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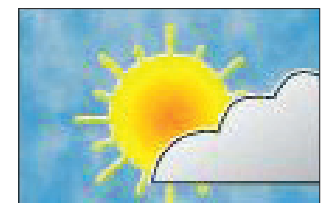


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# H BIG SPRING HERALD

**WEDNESDAY**

**MAY 27, 2009**



VOLUME 104, NUMBER 151

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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

## Conley, Martin named top Coahoma graduates

By **STEVE REAGAN**  
Staff Writer

**COAHOMA** — Megan Conley and Ashley Martin are the top graduates for the Coahoma High School Class of 2009.

Conley, the daughter of Mike and Carrie Conley, is class valedictorian with a grade point average of 3.98.

She is president of the National Honor Society, Student Council and band, as well as serving as an editor for the school yearbook. She also is

active in athletics, cheerleading, one-act play, Drama Club and Spanish Club.

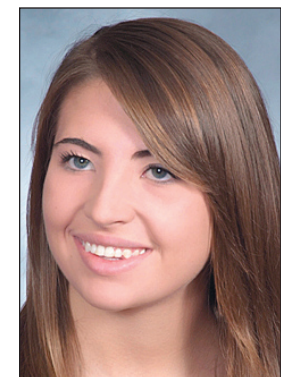
Among the honors she has received during high school include receiving the Optimist Youth Award and CHS Band Director's Award. In addition, she was voted homecoming queen and band sweetheart and voted "most likely to succeed" by her classmates.

In athletics, she has participated in softball, cross country and track.

Conley plans to attend Texas Tech University and major in political science and later attend law school.

Martin, the daughter of Danny and Kim Martin, is class salutatorian with a GPA of 3.98.

She is vice president of the senior class and treasurer of the NHS and Student Council. In addition, she is active in the Drama Club, Spanish Club, Future Farmers of America



**CONLEY**



**MARTIN**

See **COAHOMA**, Page 3A

## Kids' Zone

*Renovation almost done for summer*

By **THOMAS JENKINS**  
Staff Writer

Mission accomplished... almost.

That's the message City Manager Gary Fuqua and Assistant City Manager Todd Darden delivered to the Big Spring City Council Tuesday night concerning ongoing repairs and renovations to the Kids' Zone playground in Comanche Trail Park.

"The only thing we're lacking at this point is one of the large tubes that makes up a horseshoe on part of the playground equipment," said Darden. "Until we have that piece of equipment up, the project won't be finished, and the playground won't be open to the public. However, we're

See **ALMOST**, Page 3A



HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins

One of the many city employees and volunteers labors to paint part of the new playground equipment at Kids] Zone Saturday morning, part of a week-long effort last week to have the facility — which was damaged by an arson attack in December — ready for the summer break.

## Halfmann, Wheeler tops at Garden City

By **STEVE REAGAN**  
Staff Writer

**GARDEN CITY** — Brooke Halfmann and Lauren Wheeler are the top graduates of Garden City High School's Class of 2009.

Halfmann and Wheeler are valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively, for the class, which will hold graduation exercises at 7:30 p.m. Friday in the school auditorium.

Halfmann, the daughter of Gary and Sharon Halfmann, will graduate with a grade point average of 4.0.

She is the school's National Honor Society and Business Professionals of America president. She is also the senior class president.

She received awards at the state level in TMSCA, University Interscholastic



**HALFMANN**



**WHEELER**

League Math, UIL Number Sense, UIL Computer Applications, UIL Computer Science, UIL Science, Golf and at the national level in BPA. She also participated in basketball, Beta Club, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Halfmann will attend Texas Tech Uni-

versity, where she will seek an engineering degree.

Wheeler, the daughter of Andy and Karen Wheeler, also will graduate with a grade-point average of 4.0.

She has received awards at the state level in UIL Solo and Ensemble (piano) and cross country.

Wheeler is the National Honor Society treasurer and has participated in Beta Club, UIL Spelling and Vocabulary and Social Studies, Future Farmers of America, BPA, FCA, Student Council, track and tennis.

She will attend Texas Tech University and pursue a degree in Exercise and Sport Sciences.

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

### INDEX

- Comics 6B
- Classified 3-5B
- Features 5A
- Obituaries 2A
- Opinion 4A
- Sports 1-2B

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Christopher Tomlinson/Grand Junction Daily Sentinel

Howard College's Bryan Johns (10) beats Shelton State (Ala.) College's Nick Vickerson to second base in action from the 2009 Junior College World Series in Grand Junction, Colo., Monday. The Hawks, who have won their first two games of the World Series despite committing a total of 11 errors in the field, face San Jacinto's Gators at 8:30 p.m. tonight.

# A Texas two-step

## Howard, San Jacinto last two unbeaten at JUCO World Series

By JONATHAN HULL  
Sports Editor

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. -- Howard College's Hawks (60-1) have a chance to be known as the most prominent team in the history of junior college baseball.

However, the most prestigious program in the JUCO annals stand in their way.

The last two undefeated teams in the 2009 Division I World Series in Grand Junction, Colo., both hail from Texas. Howard faces San Jacinto College (43-

9) at 8:30 p.m. tonight with the winner moving into prime position to claim a national title.

Both teams have won the World Series in the past. Howard last did so in 1991, but that was its only title. San Jacinto accomplished the feat last in 1990, claiming its record fifth national championship.

While Howard is making just its second appearance in Grand Junction in program history, the trip to Western Colorado is old hat for

See **HAWKS**, Page 2B

# Magic night

## Orlando tops Cavs to take 3-1 series lead

By TOM WITHERS  
Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — As LeBron James pulled up for the final shot, Orlando's crowd gasped, Magic coach Stan Van Gundy gulped and time stood still.

Spinning through the air, James' 3-pointer looked good.

Not this time, MVP. This was a Magic night.

Dwight Howard scored 10 points in overtime and Orlando, raining down 3-pointers like a Florida thunderstorm, with a Flood 44 and the last-second fling by James for a 116-114 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Tuesday night to take a 3-1 lead in the Eastern Conference finals.

The resilient Magic, who have overcome injuries, double-digit

See **MAGIC**, Page 2B



AP Photo/LM Otero

Texas Rangers first baseman Chris Davis reaches to field the ball hit by New York Yankees' Johnny Damon during the first inning of a baseball game in Arlington, Texas, Tuesday, May 26, 2009. Davis threw to second base for the out on Derek Jeter; Damon reached first safely.

# Davis leads Rangers past Yankees

By JAIME ARON  
Associated Press

ARLINGTON — His slump stretched to 1 for 30, and Texas slugger Chris Davis at least felt he was making progress.

Now he has something pretty cool to show for it: The first two-homer game of his career.

"I was so happy to have two hits, I didn't even care,"

Davis said after his pair of solo shots helped the Texas Rangers beat the New York Yankees 7-3 Tuesday night.

The start was held up 2 hours, 24 minutes because of rain. Due to the delay, the Yankees knew that Boston had lost, which meant a win would've tied them with the Red Sox for first place in the AL East.

But Joba Chamberlain

gave up two runs in the first inning, then allowed Davis' first homer leading off the fourth. Although New York tied it at 3 in the top of the sixth, Jarrod Saltalamacchia restored Texas' lead with a looping single in the bottom of the inning. Davis added an upper-deck homer in the eighth.

OK, so he also struck out

twice, upping his majors-leading total to 68. But after a recent 0-for-25 drought, it's understandable that he's going to remember this game for the homers, which give him 12 for the season.

"The last few weeks have been about as tough as they could be so to have a night like tonight, it's very

See **RANGERS**, Page 2B

# Sports in brief

## College offers bus package to Colorado

If the Howard College Hawks advance to the Junior College World Series championship game, college officials are offering local fans the chance to cheer the team on in person.

Officials announced a bus travel package for local fans.

Seats are being sold on a first come, first served basis with a cost of \$80 plus expenses (hotel, food and game tickets) to make the trip. Approximate total expenses will be \$250.

The bus is tentatively scheduled to leave the Howard College campus at 10 p.m. Thursday and return to Big Spring Saturday.

However, there are many variables with game outcomes still pending that may affect the schedule of the trip, officials cautioned.

Interested persons are urged to contact the college for a detailed itinerary and instructions regarding bus and hotel reservations.

Reservation deadline is 5 p.m. Thursday.

Contact Cindy Smith (264-5034) or Laura Hughes (264-5063) to make reservations.

## Upcoming high school softball playoff dates

Coahoma and Forsan's softball teams both open regional final play tonight. Coahoma faces Early in the Region I-2A final, while Forsan takes on Marfa for the Region I-1A crown.

### Coahoma

The No. 5 ranked Bulldogettes hope to earn their 10th trip to the Class 2A state tournament when they face Early in a best-of-three series beginning tonight in Abilene.

Game One is scheduled for 7 p.m. today.

The second game will be held at 4 p.m. Friday, with the third game, if necessary, following about 30 minutes after Game Two's conclusion.

All games will be at the Abilene Christian University softball complex.

The Bulldogettes earned their trip to the region finals by sweeping Kermit Friday and Saturday in Midland.

### Forsan

The Lady Buffaloes are two victories away from

their first-ever trip to the Class 1A state tournament.

Their best-of-three series with Marfa begins at 7 p.m. tonight in Monahans.

Game Two, meanwhile, will be played at 11 a.m. Saturday at Mugs Field in Midland.

Game Three, if necessary, will follow immediately afterward.

## Big Spring ISD announces sports skills camps

The Big Spring High School Athletic Department will host a variety of sports skills camps during the summer.

Call Kay Cook at the Athletic Training Center with any questions at 264-3662.

### Camp of Champs

Camp of Champs is a weight conditioning program geared to helping increase strength, quickness, speed and agility.

The program begins June 1 and continues through June 18 at the Athletic Training Center. There are two different sessions for different age groups.



## Obituaries

### Evalena Louise Sturdivant

Evalena Louise Sturdivant, 93, of Corpus Christi, a former resident of Big Spring, died May 24, 2009. She was born July 25, 1915, to Joseph and Ola Dunnam.

She was the founder of the ECW for St. John Episcopal Church in Odessa and the founder of the American Business Women's Association in Odessa.

She was preceded in death by her parents; a great grandson, Stefen Brown; and her husband, James Allen Sturdivant Sr.

She is survived by her daughter, Mary Louise Clark of Corpus Christi; a son, Jim and wife, Sandy, Sturdivant of Tulsa, Okla.; sisters, Alvis Pounds and Joann Marshall; grandchild, Judith Brown; great-grandchildren, Brittany Brown, Joseph Brown and James and wife, Erica, Brown.

Funeral services will be conducted on Tuesday, May 26, 2009, at 5 p.m. in the Sawyer-George Funeral Home Chapel in Corpus Christi with the Rev. Sidney Blalack officiating. Graveside services will be conducted by McCoy Funeral Home in Sweetwater at 11 a.m. Thursday, May 28, 2009, at the Hylton Cemetery in Nolan County.

*Paid obituary*

### Jessie V. Hernandez

Funeral services for Jessie V. Hernandez, 72, of Big Spring will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday, May 28, 2009, at the Templo Elim with Joe Hernandez officiating under the direction of Branon Funeral Home of Lamesa.

Prayer service will be held from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday, May 27, 2009, at Branon Funeral Home.

Mr. Hernandez died Monday, May 25, 2009, at his residence. He was born Aug. 26, 1936, in Lavernia to Bonifacio and Juanita Hernandez. He married Josie Franco on April 29, 1957, in Lamesa. He was a member of Templo Elim for the past 51 years and owned his own welding service for many years.

He is survived by his wife Josie Hernandez of Big Spring; two sons, Arthur Hernandez of Lamesa and Jessie Hernandez Jr. of Midland; two daughters, JoAnn Palacios of Big Spring and Rosie Alcantar of Midland; a sister, Victoria Garcia of Abilene; 11 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

### Harold B. Odom

Harold B. Odom, 75, of Denton died Tuesday, May 26, 2009, in a local nursing home. Graveside funeral services will be held at 10 a.m. Monday, June 1, 2009, at the Peace Chapel at Trinity Memorial Park with the Rev. Burt Bronaugh, pastor of First Presbyterian Church, officiating.

Harold was born Sept. 8, 1933, in Brownwood and then came to Big Spring as an infant with his parents, Roy and Oneita Odom. He grew up here and graduated from Big Spring High and then attended Howard County Junior College. Harold also attended Texas Tech University. Before finishing college, he joined the United States Navy as a pilot and retired from the Naval Reserves as a commander. Harold then went back to college to finish his Bachelor of Science degree in biology at North Texas State University in 1963. He worked as an airline pilot for Pan American for 25 years. He had a passion for talking about natural health care. He also loved to talk about and take his nieces and nephew on ski trips.

Survivors include two brothers, Paschal Odom and wife, Lucy, of Big Spring and James Roy Odom and wife, Dolores, of Fort Worth; four nieces, one nephew; seven great nieces; and one great nephew.

The family suggests memorials be made to Texas Tech Medical Center, 3601 Fourth St., Mail Stop 6540, Lubbock 79430-6540.

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

## Support Groups

### WEDNESDAY

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

### THURSDAY

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

### FRIDAY

• AA open discussion meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at 615 Settles. Big Book study meeting, 8 p.m.

### SATURDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, 615 Settles, noon. Speakers meeting, 8 p.m.

## Police blotter

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

- ANTHONY ALPHONSO LEWIS, 37, of 904 E. 12th St., was arrested Tuesday on charges of assault by contact and possession of drug paraphernalia.
- THOMAS RIOS, 27, of 1321 Mulberry, was arrested Tuesday on charges of no driver's license, failure to maintain financial responsibility and displaying a fictitious/counterfeit inspection or insurance document.
- SANDRA NICOLE SHAEFFER, 25, of 1401 Nolan, was arrested Tuesday on five local warrants.
- THEFT was reported:
  - in the 800 block of Lancaster.
  - in the 2300 block of Wasson.
- OPERATING A VEHICLE WITH THE WRONG REGISTRATION was reported in the 300 block of 11th Street.
- FICTITIOUS/COUNTERFEIT INSPECTION OR INSURANCE DOCUMENT FOR DISPLAY was reported in the 300 block of 11th Street.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported:
  - in the 3600 block of Hamilton.
  - in the 800 block of FM 700.
  - in the 200 block of FM 700.
- BURGLARY OF A HABITATION was reported in the 300 block of 11th Street.
- ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE was reported in the 4000 block of Vicky.
- AGGRAVATED ASSAULT was reported in the 1300 block of College.

## Sheriff

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

Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 79 inmates at the time of this report.

- DAMISHA ANDERSON, 39, was transferred to the county jail Monday by the BSPD on charges of violation of a promise to appear (two counts) and a local warrant.
- CHARLES DANIEL, 53, was transferred to the county jail Monday by the BSPD on a charge of public intoxication.
- ANTHONY LEWIS, age not provided, was transferred to the county jail Tuesday by the BSPD on charges of assault Class C and possession of drug paraphernalia.
- BOBBY LOPEZ, 23, was arrested Monday by the HCSO on a charge of public intoxication.
- THOMAS RIOS, 27, was transferred to the county jail Tuesday by the BSPD on charges of no driver's license, no insurance and displaying a fictitious inspection sticker.
- SANDRA SHAEFFER, 25, was transferred to the county jail Tuesday by the BSPD on charges of contempt of court (three counts), no driver's license and failure to appear.

## Take Note

• Road to Recovery, a free service for those in the Big Spring area taking cancer treatments at Allison Cancer in Midland, is still in operation. The coordinator and phone number to call have changed. To get a ride to cancer treatment in Midland, please call Amy Carnes at (432) 334-6121, which is the American Cancer Society office in Odessa. If Amy is out of the office, you may leave your information with Melissa. An alternate number to call is 1-800-ACS-2345, which is the regional patient services offices; they will relay your information to Amy for the local drivers.

• A reception for retiring Coahoma Independent School District employees will be held from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 27, in the Coahoma Community Center. Everyone is invited.




• The Big Spring High School class of 1979 is seeking classmates to attend our 30-year reunion Sept. 18-19. Please contact Debbye Salazar ValVerde at debbyev@bigspringchamber.com or Cheryl Carter Joy at joycheryl79@hotmail.com with any contact information, be it an e-mail address or physical address.

• A benefit account has been established at Woodforest National Bank (Account 1652331339) for John Allison and Jacoby Rivera, who lost their belongings in a residential fire on Runnels. Donations can also be made by calling (431) 213-4091.

• The Salvation Army has funding for Texas military personnel who have served or are currently serving in Iraq or Afghanistan and their families. Apply at the Salvation Army, 511 W. Fifth St. These funds were granted by the TRIAD Fund of Permian Basin Area Foundation.

• We are currently seeking Class of 1999 classmates from Big Spring High School. Our 10-year reunion will be Sept. 18-19. Please send your mailing information to bsbs1999@gmail.com to receive information on the reunion or contact Jennifer Davidson at (432) 213-0257.

## Your Local Weather

| Thu<br>5/28   | Fri<br>5/29  | Sat<br>5/30   |
|---|--|---|
| <br><b>81/61</b><br>Scattered clouds with the possibility of an isolated thunderstorm developin. | <br><b>84/63</b><br>A few thunderstorms possible. Highs in the mid 80s and lows in the low 60s. | <br><b>82/61</b><br>Partly cloudy with a stray thunderstorm. |

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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

### WEDNESDAY

- 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.
- 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.

### FRIDAY

- Signal Mountain Quilting Guild meets from 9 a.m. until about 3 p.m. at 1019 Nolan St. Members bring their own lunch. 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.

## Fire/EMS

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

- MEDICAL was reported in the 1900 block of Wasson. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2700 block of S. Anderson Road. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 700 block of Abrams. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 1100 block of E. 17th Street. Service refused.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 2600 block of N. Anderson Road. One person was transported to SMMC.

## Lottery

There has been another rollover in the grand prize for the Mega Millions multistate lottery game — to \$35 million.

The rollover occurred because no player matched all the winning numbers from Tuesday night's \$25 million drawing. The next Mega Million drawing will be Friday night.

The winning numbers from Tuesday night's drawing were: nine, 18, 21, 37, and 55. The Mega Ball number was 33.

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Tuesday night: Winning numbers drawn: 8-12-14-22-30. Number matching five

of five: 1. Prize: \$22,685  
Winning ticket purchased in: Andrews  
Next Cash 5 drawing: Tonight.

•••  
The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Tuesday night, in order:  
3-6-6-0. Sum It Up: 15.

•••  
The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Tuesday night, in order:  
1-4-8. Sum It Up: 13.

•••  
The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Tuesday afternoon, in order:  
9-9-1-1. Sum It Up: 20.

•••  
The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Tuesday afternoon, in order:  
1-4-8. Sum It Up: 13.

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MAGIC

Continued from Page 1B

deficits and a spat between their star and coach, are one win from their first trip to the NBA finals since 1995.

"You can almost taste it," said Orlando's Rafer Alston, who scored 26 points. "We've got to win one more game and it's not going to be easy."

The Magic, who won a Game 7 in Boston in the last round, can close out the Cavaliers in Cleveland on Thursday night.

Howard finished with 27 points, 14 rebounds and again made his free throws — 7 of 9 — and the Magic made a team play-off record 17 3-pointers. Rashard Lewis and Mickael Pietrus had 17 points each for Orlando. "We just have to keep fighting," Howard said. "We have an excellent opportunity in front of us. We can't think that anything's going to be easy. As a team, we believe that anytime we step on the floor and play our brand of basketball we can win."

James added 12 rebounds and seven assists, but he had eight turnovers for the Cavs, whose season of seasons is slipping away.

After Lewis made one of two free throws with 3.2 seconds left to give the Magic the 116-114 lead, the Cavs had one last chance.

Every person inside Amway Arena and millions watching on TV knew who was going to get

the ball — James, who saved the Cavaliers with a 3-pointer at the final horn in Game 2.

He was double-teamed on the inbounds pass but still managed to get free. Dribbling into the frontcourt, James rose from 35 feet, and with a clean look at the basket, sent his shot toward the rim.

When it fell short, Van Gundy could finally exhale.

"With LeBron James on the court, doesn't 3.2 seconds seem like two minutes?" he asked. "We had two guys on him and he made a move like a tight end, caught the ball and still got off a reasonable shot. This guy is unbelievable."

James said the ball felt good leaving his hand.

"I always feel I can make any shot I take," he said. "I was just hoping I could make one more."

James, who played the entire second half and overtime, has scored more than 40 in three games in the series. Cleveland is 0-3 in them.

Mo Williams, who guaranteed the Cavs would win Game 4 and the series, scored 18 points, none after the third quarter. Delonte West added 17 for the Cavaliers.

Following the game, Magic fans chanted "One more win."

History is on the Magic's side heading into Game 5. Teams with a 3-1 lead are a staggering 182-8 in series dating to 1947.

"We're not happy with just winning a few games in the Eastern Conference finals," Howard said. "We want to win the whole thing."

Lewis' catch-and-shoot 3-point-

er on an inbounds play with 4.1 seconds left in regulation gave the Magic, who attempted 38 3s, a 100-98 lead.

Cleveland set up a clear-out play for James, who drove the right side and was tripped in the lane by Pietrus with .5 seconds to play.

James swished his first free throw attempt, and then after a long delay, he made his second, which dangled on the rim before falling through. James said he never considered taking a 3-pointer.

"If I was Rashard Lewis we would have won," James said, smiling.

Orlando called a timeout and tried a lob play for Howard, who was ridden out under the basket by Anderson Varejao. Both players tumbled out of bounds, and although there was enough contact for the officials to call two or three fouls, there was no whistle.

Howard screamed in protest, pleading his case to anyone who would listen.

"Are you serious?" Howard said, turning to the media section. "If that was LeBron ..."

Howard took over in overtime. He dunked the first two times he touched it, shaking the backboard each time and Orlando opened what looked to be an insurmountable six-point lead with 1:11 left on his tip-in.

James wasn't done.

He made a left-handed scoop, two free throws and an are-you-kidding-me 3 while falling into Orlando's bench with 4.6 seconds to go.

RANGERS

Continued from Page 1B

encouraging," Davis said. "I'm definitely going to take the two home runs away from this and try to build on it."

Jason Jennings (2-1) got two outs in the sixth for the win, and Frank Francisco finished up. Davis' second homer cost him a save opportunity.

Marlon Byrd had a two-run single in the first inning to get the Rangers going, then scored the go-ahead run after a double off Yankees reliever Alfredo Aceves (3-1).

The Yankees, who'd won 11 of 13, had a lot going for them — 13 hits, a season-high five stolen bases, plus more freebies via a wild pitch and a passed ball.

But they failed to take advantage, such as hitting into double plays to end the seventh and eighth innings.

"I thought we swung the bats pretty well but we couldn't get the big hit," manager Joe Girardi said.

Chamberlain threw a lot of pitches in the first inning and wound up going only four. He allowed three runs and four hits, with four walks and five strikeouts.

"Plain and simple, I was terrible," he said. "I've got to do a better job of keeping the team in the game."

Mark Teixeira homered for New York, and center fielder Melky Cabrera left with a shoulder injury.

The first pitch was delayed because of an approaching storm that didn't arrive until nearly an hour later. Once it did, it dropped buckets of rain and enough golf ball-sized hail to make the outfield look like a crowded driving range. More rain fell in the first inning and there were flashes of lightning throughout the night, but most of the crowd of 33,397 waited out the delay. About half were still around for the final out — at 12:38 a.m.

As a thank you to fans for staying through the rain delay, the team announced that tickets from this game can be traded in for seats at certain other games later this season.

HAWKS

Continued from Page 1B

San Jacinto. The Gators have visited Colorado's

Wine Country on 15 occasions, dating back to 1984.

This is, however, San Jacinto's first appearance at the World Series since 2006.

Both teams fin-

ished the regular season ranked in the top 10 nationally with the Hawks commanding the poll at No. 1, while San Jacinto was rated seventh.

However, looking at the results of the two games played by each team thus far through the World Series, one might mistaken the Gators as the higher ranked squad.

San Jacinto has rolled through its two opponents, beating Spartanburg Methodist (S.C.) College, 7-1, in its first game Sunday and handling Santa Fe (Fla.) College, 9-4, Tuesday.

The Gators received two top-notch pitching performances in both games.

Tommy Collier picked up the win Sunday, allowing one earned run on five hits and five walks, while striking out 13 batters in 7.2 innings.

Then on Tuesday, Jacob Cowan, who picked up a save Sunday, threw eight innings, giving up two earned runs on five hits and three walks with 13 strikeouts.

There's a chance the Hawks could face Collier on short rest, but the Gators do have two more capable starters available in a pair of freshmen lefties.

David Rollins (8-3) has a 3.66 ERA with 69 strikeouts in 66 innings pitched, while Sean Nolin (4-1) has allowed 2.66 runs per nine innings with 58 Ks in 40.2 innings or work.

Although the Hawks have gotten quality work out of their pitching staff, 11 errors in two games haven't made anything easy.

Howard survived a scare from Western Nevada College Saturday with a 4-3 win in 11 innings.

Sophomore center fielder Runey Davis hit a solo walk-off home run in the 11th to secure the win.

Howard then had to rally late in the game against Shelton State (Ala.) College for a 7-4 victory.

Two key Shelton State errors in the seventh inning along with another timely hit by Davis, this time an RBI triple, allowed the Hawks to score three unearned runs in the frame to pull away for the win.

However, because of all the mishaps by Howard in the field, the Hawks pitchers have had to work to allow as few runs as they have.

"We're just trying too hard," said Howard Head Coach Britt Smith. "The errors are not from a lack of effort. I think it's a bunch of guys just trying too hard to make the big play. This team doesn't commit this many errors normally. It's been an odd situation. We've probably committed 30 percent of our season total for errors in the first two games here. Our pitchers are throwing well, but runners are getting

on base because our defense is atrocious."

Smith is still unclear who will get the start against San Jacinto, but it is a debate between two players — right-hander Zach Neal and left-hander Anthony Collazo.

Neal started the opening game against Western Nevada Saturday, allowing three runs -- two earned -- on 12 hits and three walks, while striking out four batters in eight innings pitched.

He's been the No. 1 starter for the Hawks the entire season and has never shied away from asking for the ball in pivotal games.

Collazo pitched an inning of relief for Neal Saturday, taking over in the ninth inning with two runners on board. He worked out of a bases loaded situation with a key strikeout.

The winner between San Jacinto and Howard will face Western Nevada at 8:30 p.m. Thursday.

The loser meets the winner of a game between Santa Fe and Spartanburg Methodist at 3 p.m. Thursday.

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In Sunday's Big Spring Herald  
**American Profile**  
Destinations for Discovery  
America's state parks offer thousands of vacation options  
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Often overlooked in favor of our country's national parks, America's state parks are an abundant source of vacation options and weekend getaways. Plus, country stars play ball and a tomato double-take.  
**American Profile**

**Contract Bridge**  
By Steve Becker  
**The Resistible Impulse**  
South dealer. North-South vulnerable.  
NORTH: ♠K 10 8 5, ♥K 9 6 3 2, ♦Q 4, ♣A 6  
WEST: ♠7 2, ♥8, ♦K 10 8 5 3, ♣Q 10 9 5 4  
EAST: ♠A 6 4, ♥A 7 5 4, ♦J 9 7 2, ♣7 3  
SOUTH: ♠Q J 9 3, ♥Q J 10, ♦A 6, ♣K J 8 2  
The bidding: South 1♣, West Pass, North 1♥, East Pass  
Opening lead — eight of hearts.  
If you tend to play impulsively, you often will fail to get the best possible result. There are simply too many built-in traps in bridge for anyone to be able to play first, think later and still come out all right.  
Consider this deal where East won the heart lead with the ace and, recognizing that the lead was a singleton, immediately returned a heart. This didn't work out well because, although West got his heart ruff, declarer made the contract. The only trick he lost after the ruff was the ace of trumps. Declarer's diamond loser was eventually discarded on one of dummy's hearts.  
East's heart return was not very well thought out. He should have realized that declarer would almost surely make the contract after a heart return, and that the only real chance was to lead a diamond at trick two, hoping to find West with the king (or ace).  
South inevitably would have gone down one against a diamond return. If he rose with the ace and returned a trump, East would take the ace and return a heart for West to ruff, whereupon West would cash the king of diamonds for down one. And if South played low on the diamond, West would score the diamond king that much sooner and eventually ruff a heart to set the contract.  
In the given situation, it is not enough for East to recognize that his partner's opening lead is a singleton, and so spontaneously return a heart. East must look beyond that one thought and ask himself: "If I give partner a heart ruff now, which will be the third trick for our side, where is the fourth trick going to come from?"  
It takes real discipline to stop and ask oneself questions like this before acting automatically at trick two. You can't play impulsively and expect to get the best results.  
Tomorrow: The Alcatraz Coup.  
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**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.

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



# Child hurt in Saturday wreck in stable condition

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

Law enforcement officials say a child injured in a traffic accident near the intersection of Highway 350 and Hilltop Road Saturday morning is in stable condition, having suffered facial trauma in the crash.

The 6-year-old boy — whose identity officials with the Department of Public Safety are not releasing due to his age — was rushed to the emergency room at Scenic Mountain Medical Center just after

11 a.m. Saturday when the vehicle he was traveling in crashed into a pickup headed north on Highway 350.

The driver of the Buick Park Avenue the child was riding in was later identified as Elias Sol Ledesma, 23, of Big Spring. Ledesma was later arrested by DPS troopers on charges of intoxicated assault with a vehicle, possession of a controlled substance, assault of a public servant and driving while license invalid.

Also arrested as a result of the crash was Jorge Luis Gomez, 18, a passenger in the

Buick, on charges of possession of a controlled substance, resisting arrest, search or transportation and public intoxication. Both were subsequently booked into the Howard County Jail.

According to DPS Trooper Thomas Moore, Ledesma is being charged with intoxicated assault with a vehicle as a result of the injuries sustained by the child, and is being charged with assault on a public servant because he became combative with one of the emergency responders at the scene of the accident.

“Evidence at the scene of the accident led investigators to believe both men were intoxicated at the time of the accident,” said Moore. “Blood samples have been sent off and we’re currently awaiting results.”

According to law enforcement officials at the scene, the child was ejected from the vehicle when it pulled out from Hilltop Road onto Highway 350, striking a white pickup that was traveling north on the highway. Department of Public Safety troopers on the scene said it was unclear if the

child was properly restrained at the time of the accident.

Ledesma was also transported from the scene to SMMC following the accident, where he was later charged and arrested.

Gomez initially refused treatment at the scene, but later opted to be transported by ambulance. He was also arrested at the SMMC emergency room.

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

# City council schedules budget work session

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

The Big Spring City Council agreed to hold a work session next week to address a number of budgetary challenges facing the municipality in the coming year, but none more pressing than the fate of the city swimming pool.

“We’ve hit that time again,” said City Manager Gary Fuqua. “(Tuesday) June 2 is a scheduled work session with the council. It will be sort of a combined work session, where we’ll go over some items the council has asked us to look into, and it will also be a chance for the council to give us some direction for the budget. It’s time for us to get into that process.”

Before Fuqua could move on to the next item in his report, May-

or Russ McEwen asked him to clarify the topics that will be discussed during the meeting.

“Before you go on, at that meeting we’ll also be discussing the swimming pool, is that correct? It will be a little bit multi-faceted?” asked McEwen, which Fuqua confirmed.

The council has been under fire from local citizens since it gave the word to not open the Municipal Swimming Pool this season, a start that would normally come around Memorial Day, a move made necessary by federal mandates, according to city officials.

“We’ve been talking with our consultants, Parkhill, Smith & Cooper, regarding the Virginia Graeme Baker Act which deals with your drainage (in the pool),” Assistant City Manager Todd Darden

told the council earlier this month. “We asked the people at PSC to tell us what it would take to make our drainage system comply with that law. Because there is no grandfathering with this act, once you touch any portion of the plumbing, all the things that were grandfathered in are no longer grandfathered. So we had to come back and look at our recirculation lines, skimmer lines, and have to meet the code of the law related to those items as well.

“To comply with the Virginia Graeme Baker Act, and to comply with the other plumbing systems we have in and around the pool, would cost between \$500,000 and \$600,000. That’s just to fix the plumbing and get the drainage system and other fixtures up to code, and it comes

from a contractor that has worked with a lot of pools like ours.”

Named after the granddaughter of former Secretary of State James Baker, the Pool and Spa Safety Act requires public swimming pools to have measures in place to prevent drain entrapment, a situation where a swimmer becomes trapped by the suction force of a pool drain.

Virginia Graeme Baker died in an entrapment accident in 2002. The Consumer Product Safety Commission recorded 74 entrapment incidents between 1997 and 2007, most of the victims being children.

Darden said he asked the consultant to look at a second, more radical scenario, and the results were also astounding.

“The second scenario I asked him to look at was if we decided to

build a new pool inside the existing pool,” said Darden. “Redoing all of the plumbing and getting us into compliance. To do that, the cost was about \$700,000 to \$800,000, to have a complete, new pool. And, as you know, we’re still trying to address our ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) issues, which include the poolhouse. And he (the consultant) gave me some numbers from recent projects done in our area.

“The first was in Brownfield... It cost approximately \$1.2 million. The second was in Muleshoe... It cost approximately \$1.8 million. There is also a third project they are completing in Snyder, but I haven’t been able to get the cost on that one.”

Mayor Russ McEwen

previously asked the council and staff to plan for the work session to render a decision on the issue, which could land Big Spring a new pool or see the city getting out of the “pool business.”

“I think that’s the whole key,” said McEwen. “We need to decide what we’re going to do. There’s no reason to put hundreds of thousands of dollars into an old pool that leaks and has all the problems ours has. By having a work session we can look at this and decide what route we want to take. And I think it goes all the way from getting out of the pool business to building a new pool.”

Closure of the pool

See CITY, Page 5A

## ALMOST

Continued from Pg. 1A

anticipating having that piece in and ready by June 1 so the kids will have it when school is letting out for the summer. Until that’s done though, it’s just not finished.”

Plans for the repairs — and subsequent renovations to the playground — began shortly after the Dec. 9 arson attack that destroyed the southwestern portion of the facility.

If Darden seems passionate about the project, it’s no wonder. According to City Manager Gary Fuqua, the assistant city manager has been at the helm of the project from the beginning.

“There are so many things that could be said about Kids’ Zone. What the vandals did was a terrible thing, but in essence it really brought our community together,” said Fuqua. “I can’t say enough about what Todd Darden did to bring the community

together and to get the funds together and get it organized. He was the first person there and the last to leave.”

The work, which began last week and wrapped up — over the Memorial Day weekend didn’t just impress Fuqua or Darden, drawing praise and a sizable contribution from a Midland-based engineering firm that works with the city on a regular basis.

“I wasn’t the only one that was impressed with the progress made,” said Fuqua. “Butch Davis from Parkhill Smith & Cooper came out on Wednesday and did a walk through with some of his people. He was so impressed with our community and the effort we were putting forth he went back to his office and brought us a check for \$5,000 for the project.”

Darden was quick to re-direct the praise for the project to the numerous men and women that volunteered hour after hour last week to making the repairs and renovations a reality.

“Make no mistake, this was a community effort. It was made by everyone, especially the volunteers,” said Darden. “I don’t want to name any because I’d miss someone. But with projects like this, it always seems to bring out our community’s heart. We talk about ‘Big Sky, Big Hearts, that’s Big Spring,’ and that heart is a big part of this.”

Darden said many city employees that were being paid to help with the project didn’t let their efforts stop when the time clock hit eight hours.

“Many of them continued working well after their shift was up. These people were working for free,” said Darden. “And the labor and skills they provided were so important to the project. We also had local businesses send out their maintenance people to help. They paid their employees to come out to Kids’ Zone at no cost to the city.”

Darden also thanked several local businesses that contributed equipment and labor that helped the work along.

“I do want to thank Wal-Mart, who fed us very well every day,” said Darden. “Tim Walsh (SuperCenter Manager) and his crews were out there on a daily basis making sure we had food and water. There was also a piece of equipment that was loaned to use by Tate Plumbing. It’s about a \$300,000-plus machine they allowed us to operate to do the boring. You get down about four inches and it’s solid rock out there. So without that machine, we would have really been behind.”

While fund-raising efforts have met with nothing but success since the blaze destroyed the southwest portion of the playground, efforts to catch the vandals responsible have yet to produce an arrest despite more than \$10,000 in reward money being put up by the city and Howard County governments.

Anyone with information regarding the fire — or any other acts of vandalism — are 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@bigspringherald.com

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## COAHOMA

Continued from Pg. 1A

and band.

She has been named to Who’s Who Among All-American Scholars and was selected as the Region 18 Most

Outstanding Gifted and Talented Student.

In athletics, Martin participated in basketball and tennis.

She plans to attend Howard College in the fall with a major in mathematics and hopes to become a high school math teacher.

The CHS Class of 2009 will hold commencement exercises at 7 p.m. Thursday in Dorothy Garrett Coliseum.

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

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# EDITORIAL

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-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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**John A. Moseley**  
Managing Editor

## OTHER VIEWS

# Concealed guns on campus bill not a good idea

Gun-rights supporters are scoring some big victories these days. The Texas Senate has approved a bill to allow students who have a concealed gun permit to carry a gun into dormitories and classrooms. And Congress just approved legislation to allow visitors to national parks and national wildlife refuges to carry loaded weapons.

The main argument for approving these changes is that they will allow people to defend themselves in threatening situations until law enforcement officers can arrive. The worry is that they will overreact and shoot when it's not necessary, or accidentally shoot the wrong people.

More generally, is society really growing more dangerous? Do we need more legally armed but not professionally trained people wielding concealed weapons in public places?

The campus gun bill was inspired — in part, at least — by the Virginia Tech massacre in 2007, when a deranged student shot and killed 32 students.

Sen. Jeff Wentworth, R-San Antonio, is author of the campus gun bill. In defending his bill in Senate debate, he said, "I would feel personally guilty if I woke up some morning and something like this had occurred in Texas. They were picked off like sitting ducks...in Virginia. It does happen very rarely, but when it does, it is catastrophic."

But if his bill becomes law, will Wentworth feel equally guilty if a fraternity house or dorm room dispute, fueled by alcohol, suddenly escalates into gunfire and someone is shot, whether on purpose or accidentally, by a drunk student with a concealed weapon permit? Or by a student without a permit and who grabs the gun of a roommate who has one?

Wentworth and a majority of the Senate were so determined to let students go armed on campus that they beat back one amendment to allow a university to set up gun-free dormitories for those who want to live in one and another to ban guns from any place where alcohol is sold or served. (Private universities could take such steps under his legislation, but not public ones.)

So even those who prefer to take their chances by living in a gun-free dorm would not be allowed the privilege.

A similar bill died in the House on a technicality. The House would do well to let this bill expire as well.

In Congress, gun-rights advocates, led by Republicans but with considerable Democratic support, overturned a federal regulation that barred national park visitors from carrying loaded weapons. The measure would apply to parks and wildlife refuges the appropriate state law for carrying guns.

Last year, in a landmark case, the U.S. Supreme Court declared a constitutional right of Americans to arm themselves in their own homes for their defense. We agreed with that decision.

But Justice Antonin Scalia, the conservative who wrote that 5-4 ruling, said it should not be taken to cast doubt on "laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of arms."

Texas doesn't have much in the way of national parks or refuges, and state law already allows visitors to carry weapons into state parks. But the Legislature should not require university campuses to allow concealed weapons into dormitories and classrooms.

THE AMERICAN-STATESMAN  
AUSTIN

## A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

We're prepared for the unexpected, Lord,  
when we have You.

Amen

# Expanding voter participation

Almost half a year has passed, but the 2008 election still looms as an epochal event.

With a record voter turnout, the American people, including members of many groups who have been excluded from the political process, changed the face of the nation's leadership and the direction of our public policies.

In many ways, this view is not only optimistic but realistic. More than 133 million Americans cast ballots in the election last year — the largest number of voters in U.S. history and 9 million more than in 2004. Four constituencies that have historically been under-represented — African Americans, Hispanics, unmarried women and young voters (ages 18-29) — provided the margin of victory for President Obama.

But the other side of the story is that 79 million eligible Americans did not vote. Forty-four million of these non-voters were not registered, and another four million were discouraged from voting because of burdensome policies, such as voter identification requirements.

Disproportionate numbers of non-voters belong to the very groups that have historically been excluded. African American turnout increased dramatically in 2008, but, in 2004, only 60 percent of African Americans voted. Meanwhile, in 2008, among voting-age Americans, 21.5 million young people, 20.4 million unmarried women, and 9.8 million Hispanics did not vote.

Why did 79 million Americans — more than the total population of Great Britain or France — not vote in an historic

election after an exciting campaign? As Professor Nathaniel Persily of Columbia Law School testified before the Senate Rules Committee, "The United States continues to make voting more burdensome than any other industrialized democracy."

As an organization focused on encouraging the political participation of the nation's 53 million unmarried women, Women's Voices. Women Vote recently released a report, "Access to Democracy: Identifying Obstacles Hindering the Right to Vote" by Scott E. Thomas, former chairman of the Federal Elections Commission, and Alicia C. Insley and Jenifer L. Carrier.

The report found that many states have confusing and cumbersome registration requirements, limited options to cast ballots before Election Day, complicated voter ID requirements, inconsistent rules regarding casting and counting provisional ballots, and varied regulations regarding the maintenance of voter lists. These obstacles make registering and voting especially difficult for underrepresented groups who tend to move more often, have less formal education and income, hold jobs where they can't take time off during the day, and, especially among immigrants, lack common forms of identification.

The best way to encourage voter participation is to enact a Federal Universal Voter Registration Act. This would establish a national mandate for universal voter registration within each state. Federal funds would be provided to the states to create permanent voter registration systems that will allow voters to stay on the rolls when they move.

Short of this comprehensive initiative, five other reforms would bring the nation closer to the goal of full voter participation.

First, same day registration would allow eligible Americans

to register on Election Day. In the 2008 presidential election, voter participation rates were highest in the states that allowed same day registration — 69 percent, compared to 62 percent.

Second, there needs to be more clarity about voter qualifications, including whether people without permanent addresses or felons who have served their time are now eligible to vote. Qualifications should be similar in different states; the nation must not return to the days when arbitrary poll taxes and literacy tests set discriminatory standards in some parts of the country.

Third, registration deadlines should not vary from Election Day to a month or more before.

Americans who are excited about a presidential campaign debate a week before the election should not be told it is too late to register and vote.

Fourth, registration should be brought into the 21st Century. Busy Americans should be allowed to register online so that they do not have to wait in line.

Fifth, there should be "no excuses" early and absentee voting. As of January, 2009, 32 states allow no-excuse early voting, 15 require excuses, and four do not allow early voting at all. There is no reason why states should not allow no-excuses early voting.

The U.S. still lags behind most other advanced democracies in the percentage of the population that votes in national elections. We can correct this condition by simply removing the obstacles to expanding American democracy.

*Page Gardner is the president and CEO of Women's Voices. Women Vote, a nonprofit, non-partisan organization dedicated to increasing the involvement of women in the public policy process.*

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# Cheney? GOP, you can do better

Come on, my Republican friends, you can do better than this. From Rush Limbaugh (who doesn't want the job) to Mike Steele (who wanted it until he got it) back to Dick Cheney?

Has anyone heard of new faces, new ideas, "change" — all the things Americans voted for overwhelmingly?

The fact that the president was rebuked by his own party in both the Senate and the House this week on the closing of Gitmo makes clear that there is a debate to be had in this country about terrorism: about where to keep suspected terrorists, and where and how to try them; about what to do with detainees no country will take, which is not exactly a reassuring reason for bringing them here.

I greatly admire the president for his principled views on torture and detention and the rule of law, but that doesn't mean I'm sure he's right. How could I be sure? How can anyone be sure of anything when dealing with men and women who at least might be determined to kill all our children and destroy everything we believe in?

Indeed, it is precisely because these are such serious, difficult

and inherently uncertain questions that Dick Cheney is getting the attention he is. I know many smart and well-informed conservatives who firmly believe it was wiretapping and waterboarding that kept us safe for the last eight years. I'd like to say they're wrong, like a good screaming TV liberal, but how would I know, really? How do they?

Would we have gotten the same information without resorting to enhanced interrogation techniques? Would we have discovered as much if judicially approved warrants, based on standards of at least some objective "cause," had been required for those wiretaps? These are questions that really can't even be intelligently addressed without access to classified information.

Even then, there's no way to know for sure what we would or wouldn't have learned had we not done what we did to get it.

No, it's not the debate that troubles me. I think a debate like this is a healthy exercise in a democracy, even if the bottom line is that this is the sort of issue on which we elect presidents, the sort of issue that should turn on judgment, not poll numbers.

It's the debaters. Whether it's politically wise or not (considering his need to keep the country behind him to inspire confidence on the economy), President Obama is out there, as

the nation's leader, offering his views. In an ideal world, with a different vice president (Hillary for Veep in '12?), this might be a perfect job for a vice president. A sitting vice president. Not the former one.

There is a long tradition that says the former president doesn't criticize his successor publicly, particularly in matters of foreign policy. Having the former vice president do it is hardly much of an improvement. But protocol and respect aren't the only reasons Cheney is a poor spokesman for Republicans.

When he left office, Cheney's approval rating was down to the immediate family. He had dodged so many bullets in office — remember Scooter Libby? — that, health issues aside, the idea of him succeeding his boss was out of the question. His defenders adore him, but for most Americans, Cheney was a symbol of the ugliest of partisan politics and the failings of his No. 1, who allowed him to wield too much power.

Bringing Cheney back brings the country back to the period we overwhelmingly voted to leave behind. If the Republicans want to win this debate, or any future elections, they need men and women who don't carry Cheney's baggage to take on the president.

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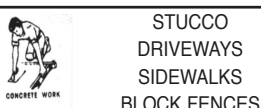
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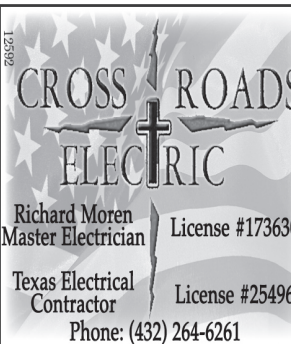
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# GM bankruptcy likely after bond offer fails

DETROIT (AP) — A General Motors Corp. bankruptcy filing seemed inevitable after a rebellion by its bondholders forced it to withdraw on Wednesday a plan to swap bond debt for company stock.

GM has until Monday to complete a government-ordered restructuring that includes debt reduction, labor cost cuts and plant closures. But a Chapter 11 reorganization is likely after the company said its offer to exchange \$27 billion in unsecured debt for 10 percent of the company's stock had failed. GM has received \$19.4 billion in federal loans.

The move came as cross-town rival Chrysler LLC headed to court Wednesday to ask bankruptcy judge for permission to sell the bulk of its assets to a group headed by Italy's Fiat Group SpA in hopes of saving itself from liquidation. Attorneys for Chrysler maintain that the Fiat deal is the company's only hope to avoid being sold piece by piece, but car dealers, debtholders, former employees and others are protesting.

Chrysler filed for bankruptcy protection April 30,

after the government ended talks with a group of holdout debtholders. Both automakers were pulled down by overwhelming debt, high pension, health care and other labor costs relative to competitors, a global auto sales slump and a dismal U.S. housing market that pulled down demand for pickup trucks, their top-selling vehicles.

News of the failed GM bond exchange offer sent its shares down 12 cents, or 8.3 percent, to \$1.32 in morning trading.

John Pottow, a professor at the University of Michigan who specializes in bankruptcy, said GM evading Chapter 11 now is almost impossible.

"They said no. That's it. They tried. That's why they're going to have to file for bankruptcy," Pottow said.

GM spokesman Tom Wilkinson said the board will meet later this week to decide its next move, but he would not say exactly when. He also would not say if the company would soon file for Chapter 11, nor would he reveal what percentage of bondholders took the offer.

The Obama administration has said it would only provide more funds if 90 percent of the bondholders, as well

as unionized workers, agreed to concessions that substantially reduced GM's costs.

GM also said it canceled meetings set for Wednesday with holders of notes that were not sold in U.S. dollars. The statement said the meetings were to discuss amendments to the debt-for-equity offers, but it did not specify what the amendments were.

There was a small hope Tuesday that GM could avoid a bankruptcy filing when the United Auto Workers union disclosed that it would take a 20 percent stake in GM — down from the original plan of 39 percent.

That seemingly freed 19 percent of the Detroit-based company's shares to sweeten the pot for its recalcitrant bondholders.

Wilkinson would not say why GM didn't make the offer to bondholders more attractive.

Because the bondholder deal did not go through, the equity freed by the UAW deal now apparently will go to the U.S. government, which may have to commit billions more for GM's restructuring in court.

The government's stake in the company originally was

to be 50 percent, according to GM's regulatory filings. But it now could be as high as 69 percent. The Canadian government also could get equity for up to \$8 billion in aid for the automaker.

Such an arrangement would leave bondholders back where they started — and a Chapter 11 filing all but certain. The deadline for GM's bondholders to tender their debt was midnight Tuesday.

Automakers worldwide are struggling as the global recession has reduced demand for new vehicles.

But GM and Chrysler have been particularly hobbled by promises to cover the health and pension costs of tens of thousands of unionized retirees — along with recent record-high gasoline prices that reduced demand for their low-mileage trucks and SUVs.

The UAW disclosed Tuesday it agreed to take a much smaller 17.5 percent stake in GM, plus a warrant for an added 2.5 percent stake to partially fund the \$20 billion that GM must put into a trust that will start paying retiree health care costs next year.

In exchange for agree-

ing to a lower equity ownership stake, GM promised the union \$6.5 billion of preferred shares that pay 9 percent interest, plus a \$2.5 billion note. The union, facing the possibility that it may not be able to quickly sell GM shares to fund its trust, preferred the certainty of the \$585 million annual dividend that accompanies the preferred shares.

The remaining \$10 billion will come from health care trust funds that GM already has set up.

The trust will get a seat on GM's board as well, although it will have to vote at the direction of GM's other independent directors. The concession deal, on which roughly 61,000 workers will vote by Thursday, also froze wages and cut retiree health care benefits, performance bonuses and cost-of-living raises.

GM had said previously that the government was preventing it from offering bondholders more than 10 percent of the restructured company.

Some analysts said GM's bondholders may be holding out for better terms in bankruptcy, where they would normally get up to 40 percent of their holdings back.

# Chrysler heads to court for key hearing

NEW YORK (AP) — The future of Chrysler hangs in the balance as it heads to court Wednesday to ask a bankruptcy judge for permission to sell the bulk of its assets to a group headed by Italy's Fiat in hopes of saving itself from liquidation.

Attorneys for Chrysler LLC maintain that the deal with Fiat Group SpA is the company's only hope to avoid being sold off piece by piece, but the agreement remains controversial with more than 100 objections to the sale filed by the automaker's

dealers, bondholders, former employees and others.

However, if the deal doesn't close by June 15, Fiat could back out.

Also Wednesday, rival U.S.-based automaker General Motors Corp. moved a step closer toward its own bankruptcy filing after a rebellion by its bondholders forced it to withdraw a plan to swap bond debt for company stock.

Detroit-based GM has until Monday to complete a government-ordered restructuring that includes debt reduc-

tion, labor cost cuts and plant closures. But a Chapter 11 reorganization is likely after the company said its offer to exchange \$27 billion in unsecured debt for 10 percent of the company's stock had failed. GM has received \$19.4 billion in federal loans.

The automaker said its board will meet to decide its next step.

Automakers worldwide are struggling as the global recession has reduced demand for new vehicles. But GM and Chrysler have been particularly hobbled by promises to

cover the health and pension costs of tens of thousands of unionized retirees — along with recent record-high gasoline prices that reduced demand for their low-mileage trucks and SUVs.

On Tuesday, Chrysler avoided a possible roadblock to its sale when a U.S. district judge ruled that a legal review of its bankruptcy proceedings wasn't needed before

the sale hearing could take place.

Judge Thomas Griesa denied a withdrawal motion from attorneys representing a pair of Indiana state pension funds and a state construction fund. The funds had argued that a review was needed because of the unprecedented involvement of the Treasury Department in the case and its use of federal

bailout funds for bankruptcy financing.

Chrysler released a statement late Tuesday saying that it was pleased with Griesa's decision and looked forward to Wednesday's hearing in bankruptcy court. Last week, attorneys for the funds asked U.S. Judge Arthur Gonzalez to postpone the sale hearing in order to give the district court time to rule, but that motion was denied.

## CITY

Continued from Pg. 3A

came on the heels of the closing of Municipal Auditorium, which failed to meet ADA specifications and is part of a law suit that has been

brought against the city. City officials had already given the go-ahead several months ago to open the pool without use of the poolhouse, in hopes of serving local citizens without breaking federal laws.

The meeting will be expected to get under way

at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday in the City Council Chambers, located at 307 E. Fourth Street.

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

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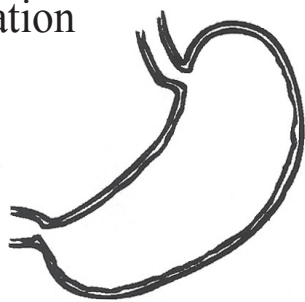
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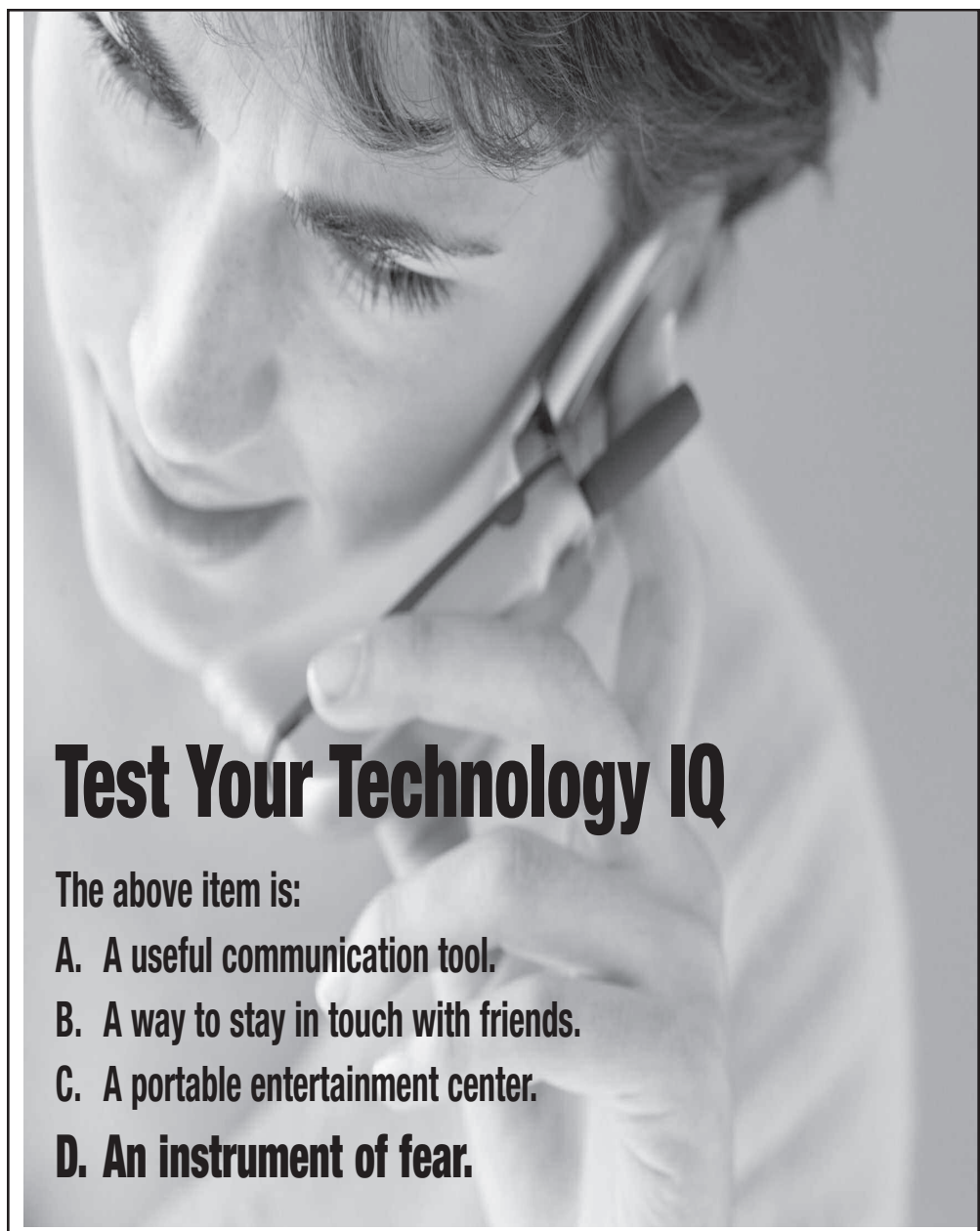
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**Tomorrow's Horoscope**

Jupiter and Neptune have traveled great distances to align with each other in a rare conjunction that becomes exact today. It's a melding of grace, bounty, faith and evidence. Physical abundance springs from mystical sources. Stay open to signs of your connection to all things. Try to see the world from another person's point of view.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19). You have two really attractive qualities going for you today. First, you know what you want. Second, you have no fear about going and getting it. Because of this, you'll be admired and pursued.



HOLIDAY  
MATHIS

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20). You're busy in your own world and you don't wish to gettled in anyone else's business. That's exactly the reason people will relax and open up to you. It's funny how much you learn when you don't want to know!

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21). There's a lull, but you won't relax. You're convinced another hectic rush is coming any minute. Put anxious energy to good use by handling a mindless task. Repetition will calm you down.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 22). You have standards of what you will and won't put up with from others. This doesn't make anyone feel uncomfortable. In fact, people feel more comfortable around you because they sense that you'll draw clear boundaries.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22). A little extra attention

to your image and the message you are putting out to the world will make a big difference in the way others respond to you. Better than that, it will boost the way you feel about yourself.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Cozy up to your funny friend or colleague. This person is not always appropriate, and half the time you don't know if you're laughing because you're shocked or humored. Either way, the chuckles bolster your immune system.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You experience your feelings with greater intensity today. It would be wise to show some restraint, though. Your passion for life is wonderful, though it could overwhelm the milder mannered in your midst.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). No matter how much you know, there's always more to learn. Right now, instead of seeking more information, apply what you already know. It's more than enough to make your work stellar.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You feel safe with people who are like you. You think you can predict what they'll do next. And you guess that they won't be critical of you since they are the same. You'll be around such people today.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Oh, how you hate to feel like relationships are a game. Cheesy opening lines and smooth moves annoy you, too. You seek down-to-earth, real people and that's exactly whom you will find now.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You are discovering that service to a noble cause is extremely rewarding. It brings you to who you really are. When you get in

touch with your own spirit, you are in touch with the spirit of destiny itself.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20). Play is essential to your wellness. You never grow out of the need to play; you only grow out of

certain games. It's about time you added variety to your playtime to stimulate your mind and thrill your senses.

**CELEBRITY PROFILES:** Helena Bonham Carter has reportedly never had

formal acting training and yet this Oscar-nominated Gemini is lauded for her amazingly versatile performances. Versatility is a Gemini specialty and so is super-intelligence. Born under a show-stopping Leo moon, Carter

also has a natural instinct for showmanship and gravitates toward the choices that bring the most entertainment value.

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**Room makeovers that won't break the budget**

(Family Features) — So you have a room that needs updating, but you don't have a lot of time or money? Not a problem. These quick-fix ideas will spruce up a room in no time without emptying your wallet.

**Bathroom**

- If you like old fashioned tin ceilings, try ceiling tile paintable wallpaper. It's textured wallpaper that looks like embossed white plaster, and you can paint it any color you want. Put it up under a chair rail to make a unique wainscoting in a weekend.

- For artwork, frame color copies of prints out of books, magazines or catalogs. If it's a kids' bathroom, frame some of their art.

- A few fresh hand towels and a new toilet seat will freshen things up, as well.

**Bedroom**

- A new duvet cover or comforter and matching shams will instantly change the look of your bedroom. Reversible covers give

you even more design bang for your buck.

- Paint an accent wall to bring a new color into the room. If your other walls are neutral, go with a bolder color on the accent wall. If the other walls are a strong color, pick out a neutral tone.

- Fabric remnants are an inexpensive and easy way to dress up your room. Recover pillows or add a colorful band to your drapes. At about one-third of the regular fabric price, they're a bargain.

**Living Room**

- One of the easiest - and cheapest - ways to change up a room is to rearrange the furniture. Take everything out and start over with a clean slate. And don't be afraid to poach items from other rooms - the mirror in the hall just might look perfect behind the sofa now.

- Don't forget the floors. If you have wood floors, put the shine back into them with wood cleaner. If you have carpet, add a colorful area rug on top for a splash of color and to help define an

area.

- Go green — with plants. Whether it's a single palm leaf in a vase or a pretty silk tree, greenery adds a lot to a room. For the best effect, group plants of varying heights, fullness and color together.

**Kitchen**

- Replace cabinet hardware with decorative pulls and handles. It's an easy way to add personality to ordinary cabinetry. New switch plates are another affordable change that can make a difference.

- Dress up your windows with a new valance. A fresh color will perk things up in no time. If you have solid curtains or sheers, try a patterned valance. If the curtains are print, compliment them with a solid valance.

- Add a new throw rug and a few fresh kitchen towels and you've got a brand new look for next to nothing.

Some creative thinking and a little elbow grease is all it takes to make a room feel like new.

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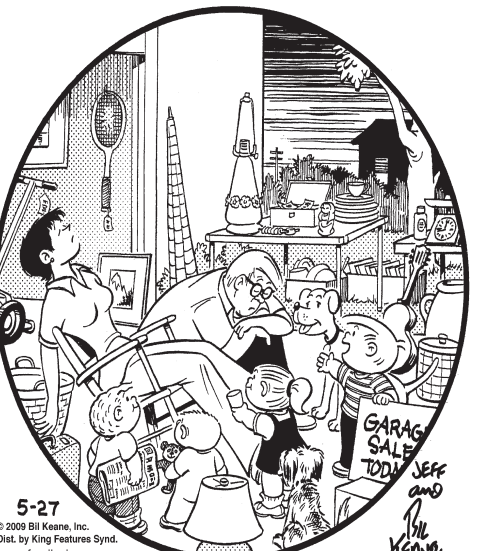
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|-------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 5:PM  | News               | News                | Locura             | Lopez                      | News                                    | Noticias              | News                | Raymond                     | Cortes                      | BBC                 | Cash Cab               | Movie: Com-mando, Dan Hedaya    | CSI: Crime Scn                     | Bones                         | 106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live | Phineas             | ESPN2                | SportsCenter        |
| 6:PM  | ABC                | Jeopardy!           | Tontas Cielo       | Lopez                      | CBS                                     | Noticiero             | News                | Friends                     | Harris                      | Business            | Cash Cab               | CSI: Crime Scn                  | Bones                              | 106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live | Suite Life                    | NASCAR              |                      |                     |
| 7:PM  | Entertain          | Fortune             | Two Men            | News                       | 12 Cora-zones                           | Millionaire           | Seinfeld            | Hagee                       | Mark                        | News-Lehrer         | Made                   | CSI: Crime Scn                  | Bones                              | 106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live | Montana                       | MLB                 | NFL Live             |                     |
| 8:PM  | Wipeout            | Wipeout             | Cuidado-Angel      | So You Think You Can Dance | George Strait: ACM Artist of the Decade | El Rostro de Analia   | Law & Order: SVU    | Payne                       | House                       | Great Perfor-mances | Time Warp              | Movie: Outbreak, Morgan Freeman | CSI: Crime Scn                     | Law & Order                   | Movie: I Got the Hook-Up      | Phineas             | NBA Shoot-around     |                     |
| 9:PM  | Goode              | Goode               | Mañana es          | TMZ                        | Criminal Minds                          | Sin Senos             | Law & Order         | Browns                      | Light of the Southwest      | American Masters    | MythBusters            | Deadliest Warrior               | Movie: Ocean's Eleven, Andy Garcia | Game                          | Wizards                       | Baseball Tonight    |                      |                     |
| 10:PM | The Unusu-als      | The Unusu-als       | Don Francis-co     | Raymond                    | News                                    | Noticiero             | News                | Payne                       | Israel                      | Stamps              | Charlie Rose           | Time Warp                       | Movie: Stargate & Hutch            | Game                          | Montana                       | SportsCtr.          |                      |                     |
| 11:PM | News               | News                | Impacto            | Raymond                    | News                                    | Noticiero             | News                | Payne                       | Dr. Young                   | Stamps              | Charlie Rose           | Time Warp                       | Movie: Stargate & Hutch            | Game                          | Montana                       | SportsCtr.          |                      |                     |
| 12:AM | Nightline          | Nightline           | King-Hill          | Late Show                  | Más Sabe el Diabolo                     | Decisions de          | Late Night-Jim      | Sex & Sex & Israel          | Sanchez                     | Stamps              | Charlie Rose           | Time Warp                       | Movie: Stargate & Hutch            | Game                          | Montana                       | SportsCtr.          |                      |                     |
| 1:AM  | Insider            | Jimmy Kim-mel Live  | La Escuelita VIP   | Law Order: CI              | Late Late Show                          | Decisions de          | Late Night-Jim      | Sex & Sex & Israel          | Sanchez                     | Stamps              | Charlie Rose           | Time Warp                       | Movie: Stargate & Hutch            | Game                          | Montana                       | SportsCtr.          |                      |                     |
| 2:AM  | Jimmy Kim-mel Live | Extra               | Contra Viento      | RENO 911                   | Consumer                                | Insider               | Pagado              | News                        | Movie: George of the Jungle | Stamps              | Charlie Rose           | Time Warp                       | Movie: Stargate & Hutch            | Game                          | Montana                       | SportsCtr.          |                      |                     |
| 3:AM  | News               | Marketing           | Mujer...           | Friends                    | Entertain                               | Pagado                | Poker After Dark    | Movie: George of the Jungle | Light of the Southwest      | Stamps              | Charlie Rose           | Time Warp                       | Movie: Stargate & Hutch            | Game                          | Montana                       | SportsCtr.          |                      |                     |
| 4:AM  | Paid               | Basco               | Güereja            | Consumer                   | Paid                                    | Pelicula:             |                     |                             |                             | Stamps              | Charlie Rose           | Time Warp                       | Movie: Stargate & Hutch            | Game                          | Montana                       | SportsCtr.          |                      |                     |
| 5:AM  | Paid               | Paid                |                    |                            |   |                       |                     |                             |                             | Stamps              | Charlie Rose           | Time Warp                       | Movie: Stargate & Hutch            | Game                          | Montana                       | SportsCtr.          |                      |                     |

DENNIS THE MENACE



"WELL, WE CAN SCRATCH THAT RESTAURANT OFF THE LIST."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

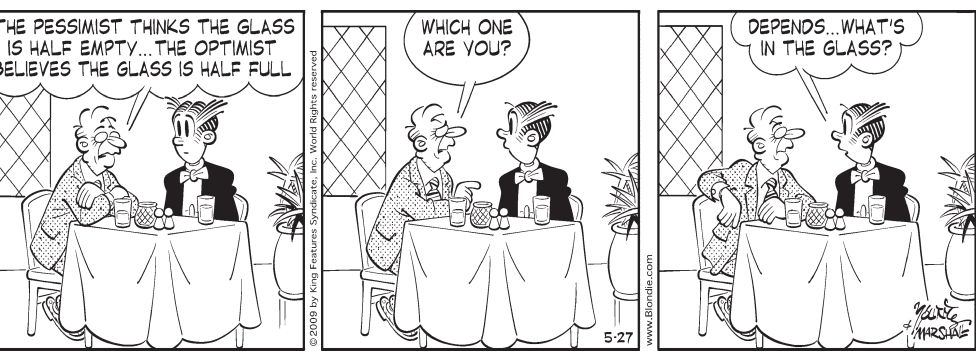


"Oh boy! We have enough good stuff left to have another garage sale next week!"

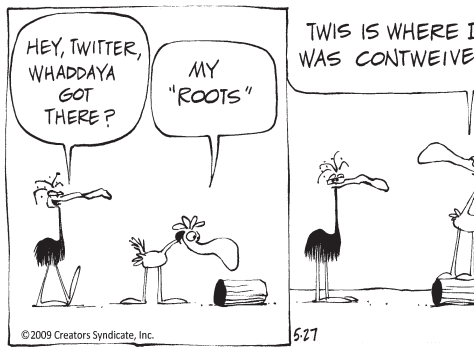
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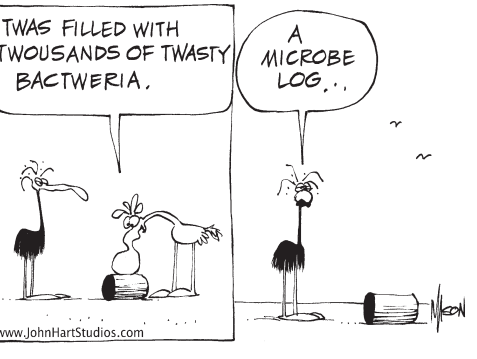
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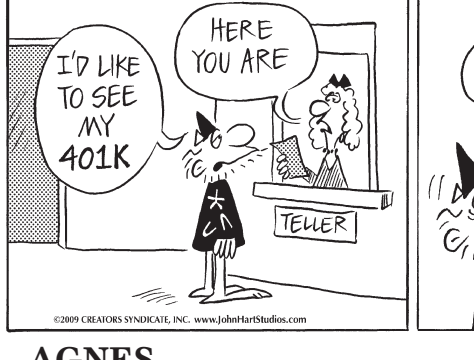
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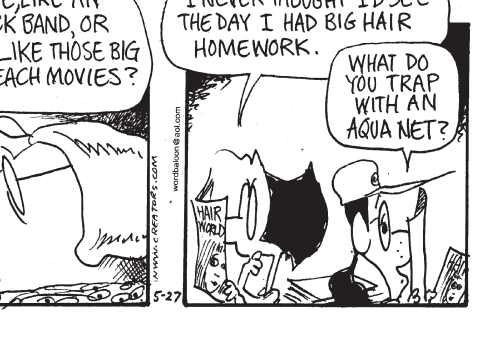
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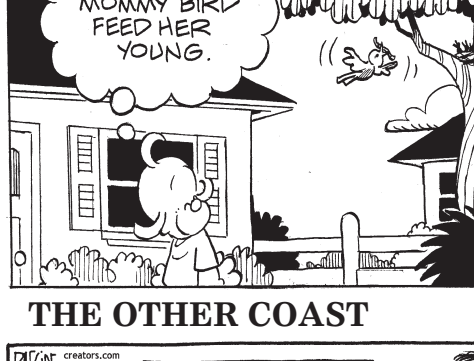
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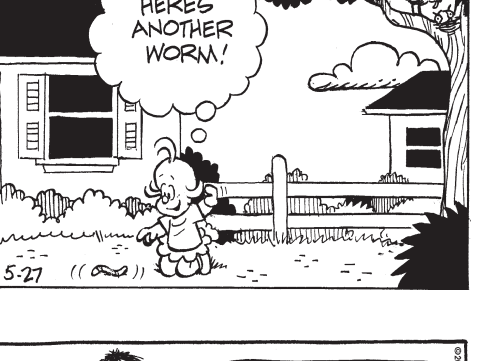
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This Date In History

Today is Wednesday, May 27, the 147th day of 2009. There are 218 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 27, 1937, the newly completed Golden Gate Bridge connecting San Francisco and Marin County, Calif., was opened to pedestrian traffic. (Vehicular traffic began crossing the bridge the next day.)

On this date:

In 1818, American reformer Amelia Jenks Bloomer, who popularized the garment that bears her name — "bloomers" — was born in Homer, N.Y.

In 1896, 255 people were killed when a tornado struck St. Louis and East St. Louis, Ill.

In 1929, Charles A. Lindbergh Jr. married Anne Morrow in Englewood, N.J.

In 1933, Walt Disney's Academy Award-winning animated short "The Three Little Pigs" was first released.

In 1935, the Supreme Court struck down the National

Industrial Recovery Act.

In 1936, the Cunard liner RMS Queen Mary left England on its maiden voyage to New York.

In 1941, amid rising world tensions, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed an "unlimited national emergency." The British navy sank the German battleship Bismarck off France, with a loss of more than 2,100 lives.

In 1964, independent India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, died.

In 1985, in Beijing, representatives of Britain and China exchanged instruments of ratification on the pact returning Hong Kong to the Chinese in 1997.

In 1993, five people were killed in a bombing at the Uffizi museum of art in Florence, Italy.

Today's Birthdays: Novelist Herman Wouk is 94. Actor Christopher Lee is 87. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is 86. Author John Barth is 79. Actress Lee Meriwether is 74. Musician Ramsey Lewis is 74. Actor Louis Gossett Jr. is 73. R&B singer Raymond Sanders (The Persuasions) is 70. Country

singer Don Williams is 70. Actor Bruce Weitz is 66. Singer Cilla Black is 66. Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) is 65. Singer Bruce Cockburn is 64. Singer-actress Dee Dee Bridgewater is 59. Actor Richard Schiff is 54. Singer Siouxsie Sioux (The Creatures, Siouxsie and the Banshees) is 52. Rock singer-musician Neil Finn (The Finn Brothers) is 51. Actress Peri Gilpin is 48.

Thought for Today: "The charm of history and its enigmatic lesson consist in the fact that, from age to age, nothing changes and yet everything is completely different." — Aldous Huxley, English author (1894-1963).

Answer to previous puzzle

|        |          |        |
|--------|----------|--------|
| USHER  | PUTS     | CLEF   |
| STOVE  | OHIO     | LIVE   |
| EASED  | WORN     | AMID   |
| DRESS  | REHEARS  | SALS   |
| EAR    | TAP      |        |
| THREAD | PLAN     | AMA    |
| RAID   | ISEE     | URBAN  |
| ADDO   | ACATO    | FPAINT |
| ITEMS  | GENL     | IDLE   |
| NOR    | PEER     | ALLEYS |
| LVAN   | SPA      |        |
| LOSING | NESSHIRT |        |
| ABIT   | IDEA     | TENOR  |
| COLA   | NOEL     | ERODE  |
| YELL   | ERRS     | DENSE  |

5/27/09

Newsday Crossword

HAPPY HAUNTING by Daniel R. Stark Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

- |                           |                            |                           |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>             | <b>DOWN</b>                | <b>DOWN</b>               |
| 1 Half-moon tide          | 1 Hoops group              | 9 Hearth goddess          |
| 5 Exterminator's target   | 2 British blueblood        | 10 French friend          |
| 10 Amazes                 | 3 Fit to                   | 11 Despicable one         |
| 14 Shower alternative     | 4 Flying Dutchman, for one | 12 Grand-scale            |
| 15 Birdie beater          | 5 Mirrors                  | 13 Gels                   |
| 16 Sulk                   | 6 Regatta trophy           | 19 Hungry feelings        |
| 17 Geometry calculation   | 7 Suffix for teen          | 21 Cozy room              |
| 18 Unconventional person  | 8 Soccer-shoe feature      | 25 Customs                |
| 20 Ivan of tennis         |                            | 27 Uncredited author      |
| 22 Pro (proportionally)   |                            | 28 Clumsy mistake         |
| 23 Banquet hosts          |                            | 29 Total                  |
| 24 Swarm                  |                            | 30 Jazz instruments       |
| 26 Metallic sound         |                            | 32 Run of (conflict with) |
| 28 Wild horses            |                            | 33 Wild guesses           |
| 31 Thunderstruck          |                            | 34 Sandbox patron         |
| 35 Feeling down           |                            |                           |
| 36 Ensnare                |                            |                           |
| 38 Big-hearted one        |                            |                           |
| 39 Very long time         |                            |                           |
| 40 Proverbial battlers    |                            |                           |
| 42 Enjoy a                |                            |                           |
| 43 Flame fanciers         |                            |                           |
| 45 Antitoxins             |                            |                           |
| 46 Toothpaste holder      |                            |                           |
| 47 Goes bad               |                            |                           |
| 49 Writes hurriedly       |                            |                           |
| 51 Strike repeatedly      |                            |                           |
| 53 Scalp stuff            |                            |                           |
| 54 Paul                   |                            |                           |
| 57 Dickinson creation     |                            |                           |
| 59 Uttered loudly         |                            |                           |
| 62 Petunia's plant family |                            |                           |

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# Survey: Most economists see recession end in '09

WASHINGTON (AP) — More than 90 percent of economists predict the recession will end this year, although the recovery is likely to be bumpy.

That assessment came from leading forecasters in a survey by the National Association for Business Economics to be released Wednesday. It is generally in line with the outlook from Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke and his colleagues.

About 74 percent of the forecasters expect the recession — which started in December 2007 and is the longest since World War II — to end in the third quarter. Another 19 percent predict the turning point will come in the final three months of this year, and the remaining 7 percent believe the recession will end in the first quarter of 2010.

"While the overall tone remains soft, there are emerging signs that the economy is stabilizing," said NABE president Chris Varvares, head of Macroeconomic Advisers. "The economic recovery is likely to be considerably more moderate than those typically experienced following steep declines."

One of the major forces that plunged the economy into a recession was the financial crisis that struck with force last fall and was the worst since the 1930s. Economists say recoveries after financial crises tend to be slower.

Against that backdrop, unemployment will climb this year

even if the economy is rebounding, the NABE forecasters predict. Companies won't be in a rush to hire until they feel certain any recovery is firmly rooted.

For all of this year, the forecasters said the unemployment rate should average 9.1 percent, a big jump from 5.8 percent last year and up from its current quarter-century peak of 8.9 percent. If NABE forecasters are right, it would be the highest since a 9.6 percent rate in 1983, when the country was struggling to recover from a severe recession.

Some forecasters thought the unemployment rate could rise as high as 10.7 percent in the second quarter of next year. The NABE outlook from 45 economists was conducted April 27 through May 11.

General Motors Corp., chemical company DuPont and Clear Channel Communications Inc. were among the companies announcing mass layoffs during the survey period.

With joblessness rising, consumers — major shapers of overall economic activity — likely will stay cautious, making for a tepid turn-

around. And given the big bite the recession has taken out of household wealth, notably the values of homes and investment portfolios, consumers probably will stay subdued for some time.

Seventy-one percent of the forecasters believe a more-thrifty consumer will be around for at least the next five years. Americans' personal savings rate edged up to 4.2 percent in March, marking the first time in a decade that the savings rate has been above 4 percent for three straight months.

Even as the NABE forecasters believe the country will emerge from recession later this year, they also predict the economy's overall performance in 2009 will be rotten.

The economy should contract by 2.8 percent this year, the forecasters said in updated projections. That's worse than the 1.9 percent drop they forecast in late February. If they are right, it would mark the worst annual contraction since 1946, when economic activity fell by 11 percent.

Still, the forecasters believe the worst is already behind the country in terms of lost economic activity.

The economy shrank at a 6.1 percent annualized pace in the first three months of this year, on top of a 6.3 percent decline in the

final three months of last year, the worst six-month performance in 50 years.

For the current April-June quarter, the NABE

forecasters believe the economy will shrink at a pace of 1.8 percent. After that, the economy should start growing again.



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# Democrats stop voter ID bill

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas Democrats declared victory in the partisan battle over tightening voter identification laws, but their five-day filibuster left hundreds of bills dead and threatened to spark a special session this summer.

With six days left in the 2009 session, there's theoretically time to resurrect almost anything. But a midnight deadline Tuesday night for the voter ID bill came and went in the House, and leaders from both parties said the controversial election reform had gone down in flames.

"I guess it's dead. I don't see any way it can be resurrected at this point," said Rep. Jim Dunnam of Waco, leader of the House Democrats. Dunnam, whose delay tactics brought the legislative machinery to a virtual crawl, described the demise of the voter ID legislation as a victory for the voting public.

"We successfully stood up

for people's voting rights and have shown that we're not going to be bullied into suppressing people's votes," Dunnam said.

House Speaker Joe Straus, R-San Antonio, maintained his trademark hands-off approach as midnight approached and mostly left the public relations job to Rep. Larry Taylor, chairman of the House Republican Caucus.

Taylor said Democrats would pay a hefty price for killing off the voter ID legislation and inflicting "a lot of other casualties in that process."

"I think there's got to be some repercussions," Taylor said. "I think the average Joe at home isn't going to be pleased that an issue like voter ID knocked off all those other issues people have been working on."

Scores of reforms appeared to be lying on the legislative scrap heap for now — major

**"We successfully stood up for people's voting rights and have shown that we're not going to be bullied into suppressing people's votes."**

State Rep.  
Jim Dunnam

insurance reforms, tuition relief and key health care legislation among them. The House also failed to pass a bill to accept \$555 million in unemployment funds. Gov. Rick Perry had opposed the legislation on the grounds that too many strings were attached to the federal money.

But there's still time to save important reforms.

Rep. Dan Branch, R-Dallas, who is trying to get an endan-

gered college tuition relief bill passed, flashed a new tie as a symbol of his hope: it showed a rabbit being pulled from a hat.

Gov. Rick Perry, a Republican, has indicated he could call a special session if the Legislature does not send him a windstorm insurance reform bill. Without it, Texas could be on the hook for untold billions of dollars in liability if a major storm hits the state.

The stalling tactics began Friday as Democrats used up their time privileges to hold an entire slew of bills hostage. The target was the voter ID bill, which Republicans say is necessary to combat ballot box fraud while Democrats say it would diminish voting rights.

The legislation would require Texans to provide a photo ID or two non-photo alternatives before being allowed to cast a ballot.

Democrats called on

Republicans to join together and take up other bills. But that takes a supermajority — a two-thirds vote — and Republican lawmakers vowed not to give in.

At one point, Taylor, the Republican leader, said compromising with the Democrats would be like negotiating with "kidnappers or terrorists." He hastened to add that he wasn't likening Democrats to criminals but compared them to "whiny kids throwing a fit on the floor."

One bill did appear to be on the verge of rescue: legislation by Rep. Kino Flores, D-Mission, giving property tax exemptions to disabled veterans. Rep. John Otto, R-Dayton, worked to get Flores' bill tacked onto a bill he had authored and that was heading back to the House from the Senate.

Officials said they expected a vote on the measure as soon as Wednesday.

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