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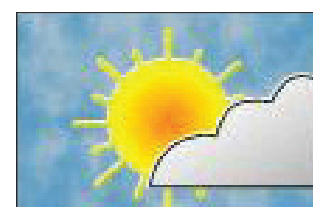
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MONDAY

JANUARY 5, 2009



VOLUME 104, NUMBER 29

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Craddick throws in the towel

By **APRIL CASTRO**
 and **JAY ROOT**

Associated Press Writers
 AUSTIN — Texas House Speaker Tom Craddick, the longest serving Republican in state elective office, has given up his hard-fought bid for a fourth term.



Craddick

Craddick aides and allies said the Midland oilman, the first Republican to lead the House since the Civil War era, told his supporters that he did not have enough votes

among his fellow members to remain in the powerful job.

“I talked to the speaker. He has dropped his candidacy and released his pledges,” Rep. Will Hartnett, a longtime Craddick supporter, said Sunday. “He just decided it was getting too tight.”

Craddick had been campaigning for another term as the presiding officer over the 150-member chamber, but his dwindling support became insurmountable as Rep. Joe Straus, a relative newcomer to the political arena, gained strength.

Shortly before word of Craddick’s surrender spread,

Straus, R-San Antonio, released a list of 85 pledges of support, more than enough to win the election on Jan. 13.

“It is time for a new tone and an atmosphere of trust in the Texas House of Representatives,” Straus said, upon announcing his victory.

See **SPEAKER**, Page 3

Copter crashes

Eight people killed, one hurt

HOUMA, La. (AP) — Federal officials were en route to find out why a helicopter bound for an offshore oil platform crashed in Louisiana’s marshlands, killing eight and critically injuring another.

The helicopter, operated by PHI Inc., crashed shortly after taking off Sunday afternoon from the company’s base in Amelia, said Richard Rovinelli, a spokesman for the company.

The cause of the crash, which happened about 100 miles southwest of New Orleans, isn’t clear. Rovinelli did not know the type of helicopter or its exact destination.

He said the helicopter was carrying two pilots and seven passengers. Identities of the victims have not yet been released.

The National Transportation Safety Board has been advised of the crash and investigators were expected to arrive Monday, Rovinelli said.

Petty Officer Jaclyn Young

See **CRASH**, Page 3



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Four-year-old Sky Murley eyes some desserts during the Eagle Lodge’s seventh annual chili cookoff Saturday. Money raised at the event went to the West Texas Centers for MHMR Children in Need fund.

Few leads on Kids Zone fire

Officials hope \$11,000 reward will prompt information

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
 Staff Writer

Investigators looking into the Dec. 9 arson attack on Kids Zone in Comanche Trail Park say the trail may be growing colder, but efforts to catch the person or persons responsible are still running at full force.

“The more time that elapses, the less likely we are to be able to solve the case,” said Sgt. Tony Everett, public information officer for the Big Spring Police Department. “That’s true of all criminal investigations. However, we’re still getting a few tips here and there through Crimestoppers, and we’ll continue to follow up on each and every one of them until this case is solved.”

The fire — which ripped through the southwest portion of the children’s playground — caused between \$25,000 and \$50,000 in damages, according to city officials.

See **REWARD**, Page 3

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Diplomats converge on Israel

By **IBRAHIM BARZAK**
 and **AMY TEIBEL**

Associated Press Writers

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — Israel consolidated its hold on parts of the Gaza Strip on Monday, seizing high-rise buildings on the outskirts of the territory’s biggest city as a stream of world leaders headed for the region to press for a truce. At least seven Palestinian children were killed, adding to the growing toll of civilian deaths that has caused international outrage.

As the bruising campaign against Gaza’s Hamas rulers entered its 10th day, the Islamic militant group continued to pummel southern Israel with rockets.

Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak said the offensive would continue until Israel achieved “peace and tranquility” for residents of southern Israel. Militants, defying the attacks, fired more than two dozen rockets by midday, and

Hamas’ strongman urged Palestinians to “crush” the invading Israeli forces and target Israeli civilians.

After a weeklong air offensive, Israeli ground troops invaded Gaza late Saturday. The Israelis have seized a main highway in Gaza, slicing the territory in half. Israeli forces also pounded houses, mosques and smuggling tunnels on Monday as they pressed forward with the offensive.

The Israeli army said “dozens” of militants have been killed or wounded.

Gaza health officials reported Palestinian

dead and nearly 2,000 wounded.

See **ISRAEL**, Page 3



Associated Press photo

Israeli soldiers peer out of their tank as they move towards the Gaza Strip from southern Israel early Monday. Israeli forces pounded Gaza Strip houses, mosques and tunnels from the air, land and sea as they consolidated

LOCAL NEWS AND LOCAL VIEWS

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COMPLETE STORY

Obituaries

Nieves P. Galvan

Nieves P. Galvan, long time resident of Big Spring passed away Jan. 1, 2009, in Edinburg.

Mr. Galvan was employed as a fireman for Webb Air Force Base until its closing. Mr. Galvan moved to Big Spring in 1960 and was transferred to Corpus Christi in 1978.

Mr. Galvan was born Aug. 5, 1925, and was a veteran of World War II.

He is survived by his wife Eloise (Mague) and nine children, Reynaldo, Armando, Norma, Juanita, Delia, Bo, Bobby, Mimi and Marylou.

They were members of the St. Thomas Catholic Church.

Burial will be at the Rio Grande Valley Veterans Cemetery in Mission on Jan. 6, 2009.

Funeral arrangement are under the direction of Memorial Funeral Home in Edinburg. Comments and or respects can be sent to memfuneral@aol.com

Raul Rios-Rios

Raul Rios-Rios, 78, of Big Spring died Sunday, Jan. 4, 2009, in a local hospital. His services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Beulah May Wilkinson

Beulah May Wilkinson, 86, of Big Spring died Monday, Jan. 5, 2009, in a local hospital. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Take Note

The Howard County Master Gardeners will begin its spring class with an orientation at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Howard County Library basement.

Registration is \$75. Classes will be held at 5:30 p.m. each Tuesday through May. Learn about plants, gardening skills, pruning, pest management, landscape and design. Call Katie Grigg at (432) 661-4707 for more information.

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.

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

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

Scenic Mountain Medical Center's Relay for Life team is selling cookbooks to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. The cookbooks can be purchased at the PBX operator's booth for \$10 apiece. For more information, contact Beverly Grant at 268-4952.

Police

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

- EARNEST CLARK, 68, transient, was arrested Sunday on a charge of criminal trespass.
- MARTIN RAMIREZ, 18, of 1601 Stadium, was arrested Sunday on charges of assault of a public servant and resisting arrest.
- DANIELLE OVERTON, 22, of 1202 Alabama, was arrested Sunday on charges of no driver's license and failure to maintain financial responsibility.
- LONNELL LOTT, 48, of 2911 W. Highway 80, was arrested Monday on a charge of public intoxication.
- UNAUTHORIZED USE OF A MOTOR VEHICLE was reported in the 700 block of 15th Street.
- RESISTING ARREST, SEARCH OR TRANSPORTATION was reported in the 500 block of Goliad.
- POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA – TWO OUNCES OR LESS was reported in the 100 block of Airbase Road.
- FORGERY was reported in the 500 block of Lamesa.
- ASSAULT OF A PUBLIC SERVANT was reported in the 400 block of Fourth Street.
- ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE was reported:
 - in the 2300 block of Marshall.
 - in the 2900 block of W. Highway 80.

Sheriff's report

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

Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 61 inmates at the time of this report.

- MILO JOEL ROMERO, 17, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on a charge of failure to identify – giving false information.
- FREDDY CANO RODRIGUEZ JR., 21, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a motion to revoke probation for resisting arrest, search or transportation.
- SAMMY FERRELL, 47, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on a charge of theft.
- ANGIE DIANE SKAGGS, 40, was arrested Saturday by DPS on a charge of driving while intoxicated.
- FLAVIO SERRANO GARCIA, 23, was arrested Saturday by the HCSO on a motion to revoke probation for resisting arrest, search or transportation.
- ARTHUR EARL JACKSON, 41, was transferred to the county jail Saturday by the BSPD on a charge of possession of marijuana – two ounces or less.
- STEVEN ALVAREZ, 44, was transferred to the county jail Saturday by the BSPD on a motion to revoke probation for driving while license invalid and a charge of driving while license suspended/invalid enhanced.
- ALBERT SMITH JR., 35, was transferred to the county jail Saturday by the BSPD on charges of evading arrest or detention and tampering with or fabricating physical evidence.
- ROY DWIGHT BIDDLE III, 48, was arrested Saturday by the HCSO on a charge of criminal mischief.
- A.J. GRIFFITH, 76, was arrested Sunday on a charge of possession of a prohibited weapon.
- BIANCA CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ, 19, was transferred to the county jail Sunday by the BSPD on charges of resisting arrest, search or transportation and assault of a public servant.
- EDWIN WARE, 76, was transferred to the county jail Sunday by the BSPD on a charge of driving while intoxicated.
- CARLOS OVALLE, 41, was transferred to the county jail Sunday by the BSPD on a charge of criminal trespass.

Support Groups

TUESDAY




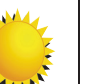

Grief share, sponsored by Home Hospice and the First Presbyterian Church, Seventh and Runnels (north end door), meets at 6 p.m.. Drop-ins are welcome. For more information, contact Sherry Hodne3tt at 264-7599.

The Path, faith-based addiction recovery, meets at 6:30 p.m. at Spring Tabernacle Ministeries, 1209 Wright St. Tuesday, Teen Challenge will be held at The Path. They will present a Rally for Jesus.

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.

Your Local Weather

Tue 1/6	Wed 1/7	Thu 1/8	Fri 1/9	Sat 1/10
				
61/30	67/37	71/40	74/35	56/29
Partly cloudy skies. High 61F. Winds W at 20 to 30 mph.	Mainly sunny. Highs in the upper 60s and lows in the upper 30s.	Sunshine. Highs in the low 70s and lows in the low 40s.	Sunshine. Highs in the mid 70s and lows in the mid 30s.	Sunshine. Highs in the mid 50s and lows in the upper 20s.

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Bulletin Board

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

TODAY

- Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) No. 21 begins at 5 p.m. with weigh-in 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.
- Evening Lions Club meets at 6:45 p.m. at Dragon China Buffet.
- Howard County ARC meets at 806 E. Third in the Bingo Hall. Call 264-0674 for more information.
- The Big Spring Cruisers club meeting at 7 p.m. in the Texas RV Park meeting room.
- Prospector's Club work night begins at 7 p.m. at 606 E. Third.
- Big Spring Chapter No. 178 meets at 7:30 p.m. at 221 Main.

TUESDAY

- Coahoma Senior Citizen luncheon is set for 11 a.m. in the Coahoma Community Center.
- Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- Alzheimer's Association, the Greater West Texas Chapter meets at 2 p.m. in the Howard County Library conference room, 500 S. Main.
- VFW Post 2013 meets at 7 p.m. in the VFW Hall, 500 Driver Road.
- Gospel Singing in the Kentwood Activity Center at 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome.
- The Howard County Sheriff's Posse meets at 7 p.m. at the Sheriff's Posse building on the Andrews Highway. For more information, call Bert Sheppard at 263-4483.

Fire/EMS

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

- MEDICAL was reported in the 100 block of Reynolds. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2600 block of Dow. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 3200 block of Parkway. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 1300 block of Mesa. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2500 block of S. Gregg Street. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 500 block of W. Fifth Street. Service refused.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 400 block of Westover Road. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 4100 block of Parkway. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 800 block of Old Colorado City Highway. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2900 block of W. Highway 80. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1700 block of Owens. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 3200 block of Parkway. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAFFIC ACCIDENT was reported in the 600 block of S. Main Street. Two people were transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 200 block of S. Avenue. Service refused.
- GRASS FIRE was reported in the 1700 block of Main Street.

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CRASH

Continued from Page 1

said the Coast Guard assisted Terrebonne Parish sheriff's deputies in recovering the dead and rescuing the unidentified survivor from the marshy Bayou Penchant area. A sheriff's office spokesman did not return a phone call seeking comment early Monday morning.

Young said the survivor was being transported to an Ochsner Medical facility in suburban New Orleans. Young said the person was in critical condition.

Lafayette-based PHI is a primary provider of helicopter services to oil and gas platforms that dot the coast of Louisiana. It also flies medical helicopters.

Workers typically are flown to and from their worksites from coastal flight bases.

In June, a PHI Air Medical helicopter crashed in Texas, killing four. The accident in the Sam Houston National Forest killed the pilot, paramedic, nurse and a patient who was being transported from Huntsville to Houston.

That crew agreed to transport the patient after another helicopter company abandoned the mission saying that cloud cover was too low, making visibility poor in the early morning darkness.

SPEAKER

Continued from Page 1

nouncing that he had secured enough support to win the race. "Having received the commitment of a strong majority of my colleagues, it is my goal to restore civility, fairness and transparency to the House of Representatives and its public-policy making process."

Republicans hold a 76-74 majority in the House. The narrow partisan split and divided GOP loyalties mean House Democrats will play a decisive role. All but four House Democrats endorsed Straus.

Most Republicans threw their support behind veteran Amarillo Republican Rep. John Smithee, who entered the race Sunday.

"We're going to need a little bit of help from a higher power and that's where we're looking," Smithee said after members of the Republican caucus meeting Sunday night voted to support him.

Hartnett, who said he would be supporting Smithee, said Straus is inexperienced and "virtually unknown in the House."

"Smithee is known — he's known, trusted and respected and I think everyone in the House would feel comfortable with him as speaker," said Hartnett, R-Dallas. "Obviously, it's a horserace right now but Smithee is very popular."

Craddick's allies said he also endorsed Smithee. Hartnett told reporters he thought Craddick would return to the chamber as a rank-and-file member and serve out his two-year term.

At a downtown Austin steakhouse, where Craddick addressed the House Republican caucus, Craddick rushed through a throng of reporters to get into the restaurant.

Republican Rep. Leo Berman, of Tyler, said the caucus members were not deterred by Straus' hefty list of supporters. He said they would start calling them to bring them to their side. Berman said he wasn't worried that they were already pledged to Straus because he said they had previously been pledged to Craddick.

He said Straus didn't stand for Republican values.

Craddick has been a lightning rod of controversy in Austin. He famously faced down a rebellion at the end of the 2007 session after replacing his rules advisers and claiming "absolute" authority to brush aside challenges to his rule.

Fire fatalities confirmed at homeless shelter

PARIS, Texas (AP) — The fire chief in Northeast Texas town of Paris says more than one person was killed at a fire at a homeless shelter.

Fire Chief Ronnie Grooms confirmed the fatalities to The Associated Press in the fire early Monday morning, but he would not say how many. He said that they got the alarm at about 3 a.m. He said the shelter is run by a nonprofit faith-based organization.

The Paris News reports that the American Red Cross has moved about 26 people to an emergency shelter at the First United Methodist Church of Paris.

A firewall confined damage to the southern part of the building, a brick structure near downtown that was formerly a business.

Police standoff ends at Georgia motel

MADISON, Ga. (AP) — A standoff is over at a Georgia motel where a former police officer had been holding an infant and two other people hostage.

An FBI spokesman said 25-year-old David Dietz surrendered at about 9:15 a.m. Monday after the overnight standoff about 60 miles east of Atlanta.

An officer wearing body armor came out of the motel and put the infant into an ambulance. Dietz was taken away moments later.

Authorities say Dietz kidnapped the infant and two women on Saturday night in South Carolina.

It was not immediately clear where the other two hostages were. Authorities said they were Dietz' estranged wife, 29-year-old Eva Arce-Perez, and 17-year-old Jamie Lynn Burgess.

Obama's girls enroll at private school

WASHINGTON (AP) — First things first: President-elect Barack Obama's two daughters have checked into their new school in Washington.

Katie McCormick Lelyveld, a spokeswoman for Michelle Obama, said that Michelle Obama accompanied daughters Sasha, 7, and Malia, 10, to Sidwell Friends school Monday morning. Sasha is attending classes at the Bethesda, Md., elementary-school campus, where she is in second grade. Malia is in fifth grade at the middle school campus in the District of Columbia.

Sidwell is a private Quaker school.

REWARD

Continued from Page 1

And while public outrage concerning the attack has been rampant, Everett said it's simply a matter of motivating anyone with information on the crime to step forward.

"Someone out there knows what happened and who did this," said Everett sternly. "Now it's a simple matter of whether or not they are willing to step forward."

According to Todd Darden,

assistant city manager for Big Spring, if conscience doesn't motivate someone to turn in the arsonists, cold, hard cash just might do the trick.

"There's the Crimestoppers reward of up to \$1,000 being offered," said Darden. "And, on top of that, the city of Big Spring and Howard County have both put up rewards of \$5,000. So that's \$11,000 someone can put in their pocket for information leading to the arrest of those responsible. I would think that's quite a bit of motivation."

The Dec. 9 fire wasn't the

first reports of vandalism to come out of the park in December, as vandals — possibly the same ones who set fire to Kids Zone — destroyed the totem pole that has been a part of the park since the 1950s.

Darden said efforts to assess the damage caused by the fire are under way, with repairs to the facility on the horizon.

"We have to get with the New York company that manufactured the play equipment that was destroyed and figure out what it's going to cost to fix," said Darden. "We also

have to work with the insurance company to see what is covered. We have a \$25,000 deductible, so no matter where the estimates come out, we know we're out at least that much.

"Once we have all of that done, we plan to hold a meeting with the Parks Board to decide how to proceed with the repairs. We've received several calls from volunteers willing to help, which is very encouraging. Now we just have to get a plan in place."

Anyone with information regarding the fire or totem

pole — or any other acts of vandalism — is asked to call Big Spring Area Crimestoppers at 264-TIPS (8477). No caller ID is ever used and informants can remain anonymous.

Information can also be left with the Fire Marshal's Office at 264-2305, or the Big Spring Police Department at 264-2550.

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

ISRAEL

Continued from Page 1

ed since Israel embarked upon the campaign on Dec. 27. At least 200 civilians were among the dead.

Israel has three main demands: an end to Palestinian attacks, international supervision of any truce and a halt to Hamas rearming.

Hamas demands a cessation of Israeli attacks and the opening of vital Gaza-Israel cargo crossings, Gaza's main lifeline.

Israeli forces seized sparsely populated areas in northern Gaza and by Monday morning were dug in on the edges of Gaza City. Further movement into the heart of the built-up areas would mean deadly urban warfare, with house-to-house fighting, sniper fire and booby traps in crowded streets and alleyways familiar to Hamas' 20,000 fighters.

Thirteen civilians died in the various attacks across Gaza on Monday morning, said Gaza health official Dr. Moaiya Hassanain.

Four young siblings were killed in a missile strike on a house east of

Gaza City. Three other children died in a naval shelling of a Gaza City beach camp and three adult civilians died when a missile struck near a house of mourning in the northern town of Beit Lahiya, he said. Three other adult civilians died in attacks elsewhere.

Israeli troops seized three six-story buildings on the outskirts of Gaza City, taking up rooftop positions after locking residents in rooms and taking away their cell phones, a neighbor said, quoting a relative in one of the buildings before his phone was taken away.

"The army is there, firing in all directions," said Mohammed Salmay, a 29-year-old truck driver. "All we can do is take clothes to each other to keep ourselves warm and pray to God that if we die, someone will find our bodies under the rubble."

Civilian casualties have spiked since Israel launched a ground offensive Saturday, following a week of punishing air strikes. Of about 80 Palestinians killed during the ground operation, at least 70 were civilians, Hassanain said.

If civilians are killed, then Hamas is to blame

because it operates within civilian areas, said an Israeli military spokeswoman, Maj. Avital Leibovich.

"If Hamas chose cynically to use those civilians as human shields, then Hamas should be accountable," she said. "Civilians will probably continue to get killed, unfortunately, because Hamas put them in the first lines of fire."

Black smoke from tank shells and wind-swept dust billowed in the air over Gaza City, while white smoke from mortar shells rose in plumes above a main road leading to northern Gaza that the Israeli military seized on Sunday, cutting off Gaza's north from its south. Explosions could be heard in Gaza City as aircraft attacked buildings.

The streets of Gaza City, home to 400,000 people, were almost empty. Two children crossing a street near a Hamas security compound didn't bother to

look right and left for cars but gazed up at the sky, apparently looking for attack aircraft. The only vehicles on the road were fire engines, ambulances and press cars.

Unmanned Israeli planes and Apache helicopters circled overhead.

"Hamas has sustained a very harsh blow," Barak told parliament's foreign affairs and defense committee. "But we still haven't reached our objectives, so the offensive continues."

Hamas leaders went into hiding before the Israeli military strike began and only on rare occasions have addressed the Gaza residents in broadcasts from their hideouts.

On Monday, the mastermind of Hamas' takeover of Gaza, Mahmoud Zahar, exhorted Palestinians to "crush" Israeli forces and to target Israeli civilians.

"The Zionists have legitimized the killing of

their children by killing our children. They have legitimized the killing of their people all over the world by killing our people," Zahar said in a grainy video broadcast on Hamas TV. "Crush your enemy," he urged.

Hamas security said Israeli aircraft struck two mosques in central and northern Gaza, while ground troops battled with militants armed with mortar shells, grenades and anti-tank missiles in the area between Gaza City, Gaza's largest urban area, and Jebaliya to the north.

The ground clashes took place in open areas militants use to launch rockets and mortars at nearby Israeli communities, but did not advance into urban areas

where casualties are liable to swell.

The Israeli military

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Rey Castaneda, Sr., 49, died Friday. Funeral Mass was at 11 a.m. Monday at Sacred Heart Catholic Church with burial at Mt. Olive Memorial Park.

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EDITORIAL

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

-FIRST AMENDMENT

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

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OTHER VIEWS

The really sad economic saga of Bernie Madoff

Investors ranging from wealthy individuals to charities were once mad about Wall Street money manager Bernard Madoff, mad as in crazy about the guy because of the stellar investment returns he produced for them.

Those investors continue to be mad about Madoff but it's now a far different mad, as in angry and resentful.

As astonished Americans learn of the enormous damage wrought by the \$50 billion Ponzi scheme that prosecutors say was perpetrated by Madoff, timeless aphorisms come to mind. They might be clichés, but that doesn't make them any less worthy in terms of lessons learned and relearned.

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Investors enticed by the lure of exceptional double-digit returns year after year from Madoff's firm ignored this adage at their peril.

Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Some investors and longstanding charitable and humanitarian organizations entrusted virtually all their money to Madoff, rather than spreading the risk.

Don't leave the fox to guard the henhouse. While America wisely has shown faith in a capitalistic economic system and vigorous financial markets, effective government regulation is nevertheless needed to avert chicanery and fraud. Not everybody is honest, as victims in the Madoff debacle cited by The Associated Press as "the biggest financial scam of all time" now know oh so well.

Laxity in government regulation contributed mightily to the housing bubble and ensuing bust that played a huge role in triggering and perpetuating the severe economic recession we are in. As the Madoff scandal unfolds, The New York Times reported this past week that federal prosecutions for fraudulent stock schemes have greatly diminished compared to the 2000-02 period, in part because of staff cutbacks at the Securities and Exchange Commission and a shift in resources at the FBI toward combating terrorism.

Sadly, the Madoff mess is making headlines just as many charitable and humanitarian organizations are hoping to benefit from year-end donations from contributors who want both to do good and secure year-end tax breaks.

Perhaps the first question many potential givers will ask charities is, "Have you all put any of your money with Bernard Madoff?"

Organizations that can honestly answer "No" are much more likely to have a truly happy new year in 2009.

THE STAR-TELEGRAM
FORT WORTH

LETTER POLICIES

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- Limit your letters to no more than 300 words.
- Sign your letter.
- Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street address for verification purposes.
- We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity.
- We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per 30-day period per author.
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- Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

Dear Lord, You clear out all the cobwebs in our soul. Thank You.

Amen

Big Brother/Backseat driver

For 100 of these many years, the Democratic motorcade class has scolded American workers for driving gas-guzzling cars. Now that Americans have begun driving more fuel-efficient cars and driving less, how have the finger-waggers reacted? No, they are not planning a parade — they already are working on a new tax on miles driven to make up for lost gasoline-tax revenue.

With the help of a six-year, \$2.1 million federal grant, Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski is moving forward with a proposal to tax Oregon drivers for the miles they drive. "As Oregonians drive less and demand more fuel-efficient vehicles, it is increasingly important that the state find a new way, other than the gas tax, to finance our transportation system," Kulongoski told the Albany Democrat Herald.

Why not simply raise the gas tax so that Hummer owners continue to pay more than drivers of four-cylinder put-puts?

"It's very difficult to raise the gas tax when the price of gasoline is so volatile," answered James Whitty, Kulongoski's point man on the Oregon Mileage Fee Concept. (In lieu of the term "concept," many Oregonians might prefer to substitute the word "squeeze.") Politically, Whitty explained, raising taxes has been untenable in Oregon and on Capitol Hill since 1993.

In November 2007, a task force released the findings of the Road User Fee Pilot Program. Guess what: It found that a road tax has

more advantages than disadvantages. In that self-congratulatory tone perfected by bureaucrats who have succeeded in finding what they always planned on finding, Whitty noted in the report, "The Oregon Department of Transportation concludes that the Oregon Road User Fee Pilot Program tested the critical elements of the Oregon Mileage Concept and yielded the result — Concept Proven."

Not so fast, buckaroo.

If the goal of the green brain trust is to reduce gas consumption, then Oregon shouldn't dump a tax that punishes guzzling and replace it with a tax that dings Hummers and hybrids alike. (Whitty noted that the state could choose to charge gas-burning wheels more per mile than itty-bitty cars. Hello. That's what the gasoline tax already does.)

Whitty believes that the state should prepare for the day when 100-mpg vehicles and electric cars dominate the road.

Oregon, he noted, boasts the country's highest ratio of hybrid cars — 30,000 out of 3.8 million vehicles. With oil trading below \$50 per barrel, there would be less incentive to buy a hybrid — yet the green trust is busy working on another reason to not buy a hybrid. Some critics have privacy issues with under-the-hood transponders that could track where a car travels. No worries, the 2007 paper asserts the Oregon plan "protects privacy. Places driven cannot be revealed nor are they stored."

Maybe the pilot program was set up that way. But Whitty told me the transponders are supposed to track out-of-state driving. And down here, where I get a regular bill with the dates and times for when I paid to cross the Bay Bridge, it's hard to imag-



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Family farmers demand change

As President-elect Barack Obama confronts the current economic crisis, in the shadows lurks an issue that demands equal attention, despite its low profile during the campaign: agriculture. As an African-American farmer from Mississippi, I am hopeful that our next president will also recognize we cannot afford business as usual when it comes to the subject of our broken food system.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, while originally known as the "People's Department" under President Lincoln, has in recent decades been controlled by the voices of the corporate commodity groups and agribusiness interests. Those monied interests have continually stomped on the concerns of family farmers and consumers. As a result, our current disastrous model of industrial agriculture pushes for bigger factory farms, more genetically-modified monoculture crops, and more "globalization" and free trade that emphasizes export-driven growth and allows for cheap imports to displace American farmers. Americans now must deal with poisonous Chinese imports in our pet food and dairy products, a flood of e.coli outbreaks in our meat and spinach, salmonella-tainted tomatoes from Mexico and contaminated water supplies due to factory farm pollution.

A new food and farm movement uniting family farmers, consumers, environmentalists, public health advocates and others has blossomed in recent years, backed by scientific research. A landmark study

released in April 2008 by the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) concluded that industrial agriculture practices were posing a dire threat to water, energy and climate security. It also noted that continued pushes for trade liberalization and export-model growth had deepened poverty and inequality in the developing world. The report says governments must go beyond simply advocating for more biotechnology and free trade as solutions to feeding our planet. Meanwhile, the Pew Forum and Union of Concerned Scientists have also released reports documenting the severe ecological, economic and public health threats from the growth in factory farm practices in rural communities.

We are hopeful that new Secretary of Agriculture Governor Tom Vilsack will be a forceful advocate on President-elect Obama's promises for change. We sorely need reform in our agriculture policies, including anticompetitive behavior against family farmers by agribusiness, the regulation of industrial livestock operations, rebuilding local and regional food systems and a new direction in our trade policy. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission's recent \$12 million fine of Dairy Farmers of America for price manipulation shows we also urgently need a USDA and Department of Justice committed to fair and competitive markets that enable family farmers to make a living. While many corporate livestock groups are hoping for decreased environmental regulations, family farmers believe we need more sustainable practices to preserve our rural communities and protect water and air quality.

We also hope, given the cur-

rent volatility in commodity prices that has impacted both farmers and consumers, that the Obama-Biden Administration looks into establishing Strategic Grain Reserves. Ever since they were eliminated under the 1996 Farm Bill, we now find ourselves dependent on speculative global markets for our food security. Just as deregulation of our financial markets has been a disaster for our economy, so has deregulation of our food supply imperiled seriously our ability to address food shortages in case of weather or other catastrophes.

We look forward to working with the new Administration to implement important victories in the 2008 farm bill, including the diversity initiative to broaden access to all USDA programs to minority farmers and beginning farmers. We urge swift implementation by USDA to promote efforts to ensure that schools and institutions are purchasing from and supporting local farmers and providing healthier food whenever possible.

The time is now to rethink our food systems and begin rebuilding them towards sustainable, localized models predicated on the principles of food sovereignty. We must abandon the WTO model of "free trade" for agriculture that only pushes for globalized markets and exports that destroy rural communities and the environment. We believe Obama's promises for real change offers us much hope and possibility for the next USDA Secretary.

My big fear isn't being tailed by a black helicopter on my way to the grocery store. My fear is that that enviro do-gooders will use this unnecessary road tax to devise new busybody regulations just to keep me out of my car — when gridlock, the cost and stress already serve as disincentives.

My fear is that my tax dollars will be used to bankroll a scheme to punish me for using roads my tax dollars already paid for, because some day I might own an electric car.

E-mail Debra J. Saunders at dsaunder@schronicle.com.
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Ben Burkett is the president of the National Family Farm Coalition and a Mississippi farmer. The National Family Farm Coalition (NFFC) was founded in 1986 to serve as a national link for grassroots organizations working on family farm issues.

Coahoma boys, girls fall in 2009 openers

Herald Staff Report

PLAINS — It wasn't a joyous start to 2009 for the Coahoma Bulldogs as they fell to Plains Friday, 63-53.

The Bulldogs were led by Isaac Garcia who scored 12 points, while Cody Sheppard chipped in 11.

The Bulldogs trailed by just 1 point at intermission, but Plains came out of the locker room in the second half with a hot hand.

The Eagles outscored Coahoma 19-7 in the frame.

The Bulldogs attempted to put forth a rally, scoring 20 in the final stanza.

Unfortunately, they couldn't keep Plains off the scoreboard as the Eagles still managed a 10-point victory.

The Bulldogs (16-3) host Hamlin at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Coahoma	11	15	7	20-53
Plains	12	15	19	17-63

Coahoma leading scorers: Isaac Garcia 12, Cody Sheppard 11.

Abilene Cooper 48, Bulldogettes 40

ABILENE — The Lady Cougars outscored Coahoma 7-2 in the final 1:26 Saturday for an 8-point victory.

Berkley Iden led Coahoma with 14 points, while Alex Moore and Kylie Gee had eight apiece.

Cooper took a 5-4 lead with 3:15 left to play in the first period and never trailed again. Still Coahoma led the contest close, trailing 21-20 at the break courtesy of some impressive free throw shooting.

The Bulldogettes connected on just two field goals in the second period, but hit 9 of 14 free throws in the frame.

They weren't as fortunate in the second half and didn't go to the foul line a single time in the third and

fourth periods.

Cooper led by as much as 10 points, jumping out to a 40-30 advantage with 3:54 to play, but Coahoma made one final run at an upset.

Using a full court press, Coahoma cut the deficit to 41-38 with 1:38 to play.

That's as close as the Bulldogettes would get, though, as Cooper outscored them 7-2 from that point.

The Bulldogettes begin District 7-2A play Friday, playing host to Jim Ned, which is ranked sixth in the Class 2A state poll.

UT, OSU ready for Fiesta Bowl

By ANDREW BAGNATO

AP College Football Writer

GLENDALE, Ariz. — Texas coach Mack Brown has a theory about bowl games.

"If the teams are fairly even, the team that wants to be there the most and has the edge and is more motivated usually wins," Brown said.

If third-ranked Texas had a choice, it would be in Miami preparing to face Florida for the BCS title. But the Longhorns still have plenty of motivation against No. 10 Ohio State in the Fiesta Bowl on Monday night.

Snubbed in their bid for a slot in the Bowl Championship Series title game, the Longhorns (11-1) will try to take their frustrations out on the Buckeyes (10-2), who have made their fifth bowl trip to Arizona since 2002.

"Really, what's going through our minds is, 'Let's just put on a show, basically,'" Texas defensive end Brian Orakpo said.

The Longhorns finished

in a three-way tie atop the rugged Big 12 South and thought their 10-point victory over Oklahoma should have put them in the Big 12 title game. But Oklahoma was declared the division winner on a BCS standings tiebreaker, and the Sooners ripped Missouri in the Big 12 playoff to earn a trip to the national title game.

The Longhorns still have a shot at a national title, but it's slender.

Either Oklahoma or Florida will claim the BCS national title. But the 65 pollsters who vote in The Associated Press Top 25 are free to select the Longhorns No. 1.

Six AP voters have the Longhorns at their ballots, and that number could swell if the top-ranked Gators lose and their 50 first-place votes go up for grabs. Some voters might choose Texas because it beat Oklahoma.

It's a long shot, but it's the only shot Texas has. The Longhorns will have no shot if they don't take

See **FIESTA**, Page 6



AP photo/Chris Carlson

Ohio State coach Jim Tressel, left, and Texas coach Mack Brown pose for a picture after a news conference in Scottsdale, Ariz., Sunday. Texas will face Ohio State in the Fiesta Bowl at 7 p.m. tonight.

Eagles, Ravens fly to wild card victories



AP photo/Ann Heisenfelt

Minnesota Vikings quarterback Tarvaris Jackson (7) takes a hit from Philadelphia Eagles linebacker Akeem Jordan, left, after releasing the ball during the fourth quarter of an NFL playoff game in Minneapolis on Sunday. The Eagles roughed up the Vikings in a 26-14 win.

By DAVE CAMPBELL

AP Sports Writer

MINNEAPOLIS — Perhaps a thousand Eagles fans surrounded the opening to the Metrodome tunnel as the victorious visitors jogged past, cheering their vanquish of the Vikings and tossing a derogatory chant toward the defending Super Bowl champions.

The Giants are next, but Philadelphia — after getting hot just in time to make the playoffs — is bringing some sizzle to the second round along with a quarterback who won't be rattled.

Brian Westbrook caught a short pass from Donovan McNabb out of the backfield and zigzagged for a devastating 71-yard touchdown midway through the fourth quarter, and the Eagles spoiled Minnesota's first home playoff game in eight years with a 26-14 win Sunday.

"That's what you expect from a superstar quarterback like Donovan," Westbrook said.

Above the deafening din under the dome, McNabb stayed poised, sidestepped the rush and went 23-for-34 for 300 yards. He committed two turnovers, but the Vikings didn't capitalize.

After taking a nine-point lead on Westbrook's vaunted blitz and overwhelmed Tarvaris Jackson to raise further questions about the ability of Minnesota's raw quarterback to become a successful starter. Asante Samuel's 44-yard interception return of Jackson's errant pass in the second quarter set a tone for the kind of game Vikings fans feared.

NFL playoff schedule

Saturday

Ravens at Titans, 3:30 p.m.
Cardinals at Panthers, 7:15 p.m.

Sunday

Eagles at Giants, noon
Chargers at Steelers, 3:45 p.m.

"You know, this game sticks with you," coach Brad Childress said. "You hate to serve up seven points. You have to take that out of your repertoire."

Coach Andy Reid improved his playoff record to 9-6, including at least one win each time the Eagles have qualified in his 10 years. He bested his buddy and former offensive coordinator Childress in this one, and they held an extended conversation on the field after the game. Reid is 5-0 against the Vikings, including two playoff victories.

In fact, the Eagles beat Minnesota in the postseason during both of their previous Super Bowl appearances. They'll face the top-seeded Giants next Sunday in New Jersey, with plenty of confidence they can repeat their 20-14 victory on Dec. 7. Arizona visits Carolina on Saturday in the other NFC semifinal.

"I think we're dangerous," Samuel said. "We've just got to see how it plays out."

See **NFL**, Page 6

COLLEGE BOWL FORECAST

Games from
Dec. 26
through
Jan. 8



Jonathan Hull



Jeff Lane



Robert Smith



Troy Hyde



Brandon Hallford



Tim Larson



Tim Knox

Fla. Atlantic vs. C. Michigan
West Va. vs. North Carolina
Wisconsin vs. Florida State
Miami, Fla. vs. Cal
Northern Illinois vs. La Tech
NC State vs. Rutgers
Missouri vs. Northwestern
Maryland vs. Nevada
Western Michigan vs. Rice
Oklahoma State vs. Oregon
Houston vs. Air Force
Oregon State vs. Pitt
Boston Coll. vs. Vanderbilt
Kansas vs. Minnesota
LSU vs. Georgia Tech
South Carolina vs. Iowa
Georgia vs. Michigan State
Nebraska vs. Clemson
Penn State vs. USC
Cincinnati vs. Virginia Tech
Ole Miss vs. Texas Tech
Kentucky vs. East Carolina
Utah vs. Alabama
Buffalo vs. Connecticut
Ohio State vs. Texas
Ball State vs. Tulsa
Florida vs. Oklahoma

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To date 19-12

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17-14

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14-17

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18-13

sudoku

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

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

FIESTA

Continued from Page 5

care of the Buckeyes.

"I don't know what needs to happen," Texas tailback Chris Ogbonnaya said. "Right now, our focus is Ohio State and really that is all that matters. We can't talk about being in the national championship picture without having a victory against them."

The Buckeyes haven't been in the national title discussion since a 35-3 walloping at USC on Sept. 13. But the Big Ten co-champs say they have plenty of motivation, and, like Texas, it springs from a bad experience in the BCS.

After absorbing lopsided losses to Florida and LSU in the last two BCS title games, the Buckeyes have grown tired of hearing that they are a product of a soft conference and don't belong among the national elite.

"It would be nice to win that big game," linebacker James Laurinaitis said. "We will be remembered about how this

game comes out. It is just a real fact."

Ohio State coach Jim Tressel brushed aside suggestions that the Buckeyes might be bored by another trip to Arizona.

"It wasn't real hard for our guys to be excited when they were named to come to the Fiesta Bowl," he said. "And then they get to know it will be against Texas, who could be the best team in the country. They wanted to go to work."

Questions about motivation aside, the Fiesta Bowl presents an interesting clash of conference styles. It pits the freewheeling Big 12, where tackling often seems optional, against the staid, conservative Big Ten.

With Heisman Trophy runner-up Colt McCoy directing the attack, the Longhorns average 43.9 points per game. That was fifth in the nation — but only third in the loony Big 12 South, where Oklahoma scores a national-best 54 points per game and Texas Tech averages 44.5 points, fourth in the country.

McCoy has completed 77.6 percent of his passes for 3,445 yards and 32 touchdowns, and he has

thrown seven interceptions. McCoy, a junior who plans to return for his senior year, has also rushed for 576 yards and 10 more scores.

"McCoy is extremely good," Buckeyes defensive coordinator Jim Heacock said. "He's accurate. The ball is on target. Plus, he has a great chemistry between him and his receivers."

The Buckeyes allow 13 points per game, seventh in the nation. But last year they brought the nation's top-rated defense — conceding 10.7 points per game — into the BCS title game and watched LSU romp to a 38-24 victory.

The year before that, in another BCS title game, Florida hung 41 points on the Buckeyes on the same field where Ohio State will face Texas on Monday night.

Ohio State's best defense might be a clock-controlling offense. The Buckeyes may try to feed the Longhorns a steady diet of tailback Beanie Wells — he runs for 121 yards per game, seventh in the nation — and keep McCoy and Co. off the field. If that doesn't work, it may be another long January night for the Buckeyes.

NFL

Continued from Page 5

Ravens 27, Dolphins 9

MIAMI — The over-the-shoulder interception was enough to make the video highlights.

"Like playing center field," Ed Reed said. His runback was just as special. The Baltimore Ravens safety eluded one tackler, then juiced another as he cut back, finding a corridor to the end zone.

"It felt like the 200 in track," Reed said. "I don't think I caught my breath until the third quarter."

Reed was out of breath, but the Ravens were in good shape and on the way to their first playoff win in seven years. They came up with four interceptions, including the one returned 64 yards for a touchdown by Reed, and beat the Miami Dolphins 27-9 on Sunday.

After throwing only seven interceptions during the regular season, the Dolphins' Chad Pennington had four during a 22-minute flurry midway through the game.

"We heard all week that they don't turn the ball over," linebacker Ray Lewis said. "But we force turnovers."

With a rookie coach in John Harbaugh and a rookie quarterback in Joe Flacco, wild-card entrant Baltimore (12-5) won for the 10th time in 12 games and will play Saturday at AFC South champion Tennessee.

"We don't want the roll and the Ravens' story to end here," linebacker Terrell Suggs said. "We think we are a team of divine purpose."

The result put the brakes on this season's remarkable resurgence by the Dolphins (11-6), who won the AFC East after going 1-15 in 2007. The playoff game was Miami's first in seven seasons.

"It has been a special year. That's why it hurts so much," Pennington said.

A soft schedule contributed to Miami's turnaround, but there was nothing soft about the Ravens. They forced repeated mistakes by a team that tied an NFL record with only 13 turnovers during the regular season.

"We were doing things we hadn't done all year," Miami coach Tony Sparano said.

Reed had two interceptions, and Jim Leonhard and Fabian Washington made one apiece. Suggs recovered a fumble to set up a touchdown. Pennington, playing his first game since being chosen the NFL Comeback Player of the Year, was sacked three times and faced constant pressure.

"It always starts up front," Ravens defensive tackle Trevor Pryce said. "We had some favorable matchups, and we took advantage of them."

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Famous Hand

East dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
♠Q
♥10 8
♦Q J 7 5
♣A Q 10 9 7 3

WEST
♠K 7 6 5
♥J 4 2
♦A 9 8 4 2
♣5

EAST
♠A J 9 8 2
♥K 3
♦10 6 3
♣J 8 6

SOUTH
♠10 4 3
♥A Q 9 7 6 5
♦K
♣K 4 2

The bidding:
East South West North
Pass 1♥ Pass 1NT
Pass 2♥ Pass 4♥

Opening lead — five of clubs.
This deal occurred in a match between Canada and Mexico, and features a brilliant defensive play by Miguel Reygadas of Mexico, who held the West hand.

The Canadian North-South pair reached four hearts as shown. As played by them, North's notrump response was forcing for one round, and South's two-heart rebid guaranteed at least a six-card suit.

Reygadas led his singleton club, taken by dummy's ace. Because declarer couldn't afford to play trumps before doing something

about his three spade losers, his next move was a low diamond to the king.

Reygadas took the king with the ace, led a low spade to East's ace and ruffed the club return. It was the third trick for the defense. He then exited with a diamond to dummy's queen. After discarding the 10-4 of spades on the Q-J of diamonds, declarer next led the heart ten and, when East followed low, finessed the queen.

Since the heart finesse succeeded and the jack and king of hearts were about to fall under the ace on the next round, it might seem that South was sure to take the rest of the tricks. But a funny thing happened on the way to making the contract.

Visualizing perfectly what was about to take place, Reygadas refused to make life easy for declarer. When the heart ten was led to South's queen, he played his jack instead of woodenly following with the four.

Declarer cannot really be blamed for what happened next. To him it appeared, naturally enough, that West had no more trumps, which in turn meant that a second finesse would be necessary to trap East's "marked" K-4 of hearts. But when declarer tried to cross to dummy with a club to repeat the finesse, Reygadas trumped with the four of hearts, and the seemingly certain contract went down one.

Tomorrow: Like taking candy from a baby.

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Kids Can: Little gardeners can get 'oversized' results

Family Features — The best kinds of lessons are those that make learning fun and exciting. This year, more than 1.5 million third graders across the United States have gotten hands-on, enjoyable lessons about plants, patience and perseverance as they compete to grow the biggest cabbage in their state.

Thanks to the Bonnie Plants' Third Grade Cabbage Program, students from participating classrooms across the country will receive a free Bonnie O.S. Cross, or "oversized," cabbage plant they can cultivate, nurture and watch grow bigger than a basketball and often over forty pounds.

At the end of the season, teachers from each class will select the student who has grown the "best" cabbage, based on size and appearance.

A picture of the cabbage and the student entry is submitted to Bonnie plants by mail or online.

That student's name will then be included in a statewide drawing to receive a \$1000 scholarship towards education.

The winner of each statewide drawing is selected by the Commission of Agriculture, state by state, via random drawing.

This year, Bonnie Plants gave 1.5 million students the opportunity to experience the joy of gardening through planting and nurturing their very own cabbage plants.

One child winner, per state, from 45 participating states, is awarded a \$1,000 savings bond from Bonnie Plants towards education.

"It's good for the

students to get out there and grow their own plants," said Melody Witt, principal of Alto Elementary School in Alto.

"It helps them learn about nature, soil composition and the parts of plants, but it also shows them where things come from.

"So many young people take for granted the fact that we can walk into the store and buy whatever we want."

Growing a giant cabbage may seem like a big undertaking for little kids — but it's easier than you may think. To get started, all kids need is:

- **Sunshine:** Cabbages need at least six hours of full sunlight, more if possible.

- **Space:** Bonnie O.S. cabbages need at least three feet on each side to spread out. If you don't have that much space, use a large planter.

- **Soil:** Work some compost into the soil - cabbages love nutrient-rich soil.

- **Food:** Start your cabbage off right with an all-purpose vegetable fertilizer, then fertilize it every 10 days to keep it growing strong.

- **Water:** Your cabbage will need at least one inch of rainfall each week. If it doesn't rain, use a watering can or a garden hose with a sprinkler to gently water your plant.

- **TLC:** Keep weeds out of the cabbage patch - they compete for the food and water your cabbage needs. Be on the lookout for brown or white moths - these come from worms that love to munch on cabbage. If you see any, get rid of them right away.

- **Time:** In just 10 to 12 weeks, you should have a huge head of cabbage you can be proud of.

Green thumbs can pay off big time — providing participating children with pride for a job well done, a humongous cabbage, and for the lucky state winner, the beginning of an educational fund for college.

For more information on the 2008 winners and the 2009 Third Grade Cabbage Program, visit Bonnieplants.com.



"It's a good history lesson for them to learn that it wasn't always like that, even in this country."

"The cabbage program is our way of sharing our love of gardening with children," said Bonnie Plants General Manager Dennis Thomas. "Because we believe so deeply in the joy and peace gardening can bring to the soul, we want to afford the opportunity to children to experience this same joy and sense of accomplishment, as well as encourage them to continue gardening throughout their lives."

Tomorrow's Horoscope

It's a time of mind-blowing change on a personal and global level. The motion is set off as Jupiter, the big Mac Daddy of the zodiac, joins dreamy Neptune in the idealistic sign of Aquarius.

When you give a thought to what you want the future to look and feel like, you'll be contributing to humanity in a meaningful way.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Since luck is definitely on your side, ask for what you want, whether it's taking a relationship to another level or a raise in pay. Be cautious, however. When everything keeps coming your way, you might be in the wrong lane.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Be wary of how much information you share with associates. Don't let your tongue get so relaxed that you divulge the wrong things to the wrong people. And keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Today will be a galaxy away from what you are accustomed. Use the unfamiliarity to pull yourself out of the rut and shine in the new light. Take some social risks and you will return home as everybody's darling.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Some think you are aloof because you don't participate in the goofier rituals of human bonding, but covering in the shadows is hardly your style. Hook them on your dry wit. Let some of those clever retorts fly.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Sometimes, all you need is a good long cry or a good long laugh. Choose one and let it go. It will act as a sump pump for the immense pressure you've been putting on yourself lately.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The need for change is obvious, but the prospect of altering the

rules you live by is frightening. The discomfort you're muddling through is part of healing. You'll soon find new inspiration. Trust in the process.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You want to act on your true feelings, but on an emotionally erratic day like today it's hard to know which ones those are. Exercise control. And if you can't be kind when discussing others ideas, at least be vague.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). A cancellation allows you the extra time to recharge your spiritual batteries. A good book or a long, relaxing bath will do the trick. Relaxation unlocks your imagination so don't be surprised if your dreams get a little wild tonight.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Mistakes don't have to stress you out. Keep your humor and you'll quickly get back into a rhythm. Just remember the moves that got you through it before. When you stumbled, you made it part of the dance.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). A friend's recent accomplishment may seem trivial to you, but it is a big deal to him or her. Plan an event to celebrate the moment. It will strengthen an important bridge that's fallen into disrepair.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You are not your finances. Though you may need to nurse a few financial bruises, in no way should you let that devolve your self-image. You are still in control of who you are and who you will become. Keep your head up.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). What you look for will appear. You can use this good luck to find your keys or your cell phone. But why not think even bigger? Look for a profound example of love in action, a mystical happening or a miracle.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "I've been sick for a long time and my work and family have had to make sacrifices because of this. What does Aquarius have to look forward to this year?"

This year is about

finding your joy. Focus on this and your family and colleagues will be more joyful as a result! Optimism is what's needed in your case, and you're in luck. Jupiter will be gracing your picture with a healthy dose of positive thinking all year long. Also, the sun is headed your way to lend support in the form of additional physical energy, self-esteem and a better way of viewing your life.

If you could possibly see your illness as the agent that helps you to live more fully and mindfully it might help you to be more hopeful.

Reading will be a powerful tool against patterns of thinking that don't contribute nicely to your well-being. Spend a few minutes a day — an hour if you can spare it — reading biographies about people who have undergone tremendous physical struggle and whose lives and personal contribution have ultimately been made richer because of it.

Some ideas: Stephen Hawking, Helen Keller, Christopher Reeve and David Helfgott to name a few.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Diane Keaton is a true original with strong ideas about how to live her life. Whether it's wearing a man's suit and tie as she did in "Annie Hall" or adopting children as a single mom, her choices have at times been unusual, but so right for her that others felt compelled to imitate her. Sun and Venus in driven

Capricorn say that Keaton will keep finding new ways to express her artistic spirit.

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.

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Annie's Mailbox : Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: I have been married for three years to a wonderful man. He is gentle, thoughtful and works very hard. Let me clarify that: he will stay up until 2 or 3 a.m., come to bed and be up at 7 a.m. for work.

Last Friday, he stayed up until 6 a.m. working on a computer problem for the church and then was up three hours later.

Someone once insinuated that maybe he isn't really working all this time, but let me assure you, he is. He leaves his office door open, and I can walk in any time and find him hunched over a problem, oblivious to the world.

My husband has a fabulous income and has given me the opportunity to develop a small business. I'm not ungrateful. But I would like to have a baby. I come from a big loving family and am almost 30.

My husband wants to wait. He says he's "too busy" to be a father right now. Annie, he will always be busy. He is a workaholic and likes it that way.

Twice in the past two years he has given me a date when we would start trying for a family. Both times he reneged. There is almost no hope of an "accident," because he is militaristic in his use of

birth control.

I have tried every tactic I can think of, from citing medical references about why it is healthier to start sooner rather than later to not talking about it at all. I'm at a loss. My bio-clock is ticking so loudly I can hardly hear anything else.

When we were dating, he assured me he wanted children. I've been in counseling for a year for depression. Please help me. — Barren in Boise

Dear Boise: Your workaholic husband isn't interested in changing his routine, but he owes it to you to keep his promises.

Your biological clock should tick for a while longer, so don't panic, but if he refuses to make a sincere commitment to starting a family, insist that he get counseling with you. (And we hope you're prepared to raise those children alone, because he will always be at work.)

Dear Annie: I have a friend in her 30s who recently lost 100 pounds through hard work and exercise.

She looks fantastic. The problem is, along with the weight, she seems to have lost her mind. She has been running around on her husband, and is talking about divorce and leaving

behind her 8-year-old daughter to move to a city 500 miles away for some guy she

met on the Internet. I'm scared for her safety, worried about the choices she is making and, well, disgusted at her behavior. How do I remain supportive as a friend, yet smack her in the head and tell her to grow up? — Arizona Dear

Arizona: Your friend considers herself so gorgeous now that she wants to make up for lost time, and recklessness is part of the appeal. In a few months, she'll settle down, but by then it may be too late to undo the damage.

Unfortunately, in her current state of mind, she is unlikely to listen to any advice. All you can do is make it clear that abandoning her child will affect the girl permanently and her daughter may never forgive or trust her again. Maybe that will sink in.

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

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The Big Spring Herald has instituted a 600 word limit for all wedding submissions. All wedding articles will be edited to fit the above listed policy.

All submissions for Sunday's life section must be turned in by noon Wednesday to be published in Sunday's edition. Submitting articles by the deadline does not guarantee publication in the Sunday Life Section.

The Herald attempts to publish articles in a timely manner but because of space limitations submissions may held until the following week. For more information, call 263-7331

	WFAA (2) Dallas	KMID (3) Midland	UNI (4) Spanish	KPEJ (5) Odessa	KOSA (7) Odessa	KTLE (8) Telemundo	KWES (9) Midland	WTBS (11) Atlanta	KMLM (12) Odessa	KPBT (13) Odessa	DISC (20) Discovery	AMC (21) Classics	SPIKE (22) Spike TV	TNT (23) Atlanta	BET (26) Black Ent.	DISN (27) Disney	ESPN2 (28) Sports	ESPN (29) Sports
5:PM :30	News ABC	News ABC	Locura Noticiero	Lopez Lopez	News CBS	Noticias Noticiero	News NBC	Raymond Friends	CCM Granger	BBC Business	Cash Cab	Gentleman, Louis Gossett Jr.	Episode III -- Revenge of the Sith	Bones	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live	Suite Life	Horn Interrupt	SportsCenter
6:PM :30	Entertain	Fortune	Tontas Cielo	Two Men Pregame	News CBS	12 Corazonos	News NBC	Seinfeld	Van Impe	News-Lehrer	Made	Made	Law & Order	Law & Order	Movie: How Stella Got Her Groove Back	Movie: Beethoven's 3rd	Women's College Basketball	College Basketball
7:PM :30	The Bachelor	The Bachelor	Cuidado-Angel	(15) College Football: Fuego en la Sangre	Big Bang How I Met	Doña Barbara	El Rostro de Analia	Fam. Guy	Israel	Shoebat	Destroyed	Movie: Hook, Julia Roberts	CSI: Crime Son	Law & Order	Movie: How Stella Got Her Groove Back	Phineas	Billiards: Trick Shots	SportsCenter Special
8:PM :30	True Beauty	True Beauty	Cristina	CSI: Miami	Sin Senos El Cartel	Momma's Boys	Name	Name	Charlie Rose	Made	Movie: Star Trek: Nemesis, Brent Spiner	CSI: NY	Without a Trace	Movie: How Stella Got Her Groove Back	Replace Kim	Emperor Dragon	High School Football	SportsCenter
9:PM :30	News Nightline	News Nightline	Impacto Noticiero	News	Noticias	News	Seinfeld	Israel Sala	Uri Harel	Smiley	Destroyed	CSI: NY	Without a Trace	Movie: How Stella Got Her Groove Back	Replace Kim	Emperor Dragon	High School Football	SportsCenter
10:PM :30	Insider Jimmy Kimmel Live	Jimmy Kimmel Live	La Hora de la Risa	Postgame	Late Late Show	Decisiones de	Late Night	Movie: The Perfect Man, Chris Noth	Mark	Smiley	Destroyed	Unsolved Mysteries	Without a Trace	Movie: How Stella Got Her Groove Back	Replace Kim	Emperor Dragon	High School Football	SportsCenter
11:PM :30	News	Paid	Amarte-Pecado	RENO 911	Insider	Programa Pagado	News	Light of the Southwest	Light of the Southwest	Light of the Southwest	Light of the Southwest	Unsolved Mysteries	Without a Trace	Movie: How Stella Got Her Groove Back	Replace Kim	Emperor Dragon	High School Football	SportsCenter
12:AM :30	Wall St	Paid	Clasicos	Friends	Entertain	Poker After Dark	Movie:	Light of the Southwest	Light of the Southwest	Light of the Southwest	Light of the Southwest	Unsolved Mysteries	Without a Trace	Movie: How Stella Got Her Groove Back	Replace Kim	Emperor Dragon	High School Football	SportsCenter
1:AM :30	Paid	Paid	Humor	TMZ	Paid	Pelicula: La	Movie:	Light of the Southwest	Light of the Southwest	Light of the Southwest	Light of the Southwest	Unsolved Mysteries	Without a Trace	Movie: How Stella Got Her Groove Back	Replace Kim	Emperor Dragon	High School Football	SportsCenter

DENNIS THE MENACE



"DON'T GIVE UP, RUFF. DAD'LL HAVE A PATH TO YOUR TREE ANY MINUTE NOW."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

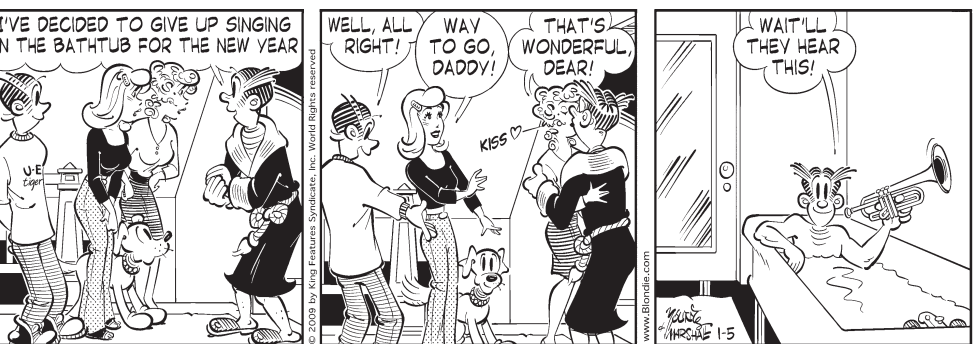


"... for little kids do they have kitten scans?"

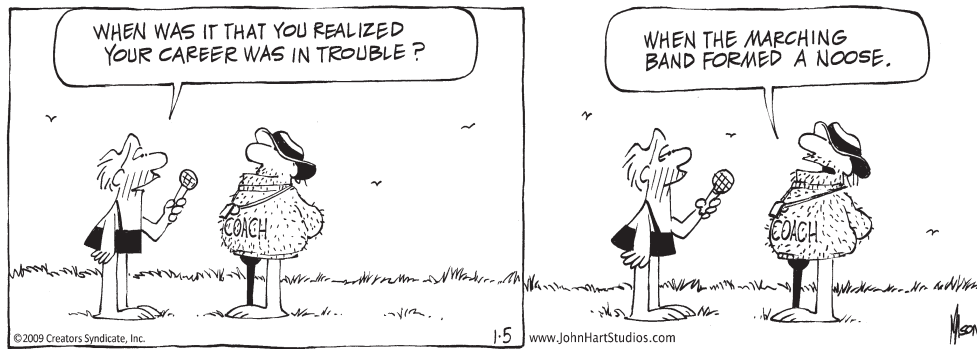
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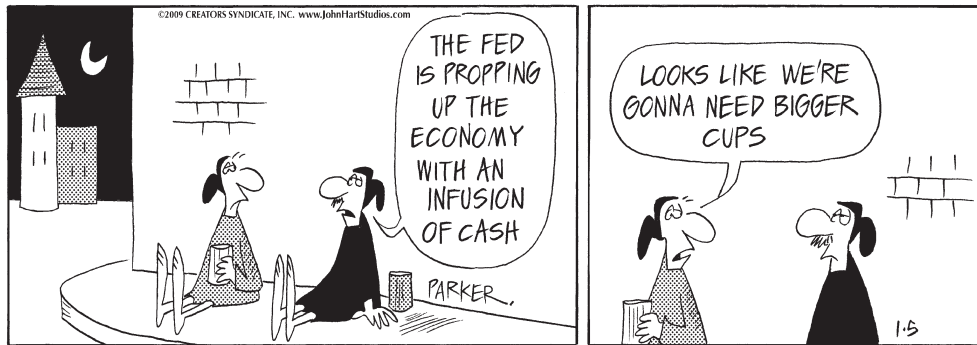
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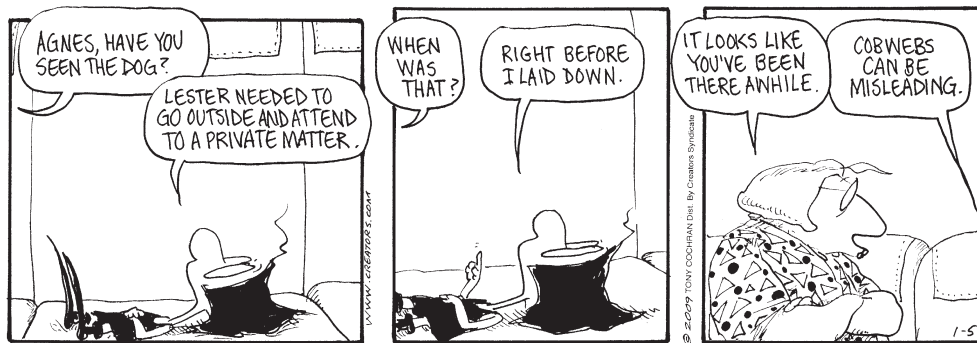
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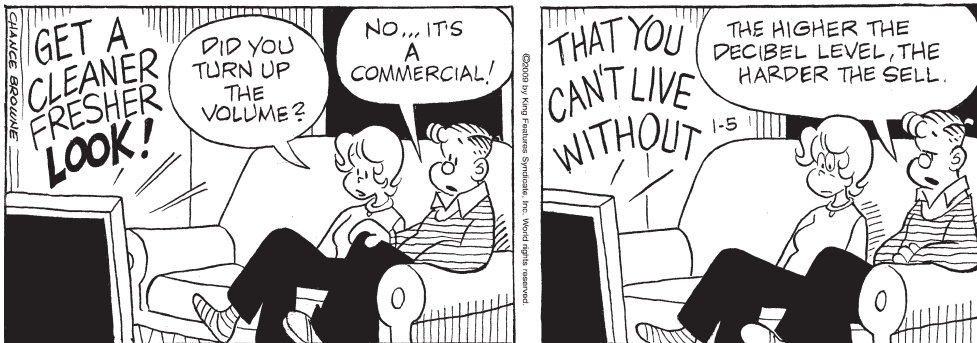
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AGNES



HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BEETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Monday, Jan. 5, the fifth day of 2009. There are 360 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 5, 1896, an Austrian newspaper, Wiener Presse, reported the discovery by German physicist Wilhelm Roentgen of a type of radiation that came to be known as "X-rays."

On this date: In 1781, a British naval expedition led by Benedict Arnold burned Richmond, Va.

In 1809, the Treaty of the Dardanelles, which ended the Anglo-Turkish War, was concluded by the United Kingdom and the Ottoman Empire.

In 1895, French Capt. Alfred Dreyfus, convicted of treason, was publicly stripped of his rank. (He was ultimately vindicated.)

In 1925, Nellie T. Ross became governor of Wyoming; she was the first female governor in U.S. history. (She succeeded

Frank E. Lucas, who had served as acting governor following the death of Ross' husband, William B. Ross.)

In 1933, the 30th president of the United States, Calvin Coolidge, died in Northampton, Mass., at age 60.

In 1949, in his State of the Union address, President Harry S. Truman labeled his administration the Fair Deal.

In 1957, President Dwight D. Eisenhower proposed assistance to countries to help them resist Communist aggression; this became known as the Eisenhower Doctrine.

In 1970, Joseph A. Yablonski, an unsuccessful candidate for the presidency of the United Mine Workers of America, was found murdered with his wife and daughter at their Clarksville, Pa., home. UMW President Anthony Boyle and three others were convicted of the killings.

In 1994, Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill, former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, died in Boston at age 81.

In 1998, Sonny Bono, the 1960's pop star-turned-politician, was killed when he struck a tree while skiing in South Lake Tahoe, Calif.; he was 62.

Today's Birthdays: Former Vice President Walter F. Mondale is 81. Actor Robert Duvall is 78. Football Hall-of-Fame coach Chuck Noll is 77. King Juan Carlos of Spain is 71. Talk show host Charlie Rose is 67. Actress-director Diane Keaton is 63. Actor Ted Lange is 61. Rhythm-and-blues musician George "Funky" Brown (Kool and the Gang) is 60. Rock musician Chris Stein (Blondie) is 59. Actress Pamela Sue Martin is 56. Actor Clancy Brown is 50. Singer Iris Dement is 48. Actor Ricky Paull Goldin is 44. Actor Vinnie Jones is 44. Rock musician Kate Schellenbach (Luscious Jackson) is 43. Actress Heather Paige Kent is 40.

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Answer to previous puzzle

DORMANT	PRELACY
IHEARYA	HABITUE
SPECTER	ENAMORS
ALLOY	HANDYANDY
SEEN	SENIOR
TAC	STEAM
EST	HALT
RESORTS	GAINSON
NEE	TORT
FTORD	ARNAZ
AHME	CLEAT
KEEP	QUIET
IRROUTE	IRANIAN
RETRAIN	VERDANT
STATINS	EXPANDS

Newsday Crossword

NOT RIGHT NOW by Gail Grabowski
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

1 Orchard fruit	60 Sunrise direction	10 Do a librarian's job	40 Is caught in a downpour
6 Hourglass filler	61 Make impure	11 Like skyscrapers	41 Source of wool
10 Guys-only party	62 Golf gadgets	12 In addition	42 Box-office purchases
14 Move sneakily	63 Those people	13 Narrow valley	44 Sales agent, briefly
15 Margarine	64 Cobra, e.g.	18 Religious doctrine	47 Small-minded
16 School corridor		23 Snakelike fish	48 "Phooey!"
17 "Not so loud!"		24 Dining-room linens	49 Steak preference
19 "If all ___ fails..."		25 Long periods of time	50 Fairy-tale beginning
20 CPR pro		26 Starting with	51 All-knowing
21 Bench or chair		27 Cow catchers	52 China's continent
22 Tattle about		28 Shipping container	53 Monastery resident
24 Heavy weights		29 Cannon sounds	54 Poker-hand starter
25 Mountain height: Abbr.		30 Hunter's weapon	57 "That feels great!"
26 Pinball player's hangout		31 More secure	58 Competed in a marathon
29 Hot-water tanks		35 Tax-form IDs	
32 Frozen dessert		37 Tennis-match units	
33 Dollar bill			
34 Skewed view			
36 Whithish birthstone			
37 Ship's call for help			
38 Light-switch positions			
39 Lavish celebration			
40 Emerald, for one			
41 Gotten illegally			
43 Confidential things			
45 Trail walkers			
46 "Shall we?" reply			
47 Chest muscles, briefly			
48 Sags			
51 Line on a wall calendar			
52 Physicians' org.			
55 ___ and rave			
56 Restaurant order-taker			
59 Curved entrance			