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**Garden City
 Bearcats headed
 to state title
 game**
 Page 7

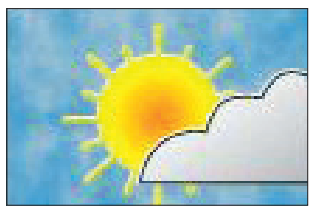


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HIGH BIG SPRING HERALD

MONDAY

DECEMBER 7, 2009



VOLUME 105, NUMBER 1

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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

Parade officially opens Yuletide



**Despite detour,
 cold weather,
 procession
 was success**

By **STEVE REAGAN**
 Staff Writer

Santa Claus took a different route to Big Spring Saturday. With Gregg Street off limits because of road construction, the annual Big Spring Herald Community Christmas Parade took a detour through downtown Big Spring Saturday evening, but that and cold temperatures did

See **PARADE**, Page 3

**KEEP YOUR EYES TOWARD
 THE SKY IN DOWNTOWN
 BIG SPRING FOR A HOLIDAY
 SURPRISE.**



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17 SHOPPING DAYS BEFORE CHRISTMAS



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Clockwise, from top: The jolly old elf from the North Pole — joined by Mrs. Claus — greets parade-goers during the 24th Annual Big Spring Herald Christmas Parade Saturday evening; local residents attempt to stay warm while waiting for the parade to begin; Cornell Correction's float makes it's way down Scurry Street, and eventually took Best in Show honors in the float competition; students with the Big Spring High School band play Christmas songs as the parade passes in front of the Big Spring Herald.

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Obituaries

Harry Hurt

Harry Hurt, 81, one of the world's foremost authorities on motorcycle crashes and their causes, died Sunday, Nov. 29, 2009, in a California hospital, days after undergoing back surgery. Graveside funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2009, at the Mt. Olive Memorial Park Chapel in Big Spring.

Mr. Hurt was the principal investigator of the Hurt Report, an on-scene investigation of 900 motorcycle accidents in Los Angeles conducted from 1976 to 1977. Published in 1981, his research continues to form the basis of many U.S. motorcycle safety programs.

He was a professor of safety science at the University of Southern California in the early 1970s.

The only child of a banker, Hugh Harrison Hurt Jr. was born in Big Spring where he grew up building and flying model airplanes. He joined the Navy toward the end of World War II, learned to fly and became a commissioned officer, but by that time the war was over and he never flown in combat.

He met his wife, Joan Beene, while serving in the Navy, and they married in 1950, the same year he graduated from the Agriculture and Mechanical College of Texas (now Texas A&M University) with a bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering. Later he moved west to attend USC and received his master's degree in aeronautical engineering.

Along with his wife, Mr. Hurt leaves two sons, Harry Hurt III and John; three daughters, Julie, Vivien and Vera; and 10 grandchildren.

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

John Stephen Edgar

John Stephen Edgar Jr., 79, of Big Spring died Friday, Dec. 4, 2009, in a local hospital. Memorial services will be held at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2009, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel with the Rev. Sharon Wiese, pastor of First United Methodist Church, officiating.

He was born Dec. 2, 1930, in Mathis to John and Thela Edgar. He married Jeanne Wells on Dec. 31, 1967, in Big Spring. She preceded him in death April 13, 1998.

John graduated from high school in Odem and attended Texas A&I University and Lamar University. He served in the United States Air Force from Nov. 22, 1950, to Nov. 19, 1953. He was a Methodist.

Survivors include two daughters and sons-in-law, Stephanie and Jerry Cannon of Big Spring, and Toni Jo and Monty Mrotz of St. Croix, Virgin Island; four grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild; three nieces and a brother-in-law.

He was also preceded in death by his parents; and two sisters, Catherine Frankel and Juanita "Corky" Smith.

The family suggests memorials to All Creatures Sanctuary, P.O. Box 871, Coahoma 79511-0871.

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

Raymond Villa

Raymond Villa, 51, of Stanton died Saturday, Dec. 5, 2009, in Midland. His services are pending with Gilbreath Funeral Home of Stanton.

Flora Wells

Flora Wells, 53, of Big Spring died Saturday, Dec. 5, 2009, in a local hospital. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Police blotter

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

- ELIAS MUNOZ, 54, of 204 Johnson, was arrested Saturday on a charge of driving while license invalid.
- SASHA HICKMAN, 21, of 614 Ridgelea, was arrested Saturday on charges of failure to identify and resisting arrest, search or transportation.
- JOSE AVINA, 33, of 107 E. 17th St., was arrested Saturday on a warrant from another agency and a charge of resisting arrest, search or transportation.
- JUSTIN WILSON, 21, of 311 E. Main in Forsan, was arrested Sunday on a local warrant and a charge of driving while license invalid.
- LOUIS BELLA, 35, of 1608 Jennings, was arrested Sunday on a charge of possession of drug paraphernalia.
- UNLAWFUL RESTRAINT was reported in the 1000 block of Gregg Street.
- THEFT was reported: in the 400 block of Birdwell Lane.
- RESISTING ARREST, SEARCH OR TRANSPORTATION was reported in the 300 block of Owens.
- ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE was

reported in the 1800 block of FM 700.

- AGGRAVATED ASSAULT was reported in the 1000 block of Nolan.
- TERRORISTIC THREAT was reported in the 1200 block of Marijo.
- POSSESSION OF DRUG PARAPHERNALIA was reported in the 1400 block of Wood.
- GRAFFITI was reported in the 700 block of Johnson.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported: in the 3200 block of Avenue C.
- ASSAULT BY CONTACT was reported: in the 1200 block of Marijo.
- ASSAULT BY CONTACT was reported: in the 1400 block of Wood.

Sheriff

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

Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 73 inmates at the time of this report.

- RICHARD GENE ARMSTRONG, 31, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a charge of contempt of a child support order.
- JOSE MANUEL AVINA, 33, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on a probation revocation for driving while license invalid with a previous conviction and a charge of driving while license invalid with a previous conviction.
- LOUIS ROSALI BELLA, 35, was transferred to the county jail Sunday by the BSPD on a charge of possession of drug paraphernalia.
- SAMUEL GILBERT BOUKNIGHT, 29, was arrested Saturday by DPS on a parole revocation for violation of parole.
- DAVID CANALES, 24, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a bond revocation for possession of a controlled substance.
- ERNEST WILLIAM CLARK, 69, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on a charge of public intoxication.
- RUBEN DOMINGUEZ, 23, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a probation revocation for driving while intoxicated.
- CHAUNCEY LAVAR FORD, 29, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a charge of contempt of a child support order.
- JERRY ERNEST GARCIA, 40, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a contempt charge for child support.
- JOHN PETER GORDON, 21, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on a charge of possession of a controlled substance.
- MARCUS LANCE HATTENBACH, 37, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on charges of criminal trespass, evading arrest or detention and resisting arrest, search or transportation.
- SASHA LATOYA HICKMAN, 21, was transferred to the county jail Saturday by the BSPD on charges of failure to identify, resisting arrest, search or transportation, obey warning signs or barricades over roads and disobeying lawful order of a police officer.
- TERE D. HOUSTON, 17, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on a charge of possession of a controlled substance.
- HOWARD BRANDON JOHNSON, 25, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on a charge of evading arrest or detention.
- CHARLES RENE LANDRY, 18, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on a charge of possession of a controlled substance.
- SANG XUAN LE, 36, was arrested Monday by DPS on a charge of theft by check.
- ELIAS LEE MUNOZ, 54, was transferred to the county jail Saturday by the BSPD on a charge of driving while license invalid with a previous conviction.
- KENNETH DEWAYNE NEWSOME, 18, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on charges of possession of a controlled substance, evading arrest or detention and unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon.
- LAQUANTHUS LAMAR RANDALL, 19, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on a charge of possession of a controlled substance.
- JUSTIN MICHAEL WILSON, 21, was transferred to the county jail Sunday by the BSPD on a contempt charge for minor in possession of alcohol and a charge of driving while intoxicated — open container.
- TERRANCE ALI YOUNG, 20, was transferred to the county jail Friday by the BSPD on a charge of possession of a controlled substance.




Fire/EMS

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

- MEDICAL was reported in the 3200 block of Parkway. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1900 block of Simler. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1400 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1200 block of Sycamore. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1800 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 3200 block of Parkway. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 300 block of Aylesford. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 4200 block of W. Highway 80. Service refused.
- TRAUMA was reported near the intersection of Goliad and Scott. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 700 block of E. 13th

Today's Weather

Local 3-Day Forecast

Tue 12/8	Wed 12/9	Thu 12/10
		
68/34	61/33	60/36
Decreasing cloudiness and becoming windy. High 68F. Winds SW at 25 to 35 mph.	More sun than clouds. Highs in the low 60s and lows in the low 30s.	Mix of sun and clouds. Highs in the low 60s and lows in the mid 30s.
Sunrise: 7:35 AM	Sunrise: 7:36 AM	Sunrise: 7:36 AM
Sunset: 5:41 PM	Sunset: 5:41 PM	Sunset: 5:42 PM



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Texas At A Glance



Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	68	33	pt sunny	Kingsville	74	58	t-storm
Amarillo	52	16	windy	Livingston	67	47	rain
Austin	66	47	rain	Longview	58	41	rain
Beaumont	72	57	rain	Lubbock	59	25	windy
Brownsville	78	64	pt sunny	Lufkin	68	47	rain
Brownwood	69	38	pt sunny	Midland	69	38	windy
Corpus Christi	70	58	rain	Raymondville	81	61	t-storm

Street. One person was transported to SMMC.

- TRAUMA was reported in the 2600 block of Chanute. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 700 block of E. 11th Street. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1900 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1600 block of Benton. Service refused.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 800 block of W. Interstate Highway 20. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 500 block of W. Interstate Highway 20. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1800 block of Shepard. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2000 block of Lynn. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1000 block of N. Main Street. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1400 block of Stadium. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1200 block of Lloyd. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 200 block of N. Main Street. One person was transported to SMMC.

Lottery

The winning numbers drawn in the Lotto Texas drawing Saturday night:

1-6-8-26-31-51
Estimated jackpot: \$17 million
Next Lotto Texas game: Wednesday night.

The winning Cash Five numbers drawn Saturday by the Texas Lottery: 2-9-17-20-34
Next Cash Five drawing: Tonight.

The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Saturday night, in order: 1-5-7-8. Sum It Up: 21.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Saturday afternoon, in order: 3-6-7. Sum It Up: 16.

The winning Daily 4 numbers drawn Saturday afternoon, in order: 1-4-0-7. Sum It Up: 12.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Saturday afternoon, in order: 0-6-1. Sum It Up: 7.

BIG SPRING HERALD

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Big Sky, Big Heart, Big Spring

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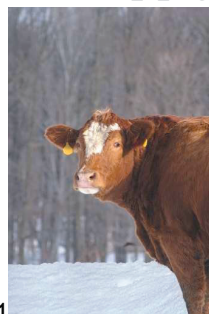
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WETT slates open house for Wednesday

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

Electrical transmission lines will be the topic of choice Wednesday when Wind Energy Transmission Texas holds an open house at the Dora Roberts Community Center to discuss plans for development in the Big Spring and Howard County area.

According to Chad Willbanks, spokesman for WETT, the open house is open to the public, and he hopes stakeholders in the process

will take time to visit with officials on how development plans will effect them.

"The purpose of the open house is to present our plans for the development of transmission lines," said Willbanks. "Land owners, stakeholders and other interested parties are encouraged to attend to learn more about the strategic planning and development of the routing process. Transmission route lines and alternative route lines will also be available for

viewing."

Willbanks said the development is part of a contract awarded to WETT by the state.

"The contract was awarded to WETT by the Public Utility Commission of Texas to construct, operate and maintain high-voltage transmission lines in 12 West Texas counties, including Howard County," said Willbanks. "This is part of the Texas Legislature's Competitive Renewable Energy Zone (CREZ) project

to deliver clean, renewable energy throughout the state."

The come-and-go open house is set for 5:30 p.m. until 8 p.m.

According to Willbanks, WETT is a joint venture between two worldwide leaders in electric transmission development, with members that have an international reputation for quality engineering, construction, operation and maintenance.

"WETT will use its worldwide experience and

global resources to speedily deliver a quality product to Texans at the lowest cost, providing Texans with the best transmission value and service available in the world," he added.

For more information about Wind Energy Transmission Texas, visit www.windenergyoftexas.com.

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



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Gary, left, and David Tidwell look over some items for sale at the annual Canterbury Christmas Bazaar, held at the retirement community Saturday afternoon.

TxDOT issuing high wind advisory weather warning

Special to the Herald

The National Weather Service has posted a high wind warning for much of West Texas for Tuesday.

Winds will make driving very difficult across the region Tuesday. Motorists are urged to postpone travel through the Guadalupe and Davis Mountains or plan alternate routes. Residents should be prepared to secure loose outdoor objects.

A very strong upper level storm system will lift across the Rocky Mountains into the Plains during the day Tuesday. Strong winds associated with this storm system will

spread across southeast New Mexico and much of West Texas during the day Tuesday.

A significant severe wind event is expected to impact the Guadalupe Mountains and the higher elevations of the Davis Mountains starting early Tuesday morning, and continuing through late Tuesday evening. West to southwest winds of 55-80 mph, with gusts near 100 mph will be likely in the Guadalupe Mountains. Speeds of 45-60 mph, with gusts to 80 mph are expected in the higher elevations of the Davis Mountains.

High winds will also likely spread across the southeast New Mexico plains, the Permian Basin, Upper Trans Pecos region, the Stockton and Marfa Plateaus and the Van Horn area Tuesday. West to southwest winds of 30-45 mph, with gusts of 55-65 mph will be possible across these locations.

Routine business on council's agenda

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

The final scheduled meeting of 2009 for the Big Spring City Council set for Tuesday appears to be business as usual, as the government body looks to handle a few housekeeping items before the end of the year.

The council is slated to present its "Doing Your Part Beautification Award" and "Star Employee Award"

during the meeting, as well as accept meeting minutes from the Conventions and Visitors Bureau Committee, Howard County Appraisal District Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment and Appeals.

The council is expected to consider first reading of an ordinance amending Chapter 18, Article 3 of the city code to increase the speed limit on the Interstate Highway 20 S. Frontage Road from the eastern city limit to Tulane to 45 miles

per hour.

The council will also consider:

- A budget amendment for the Howard County Appraisal District's 2009-10 annual budget.
- Approval of an industrial agreement with Power Resources Ltd. and authorizing the city manager or his designee to execute the agreement.
- Approval of an agreement with Enernoc Inc. to provide

equipment and management services for electric load management for the water treatment plant.

• Approval of renewal of employment contract with Chief of Police Lonnie Smith.

The meeting will get under way at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday in the City Council Chambers, located at 307 E. Fourth Street.

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

PARADE

Continued from Page 1

little to hamper the festivities, organizers said.

"The crowds were very good, probably even better than last year," said Herald Publisher Ron Midkiff. "Overall, I think the parade was a huge success."

Reflecting the theme, "A Cotton-Pickin' Christmas," more than 40 floats made their way down Scurry, Fourth and Third Streets for the 24th annual parade.

Taking Best in Show Honors this year was Cornell Correction's float. Other major prize winners included Midway Baptist Church, which received the Mayor's Award, and

Lighthouse Restoration Center, winner of the Grand Marshal's Award.

Category winners included:

- Commercial — First, Lamun-Lusk-Sanchez Texas State Veteran's Home; second, HEB; third, Texas RV Park.
- Industrial — First, Western Container; second, Alon.
- Church/Civic/School — First, Howard County Volunteer Fire Department; second,

Howard County 4-H; third, Lakeview Head Start.

• Individual — First, Jacy Blair.

Midkiff expressed appreciation to residents for adapting to the cold weather, not to mention the unfamiliar parade route and expressed hopes things will be back to normal for next year's parade.

"Considering how cold it was, we really appreciate the good turnout," he said. "And

hopefully, we'll be back on Gregg Street next year."

Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-

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

MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL
24th & Johnson 267-8288
Patsy Ophelia Horn, 60, died Friday. Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Wednesday at Myers & Smith Chapel. Burial will be at Trinity Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

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EDITORIAL

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

-FIRST AMENDMENT

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

Ron Midkiff
Publisher

Bill McClellan
News Editor

John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

OTHER VIEWS

Graduation rates at Texas colleges must be increased

Low retention and low graduation rates are big problems for colleges and universities in Texas and across the country. A lot of time, energy and money are spent recruiting and enrolling new students, but the lack of follow through to ensure success once the students arrive on campus is often pathetic.

The graduation rates at Texas colleges and universities indicate that high enrollment rates do not necessarily translate into more diplomas two, four or even six years down the road.

This cannot be allowed to continue. More needs to be done to ensure student success and help Texas meet its goals of increasing the number of college graduates in the state.

The Lumina Foundation for Education, an Indianapolis-based nonprofit, recently awarded Texas a \$1.8 million grant to help it increase its college graduation rates.

Texas is one of seven states the Lumina Foundation has targeted for this project. The nonprofit has awarded a total of \$9.1 million to the states to work on increasing the number of college graduates.

The aim of the Texas grant is to help the state overhaul its public higher education funding system and tie budget allocations to final outcomes instead of just enrollment figures.

At present, higher education funding is calculated on the enrollment on the 12th day of class, giving college administrators little incentive to make sure students do not drop their classes after that date.

Forcing institutions of higher education to concentrate on the retention and graduation of their students if they want to maintain their funding should improve student outcomes tremendously.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board has attempted to spark some changes in this area but has failed. Perhaps the infusion of funding from the Lumina Foundation will grab legislators' attention to bring about change more quickly.

As anyone who paid a college tuition bill last fall knows, a college education does not come cheap.

Students and parents footing the hefty costs could use some assistance in making sure their investments in higher education pays off.

THE EXPRESS-NEWS
SAN ANTONIO

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 find a quiet place to relax and retreat from this world into Your world, Lord.

Amen

Don't count Sarah out

Watch out! Sarah Baracuda is back and she's on the move. Sarah Palin — former point guard, governess, and vice-presidential candidate — has written a book (Going Rogue: An American Life) and is on the road plugging it.

Oprah, Barbwa, Bill O'Reilly, Sean Hannity, Greta Van What's-her-name. No interviewer is safe (with the possible exception of Katie Couric). It's just a book tour, she says. She's not running for anything.

Ha! She's running for something. President, that's what she's running for. The smart money says she hasn't got a chance to win even the Republican nomination, but the last time we heard from the smart money it was predicting a landslide — for Hillary Clinton

I, for one, would never count her out. She may not be the brightest porch light on the block, but when did that ever stop the Republicans from nominating someone?

More importantly, she combines an acute political sense with a bold disregard for the conventional wisdom of the elders of her party. She reminds one not of another politician but of Marshal Foch, the World War I French general, who at the first

battle of Marne said:

"My center is giving way, my right is pushed back; situation excellent. I am attacking."

That's our Sarah. Criticism bounces off her like bullets off Superman. Besides, who else in the Republican Party can draw thousands to a rally or sell millions of books?

She's a star, the only one in the Republican firmament.

It's more than good looks. She radiates an electric intensity that makes her one of the two most interesting politicians on the scene. The other, Barack Obama, is beginning to look as though he's suffering from a bad case of presidential fatigue. It happens to all of them.

Will the Republicans be able to resist plugging into that kind of energy source? Will she let them resist? The more I think about it, the more I like her chances.

I know, there's not much evidence she can extend her appeal beyond the hardcore right wing of the Republican Party. Even now she's limiting her book tour to smaller cities where she and John McCain did well in 2008. (She kicked it off in Grand Rapids, Mich., of all places.)

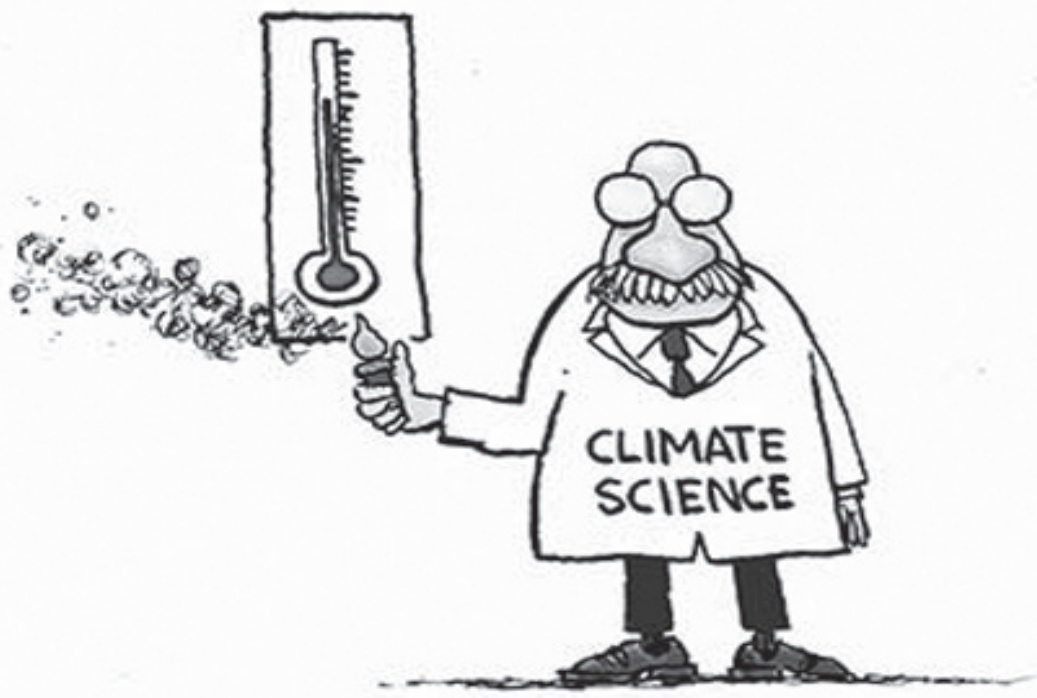
But some analysts are saying that 2012 just might be a Republican year. Didn't the party's candidates cream the Democrats in the recent mid-term elections, taking the governorships in New Jersey and Virginia from Democrats? Might not Sarah at the top of the ticket be enough to push the Party to victory in 2012?

Yes and no.



DONALD KAUL

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Go ahead, follow your star!

I just returned from a lovely autumn walk in Texas.

Living on a cattle ranch provides a variety of trails for taking a walk. It turns out my stroll today involved passing the pasture where our cows were grazing. I was amused that as I passed by, they immediately stopped what they were doing and began following me. And as I reached the north end of our property and turned around for my return trip, the cows did the same.

Remember the childhood game appropriately titled, "Follow the leader?" I suspect many of you are familiar with the rules of this game — pretty simple really. The child in front is the leader, and all the other children follow and do whatever the leader does. I recall thinking it was as much fun to follow as it was to lead. But I never imagined myself playing leader to a herd of cows!

Actually, I think my days are more often spent in the following mode. Perhaps this is true for many of us.

There are goals to go after, dreams to pursue, advice to adhere to, rules to obey, directions to understand, guidance to accept, role models to imitate — the list is endless. And once upon a time three wise men would have said, "There is a star to follow."

We follow because following brings the promise of success, accomplishment, satisfaction, and understanding — the finding of whatever we are searching for.

Like the wise men of old, we don't always know exactly what to expect when we get to the end of our search. Yet all along our journey, high hopes and great expectations encourage us to keep going. And after reaching our goal, we conclude that our persistence, faith and effort were worth it.

This type of following is very different from the herd mentality that aimlessly follows without any thought, question or purpose. Indeed, following your spiritual intuition, your highest sense of what is right, and your lofty goals, will likely require courage, confidence, diligence and patience.

I'm sure some would have thought the three wise men were crazy to set out on such a long journey following a star. Perhaps they were confronted by people voicing their doubts. Maybe the route they had to take was difficult and challenging. I wonder if they were ever tempted to turn back, concluding the path was too tough.

No, I think the wise men never lost their confidence or focus and didn't allow anything or anyone to distract them, diminish their hopes or lead them off course. What enabled them to be certain about the direction they were going? What guided their quest?

The wise men never lost sight

Political analysts get paid to find trends so they find them, even if they have to make them up. Mid-term elections are notoriously a function of local issues. A Republican won in Virginia because it is a Republican state. A Republican won in New Jersey because the Democratic incumbent had worn out his welcome and the economy was in a funk.

So who really knows what the trend is now, and even less what it will be in three years? If the economy picks up it could be a Democratic year; if not, perhaps any Republican could win an election.

I'm rooting for Sarah to get the nomination because she is the most fun you can have in a Republican candidate. I am rooting for a Democratic victory because I'm a patriotic American and she would be a disaster as president.

She has, at the very best, a tangential relationship to truth or facts or ideas. For example, she's still blaming Obama for taking "In God We Trust" off the face of the \$1 coin and putting it on the edge.

Actually, a Republican Congress did that and Bush signed it into law. And when she's told that is the case she will still blame Obama, because it sounds good.

It's not so much that she's dumb, it's that she has no interest in being smart. We've just seen that movie.

Minuteman Media columnist Donald Kaul lives in Ann Arbor, Mich.

of their purpose — finding a messiah. And so they found what they were looking for.

They listened to the spiritual guidance they received from God. Clearly, they had a deep faith and trust in this guidance. Yet sometimes following this instruction can mean a change in direction.

The Bible speaks of the wise men listening to God in a dream that warned them not to return to Herod, so they headed back to their country by going a different way. (Matthew 2:12)

And we must do the same as we move along the course of our life journey — keeping our high goal always before us lighting our way. And yet remaining flexible and teachable, open to new ideas and possibilities — ever listening for God's wisdom and guidance.

We each have a star to follow — a timeless, God-given purpose. It's never too late or too hard to fulfill one's mission.

The fact is our purpose is not some far away dream. We have a purpose each day and in each moment of our lives. Seize the potential of each moment and day, my friends.

Let your spiritual intuition guide you. And you will find your path remains bright as you walk toward all of your life goals.

Annette Bridges is a freelance writer who lives in North Texas. Her columns are published weekly by numerous websites and newspapers. E-mail her at annettebridges@gmail.com

TEXAS NEWS BRIEFS:

Abuse victims featured in calendar

HOUSTON (AP) — A 2010 calendar is meant to serve as a Texas memorial to 12 young women whose deaths have been blamed on abusive partners.

Olga Rodriguez of Houston founded a nonprofit group and created the calendar in memory of her 18-year-old niece, Daniela Huertas.

Rodriguez founded Reaching Our Young Adult Ladies Through Yesterday's Tragedy, or Royalty. The pregnant victim was slain in 2007 by her husband, who then killed himself.

Rodriguez hopes the \$20 calendar will make young women steer clear of unhealthy relationships.

Deacon allegedly lied about robbery

SUNNYVALE (AP) — A deacon who told investigators he slugged it out with robbers to protect the offering of the Dallas-area church allegedly lied.

Authorities are considering charges against 77-year-old Bill Hammett for filing a false report over what he reported as an attack at First Baptist Church in Sunnyvale.

Dallas County Sheriff's Department spokeswoman Kim Leach originally said investigators believed that robbers fled Nov. 29 with Hammett's wallet and some cash.

KTVT-TV reports investigators say the evidence did not add up and Hammett allegedly confessed. He could not immediately be reached for further comment.

Two charged in June double slaying

HOUSTON (AP) — Capital murder charges have been filed against two men over a June 3 convenience store robbery in Houston that left the owner and a clerk dead.

No bail has been set for 17-year-old Casey Carmon and 20-year-old Minh Joseph Truong, who remained Monday in the Harris County Jail. Electronic jail records indicated both faced initial court appearances. Casey also was charged with aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon.

Police say 55-year-old Mohammad Aziz Zubair called 911 for help, to describe the gunman, then later died at a Houston hospital. A store worker, 57-year-old Shahzad Anwer Quraishi, was dead at the scene.

Carmon was booked on Friday. Records show Truong was booked on Saturday.

Man dies in fall from roof of hotel

HOUSTON (AP) — A man attending a holiday party in Houston accidentally fell to his death from the roof of the seven-story hotel.

The name of the 30-year-old victim was not immediately released. Police are trying to determine if

alcohol played a role in the death.

Houston police spokesman Kese Smith says the man and two friends made their way onto the roof late Saturday through an employee entrance. Smith says the victim fell from a ledge.

Children die after Orange house fire

ORANGE (AP) — A house fire in Orange left two girls dead in a blaze that injured their mother and a firefighter.

The Orange Fire Department says the fire was reported around 12:30 a.m. Monday.

A department statement says emergency personnel rescued the girls, ages 3 and 4, who were transported to hospitals, where both died.

Deputy Fire Chief Jerald Ziller says a neighbor reported being awakened by a woman screaming. The woman, who was outside when firefighters arrived, was home alone with the girls.

The woman was transported to a hospital, for treatment of smoke inhalation. Ziller says the firefighter was treated and released for a back injury.

Ziller says the home had burglar bars, but firefighters entered through an unsecured sliding glass door.

Galveston County aid for Ike repairs

GALVESTON (AP) — Galveston County residents needing home repair assistance from Hurricane Ike can get federal help through a nearly \$100 million grant program.

The Galveston County Housing Assistance Program expects to use about \$15 million of the Housing and Urban Development funds for administrative costs.

Coordinator James Wilson says more than 200 people have applied through the Recovery for Ike Survivors Enterprise, created by the state and managed by Lutheran Social Services.

Catholic Charities is also coordinating applications. Wilson says for now Galveston County is only taking applications through those two groups for repairs from the September 2008 hurricane.

Bush dedicates war museum

FREDERICKSBURG (AP) — Former President George H.W. Bush is helping dedicate a \$15.5 mil-

lion gallery expansion that carries his name at the National Museum of the Pacific War in Texas.

Bush is expected at the museum in Fredericksburg on Monday, the 68th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attacks. Bush was a World War II naval aviator and survived being shot down by the Japanese over the Pacific.

The museum expansion has been planned for about a decade. It takes visitors on a chronological journey using multimedia and has thousands of artifacts, including one of two existing Japanese mini-submarines used on Pearl Harbor.

It's managed by the Nimitz Foundation, named for Fredericksburg native Adm. Chester Nimitz.

Two dead in fire at Austin building

AUSTIN (AP) — Authorities say two people have died after a fire in a small Austin apartment building.

Austin Fire Department Battalion Chief Thayer Smith says the blaze Saturday night trapped both victims on the second floor of the two-story building.

Smith tells the Austin American-Statesman that both victims were dead by the time firefighters reached them. Smith says homicide and arson investigators were involved as part of routine procedure.

Neighbor Luis Casillas says he hurried several children out of his apartment. He says the flames were too intense for him to help the victims.

Woman, daughter die in house fire

PORT ARTHUR (AP) — A woman and her daughter have died following a house fire in Port Arthur early Sunday morning.

Justice of the Peace Robert Morgan says Mollie Van Wright and her daughter, Florence Van Wright, were killed. Mollie Van Wright was in her 80s. Her daughter was 53.

Morgan says the fire doesn't appear suspicious but remains under investigation. He says he's ordered autopsies.

Port Arthur Fire Department Battalion Chief Gary Sewell says the women's bodies were found in a bedroom, but it appears the fire started in another part of the home. Sewell says firefighters found heavy smoke in the bedroom.

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Steers take third place in Andrews tourney

Herald Staff Report

ANDREWS — The weekend was up and down for the Big Spring Steers in the Gym Bice Classic in Andrews. The Steers lost off to a good start Thursday, defeating Lamesa 60-55 in the first round. However, after bad weather cancelled Friday's games, the team lost a 69-53 rematch with Greenwood, which defeated Big Spring in four overtimes earlier in the season. After that loss, the Steers bounced back to capture third place in the tournament with a 73-66 win over

Andrews. Big Spring came back in the second half to capture the lead and bronze medal in the tournament. "It was a good win for us," head coach Marcus Morris said. "It was a good tournament. Every time you get two wins in a tournament, especially this early, that is a bright spot." Jerrell Williams scored 21 points in the game and Mark Segundo added 10 points for the Steers, who took control of the game after going down 19-14 at the end of the first quarter. "We started to share the ball a little more and look a little more like

a basketball team instead of just a bunch of guys," Morris said. "There were a lot of good things for us to improve on, and it gave us a chance to play a lot of different kids. That's what tournaments are for." The Steers are 3-3 on the season, and they will travel to Abilene to play Wylie on Wednesday before going to the Monahans Tournament over the weekend. "We're not anywhere near where we'll be as far as the end of the season, but I feel like we're ahead of where we were last year," Morris said.



HERALD PHOTO/Joe Zigtema
Monte Anderson shoots over a Greenwood defender Saturday in Andrews. The Steers lost 69-53.



HERALD PHOTO/James Schwartz
Garden City running back Josh Colunga runs the ball against Follett on Saturday in Plainview. Colunga ran for 235 yards and scored five touchdowns in the game, three on kickoff returns.

Bearkats headed to state title game

Herald Staff Report

GARDEN CITY — The Garden City Bearkats are in uncharted territory heading to next week's state championship game against Strawn. But Garden City's coach, Vance Jones, has been there before. Jones coached a Marathon team to a state championship in 1976, and in 2002 made it back to the title game coaching Sanderson. Now, the Bearkats will meet the Strawn Greyhounds on Saturday at Shotwell Stadium in Abilene at 7 p.m. "I was just thinking, 'Man I'm glad I get to do it one more time before I get too old to coach,'" Jones said Sunday.

Garden City's 76-55 victory over Follett on Saturday night at Bull Stadium in Plainview showed that the Bearkats are worthy of playing for the state title. For the second straight week, Garden City shut out its opponent in the fourth quarter to preserve a win. "I think that shows our kids are dealing with the adversity and making the adjustments we need to make, and seeing what they're doing, we end up playing really good defense at the end of the game," Jones said. "It's been a big difference." The Bearkats held Follett to just seven second-half points after it scored on all but two of its first-half possessions. Garden

City, meanwhile, scored 62 first-half points that was more than enough. Running back Josh Colunga totaled 235 yards on the ground and ran back three kickoff returns for scores. He accounted for six total touchdowns. Receiver Reggie Halfmann ran for two touchdowns in the game, as well as intercepting two of Garden City's three picks. Marcus Cook nabbed the other in the second half, and two of those turnovers led to Bearkat scores on the other end. "They were huge," Jones said of the turnovers. Now, the team prepares for

See **BEARKATS**, Page 8

Coahoma girls win home Invitational

By JOE ZIGTEMA Sports Editor

COAHOMA — The Bulldogettes were on a roll heading into the Coahoma Invitational championship against Stanton. Coahoma's fast-paced offense and press defense were frustrating opponents, and the Bulldogettes were lighting up the scoreboard. But against the Lady Buffs on Saturday night, the Bulldogettes found themselves mired in a tough, physical slugfest, where they pulled out a gritty 60-55 overtime win for the Coahoma Invitational Championship. The game was neck-and-neck for the entire second half as both teams wore on through their second games of the day. In the end, free throws decided the game as Kenzie Stone made four free throws in the extra period and Kalea Neff made three to ice it for the Bulldogettes. Kylie Gee and Neff led the Bulldogettes with 17 points apiece. K'Leigh Fowler dropped in 16 as well. "She's been playing good for us all year," head coach Derek Faught said of Gee.

"She's got really good footwork down there, and she's really good at drawing fouls and getting to the line, and she's been making her free throws." Coahoma played from the first half, as Stanton's defense slowed the pace of the game and pressure the Bulldogettes into turnovers. Missed shots didn't help, either, Faught said. "We missed a bunch of easy ones in the first half, and then we weren't able to set up our press," he said. "Stanton did a great job

See **COAHOMA**, Page 8



HERALD PHOTO/Joe Zigtema
Kenzie Stone shoots over a Staton defender Saturday at Coahoma Elementary Gym.

Jacobs' big touchdown lifts Giants past Cowboys at Meadowlands

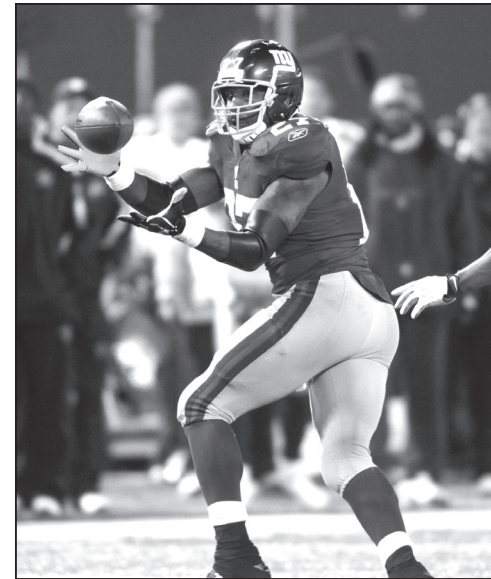
Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Brandon Jacobs' sensational touchdown left nearly everyone in the stadium breathless. Except the Giants' bruising running back, that is. Displaying his speed and versatility, Jacobs galloped 74 yards for the go-ahead touchdown in New York's 31-24 victory over Dallas on Sunday that scrambled the NFC East standings. The longest play of his five NFL seasons also was the most satisfying. "When you're running that route, you don't see that much," Jacobs said. "As soon as I turned, I caught the ball, and I never looked back as I headed upfield. "I was looking to get 15 to 20 yards. I had no idea I would go the distance." Was he winded by the end?

"I was good," he said, "able to celebrate and talk trash." A lot of talking goes on when these intense division rivals meet. Jacobs knew full well it was the first time in his career the Giants swept the Cowboys during the regular season. "It's the biggest play of my career," he said. "It's extra special against Dallas. That's absolutely a team I can't stand. I've been hating Dallas ever since I knew anything about football." The thing to know about football in the NFC East is that it's a three-team race with a month to go. Dallas is 8-4, tied with Philadelphia at the top. New York is 7-5. Next week, the Giants host the Eagles, who already have a head-to-head win with them. Dallas has a victory over Philly.

"It's good to see that when you put some pressure on us and we needed to get something going," Manning said, "we were able to come out and do some things and win the game." For Dallas, the questions about folding in December will be raised again. Tony Romo is 5-9 in the month, and even a career-high in yards passing couldn't prevent another defeat. New York won despite huge stats for Dallas tight end Jason Witten, wide receivers Roy Williams and Miles Austin, and Romo. Witten included his 500th career catch among a career-best 14 receptions for 156 yards. Romo went 41 of 55 for 392 yards, a career high, and three TDs, two to Roy Williams. Austin had 10 catches for 104 yards and one touchdown.

See **COWBOYS**, Page 8



AP Photo/Bill Kostroun
Brandon Jacobs catches a career-high 74-yard TD pass Sunday. The Giants beat the Cowboys 31-24.

Sports in brief

Garden City girls ranked No. 3 in state

The Garden City Lady Bearkats have been ranked No. 3 in the Division II Top 20 rankings by Texasgirlsbasketball.com. The Lady Bearkats are 7-0 after a weather-shortened Garden City Booster Club Classic over the weekend. The Lady Bearkats defeated El Paso Jesus Chapel 43-16 in the first round of the tournament before it was cancelled Friday. Garden City will take on Bronte at 7:15 p.m. Tuesday in Bronte.

One more chance to sign up for Coahoma Little Dribblers

Those who missed out on Coahoma Little Dribblers signups have one more chance today to get on a team. The league is for boys and girls in grades three through six. Today is the last chance to sign up. Registration will be held at the Coahoma Dairy Queen today from 6-8 p.m. For more information, contact Brian and Karen Moore at 517-4006.

Borden County to play for state in Abilene

The Borden County Coyotes are in the playoffs for the second straight year after defeating Motley County 50-0 Saturday in Lubbock. The Coyotes needed just one play into the second half to take care of the Matadors, when Flynn Chapman romped 46 yards in the third quarter to trigger the 45-point mercy rule. Borden County will take on Highland in the state championship, to be played at 2 p.m. at Shotwell Stadium before Garden City's game.

COWBOYS

Continued from Page 7

"We've got to challenge ourselves and find a way to play," Witten said. "We have to get back to it and forget all this December stuff. I'm not trying to avoid it or say it's not true. We've got to put it away. You let another one slip and you're really in trouble."

Jacobs' touchdown was the Giants' longest play of the season — for about 14 minutes. Then Domenik Hixon broke a 79-yard punt return.

Hixon clinched the win as he ran into a pile, got free, cut right and down the sideline behind a stream of solid blocks.

"It's a credit to the 10 guys up

front," Hixon said. "They knew we were close, and today we finally broke it."

"Every time I get on the field, I have the mindset of taking it all the way."

Dallas led 17-14 after Williams' second TD reception, a 5-yarder off superb play-action by Romo. New York answered with Jacobs and, following Nick Folk's miss of a 42-yard field goal in the fourth quarter, Lawrence Tynes' 23-yard kick for a 24-17 lead.

And then Hixon finished off the Cowboys — even though Dallas had the ball for nearly 39 minutes. The Giants' ability to grab big chunks of yards and quick points was decisive.

"We gave up big plays we don't normally give up," coach Wade Phillips said. "They didn't com-

plete that many passes, but the ones they did were big plays for them."

The Cowboys dominated possession in the first half, if not the scoreboard. They grabbed a 10-0 lead on Folk's 34-yard field goal and Williams' 4-yard TD reception that was set up by two fumbles.

Ahmad Bradshaw lost the ball at New York's 26, with Jay Ratliff forcing the fumble and recovering it. Then Dallas was helped immensely by a replay reversal one play before Williams beat Corey Webster in the corner of the end zone.

Tashard Choice lost the ball on a third-down run from the 7 and Giants cornerback Terrell Thomas recovered. But the Cowboys challenged and

were rewarded when Choice was ruled down by referee Bill Leavy.

New York responded by covering 74 yards in four plays, with top draft pick Hakeem Nicks scoring on a 21-yard pass from Manning.

Three plays later, the Giants were threatening again. Mathias Kiwanuka forced Marion Barber's fumble that defensive end Osi Umenyiora — who lost his starting job — returned 24 yards, palming the ball in his right hand as he scooted down the left sideline.

Jacobs surged in from the 1 with 19 seconds left in the half. Even though the Cowboys had possession for 21 minutes, they trailed by four points at the break.

Lady Steers win one in Andrews

ANDREWS — The Big Spring Lady Steers got their first win in five tries Saturday as they beat Presidio 88-33 in the second round of the Andrews Kristen Corbin Classic. The Lady Steers went 1-2 on the weekend after losing to Caprock in their final game of the tournament.

Big Spring's offense came alive against Presidio. Linzee Yarbar led the team with 14 points, Valerie Ross had 13, Diamond Mayes had 12, Cerbi Ritchey had 12 on a sore ankle and Stormi Smith scored nine points for the Lady Steers.

"We got out and ran, and we had our fast break going," head coach Mike Warren said. "Our two point guards, Bridgette Tuitt and Logan Yarbar, had a lot of assists."

The Lady Steers' zone defense held Presidio in check for most of the game and also set up the fast break off defensive rebounds.

"When you play zone defense you should get the rebound, and I thought we got out and ran well," Warren said. "We got a lot of layups."

Big Spring will travel to Pecos on Tuesday. Tipoff is 7:30 p.m. after the junior varsity game.

COAHOMA

Continued from Page 7

pressuring our guards, and we didn't handle the pressure very well."

The Bulldogettes found themselves down 32-17 at halftime. However, a 10-2 run to start the third quarter put Coahoma in the lead, though it took an extra four minutes for the Bulldogettes to pull away for the victory.

"I told them before the game, we need to keep the game up-tempo, and I reminded them of that at halftime," Faight said. "They were getting tired, but I told them we have to keep pressing. The effort was good, and I'm proud of them."

Coahoma will travel to Miles on Tuesday.

Coahoma Boys take second in tourney

The Coahoma boys took second in the Coahoma Invitational Tournament, defeating Sweetwater on Saturday before falling to Wall in the finals. The All-Tournament Team was not available by press time.

BEARKATS

Continued from Page 7

Strawn, which Jones has already looked at on film.

"They're really similar to the two teams we just played in a lot of respects," he said. "They've got some big kids, I don't think they have as much speed as the last two opponents, but they've got admirable speed."

They play pretty tough, hard-nosed defense, and we'll have to block well and catch well."

Jones feels good about his team's chances.

"Our kids' determination and the fact that we do have a lot of quickness helps us a lot," he said.

Garden City 76, Follett 55
Follett 28 20 7 0 -- 55
GC 38 24 8 6 -- 76
First Quarter
GC- Josh Colunga 20 run (Brett Chudej kick), 9:31
F- Cole Freeman 16 pass from Braden Blau (PAT NG), 6:49
GC- Colunga 71 kickoff return (Chudej kick), 6:36
F- Boone Tyson 34 run (PAT NG), 6:27
GC- Chudej 15 pass from Blayne Batla (Chudej kick), 5:48
F- Luke Lobmeyer 45 run (Freeman kick), 5:39
GC- Colunga 2 run (PAT NG), 3:20
F- Blau 45 run (Freeman kick), 3:01
GC- Colunga 53 kickoff return (Chudej kick), 2:53
Second Quarter
F- Tyson 3 run (PAT NG), 9:23
F- Lobmeyer 3 run (Freeman kick), 7:38
GC- Reggie Halfmann 3 run (Chudej kick), 4:56
GC- Chudej 24 run (Chudej kick), 2:37
F- Luke Cox 20 pass from Blau (PAT NG), :44
Fourth Quarter
GC- Halfmann 5 run (PAT NG)

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Dear Santa,
Thank you for the gifts that got last year. I still have most of them. I'd like a puppy, a game and a new bike. If you want to bring more stuff it's ok with me. I know I sent a letter before but this new list is what I really want. Thank you Santa.

With Love,
Sam

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.

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

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Famous Hand

South dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ A 7
♥ J 6
♦ A J 9 8
♣ A J 8 4 3

WEST
♠ 6 5 2
♥ A 10 8 7 2
♦ 10 5 4 3
♣ 7

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

SOUTH
♠ K Q J 9 4
♥ K 3
♦ K Q 7
♣ K 9 5

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♣ Pass
3 NT Pass 4 ♦ Pass
4 NT Pass 6 NT

Opening lead — seven of clubs.

Some contracts are extremely difficult to make even if all 52 cards are exposed. Here's one where declarer found the winning — and correct — line of play without even the slightest peek at the East-West cards.

The deal occurred in a pair championship many years ago, and was played by Dr. Kalman Apfel of New York. The doctor correctly diagnosed West's lead in dummy's first-bid suit as a singleton or a doubleton. Apfel followed low from dummy and took East's ten with the king.

With 11 sure tricks in sight and

no chance of winning a club finesse, the slam appeared to depend entirely on East's holding the ace of hearts. But the doctor formulated a magnificent scheme that succeeded even though West held the ace.

He began by cashing four diamonds, discarding a club from his hand. Next he cashed all five of his spades, discarding two clubs and a heart from dummy. With three tricks remaining, this was the position:

North
♥ J
♠ A J

West
♥ A 10 8

East
♥ Q
♣ Q 6

South
♥ K 3
♠ 9

East had been forced to part with three hearts in order to keep a guard against dummy's jack of clubs. West, having no choice at all, was left with three hearts. Apfel now led the heart three toward dummy's jack. If West played low, East would win with the queen and be forced to return a club from the Q-6 into dummy's A-J. And if West rose with the ace instead, he'd have to return a heart, yielding declarer's 12th trick.

Note that the outcome would have been the same had East held the heart ace and West the queen. Only if West had been dealt the A-Q would the slam have failed, but in that case not even a doctor could help!

Tomorrow: The long-term view.

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NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS OF PROPOSED TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (TxDOT) CONTRACTS
Sealed proposals for contracts listed below will be received by TxDOT until the date(s) shown below, and then publicly read.
CONSTRUCTION/ MAINTENANCE/BUILDING FACILITIES CONTRACT(S)

Dist/Div: Odessa
Contract 6197-11-001 for ROAD-SIDE MOWING in MARTIN County, etc will be opened on January 12, 2010 at 2:00 pm at the District Office for an estimate of \$111,672.00.

Plans and specifications are available for inspection, along with bidding proposals, and applications for the TxDOT Prequalified Contractor's list, at the applicable State and/or Dist/Div Offices listed below. If applicable, bidders must submit prequalification information to TxDOT at least 10 days prior to the bid date to be eligible to bid on a project. Prequalification materials may be requested from the State Office listed below. Plans for the above contract(s) are available from TxDOT's website at www.txdot.gov and from reproduction companies at the expense of the contractor.
NPO: 31536

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Austin, Texas 78704
Phone: 512-416-2540
Dist/Div Office(s)

Odessa District
District Engineer
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Odessa, Texas 79761
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Minimum wage rates are set out in bidding documents and the rates will be part of the contract. TXDOT ensures that bidders will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.
#6350 December 6 & 7, 2009

Legals

The Coahoma Independent School District will hold a public hearing on the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) on Thursday, December 17, 2009 at 8:30 p.m. The AEIS is an annual rating of school districts by the Texas Education Agency. The state agency looks at criteria such as attendance figures, dropout rates, and student achievement on TAKS exams. This report will be available over the Internet at: <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2009/index.html>
The hearing will give the public a chance to discuss the report. Review copies of the report will be available as well at the administration office.
#6360 December 7 & 13, 2009

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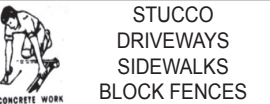
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Annie's Mailbox®

Dear Annie: My 60-year-old boyfriend has been accused of being a child molester. We were attending a birthday party, and "George" took a couple of pictures of a 14-year-old girl from her shoulders down.

The girl was wearing a low-cut shirt that showed her cleavage. She looked around 20. Her parents are outraged.

They took the pictures to the police, who stated they could not charge him because the girl was fully clothed.

George claims the pictures were not taken intentionally. I think he was checking her out, not realizing how young she was.

His behavior was wrong, but I don't think he is a child molester. He has no criminal record, nor have I ever had reason to believe he was anything other than

a decent and loving person.

When he moved in with me, I went through all of his belongings in order to organize stuff and found nothing out of the ordinary.

If he were into child porn, wouldn't I have found some evidence?
— *Trusting Girlfriend*

Dear Girlfriend: On the assumption that the girl truly looked "around 20" and George didn't actually touch her, he is technically not a child molester.

But how, exactly, do you take that kind of picture unintentionally? Any man who chooses to snap photos of an unknown girl from the shoulders down is behaving like a pervert and ought to be ashamed of himself.

He owes everyone an apology — and tell him it better not happen again. (And those par-

ents should pay attention to the way their young daughter is dressing if it attracts dirty old men like George.)

Dear Annie: In order to apply to college, get into certain clubs and receive scholarships, students often need to ask teachers for a letter of recommendation.

Most of the time, my teachers give this letter back to me in an unsealed envelope. Am I allowed to read it, or is that like eavesdropping?

Also, after receiving a recommendation, I feel



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

I should get the teacher some kind of small gift.

My mother says I should wait until the end of the year to do this or it will look like a bribe. But it feels wrong to ask a teacher for multiple

commendations without more than a "thank you." What is the proper thing to do?
— *Curious Girl*

Dear Curious: If the letter is unsealed, it means the teacher expects you to open it and you may do so. As for a small gift, it is OK to show gratitude in this way, provided you do it after the recommenda-

tion letter has been produced and not before. But frankly, a written thank-you note will mean just as much.

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Lonely for Life," the teenage girl who has few friends and doesn't know how to make more.

May I suggest she investigate the symptoms of Asperger syndrome? It is on the autism spectrum.

People affected with Asperger's are usually very intelligent but lack social skills.

It's much more prevalent than people realize. As a retired elementary teacher, I can tell you it's only been diagnosed in the last eight to 10 years, so it's now being confronted in the middle and high schools.

However, much more needs to be done at the community level to support those who most

likely have not been diagnosed.

My husband was a gifted attorney, but didn't have a single friend. This teen says her activities are "the computer, watching TV or pacing in my backyard."

The last really grabs my attention. Does she engage in any other repetitive activities that would hint of autism? Please suggest she look into this.
— *Married to Him*

Dear Married: Several readers suggested Asperger's, and we have printed information on this in the past. The fact that "Lonely" has an older sister who is also socially awkward could indicate a genetic predisposition. Thanks for the suggestion.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column.
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Tomorrow's Horoscope

This is no time for frivolous drama — only meaningful, profound drama will do. The Leo moon gives



HOLIDAY
MATHIS

a theatrical edge to the Mercury/Pluto conjunction. Our words have weight, resonance and intention. If unsure of what to say, it's

always an option not to speak at all. "The best way to keep one's word is not to give it." — Napoleon Bonaparte

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Partnerships will work well, even if you do spend a lot of time joking around. You will be the whipped cream and sprinkles to another person's hot chocolate. The fanciful element you bring is essential to

the relationship's success.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You will be extremely determined to finish a project so that you can finally move on. Once you set your mind to something, it would take an army to stop you, and perhaps even then you would be the victor.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Your mind will be even sharper than usual. You will process an impressive amount of information in a short span of time. Higher-ups turn to you to head up the most important tasks on the agenda.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Epic journeys are made of thousands of regular-sized steps. The first few are the hardest. Take those today. Get them out of the way while you're feeling tough.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You are flying high. Nothing outside has

changed, but the air smells fresher and your mind feels clean and ready. It's like an adrenaline rush after a long run, only without the sore knees.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). For you, the beauty isn't just skin deep. When people get to know you, they start to discover that the inside is even prettier than the shiny outside. Your heart is what makes you so remarkable.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Chief among your talents is an ability to facilitate harmony between people who wouldn't otherwise see eye to eye. You are a natural peacemaker, and the friends you make today you will have for a lifetime.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Your basically rebellious nature manifests itself in very acceptable ways. You may poke fun at convention, but you're not out

to hurt anyone. Your individuality will positively impact your workplace.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Despite your expectations about some of the more daunting tasks on your list, today is turning out to be a pretty great day. Stick to your plan. Unforeseen good news will interrupt it just enough to make you laugh.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You may feel a tad fragile, and it benefits you to touch base with your humanity. Hug it out. Whether you're giving a hug or getting one, the human comfort exchanged feels equally healing.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Doubting your choices is a waste of energy. It benefits you to believe that you are where you should be and that your path is right for you. Be productive with your downtime. Exercise or read.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Your charm is famous, your witty remarks are repeated in your absence, and your kindness makes a friend of everyone you meet. In short, you are loved because you love.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 7). You still don't know the limits of what you can do. This year you'll push what you thought was your personal best. Consistency, stamina and determination will be your trademarks. The responsibilities that befall you in January, if taken seriously, will be delightful and lucrative. New resources open to you in June. Aries and Virgo people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 7, 21, 50, 32 and 3.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Teri Hatcher often plays the ditsy leading lady on television, but in real

life, this adventurous Sagittarian is somewhat of a brainiac. The daughter of a nuclear physicist and a computer programmer, Hatcher was studying mathematics and engineering when she was sidelined by an open casting call. Her natal moon and Saturn are stationed in intellectual and forward-thinking Aquarius.

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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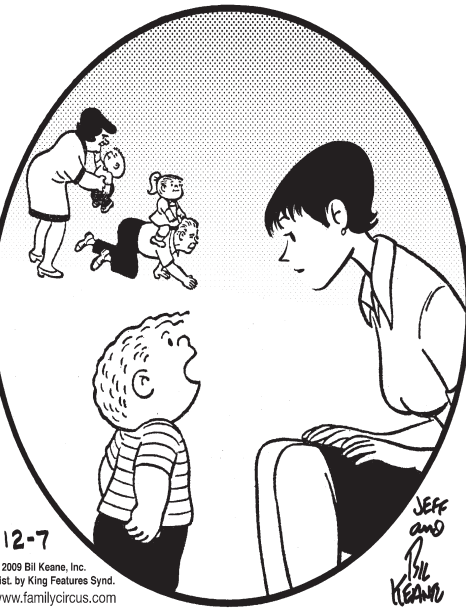
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5:PM :30	News ABC	News ABC	Locura	Lopez	CBS	Noticias	News	Seinfeld	Chumney	BBC	Cash Cab	Been Kissed, Michael Vartan	Michael Madsen	Law & Order	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live	Phineas	Around Interrupt	SportsCenter
6:PM :30	News	Jeopardy!	Gancho	Lopez	News	12 Cora-zones	News	Office	Granger	Business	Cash Cab	Michael Vartan	Michael Madsen	Bones	Wizards	Wizards	Women's College Basketball	Monday Night Countdown
7:PM :30	Entertain	Fortune	Nombre-Amor	Carrie Underwood, Holiday Special	How I Met Purpose	Más Sabe el Diabolo	Law & Order: SVU	Seinfeld	Upd	Antiques Roadshow	Planet Earth	Movie: All I Want for Christmas	Movie: Cradle 2 the Grave	Bones	The Unit	Movie: Chicken Little	World Series	NFL Football: Baltimore Ravens at Green Bay Packers.
8:PM :30	Find My Family	Find My Family	Sortilegio	Simpsons Friends	CSI: Miami	Victorinos	The Jay Leno Show	Fam. Guy	Andrew Jackson: Good, Evil- Presidency	Planet Earth	(-15) Movie: Jack, Jennifer Lopez	Movie: Kill Bill: Vol. 1, Vivica A. Fox	Certain Age	The Unit	Phineas	Rodeo: Wrangler National Finals -- Fifth Round.	SportsCenter	
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10:PM :30	News	News	Impacto	Noticiero	TMZ	Letterman	Noticias	Decisions	Tonight Show	Upd	Sala	Charlie Rose	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth
11:PM :30	Insider	Jimmy Kimmel Live	La Escuelita VIP	Law & Order: SVU	Late Late	Decisions	Late Night- Jim	Sex & Upd	Mark	T. Smiley	(Off Air)	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth
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DENNIS THE MENACE



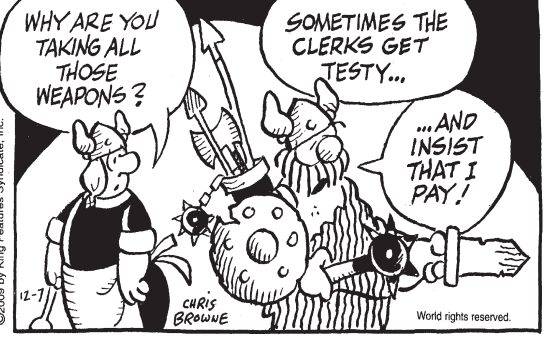
"DAD DID THE COOKING WHILE YOU WERE AWAY, AND WE ONLY HAD TO WASH DISHES ONCE!"

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



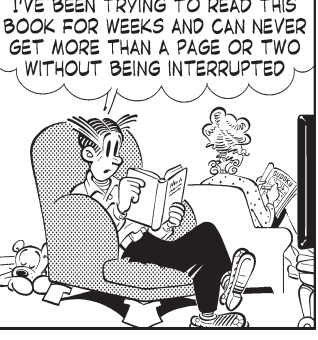
"How did we get to know Grandma and Granddad?"

HAGAR

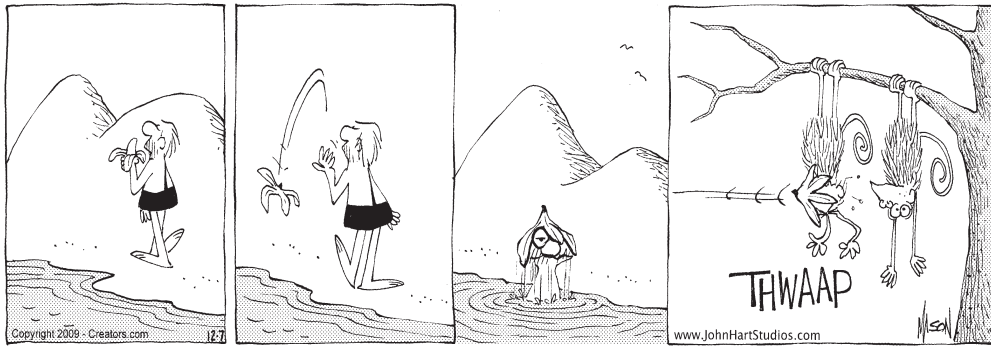


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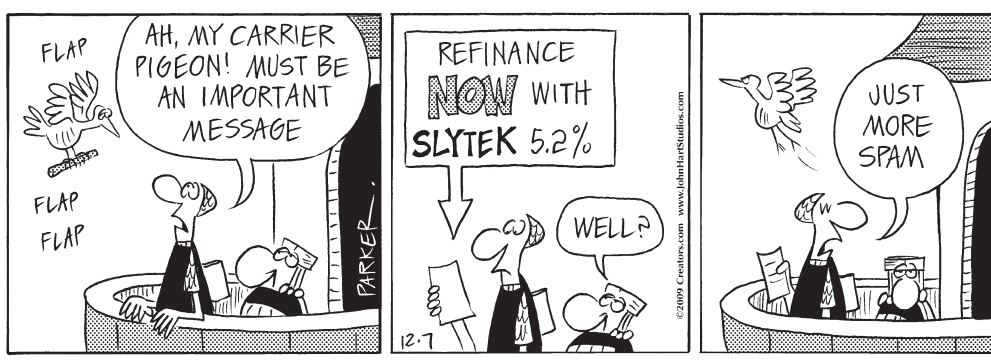
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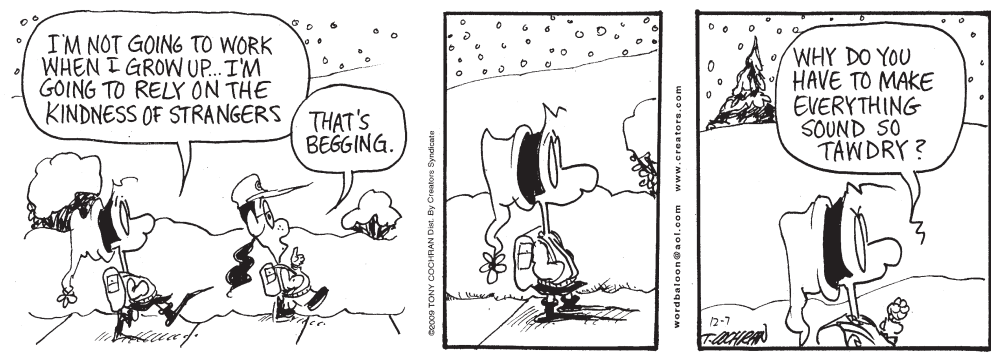
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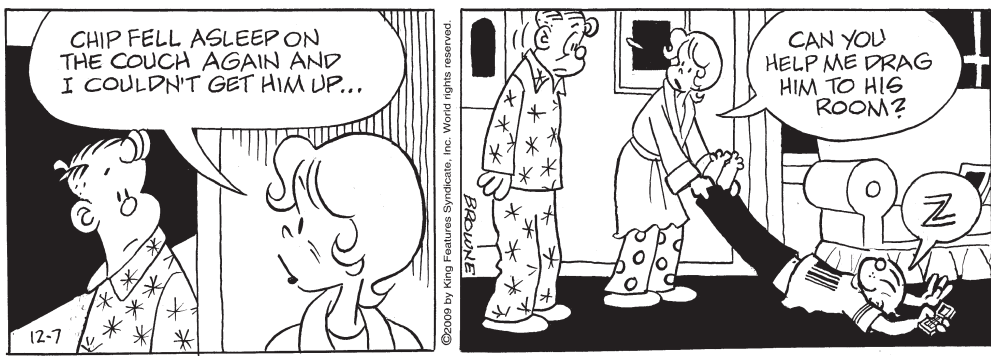
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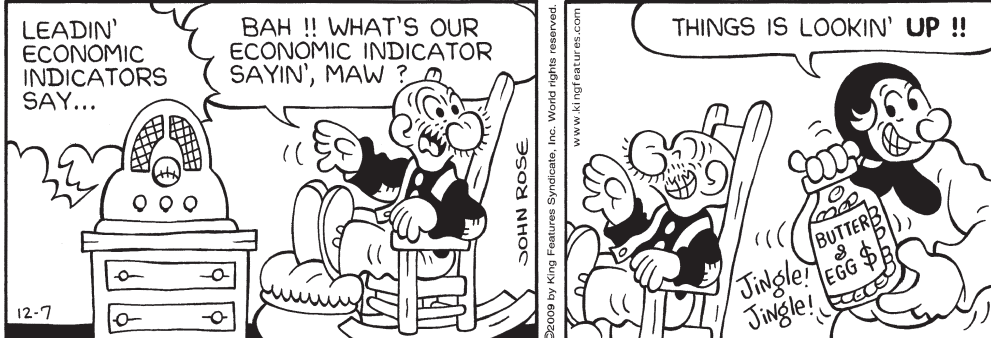
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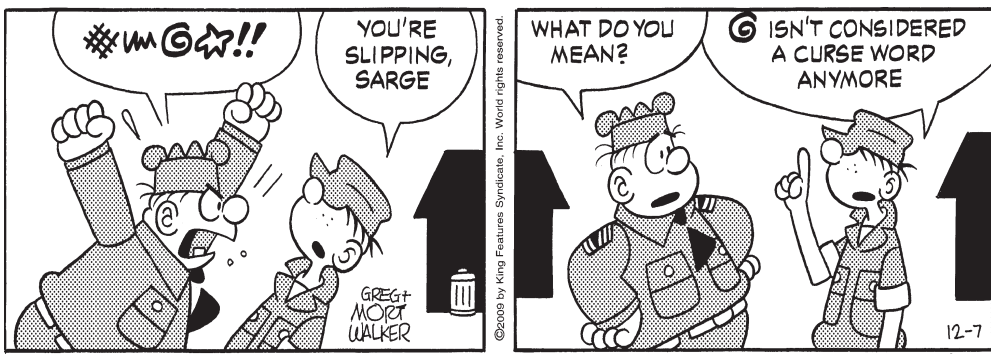
THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



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This Date In History

Today is Monday, Dec. 7, the 341st day of 2009. There are 24 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 7, 1941, Imperial Japanese warplanes attacked the U.S. Navy base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, as well as other American and British bases in the Pacific; the preemptive raids prompted the United States to enter World War II.

On this date:

In 1787, Delaware became the first state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1796, electors chose John Adams to be the second president of the United States.

In 1808, electors chose James Madison to be the fourth president of the United States.

In 1836, Martin Van Buren was elected the eighth president of the United States.

In 1909, in his State of the Union address, President William Howard Taft defended the decision to base U.S. naval operations in the Pacific at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, instead of in the Philippines. Chemist Leo H. Baekeland received a U.S. patent for Bakelite, the first totally synthetic plastic.

In 1946, fire broke out at the Winecoff Hotel in Atlanta; the blaze killed 119 people, including hotel founder W. Frank Winecoff.

In 1972, America's last moon mission to date was launched as Apollo 17 blasted off from Cape Canaveral, Fla.

In 1983, in Madrid, Spain, an Aviac DC-9 collided on a foggy runway with an Iberia Air Lines Boeing 727 that was accelerating for takeoff, killing all 42 people aboard the DC-9 and 51 aboard the Iberia jet.

In 1987, 43 people were killed after a gunman aboard a Pacific Southwest Airlines jetliner in California apparently opened fire on a fellow passenger, the two pilots and himself, causing the plane to crash.

In 1988, a major earthquake in the Soviet Union devastated northern Armenia; official estimates put the death toll at 25,000.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Eli Wallach is 94. Linguist and political philosopher Noam Chomsky is 81. Bluegrass singer Bobby Osborne is 78. Actress Ellen Burstyn is 77. Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss., is 72. Broadcast journalist Carole Simpson is 69. Baseball Hall of Famer Johnny Bench is 62. Country singer Gary Morris is 61. Singer-songwriter Tom Waits is 60. Sen. Susan M. Collins, R-Maine, is 57. Basketball Hall of Famer Larry Bird is 53. Actress Priscilla Barnes is 52. Former "Tonight Show" announcer Edd Hall is 51. Rock musician Tim Butler (The Psychedelic Furs) is 51. Actor Jeffrey Wright is 44. Actor C. Thomas Howell is 43. Buffalo Bills wide receiver Terrell Owens is 36.

Answer to previous puzzle

CALICO	CAT	HOWSO
ATANYR	ATE	OKAPI
BSTUD	ENTS	SITIN
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EDAMS	TIDESCOVER	
EGRET	CROSSWISE	
DEEDS	HEFTINESS	

Newsday Crossword

PET SHOP by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
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ACROSS

1 Partners of zigs
5 Slender
9 San Antonio shrine
14 Phrase of understanding
15 "I could — horse!"
16 Goliath's opponent
17 Ship of 1492
18 Study hard
19 Cross home plate
20 Sneaky thief
23 Lambs' mothers
24 Fencing sword
25 CPR pro
27 Least ruddy
30 Insurance policy's scope
35 www.yale. —
36 Former Italian money
38 More pleasant
39 Hot-weather period
43 Ram constellation
44 Completely confused
45 Point opposite WNW
46 Prolong
48 Made higher
51 Caviar source
52 Baby powder
53 Hamster home
56 TV-top antenna
62 Impressive display
64 Laundry appliance
65 Per item

DOWN

66 Rental agreement
67 Coal source
68 Car-transmission selection
69 Loses color
70 Fortune-teller
71 Swirling current

8 Papa's partner
9 Commercials
10 Frilly edging
11 Declare openly
12 Muddy area
13 Poems of praise
21 FedEx rival
22 Race, as an engine
26 Restaurant list
27 Bicycle part
28 Like a lot
29 Haul through the entrance
30 Sing romantically
31 Dunderheads
32 High points
33 Gaggle birds
34 Goofed up

37 Cruise stop
40 Remove oil from
41 Regarding
42 Colander kin
47 That girl
49 Height: Abbr.
50 When mammoths lived
52 Steakhouse selection
53 Newborn cow
54 Neighborhood
55 Diploma owner
57 Goals
58 Soft cheese
59 Limited
60 Highway or byway
61 Full of pep
63 "Absolutely!"

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It's Texas, Alabama in BCS Championship

Associated Press

There were five undefeated teams and only two spots in the title game.

Alabama and Texas came out winners in that bit of BCS math, while TCU, Cincinnati and Boise State were left with nice consolation prizes.

The imperfect method of choosing a national champion paired top-ranked Alabama against No. 2 Texas in the BCS title game — a Jan. 7 meeting that will bring together Heisman Trophy hopefuls Colt McCoy of the Longhorns and Mark Ingram of the Crimson Tide.

And, of course, Sunday's bowl bids also produced plenty of fodder for second-guessing.

No. 3 TCU, No. 4 Cincinnati and No. 6 Boise State also finished undefeated. All three were included in the BCS, but none will play for the championship — a predictable result that will renew the annual debate about college football's way of determining the best team in the land.

"We absolutely recognize that there were five undefeated teams that had very good seasons, and the fact is, only two could play in the game," BCS executive director Bill Hancock said.

Seeking its first national title since 1992, Alabama opens as a 3-point favorite for the game at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif. That's the place where Vince Young almost single-handedly led Texas to a victory over Southern California in 2006 to claim the national title.

The other BCS matchups: Oregon against Ohio State in the Rose Bowl; Iowa against Georgia Tech in the Orange; Florida against Cincinnati in the Sugar and TCU against Boise State in the Fiesta.

The TCU-Boise State game also will pit a pair of undefeateds against each other, two teams from small conferences that don't always get automatic spots in the BCS. This is the first time in BCS history that two of the small schools have been selected. Both should be expected to use the title-game snub as motivation.

"We're here to prove a point," TCU coach Gary Patterson said. "I voted for us No. 2 in polls today when we voted. We believe we have a great football team and

we're out to show we could be the No. 1 team in the nation."

The Longhorns (13-0) have been on both sides of the BCS debate.

Just last year, their chances for a national title were squashed when they lost a three-way tiebreaker for the Big 12 South title.

This time, Texas defeated Nebraska 13-12 in the Big 12 title game to secure its spot in the national championship, though the less-than-dominating performance certainly left things open for debate.

Still, there was a big gap between Texas and TCU in the BCS rankings, the coaches' poll and The Associated Press poll, which is not included in the BCS formula. The AP awards its own national championship.

Alabama, meanwhile, got 113 yards rushing and three touchdowns from Ingram to defeat Florida 32-13 in the SEC championship game, an overwhelming victory over the defending national champions that made the Tide (13-0) an easy choice for No. 1.

But is anything really clear-cut when it comes to the BCS?

TCU was ranked 17th in the preseason polls and never really had a chance to rise above the bigger, more traditional programs that were ahead of them.

Cincinnati made it through the Big East, one of the six so-called power conferences, and needed a 21-point comeback against Pittsburgh on Saturday to move to 12-0. The Bearcats finished third in the BCS rankings and would've taken Texas' spot had the Longhorns not pulled out their last-second win.

"We were within one second of playing for a national championship," coach Brian Kelly said. "It's not crazy (for Cincinnati) to play for a national championship."

Boise State finished its fourth undefeated regular season in the last six years, but still found itself ranked behind No. 5 Florida, in large part because it plays in the Western Athletic Conference.

A perfect scenario for an eight-team playoff, perhaps, but that's years off. The current system is set for the next four years. And to hear the BCS officials tell it, there's nothing really wrong with their sys-

tem, anyway.

"We do feel like it's working and college football is thriving," Hancock said. "We recognize there are elements in each constituency that don't like it, but the fact is, it has a consensus. The critics, the playoff proponents, do not have a consensus."

Certainly, he'll get no argument from Texas or Alabama, who meet for the first time since the 1982 Cotton Bowl — a 14-12 Longhorns win over the Tide and Bear Bryant.

"The system put us in the game," Texas coach Mack Brown said. "We were told for the last three weeks if we won, we'd be in the game. We did that."

Not by much, though. It took a 46-yard field goal from Hunter Lawrence with no time left to lift the Longhorns to the victory over Nebraska. Now it's Brown, formerly known for not being able to par-



AP PHOTOS

Alabama players, left, celebrate an SEC Championship victory over Florida on Saturday in Atlanta. Colt McCoy, right, hoists Texas' Big 12 trophy after the Longhorns beat Nebraska 13-12 on a last second field goal.

lay all that Texas talent into a national title, who's a win away from taking his second in five years.

Alabama, meanwhile, is in the midst of a resurgence brought about by

Nick Saban, who three years ago took over a program in turmoil and now has the faithful believing again.

"There's so much tradition and so much passion," Saban said.

"There are great expectations for what people like to accomplish around here, and it's a feeling of tremendous self-gratification for everyone involved in the program."

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