Remy Colette, 1st, Leah Burton, 2nd, Lindsay Woodard, 3rd.
- Environmental — Hannah Jensen, 1st, Jacob Scott, 2nd, Dylan Watson, 2nd, Destiny Hernandez, 3rd.
- Physics — Ethan Morelion, 1st, Mikaela Biddison, 1st, Nathaniel Permenter, 2nd, Mathew Wood, 3rd.