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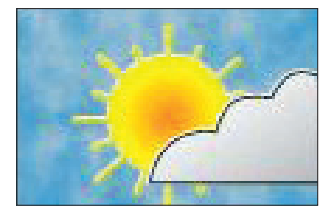


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# BIG SPRING HERALD

TUESDAY

JUNE 16, 2009



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# Mother of slain boy slams investigation

By THOMAS JENKINS  
Staff Writer

A local woman whose son was slain in a shooting more than two weeks ago says the Big Spring Police Department has botched the investigation and is seeking help from a state law enforcement agency.

Nicole Harbour, mother of 16-year-old Justin Hernandez, who was shot and killed during the early morning hours of May 29, said she has contacted the Texas Rangers to assist in the investigation of her son's death because she feels



Hernandez

the investigating agency — the BSPD — is mishandling the case.

"We're very angry. First you're sad and you're grieving, but we're not going to have any type of resolution until these people are picked up," said Harbour.

"It just doesn't seem to me that this is of much importance to the police department or the district attorney's office ... It took the police five days before they went back out to the scene and looked for

shell casings and other evidence. And it took longer than it should have for police officers to get on the scene. They are always patrolling that neighborhood closely, but it certainly seemed like it took them longer than it should to get there. I just don't feel like this is very important to them."

Justin Hernandez, 16, was pronounced dead shortly after 10 a.m. May 30 at a Lubbock area hospital, according to Sgt. Tony Everett, public information officer with

See MURDER, Page 3A

*"Never, even once, has the police department called me. From day one, I've always had to contact them to see what's going on. They have never contacted our family, not mine or my ex-husband's family. I feel like if it doesn't just come to the police, they aren't going to seek the information."*



Harbour

# Drug charges

Lubbock woman pleads guilty in case that involves Big Spring

LUBBOCK (AP) — The wife of an alleged gang leader pleaded guilty Monday to drug trafficking charges involving cocaine and marijuana brought from Mexico for distribution in Texas.

Federal prosecutors said Marie Chavez, 28, of Lubbock pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute and possession with intent to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine and 100 kilograms or more of marijuana. She also pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute 500 grams or more of cocaine.

Chavez's trial was to have begun Monday. She faces a sentence of 10 years to life in prison. Sentencing has not been scheduled.

Prosecutors said Chavez, a member of the Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation

See PLEA, Page 3A



HERALD Photo/Thomas Jenkins

Employees with Oncor Electric work on power lines near the rear entrance to the Big Spring VA Medical Center Monday afternoon. Part of the utility work being done in conjunction with road repairs on Gregg Street and expected on Lancaster, traffic had to be detoured around this and a section of Gregg Street to accommodate the repairs.

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# State Park to host Stargazing Party

By THOMAS JENKINS  
Staff Writer

Amateur astronomers and local residents will get a chance to turn their sights toward the heavens Saturday, June 27, as officials with the Big Spring State Park prepare for their annual Stargazing Party atop the local landmark.

"Sunset is approximately 9 p.m., and Gene Hardy will present a program as soon as it gets dark enough to see the projection, which is usu-



Alton

ally between 9:20 and 9:30 p.m.," said Park Manager Ron Alton. "I'm going to ask the astronomy club members to bone up on their constellations so we can point some of them out."

"The moon should be at just a little less than first quarter. Constellation Sagittarius should be visible, looking through it toward the center of the Milky Way galaxy with lots

of nebulas and star clusters. Also, the Summer Triangle, including the stars Vega, Altair and Denab, with more nebulas and a spectacular double star, Alberio, will be visible."

Slated for 8:30 p.m. until 11 p.m. near the park office at the top of Scenic Mountain, the program will offer something for everyone in the family, according to Alton.

"It's one of the bigger events of the year for us," said Alton. "It's a fun

See STARS, Page 3A

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# Rangers holding on in AL West minus Hamilton

**STEPHEN HAWKINS**

AP Sports Writer

ARLINGTON — That hole in the middle of the Texas lineup is getting harder to ignore, no matter how much the AL West-leading Rangers insist they can win without injured slugger Josh Hamilton.

While the Rangers have reached mid-June as the division leader for the first time in 10 years, their hitters are slumping and their lead shrinking.

"It's not that we're downplaying missing Josh. We're a good team without him, we're a good team with him," Ian Kinsler said. "We have won without him and we need to continue doing that until he gets healthy. We can't sit around and blame our offen-

sive woes on that."

But their June swoon does directly correspond with Hamilton's second trip to the disabled list this season. The center fielder who bats third last played May 31. He is recovering from surgery last week to repair a tear in his abdominal muscle and expected to be out another month.

Before a day off homestand, Texas was 2-4 on its current homestand and hit .197 with 14 runs in that stretch against Toronto and the Los Angeles Dodgers.

The Rangers (35-27) were held to one run twice and scoreless another game. The Los Angeles Angels have moved within 2½ games, the slimmest margin in three weeks.

"We're not panicking when it comes

to our offense," Michael Young said. "We know we'll make adjustments. ... We'll get there. We're confident. It's a matter of time."

The last time the Rangers led the division in mid-June was 1999, the season they won the last of their three AL West titles. They were 7½ games back by this point a year ago, and a whopping 28 games behind in 2001.

There are 100 regular season games left, and things are out of whack for a team long known for potent offense and miserable pitching.

Rangers pitchers had a string of 24 consecutive scoreless innings last week, including back-to-back shutout victories at home for the first time in 29 seasons. But they won one of those by the smallest possible margin, 1-0

when they scored on a sacrifice fly.

Texas is hitting only .223 with 39 runs and a 5-7 record so far in June.

"Everybody kind of needs to take it upon themselves to try to be a leader and make something happen," outfielder David Murphy said.

That has been a struggle lately for several of the everyday players.

Kinsler, the leadoff hitter whose torrid start included a 6-for-6 game with a cycle April 15 that had him third in the majors with a .474 batting average, has dipped all the way to .260. He was 4 for 33 the last eight games.

Young was in an 0-for-17 slump, two at-bats short of the longest drought

See **RANGERS**, Page 2B

## BSHS 7-on-7 team state bound



Courtesy photo

The Big Spring Steers 7-on-7 football team recently placed second in a tournament at Frenship High School in Wolfforth, winning its pool and qualifying for the state tournament in the process. The state tourney is set for July 11 at Jones Stadium in Lubbock. The Steers play in a league every Monday in Midland and are currently 4-0. Their next games are at 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Monday. Sonic owner Mike Abusaab (standing center) sponsors the team. The players are (kneeling, left to right): Austin Sanchez, Monte Anderson, Ben Merworth, Robert Parra, Tracey Russell, (back row) Mike Menefield, Thaddeus Straughter, Matt Ritchey, Devonte Lloyd, Tyler Tannehill and Pavel Plakhotny.

## Grossman looking to impress

By **KRISTIE RIEKEN**

AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON — Former Chicago Bears quarterback Rex Grossman wants to be a starter again.

First, he'll have to make the roster with his new team, the Houston Texans.

Grossman, who signed with the Texans as a free agent last week, joined the team on the opening day of a three-day minicamp to compete for the third quarterback spot behind starter Matt Schaub and Dan Orlovsky.

"It's just an opportunity for me to be in this league and get to where I want to be," Grossman said after the more than hour-long workout. "I'm going to work as hard as I can."

Grossman led the Bears to the Super Bowl in 2006 but has worked mostly as a backup.

He'll compete with Alex Brink for the third quarterback spot. But coach Gary Kubiak isn't sure if he'll carry three quarterbacks into the season, so the 2003 first-round pick will have to impress to earn a spot on the roster.

Kubiak played in a two-quarterback system in Denver and prefers carrying

See **GROSSMAN**, Page 2B

## No contract, no problem, Ware says

**STEPHEN HAWKINS**

AP Sports Writer

CARROLLTON — DeMarcus Ware was almost to the bus and out of the heat when one of the Dallas Cowboys equipment guys stopped him to retrieve his No. 94 jersey.

"Oh, this is where I want to be, America's Team, nowhere else," Ware said Monday, while stripping off the sweat-soaked jersey after the first practice of the team's minicamp.

While Ware is already under contract through the upcoming season, the Cowboys have been working on an extension for the NFL sacks leader (20 last season) to keep that jersey and the star on his helmet for a long time.

It will be a big payday for the linebacker who has already been in three Pro Bowls and has 53½ sacks in four seasons.

Still, those contract

See **WARE**, Page 2B



Photo/The Dallas Morning News, Vernon Bryant

Dallas defensive lineman DeMarcus Ware (94) works on pass rushing technique during the team's football minicamp in Carrollton Monday.

## Sports in brief

### Big Spring baseball and softball boosters hosting ragball tourney

The Big Spring High School baseball and softball boosters are teaming to host a ragball tournament Friday and Saturday at Lady Steer Park.

Registration is at 5:30 p.m. June 19 with games starting at 7 p.m. that same day. Cost is \$10 per player with each team needing to contain five boys and five girls.

For more information, call John Sparks at 270-2711.

### 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.

### Volleyball Skills Camp

A Volleyball Skills Camp has been scheduled for Wednesday through Friday at the Big Spring

Junior High gymnasium.

The camp is for incoming junior high and high school female athletes. Incoming seventh and eighth graders work out from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., while the high school aged girls take the floor from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Cost is \$25 with an optional \$10 fee for a T-shirt.

### Lady Steers Basketball Skills Camp

Lady Steers Head Coach Mike Warren will lend his skills in teaching a basketball camp for girls entering second through eighth grade June 22-25.



# Ex-Cowboys DE Ellis signs with Raiders

ALAMEDA, Calif. (AP) — The Oakland Raiders signed defensive end Greg Ellis on Monday night, acquiring a veteran presence as they work to upgrade their defense.

The 6-foot-6, 262-pound Ellis, who turns 34 on Aug. 14, was released earlier this month by the Dallas Cowboys — his team for all 11 of his NFL seasons. The sides completed the deal late Monday

when he signed the contract, Raiders CEO Amy Trask said.

Ellis has also played linebacker but will be a defensive end in the Raiders' 4-3 system. Oakland's defense struggled in the pass rush and to generate sacks last season. Training camp opens next month in nearby Napa.

Raiders coach Tom Cable has acknowledged the

team might trade former Pro Bowler Derrick Burgess, who is unhappy with his contract, if Oakland gets adequate compensation.

Ellis has 77 career sacks, including a career-best 12½ in 2007 for the Cowboys. He's had 30 or more tackles in eight of his professional seasons.

Burgess heads into the final year of a deal that pays him a \$2 million base salary this season.

## WARE

Continued from Page 1B

talks haven't been a distraction for Ware or kept him off the field.

While this week's three-day minicamp is mandatory, and the last organized team workouts until training camp opens next month, he has already been a regular participant in offseason workouts.

"He's that kind of guy. He kind of lives in the moment and is happy to be doing what he's doing all the time," coach Wade Phillips said. "When he's on the field, he's playing football. That's a good thing, and in the classroom he does well."

Ware doesn't even want to talk about the contract.

"No comment about that," he said. "I let my agent and Jerry (Jones)

handle that."

This will be the final season of the five-year deal Ware signed after being the 11th overall pick in the 2005 draft. His base salary for this season is just over \$1 million.

Cowboys owner Jerry Jones has indicated several times recently that a deal will get done.

That leaves the questions of when and for how much.

"These things take time, and we obviously want DeMarcus to be a Cowboy for his career. That is our goal," Stephen Jones, the team's vice president and owner's son, said last month. "We've made offers. We made an offer a while back."

Considering what some of other top NFL defenders got paid this off-season, Ware will getting a significant raise.

The Washington Redskins gave free agent defensive tackle Albert

Haynesworth a seven-year, \$100 million contract that included an NFL record \$41 million guaranteed. Super Bowl champion Pittsburgh gave outside linebacker James Harrison, the NFL defensive player of the year, a \$51.75 million, six-year deal with \$20 million guaranteed.

Ware possesses a unique blend of strength, agility and quickness that allows him to be a dominating force all over the field. His sack total has increased every season — from eight as a rookie in 2005, to 11½, 14 and then 20.

"When you get 14 sacks, you're kind of numbered, they know who you are. And then to get 20," Phillips said. "They know where you are. It was pretty amazing last year, in that he had so many sacks the year before then upped that. Of course, he's got the bar that's higher than everybody else as far as trying to high jump every year. But he's the kind of guy that can do it."

Ware, who turns 27 next month, is only the fourth player in Cowboys history with three consecutive 10-sack seasons. The last Dallas player with more than Ware in a single season

was Hall of Fame defensive tackle Randy White with 16 in 1978.

There was also his NFL record-matching streak of 10 consecutive games with a sack, the longest in the NFL in 15 years even though it is not recognized as the Cowboys record. Harvey Martin had sacks in 11 consecutive games from 1976-77 before the NFL considered sacks as an official stat.

But what still stands out from last season for Ware is that Cowboys went from Super Bowl expectations to missing the playoffs after losing their final game.

"It feels really good to be back and sort of try to get that bad taste out of your mouth from last season," Ware said. "We've got a lot of guys coming in here that are going to contribute to the team. You just want to see how it's all going to unfold."

Both on and off the field in Ware's case.

Notes: RB Felix Jones didn't participate in the second practice Monday because of a bruised calf sustained in the morning session. ... WRs Miles Austin (hamstring) and Sam Hurd (quad) were already out.

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## GROSSMAN

Continued from Page 1B

two. He may carry three this season because Schaub missed five games in each of the last two years and the team was forced to scramble to add one midseason.

Grossman appeared in four games with one start last season for the Bears with Kyle Orton in the starting spot. He spent his six-year career in Chicago, where he had 33 touchdowns and 35 interceptions.

His best season came in 2006 when he threw for 3,193 yards and 23 touchdowns in guiding the Bears to the Super Bowl.

"I'm a 28-year-old, I've got a lot left," Grossman said. "I'm hungry to get back to start at some point in my career, get back to the Super Bowl. I'm extremely motivated."

Grossman was excited to get back on the field Monday after sitting around for the past few months hoping he'd get another shot. Most of Houston's starters didn't work on the field Monday, so Grossman got acquainted with Kubiak's offense with the help of rookies and other young players.

Kubiak isn't worried about Grossman's recent struggles and hopes he can regain his old form in Houston.

"A lot of times in this game you are a high draft choice, you get your opportunity somewhere and some

things go great for you," Kubiak said. "Then all the sudden you don't have a good year or the team starts going a different direction and it's a struggle. I think guys that keep their head up and fall in the right place have an excellent chance to revive their careers and we're going to do our part with him."

Grossman remains upbeat despite his current position.

"This league is about adversity," he said. "Everyone faces adversity at some point. I've had my fair share already and I feel like I'm experienced ... this is just another situation that I'm going to have to somehow get to the other side of."

Also on Monday, tight end Owen Daniels did not report to the stadium for the mandatory minicamp despite signing his restricted free agent tender. Daniels missed last week's organized team activities because he is unhappy with his contract status.

"We're happy he elected to come in and sign his tender and be part of this football team again," Texans general manager Rick Smith said. "I'm a little disappointed he's not here today but ... we talked about how it's a process and how complicated it is."

Because Daniels signed the tender he could be fined.

"This is a mandatory minicamp, so there are ramifications for him not being here," Smith said.

Smith said the team will work on a long-term deal with Daniels, who had 70 receptions for 862 yards last season.

## RANGERS

Continued from Page 1B

in his career that includes five 200-hit seasons, before an RBI single on Friday night. While still hitting .316 overall, he is 3 for 24 (.125) during the homestand.

Andruw Jones, whose playing time has increased with Hamilton out, also had an 0-for-17 skid before hitting two home runs this weekend against the Los Angeles Dodgers. (Add a homer Jones hit in a spring training game against the Dodgers and he has three in three games against them this year, after three homers in 75 games for them last season.)

Since nine homers in a 15-game stretch, Nelson Cruz is 6 for 33 with one homer the past nine games. He had three of those hits in one game.

Chris Davis has hit .303 (10 of 33) the past 10 games, but the 23-year-old first baseman is hitting .208 overall and on a record strikeout pace. His majors-

high 92 strikeouts in 59 games includes 22 Ks his last 13 home games.

"We're all confident," Kinsler insists. "We know we're capable. We've just got to move on."

The Rangers did go 9-4 when Hamilton missed 13 games earlier this season with a strained ribcage muscle after crashing into an outfield wall while making a catch. He got hurt again when he ran into another wall making another catch less than a week after returning from the first DL stint.

Hamilton, who hit .304 with 32 homers and an AL-high 130 RBIs last season, was hitting .240 with six homers and 24 RBIs in 35 games when he got hurt again. But the Rangers depend on him for more than just his bat.

"There are some intangibles that come with him being on the field, whether it's leadership or defense, base running," Murphy said. "He brings so much to our team and so much to the game that we're easily a better team with him on the field and with him in the lineup."

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**Road Construction Blues**

At the Big Spring Herald we are suffering through the same road construction problems as everyone else. Over the last 2 weeks the front of our building has had no parking and it has been very hard for our customers to get to us. It is now available for parking and our newspaper racks that are out front are again available. We also realize that it is not easy to get to places on Gregg St. to get your copy of the paper. We would like to make everyone aware of all the different locations the Big Spring Herald is sold at for your convenience.

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# News in Brief

## South Korea's Lee and Obama to discuss North Korean nuclear standoff in White House meeting

WASHINGTON (AP) — As North Korea threatens nuclear war, President Barack Obama and South Korean President Lee Myung-bak will be eager to show the North the unity of their alliance and a determination not to back down.

North Korea's pledge to expand its nuclear programs gives their meeting Tuesday at the White House a sense of urgency. The presidents probably will express their refusal to accept the North as a nuclear weapons state and condemn recent missile and nuclear tests.

Before leaving Seoul, Lee said he supported Obama's appeal for a world without nuclear weapons. However, he told The Wall Street Journal, "we are faced with North Korea trying to become a nuclear power, and this really is a question we must deal with now."

The United States, during Lee's visit, is likely to pledge its continued commitment to use its military muscle to protect the South should the North attack. Such comments are welcome in Seoul and Tokyo, no matter how many times U.S. officials repeat them.

Lee's talks with Obama come on the second day of a three-day visit also scheduled to include meetings with U.S. trade envoy Ron Kirk, Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton welcomed Lee to Washington on Monday, the same day tens of thousands rallied in Pyongyang to condemn sanctions imposed by the United Nations after the country's latest nuclear test.

## Iran's Guardian Council agrees to limited ballot recount

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's powerful Guardian Council is ready to recount specific ballot boxes in last week's disputed presidential elections, a council spokesman said Tuesday, another twist in an election that has touched off widespread protests.

State television quoted Abbas Ali Kadkhodaei as saying that the recount would be limited to voting sites where candidates claim irregularities took place. It was not clear which or how many voting sites would be affected.

The results from last Friday's election showing a landslide victory for President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad sparked Tehran's worst violence in 10 years — including seven reportedly killed Monday

during clashes.

Supporters of reformist candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi claim the vote was rigged to re-elect the hardline president.

The 12-member Guardian Council includes clerics and experts in Islamic law. Its role includes certifying election results, and it is closely allied to Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

## Russia pushes for new reserve currencies at international summits

YEKATERINBURG, Russia (AP) — China and Russia sought greater international clout at a summit Tuesday, with China promising a \$10 billion loan to Central Asian countries, while Russia challenged the dominance of the U.S. dollar as a global reserve currency.

Russia also gave a prominent platform to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad amid massive protests in Iran over his bitterly disputed re-election and questions in the West about the vote.

Chinese leader Hu Jintao said China will extend a \$10 billion loan to a regional group that also includes Russia and four Central Asian states.

The move adds muscle to China's role in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

# MURDER

Continued from Page 1A

the BSPD. According to police records, Hernandez and a second victim, later identified as 17-year-old Richard Pineda of Big Spring, were shot at a residence in the 1600 block of Cardinal shortly after midnight.

Harbour said she has contacted the Texas Rangers and is in the process of setting up a meeting with the agency in hopes of moving the case forward.

"Apparently, everyone in town knows who did this," said Harbour. "All of Justin's friends, just about everyone knows who did this. I know the police have typed up a warrant ... but my understanding is the district attorney's office is not cooperating with them. Hardy (Wilkerson, district attorney) deems it insufficient evidence to move the case along. And here it's been two weeks and they have 34 statements and witnesses, and they (law enforcement) still haven't done anything.

"It's a lot like the murder that happened Monday. That guy is already locked up and in jail. Why? Because he turned himself in and they (the police) didn't have to go and do any work. Never, even once, has the police department called me. From day one, I've always had to contact them to see what's going on. They have never contacted our family, not mine or my ex-husband's family. I feel like if it doesn't just come to the police, they aren't going to seek the information."

Wilkerson would not comment directly on Harbour's allegations.

"The investigation has limited the number of suspects, but it's not at the point that it's ready to be presented to the grand jury," Wilkerson said. "I feel that good work has been done by the police so far, but there's still significant work yet to be done."

Preliminary investigation into the shooting revealed that a fight involving the two teenagers and several others had occurred earlier in the evening, according to police officials.

Harbour said Hernandez was not directly involved in the fight police described.

"There were several fights that night, one between some females who later brought back some male friends," said Harbour. "When they brought them, there was another fight, and not everyone that was at the party was involved in the fight. My son wasn't involved in the fight. After that, the people that came back to the party left again.

"The kids were playing football in the street and someone drove by and swerved at them like they were going to run them over. The vehicle took off, and not more than five minutes later it came back and did the same thing. This time, though, it stopped at the end of the road. The kids in the street thought they had come back to fight again, and that's when this person got out (of the car) and started shooting."

Police have not identified a suspect in reports to the media, and according to BSPD Chief Lonnie Smith, details surrounding the inves-

tigation will not be discussed at this time.

"I will not discuss this," said Smith firmly. "We will continue to investigate this case."

Smith declined to comment on Harbour's allegations the police department was slow to respond to the scene of the shooting and waited several days to investigate the crime scene.

Harbour said she feels like the police department is treating the death of her son as just "another Mexican kid that got shot."

"I read the paper online, and there are people who are posting comments asking where the parents of the 16-year-old were, and why was a kid his age there that late," said Harbour. "My son hung out with that family almost every weekend. This isn't just some thug off the street that got shot. This kid had a family that loved him. He was very loved. They are just treating it like they were a bunch of thugs, and he's just another Mexican kid that got shot. This is how I feel.

"People are trying to trivialize this like these

# PLEA

Continued from Page 1A

gang, was one of 17 co-defendants named in an indictment that

alleged they brought the drugs from Mexico to South Texas for packaging and storage before being taken on to Big Spring, Lubbock and Midland for distribution.

Chavez admitted distributing

cocaine and marijuana throughout North Texas. She said she participated in the drug operation from 2001 until her arrest in December.

She is the tenth person to plead guilty in the case.

# STARS

Continued from Page 1A

and educational way to spend a Saturday night outdoors with your family. You can take a tour of the night sky with area amateur astronomy clubs.

"It's a great chance for families to spend some quality time together, as well. It doesn't matter how old you are, seeing the stars and the different heavenly bodies through a telescope is just amazing."

Alton said the West Texas Amateur Astronomy Club from Midland will provide several high-powered telescopes for those attending to get a better look at the heavens.

"They've been really great in helping us put the stargazing event on each year," said Alton. "They really love doing this. Most people who are into astronomy love to teach others about it, so there will be plenty of knowledgeable people to answer questions dur-

ing the presentation."

Alton said the Stargazing Party is a great chance for area residents to learn about astronomy, but it also serves a very important purpose when the state of Texas begins looking at the park's budget.

"We invite everyone to come out," said Alton. "These events keep the state park finances going, especially in these times when budgets are being even more closely examined than in pre-

vious times. The state looks at attendance at these types of events when they decide how much to allocate, so participating is very important.

"If the weather doesn't cooperate with us — we have too many clouds or it rains — we'll reschedule the Stargazing for July 25," he added.

Admission to the park is \$2 for those age 13 and over. There is no charge for children 12 and under. The facility

is located at No. 1 Scenic Drive, just off FM 700 near Wasson Road. For more information about the stargazing event, contact Alton at 263-4931.

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

## MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL

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Bill Gilbert, 73, of Big Spring died Friday, June 12, 2009, in Stanton. Funeral Mass was at 11 a.m. Tuesday at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church with burial at Mt. Olive Memorial Park.

Juan Dominic Salazar, infant, of Garden City died Saturday, June 13, 2009, in Odessa. Funeral Mass will be at 3 p.m. Tuesday at St. Lawrence Catholic Church with burial at Garden City Cemetery.

Nathan Mikial Burch, 10, of Big Spring died Sunday, June 14, 2009, at his residence. Memorial Services will be at 10 a.m. Saturday at the First Presbyterian Church.

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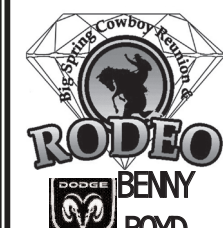
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# EDITORIAL

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

-FIRST AMENDMENT

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

**Ron Midkiff**  
Publisher

**John A. Moseley**  
Managing Editor

**Bill McClellan**  
News Editor

## OUR VIEW

# Pops still needs donations with little time left

Another week has gone by, so the annual "Pops in the Park" concert and fireworks display at Comanche Trail Park is now a little more than two weeks away. Unfortunately members of the Big Spring Fourth of July Foundation say they're still short of their fundraising goal.

As of the committee's last meeting Thursday, a little less than half of the \$40,000 needed to stage the show had been received. While the total had virtually doubled, the organizing committee is a long way from where it needs to be financially.

That means it's time for all of us to do our part and make sure "Pops in the Park" remains one of the mainstays of our community's July 4 holiday celebration.

A huge crowd packs the park and amphitheater every year to be a part of the celebration.

As we have noted before, donations making the concert and fireworks show possible come from local businesses and individuals, as well as corporate sponsorships. They also make it possible to open the gates to the public free of charge.

Final touches for this year's July 3 show that will feature the Big Spring Symphony and Chorus, a choreographed fireworks show and performances by two warm-up acts — young country singer-songwriter Maren Morris and her band and the bluegrass music provided by Jim Kay and the Kay Grassband.

However, the committee still needs to raise more than \$w0,000 to make sure "Pops in the Park" continues to thrive.

So again, regardless of whether you or your business has been contacted or not concerning a donation, we hope you'll pitch in and help make sure this year's concert and show is a success.

Remember, donations of \$500 or \$1,000 from businesses aren't the only help the committee is seeking. Anything anyone can do to help would be appreciated, even just a few dollars.

Those wishing to make a donation can contact Debbye ValVerde at the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce office or mail them to the chamber office at P.O. Box 1391, Big Spring 79721.

Once again, we think it's important that we all have a stake in making sure this is our community's best and most patriotic Fourth of July holiday celebration ever.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

The Herald is always interested in our readers' opinions.

In order that we might better serve your needs, we offer several ways in which you may contact us:

- In person at 710 Scurry St.
- By telephone at 263-7331
- By fax at 264-7205
- By e-mail Managing Editor John A. Moseley at editor@bigspringherald.com or News Editor Bill McClellan at newsdesk@bigspringherald.com.
- By mail at P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721

## LETTER POLICIES

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.

- Limit your letters to no more than 300 words.
- Sign your letter.
- Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street address for verification purposes.
- We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity.
- We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per 30-day period per author.
- Letters that are unsigned or do not include a telephone number or address will not be considered.
- Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

## A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

May we adhere to Your high ideals, Lord.  
Amen

# Deadline arrives, many unprepared

Americans from coast to coast witnessed the first nationwide colorcast Jan. 1, 1954, when the Tournament of Roses Parade was aired in vivid Technicolor. This broadcast marked the arrival of the color television, something Americans have now enjoyed for over half a century. Not since that undertaking have the U.S. broadcasting industry and the federal government endeavored to roll out a technology upgrade that impacts every American household. Until now.



KAY  
BAILEY  
HUTCHISON

After years of planning and preparation, the digital television, or DTV, transition took place June 12. At midnight, all of the nation's full power broadcasters, large TV stations covering multiple cities, switched from an analog to a digital broadcasting format.

Prior to this date, about 40 percent of broadcasters had transitioned to digital, but the remaining 60 percent were required by law to changeover and discontinue broadcasting in analog format.

For those who were not ready for the transition, you may have turned on your TV set the day of the transition and found you had no access to basic television programming, public emergency broadcasts, such as AMBER Alerts, severe weather warnings and other important safety mes-

sages. You can still take modest measures to continue to receive television broadcasts.

The Texas households at risk of being unprepared are ones with older television sets and they receive over-the-air programming using roof top antennas or "rabbit ears." These TVs require a converter box to translate the digital broadcast signal into an analog signal that an older television can display. Each television that is neither outfitted with a digital tuner nor connected to a cable or satellite service requires an independent converter box. Consumers can still purchase converter boxes at retail locations across the country, including many electronics chains throughout Texas. Consumers who still need coupons to offset the cost of a converter box may contact the U.S. Department of Commerce at 1-888-388-2009 or visit [www.dtv2009.gov](http://www.dtv2009.gov).

Many Texans faced with preparations and costs may be wondering why this transition was so important — or even necessary at all.

Although it may not be as dramatic as shifting from black and white to color TV, the transition will significantly enhance the clarity of television broadcasts, resulting in less interference, sharper pictures and better sound quality. The efficiency of digital broadcasting will also allow for new and diverse television programming.

Most importantly, transitioning to digital television, or DTV, will free up important radio frequencies, which can be reused for new communications services and safety activities that will

increase the nation's ability to respond to terrorist attacks and national disasters. Digital broadcasting will continue to transmit emergency messages, like AMBER Alerts, but some of the spectrum space will be reallocated to implement a nationwide interoperable public safety communication system to support police, fire departments, rescue squads and other first responders. The challenges facing first responders Sept. 11, 2001, and during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita illustrate how badly this capability is needed, and the 9/11 Commission recommended a nationwide public safety system in its final report to Congress.

I have worked hard to spread the word to all Texans through brochures, educational outreach programs and public service announcements. Even though the changeover date has come and gone, large numbers of Texans may not have been able to prepare; including many elderly and disabled individuals as well as those facing language barriers.

Though you may have prepared and your household's DTV transition went smoothly, please take time to assist others, particularly friends, family and neighbors who may be unable to obtain a converter box or need assistance installing one.

This technological change is an important development, but it need not be overwhelming.

*Kay Bailey Hutchison is the senior U.S. Senator from Texas and is the ranking Republican on the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.*



# Try raising your bar a little

Some say we generally meet our own expectations. In fact, whether our expectations are high or low, it could be said we will rise or fall to the occasion. This is how we live self-fulfilling prophecies.

We become either our own worst enemy or our own best ally. Whose side are you on?

When confronted by a challenge, do you meet it head-on or run away? Do you try extra hard, or do you give up easily or not even try at all? Do you resolve to do what is needed, or do you make excuses and do nothing?

If low morale has taken hold of your outlook and attitude, then you have boarded a sinking ship known as self defeat. Any ship will sink if enough water leaks into it. And nothing will take you down faster than the negativity and pessimism that self defeat incites.

A self-defeated person can only see the worst side. He will say what he is not rather than what he could be. He has little or no hope that change is possible. He gripes, complains, compares and criticizes. He thinks trying something new is pointless since he will fail or be disappointed. So either he condemns himself to be nothing, or he settles for anything but what he really wants.

Consequently, the self-defeated person gets no joy out of his life and is even more depressed about his future. He has nothing good to say about himself or his ability to achieve success. "Yes,

but..." is his usual response when someone suggests he consider alternative solutions to his problems.

The bottom line is that despair and discouragement will hinder us from becoming all that we truly can be. The good news is, my friends, we're not without help and we're never without hope. It is only bewilderment that has caused us to be mistaken in our conclusions. But a fresh and inspired viewpoint can correct our faulty and flawed notions and propel us forward!

Maybe you're tired of shooting too low for yourself — and having others who expect little of you or for you. Why not raise your bar as high as God has raised it!

God sees only the infinite potential of His creation — which of course includes you and me. His expectation has no limitations or boundaries. His desire for us is good. He envisions infinite possibilities. So why should our bar be lower than His?

What if there are circumstances that would bring us down, that would stop us from reaching for our dreams, that would have us feel lonely, abandoned, isolated, worthless, incompetent, useless, cheated, defenseless or ignored.

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:21) Did you know this means the kingdom of God — His power, strength, knowledge — is within your reach, is a present possibility? Truly, we are instilled, equipped and furnished with everything we need to conquer any foe and accomplish our goals.

We are not struggling, weak and weary mortals but rather spiritual warriors who are confident, strong and determined. Our life has reason and purpose.

We need only recognize, admit and embrace our God-given determination, resolve, ambition, diligence, tenacity and zeal to not only raise our bar but reach our potential.

I love the story of Jesus' healing of the crippled man by the pool of Bethesda. Apparently, this poor man had been in his condition for 38 years — so perhaps it was no wonder he wasn't very hopeful when Jesus asked him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" I think it is worth noting that the man responded with a narration of reasons why he had not been healed in all of those years. (John 5:1-9)

I've often thought how good I am at reciting all the reasons why I can't do something or why I haven't — instead of just doing whatever I needed to do to fix the problem, to accomplish my goal, to improve the situation. There is always an answer even if it is different from what we first thought was the right one. Jesus did heal the man. But it was in a way the man didn't expect or probably considered possible. All the more reason for you and I to keep our mind open for the unexpected and unplanned!

Don't let negativity — pessimism, cynicism, skepticism — sink your ship. My friends, you can raise your bar and set your sights on all the good God intends for you. You can be your own best ally. And you can aspire to practice your spiritual prowess which enables you to pursue the infinite possibilities of your infinite potential.

*Annette Bridges is a freelance writer who lives in North Texas. Her columns are published weekly in numerous newspapers. E-mail her at [annettebridges@gmail.com](mailto:annettebridges@gmail.com)*

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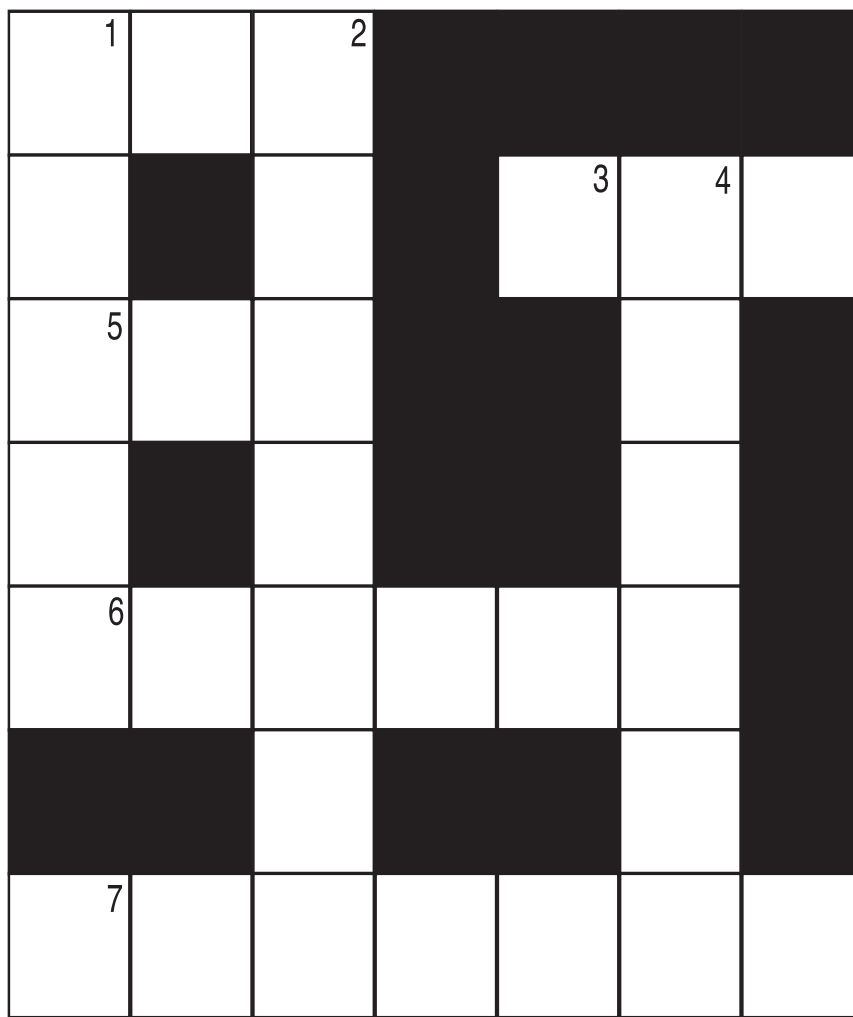
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ANSWER: THE ROSE

**ACROSS**

1. Crimson color
3. Consumed
5. Perceive with eyes
6. Season
7. Most grand

**DOWN**

1. Type of flowers
2. One who dreams
4. Flower defense

Answers:

Across  
1. red 3. ate 5. see 6. summer 7. largest

Down

1. roses 2. dreamer 4. thorns

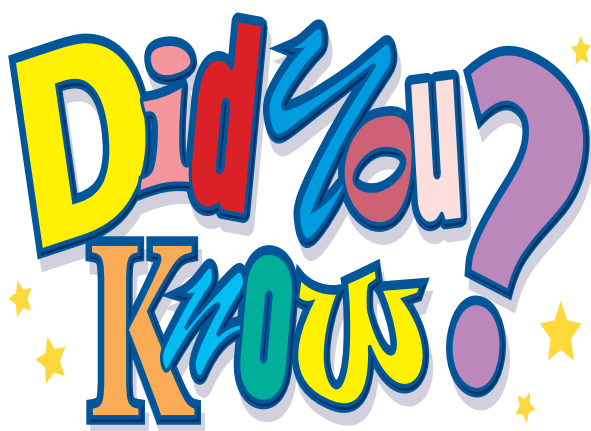


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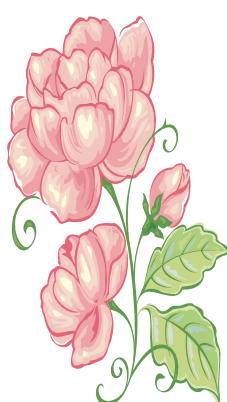
bud of a plant

*How they SAY that in...*

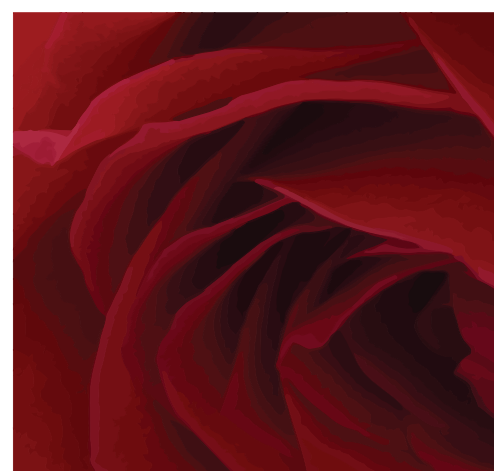
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ANSWER: A ROSE

Tomorrow's Horoscope

The sun in Gemini challenges the moon in Aries to a raucous game of truth or dare and we're all invited to participate. If you choose to be truthful, the result will likely



HOLIDAY MATHIS

be humorous. Furthermore, you'll learn there are others in similar straits. If you choose to be daring, the result will quicken your pulse and thrill you, too. You can't lose!  
**ARIES** (March 21-April 19). You didn't realize what you wanted until you got what you didn't want. Your taste and style has been honed by the little disappointments along the way.

Now your order will be fulfilled to precise specifications.  
**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20). You're not missing anything. The power is in you. Steer clear of offers that promise an easy fix. Stay away from those who just want to make money from you and are not personally invested in your success.  
**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21). Instead of a "to-do"

list, you need to keep a "lookie what I did" list. You haven't been celebrating your accomplishments. Stop taking yourself for granted and start acknowledging to yourself all that you've done.  
**CANCER** (June 22-July 22). You're quite caught up in the task at hand and it's turning out to be a rather frustrating one. It's possible that you're forgetting

why you wanted to do it in the first place. Take a step back.  
**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22). There is much that is unknown about a situation and that has potential to cause stress and fear. Keep your mind with what is known. Don't speculate. Stay in the moment and handle what is in front of you.  
**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). What is preventing you from doing what you know is right? Perhaps you're still imagining the possible consequences of an action and what others will think. Forget it. Do what is right and the future will take care of itself.  
**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You'll be dealing with a traditional culture and formalities must be obeyed. There will be delicate matters of etiquette, as well as specific procedures and rules. Comply wherever possible.  
**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You've canceled lunch one or two times, but have you ever cancelled a way of thinking? You'll hit on a line of reason that no longer serves you or is simply untrue. Cancel that internal monologue and replace it with a new one.  
**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll be dealing with someone who behaves as though he or she is helpless. Don't buy into this lie. This person is actually very powerful and needs to be shown how to do things autonomously.  
**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're in the mood to build a light rapport with others, not a serious bond. You may feel like steering clear of heavy topics of conversation or serious matters in favor of areas of novelty, intrigue and gossip.  
**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). If you're feeling anxious, ask yourself what thoughts and

beliefs have contributed to this mood. You're probably thinking about what you don't want instead of what you do want. You can turn it around in an instant.  
**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20). You are starting to realize that the decisions you make are not so much about what you should do next, but about who you are and who you are becoming. You'll recognize what feels authentically you and what doesn't.  
**ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS:** "I'm a 30-year-old Aquarius girl who lives at home with my parents. They don't mind that I live at home, but they would prefer that I marry. I have never found someone I wanted to marry. When I turned 24, my mom sent me to Korea to meet a man she thought was perfect for me. This man couldn't have been a worse match. After that, my mother seemed to give up on me ever getting married. I like to date and go out and have fun. My mother doesn't understand. She blows up at me. I'm not willing to get married just so my parents can be happy. Do you think I'll ever find love?"  
Being an Aquarius, you tend to buck traditional systems and can often open people's minds when you do. But you haven't taken this purpose to heart. Though you are 30 years old, in many ways you are still a child. If you are not going to follow your family traditions, you need to give your mother and father new reasons to respect you. Find meaningful work and contribute to your household and family more than you ever have before. You will find love as you learn to make valuable contributions to others.  
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Obesity surgery thins bones, but enough to break?

By LAURAN NEERGAARD

AP Medical Writer  
WASHINGTON (AP) — isn't just the thunder thighs that shrink after obesity surgery. Melting fat somehow thins bones, too.

Doctors don't yet know how likely patients' bones are to thin enough to break in the years after surgery. But one of the first attempts to tell suggests they might have twice the average person's risk, and be even more likely to break a hand or foot.

The Mayo Clinic's finding is surprising, and further research is under way to see if the link is real. But with bariatric surgery booming and even teenagers in their key bone-building years increasingly trying it, specialists say uncovering long-term side effects and how to counter them takes on new urgency.

Simply popping today's doses of calcium supplements may not be enough.

"These procedures are now being sold as a panacea," Dr. Shonni Joy Silverberg of Columbia University told last week's annual meeting of The Endocrine Society, where the fat-and-bone relationship took center stage. "It is of heightened importance to find the answers to these questions."

Here's the irony: Obesity actually is considered protective against bone-weakening osteoporosis, possibly the only positive thing you'll ever hear a doctor say about too much fat.

"They're starting better than most of us," cautions Mayo bone-metabolism expert Dr. Jackie Clowes. So the big question is whether they really end up with worse bones, or just go through a transition period as their bones adjust to their new body size.

About 15 million Americans are classified as extremely obese, 100 pounds or more overweight. Dieting alone doesn't make enough of a dent to fend off rampant diabetes and other health problems, so surgery is fast becoming the preferred treatment — from the stomach stapling called gastric bypass to less invasive stomach banding. Patients tend to lose between 15 percent and 25 percent of their original weight, and diabetes dramatically improves.

More than 1.2 million U.S. patients have undergone the surgery in the past decade, 220,000 in the last year alone, according to the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery.

There's little data on how patients fare many years later; large National Institutes of Health studies, on both adults and teens, are under way.

But doctors have long noted that the radical weight loss can speed bone turnover until the breakdown of old bone outpaces the formation of new bone. Silverberg cites recent studies showing that a year after gastric bypass, adults' hip density drops as much as 10 percent, raising concern about a common fracture site of old age. (Stomach banding causes less thinning because it doesn't alter nutrient absorption as much.)

No one knows if teen bones react similarly, but it's an important issue because almost half of peak bone mass develops during adolescence.

To see if such changes translate into fractures, the Mayo team is comparing the medical records of nearly 300 adults who've had bariatric surgery with similarly aged Minnesotans who haven't.

A quarter of the 142 surgery

recipients studied so far experienced at least one fracture in the following years, Mayo's Dr. Elizabeth Haglund told the endocrinology meeting. Six years post-surgery, that group had twice the average risk. But in a puzzling finding, the surgery recipients had even more hand and foot fractures than their Minnesota neighbors, three times the risk.

Those fractures aren't usually connected to osteoporosis. Did the once-obese merely start exercising and just fall down more? Clowes doubts it.

"I was shocked" at the numbers, says Dr. Scott Shikora, president of the bariatric surgeons group, who says he hasn't seen a significant fracture problem in his own practice.

Surgeons routinely tell patients to take some extra calcium and vitamin D. Shikora estimates about half follow that advice, and other research suggests higher doses may be needed anyway as the obese tend to start out deficient in vitamin D.

A key next step will be to compare the patients who fracture with people of the same weight to see if their bone mass just had to adjust — or if something about surgery alters the complex soup of hormones and other factors that keep bones strong, thus requiring more than extra calcium.

Clowes' advice for now: Don't skip checkups, where doctors monitor bone health, and aggressively treat nutrient deficiencies.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Ai Lauran Neergaard covers health and medical issues for The Associated Press in Washington.

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# Bird Poop: Mend these broken wings

With the Gail road's seemingly endless plowed fields interspersed with unbroken land, the sharp, right angle curves of the southern part offered a slight break in the lengthy drive for the pumper. Leftovers from section or property lines, the abrupt changes of direction always caused a slight pause in an otherwise routine trip.



BEBE  
McCASLAND

Continuing on his way, the man would check wells down roads that few ever traversed. Ahead, by the side of the road, stood a small, slender bird. Accustomed to seeing wildlife, he slowed his vehicle, then stopped. As he approached what he thought was a sandpiper, it did not fly. The man worried that the bird, with one wing lower than the other,

would probably be hit if it stayed by the road.

Through the porch widow, I recognized R.C. after he rang the doorbell. Having brought us various species of birds, he held a small object in his hand. "It has an injured wing," he said as he transferred the unusual bird to my hands.

Weighing maybe two ounces, the bird resembled a delicately sculptured figurine. Most noticeable were its long needle-like bill, neck and legs. Dull gray above and white below, the bird had a cinnamon wash heightening its otherwise pale neck. "You've given me something special. Although it's a shore bird, I can't tell you which one."

Offering to call him as soon as we identified it, I had Art photograph the bird that rested in the palm of my hand.

In an e-mail to Gail Barnes, a wildlife volunteer in Lubbock, I wrote that it resembled a member of the sandpiper family, but I wasn't sure just what I had.

After examining



Courtesy photo  
**Sporting his wing bandage, Wilson cavorts in the dry area of Gail's tub. As a fresh water bird, the phalarope frequents ponds and playas filled by spring rains during migration.**

both wings and finding nothing obvious, we felt our guest might have either a hairline fracture or soft tissue

injury. Knowing that many similar birds feed at the edge of ponds and marshes, I provided, inside a carrier, a shallow basin of water sprinkled with meal worms. Gently placing the bird at the back of the container, I had not anticipated its rush to the water dish or ensuing dance.

As if to signal its approval of our dietary selection, the bird used its bill to swirl the water and extract the larvae. Whirling around in the basin and on the floor of the carrier, it pirouetted to an unheard melody.

Having heard the phone ring, we listened to a message from Gail. "We've identified your bird as a Wilson's — I'll have to spell it — Phalarope." Calling her back, I told her the pronunciation is "fal-uh-rope."

After calling R.C. about his rescue, I asked, "Where is the closest body of water in relation to where

you found this bird?" "There isn't any," he replied. Then after a moment's silence, he corrected himself. "Two buffalo wallows filled with water after that last rain."

Since it was the 23rd of April, the male phalarope had been in the process of migrating to the northern Great Plains and southern Canada.

For three days we continued to supply the worms that brought utter delight to this dainty creature.

Informed that we were delivering the bird the next day, Gail asked about its diet. "Mosquito and crane fly larvae, beetles, eggs of water fleas, seeds of aquatic plants, and shrimp brine," was my reply. "Where am I supposed to get that?"

Over the weekend, the phalarope frolicked in Gail's bathtub. With only half of the bottom in water, the tub allowed the bird to walk on a dry sur-

face as well as dab for worms and dance in the water. When she asked what name to give him, I suggested Wilson.

An X-ray of the right wing showed a simple fracture.

Binding the wing, the veterinarian advised Gail to keep the bandage dry.

Once home, she decided a playpen would give the phalarope ample room to exercise. However, playing in water would be off-limits for at least four weeks.

In addition to meal worms, she searched until finding shrimp brine. Refusing any offerings except the worms, Wilson was the ruling presence during his recovery. Once a week, Gail escorted the phalarope to the clinic, where exercising his wing prevented muscles from atrophying.

Role reversal seemed inherent in our male, who was less colorful than a female. Although she would be adorned for breeding with a black face and neck stripe leading into a deep cinnamon on her neck, Wilson had redeeming qualities. His duties were nest building and incubation, while she would sound an alarm of any danger. In addition, he would watch over the newly hatched and protect them from weather extremes.

After Wilson's forced recuperation, the wing bandage was removed. Thirty-four days after being found on a lonely county road, the phalarope was taken by Gail to a playa lake. Seeing the body of water through the carrier's gate, the bird became almost frantic to reach the water. Squeezing past the opening gate, the phalarope ran to the edge and once again physically rejoiced by wading and spinning in the shallow water. Having given Wilson his freedom, Gail experienced the pleasure of an avian ballet.

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

## 2009 Big Spring Baby Contest



**Did you or someone you know have a baby in 2008 or 2009**

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"2009 Big Spring Herald Baby Contest" which will be printed on Sunday, June 28th. To enter your baby simply fill out the information below and bring the photo, information to the Big Spring Herald before 5 p.m. on Wednesday, June 17th and your baby will be entered into the contest. Bring \$15 to have baby's photo published.

An independent panel of judges will be judging the photos.

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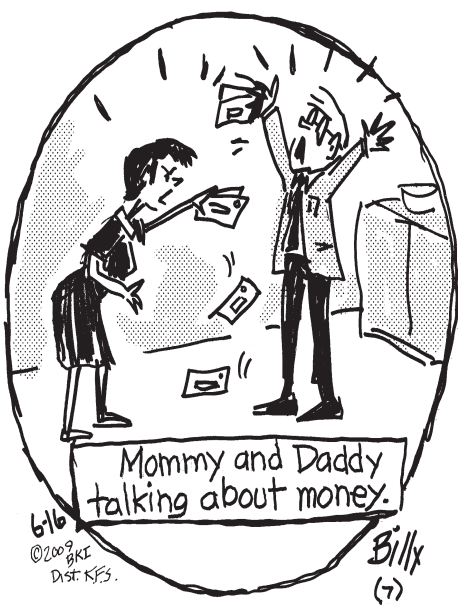
Table with 29 columns representing different TV channels and their respective programming schedules for the day of June 16, 2009.

DENNIS THE MENACE



'COULD YA MAKE US A B'LONEY SAN-WICH, AN' CUT IT IN THREE HALVES?'

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



Daddy has the week off and Billy fills in with his family observations.

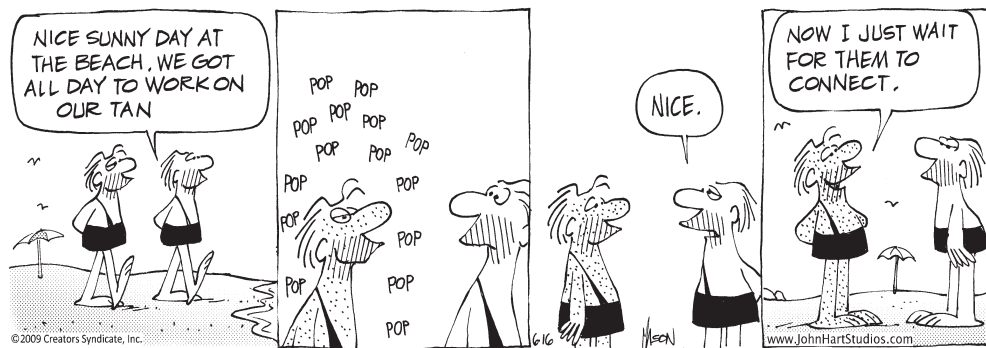
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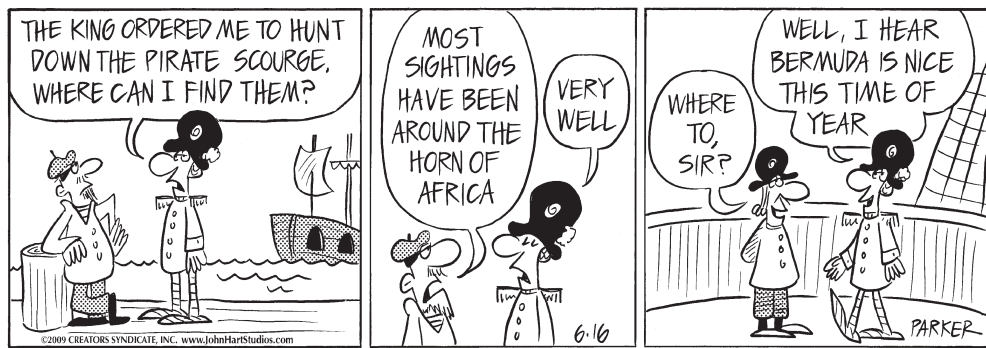
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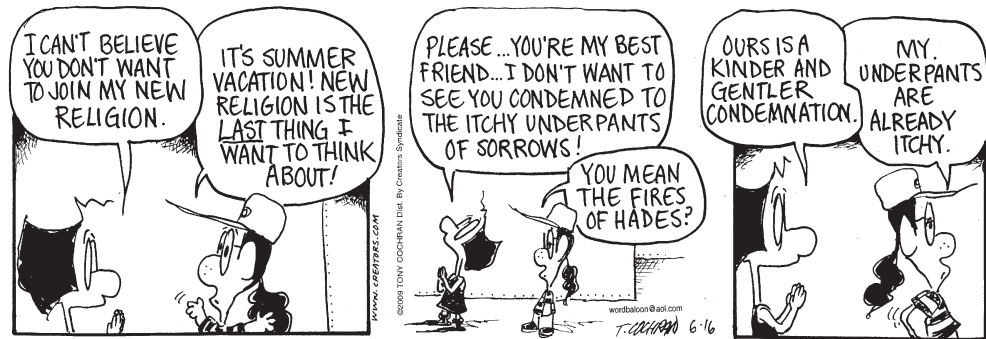
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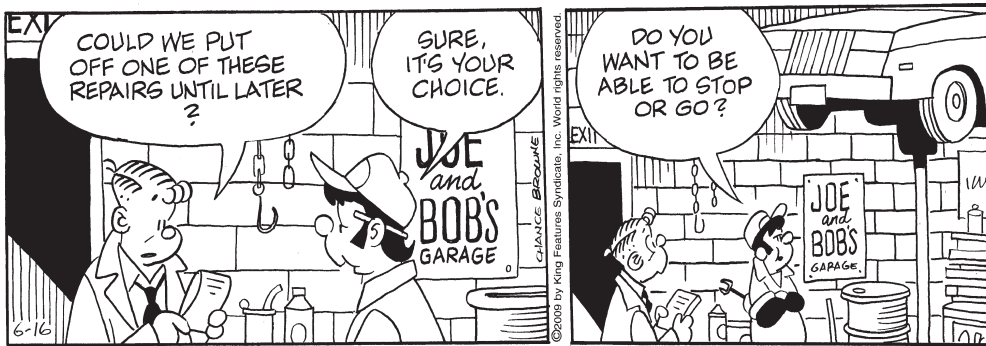
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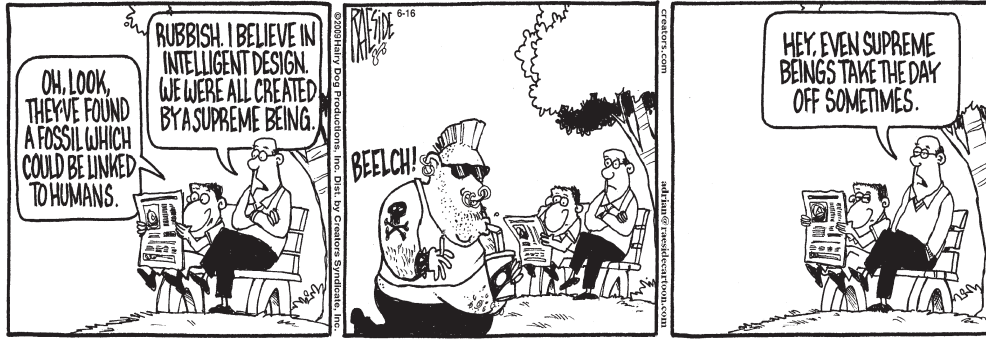
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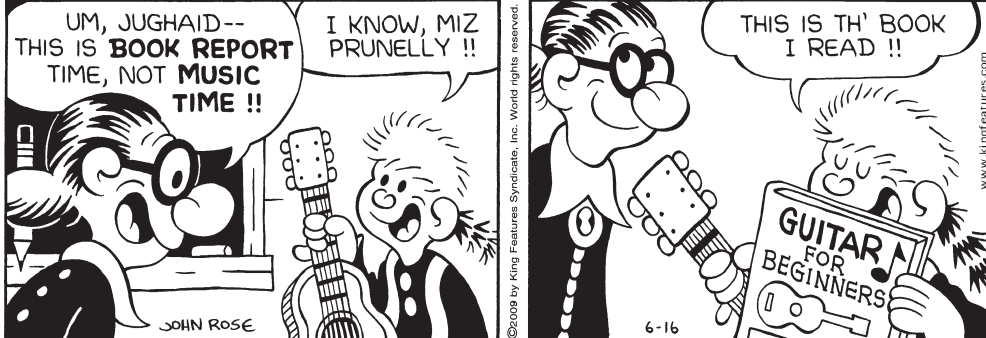
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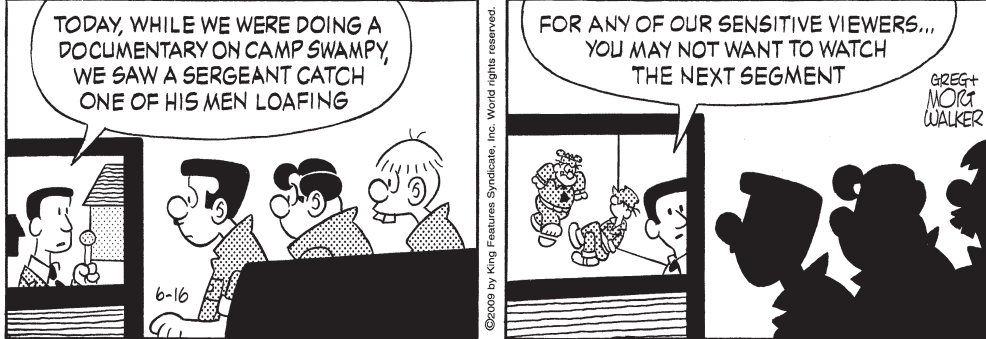
THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



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This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, June 16, the 167th day of 2009. There are 198 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On June 16, 1858, he accepted the Illinois Republican Party's nomination for U.S. Senate...

Industrial Recovery Act became law. (It was later struck down by the Supreme Court.) In 1958, the Supreme Court, in Kent v. Dulles, ruled that artist Rockwell Kent could not be denied a passport because of his communist affiliations.

68. R&B singer Eddie Levert is 67. Actress Joan Van Ark is 66. Actor Geoff Pierson is 60. R&B singer James Smith (The Stylistics) is 59. Boxer Roberto Duran is 58. Pop singer Gino Vannelli is 57.

Answer to previous puzzle: A crossword puzzle grid with words like SLAY, ASEC, BARDS, TACO, LAVA, UBOAT, RSTU, TWIN, LOTTA, ASU, HAILING, GACAB, POPCORN, HOER, OPS, HES, DAMS, ANGLO, ALIT, VIA, WINDFALL, PROFITS, ALA, FLIT, WIDTH, YEWIS, IFS, VAN, LEAVE, VERDICT, THUNDERBIRD, DUO, RUNTO, AIDS, PERK, ASTIR, FLEE, EASE, PHONE, TKOS, GLEN.

Newsday Crossword

ROMANTIC by Gail Grabowski Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Clues include: 1 African snakes, 5 Tire in the trunk, 10 Sow's supper, 14 Breadbasket item, 15 Ocean motions, 16 Mystical glow, 17 Detective's lead, 18 Barnyard perch, 19 '...hardly wait!', 20 Host team's basketball locale, 22 Lower-leg joint, 23 Heartbeat, 24 Required task, 25 Iron alloy, 27 Camera accessory, 30 Plays the lead role, 31 Paid out, 33 Patient-care grp., 34 Be incorrect, 35 Shoreline, 36 Quite likely, 37 Harbor boat, 38 Young stallions, 39 Young women, 41 How-to book's starting point, 43 'I'll do that for you!', 44 Pulled apart, 45 Stretches over, 47 Soup server, 49 Like tiny print, 53 Egg-shaped, 54 Well-built, 55 Use a vegetable peeler.

# State probe finds code violations at shelter

By DANNY ROBBINS

Associated Press Writer  
DALLAS — A state investigation has found more than a dozen fire code violations at the East Texas homeless shelter where five men died in a massive blaze early this year.

The investigation by the state fire marshal's office has determined that the Christians in Action shelter in Paris was deficient in 18 areas, including a lack of fire prevention devices and proper exits, before it burned to the ground in the early morning hours of Jan. 5. Thirty men were sleeping in makeshift cubicles at the time.

The report said the Lamar County district attorney's office will review the matter to see if criminal negligence was involved and that the case will remain open until the DA's scrutiny is complete.

Gary Young, county and district attorney for Lamar County, declined comment, saying he hadn't seen the report. Paris Fire Chief Ronnie Grooms, whose office requested the investigation, declined comment Monday.

A copy of the document, completed May 20, was obtained by The Associated Press through a

request under the Texas Public Information Act. The report paints a stark picture of a group facility that for years operated under unsafe conditions and off the radar of local authorities even though it was located in a downtown section of the city of 26,000.

"This is a tragedy that any local jurisdiction would do well to learn from," said Jerry Hagens, a spokesman for the state fire marshal's office.

Larry Dixon, whose brother Derrial was among those who died, said he would welcome an investigation by the district attorney.

"Justice has not been met because nobody is saying who's actually liable and I know somebody has to be liable," he said.

The report details how men slept in wooden cubicles built into a warehouse-style structure that lacked sprinklers or smoke detectors as well as the required number of exits. The building also contained "excessive" amounts of donated clothing and other items throughout, according to the document.

The men who died were discovered in an upper level of cubicles that afforded "minimal"



AP photo/George Strawn/The Paris News

This Jan. 5, 2009, file photo shows members of the Paris Fire Department securing equipment after extinguishing an overnight blaze at the Seed Sowers Christians in Action homeless shelter in Paris, Texas. A state report has found more than a dozen fire code violations at the East Texas homeless shelter that burned to the ground in January, killing five of the 30 men sleeping inside.

means of egress, according to Jim Lindholm, the state's investigator.

Lindholm wrote that the fire started in a large pile of clothing that was "boxed in" by some of the cubicles, but he could not determine its cause. The pile of clothing was 5 feet high and had to be removed from the building with heavy equipment, he stated.

Lindholm noted that most of the men in the

facility smoked and were careless in how they disposed of their cigarettes. He also stated that a lamp that had been positioned near the clothing could not be examined because it had been removed by "an unknown party" to "an unknown location."

Don Walker, the founder of the nonprofit organization that owned and operated the facility, said Monday smok-

ing was not allowed in the building. He said battery-operated smoke detectors had been installed, but the men were constantly removing the devices so they could smoke.

Walker said his organization, Seed Sowers Christians in Action, did the best it could with little funding and would have upgraded the facility if the fire department had ordered it.

"If (the fire department) would have told me I needed these kind of things, I would have done everything in my power (to follow their instructions)," he said. "Of course, even with that, you've got to have money to do it."

Lindholm, citing information provided by Paris fire personnel, stated in his report that

See FIRE, Page 8A

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# Vietnam veteran's art documented war

By MICHAEL GRANBERRY

The Dallas Morning News ARGYLE — Don Schol is a Vietnam veteran and no stranger to the horror of war. But from the moment he arrived in 1967, his experience was destined to be different.

The Pan Am jet from San Francisco had just touched down at the Saigon airport. A jeep pulled up and a captain barked, "Schol, come with me." At U.S. Army headquarters, he met a colonel who told him he would be using his talent as an artist to document the war for posterity.

He would carry an M-16, a .45 and an artist's sketchbook.

"Our job," Schol says, "was to document the war like no other war had ever been documented."

Schol was appointed the head of a team of combat artists who from October 1967 to April 1968 crisscrossed Vietnam to paint, sculpt, shoot

pictures and, like every other soldier, try to survive which posed the biggest challenge.

"I have always been a dove," Schol says. "Vietnam made me even more of one."

Schol's work and that of the four enlisted men he supervised as artists became permanent fixtures in the U.S. Army Office of Military History, where it remains in Washington, D.C. But what he saw and felt has never left the Argyle resident, who, at 67, remembers all too well the enduring terror of Vietnam.

An exhibition of Schol's work is on view through Saturday at Photographs Do Not Bend on Dragon Street in the Dallas Design District. It consists of 16 wood-cut prints that Schol hopes will "grab people, make them think about what they're seeing. I want them to realize ... this could be any war." (Those who wish to buy individual prints can do so for \$600 each.)

Schol has taught at the University of North Texas since 1969, just after he left Vietnam. Even now, he finds it hard to escape the grim effects of war, which in his mind too many people take for granted. These days, he's lamenting the departure of one of his UNT graduate students who was recently sent to Iraq for a second time to finish out his reserve commitment. More than 40 years later, Schol is still coping with his own war, which caused his best friend to take his life soon after coming home.

Burt Finger, the co-owner of Photographs Do Not Bend, served in Vietnam during 1968 and 1969 with the 299th Combat Engineer Battalion stationed in Dak To. He says Schol's exhibition "has brought back a lot of really hard memories. The pieces are so real to me, so vivid. The first time I saw them in his studio, there were actu-

ally tears in my eye. It was almost too much for me to look at, it was so emotional."

Finger is especially moved by Angel of Mercy, which shows a helicopter with angel wings, the kind that flew him to safe harbor after he was wounded. More than anything, he says, Schol's artwork portrays the horror of war but does so "with a feather and not a sledgehammer."

"It's the responsibility of returning soldiers to try to relate to others the horror and the misery of war," Finger says. "It's not something you ever walk away from."

As soon as they arrived, Schol and his team of artists hooked up with the 3rd brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, the same unit depicted in Apocalypse Now. Death arrived quickly.

"More so than battlefields with bodies lying all around, it was the existential mo-

ments that always went the deepest," Schol says. "For me, seeing an individual at the moment of death was the hardest." It was also an existential moment to have someone shoot at him, which he says made the war "very, very personal."

Schol remembers a moment with the 25th Infantry when he was visiting soldiers huddled in a tent. He left, and no more than a minute later, watched a mortar round hit the tent, killing all inside.

"I was moved by the whole experience," he says, "but what saved me was my philosophy, my outlook, my ability to put things in perspective. I was not unfamiliar with the atrocities of war." His father had, for six months during World War II, been a prisoner of war, held captive by the Nazis. He now realizes that even his father suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome.

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## FIRE

Continued from Page 7A

the shelter hadn't been inspected since 2005. Records reviewed by the AP in February showed that the building had been inspected by the Paris Fire Department only five times in the past 10 years, the last in 2006, and that none of the inspections were by state-certified fire inspectors. The records detailed how the inspections failed to notice that the facility lacked the basic safety requirements for overnight occupancy.



## Community Guide

*A resource for newcomers to  
Big Spring and Howard County*

**Publication Date: July 26, 2009**  
**DEADLINE: July 15th**

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