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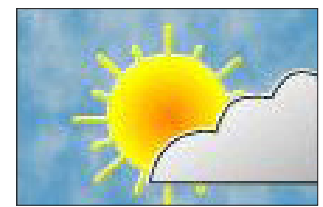


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BIG SPRING HERALD

TUESDAY

MARCH 24, 2009



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HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

New Howard College Trustee Maxwell Barr, right, receives the seal of office from Dr. John Freeman, president of the board of trustees, Monday at the college. Barr was appointed to the Precinct 4 seat on the board, which became vacant when long-time trustee Don McKinney died.

HC campus renovations to accelerate

Garrett building abatement to be held Memorial weekend

By **STEVE REAGAN**
Staff Writer

Campus-wide renovation work at Howard College is about to switch from high gear into over-drive.

College trustees learned during their Monday meeting that renovation projects authorized by a 2007 bond election are, with few exceptions, proceeding on schedule with major work scheduled to begin this summer.

The main work ongoing now includes renovation of the A and E wings of the administration annex, modification of the electrical primary system and constructing an addition to the science building.

The only main delay among those three projects is at the science building addition.

"That's about five or six weeks behind schedule," Executive Vice President Terry Hansen told trustees. "Several utility lines that were missed during the initial site survey have to be moved ... But even though we've run into extra work, we're still basically



Hansen

on schedule (overall)."

While things have been busy so far, the pace will pick up even further in the coming months when work begins on Phase 2 of the renovation project, Hansen said.

Major work to be done in the second phase includes installation of a new central chiller and boiler plant and renovation of the Student Union Building, Horace Garrett Applied Sciences Building and the administration building.

Before the Garrett and administration buildings can be renovated, they must undergo asbestos abatement (the Student Union Building has already been abated). Because the Garrett building houses the nexus for the college's phone system and computer network, abatement would severely hamper those areas of operation.

"We're going to do abatement over the Memorial Day week-

See **HC**, Page 3

Jail parking lot cause of concern

By **STEVE REAGAN**
Staff Writer

It is uncertain what effect a last-minute glitch in the parking area will have on the impending opening of the new Howard County Jail.

County commissioners learned during their Monday meeting that grading work done of the parking area was insufficient to provide proper drainage in case of rain and more work must be done in that area.

"Curbs already placed out there are not to grade and we need them to be at grade before we pour asphalt," said Jimmie Long, Precinct 2 com-



Long

missioner. "As it is now, the area won't drain water properly."

After meeting with Jeff Heffelfinger, architect of the jail project, commissioners awarded a contract to Cline Construction to regrade and pave the parking areas to the north and west of the new facility.

After the new grading work is complete, the area will be resurveyed, Long said. If survey results are satisfactory, asphalt will be poured.

There was some discussion

whether the parking lot work would delay the planned opening of the jail in April, but at least one county official doesn't believe it will be

a major hindrance.

"We can open (the jail) without a parking lot," Sheriff Stan Parker said.

Also Monday, commission-

ers voted to diversify county funds placed in investment pools.

See **JAIL**, Page 3



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Howard County Judge Mark Barr, center, makes a point during Monday's county commissioners' meeting. Also shown are commissioners Jerry Kilgore, left, and Jimmie Long.

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Obituaries

Edgar Payne

Edgar "Ed" Payne, 56, of Big Spring died Tuesday, March 23, 2009, at his residence. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Tommy Rayvon

Tommy Rayvon, 53, of Big Spring died Tuesday, March 17, 2009, at his residence. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Earl Kolden

Earl Kolden, 77, of Big Spring died Thursday, March 19, 2009, at Scenic Mountain Medical Center. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Take Note

• Schwan's food distributors will hold a fund-raiser for the March of Dimes from 1 p.m. until 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Big Spring Mall. A percentage of proceeds from all food orders received during the drive will go to the March of Dimes' "Miracle of the Moment" drive. For more information, contact Cherly Shults at 213-2112 or Louis at (505) 220-3963.

• Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club will hold a bake sale beginning at 5 p.m. Friday at Wal-Mart. Donations of baked goods will be accepted from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at The Salvation Army, 811 W. Fifth St. For more information, call Sonnett Hildebrand at 264-0455.

• Mobile Meals needs volunteers. If you can donate one hour per week to our organization delivering meals between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m., you will be helping the senior citizens of Big Spring. Contact Macaria Cantu at 263-4016

Support Groups

SUNDAY

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

MONDAY

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

• 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.

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 Hodnett at 264-7599.

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

• Celebrate Recovery, a 12-Step program, meets from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Salvation Army, 308 Ay-lford.

• 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.

Fire/EMS

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

- TRAUMA was reported in the 4100 block of Parkway. Service refused.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2500 block of Gregg Street. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1700 block of Harvard. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 300 block of N. Lamesa. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1300 block of Main Street. One person was transported to SMMC.
- DUMPSTER FIRE was reported in the 200 block of Circle.

Police blotter

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

- ADRIANZ YANEZ, 20, of 1508 Sycamore, was arrested Monday on a Howard County warrant for possession of marijuana – two ounces or less and a charge of criminal trespass.
- ROBERT LEE AIKENS JR., 45, of 1715 W. Highway 350, was arrested Monday on a charge of solicitation by a pedestrian.
- CAROL ELAINE MATHIS, 48, of 4200 W. Highway 80, was arrested Monday on a warrant for a junked vehicle and a charge of driving while license invalid.
- LARRY DEAN WHITE, 37, of 1107 S. Goliad, was arrested Monday on a charge of assault – family violence.
- ROBERT RUBEN SANCHEZ, 44, of 423 Westover Rd., was arrested Tuesday on a charge of public intoxication.
- UNAUTHORIZED USE OF A MOTOR VEHICLE was reported in the 400 block of Fourth Street.
- ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOENCE was reported in the 2400 block of Alabama.
- ASSAULT BY CONTACT was reported in the 1900 block of N. Highway 87.




Sheriff

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

Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 56 inmates at the time of this report.

- ENRIQUE MARTINEZ ALVAREZ, 45, was arrested Friday by the HCSO (charge not provided).
- MICHELLE MARIE CARRASCO, 36, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a charge of issuance of a bad check.
- CRYSTAL LASHALLE COBLE, 21, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a charge of possession of marijuana – two ounces or less in a drug free zone.
- JOHN MICHAEL EDMONDSON, 18, was arrested Sunday by DPS on charges of fraudulent use/possession of identifying information and minor in possession of an alcoholic beverage.
- REYNALDO BRITO GONZALES, 21, was arrested Saturday by DPS on charges of no driver's license (two counts).
- ANGELA KATHLEEN LORD, 46, was transferred to the County Jail Saturday by the BSPD on a charge of driving while intoxicated.
- JEREMY JOHN MILLER, 31, was arrested Saturday by the HCSO on a charge of driving while license invalid.
- MICHAEL DEAN NALL, 30, was transferred to the County Jail Saturday by the BSPD on a charge of duty on striking fixture or highway landscape.
- TIMMY ROGERS, 29, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a charge of assault causing bodily injury (sentence).
- FELIX SALAS, 39, was transferred to the County Jail Friday by the BSPD on a charge of theft.
- ARTHUR HOSEA SALAZAR, 42, was arrested Sunday by the HCSO on charges of forgery by passing (two counts) and a Midland County warrant.
- GARY LEE SCOTT, 58, was transferred to the County Jail Monday by the BSPD on charges of driving while license invalid – enhanced and aggravated assault against a public servant.
- DEBRA SHAEFFER, 40, was transferred to the County Jail Friday by the BSPD (charges not provided).
- AUSTIN GEORGE SHERRILL, 55, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on charges of driving while license invalid with a previous conviction and driving while license suspended.
- WILLIAM SAINT-GIRARD THOM, 25, was transferred to the County Jail Friday by the BSPD on charges of possession of a controlled substance – less than one gram and possession of a controlled substance – more than 4 grams, less than 200 grams.
- BRENT WALTER WHITNEY, 23, was arrested Friday (arresting agency not provided) on a charge of aggravated assault – family violence.
- ROY DEWAYNE CARTER, 34, was transferred to the County Jail Sunday by the BSPD on charges of issuance of a bad check, failure to appear and a miscellaneous charge.
- ROBERT LEE EVANS, 27, was arrested Monday by the HCSO on a charge of possession of a controlled substance.
- ZACK MONROE TURMAN, 31, was transferred to the County Jail Monday by the BSPD on a charge of theft.
- CODY ALAN WINGO, 20, was arrested Monday by the HCSO on a charge of possession of marijuana – two ounces or less.

Your Local Weather

| Wed 3/25 | Thu 3/26 | Fri 3/27 |
|--|--|---|
|  72/42 Mostly cloudy...isolated thunderstorms developing during the afternoon. |  81/50 Windy with plenty of sun. Highs in the low 80s and lows in the low 50s. |  63/33 Partly cloudy and windy. Highs in the low 60s and lows in the low 30s. |

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Bulletin Board

TODAY

• The Powwow Committee of Big Spring meets at 7 p.m. at St. Paul Lutheran Church annex, 809 Scurry, or the fellowship hall at 810 Scurry. Call Robert Downing at 263-3255 for information.

WEDNESDAY

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

THURSDAY

• Gideon International Big Spring Camp U42060 meets at 7 a.m. in Herman's Restaurant.
• Kiwanis Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
• Citizen's Police Academy Alumni Association meets at 5:30 p.m. in the Big Spring City Council Chambers, 307 E. Fourth.
• League of United Latin American Citizens LULAC Chapter 4791 meets at 5:30 p.m. at the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce. The public is invited.
• American Legion Post 506 meets at 6 p.m. Call 263-2084 for more information.
• Rackley-Swords 379, Vietnam Veterans of America meets at 7 p.m. in the Sparenburg Building, 309 S. Main St.
• Big Spring Masonic Lodge No. 1340 meets at 7:30 p.m. at 2101 Lancaster.

FRIDAY

• Signal Mountain Quilting Guild meets from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. at 1019 Nolan St. Call 267-1037 or 267-7281 for more information.
• AMBUCS meet at noon in La Posada Restaurant.
• Greater Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon at the Howard College Cactus Room.
• Dance at the Senior Center, 1901 Simler, from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

SATURDAY

• Eagles Lodge Dance at 8:30 p.m. at 703 W. Third.

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.

Lottery

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Monday night: Winning numbers drawn: 6 - 14 - 26 - 30 - 37 Number matching five of five: 0.

Results of the Texas Two Step drawing Monday night:

Winning numbers drawn: 2 - 7 - 15 - 18. Bonus Ball: 17.

Number matching four of four, plus Bonus Ball: 1. Prize: \$300,000.

The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Monday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 3 - 8 - 1 - 5. Sum It Up: 17.

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

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News in Brief

Fed and Treasury chiefs to get fearful from Congress on AIG, new bank-cleanup efforts

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Reserve's chairman and the secretary of the treasury are making a rare joint appearance at a congressional hearing, ostensibly to take a scolding over the handling of bonuses at AIG, the giant insurance company that has become the symbol of reckless risk-taking on Wall Street.

But after venting their spleen yet again at a House hearing Tuesday, lawmakers also were expected to press Fed boss Ben Bernanke and Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner on the new risks to taxpayers from their latest effort to save tottering banks and the U.S. economy: a plan to take over up to \$1 trillion in dodgy mortgage securities with the help of private investors.

At the same time, Bernanke and Geithner are likely to once again call on Congress to enact legislation that would allow the government to safely dismantle a big financial institution, like American International Group Inc., to minimize any damage to the U.S. financial system and the broader economy.

Obama last week said his administration soon will propose new financial industry oversight that includes a "resolution authority" with powers similar to those of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., which can seize control of banks, take over their bad assets and sell the good ones to competitors.

The proposal would give the treasury secretary the unprecedented power, after consulting with officials at the Fed, to take control of a major financial institution and run it. The treasury chief is an official of the administration, unlike the FDIC, which is an independent regulatory agency.

Obama trying to stop stoking fiery rhetoric on AIG bonuses, fearing overreaction

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama is trying to dampen a fire he once stoked, urging a more tempered response to public furor over bonuses paid to executives of the publicly rescued insurance giant American International Group.

Obama is virtually certain to use Tuesday's prime-time news conference to continue an effort that began over the weekend: cooling the anti-AIG ferocity, now that it threatens to undermine his efforts to bail out the nation's deeply troubled financial sector.

Obama's tone changed dramatically after the House voted last week for targeted taxes to take back most of the \$165 million in bonuses paid to AIG executives. Many lawmakers felt Obama had encouraged their step, because he called the bonuses reckless, outrageous and unjustified.

In the White House, however, the situation seemed to be spinning out of control. Some fellow Democrats questioned the constitutionality and wisdom of the House's action. Executives of other troubled companies signaled they would not make deals with a federal government that revises agreements after they are signed.

On Sunday, Obama told CBS' "60 Minutes" the House's plan to slap a special tax on the AIG executives would be unconstitutional. Borrowing a line from his Feb. 24 speech to Congress, he said he would not "govern out of anger."

Speculation shifts from overloading to ice on the wings as cause of plane crash in Montana

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speculation over the crash of a single-engine turboprop plane into a cemetery shifted to ice on the wings Monday after it became less likely that overloading was to blame, given that half of the 14 people on board were small children.

While descending Sunday in preparation for landing at the Bert Mooney Airport in Butte, Mont., the plane passed through a layer of air at about 1,500 feet that was conducive to icing because the temperatures were below freezing and the air "had 100 percent relative humidity or was saturated," according to AccuWeather.com, a forecasting service in State College, Pa.

Safety experts said similar icing condition existed when a Continental Airlines twin-engine turboprop crashed into a home near Buffalo Niagara International Airport last month, killing 50.

A possible aerodynamic stall in which ice causes the plane to lose lift, and the pilot's reaction to it, has been the focus of the Buffalo investigation.

"It's Buffalo all over again, or it could be," said John Goglia, a former member of the National Transportation Safety Board. "Icing, given those conditions, is certainly going to be high on the list of things to look at for the investigators."

Pakistan's chief justice urges end to judicial corruption; president calls for reconciliation

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The Pakistani chief justice whose ouster sparked political turmoil called for

an end to judicial corruption upon returning to his office Tuesday, a day after the president — who had long blocked the judge's reinstatement — reached out to reconcile.

Meanwhile, the capital remained tense after a suicide bombing killed an officer at a police station housing intelligence facilities — a reminder of the militant threat to this shaky, U.S.-allied nation.

Supporters of Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudhry threw rose petals on his car as it entered the Supreme Court compound. Chaudhry technically resumed work Sunday, the day after the justice who had replaced him retired.

At the start of his first hearing, Chaudhry thanked Pakistanis for supporting his restoration but warned that the population often viewed the courts as corrupt.

"Lawyers should help us end corruption," he said. "You should point out those cases in which you see elements of corruption. It is a must for justice to end corruption first."

Analysis: U.S. leaders say the war in Afghanistan is stalemated as Obama prepares new strategy

WASHINGTON (AP) — When President Barack Obama presents his overhaul of U.S. strategy and goals in the Afghanistan war in the coming days, it's a safe bet that he will not claim America and its allies are winning the seven-year-old conflict.

Almost no one inside the Obama administration makes those claims, a bleak assessment that acknowledges the grinding stalemate the war has become, and its impending plans to change tactics and lower expectations.

Little has gone as planned in Afghanistan in recent months, and Obama's advisers know their program to counter a resourceful insurgency may not work, and will cost many more American lives before they find out.

The cautionary tone coming from Obama and his top military and civilian commanders is a quantum shift from the misplaced optimism that papered over harsh battlefield realities during the Vietnam War and the post-invasion period of the Iraq war.

Obama's mission statement for Afghanistan and Pakistan, expected before he sees NATO allies in Europe next week, is likely to redefine victory in the sprawling, decentralized country. The long-awaited review also will probably acknowledge the shortcomings of military power to win a war of "hearts and minds" — the hoary military catch-phrase left over from

Vietnam.

Netanyahu bid to moderate Israeli government faces crucial coalition vote

JERUSALEM (AP) — Benjamin Netanyahu's bid to moderate the image of his incoming Israeli government faced a crucial test on Tuesday as the centrist Labor Party was deciding whether to join.

Negotiators from Labor and Netanyahu's hawkish Likud Party have worked for the past two days on a coalition agreement that was to be presented to Labor's central committee later Tuesday. In a gesture to Labor, the deal would commit to pursuing a peace agreement with the Palestinians.

Half of Labor's lawmakers object to teaming up with Netanyahu because of his long-standing opposition to peace efforts. Tuesday's vote was expected to be close.

Netanyahu has been a vocal critic of the outgoing government's peace talks with the Palestinians, saying conditions are not ripe for a deal.

But he appears to be softening his line as he courts moderates. A broader coalition would bring stability to the government since it would not be hostage to the demands of smaller partners. It also would enjoy more international credibility because some members are committed to peace talks.

Health costs for Alzheimer's triple that of other elderly people

CHICAGO (AP) — The health care costs of Alzheimer's disease patients are more than triple those of other older people, and that doesn't even include the billions of hours of unpaid care from family members, a new report suggests.

Compared with people aged 65 and older without Alzheimer's, those with the mind-destroying disease are much more often hospitalized and treated in skilled-nursing centers. Their medical costs also often include nursing home care and Medicare-covered home health visits.

That all adds up to at least \$33,007 in annual costs per patient, compared with \$10,603 for an older person without Alzheimer's, according to a report issued Tuesday by the Alzheimer's Association.

The numbers are based on 2004 data and include average per-person Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance costs.

Costs likely have grown since then as the U.S. population has aged.

JAIL

Continued from Page 1

Currently, the county has around \$10 million placed in two investment funds, said County Treasurer Teresa Thomas.

"Basically, everything that we don't need to pay bills we invest, so we can earn interest on it," Thomas said. "Then I transfer money out of those funds when we have more bills to pay."

With a worsening economy, however, commissioners are worried about putting too many of their financial eggs in one or two baskets.

"Interest rates are so low that I don't think it'll make much difference what (investment funds) we use, but I think it's a wise course of action to spread out the money among five

funds," County Judge Mark Barr said.

Commissioners then authorized Thomas to allocate county money equally among five investment funds, a process that will begin immediately. She said there will be no financial penalty incurred by the county for switching investment pools.

In other business, commissioners:

- Approved the hiring of a full-time and part-time employee in the Road and Bridge Department.
- Approved a contract with Specialized Public Financing to provide financial consultant services for the county.
- Took no action after a 45-minute executive session concerning personnel matters.
- Conducted a budget workshop.

Contact Staff Writer

Steve Reagan at 263-7331 ext. 234 or by e-mail at reporter@bigspringherald.com

HC

Continued from Page 1

end," Hansen said. "When they begin abating the Garrett building ... the college will be effectively offline — we won't have phone service or our computer network. So we're going to have the abatement work done over that four-day weekend."

Officials hope to present finalized plans for the second round of projects to trustees within the next two months, Hansen said.

Also Monday, trustees:

- Welcomed new Precinct 4 trustee Maxwell Barr, who was appointed to succeed long-time trustee Don McKinney.
- Approved a new Geographical Information Systems Technology Program for SouthWest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf.
- Approved handbook and catalog changes and reappointment of college deans and directors.

MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL

24th & Johnson 267-8288

Clovis Phinney, Jr., 78, died Saturday. Funeral Services will be at 2 p.m. Tuesday at Myers & Smith Chapel. Burial will be at Coahoma Cemetery.

Lennis Phipps Couch, 89, died Saturday. Funeral services will be at 4 p.m. Tuesday at Myers & Smith Chapel with burial at Mount Olive Memorial Park.

Edgar Payne, 56, died Tuesday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Tommy Rayvon, 53, died Tuesday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Earl Kolden, 77, died Thursday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

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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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Publisher

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News Editor

John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

OTHER VIEWS

Texas education needs wake up call in legislature

The overwhelming majority of Texas public school students lack proficiency in math, science, reading and writing, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics. That is unacceptable in a world in which Texas students increasingly face competition from their peers in China, South Korea and India.

Hardly a week goes by that education leaders are not discussing the challenges of boosting academic skills, especially improving performance in math and science. Earlier this month, President Barack Obama weighed in on the academic challenges facing public schools: "We can no longer afford an academic calendar designed when America was a nation of farmers who needed their children at home plowing the land at the end of each day. That calendar may have once made sense, but today, it puts us at a competitive disadvantage."

He noted that American students have more than a month less school each year than children in South Korea and recommended that public schools lengthen the school year or day to give students more instructional time in the classroom. Good idea.

The Texas Legislature should pay attention because the reverse is happening in public schools here, thanks to a law it passed in 2003. American-Statesman writer Eric Dexheimer exposed the practice in last Tuesday's editions.

The state Optional Flexible Year Program permits school districts to petition the Texas Education Agency for a waiver of the state-mandated 180 days of classroom instruction. The waiver exempts districts from losing state money for student absences, which means the districts can collect money for students who aren't in the classroom. This school year, 148 districts were granted waivers, up from 58 in the previous year.

Incredibly, lawmakers believed this was a good idea. They figured reducing school by up to 10 days for students who did well or simply passed would give teachers more time to concentrate on students who needed remedial help, especially those who were struggling with the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. That kind of logic only makes sense in the context of high-stakes testing in which nearly all measures of success ride on the outcome of a single test including student promotions to the next grade, high school graduation, school and district ratings and school closures.

There is something terribly wrong when the reward for achievement is to reduce a student's opportunity to make even more progress. Instead of saying, "Congratulations, you're ready to advance," the school says, "Stop right there that's enough learning for one year. Go home and start vacation or weekends early."

Wake up, legislators. This was an ill-advised law that needs to be repealed. While you are reforming high school requirements and TAKS testing, take the opportunity to repeal a bad law that basically gives students a license to skip school. With so much catching up to do to compete with their peers across the nation and the world, Texas students need more time in the classroom, not less.

THE AMERICAN-STATESMAN
AUSTIN

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

Now more than ever, Lord, may we trust completely in You.

Amen

Let us learn: Part 1

Beginning in babyhood, we watch and learn from others. What doesn't always continue throughout our lives is how we speak about what we're learning with one another. And yet there is much we can learn from hearing about another's experiences and perspectives.

Truly each of us has a unique path we will call our life. And there are probably no two paths exactly alike. Still, when we share the lessons we've learned with another, we may be giving that person the inspiration, encouragement, hope or wisdom they need at that moment in their own life.

A couple of weeks ago, I asked some friends to share one of their "Aha!" moments with me — such as an experience that changed the way they lived their life, something they read that altered the way they believed, life-transforming insight gleaned from a mistake or perhaps something realized from witnessing another person's experience.

This week is going to feature those who shared lessons learned in their childhood or from a child. Next week will feature parental perceptions and other lessons learned as an adult.

One friend told about the death of friend in an automobile accident. They were both twelve years old and their mother's only children. She wrote, "At that moment I had an "Aha!" that would change my life forever. Life became a precious gift — something fleeting. I realized that even at the tender age of twelve, I could die and so could those I love. It is a lesson that

I suppose we all learn at some point — the first time we feel our own mortality. "

Another wrote, "My "Aha!" moment came when I made a phone call about making brownies for the band bake sale." She became acquainted with a family and a student who had been diagnosed with cancer. She shared, "I watched her during her struggles with chemo, surgery, radiation and anything else that was sent her way. She had more strength and wisdom than many adults have — me included. We complain because we've had a bad day or we never have enough hours in the day to accomplish what we want to do or something isn't going our way. Then I look at Chalisa. What an amazing young lady."

One friend told about an epiphany she experienced as a teenager during Sunday School. She explained, "We were talking about the Bible Lesson for that week, questions were flying, and ideas started percolating. Then came my "Aha!" moment which became pivotal to my life. Liz started talking about everything around us representing a spiritual idea; that the very substance of all stuff was spiritual, not the matter it seemed to be constructed of. For instance, a dog represents unconditional love and boundless joy, the chair we sat on represented structure and support, as God's children we represented every divine quality attributable to God's good nature — honesty, intelligence, tenderness, strength, loving-kindness, etc. And the light bulb went off. Oh my gosh. Suddenly, this statement by Mary Baker Eddy who authored the book Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures had profound meaning to me: "Metaphysics resolves things into thoughts, and exchanges the objects of sense for the ideas of Soul." Life suddenly had a new

color and purpose and it became an adventure in spiritual discovery ... that continues today."

Another childhood "Aha!" came when this friend was about 10 years old. She wrote, "I was at a fair with my best friend and I was at one of those booths where you try to win a stuffed animal. I had one in mind that I wanted, and I kept putting quarters down and guessing a number that the game would land on and I kept guessing the wrong number. After the 20th time of guessing, was ready to move on. The man suggested I let my friend guess. And of course my friend guessed the right number and she got the stuffed animal that I wanted. So "Aha!" — I learned that it doesn't pay to gamble. I never gambled again. I learned that we can't rely on chance for any aspect of our lives. I would much rather feel the safe, secure, presence of God's love and guidance than let accidents, mishaps, superstition rule my day."

I recall many "Ahas!" from my youth, such as: What goes around comes around. Lying is never a good idea. Sneak around enough and you will get caught. Mothers are not easily deceived. And also, if you want things to be different in your life, be the difference that makes the difference.

Every life lesson learned is pivotal to who we are and how we live our lives. May you have many "Aha!" moments, my friends, and may you share these precious lessons with everyone you can!

Stay tuned for Part II of "Let us learn from each other" next week!

Annette Bridges is a freelance writer who lives in North Texas. Her columns are published weekly on United Press International's ReligionAndSpirituality.com and numerous newspapers. E-mail her at annettebridges@gmail.com.

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Newspapers need ideas, not cuts

Sam Zell, CEO of the beleaguered Tribune Company, I'm calling you out. You entered the newspaper industry full of ideas and ready to make changes, but instead of shaking things up you went for more of the same.

Here in Hartford, Conn., like in so many other places you own newspapers, you decided to combat dropping revenue and flagging reader interest by having less pages and fewer staff members. You still plan on charging the same newsstand and subscription price, but readers now get less for their money.

Worse yet, you continue to allow the same people to be in charge despite the fact that their lack of innovative ideas have brought your business crumbling down.

Instead of tossing the top editors overboard and trying something radical — perhaps hiring someone with an actual background in creating engaging content cheaply — you continue to jettison staffers and pages.

Cutting pages and staff members does, of course, save money, but I'm hard-pressed to believe that it will raise revenues.

I'm also perplexed that executives at your papers, as well as those in the newspaper industry in general, so willingly concede their readership to the Internet.

Admittedly, print newspapers have lost readers to Web sites and some of that can be accounted for by the immediacy and availability of the Internet. Some, perhaps a lot, of lost readership is not a question of what you use your medium to deliver.

Newspapers must produce content that people care about and deliver it in whatever method they choose to digest it.

I prefer stretching out with a newspaper in the morning and grabbing breaking news online all day.

Others may like video or podcasts or even Twitter "Tweets," but if I ran a major newspaper we would deliver news in all these formats.

Your paper here in Hartford underwent a supposedly massive overhaul which consisted mostly of making the front page more boring, cutting pages and directing people nice enough to buy the paper to your Web site. Nothing radically changed about the content, no new features of interest got added and nothing was done to make me, a 35-year-old family man want to buy it.

Newspaper executives like to act as if it takes some magic formula to win readers back, when

really all it takes is being willing to appeal to today's audience instead of 1974's audience. Look at what younger folks actually read and give them that content.

Doing that requires changing your notion of what news is. Today's readers want news and analysis all at once. They crave service articles, useful stories and commentaries that incite passion about things they care about.

News should be dictated by your audience, not by the grizzled AP wire addicts on the copy desk. You have the ability to be the center of debate for your community, but doing that involves a willingness to cast aside entrenched ideals and probably a whole lot of people who have not been able to embrace the present let alone the future.

I'm a veteran editor of magazines, cutting edge Web sites, and yes, print newspapers. I, or someone like me could make readers, and therefore advertisers, care about your papers again and I could do it with even less people than you currently have.

It's a simple road back to vitality and profitability, you just need the right person behind the wheel.

Daniel B. Kline's work appears in more than 100 papers weekly. He can be reached at dan@notastep.com.



ANNETTE BRIDGES



DANIEL KLINE

Bird Poop: Barn owls get unique rescues from chimneys

As the calendar turned to March, we anticipated the surge of phone calls regarding birds trapped in chimneys. With the avian breeding season came the discovery and panic of homeowners throughout the county. Suddenly, they had an uninvited guest.



BEBE
McCASLAND

Driving east of town one year, I headed toward my first encounter with this spring event. As I left my vehicle, a homeowner pleaded with me to see if I could get the bird up the chimney to freedom by using a rope. She even had a ladder already positioned for my climb to the rooftop.

Knowing that this effort was futile, I started upward to appease the woman. Having been given a long, thick rope the width of a hoe handle, I doubted that it could be extended far enough down the chimney. It was unlikely for the bird to grip and pull itself upward. Although I was correct, the view from the rooftop was breathtaking.

To the southwest was Signal Peak and South Mountain. In between was nothing but open, undeveloped land. The brush country, spotted with mesquites, gullies and the rising bluffs beyond, offered the best hunting for this nocturnal bird of prey.

After securing the thick hemp to the outside of the chimney, I looked down the flue to discover it empty. A voice from below advised that whenever her husband had looked down the chimney, the bird had jumped from the damper to the grate in the fireplace. If anyone were in the room, the bird would jump upward and retreat above the damper for safe-keeping. This hide-and-seek game had been going on for two days.

Telling the woman that the bird could not even jump high enough to access the heavy rope, I assured her that we could grant the barn owl its freedom without

damaging her home. After dark, the front door and glass doors on the fireplace would be left wide open. No lights would be left on in the house. If they wanted to watch the owl leave, they could sit perfectly still on the couch. Since their entry offered a direct flight from the hearth to the outdoors, I felt the owl would leave quickly.

Late that evening my phone rang. "It was the most beautiful thing we've ever seen," the lady said. The owl had jumped on to the grate, then the hearth, shortly after the house had become quiet and dark. Since it could see the smallest mouse in the dark of night, the bird easily recognized its chance for freedom. With its long, broad wings, it had flown silently through their den and out the door.

Future rescues would not be as easy. North of town on the road to Vealmoor, a barn owl stood on a fireplace floor. Having come through the damper, it was trapped with no place to hide. The entry/exit to the house was not readily available.

In this case, Art held a sheet around me as I slowly opened the fireplace doors. Not seeing the possibility of escape on either side of me, the bird paced back and forth. Successfully grabbing the raptor, I carried it outside.

Before release, the homeowner could appreciate the golden or tawny appearance of the barn owl's back and wings. Intermixed with this color were hues of gray. The mottling with bits of black and white enhanced this elegant night creature. Its long, heart-shaped face, rimmed with a dark border around white facial disks, intrigued our host.

With a movement upward, I let go of the bird's legs. Immediately began a graceful flight toward a distant mesquite. Learning that the owl could fly in the late afternoon light, the homeowner knew that once the sky darkened, the raptor, with its extraordinary sight and hearing, would hunt their farmland for mice, rats, and rabbits.

A few years later,



Courtesy photo

As it takes flight at dusk, the buffy white underparts of a barn owl give it a ghostly appearance. Calling to its mate with an eerie shriek, the bird has earned a place in literature as well as being championed for rodent control.

two owl calls in a matter of days took me to opposite ends of the county. To the north, a "barnie" required some planning. Having to get situated inside a fireplace, I grabbed sheets, gloves and carrier. After covering the homeowners' light-colored carpet, I crumpled myself on the hearth floor. Then I realized I had forgotten my mask. The sooty dust from my movements would be unpleasant. I'd have to work quickly.

The man and his wife held another sheet over the opening to contain the dust and keep the owl from getting into their den if it slipped past me. Ready to reach up into the damper area, I heard the husband caution, "Wait just a minute!" As he pulled the sheet back, he handed me a mask. "You're going to need this."

Grateful for his kindness, I reached up into the damper. In trying to escape the gloved hand that kept coming toward it, the barn owl jumped over my wrist several times. Wondering if I'd ever get my hand around its leg, I was surprised when it suddenly jumped from the damper on to my legs. As we stared at each other, I marveled at its penetrating black eyes. Since I was partially prone on the brick, the owl wasn't as frightened as if I had been upright. After grabbing its legs, I thanked the couple for all their effort as I placed it in a carrier.

To the south, Art and I wondered about the coloration of a fire-

place's glass doors as I folded myself inside.

Above the damper, another barn owl eluded capture. Resting for a moment, I removed a glove and felt of the darkened glass. The same material was on the damper and hearth.

Resuming my effort, I managed to grab a leg, then felt the impact of the owl's other foot as it struck and wouldn't let go. Turning, I used my other hand to force the bird against the wall of the chimney. With its wings folded and held with one hand, I used my other to extract the wiggling, screaming raptor through the opening. Once outside, the bird readily left. On the way back to our vehicle, I told Art what he suspected was true. The homeowner had been cooking in the fireplace. Hot grease had coated the glass, damper, hearth, and eventually my clothes and gloves.

If a prize were given for the most owls in a fireplace, the winner would be a few years ago in the Tubbs area. Three owls had taken residence inside a rough, stone chimney, which they could easily access because of the uneven placement of the materials. Hearing them inside, the homeowner had dismantled a stove that had been carefully housed inside. Managing to get into the den, one owl was netted and another soon joined it. When the third owl decided to investigate the house, the homeowner opened a door and the bird took advantage of it.

As each barn owl has been rescued from a

fireplace, we advised a cover for the chimney.

With wooden barns and frame houses disappearing, metal structures with roll-up doors are replacing them. Adaptable, the owls seek other nest sites in which to raise their young: hangars, recessed areas in bluffs, attics of new homes

under construction, and chimneys.

After numerous rescues, I expect when I croak, I'll come back as a chimney sweep. Surely my apprenticeship has been met.

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

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

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Anticipatory Defense

North dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.
NORTH
♠ 10 8 5
♥ K 9 6
♦ K Q 4
♣ A K J 3

WEST
♠ 3 2
♥ 10 7 2
♦ J 8 7 6 3
♣ 10 9 5

EAST
♠ K Q 9
♥ A K J 8 3
♦ 10 5 2
♣ 6 4

SOUTH
♠ A J 7 6 4
♥ 5 4
♦ A 9
♣ Q 8 7 2

The bidding:
North South West
1 ♣ 1 ♥ 1 ♠ Pass
1 NT Pass 3 ♣ Pass
3 ♣ Pass 4 ♣

Opening lead — two of hearts.
Just as declarer can try to lure the defense into making a mistake, the defenders can do the same to strike in such situations is before declarer has a chance to find the winning play on his own.

Take this case where South arrived at four spades after East had overcalled in hearts, and West led the heart deuce. East won the first heart with the jack and cashed the king, West following with the seven.

Because West had not led high-low, it was clear to East that declarer had no more hearts, so he turned his attention elsewhere.

East already had two tricks in the bank and was sure to get another in spades. However, since South had to have at least five spades headed by the ace, as well as the ace of diamonds, to justify his bidding, East was left with the question of where his side could possibly secure a fourth trick.

The only hope appeared to lie in scoring a second trump trick. But if declarer held the A-J of spades, he was likely to lead a spade toward his hand early on and insert the jack, which would limit him to one trump loser.

Rather than wait for declarer to attack the spade suit himself, East decided his best hope was to try to lead South astray. So at trick three he returned the queen of spades!

Declarer took the queen with the ace and led a low spade toward dummy. When West followed low, South, fearful that East might have started with the singleton queen, finessed dummy's eight!

Had West held the K-9-3-2 originally, this would have been the only way to make the contract. As it was, though, East won the trick with the nine to put South down one.

Tomorrow: Big things in small packages.

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Wacky Facts

In 1949, as an April Fools' hoax, a New Zealand radio deejay announced on the air that a mile-wide swarm of wasps was headed toward Auckland. He warned listeners to protect themselves by wearing socks over their trousers, and leaving honey-smearing traps outside their doors. Hundreds of people took his advice. — *museumofhoaxes.com*

KID NEWS



Chatter Box

"Because we were in hotels all the time and traveling when she was little, she would want to go to the bathroom in the bathroom! Still today, if I'm at an airport, she will go in the airport stall."
— Ashley Tisdale, on her semi-potty-trained dog, Maui, in *People* magazine.

Try This

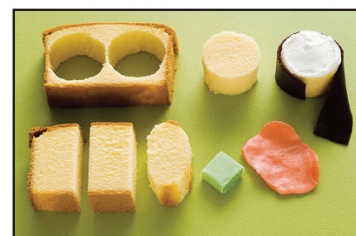
Foolish fun for April 1

SWEET SUSHI

Something's fishy about this sushi — maybe because the only fish in it comes from the candy aisle!

YOU WILL NEED

- 1-inch-thick slices of pound cake
- White frosting
- Flaked coconut
- Fruit leather (we used FruitaBü Organic Smooashed Grape Fruit Twirls)
- An assortment of candies and jellies for sweet toppings, plus, green and orange Starburst for sushi sides



Sushi bases: For rolls, ask an adult to use a knife to cut 1 1/2-inch circles from a slice of cake. Frost the tops of the circles, then wrap a 6-inch strip of fruit leather seaweed around each one, using a dab of frosting to secure it. Press coconut rice into the frosting.

Sweet toppings: To top our sushi we used orange nonpareils, apricot preserves, Twizzlers, green gumdrop slices and wedges, Swedish Fish (whole and diced) and fruit leather.

Sushi sides: To make wasabi, warm a green Starburst candy in the microwave for 10 seconds, then shape it into a mound. For pickled ginger, microwave and flatten an orange Starburst, then bunch it up into a pile.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF FAMILYFUN MAGAZINE

FAKED POTATO

These dud spuds make a great side dish at dinner-time on April Fools' Day. After the joke's been sprung, serve up the pretend potatoes at playtime.

YOU WILL NEED

- Nude-colored nylons
- Pillow batting
- Needle
- Thread
- Scissors
- Yellow craft foam

1. For each potato, stuff an 8-inch section of nude-colored nylons with pillow batting.
2. Twist both ends and sew them to the bottom.
3. For each eye, push the threaded needle up from the bottom and out the top of the potato, then back through about 1/8 inch from where it came out. Pull the needle out the bottom and knot the thread to secure it. Before "serving," use scissors to cut a slit in the top and add a pat of craft foam butter.

— *FamilyFun* magazineCHARACTER
IN HER CHARACTERS

Author Meg Cabot chats about mean girls, little sisters, diaries & cats

By Morgan Mullings/TimeforKids.com



Meg Cabot, author of the "Princess Diaries" and "Allie Finkle" series (among nearly 50 books she has written!), talked to Time For Kids kid reporter Morgan Mullings about her life, her characters and her craft.

TFK: Your latest book, "Allie Finkle's Rules for Girls: Best Friends and Drama Queens" comes out this spring. It's the third book in the Allie Finkle series. How did you come up with the idea for this series?

CABOT: I had many readers from the "Princess Diaries" series come out to book signings with their little sisters. They would ask, "When are you going to write a book for girls my age?" I decided that's something I need to do, and I came up with this character Allie Finkle, who is 9.

TFK: How has Allie changed from the first book to the third?

CABOT: In the first book, Allie is very upset because her family is moving from one side of town to the other. She's worried that she'll have a hard time making new friends at the new school that she has to go to. By the third book, she has made all new friends, and she's really happy at her school. In the first book, she's the new girl. But by the third book, another new girl comes. Allie is excited because she thinks she's going to get to show this new girl around. What she doesn't know is that the new girl is pretty confident. She doesn't need anyone to show her around.

TFK: Allie has a problem dealing with a mean girl. Do you have any advice for girls going through the same thing?

CABOT: I do, because

everything that happened in this book happened to me. I think it's important that you not let yourself get bossed around and that you stay true to yourself. That is really hard to do because your friends let themselves get bossed around by the mean girls and you don't have anyone on your side. But it's really important that you stick to what you believe in. Allie's problem is that she doesn't like kissing and she doesn't like boys. But this (new) girl wants everyone to kiss. Allie thinks it's gross. She doesn't want anything to do with it. But she's getting a lot of pressure.

TFK: Which character in the series relates to you the most when you were a kid?

CABOT: Definitely Allie because she's really based on me. Everything about Allie is just like me. I had two younger brothers who drove me crazy, and I got a new kitten just like Allie did. When I started a new school, there was a mean girl who moved to my school from Canada, just like in the book. I knew I wanted to be a veterinarian when I grew up, like Allie, but of course, that didn't happen because I'm a writer now.

TFK: You must get a lot of letters from Allie Finkle fans. What question are you asked the most?

CABOT: I'm asked a lot about the cat. People always want to know: "Was there really a cat?" and "How long did the cat live?" My cat was a female. In the book, the cat is a male. I had that cat for 20 years. But also people want to know about Allie's life and friends. They ask, "Were the friends that Allie had based on real characters?" They all are, and I'm still friends with them today.

TFK: When you were Allie's age, what was your favorite book?

CABOT: Probably "A Wrinkle In Time" by Madeline L'Engle or "Harriet the Spy" by Louise Fitzhugh.

TFK: How old were you when you started writing stories?

CABOT: I wrote my first story when I was 7. It was called "Harry the Puppy." It wasn't very good. It was part illustration, part words, but mostly illustrations.

TFK: What is your advice to kids who want to become authors?

CABOT: The No. 1 thing I would say is to write a lot. If you like writing stories — which is what I liked to do when I was a kid — then write stories. Just write however you want. Make them as messy as you want because you're writing for yourself. Don't worry about spelling and grammar at this point. In the future, you will have to worry about that. I kept a diary when I was a kid. Another piece of advice is to keep a diary so that you remember (things). Also, you should read books — comic books, articles, Web sites or anything. Reading can help you with your writing. And if you really like to write, write a little bit every day. Don't let yourself get discouraged and, if you love it, keep trying.

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Help!

Don't be afraid to show your style

DEAR AMERICAN GIRL: Some girls at school make fun of me because of the way I dress. I like to dress in bright and colorful clothes, but these girls think they're ugly. How do I make them stop teasing me? — *Colorful*

■ Kudos to you for having your own sense of style. It doesn't matter what these bullies think, but no one likes being teased. The next time it happens, you could roll your eyes and walk away. Or you could say: "I don't care if you like my clothes. Stop making fun of me." If you've tried to stop the teasing, but it continues for a few days, tell a teacher or parent what's going on.



DEAR AMERICAN GIRL: There's a boy in my class who draws really well. I draw well, too, but I feel like we're competing.

— *Artistic Girl*

■ Competition can be a good thing if it helps you do good work. But if competing is taking the fun out of art for you, you should put a stop to it. You and this boy can both be good drawers.

Focus on the type of drawing you like to do and have your own style. Draw as much as you can, and most of all, enjoy yourself!

Visit "Fun for Girls" at americangirlmagazine.com to get or give advice.

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Rips & Raves

You'll flip for these travel games



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— *FamilyFun* magazine

Bulldogettes' sweep Greenwood, Marfa

Herald Staff Report

COAHOMA — Something about this part of the softball season seems to always bring out the best in the Coahoma Bulldogettes.

The Bulldogettes picked up their 13th win in a row Saturday, winning a doubleheader against Greenwood and Marfa.

Junior Heather Newton pitched a second consecutive shutout in the first game of the day against

Greenwood, holding the Rangerettes to one hit in a 4-0 victory.

Newton then picked up her 11th win of the season against Marfa in a dramatic game that took an extra inning to win. The Bulldogettes scored a run in the bottom of the eighth to seal the



Newton

victory.

Senior Shelbi Paige shined at the plate for Coahoma in both games. Paige was a combined 4 for 7 in the two contests, knocking in two runs, while crossing the plate three times.

Katie Dunn started against Marfa and went four and a third innings, allowing two runs — one earned — while striking out five batters.

See COAHOMA, Page 12

Armstrong breaks bone in bike crash

By CIARAN GILES

Associated Press Writer

BALTANAS, Spain — With the road narrowing and cyclists piling up in front of him, Lance Armstrong tumbled hard off his bike.

He was left with a broken collarbone that will need surgery and questions about whether he'll be able to contend for an eighth Tour de France title in July.

"I'm alive!" he wrote on his Twitter feed. "Broken clavicle (right). Hurts like hell for now. Surgery in a couple of days. Thanks for all the well wishes."

Armstrong will fly back to the United States after being knocked out of the first stage of the Vuelta of Castilla and Leon stage race in Spain.

"The crash has put my upcoming calendar in jeopardy, but the most important thing for me right now is to get back home and rest up and begin my rehab," he said in a statement.

Armstrong, who has a home in Aspen, Colo., is scheduled to compete in the Giro d'Italia from May 9-May 31, then the Tour de France from July 4-26.

"I think for the Giro it's a very big problem," Armstrong said as he left Valladolid University Hospital. "For now, the biggest problem is just the pain."

Armstrong won seven straight Tours from 1999-2005 before retiring. He returned after 3½ years, and at 37 was hoping for another triumphant ride through Paris.

Astana team leader Johan Bruyneel said on his Twitter feed there were no complications in the break, and suggested Armstrong could be riding soon.

"Clean collarbone fracture," Bruyneel said. "Should be fast recovery."

Added Astana spokesman Philippe Maertens: "We are confident he can still race the Tour de France, of course. He will be off the bike, but he can still do condition training."

Armstrong was tossed off his bike during a pileup 12½ miles from the stage's finish Monday. The Texan was grimacing and trying to hold his right arm as he entered an ambulance.

"I've never had this happen before; it's pretty painful," he said. "I feel really miserable."

After falling off his bike, Armstrong sat in the grass beside the road, his right shoulder slumped and his wrist resting on his right thigh. When help arrived, he motioned toward his right shoulder. Armstrong eventually walked to the ambulance and climbed into the back.

See ARMSTRONG, Page 12

Quick fix

3 years after sanctions, OU is in Sweet 16

By MURRAY EVANS

Associated Press Writer

NORMAN, Okla. — Oklahoma made the NCAA tournament in 2006, but its basketball program quickly turned into a mess.

The Sooners made a quick exit from the tournament, losing in the first round to Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Not long after, coach Kelvin Sampson bolted for Indiana amid an NCAA investigation into nearly 600 improper recruiting phone calls made by Sampson and his staff that resulted in probation and other sanctions for Oklahoma.

The bad news continued: After Sampson left, three of the prominent recruits who had signed with Oklahoma backed out of their letters of intent, including Damir James, who went to Texas, and Scottie Reynolds, who went to Villanova. That left Sampson's replacement, Jeff Capel, with a bare cupboard of a roster.

But it didn't take long for Capel to turn around the program.

Three years after taking over, he's guided the second-seeded Sooners into the Sweet 16 in the NCAA tournament, in which Oklahoma (29-5) will play third-seeded Syracuse (28-9) on Friday in a South Regional semifinal in Memphis, Tenn.

See OU, Page 12



AP photo/Ed Zurga

Oklahoma's Blake Griffin (23) greets teammates Willie Warren (13) and Tony Crocker (5) as they come off the court after beating Michigan 73-63 in the second-round of the NCAA Tournament in Kansas City, Mo., Saturday. The Sooners' men's basketball program was sanctioned for recruiting violations three years ago, but has turned it around quickly and play in the Sweet 16 Friday.

See ARMSTRONG, Page 12

Byrd knows his role with the Rangers

By STEPHEN HAWKINS

AP Sports Writer

SURPRISE, Ariz. — Marlon Byrd knows he has a spot on the Texas Rangers roster, even without a set place in the outfield or the lineup.

And six years after being one of the National League's top rookies as the leadoff hitter and center fielder for Philadelphia, Byrd believes he has finally proven with the Rangers that he belongs in the major leagues.

"The past two years have shown what I've known," Byrd said. "But 2004-06, if I would have said I could play in the big leagues, people look at my numbers and go, 'No, you can't.' And I couldn't disagree with them."

While not an everyday starter in Texas, where only Josh Hamilton has more RBIs this spring and only three Rangers appeared in more games last season, Byrd has hit .302 with 20 home runs and 123 RBIs in 231 games the past two seasons.

"I've put up the numbers where I believed I should be," Byrd said. "They're not the greatest numbers in the world, but they're very sound."

See BYRD, Page 12



AP photo/Tony Gutierrez

Texas Rangers outfielder Marlon Byrd prepares for an at-bat during a spring training baseball game Thursday against the Oakland Athletics in Surprise, Ariz. Byrd knows he has a spot on the Rangers roster, even without a set place in the outfield or the lineup.

Sports in brief

Relay for Life Dodgeball Tourney set for Saturday

A dodgeball tournament to raise funds for Relay for Life has been scheduled for Saturday at the Big Spring Junior High gymnasium.

Registration begins at 10 a.m. and costs \$5 a person to play. There must be four boys and four girls to a team. First game is scheduled for 11 a.m.

A concession stand will be available.

Lady Steers boosters meeting March 30 at ATC

The Big Spring Lady Steers Booster Club is meeting at 5:30 p.m. March 30 in the Athletic Training Center.

All parents of Lady Steers athletes in junior high or high school are encouraged to attend.

BSCC hosting 3-person scramble April 4-5

The Big Spring Country Club is hosting a 3-person scramble tournament April 4-5 with a 1 p.m. shotgun start both days.

Entry fee is \$60 per player plus golf cart. Private carts are welcome.

Entry includes barbecue on the course April 4 and practice rounds the day before.



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Tomorrow's Horoscope

The whole day feels like the 15-minute period before a party starts. There will be a lot of running around trying to throw together last-minute details. There will also be the realization that you won't be able to do some of what you thought you would do and other exciting options may take the place of your original ideas. Go with the flow.

ARIES

(March 21-April 19).

You've made progress in a

relationship.

You were once perfect strangers and now you know each other well — maybe too well. You'll benefit by using the element of surprise to remind someone you're an ever-evolving mystery.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20).

You are usually slow to change your mind.

You want to be convinced of things. You need to see the logic behind the idea. You may make an exception today to oblige someone very attractive and persuasive.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21).

You are an excellent sounding board, open to listening to the details, going with the tangents and following the entire story. Do put limits on the time you dedicate to others. Your own purpose needs more attention.

CANCER (June 22-July 22).

This is no time to be hasty. It just so happens that you haven't come up with the best solution yet, so go back to the drawing board. Go for quantity. The winning solution may be idea No. 11 or 25.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).

Spend your energy in research. Ask questions and learn the struggles and challenges, wants and needs of others. You cannot persuade anyone to your point of view without first understanding where they are coming from.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

You are the exception to the rule and others will quietly let you go your own way even if they would protest another person in your very same position. Be sure not to take advantage of your current status as a renegade.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

You dream of greatness. So when you

get a pat on the back for doing good work, or when you receive the same accolades as everyone else, well, it's just not enough. Be enthusiastic and grateful anyway as you aim higher.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).

You know you're on the success path because you are being stretched in uncomfortable ways. Whom do you admire and what would he or she do in this situation?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).

You'll be involved with volatile people. A Taurus or Virgo helps stabilize the situation. Maybe your moral convictions won't allow you to go quietly, but at least you can choose your battles.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).

You have an accurate sense of what's appropriate and what has worked in the past. Keep in mind that tomorrow is a new day. Ask yourself a crucial question: "Am I aiming too low?"

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).

People who seem to know what they are doing may be bluffing. This information is not meant to make you feel dubious in your dealings, rather to liberate you to stretch your own role in fanciful ways.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).

Avoid seriousness. All meaningful productivity comes from playfulness. Shake yourself from the grip of heavy thoughts. As soon as you do, attractions spark up and magic happens.

ASTROLOGICAL INSIGHTS FOR A MEMORABLE WEEK

PART TWO:

The planets are rallying together to celebrate this first full week of Aries and it will be a memorable time indeed. Take the initiative to make a few strong memories of your own. Here are some suggestions for

CANCER:

Transitions are always exciting, scary and illuminating for you. While letting go of one situation and reaching for another you are a free-floating agent trusting in the universe. It's a vivid feeling, so make a leap. LEO: Performing gives you the extra energetic edge that will etch your experience into your psyche. You don't need a stage to perform. A one-on-one meeting is a kind of performance for you, and so is a sales call. Take advantage of this special astrological period by putting yourself in the position to perform. VIRGO: Spring cleaning isn't just a saying to you — it's a lifestyle. And it's not just about dust, either. You take an inventory of all you have, like a person who's getting ready to move. This is the week to delve into cleaning mode. You'll redefine yourself in the process, and what could be more memorable than a new you?

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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Vegetable gardens can please eye as well as palate

By LEE REICH

For The Associated Press

'Tis the season when everyone gets the urge to plant. And if you choose to grow vegetables, there's no need to relegate them to a far corner of your yard, where they are sure to suffer neglect.

A vegetable garden need not be an eyesore. It can be an oasis of beauty, pleasing your eyes as much as your palate.

Just visit or find a picture of Villandry, the famous French potager ("kitchen garden") near Tours, France, with its patterns of geometric beds filled with growing vegetables. Some beds are bordered with low boxwood hedges — 19 miles of them — and the whole garden is interlaced with white, gravel paths.

In fact, call your vegetable plot a "potager" and right away you might find it more charming.

When locating your potager, keep it close to your house, and consider that it needs at least six hours of full sunlight each day.

As the old saw goes, "Put your vegetable garden no further from your back door than you could throw the kitchen sink." Or maybe even from your front door. (And that old saw dates back to when kitchen sinks were made of cast iron!)

Whether it is near or against your house, establish connections — visually and physically — between it, the house and the rest of the landscape. For instance, mimic in or around your potager some design element from your house or yard: a decorative fence, a row of clipped hedges, a piece of statuary.

Paths create visual and functional connections. Choose paving for paths that matches that of a nearby patio or echoes the pattern on a floor in a room looking out at the garden.

Straight paths have a formal air, if that's the tone of your yard, while curving ones lend themselves more to informal settings. To further tie everything together, run paths from your house right up to and into the vegetable garden itself.

Paths, paving, fences, hedges, statuary and other "tie-ins" help overcome a common limitation of vegetable gardens: their often dreary appearance in winter, when, too often, they are just dirt.



(AP Photo/Lee Reich)

This photo shows a vegetable garden during the spring season in New Paltz, N.Y. A vegetable garden need not be an eyesore. It can be an oasis of beauty, pleasing your eyes as much as your palate.

These tie-ins can help carry the overall design of the garden through the winter. Create beds in your potager, perhaps geometric in shape, perhaps flowing; in either case, beds whose shapes create year-round patterns of beauty. Define your garden with hedging, arbors, fencing and paving.

Finally, remember, a potager isn't only for vegetables. No rule says you can't plant some ornamentals to help keep up appearances through winter. The shapes and lines created by small, densely twigged plants, such as potentilla, shrubby dog-

woods and cotoneaster, as well as boxwood, heather and other small evergreens, make their statements year-round.

Come spring and summer, add vegetables themselves to your designer's palette: frilly red or green lettuces in all shapes, blue-green leaves of kale, a backdrop of feathery asparagus leaves. And some flowers — for distraction from those temporary bare spots where you've picked delicious vegetables for eating.

How to start a vegetable garden

By DEAN FOSDICK

For The Associated Press

So you'd like to follow Michelle Obama's lead and start your own vegetable garden?

With just a little planning, having a kitchen garden can be rewarding and fun, especially for people new to the hobby. Here is a commonsense, eight-step strategy that can help get you growing:

1. Start by involving the entire family and deciding what it is you want to eat. What veggies are your favorites? Which would be easiest to grow?

"You can dream all you want about olives and figs, but if you live in northern Minnesota, it's not going to happen. But that's OK. The reality is you can grow a variety of things, no matter where you live," said Roger Doiron, a home garden advocate involved in the campaign to convert a small patch of the White House's South Lawn into an organic vegetable garden.

The First Lady helped break ground for the garden last week. It's believed to be the first cultivated at the White House since Eleanor Roosevelt's Victory Garden during World War II. Produce harvested from the garden will be used for family meals, state dinners and a Washington soup kitchen.

The garden also will be used to teach children about healthier, homegrown foods at a time when obesity is reaching epidemic proportions in the United States. About one-third of the nation's children and teens are dangerously overweight, government officials say.

2. Buy the necessary tools and seeds, pots and compost and plants.

Some supplies are remarkably cheap. A package of summer squash seeds, for instance, runs about \$2.50. A nine-pack of cabbage seedlings? Around \$3.50. Onion sets, 100 to the package, have been seen priced at \$2.99.

3. Determine the best time to get your plants into the ground.

Find out when the threat of the last killing frost has passed. Familiarize yourself with how long it will take to transform seeds to table fare. You can turn to fellow gardeners or check with

your county extension agent about the best crops and varieties to grow, and when it's best to grow them in your area. (<http://www.usna.usda.gov/Hardzone/ushzmap.html>).

4. Sketch a layout of your ideal garden plot.

Start small, especially your first time out. You always can enlarge the garden or plant succession crops, which are follow-

soil. "Mulch serves many purposes in the garden, including keeping weeds down, reducing your water bill and adding fertility to the soil as it decomposes," Doiron said.

7. Read the directions carefully on seed packets or seedlings about how closely plants should be spaced. Leaf lettuce can withstand some crowding. Tomatoes need a couple of feet between the hills. Pumpkins require about 4 feet.

Grow your plants upward on trellises or some other kind of support if you don't have enough elbowroom to garden laterally.

Starting with seeds is the cheapest way to garden and can give you the greatest plant variety. Seeds, though, require transplanting and take longer to mature. Seedlings or young plants are less demanding.

Salad squash, onions, sweet peppers, carrots, radishes, zucchini, peas, green beans and tomatoes — particularly cherry tomatoes — are among the easiest vegetables to grow. That makes them great confidence builders for budding gardeners.

8. Keep detailed records so you can duplicate your successes and avoid your failures next planting season.

"If you are interested in doing something more ambitious, try working some flowers, vegetables, fruits and herbs into your garden plan," Doiron said. "It not only will look nicer and give you a wider selection of things to eat, but it will help make your garden less vulnerable to pests and disease."

On the Net:

For more about starting a vegetable garden, see this University of Illinois Extension Service Web site: <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/veggies/basics.html>.

You can contact Dean Fosdick at deanfostdick@netscape.net.



(AP Photo/Larry Crowe, FILE)

This file photo shows radishes in a variety of colors, including red, purple, pink and white in Concord, N.H. Vegetable gardening is not a dark science, nor the stuff of incantations and secretive weeding on moonless nights. But it does take a little planning.

up vegetables that will mature before season's end.

5. Garden location is as important as size.

Do your growing in a place that gets a full day's sun or, at minimum, six hours. It also should be sheltered from the wind and within reach of your kitchen door.

6. Buy some starter soil and spread it liberally over the growing area, at least 9 inches deep for vegetables.

Gardens can be cultivated on bare ground, in raised beds or in containers. Look for commercially bagged soils containing a slow-release fertilizer.

If it's organic production you want, then spread generous quantities of mulch over the top-

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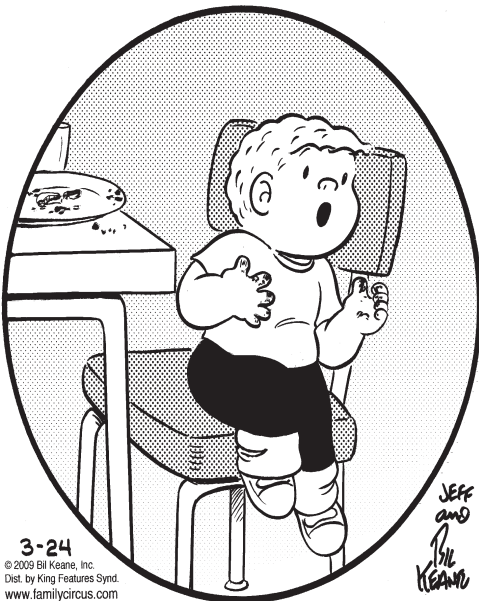
Channel guide table with columns for station (WFAA, KMID, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLN, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KPBT, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN), time, and program name.

DENNIS THE MENACE



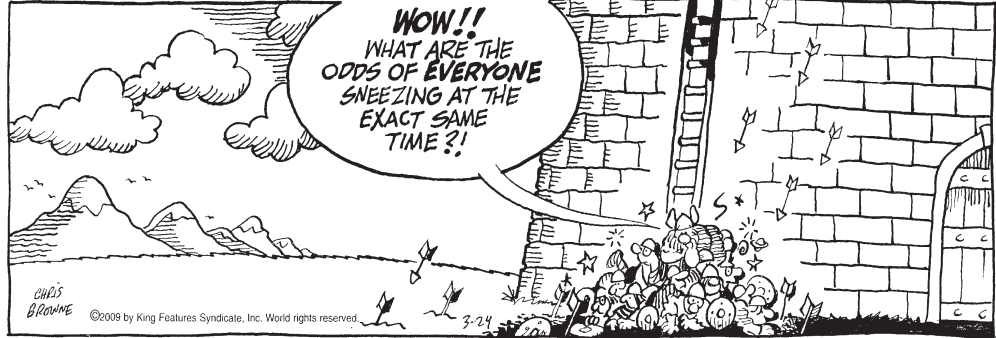
'MY MOTHER AND I WERE MARRIED IN THE SAME GOWN.' 'HOW DID BOTH OF YOU FIT INTO IT?'

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



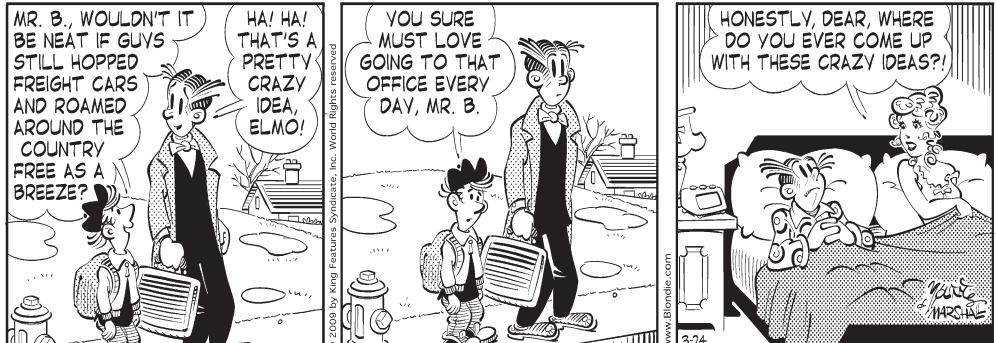
'Mommy, where should I put my sticky fingerprints?'

HAGAR



WOW!! WHAT ARE THE ODDS OF EVERYONE SNEEZING AT THE EXACT SAME TIME?!

BLONDIE



This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, March 24, the 83rd day of 2009. There are 282 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On March 24, 1989, the super-tanker Exxon Valdez ran aground on a reef in Alaska's Prince William Sound and began leaking 11 million gallons of crude oil.

On this date: In 1765, Britain enacted the Quartering Act, requiring American colonists to provide temporary housing to British soldiers.

In 1882, German scientist Robert Koch announced in Berlin that he had discovered the bacillus responsible for tuberculosis.

In 1909, Irish author and playwright J.M. Synge ('The Playboy of the Western World') died in Dublin at age 37.

In 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a bill granting future independence to the Philippines.

In 1944, in occupied Rome,

the Nazis executed more than 300 civilians in reprisal for an attack by Italian partisans the day before that had killed 32 German soldiers.

In 1958, Elvis Presley was inducted into the Army in Memphis, Tenn.

In 1976, the president of Argentina, Isabel Peron, was deposed by her country's military.

In 1980, one of El Salvador's most respected Roman Catholic church leaders, Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, was shot to death by gunmen as he celebrated Mass in San Salvador.

In 1995, after 20 years, British soldiers stopped routine patrols in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Today's Birthdays: Fashion and costume designer Bob Mackie is 70. Actor R. Lee Ermye is 65. Movie director Curtis Hanson is 64. Rock musician Lee Oskar is 61. Singer Nick Lowe is 60. Rock musician Dougie Thomson (Supertramp) is 58. Comedian Louie Anderson is 56. Actress Donna Pescow is 55. Actor Robert Carradine is 55. Actress Kelly LeBrock is 49. Rhythm-and-blues DJ Rodney 'Kool Kolliie' Terry (Ghostown DJs) is 48.

TV personality Star Jones is 47. Country-rock musician Patterson Hood (Drive-By Truckers) is 45. Rock singer-musician Sharon Corr (The Corrs) is 39. Actress Lara Flynn Boyle is 39. Rapper Maceo (P.A. Pasemaster Mase) is 39. Actress Alyson Hannigan is 35. Colts QB Peyton Manning is 33. Rock musician Benj Gersham (O.A.R.) is 29. Actress Keisha Castle-Hughes is 19.

Thought for Today: "Man must cease attributing his problems to his environment, and learn again to exercise his will - his personal responsibility in the realm of faith and morals." - Albert Schweitzer, German-born missionary and Nobel laureate (1875-1965).

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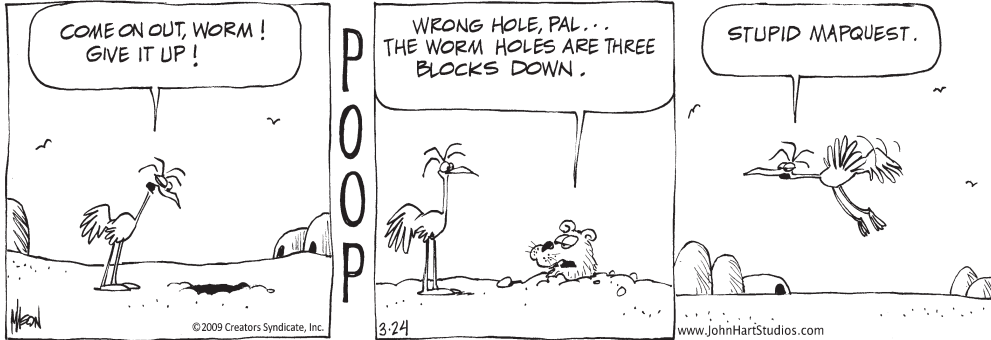
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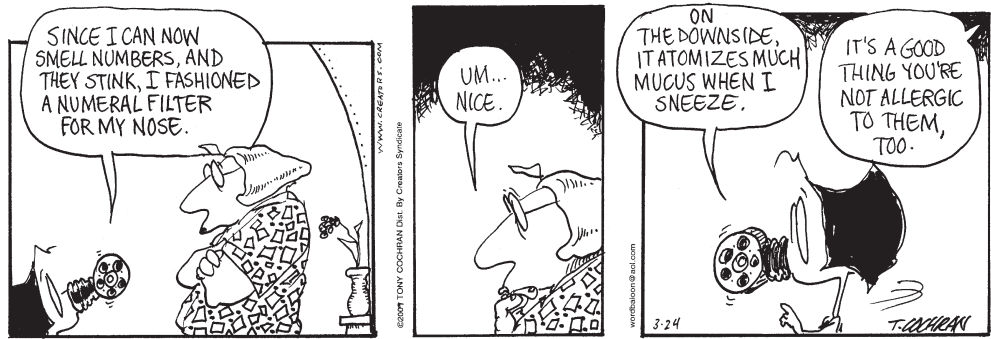
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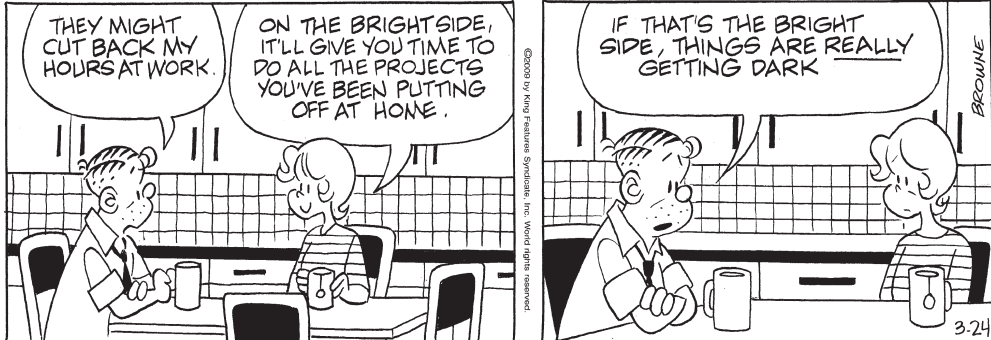
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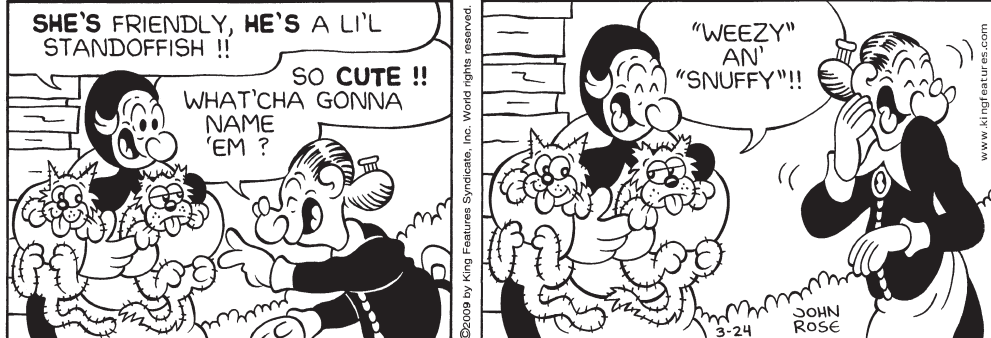
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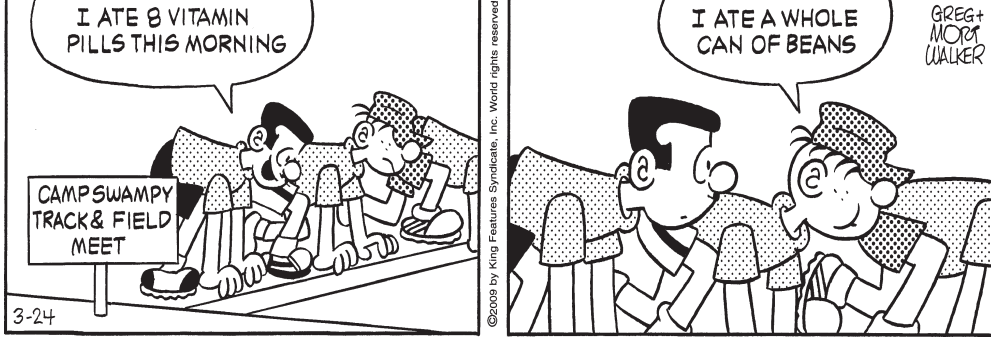
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SNUFFY SMITH

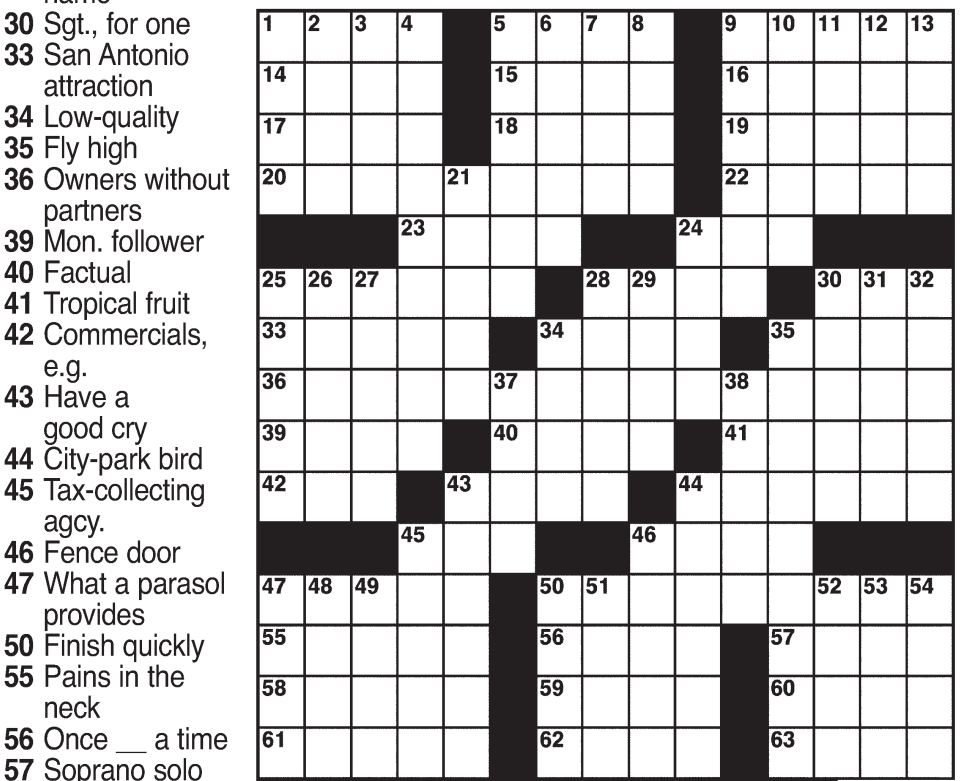


BETLE BAILEY



Newsday Crossword

- Crossword clues: Across: 1 Currier and ___ print, 5 "So long!", 9 Kicks out, 14 Roman emperor, 15 Declare, 16 Bert's Sesame Street pal, 17 Quick haircut, 18 Rude one, 19 Grownup, 20 Embroidered mat, 22 "Bulletproof" clothes, 23 Walked on, 24 That lady, 25 Backyard spots, 28 Marquee name, 30 Sgt., for one, 33 San Antonio attraction, 34 Low-quality, 35 Fly high, 36 Owners without partners, 39 Mon. follower, 40 Factual, 41 Tropical fruit, 42 Commercials, e.g., 43 Have a good cry, 44 City-park bird, 45 Tax-collecting agcy., 46 Fence door, 47 What a parasol provides, 50 Finish quickly, 55 Pains in the neck, 56 Once ___ a time, 57 Soprano solo, 58 Annoy, 59 Vegetarian's bane, 60 Hatchling's home, 61 Stops up, 62 Industrious insects, 63 Lavish affection (on), Down: 1 Worldwide: Abbr., 2 Aloe ___ (lotion ingredient), 3 Ancient explorer, 4 Now and then, 5 Forbidden things, 6 Steer clear of, 7 Chisel or hammer, 8 Out of whack, 9 "Eager" animal, 10 Command, 11 Heavy burden, 12 Slant, 13 Establishes, with "up", 21 Sag, 24 Mata ___ (infamous spy), 25 Ziti or angel hair, 26 Audibly, 27 Long stories, 28 Absorb, as gravy, 29 Ripped, 30 Nary a soul, 31 Ship's freight, 32 Actor Welles, 34 Read closely (over), 35 Theater crew member, 37 Highways: Abbr., 38 Gives off, 43 Takes by force, 44 Freshens a wall, perhaps, 45 Luggage attachment, 46 Be smug, 47 Risky business, for short, 48 Become well, 49 Concerning, 50 Mountain lion, 51 Unlock, 52 Black-and-white cookie, 53 Clenched hand, 54 Destiny



BYRD

Continued from Page 7

There was also the game-winning grand slam in the ninth inning against the New York Yankees last season, when Byrd started 70 of the last 73 games.

But with All-Star slugger Hamilton in center, David Murphy back from injury in left and Nelson Cruz finally showing some of his long-expected potential in right, Byrd is the fourth

outfielder.

"If they go with (that) lineup, which I assume they're going to go with, you've got to wait your turn, simple as that," commented Byrd. "There's nothing else you can do. There's no pouting."

His role could also be muddled or reduced if Andruw Jones, a five-time All-Star and 10-time Gold Glove center fielder, makes the team.

Through 15 spring training games before the Rangers had Monday off, Byrd hit .333 with 12 RBIs.

Only All-Star slugger Hamilton, Michael Young and the departed

Milton Bradley played more than Byrd's 122 games last season.

"Byrd's a pro and it's my job to make sure that I get him his at-bats," manager Ron Washington said. "We're very fortunate to have four quality guys that can play out there in the outfield, and on any given day, whichever one of them I have out there, I feel comfortable."

Murphy hit .275 with 15 home runs before missing the final seven weeks last season with a sprained knee after a home-plate collision.

Cruz cleared waivers at the start of last season after being outrighted by

the Rangers to Triple-A Oklahoma. He returned to hit .330 with seven home runs and 26 RBIs in 31 games for Texas at the end of the season, then started for the Dominican Republic this month in the World Baseball Classic.

"We've got those three guys that can hit, so if we're winning and they're playing well, I can't ask for anything more," Byrd said. "But if something happens and they need me to be out there, I'm that guy that's going to be ready. ... You can mix and match, that's one thing I think that's where I fit in with this team."

ARMSTRONG

Continued from Page 7

Astana teammate Levi Leipheimer described the pileup on his Twitter feed.

"Lance was involved in a huge crash as the road narrowed and became very rough," Leipheimer wrote. "He wasn't far from the front, as he was riding top 10 all day."

Armstrong said the crash was no one's fault.

"Toward the end of the race people

started getting excited, a bit of wind, some hills and everybody wanting to be at the front," he said. "A couple of guys crashed in front of me, I crossed my wheel, then I hit them and over the top."

Armstrong was first taken to Rio Carrion hospital in Palencia, then to the hospital in Valladolid. In his statement, Armstrong said he had "been lucky to avoid one of the most common cycling injuries" in his 17-year career.

"It has been a pity to lose Lance because we see him with desire of doing a good preparation in this race," said Alberto Contador,

Armstrong's teammate and biggest rival for the role of team leader. "Now only I can support him and wish him to recover as soon as possible in order to take the start on the Giro."

This was Armstrong's first stage race in Europe since winning the 2005 Tour. Armstrong started his comeback at the Tour Down Under in Australia in January, where he finished 29th overall, 49 seconds behind winner Allan Davis of Australia. He then finished seventh in the Tour of California in February.

On Saturday, Armstrong raced in the Milan-San Remo cycling classic and finished 125th, 8 minutes, 19 sec-

onds behind winner Mark Cavendish.

The mainly flat first stage of the Castilla and Leon covered 109 miles from Paredes de Nava to Baltanas. It was won by Joaquin Sobrino Martinez of Burgos Monumental in 4 hours, 31 minutes, 53 seconds after a sprint finish.

He was followed by David Vitoria of Rock Racing and Jose Joaquin Rojas of Caisse d'Epargne.

Associated Press writer Harold Hecke in Madrid contributed to this report.

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It's the Sooners' longest run in the NCAA tournament since 2003, when they lost in the round of eight, coincidentally to the Orange.

Capel wasn't in the mood to look back Monday at how far the Sooners have come: "Too busy; I'm still in the midst of it," he said. "When it's over, I guess we'll do that."

An athletic department spokesman said Oklahoma athletic director Joe Castiglione was unavailable and Castiglione did not immediately respond to an e-mail query sent Monday afternoon by The Associated Press. But Oklahoma's players

certainly are aware of the program's recent history and appreciative of its latest run of success, giving much credit to their coach.

"I'm proud to be a part of the team that kind of hopefully changed the program around and kind of got it rolling again," sophomore center Blake Griffin said. "It's something we'll all be proud of as a team."

Oklahoma has been to the Final Four four times, most recently in 2002, and the Sooners were a postseason staple under Sampson and his predecessor, Billy Tubbs, making either the NCAA tournament or National Invitation Tournament for 25 straight seasons, at the time the longest such streak among Division I programs.

That streak ended in the 2006-07 season, Capel's first at Oklahoma, when the Sooners struggled to a 16-15 record. That summer, Oklahoma's football program was penalized for NCAA rules violations and the university's probation period — which was to end in May 2008 — was extended to May 2010.

Capel took a big step in the rebuilding process by signing one of the nation's top recruits in Griffin, who came from just up the road in Oklahoma City two years after his older brother, Taylor, signed with the Sooners. Oklahoma rebounded to 23-12 last season, falling to Louisville in the second round of the NCAA tournament.

Unlike many other

stars in his class, Blake Griffin opted to return to college for his sophomore season, and Capel landed another high-profile recruit in guard Willie Warren, giving the Sooners a strong outside complement to Griffin's rugged inside presence.

Senior guard Austin Johnson said it was tough at first to adjust to Capel's way of doing things, but that it's hard to argue with his success.

"He got some good players in," Johnson said. "He's a great coach that came in and he's got us rolling right now."

That roll includes NCAA tournament wins over Morgan State (82-54) and Michigan (73-63), putting the Sooners one win shy of the program's first 30-win season since 2002. Taylor Griffin, a senior, said he will do "whatever it takes" to keep Oklahoma's season going.

"For me, being in my position as a senior, having a sibling on the team, seeing this program go through so much over these four years, it's been incredible," he said. "I don't want it to end any time soon."

COAHOMA

Continued from Page 7

Newton took over and allowed an unearned run and picked up eight strikeouts.

All-state pitcher Brittany Serrano manned the pitcher's circle for Marfa and helped her own cause with a solo home run in the game.

Jennifer Castilaw had two RBI on a double.

The Bulldogettes didn't have nearly as much trouble from Greenwood as Newton baffled the Rangerettes at the plate, striking out 10 batters.

The Bulldogettes pick back up with District 7-2A play at 7 p.m. tonight, hosting Jim Ned.

Greenwood 000 000 0-0 1 4
Coahoma 300 001 x-4 6 0
Amber Garduno and Krista Eklund. Heather Newton and Berkley Iden. W - Newton (10-1). L - Garduno. 2B: CHS - Shelbi Paige, Kalea Neff. RBI: CHS - Paige, Joanna Gonzales, Katie Dunn.

Marfa 001 101 00-3 7 4
Coahoma 101 100 01-4 10 3
Brittany Serrano and Cortnee White. Katie Dunn, Heather Newton (5) and Berkley Iden. W - Newton (11-1). L - Serrano. 2B: MHS - White; CHS - Jennifer Castilaw. HR: MHS - Serrano. RBI: MHS - Serrano, Leah McWilliams; CHS - Castilaw 2, Shelbi Paige.

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