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HERALD

BIG SPRING

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DECEMBER 10, 2010



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Drive-Through Nativity opens tonight

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

For almost a quarter-century, First Church of the Nazarene has built its Drive-Through Nativity into one of West Texas' must-see Christmas attractions.

Visitors from across the area are expected to join hundreds

of local residents in viewing the 24th annual Nativity, which begins its three-day run tonight at the church, located at 1400 Lancaster.

Times for the event are 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. through Sunday. Admission is free, although donations, which go exclusively toward future editions of the Nativity, will

be gladly accepted, said C.J. Ward, church secretary.

Visitors will be able to view up to 15 live-action scenes depicting events leading up to the birth of Jesus, as well as his life, death and subsequent resurrection, Ward said. Church members and other community residents will play the parts of shepherds,

angels and other Christmas story characters. Ward said the cast will total more than 100 people, plus live animals.

Ward, who has witnessed the event since its inception, said it began in 1987 at the behest of former pastor Gary Smith. The first year's

See **NATIVITY**, Page 3A

What: Drive-Through Nativity.
Where: First Church of the Nazarene, 1400 Lancaster.
When: 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. tonight, Saturday and Sunday.

Alon suit awaits verdict

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

The property damage trial pitting three Crossroads residents against oil giant Alon USA continued in 118th District Court today, with the case expected to be handed to the jury sometime this morning or afternoon.

According to court officials, the case — which began Monday with jury selection — was brought by local residents Beverly Smithie and Ron and Debra Walker, who allegedly sustained property damage in February 2008 when an explosion ripped through the Big Spring refinery, sending a shock wave through the community.

The plaintiffs are being represented by a Houston law firm, according to court officials, with local attorney Joshua Hamby sitting in as local counsel. Information regarding the attorneys representing Alon USA was not available, but Big Spring attorney Shane Seaton is serving as local counsel for the defense.

See **TRIAL**, Page 3A



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan
Little Paisley Osborn, with help from Sharon Pimpton, sings a Christmas song during a Christmas Party held by the Big Spring Kiwanis Club for West Side Community Day Care children Thursday at Baptist Temple Church. Santa was on hand to present the children with toys.

Sheriff's toy drive ends soon

Deadline is Sunday

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

Time is running out for area residents looking to participate in the Howard County Sheriff's Office toy drive, as the local law enforcement officials look to brighten the holiday season for low-income families.

The toy drive, which gathers toys and gifts for the Salvation Army Angel Tree

See **TOYS**, Page 3A

Crooner contest to hit final note

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

Move over "American Idol," as dozens of local residents get ready to compete for more than \$1,000 in cash and prizes tonight in the final round of the Karaoke Changed My Life Battle of the Stars.

Set to kick off at 8 p.m. at the Hog Heaven Barbecue Party Barn — located on W. Highway 80 — the competition is the brain child of local music promoted Jim Koerber, owner of Scars Entertainment.

"People are always saying there's

See **KARAOKE**, Page 3A

Accident takes local woman's life

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

Separate accidents Wednesday left one Big Spring resident dead and two in serious but stable condition in area hospitals.

The fatal accident occurred late Wednesday in the 1700 block of Gregg Street.

Big Spring Police Department officers responding to the scene

discovered that a 2007 Saturn driven by Gabriel Paredez, 23, of Big Spring, had struck a traffic signal pole at the intersection of 17th and Gregg.

Both Paredez and Olga Ann Hernandez, 55, a passenger in the vehicle, were taken by ambulance to Scenic Mountain Medical Center's emergency room, where Hernandez died a short time later, BSPD Public Information Officer Sgt. Tony Everett said in a statement released Thursday morning.

Paredez remains hospitalized with "severe" injuries, Everett added.

Both were wearing seat belts at the

time of the accident and alcohol was not a factor, police said.

"It is possible the driver had a seizure, causing him to leave the roadway," Everett noted.

Hernandez, who was employed at Big Spring State Hospital at the time of her death, is survived by her mother, a son, five siblings and many nieces and nephews. Funeral services under the direction of Myers & Smith Funeral Home will be held Saturday afternoon at Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

See **WRECK**, Page 3A

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Playoffs 2010

Upping the ante



HERALD Photo/Tony Claxton

Garden City receiver Brett Chudej runs for a score after a reception in the Bearkats' semifinal playoff game against Follett. They'll be going for a second consecutive state championship when they take on Throckmorton at 7 p.m. Saturday at Shotwell Stadium in Abilene.

Garden City-Throckmorton clash in state title game

BY ADAM COLEMAN
Sports Editor

GARDEN CITY — Garden City head coach Vance Jones remembers the last time his Bearkats lost vividly.

It was to Throckmorton in the beginning of the 2009 season and Jones remembers his players naturally being upset.

More good than harm came from that loss, though.

"That loss was probably our motivation to work harder to get to play them again," Jones said. "After the game, they said 'Coach, we can beat them.' They worked hard and that was the driving engine that helped us get to that point and once we beat them, we said 'Hey, maybe we have a shot to go all the way.'"

The Bearkats did get another shot at Throckmorton en route to the 2009 state title, beating the Greyhounds in the quarterfinals of the playoffs last year. That added to the win they had

in the second round of the 2008 playoffs.

The two teams will add another chapter to the series at 7 p.m. Saturday at Shotwell Stadium in Abilene, but this time, everything is on the line in the UIL Six-Man state championship game.

Garden City players weren't willing to talk too much about the last time the Bearkats lost a game. As far as they are concerned, all focus is on what happens against Throckmorton Saturday.

They've practice like that, too. This week has proved to the Bearkats how helpful experience can be. Going through the week of the state championship game as the defending champions is a lot different than doing it for the first time.

"It's definitely different," said Reggie Halfmann, who is one of the anchors on a defense Jones said has immensely grown. "Being through the whole experience once, the nerves

just aren't quite as high the second time around."

Garden City receiver Brett Chudej said this week has been as normal as any other week during the season and everyone is relaxed, but focused.

Jones wouldn't have it any other way. He let his players know this is the part they should enjoy the most.

"I think everyone is pretty relaxed right now," he said. "We started out the week that way. The hardest part is getting here. We got here now just relax and have fun. I think we've had a good hard week and they've had fun at it."

"Because like I told them, there is no guarantee they'll ever be back."

When Jones and his players talk about Throckmorton, explosive, talented, tough, standout and talented are just some of the words used.

Sound familiar? Jones said Saturday's game will be a matchup of two very similar teams. The Bearkats have Josh Colunga and

Throckmorton has Michael Everett.

Halfmann said the defensive game plan for Saturday's is simple: limit Everett as much as possible. Against Aquilla in the semifinal last week, he had 19 carries on 256 yards and five touchdowns.

But as much as the Bearkats want to limit Everett, the need for Throckmorton to do the same against Colunga is just as vital to the Greyhounds' success.

That's when quarterback Blayne Batla thrives, connecting with Chudej, Aaron Long or Brian Hirt, among others, who are open as a result.

"They'll probably try to stop Josh as much as anything," Batla said. "Maybe they'll leave some guys wide open."

Still, the opportunity to raise the bar even higher at Garden City has been

See **BEARKATS**, Page 2B

Sports in brief

Garden City football

The Garden City Bearkats face Throckmorton in the UIL Six-Man Division I state championship game at 7 p.m. at Shotwell Stadium in Abilene. Tickets will be available for purchase at the stadium the day of the games.

Big Spring boys basketball

The Big Spring varsity boys basketball team is scheduled to play in a basketball tournament in Fredricksburg Dec. 28-30. The dates of this tournament have been changed to Dec. 27 and 28.

Club volleyball

Club volleyball tryouts take place at 3 p.m. Sunday in the Big Spring High School PE gym. There is a mandatory meeting at 2:30 p.m. beforehand and those interested should bring a copy of their birth certificate and insurance. The fee is \$30. Contact LynnOsborne at losborne44@yahoo.com for details.

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