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Cowboys working on chemistry

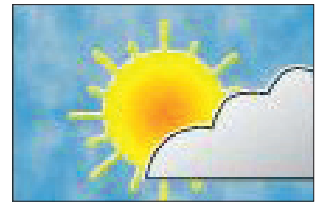
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THURSDAY

AUGUST 6, 2009



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Rash of arsons keep FD hopping

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

The Big Spring Fire Marshal's Office added two more reports of arson to its case load Wednesday, as fires in the 1600 block of Third Street and 1400 block of W. Second Street join the recent rash of fires set in the Crossroads area.

According to Fire Marshal Carl Condray, the fire in the 1600 block of Third Street was discovered after it had already extinguished itself.

"The owners of the building showed up to open their business and discovered the damage," said Condray. "It appears someone had

See ARSON, Page 3A



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Big Spring Fire Department personnel extinguish hot spots from a fire they believe was deliberately set in the 1400 block of West Second Street Wednesday morning. No injuries were reported.

Back to school: Registration times announced

By STEVE REAGAN

Staff Writer

Preparations for the new school year are shifting into high gear across Howard County.

The county's three public school systems have announced information regarding new student enrollment and current student registration for the 2009-2010 school year, which starts Aug. 24 in Big Spring,

Coahoma and Forsan.

Parents of students new to Big Spring Independent School District can set up an appointment to enroll their children by calling the respective campuses. They will need to bring the child's birth certificate, immunization records, social security card and proof of residency.

Those unsure as to which school their child will attend should call the

administration office at 264-3600 for more information.

Campuses holding student orientation and/or schedule pick ups include:

- Big Spring High School — Sophomores can pick up schedules from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. Aug. 18. Later that day, juniors can get their schedules from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Seniors will receive their schedules from 9 a.m.

until 3 p.m. Aug. 19.

Orientation and schedule pickup for incoming freshmen will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Aug. 20.

- Big Spring Junior High School — Orientation for students will be held Aug. 20 in the gymnasium. Seventh graders will meet at 4 p.m. and eighth graders will convene at 5:30 p.m.

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Police investigating Tuesday night drive-by incident

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

Police officials say no one was injured in a drive-by shooting reported in the 400 block of Aylesford Tuesday night, but a pair of vehicles were hit, causing several hundred dollars in damage.

According to Sgt. Tony Everett, public information officer with the Big Spring Police Department, officers were dispatched to the home shortly after a report was made to dispatchers at 9:40 p.m.

"Someone in the home heard shots fired. The owner of the two vehicles went outside to investigate and discovered the damage," said Everett.

Damage to the doors and one window on a sedan parked in front of the home was reported, according to Everett, with damages estimated at approximately \$700. A second vehicle, a pickup truck also parked in front of the home, was also hit.

"The damage to the pickup was esti-

"There were no witnesses to the shooting, so we don't have a description of the car. However, we're hoping someone who saw something will come forward."

Sgt. Tony Everett
Big Spring Police Department

mated at approximately \$200," said Everett. "One of the windows was hit, and the windshield was also hit. Both vehicles were owned by the same man."

Everett said the shooters used a 12-gauge shotgun in the shooting, most likely loaded with bird shot.

"By the pattern of the damage from the

shots, it doesn't appear to be anything heavy, like buckshot," said Everett. "There were no witnesses to the shooting, so we don't have a description of the car. However, we're hoping someone who saw something will come forward."

No injuries were sustained in the attack, according to police records, and Everett said the shooting doesn't appear to be gang-related.

"This appears to be related to some sort of feud," he said. "We have some suspects we're looking at, but no arrests have been made at this time."

Everett said anyone with information on this or any other crime is encouraged to call Big Spring Area Crimestoppers at 263-TIPS (8477) or 264-TIPS. Investigators working on the case can also be reached at 264-2550.

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

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Rangers' slump continues with power surge by A's

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Athletics manager Bob Geren enjoyed watching his team's rare power surge.

Adam Kennedy hit a tiebreaking two-run homer in the sixth inning, one of four over the Texas Rangers in a 7-5 victory over the Texas Rangers on Wednesday night.

"Adam is such an excellent player,"

Geren said. "He can figure when to dial it up. That's a sign of a good, experienced player."

Scott Hairston, Kurt Suzuki and Cliff Pennington also homered for the A's, who won their third straight over the Rangers. Rajai Davis added two hits.

"That's something we haven't

done," Geren said. "It's been awhile since we've done that. Home runs are always good."

The four home runs gives the A's 86 for the season, still the fewest in the AL. The Rangers lead the majors with 161 homers.

David Murphy hit a pair of homers for the Rangers, who have lost four of

their last five games.

Craig Breslow (5-5) pitched an inning in relief of A's emergency starter Chad Reineke to record the win. Andrew Bailey got three outs for his 15th save. He's converted 10 successive chances.

See **RANGERS**, Page 2B

Romo to Roy

Chemistry for QB and WR developing

JAIME ARON

AP Sports Writer

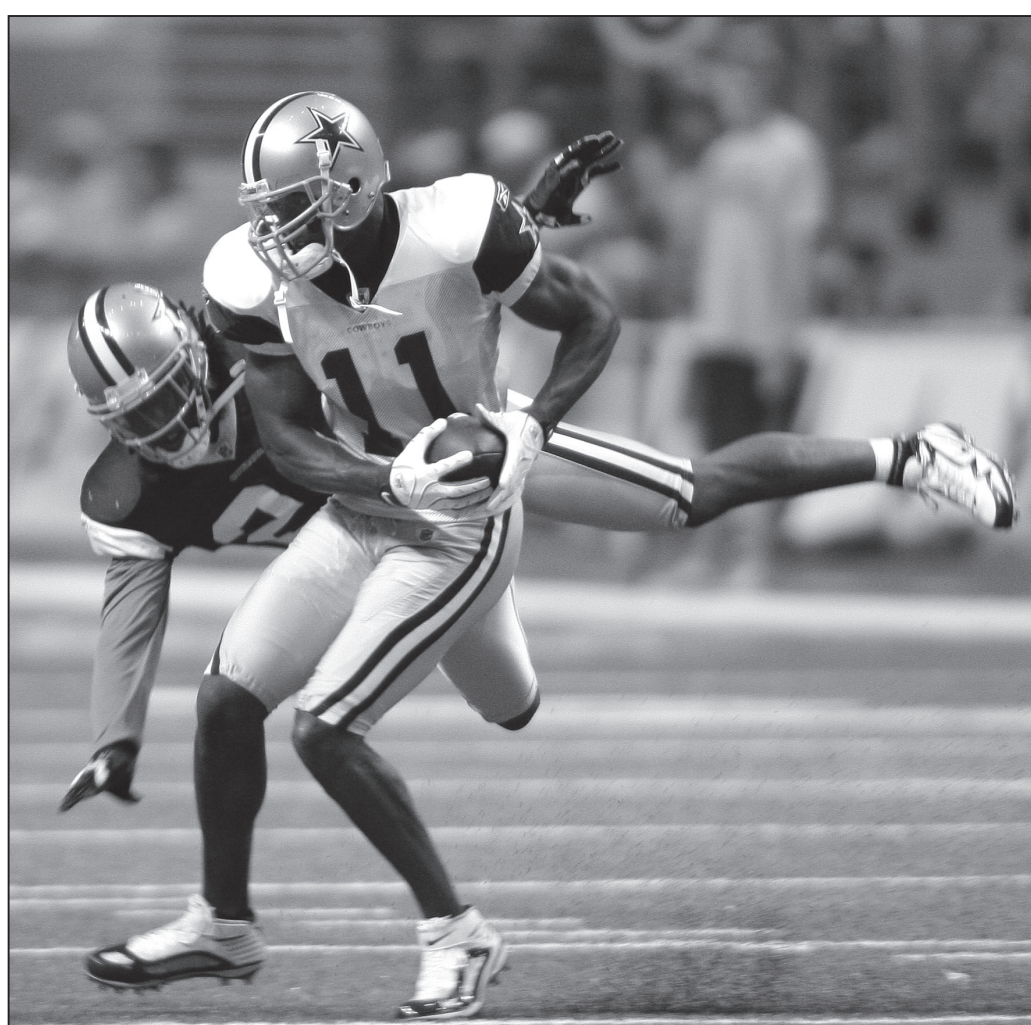
SAN ANTONIO — Tony Romo and Roy Williams are starting to get their timing down.

Romo and Williams had easily their best day of training camp Wednesday, a week after the Dallas Cowboys started practicing at the Alamodome. They hooked up repeatedly, even on tough plays, during the evening session. Although they weren't as crisp in the afternoon, everyone came away pleased with their progress.

"It's feeling real good," Williams said. "It's only a matter of time before it starts clicking. You'll look and see and we'll have turned the page."

Romo's No. 1 receiver with the Cowboys has always been Terrell Owens, but he has moved on to the Buffalo Bills. Williams is now in that position, so he and Romo need all the practice they can get.

The duo started throwing together several weeks before summer practic-



AP photo/Eric Gay

Dallas Cowboys receiver Roy Williams (11) and defender Mike Jenkins practice during the team's NFL football training camp in San Antonio Wednesday. The most talked about topic at camp is the chemistry between Williams and quarterback Tony Romo. That chemistry began to show on the practice field Wednesday.

es, then had OTAs. After about a month off, it took until the eighth day of camp for them to really shine.

"You're dusting the rust off, continuing to learn one another," Williams said. "That's why you have training camp and that's why you have pre-season games."

Williams caught only 16 passes for

160 yards and no touchdowns in the eight games with Romo after being acquired from Detroit last season. The only touchdown pass Williams caught for the Cowboys was thrown by Brad Johnson during his first two games, when Romo was injured.

See **COWBOYS**, Page 2B

Whiteside's slam lifts San Francisco over Astros

CHRIS DUNCAN

AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON — Joe Martinez handled his nerves, with considerable help from batterymate Eli Whiteside.

Martinez came off the disabled list to win his first major league start. Whiteside hit a grand slam for his first career home run and the San Francisco Giants lifted a 10-6 win over the

Houston Astros on Wednesday.

Martinez (2-0) pitched in the majors for the first time since he was struck in the head by a line drive from Milwaukee's Mike Cameron on April 9.

The 26-year-old rookie made seven starts in the minors before he was reinstated from the 60-day disabled list to start against Houston. He gave up three runs and seven hits in five innings.

Whiteside's slam gave the Giants a 7-3 lead in the sixth against Brian Moehler (7-7), who dropped to 0-2 with a 6.75 ERA in his last three starts. He nonchalantly flipped the bat and started an easy trot the moment he hit it, already knowing where the ball was headed.

"It was nice, for one, to put the barrel on the ball," said Whiteside, who came in with a .224 average.

Giants make Eli league's richest QB

TOM CANAVAN

AP Sports Writer

ALBANY, N.Y. — The Giants don't think being the highest paid player in the NFL will change Eli Manning.

Nothing seems to. "He is a franchise quarterback," Giants general manager Jerry Reese said Wednesday. "He has done everything we asked him to do. He has come in, taken a lot of flack from you guys (the media) and he just keeps going. He does what we ask him to do off the field and he does what we ask him to do off the field. He is a good football player."

The easygoing New Orleans native, who took over as the Giants starter midway through his rookie season in 2004, has proven a worthy No. 1 overall draft pick. In his first four NFL seasons as the full-time starter, Manning has won a Super Bowl and was MVP of the game, helped his team to the playoffs all four years and is coming off his first Pro Bowl season.

Now he's set to make more money than even older brother Peyton.

Eli Manning agreed to a six-year, \$97 million contract extension, an average salary of roughly \$15.3 million, according to a person close to the talks. The person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal was not signed and had not been announced, said Manning is guaranteed \$35 million under the deal that will keep him with the Giants through the 2015 season.

The extension will pay Manning \$200,000 per year more than All-Pro cornerback Nnamdi Asomugha of the Oakland Raiders, who agreed to a three-year, \$45.3 million contract this year.

Peyton Manning earns an

See **ELI**, Page 2B

Sports in brief

Big Spring Lady Steers volleyball hosting scrimmage Friday

The Big Spring Lady Steers are taking the final steps to get ready for the 2009 volleyball season as they play host to four teams in a scrimmage Friday.

The freshman team will scrimmage in the east Big Spring Junior High gym, while the junior varsity plays in the west junior high gym.

All varsity scrimmages are set for Steer Gym at the high school. The practice matches will last 25 minutes with a 5-minute break in between to warm up.

The JV and varsity schedule is as follows: **10 a.m. - Big Spring vs. Midland Christian**; 10:30 a.m. - Snyder vs. Veribest; 11 a.m. - Colorado City vs. Midland Christian; **11:30 a.m. - Big Spring vs. Veribest**; noon - Snyder vs. Colorado City; 12:30 p.m. - Veribest vs. Midland Christian; **1 p.m. - Big Spring vs. Colorado City**; 1:30 p.m. - Snyder vs. Midland Christian.

The freshmen schedule is as follows: 10:30 a.m. - Snyder vs. Colorado City; 11 a.m. - Colorado City vs. Midland Christian; 11:30 a.m. - Snyder vs. Midland Christian; **noon - Big Spring vs. Colorado City**; 12:30 p.m. - Colorado City vs. Midland Christian; **1 p.m. - Snyder vs. Big Spring**.

Steers inter-squad scrimmage set for Saturday morning

The Big Spring Steers football team will play in an inter-squad scrimmage Saturday at Blanken-

ship Field.

The freshman and junior varsity teams will be on the field at 9 a.m. with the varsity set to scrimmage at 10 a.m.

The public is encouraged to attend and get a first look at the 2009 version of the Steers.

Crossroads Youth Football signups slated for this month

The Crossroads Youth Football Association will begin signups for football players and cheerleaders Saturday at the Big Spring Mall.

Registration is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on each signup day. The other days to register will be Aug. 15 and Aug. 22.

Late registration for football only will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Aug. 29.

For more information, call Jeff Vidal at 816-6871.

Big Spring Youth Soccer Association starts registration Saturday

The Big Spring Youth Soccer Association begins registration for the 2009 season from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday at the Big Spring Mall.

Registration will continue throughout the following week — Monday through Friday, Aug. 14 — from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. each day. The final day to sign up is Saturday, Aug. 15, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Cost for registration is \$65 for the first child and \$5 less for each additional child. The cost includes the full uniform.

Boys and girls who are between the ages 4-11 are

eligible to play.

For more information, call Isaac Miramontes at 935-9056.

BSHS football season tickets going on sale at ATC offices

Season tickets for the upcoming 2009 Big Spring High School football season are now on sale for previous season ticket holders through Friday.

The general public can then begin purchasing season tickets Monday through Aug. 12.

Cost is \$30 for a total of six home games. Tickets can be purchased from Kay Cook at the Athletic Training Center from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday during the dates allotted.

For more information, call Kay Cook at 264-3661.

BSCC schedules Over 80 Scramble to benefit Big Spring Shrine Club

The Big Spring Country Club will have an Over 80 Scramble, meaning the combined ages of each two-person team must be 80 or older, Aug. 15-16, to benefit the Big Spring Shrine Club.

Entry fees are \$60 per player, plus golf cart rental. Private carts are welcomed, however.

Entry fees include barbecue on the course both days.

Practice rounds are available Friday.

Play will begin with a shotgun start on both days, and the field will be flighted by first-round scores. The number of flights will depend on the number of entries.

COWBOYS

Continued from Page 1B

An obstacle in their progress was the presence of T.O. and all the passes he was getting.

Team owner Jerry Jones took care of that by cutting Owens and making it clear part of the reason was to turn Williams into Romo's top target. Williams is eight years younger than Owens and has a \$45 million, five-year contract.

Asked about Wednesday's hookups between two of his highest-paid and

most-scrutinized players, Jones smiled and said: "More of that to come."

"He's been running good routes and he's been having good practices, now it's just a matter of us doing what we do," Romo said. "He's a big part of the offense. We definitely need to have good chemistry and have good correlation as to what we are both going to do consistently, and I think we're good now."

Cowboys coach Wade Phillips said he was encouraged by the times Romo threw the ball to Williams before he'd cut to where the pass was going.

"You really have timing when you do that," Phillips said. "Both of them

seem to be on the same page more than they have been."

Romo also is learning to throw to Williams when it looks like he's covered. It's a show of faith that Williams will make the right move at the right time and be able to make the catch.

Phillips said the harmony was especially evident on a play in which Williams was the second option. Romo's first choice was a receiver running a short route, but that guy was covered so he heaved it to Williams down the sideline.

"I thought those were really encouraging things for us," Phillips said.

Phillips said their slow start to camp was no surprise.

"It takes some time," he said. "They had pretty good timing without the pads on. You get the pads on, you get people bumping around, the route changes."

Since the pads came on, Williams also has impressed Phillips with his ability to adapt to different types of defenders.

"If a guy is really banging him, he'll rip through him real physical," Phillips said. "But if you get a finesse corner on him, he can handle that."

Said Williams: "To me, it's just throw it wherever and it's my job to make the catch, even if it's an acrobatic catch or a tough catch."

RANGERS

Continued from Page 1B

"There's a lot I would have liked to change, but you like to leave with the team ahead, so I'm glad I was able to do that," Reineke said. "I could have stayed in there, but they made their decision, and that was fine."

Vicente Padilla (8-6) allowed six

runs on seven hits over 5 2-3 innings. He walked two and struck out four.

"He could have been better and I'm sure he'd say that. But he battled and kept us in the game," Rangers manager Ron Washington said. "It was the long ball that beat us."

Reineke was recalled from Triple-A Sacramento to replace scheduled starter Dallas Braden, who had a swollen left ankle, which developed from a rash caused by a Neoprene guard used to protect his big toe when

pitching.

"I got my debut out of the way last year, so I wasn't that nervous," Reineke said. "I was a little anxious, but the worst was the two hours leading up to the game."

He became the 11th starter used by the A's and the sixth consecutive rookie starter, matching an Oakland record. Reineke appeared in a handful of games with the San Diego Padres last year.

"The guy doesn't have a whole lot of

velocity but he competed and threw the ball over the plate," Washington said.

Taylor Teagarden and Josh Hamilton also drove in runs for the Rangers. Hamilton's sacrifice fly in the sixth tied it 5-all.

"We know we're a good team," the Rangers' Michael Young said. "We're not going to let a couple bad games ruin what we've built up so far this year. We'll make our adjustments. We always do."

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Good Management

South dealer. North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ K Q 6 3
♥ A 7
♦ A Q 7 3
♣ K 10 2

WEST
♠ J 10 9 4
♥ K 9
♦ 10 9 8 6
♣ J 8 3

EAST
♠ —
♥ J 6 5 3 2
♦ J 4 2
♣ Q 9 7 5 4

SOUTH
♠ A 8 7 5 2
♥ Q 10 8 4
♦ K 5
♣ A 6

The bidding:
South West North East
1♠ Pass 3♦ Pass
3NT Pass 6♣

Opening lead — ten of diamonds.

Seemingly, the slam must now go down one.

But if you have the proper attitude, you start to think in terms of how the hand might be made despite the foul trump break. And if you think hard enough, you come up with the right answer. The slam is not as hopeless as it may appear, because it can still be made if the rest of the cards are favorably placed.

Obviously, there is no way of escaping the trump loser, so you set your sights on avoiding the heart loser. The opposing cards may not be distributed the way you would like them to be, but if you don't buy a ticket, you can't expect to win the raffle. You just have to hope West was dealt the king of hearts and that you can eventually force him to lead from it.

Accordingly, you cash the A-K of clubs and ruff a club. Next you cash the A-Q of diamonds and ruff a diamond. Finally, you cash the K-Q of trumps and exit with dummy's last trump.

West wins and, with only the K-9 of hearts left in his hand, must lead one. It doesn't matter whether he returns the nine or the king — in either case, you do not lose a heart trick and so make the slam.

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.
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ELI

Continued from Page 1B

average of \$14.17 million annually with the

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.

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

Indianapolis Colts.

Carolina defensive end Julius Peppers has Eli Manning beat this season, when he'll make \$16.7 million — but it's only a one-year deal.

Manning declined to talk to the media during lunch at Giants training camp on Wednesday.

Tom Condon, Manning's agent, was not immediately available for comment. Reese was hopeful that Manning's contract would be completed quickly, adding it's always important to get the quarterback signed.

Reese said that a lucrative new contract would not put more pressure on Manning.

"He is used to that," Reese said. "He won't get more pressure than he already has in this market. He knows how to handle pressure and he has done it before. I don't expect to see any difference in his attitude and his work ethic. He works hard. He expects a lot from himself. He knows what his role here is with us and we expect him to continue it for a long time."

Manning was in the final year of the contract he signed as a rookie in 2004 and will make \$9.4 million under that deal this season.

The two sides have been discussing a contract for months, but they worked out the final details in recent days.

While Manning's contract was to expire at the end of this season, there was little chance the Giants would lose him to free agency. They could have named him a franchise player and Manning has long said he wants to remain with the Giants.

Manning's Pro Bowl season last year included 3,238 passing yards and 21 touchdowns. He also threw only 10 interceptions, 10 less than the previous season.

Manning has started the last 71 games for New York, the third-longest streak among active quarterbacks at the end of last season. During that span he also has become the first Giants quarterback to throw for 3,000 yards and at least 20 touchdowns in four consecutive seasons.

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News in brief

Hillary Rodham Clinton remembers East Africa

embassy bombings

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Thursday honored the victims of the deadly 1998 al-Qaida-linked attacks on the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

A day before the 11th anniversary of the Aug. 7 bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam that killed more than 200 people, Clinton paid a somber visit to a memorial at the site of the former embassy in the Kenyan capital.

The site, she said, is a reminder of "the continuing threat of terrorism, which respects no boundaries, no race, ethnicity or religion, but is aimed at disrupting and denying the opportunity of people to make their own decisions and to lead their own lives."

Clinton placed a wreath at the site, signed a guestbook and met with survivors of the Nairobi bombing. She said it was a day "to renew our resolve to do all that we can to ensure that these attacks don't take more innocent lives in the future."

The U.S. says some of

those behind the attacks are sheltering in neighboring Somalia with an extremist Islamist militia known as al-Shabab that is battling the lawless country's weak interim government.

Clinton said it is "a great regret but it is a fact that we are not yet a signatory. But we have supported the court and continue to do so."

Gunman who killed 3, lamented inability to find a girlfriend

BRIDGEVILLE, Pa. (AP) — Neighbors and friends mourned the losses of three women killed in a shooting rampage during an exercise class at a Pittsburgh-area gym as the shooter's online diary revealed a man who was ignored by women and referred to an "exit plan" to avenge his rage.

George Sodini went to a sprawling L.A. Fitness Club, turned out the lights on the Tuesday night "Latin impact" dance-aerobics class for women, and opened fire with three guns, spraying dozens of bullets before committing suicide.

"He just had a lot of hatred in him and (was) hell-bent on committing this act, and no one

was going to stop him," Allegheny County Police Superintendent Charles Moffatt said Wednesday.

His 4,610-word Web diary appeared to be a nine-month chronology of his plans to end his misery with a shocking act of carnage at his gym. He couldn't understand why women ignored him, despite his best efforts to look nice. He hadn't had a girlfriend since 1984, hadn't slept with a woman in 19 years.

"Women just don't like me. There are 30 million desirable women in the US (my estimate) and I cannot find one. Not one of them finds me attractive," the 48-year-old computer programmer lamented.

Petitions for employment-based U.S. green cards down sharply

DALLAS (AP) — The number of petitions from employers trying to bring foreigners to work permanently in the U.S. has declined dramatically over the last two years, an Associated Press review of government data has found.

With the nation facing a deep recession and high unemploy-

ment, the government has received about half the number of employer-sponsored applications for work-based green cards in fiscal years 2008 and 2009 than it did in each of the previous years. There were almost 235,000 applications submitted in fiscal 2007, almost 104,000 the following year, and fewer than 36,000 through the first eight months of fiscal 2009, according to data obtained by the AP.

In addition to the weak job market, long application processing times, deep job cuts in sectors that have traditionally lured large numbers of applicants and more competition from American job seekers have led to the sharp decline, experts say.

"It mirrors the recession. Employers aren't hiring as much," said Kristi Barrows, deputy director of the Texas Service Center.

At the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' Texas Service Center in Dallas, would-be immigrant workers once waited a year or longer for a decision. Now, with the drop in applications and addition of staff, the Texas center has trimmed the average wait for those petitions and the oth-

ers it processes to about five months, a marked improvement that's still a month shy of the agency's target timeframe.

'Home and free,' U.S. journalists tearfully reunite with families

BURBANK, Calif. (AP) — After months of being left to live alone in fear and hunger, wondering if they might ever be allowed to return to their families, two American journalists held captive in Korea learned in just a heartbeat that they would be going home.

The moment, said Laura Ling, came when she and fellow reporter Euna Lee were summoned to a meeting with their captors and suddenly saw the familiar figure of former President Bill Clinton.

"We knew instantly in our hearts that the nightmare of our lives was finally coming to an end, and now we stand here, home and free," Ling said during an emotional airport reunion with her family and that of Lee's.

Both reporters sobbed and embraced their husbands and Lee's 4-year-old daughter, Hana, as they were reunited with them Wednesday

in a hangar at Bob Hope Airport in Burbank following a 9½-hour flight from Japan.

It was their last stop following their release Tuesday from North Korea.

Senate to vote on \$2 billion 'cash-for-clunkers' extension

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate is poised to add \$2 billion to the popular "cash-for-clunkers" program after lawmakers agreed to vote on the government car incentives and give shoppers until Labor Day to visit their local dealerships and make a deal.

Administration officials have estimated the tripling of the \$1 billion program could fund an additional 500,000 new car sales, giving automakers a late summer boost after months of ragged sales.

The Obama administration has said the program would go broke by Friday without congressional approval of the extension.

SCHOOL

Continued from Page 1A

• Goliad Intermediate School — Orientation and "meet the teacher" night will be held Aug. 18. Fifth graders will have orientation at 5:30 p.m., followed by sixth graders at 6:30 p.m.

Students new to Coahoma Independent School District can

enroll at their respective campuses beginning Aug. 10. Call your student's school for an appointment. New students will need to provide their Social Security card, birth certificate, immunization records, proof of residency and withdrawal papers from their previous school.

Returning students at Coahoma Elementary can register during regular hours from Aug. 10

through Aug. 21.

Coahoma Junior High students can pick up their forms beginning Aug. 17. Registration will be held from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. Aug. 21.

Schedule pick up for Coahoma High School students is as follows: Seniors, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Aug. 11; juniors, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Aug. 11; sophomores, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Aug. 12; freshmen, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Aug. 12.

At Forsan ISD, new student registration and enrollment will be held from 8 a.m. until noon and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Monday at both campuses.

Students in grades 7 through 12 will need to pick up registration/enrollment packets from 8 a.m. until noon and from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. Tuesday, then return those forms to their campus by 4 p.m. that Friday. Student and

parent signatures are required before scheduled can be picked up.

Sixth grade orientation and registration at Forsan Junior High will be held from 2:30 p.m. until 5 p.m. Aug. 19.

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

ARSON

Continued from Page 1A

thrown a flammable liquid on top of the building and some of it had run down the side of the structure.

"The fire had already gone out, and there's really no way to know how long it had been out when it was discovered. However, we believe it was set sometime during the early morning hours of Tuesday."

Condray said the damage caused by the fire was minor.

"There was some damage to the building's vinyl gutters," said Condray. "We haven't

yet put a dollar amount to it, but it shouldn't be very bad."

A second fire, reported late Tuesday night in the 1400 block of W. Second Street, consumed a vacant home, according to Condray.

"The fire was reported at approximately 12:26 a.m. The home, which had most recently been sold during a tax auction, was vacant and mostly boarded up," said Condray. "On the way to the call, firefighters could clearly see the flames and smoke, and the home was fully involved when they arrived on the scene. A portion of the home's roof was collapsing as they arrived, and short-

ly after the entire roof collapsed."

Condray said firefighters were on the scene in approximately four minutes, leaving the scene of the fire at 3:15 a.m. Wednesday morning.

"The home was a total loss," he said. "It's hard to put a dollar amount on damage to a vacant home like this, but it was definitely in the thousands of dollars."

No injuries were reported as a result of the blaze, according to Condray, but several residences nearby did lose electrical service for some time following the fire due to a transformer that was damaged.

These two most recent reports of arson join nearly a half-dozen others in the past several weeks, but according to Condray, he doesn't believe these two to be related to the string reported last month.

"They share some of the same elements, but I don't believe these most recent reports are related to the string of arsons from last month," he said.

Anyone with information regarding this or any other crime is encouraged to contact Big Spring Crimestoppers at 263-TIPS (8177) or 264-TIPS, the Big Spring Fire Marshal's Office at 264-2305 or the Big Spring

Police Department at 264-2550.

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AN ENCOURAGING WORD

By Eddy Pitchford

Football coaches are busy planning, working and reworking their goals and strategies for the upcoming season. They wonder about the skill of their new players and worry about the skill of their competition. They seek ways of improving team strength, speed and agility. They strive to strengthen their motivational tactics. They mentally play and replay all the near misses and close plays of last year. They are excited because they are undefeated!

The Christian praises God for the freshness of each new day. The realization that the victory has been won through Christ motivates and encourages. While praying about the near misses of yesterday, the desire for growing in grace and knowledge frames the playing field of today. The mercies of God are not just available for a few weeks each fall; they are new every morning! "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord."

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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.

Ron Midkiff
Publisher

Bill McClellan
News Editor

John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

OUR VIEW

Area's teenagers now hard at work readying for play

Once again, the dog days of summer have definitely arrived. Nonetheless, several hundred high school students throughout the Crossroads area are hard at work toiling in that heat, many taking part in two-a-day drills designed to hone a plethora of skills.

Most schoolboy football players began two-a-day practices this week.

Volleyball players, as well as cross-country team members and tennis players at some schools, are also honing their skills and conditioning for their seasons.

Also hard at work are members of high school bands throughout the area. Just like the athletes in their schools, they have their eyes set on mastering skills that will show up in front of the entire community.

The West Texas sun beats down almost mercilessly in August, so coaches and band directors in the area do their best to schedule practices at times other than when the sun is at its hottest.

Still, there's no real escape. Two-a-days by their nature, even if they were conducted in air-conditioned comfort, are a grueling task.

So why on earth would the young people of this area put themselves through the agony?

It's the desire to be the best they can possibly be at their particular extracurricular endeavor.

We here at the *Herald* think that's admirable, and that's why each year at this time we take the opportunity to salute each and every one of them.

Whatever the upcoming season holds, we believe these young people are most certainly en route to a job well done.

All of us should be proud of them. We certainly are.

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

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 - Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

With You, Lord, We can avoid dangerous confrontations.

Amen

It's 'Dancing with the Czars'

As President Barack Obama seeks closer ties with Moscow, we are noticing vestiges of the old Russian monarchy popping up throughout our government. Earlier this week, Deputy Secretary of Interior David Hayes became the latest example when he was named the California water czar. He joined dozens of others in what has become a veritable czar bazaar.

The rationale for creating "czar" positions is that such individuals can rise above the usual D.C. turf wars, knock heads together and make disparate bureaucracies achieve ambitious, overarching goals. Done well, this can demonstrate an administration's higher level of interest and dedication to an issue. But this ceases to be true when these exalted positions become so commonplace that it's hard to see where ordinary bureaucracy ends and the extraordinary begins.

By our count there are at least 31 active czars, giving the current administration more czars than Imperial Russia had in its history. We have a Mideast peace czar and a Mideast policy

czar, a Sudan czar and a Guantanamo closure czar. There's a green jobs czar, a pay czar and an energy czar, an urban affairs czar, technology czar and even a Great Lakes czar. Thankfully, there's also an information czar.

Clearly there is a place for the czar function. When you are trying to manage large new initiatives (such as those managed by the climate czar and health care czar) these White House-based positions can make sense. Similarly, when crisis situations develop (TARP czar, stimulus accountability czar) such positions also may make sense on a temporary basis. But others, like the drug czar, have been in place through several administrations with a spotty track record.

As they say, too much of a good thing can be a bad thing. When you look at the czar proliferation (there's a WMD czar, too), you have to scratch your head and ask if perhaps we should re-think this approach. Instead of constantly creating new positions to coordinate our government's activities, might it make more sense to figure out how to make the existing structure perform better for the taxpayer?

Turning to specially appointed czars to find solutions to some of the most complex problems facing our country is problematic. These czars occupy an exalted status in our government as

part of the executive branch but not any agency. Unless expressly provided for by Congress, the Senate does not confirm them; yet often have power over Cabinet-level officials who are subject to confirmation. Instead of streamlining government and making it more efficient, an overreliance on czars runs the risk of papering over problems (regulatory czar) while keeping the creaking structure in place.

In the end, naming a czar often yields a quick media hit and gives the impression of action. But czars are generally tasked with tackling challenging issues that require a high level of commitment, perseverance and resources. These issues are intractable for a reason: they involve tough questions, difficult trade-offs and touch the lives of millions of Americans from all walks of life. Simply adding another layer of bureaucracy isn't going to change that fact.

Only by reforming and managing the underlying bureaucracy can you effect long-lasting change. What we need is to make government work, rather than creating more czars to construct a Potemkin village for the major issues facing our country.

Ryan Alexander is president of Taxpayers for Common Sense, a non-partisan federal budget watchdog.



RYAN ALEXANDER



Swine flu? Big banks make us sick

By now every alert citizen knows that Big Banks are the leading contender for "Most Corrupt Industry" in America. And that puts them ahead of even oil, agribusiness and health insurance. Truly an all-star cast. Here in Connecticut we follow banking very closely because: 1. A lot of it goes on here, and 2. Our senior senator is in the bankers' pocket.

Sen. Chris Dodd, Finance Committee chair, an otherwise passable pol takes lots of campaign money from Big Banks and even from the scummy Payday Loan Industry. His wife also miraculously serves on several juicy corporate boards and he's received some tasty mortgages on his various houses. Talk about a sleeping watchdog!

And now that President Barack Obama has proposed some namby-pamby reforms for the financial sector, you can bet that the Senate will go docily along. There are very few boat-rockers there who might go for something stronger. Plenty of Dodd's colleagues are on the take too. The result is that even though the United States is now in Depression-lite mode, most of the same old bankers are still in charge and are once again collecting bonuses. Some have paid back their TARP loans in order

to free themselves of restrictions on bonuses and unseemly pay. Public policy is riding high, yes sir.

Even credit card moguls seem free of remorse. With their fine-print deceptions lately exposed in the public press, and with customers by the millions failing to pay their bills, the industry saunters along unabashed. It is enjoying the bailouts and is busy throwing sand in the gears of government-sponsored reform. The Treasury, as usual, is proposing only tepid improvement and the House not much better, leaving it to Sen. Dodd to do the heavy lifting. Which he is doing this time, what with the credit cards' high visibility and with reelection coming up next year.

Adding insult to injury, the Associated Press just did some telling research which showed that the dozen biggest bailed out-banks requested 4,000 special visas last year (22,000 over the last six years) to bring in cheaper foreigners for mid-level jobs. These positions pay about \$90,000 and supposedly reflect "jobs that American won't do." You betcha. Leave it to the corrupt banks to exploit one of the endless corrupt provisions of our immigration law.

One ray of hope in this gloomy picture is the health of small banks. A few overstretched ones continue to go under, but most have held onto their own local mortgages and are doing OK. An ad for one appeared in a local newsletter here last week reminding us that it is still a

"mutual" bank, which is to say, owned by its depositors. Hallelujah! Most of those babies have already been converted to stock companies and raped by their executives. Maybe I'll switch over to the bank in the ad.

But the really scary news comes from Russia. They, the Chinese, the Indians and the Brazilians just met to talk about promoting a new world reserve currency to replace the dollar. That won't happen overnight but it's in the cards eventually, probably a market basket of big country currencies like the Euro, dollar, renminbi, rupee, ruble, yen and real. Of course the United States is fighting this tooth and nail.

Nonetheless it will happen. With the dollar a shambles from wars, the banking collapse, mindless weapons purchases and mind-boggling trade deficits, there is no alternative. As the United States shows little interest in serious banking reform or raising taxes, investors will gradually but inexorably drift to other currencies, industries and metals. Thus the dollar will surely plunge and inflation will scale new heights, common enough among sinking empires.

The one thing in Washington that might save us would be campaign finance reform, but that's even less popular among pols than banking reform.

Columnist William A. Collins is a former state representative and a former mayor of Norwalk, Conn.



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Senate set to make history with Sotomayor vote

By JULIE H. DAVIS

Associated Press Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — Sonia Sotomayor is poised to make history as the Supreme Court's first Hispanic justice despite staunch opposition from Republicans who call her ill-suited for the bench, a pending victory for Democrats who believe her confirmation will pay off politically.

The Senate is ready to vote Thursday to confirm President Barack Obama's high court nominee, a 55-year-old appeals court judge of Puerto Rican descent who was raised in a New York City housing project, educated in the Ivy League and served 17 years on the federal bench.

Sotomayor picked up more GOP support Wednesday even as nearly three-quarters of the Senate's 40 Republicans said they would vote "no" and contended she would bring liberal bias and personal sympathies to her decisions. With all Democrats expected to back her, she has more than enough votes to be confirmed, barring a surprise turn of events, in one of the Senate's last actions before it breaks for the summer.

Democrats, praising her as a well-qualified judge and a mainstream moderate, are warning Republicans that they risk a backlash from Hispanic voters — a growing part of the electorate — if they oppose her. But Republicans bristle at the suggestion, noting that Democrats used extraordinary measures several years ago to block the confirmation of GOP-nominated Miguel Estrada, a Honduran-born attorney, to the federal bench.

GOP senators say their opposition to Sotomayor is based on her speeches and record, pointing to a few rulings in which they argue she showed disregard for gun rights, property rights and job discrimination claims by white employees. They also cite comments she's made about the role that a judge's background and perspective can play, especially a 2001 speech in which she said she hoped a "wise Latina" would usually make better decisions than a white man.

Republicans have been particularly critical of Sotomayor's position on the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms. She was part of a panel that ruled this year that the amendment doesn't limit state actions — only federal ones — in keeping with previous Supreme Court precedent. But gun rights supporters said her court shouldn't have called the issue "settled law," and they criticized her for refusing during her confirmation hearings to go beyond what the high court has said and declare that the Second Amendment applies to the states.

The National Rifle Association is strongly opposing her and has threatened to downgrade any senator who votes to confirm Sotomayor in its closely watched candidate ratings. The

warning has made little impact on Democrats, many of whom have rallied behind the judge despite their perfect or near-perfect ratings from the NRA, but it may have influenced some Republicans who were initially considered possible supporters but have since announced their opposition, citing gun rights as a key reason.

Just a handful of Republicans are backing Sotomayor, and most of

them say that while they disagree with some of her views and rulings, they believe she's well-qualified. Sen. Kit Bond of Missouri said partisanship has no place in debates over judges.

"There's been no significant finding against her, there's been no public uprising against her," Bond said. "I will support her, I'll be proud for her, the community she represents and the American dream she shows is possible."

Sen. Judd Gregg, R-N.H., also said he'd vote for her, adding that politicizing the confirmation process — as he argued Democrats did when they blocked GOP nominees in the past — "undermines the public's views of our courts and the integrity of our judicial system."

Obama named Sotomayor to replace retiring Justice David Souter, a liberal named by a Republican president.

"There's been no significant finding against her, there's been no public uprising against her," Bond said. "I will support her, I'll be proud for her, the community she represents and the American dream she shows is possible."

Sen. Kit Bond



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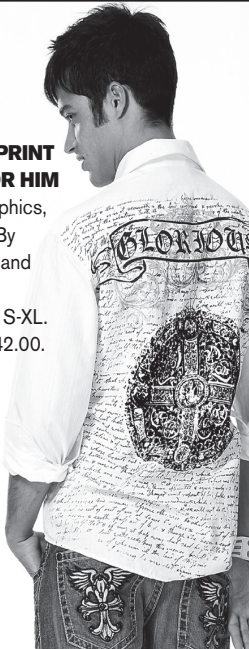
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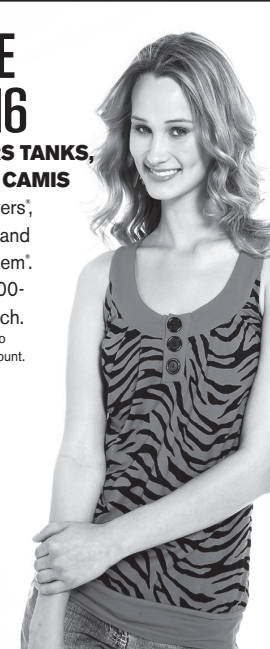
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*SUMMER FUN SWEEPSTAKES: NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. Odds depend on number of eligible entries received. Open to U.S. residents age 18 or older as of the date of entry. Sponsored by Specialty Retailers, Inc., 10201 Main Street Houston, TX 77025. Promotion runs from 12:01AM (CST) on July 1, 2009 to 11:59PM (CST) on August 31, 2009. Total aggregate prize value \$21,000. For complete details and official rules, visit www.SummerFunSweepstakes.com.

BEALLS HOURS:
Mon.-Sat. 10 AM - 9 PM Sun 1 PM - 6 PM
Inside The Big Spring Mall

Tomorrow's Horoscope

Keep your eyes peeled for strange evidence. The Aquarius lunar influences color the scene with bits of odd paraphernalia to pique our curiosity about what exactly occurred before we arrived. A random shoe, bits of confetti, a dirty glass ... the day after the full moon feels like the aftermath of a rowdy night, even when no rowdiness was had.



HOLIDAY MATHIS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). As you make your ambitious plans, do an inventory of your friends. They each have special talents, traits and resources that they would gladly share with you. Dare to ask more of them.

TAURUS (April

20-May 20). An issue that has been weighing on your mind will now be resolved with one decision. You've deliberated long enough. Now it's time to take swift, certain and inspired action.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Your feelings may be as normal and human as can be, but as they mix with your super-powered imagination, you are likely to experience them as extreme, extraordinary and distorted. A Capricorn helps you stay grounded.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your business and social acumen is impressive. You have special luck in selling a product, attracting a new client or making a customer for life. Finances are steadily getting better.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You believe in receiving value for your money and may have to

fight for this now. Your best weapons will be polite, personable reasoning. Get into a headspace of cool objectivity, then begin your argument.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There will be problems at work, but only if you choose to look at things that way. You could also choose to see this as a situation ripe for the handling, which you are likely to do with grace.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You relate well with people from all walks of life. You are likely to connect with someone who comes from a prestigious background. It's interesting to note what the two of you have in common.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Even the most organized and dependable parts of your life can get messy once in a while. To keep things in tiptop shape, do a maintenance check

on the entities and relationships you usually take for granted.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll do everything you can to make your environment a happy place, even if it costs a pretty penny. It's worthwhile since the way things look will affect your feelings. Beauty, color and functionality are important to you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You can rely on your talent for motivating others. You'll sense what you need to say to make things happen. Keep your message brief and to the point. You are extremely effective.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Life hasn't given you everything you wanted, but you're starting to realize that what it has given you is more than enough. You find a creative new way to utilize your resources.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Though there are those around you who would protest, you have every right to be fastidious about structure, order and cleanliness. Someday, people around you will be happy for your influence in this regard.

T O D A Y ' S BIRTHDAY (AUGUST 6). You have given your attention so generously to fulfill the needs of others. Here's wonderful news: This is your year to tend to the wishes and needs of your own heart. You'll take up an interest that you abandoned long ago and have immediate success. Fall brings abundant love and fun. January brings a windfall. Gemini and Aquarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 15, 6, 30 and 39.

C L E B R I T Y PROFILES: The former fashion model turned Academy Award-winner

Charlize Theron is lauded as one of the sexiest women alive. With her sun, moon and Mercury basking in the fiery energy of Leo, it's Theron's creativity and life force that makes her truly "hot." That's why whether she's wearing an unattractive prosthetic in the film "Monster" or a skin-tight suit in "Aeon Flux," she's equally compelling to watch.

If you would like to write to Holiday Mathis, please go to www.creators.com and click on "Write the Author" on the Holiday Mathis page, or you may send her a postcard in the mail. To find out more about Holiday Mathis and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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Annie's Mailbox



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

So I gave it to her. Now she says she doesn't think she can ever trust me again and ended the relationship.

At the moment, we are roommates because she is still in school and I promised to help her.

She wants to continue being the best of friends and says she loves me dearly.

But I want to be more than friends. Should I wait to see if she'll change her mind, or is she gone forever? Is there a way to win back her heart? — *Hopeful and Heartbroken*

Dear Hopeful: Trust is one of those things that is easily lost and incredibly difficult to regain.

We cannot promise that your girlfriend will ever feel completely secure with you again. You can wait indefinitely, letting her see how

trustworthy you are, but there is no guarantee it will make a difference.

We recommend instead that you move out and start fresh with someone else. If she changes her mind about a relationship, she'll let you know.

Dear Annie: I am going to be a junior in college next year. I'll be sharing an apartment with three of my closest friends.

One, "Susan," lives only 20 minutes away, and we make sure to spend time with each other over the summer vacation.

I also have invited her to parties and other events that involve my hometown friends.

Recently, another one of my roommates, "Jessica," came in from Florida to visit Susan for the weekend.

At no point during this time did either of these future roommates contact me to ask if I'd like to hang with them.

I only found out about Jessica's visit through her Facebook photos.

I am very hurt and wonder if they excluded me on purpose.

I don't know what to do. I was really excited about living with them in September, but now I have lingering hard feelings.

Should I bring it up or pretend I didn't notice? — *Confused Roomie*

Dear Confused: It's possible the weekend schedule was so rushed that there wasn't time to include anyone else. You can tell Jessica you were sorry you missed her when she was in town, but if you like these girls and wish to be roommates with them in the fall, you will

need to forgive this slight.

Keep in mind that living together will provide an opportunity for all of you to get to know each other better and solidify your friendships. It will serve no purpose to hang onto hurt feelings.

Dear Annie: My husband displayed the same lack of feeling expressed by "Emotional Roommate." Even his doctor advised treatment for depression, but he didn't care enough to pursue it.

He did not acknowledge the severe change in his behavior and ignored everyone while listlessly watching TV or napping. His energy, enthusiasm and humor were gone.

Then I pressured him to have his testosterone level checked at his next physical.

It was considered on the low side of "normal," but eventually, after repeated testing, his doctor prescribed testosterone injections.

It took several months, but my husband's attitude, energy and interest returned.

He is happier than ever and acknowledges that he can now, in retrospect, see how different he had become. "Roommate" should have her husband's testosterone level checked, and she shouldn't settle for a result that's "within normal range."

Ask specifically for his count, and if he falls on the low side, it may not be normal enough for him. — *A Friend written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, long-time editors of the Ann Landers column.*

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News in brief

Perry, Hutchison oppose Cash for Clunkers program

AUSTIN (AP) — As Gov. Rick Perry and Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison head toward an epic primary showdown in the race to be Texas governor, the two haven't been able to agree on much lately.

But the two GOP powerhouses were able to find common ground in at least one area Wednesday: their opposition to the popular "cash for clunkers" federal stimulus program.

Hutchison's Capitol office released a statement Wednesday, saying she planned to vote against a \$2 billion appropriation for the program, in which consumers get a federal subsidy for trading in their gas-guzzling autos for greener cars.

"Whatever short-term gain we might receive from this spending is more than outweighed by the long-term debt and financial burden we are passing on to future generations," Hutchison said. "We don't even have a report on how much has been spent on this program, nor reliable estimates of future requirements. It would be irresponsible to pass on another \$2 billion with so little information."

Perry spokesman Mark Miner was quick to follow up with his own statement, saying, "Governor Rick Perry is opposed to the program."

But even in their agreement, the campaigns found a way to keep the debate heated.

"After years of deficits, earmarks and bailouts, this is yet another example of the federal government offering a program it can't pay for," Miner said, taking a jab at the federal government and, by proxy, Hutchison.

Hutchison's campaign criticized Perry for opposing a federal program that's almost identical to a state program he signed into law eight years ago.

Mistrial declared in minister's child porn trial

WACO (AP) — A Waco judge has declared a mistrial in the trial of a 65-year-old Central Texas minister accused of possessing child pornography.

Henry Edgington of Chalk Bluff had pleaded not guilty, telling authorities he was doing research to get some Web sites shut down.

State District Judge George Allen declared the mistrial Wednesday after the McLennan County jury declared itself hopelessly deadlocked after 10 hours of deliberation.

Prosecutors say they haven't decided yet whether to retry the former pastor of the Elm Mott Church of Christ.

Police say the illegal images were found on Edgington's work computer at the Czech Inn in West, in his car and in a padlocked box in his bathroom.

5 bodies, 1 headless, found in Ciudad Juarez

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Five bodies, one of them headless, were found in a van in the border city of Ciudad Juarez.

The grisly find came Wednesday, a day when a prominent U.S. senator blocked some aid to Mexico over alleged human rights violations by soldiers and police fighting violent drug cartels.

The killings, along with five more Tuesday and hundreds this year, highlight concerns raised by some U.S. officials that Mexico's military strategy to control drug cartels is failing.

Arturo Sandoval, a spokesman for a regional prosecutor's office in Ciudad Juarez, said the five bodies were piled inside a red Jeep Patriot parked

downtown early Wednesday. The severed head of one was wrapped in a black plastic bag.

Police said four other bodies were found in a truck in the city late Tuesday.

Ciudad Juarez, across the border from El Paso, is one of Mexico's deadliest cities. More than 800 drug-related killings have been recorded this year, bloodshed that has gone unchecked by the February deployment of more than 5,000 soldiers.

The latest deaths in Ciudad Juarez came ahead of President Barack Obama's scheduled weekend visit to Guadalajara, Mexico, where he is meeting with Calderon and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

One item likely to be discussed is that U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy, a Democrat from Vermont, has delayed the release of \$100 million of a \$1.4 billion, three-year package meant to help Mexico combat drug traffickers.

Congress can withhold a portion of the money until the State Department confirms Mexico is not violating human rights while prosecuting the drug war.

Jury selection begins over mutilated infant

HOUSTON (AP) — A woman accused of cutting off her infant son's genitals is set to go to trial in Houston.

Jury selection was scheduled to begin Thursday in the trial of Katherine Nadal. Prosecutors say the 28-year-old mother was high on drugs when she used an unknown sharp cutting instrument to mutilate her then 5-week-old son Holden Gothia in March 2007 at their suburban Houston apartment.

Nadal's attorney says his client did not harm her son and blames the attack on the family dog, a 12-pound tan and black dachshund.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The Coahoma Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 7:00 pm, Tuesday, August 18, 2009 in Administration Building, 600 N. Main Coahoma, Texas.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district's budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.

The tax rate that is ultimately adopted at this meeting or at a separate meeting at a later date may not exceed the proposed rate shown below unless the district publishes a revised notice containing the same information and comparisons set out below and holds another public meeting to discuss the revised notice.

Table with Maintenance Tax and School Debt Service Tax rows.

Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget

The applicable percentage increase or decrease (or difference) in the amount budgeted in the preceding fiscal year and the amount budgeted for the fiscal year that begins during the current tax year is indicated for each of the following expenditure categories:

Table with columns for Maintenance and operations, Debt service, and Total expenditures, showing percentage increases.

Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value (as calculated under Section 26.04, Tax Code)

Table comparing Preceding Tax Year and Current Tax Year for total appraised and taxable values.

* "Appraised value" is the amount shown on the appraisal roll and defined by Section 1.04(8), Tax Code. ** "New property" is defined by Section 26.012(17), Tax Code. *** "Taxable value" is defined by Section 1.04(10), Tax Code.

Bonded Indebtedness

Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness* \$ 13,208,000.00 * Outstanding principal.

50-280 (Rev. 6-06/2) (Back)

Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates

Table comparing Maintenance & Operations, Interest & Sinking Fund, Total, Local Revenue Per Student, and State Revenue Per Student.

* The Interest & Sinking Fund tax revenue is used to pay for bonded indebtedness on construction, equipment, or both. The bonds, and the tax rate necessary to pay those bonds, were approved by the voters of this district.

Comparison of Proposed Levy with Last Year's Levy on Average Residence

Table comparing Last Year and This Year for Average Market Value, Average Taxable Value, and Taxes Due.

Under state law, the dollar amount of school taxes imposed on the residence homestead of a person 65 years of age or older or of the surviving spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse was 55 years of age or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of changes in tax rate or property value.

Notice of Rollback Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is \$1.0410. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the rollback rate of \$1.0410.

Fund Balances

The following estimated balances will remain at the end of the current fiscal year and are not encumbered with or by a corresponding debt obligation, less estimated funds necessary for operating the district before receipt of the first state aid payment:

Table showing Fund Balances for Maintenance and Operations, and Interest & Sinking Fund.

2009 Property Tax Rates in City Of Big Spring

This notice concerns 2009 property tax rates for City of Big Spring. It presents information about three tax rates. Last year's tax rate is the actual rate the taxing unit used to determine property taxes last year. This year's effective tax rate would impose the same total taxes as last year if you compare properties taxed in both years.

Last year's tax rate:

Table showing Last year's operating taxes, debt taxes, total taxes, tax base, and total tax rate.

This year's effective tax rate:

Table showing Last year's adjusted taxes, adjusted tax base, and this year's effective tax rate.

(Maximum rate unless unit publishes notices and holds hearings.)

In the first year a hospital district or city collects the additional sales tax to reduce property taxes, it must insert the following lines unless its first adjustment was made last year.

Table showing Sales tax adjustment rate and Effective tax rate.

This year's rollback tax rate:

Table showing Last year's adjusted operating taxes, adjusted tax base, effective operating rate, debt rate, and total rollback rate.

A hospital district or city that collects the additional sales tax to reduce property taxes, including one that collects the tax for the first time this year, must insert the following lines:

Table showing Sales tax adjustment rate and Rollback tax rate.

Statement of Increase/Decrease

If City of Big Spring adopts a 2009 tax rate equal to the effective tax rate of \$0.950783 per \$100 of value, taxes would increase compared to 2008 taxes by \$25,019.

Schedule A - Unencumbered Fund Balances

The following estimated balances will be left in the unit's property tax accounts at the end of the fiscal year. These balances are not encumbered by a corresponding debt obligation.

Table showing Type of Property Tax Fund and Balance for M&O, I&S-2007 Series G.O. Bonds, and I&S-2007 Certificates of Obligation.

Schedule B - 2009 Debt Service

The unit plans to pay the following amounts for long-term debts that are secured by property taxes. These amounts will be paid from property tax revenues (or additional sales tax revenues, if applicable).

Table showing Description of Debt, Principal or Contract Payment, Interest to be Paid, Other Amounts to be Paid, and Total Payment.

Schedule C - Expected Revenue from Additional Sales Tax

(For hospital districts, cities and counties with additional sales tax to reduce property taxes) In calculating its effective and rollback tax rates, the unit estimated that it will receive \$1,538,699 in additional sales and use tax revenues. For County: The county has excluded any amount that is or will be distributed for economic development grants from this amount of expected sales tax revenue.

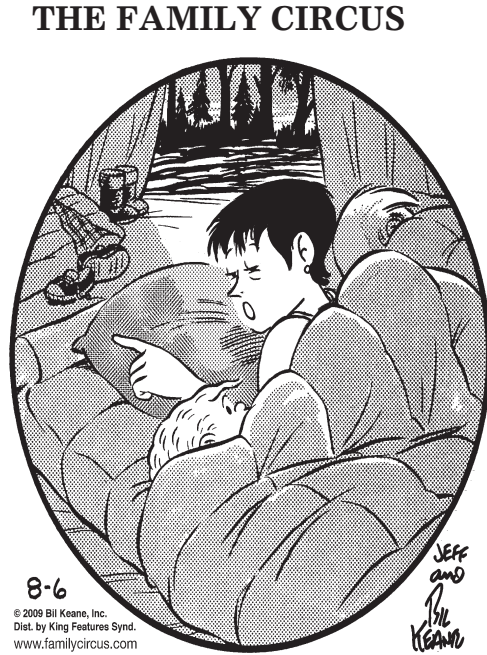
This notice contains a summary of actual effective and rollback tax rates' calculations. You can inspect a copy of the full calculations at 315 Main (County Annex Bldg.)

Name of person preparing this notice KATHY A. SAYLES, RTA Title TAX ASSESSOR COLLECTOR Date prepared August 12, 2008

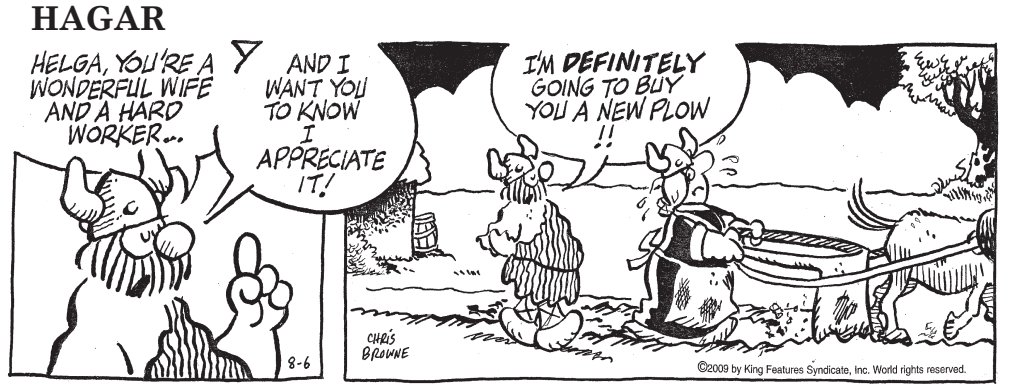
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	Dallas	Midland	Spanish	Odessa	Odessa	Telemundo	Midland	Atlanta	Odessa	Odessa	Discovery	Classics	Spike TV	Atlanta	Black Ent.	Disney	Sports	Sports
5	PM ABC News	News	Locura	Lopez	News	Noticias	News	Raymond	Granger	BBC	Cash Cab	Dragonheart	CSI: Crime Scn	Bones	106 & Park	Phineas	Horn	SportsCenter
6	PM ABC News	Jeopardy!	Gancho	Lopez	CBS	Noticiero	NBC	Friends	Brad	Business	Cash Cab	CSI: Crime Scn	CSI: NY	Movie: Inside Man	Jodie Foster	Wizards	Football	Homecoming
7	PM ABC News	Fortune	Two Men	Entertain	News	12 Cora-zones	Millionaire	Seinfeld	Sanchez	News-Lehrer	Perfect Predators	Movie: Jumanji	UFC's Ulti-mate 100	CSI: NY	Movie: Four Brothers	Montana	NFL Live	Who's Num-ber 1?
8	PM ABC News	Grey's Anatomy	Nombre Amor	So You Think You Can Dance	CSI: Crime Scn	Pobres	Office	Friends	Light of the Southwest	To Be An-nounced	Shark After Dark	Movie: Fight Club	Jesse James	Movie: Four Brothers	Game	W. Williams	Homecoming	SportsCenter
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10	PM ABC News	Private Practice	Mujeres Asesinas	TMZ	(:01) The Mentalist	Victorinos	Law & Order	Movie: Something's Gotta Give	Israel	Charlie Rose	Surviving Sharks	MAN	Movie: Man	Movie: Four Brothers	W. Williams	Montana	Homecoming	SportsCenter
11	PM ABC News	Private Practice	Mujeres Asesinas	TMZ	(:01) The Mentalist	Victorinos	Law & Order	Movie: Something's Gotta Give	Israel	Charlie Rose	Surviving Sharks	MAN	Movie: Man	Movie: Four Brothers	W. Williams	Montana	Homecoming	SportsCenter
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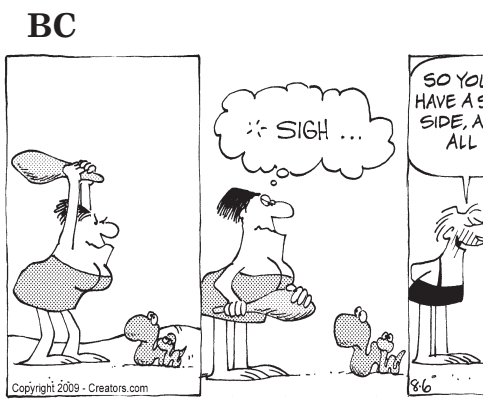
...AND PLEASE BLESS MOM AN' DAD... THEY REALLY NEED IT."



"It's only an owl. Now, get back in your own sleeping bag."



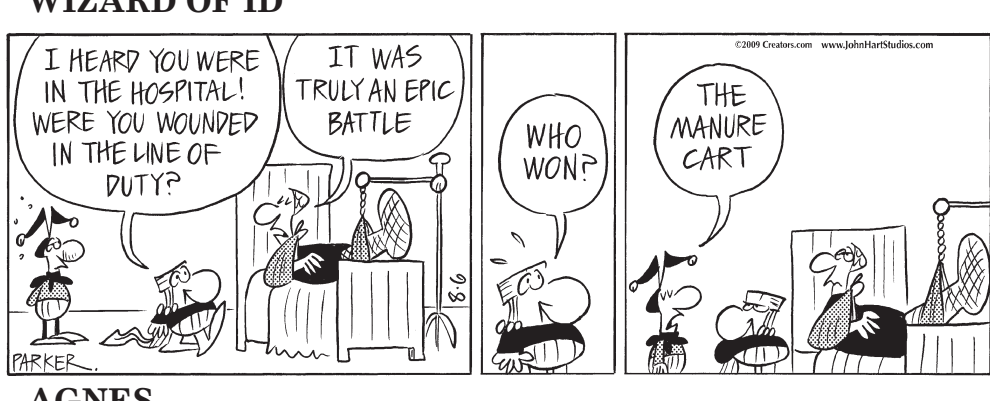
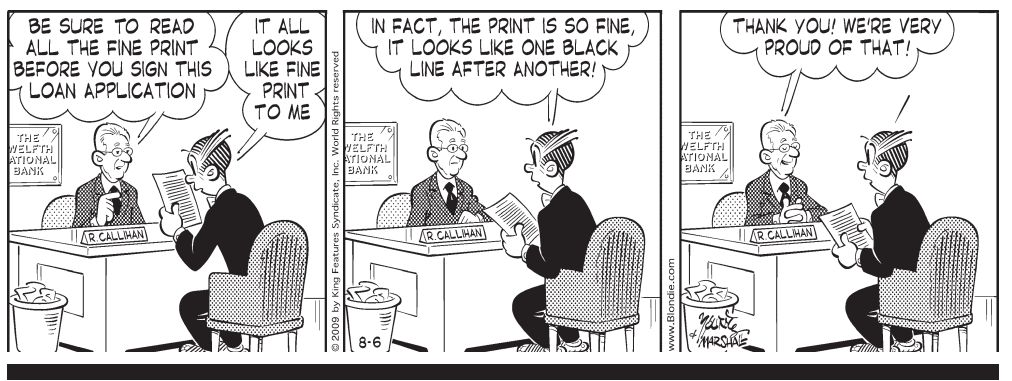
HAGAR



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WIZARD OF ID

This Date In History

Today is Thursday, Aug. 6, the 218th day of 2009. There are 147 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 6, 1945, during World War II, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, resulting in an estimated 140,000 deaths in the first use of a nuclear weapon in warfare.

On this date:

In 1806, the Holy Roman Empire went out of existence as Emperor Francis II abdicated.

In 1809, one of the leading literary figures of the Victorian era, poet Alfred, Lord Tennyson, was born in Somersby, Lincolnshire, England.

In 1825, Upper Peru became the autonomous republic of Bolivia.

In 1859, the Australian passenger ship SS Admella, en route from Port Adelaide to Melbourne, struck a reef off South Australia and broke apart; of the 113 people on board, only 24 survived.

In 1890, convicted murderer William Kemmler became the first person to be executed in the electric chair as he was put to death at Auburn State Prison in New York.

In 1926, Gertrude Ederle of New York became the first woman to swim the English Channel, arriving in Kingsdown, England, from France in 14 hours.

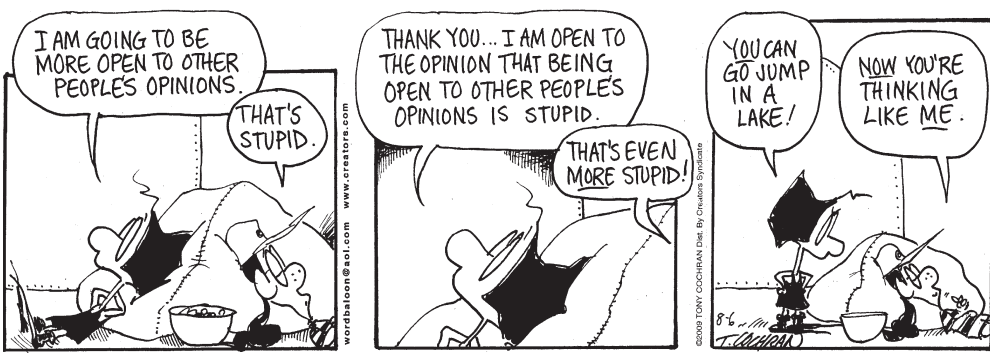
In 1962, Jamaica became an independent dominion within the British Commonwealth.

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act.

In 1978, Pope Paul VI died at Castel Gandolfo at age 80.

In 1986, William J. Schroeder died after living 620 days with the Jarvik 7 artificial heart.

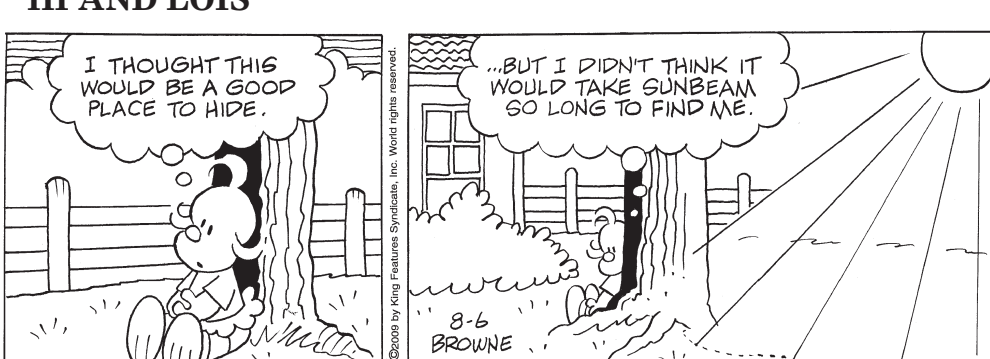
Today's Birthdays: Former tennis player Pauline Betz is 90. Actress-singer Abbey Lincoln is 79. Jazz musician Charlie Haden is 72. Actor-director Peter Bonerz is 71. Actor Michael Anderson Jr. is 66. Actor Dorian Harewood is 59. Actress Catherine Hicks is 58. Rock singer Pat MacDonald (Timbuk 3) is 57. Country musician Mark DuFresne



AGNES

(Confederate Railroad) is 56. Actress Stephanie Kramer is 53. Actress Faith Prince is 52. R&B singer Randy DeBarge is 51. Actor Leland Orser is 49. Country singers Peggy and Patsy Lynn are 45. Basketball Hall-of-Fame electee David Robinson is 44. Actor Jeremy Ratchford is 44. Country singer Lisa Stewart is 41. Movie writer-director M. Night Shyamalan is 39. Actress Merrin Dungey is 38. Singer Geri Halliwell is 37. Actor Jason O'Mara is 37. Singer-actor David Campbell is 36. Actress Vera Farmiga is 36. Actress Ever Carradine is 35. Actress Soleil Moon Frye is 33. Rock singer Travis McCoy (Gym Class Heroes) is 28.

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HI AND LOIS

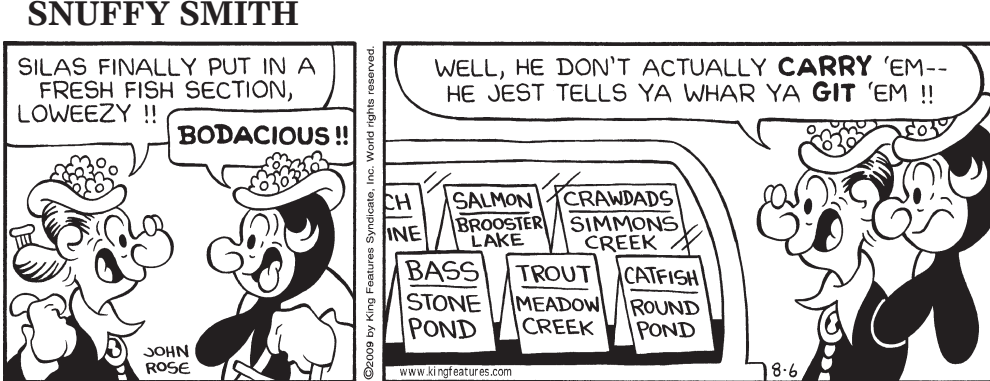
Newsday Crossword ALL THE TRIMMINGS by David W. Cromer

Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com



THE OTHER COAST

- ACROSS**
- 1 Bad time for Caesar
- 5 12-point type
- 9 Aquarium denizen
- 13 Bank teller's cry
- 14 Privy to
- 15 Print-shop worker
- 17 Swedish explorer Hedin
- 18 Dark-colored fruit drink
- 20 DC lobby
- 21 Borscht base
- 22 Jolly Roger flier
- 23 Get around
- 25 Colorado Native American
- 27 Love deity
- 28 Unvarying
- 32 Poetic preposition
- 33 Many a MySpace user
- 34 Tram contents
- 35 Amherst school, briefly
- 37 With 39 Across, Chinese dish
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- 60 Farm worker
- 63 April 15 org.
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- 30 TV therapist
- 31 Word on a bill
- 36 "____ Kentucky Home"
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- 41 South American, say
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- 49 Some muscles
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- 53 Temporary trend
- 55 Huron, etc.
- 59 Meredith's cohort on Today
- 61 Elemental building block
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SNUFFY SMITH

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BEETLE BAILEY

Midwest has been home to foreign detainees before

JOHN MILBURN

Associated Press Writer

LEAVENWORTH, Kan. — If suspected terrorists from Guantanamo Bay end up being held in Kansas, it wouldn't be the first time foreign detainees were imprisoned in the Midwest.

Thousands of Germans and Italians spent the last days of World War II in confinement on the prairie, far from the deserts of North Africa and plains of Western Europe.

As the U.S. weighs what to do with 229 suspected al-Qaida, Taliban and foreign fighters now jailed at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp in Cuba, one possibility is moving them to the military penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

But historians say the circumstances and Midwesterners' acceptance of the World War II POWs was far different from opposition being raised to bringing in Guantanamo prisoners. Many Kansas residents and elected leaders say they don't want them, worried the detainees would pose a security risk.

"It is not supported by the American public and will not change the world's opinion of us one iota by substituting the name 'Leavenworth' for the name 'Guantanamo,'" Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., said Monday at Leavenworth.

During World War II, thousands of prisoners of war were held in Kansas, Michigan — another possible site for Guantanamo detainees — Missouri and other states. Historians agree there was little opposition.

"It was a very different attitude and time," Kansas Historical Society historian Virgil Dean said Tuesday.



In this 1943 photo released by the Kansas State Historical Society, prisoners of war work in a field at the Fort Hays Agricultural Experiment Station in Hays, Kan. More than 60 years after German and Italian POWs were held in Kansas, foreign detainees may again find a home in the midwest with speculation that suspected terrorists from Guantanamo Bay may be housed at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

AP Photo

"That's not to say that there weren't people who resented them being here. But they were generally well treated and not a major concern for people."

Dean said that to many Americans it was Adolf Hitler — and not the German people or even German soldiers — who was viewed as the enemy.

But experts said Kansas residents did oppose relocating Japanese Americans to the Midwest. Dean said the feeling was that the Japanese were to be feared, especially after the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.

Those views, he said, aren't unlike what some Americans hold toward Muslims today.

"You couldn't know for sure who you could trust, regardless of how long they had been a citizen, a legal resident, a good American," Dean said. "You could more easily separate the good Germans from the bad Germans and the Nazis."

For example, officials could determine who were Gestapo members and keep them under closer watch. Others who were regular soldiers were not thought to be a threat outside the wire.

Bill McKale, historian at Fort Riley, Kan., where several hundred POWs were confined, said any comparison of finding German prisoners and the Guantanamo detainees has to be viewed through

a different cultural and political mindset.

The war wasn't going well for Germany in 1943 and 1944, with the Russians advancing in the east and Allies moving out of Africa and up through Italy.

"Those guys from World War II were probably happy not to be on the Eastern Front and winter, or post-D-Day fighting in Western Europe," McKale said.

"It's part of that whole cultural thing and gets into the sociology of warfare. People who don't act like we do, you are suspicious of."

At Fort Riley, the prisoners were kept at Camp Funston, where today advisers train for missions in Iraq and Af-

ghanistan. Some prisoners worked in the post laundry while others did landscaping or repaired streets. Those at another Kansas outpost, Camp Concordia, were sent out to nearby farms to help with the harvest or put up hay. Concordia had more than 4,000 prisoners in confinement, the largest contingent in Kansas.

"They were the model prisoners. There wasn't going to be hard cases going out," McKale said.

The prisoners, representing all branches of the German and Italian militaries, were captured and sent across the United States from 1943 through 1945.

At Fort Riley, the museum has photos and artifacts from the period, including one from the funeral of a German soldier and his casket draped with a Nazi flag.

"The prisoners are giving the Heil Hitler salute. It's kind of a chilling photo," McKale said.

Fourteen German prisoners were executed after the war in 1945 at Fort Leavenworth for killing other prisoners. Their bodies are buried in the prison cemetery near where the old facility stood.

McKale said the prisoners' movements were strictly regulated. Security was the top priority and armed soldiers weren't ever far from sight.

"It's amazing how quickly we forget," Dean said. "It's important to remember that we've been here before, one way or another, and we're able to figure out a way to deal with it."

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The Forsan Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 7:00 P.M. on August 17, 2009, in the Forsan High School Board Room, 411 W. 6th Street, Forsan, Texas. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district's budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.

The tax rate that is ultimately adopted at this meeting or at a separate meeting at a later date may not exceed the proposed rate shown below unless the district publishes a revised notice containing the same information and comparisons set out below and holds another public meeting to discuss the revised notice.

Maintenance Tax	\$1.0400 / \$100 (Proposed rate for maintenance and operations)
School Debt Service Tax	
Approved by Local Voters	\$0.05930 / \$100 (Proposed rate for bonded indebtedness)

Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget

The applicable percentage increase or decrease (or difference) in the amount budgeted in the preceding fiscal year and the amount budgeted for the fiscal year that begins during the current tax year is indicated for each of the following expenditure categories:

Maintenance and Operations	23.12%	increase
Debt Service	0.51%	increase
Total Expenditures	23.63%	increase

Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value

(as calculated under Section 26.04, Tax Code)

	Preceding Tax Year	Current Tax Year
Total appraised value *of all property	\$561,393,638	\$771,014,279
Total appraised value *of new property**	\$1,942,609	\$320,790,391
Total taxable value***of all property	\$514,539,846	\$739,970,919
Total taxable value***of new property**	\$357,880	\$318,490,508

* "Appraised value" is the amount shown on the appraisal roll and defined by Section 1.04(6), Tax Code.
** "New property" is defined by Section 26.012(17), Tax Code.
*** "Taxable value" is defined by Section 1.04(10), Tax Code.

Bonded Indebtedness

Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness*

*Outstanding principal \$3,990,000

Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates

	Maintenance & Operations	Interest & Sinking Fund*	Total	Local Revenue Per Student	State Revenue Per Student
Last Year's Rate	1.04000	0.08970	1.12970	8,025	1,877
Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operators Revenue & Pay Debt Service	1.06349	0.10794	1.17142	10,987	262
Proposed Rate	1.04000	0.05930	1.09930	11,019	262

*The Interest & Sinking Fund tax revenue is used to pay for bonded indebtedness on construction, equipment, or both. The bonds, and the tax rate necessary to pay those bonds, were approved by the voters of this district.

Comparison of Proposed Levy with Last Year's Levy on Average Residence

	Last Year	This Year
Average Market Value of Residences	\$58,700	\$62,287
Average Taxable Value of Residences	\$32,274	\$35,724
Last Year's Rate Versus Proposed Rate per \$100 Value	\$1.1297	\$1.0993
Taxes Due on Average Residence	\$364.59	\$392.71
Increase (Decrease) in Taxes		\$28.12

Under state law, the dollar amount of the surviving spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse was 55 years of age or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of changes in tax rate or property value.

Note of Rollback Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is \$1.0993. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the rollback rate of \$1.0993.

Fund Balances

The following estimated balances will remain at the end of the current fiscal year and are not encumbered with or by a corresponding debt obligation, less estimated funds necessary for operating the district before receipt of the first state aid payment:

Maintenance and Operations Fund Balance(s)	\$5,750,000.00
Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)	\$57,305.00

201823

Points
Of
Interest

Westbrook ISD Moving Forward

Westbrook Independent School District

has taken a positive, aggressive approach to the school business. At a time when declining enrollment amid

airs of change in the school finance formula have caused school districts to begin trimming the fat, Westbrook ISD is moving forward with all current programs and plans

to bring new programs on board!

Westbrook



- ▶ Pre-Kindergarten
- ▶ Core Subject Areas
- ▶ Honors Courses
- ▶ Spanish
- ▶ Technology Applications
- ▶ Distance Learning
- ▶ Extended G/T Program
- ▶ Academic UIL
- ▶ FFA
- ▶ FCCLA
- ▶ Drama
- ▶ Industrial Arts
- ▶ Sports
- ▶ National Honor Society
- ▶ Student Council
- ▶ Automated Library
- ▶ Senior Trip

*Small Student/Teacher Ratio

*Safe Environment & Excellent School District

*Recognized School District

*Additional New Bus Route that runs to McGregor Road - 1/2 mile east of Coahoma

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

2008 - \$448,000 shared

2009 - \$306,000 shared

Over one-half of our graduates complete 15 to 37 hours of college credit.

For more information or to obtain a transfer packet contact:

Westbrook ISD
PO Box 99
Westbrook, TX 79565
Phone: 325-644-2311

E-Mail:
office@westbrookisd.com

201824

4 kitchen basics can clean the house

JENNIFER FORKER

For The Associated Press

A little digging in the kitchen cupboards is all that's needed to round up enough supplies to polish, clean and disinfect every room in the home.

Not only effective, these few items — lemons, distilled white vinegar, baking soda and olive oil — are inexpensive. Additionally, they are ingestible and non-toxic. Store brands generally are not.

Somewhere during the past few decades, we forgot this.

"At some point in our collective history, we bought into (the notion) that we need Pine Sol and bleach to clean our homes," said Jennifer Taggart, an environmental lawyer and author of "Smart Mama's Green Guide: Simple Steps to Reduce Your Child's Toxic Chemical Exposure" (Center Street, 2009).

Taggart attributes Americans' dependency on single-use cleaners to fear — and good marketing by the companies that tout these products.

"We seem to be terrified of germs," she said. "We think if we make our own (cleaning supplies), they won't clean as well."

And that, according to Taggart, 40, is simply untrue. Homemade cleaners do exactly what pre-packaged cleaners do: They pick up and carry away germs.

Lemons make excellent deodorizers. And because they're acidic and have antibacterial properties, they can clean certain surfaces, such as cutting boards, according to Anne-Marie O'Neill, deputy editor at "Real Simple" magazine.

Distilled white vinegar also is acidic and performs as a gentle cleanser on most surfaces, including wood floors. (Do not use vinegar to clean limestone or marble surfaces.) O'Neill recommends adding ¼ cup of distilled white vinegar to laundry to neutralize strong odors. Add it to the final rinse in lieu of a fabric softener.

Baking soda is gritty, so cleans a little harder than white vinegar, according to O'Neill, and it deodorizes. Make a paste with water, and use baking soda to scrub away grease and grime, to gently polish silver or to brush your teeth.

Olive oil can be used to polish wood furniture and leathers, says O'Neill, but she advises doing a test spot first. She says it's excellent at removing scuff marks from leather shoes.

"You would think that it would be sticky but it is not," O'Neill said. "It's such a light oil."

Additionally, Taggart touts plain soap and water for many household cleaning chores. It's as effective as the costlier antibacterial cleaners, and in the long run, soap and water may be healthier to use because they don't over-clean. Antibacterial cleaners only clean bacteria, not viruses, and their use may encourage the growth of antibacterial-resistant superbugs.

Taggart would like to see more families turning to natural, nontoxic cleansers to improve the quality of their indoor air.

"Conventional household cleaners are believed to contribute to the elevated levels of VOCs (volatile organic compounds) found indoors," she says in her book.

The potential health effects vary depending on the product and its usage, so Taggart suggests reading product labels to steer clear of the most harmful chemicals.

Texas' Raspberry crazy ants: Ag pest or urban annoyance?

LINDA STEWART BALL

Associated Press Writer

DALLAS — A species of ant that has ruined sewage pumps, fouled computers and made it difficult for homeowners to enjoy their yards has a new target: the honeybee.

The range of the so-called Raspberry crazy ant has more than doubled in the past year, creating a swath in 11 counties beginning near Houston and moving north, scientists say.

Given the ant's encroachment on livestock, hay bales and a few honeybee farms, some are trying to classify it as an agricultural pest, one that must soon be stopped.

"It really is spreading at an alarming rate and we need to do research now," said Danny McDonald, a Texas A&M University doctoral student who is examining the tiny creature's biology and ecology. "There's no time to wait."

But serious research requires serious dollars.

The Texas Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Agriculture will fund in-depth research on the Raspberry crazy ant, but only if it gets the pest classification. And to do that, state officials say more research must be done. It's a sticky Catch-22.

"This is absolutely idiotic," said Tom Rasberry, the exterminator for whom the ant is named because he fought against them early on. "If killing honeybees does not put it in the ag pest category I don't know what does."

Honeybees are needed to pollinate crops. Honey, about 4.9 million pounds produced in Texas last year, is a sweet byproduct.

Emerging by the billions during the warm, humid season, the reddish-brown insect is



AP Photo/Pat Sullivan

Tom Rasberry photographs Raspberry crazy ants attacking a honeybee hive as beekeeper Steve Coplin looks on in Pearland. The ant that has ruined sewage pumps, fouled computers and made it difficult for some homeowners to enjoy their yards is spreading across southeast Texas. Its newest target is the honeybee. The ant is named for Rasberry.

at its peak in August and September and appears resistant to over-the-counter ant killers. They are believed to have arrived in a cargo shipment through the port of Houston.

Rasberry, a member of a federal-state task force created last fall in part to bring about awareness of the invasive ant, says the government is not moving fast enough to eradicate the pests, which were first seen in Texas in 2002.

The ants — formally known as "paratrechina species near pubens" — are called "crazy" because they wander erratically instead of marching in regimented lines. Although they eat stinging fire ants, they also feed on beneficial insects such as ladybugs and honeybees.

The USDA's Agriculture Research Service recently released about \$30,000 for a yearlong study by Texas Agril-

ife Extension Service and A&M's Center for Urban & Structural Entomology to determine how quickly the ants are spreading.

"Our folks know this is a very serious issue and we're jumping on it to make sure we find a solution very quickly," said Bryan Black, Texas Department of Agriculture spokesman. "We want to protect agriculture and we want to protect the public, absolutely."

Critics say the initial study won't address the ant's food preferences, reproduction cycles, lifespan, temperature tolerance or effect on wildlife.

"There are literally thousands of things we need to find out to get on a fast track, otherwise we're going to do just like we did with the fire ant and wait until it was too late," Rasberry warned.

Steve Coplin, a fourth-

generation commercial beekeeper in Alvin — about 30 miles south of Houston — said the ants began attacking his beehives nearly three years ago.

Initially, Coplin said, he'd just move his hives away from the infested areas but "now it's getting so widespread it's hard to keep up."

He said he's losing about 100 hives to the ants each year. At its peak, Coplin Bee Farms had about 2,500 hives, but colony collapse disorder and Hurricane Ike reduced the business to about 600 hives.

"Everything eats a honeybee — purple martins on down to dragonflies," Coplin said. "But the invasion of these ants is 100 times worse than anything I've seen. This is something new."

Apiculturists say the Raspberry crazy ants don't appear to be interested in the honey; they're after the brood. They invade the honeycomb cell and dine on larvae. When the bees escape, the ants take over the abandoned hive and lay eggs.

Coplin said he's forced to burn the infested hive and equipment. That's cost him about \$30,000 so far.

As an area director for the Texas Beekeepers Association, Coplin said other apiarists experiencing similar ant problems call him for advice. They fear quarantines and aerial pesticides could wipe out their precious bees along with the ant invaders.

"I would much rather have the fire ant," Coplin said, explaining that fire ants usually just eat dead bees that have fallen from the hive. "Fire ants are not as aggressive. They might sting and hurt at worst, but these things, they just go in by the thousands."

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