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BIG SPRING HERALD

WEDNESDAY

MARCH 12, 2014



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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

Fire destroys three structures

Families said safe, no injuries were reported

By **BILL McCLELLAN**
 Managing Editor

Strong winds early this morning made extinguishing a residential fire doubly difficult for firefighters and caused extensive damage to two occupied homes.

The fire also placed nearby residents in peril for a period of time; however, there were no injuries to civilians or responders.

The fire began shortly after midnight and destroyed two houses and a garage before city and county crews could contain it.

Big Spring Fire Department received a call at 12:45 a.m. about a structure fire in the



Ferguson

1000 block of N. Bell. When crews arrived, they found a two-car garage on fire. However, high winds caused the fire to spread quickly to two adjacent structures on separate properties. Fire crews worked for about an hour to get the fire under control and kept it from spreading further.

"We were able to keep the blaze contained to the three structures," said Craig Ferguson, BSPD fire chief. "As a precaution, there were at least four other homes that were evacuated. Those residents were later allowed to return to their homes."

Ferguson said the city fire department's first alarm response was with three fire

See **FIRE**, Page 3



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Thirty-eight city and county emergency personnel battled a wind-fueled fire that destroyed two homes and a two-car garage early this morning in the 1000 block of N. Bell.

Private EMS group to aid city with routine transports

By **STEVE REAGAN**
 Staff Writer

Big Spring's Emergency Medical Service is farming out some of its workload.

City council members Tuesday unanimously accepted a proposal from Guardian EMS of Abilene to assume non-emergency ambulance service for Big Spring.

Big Spring Fire Department Chief Craig Ferguson said Guardian will provide patient

transfers between hospitals, a service that has proved to be a strain for his personnel.

The city's EMS personnel currently average 72 patient transfers a month — or more than three a day — from scenic Mountain Medical Center to other area hospitals.

"We're averaging about six hours per ambulance on these transfers," Ferguson said. "With the staff shortages we have, this has us stretched a bit thin."

BSPD personnel will continue to handle 911 and other emergency calls, he added.

Ferguson believes farming out non-emergency calls will have little impact on the city's budget.

"I think the effect will be

fairly minimal," he said. "When you factor in all of our costs for transfers — overtime, fuel costs, things like that — it's pretty much a wash."

Guardian, a privately-owned EMS service, will temporarily headquarter at SMMC, although it is looking for a more permanent home, company representative Matt Briggs said. The company will base three ambulances and attendant staff in Big Spring and will be available for calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week, he added.

Also Tuesday, the council approved a negotiated agreement with natural gas

See **CITY**, Page 3

BSPD: Nothing new on Mendoza investigation

By **LYNDEL MOODY**
 Staff Reporter

No other charges are expected to be filed at this time on two Big Spring residents who were arrested last week on drug charges, according to Big Spring police officials.

Phillip Mendoza, 62, and Yolanda Mendoza, 63, of 104 NW Eighth St. have been released on bond after their arrest March 4, on a warrant by the Big Spring Police Department Narcotics Division. Phillip Mendoza was released on a \$40,000 bond and Yolanda Mendoza was released on a \$30,000 bond March 5, according to Howard County Sheriff Office officials. Both bonds were set by Municipal Judge Tim Green.

The two were arrested on a charge of manufacturing/delivering a controlled substance penalty group 1, more than or equal to 4 grams but less than 200 grams. This is a first degree felony.

The arrest came after a two-month investigation by the BSPD Narcotics Division. The warrant was executed by BSPD and the Howard County Sheriff's Office SWAT team in the early morning hours of March 4 at the suspects' residence.

Police reported they located more than an ounce of cocaine and approximately \$1,000 in currency believed to be proceeds from the sales of cocaine.

Contact **Lyndel Moody** at citydesk@bigspringherald.com or by 263-7331, ext. 234.

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 Please call 263-7331.
 Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you miss your paper, please call (432) 263-7331 before 6 p.m. weekdays.



Youth fishing tourney hopeful for March 22

By **LYNDEL MOODY**
 Staff Writer

Start breaking out the tackle but don't put the bait on the hook just yet.

The Sixth Annual Trout Fishing Contest for area youth will be held next Saturday, March 22, with hopes of sunny skies and hungry fish to welcoming budding fisher-

men and women.

In past tournaments, approximately 100 boys and girls ranging from age 17 and younger, their parents and grandparents have participated in the contest held at Comanche Trail Park Lake.

Colder than usual weather

See **FISHING**, Page 3

Wreck victim from Snyder

Herald Staff Report

Officials have released the name of the man who died after his vehicle crashed into a Snyder Highway restaurant Sunday morning.

Billy Jack Scott, 75, of Snyder, died en route to the hospital after his vehicle crashed into the front of the Fire House Grill Restaurant on Highway 350 around 9 a.m. Sunday.

Department of Public Safety Trooper Elena Viramontes said Scott experienced a medical problem shortly before crashing his vehicle into the front of the restaurant, tearing a gaping hole in its exterior.

No other injuries were reported as a result of the accident.

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Oleta Lavern Clanton



Oleta Lavern Clanton, 76, of Big Spring, died Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at her residence. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday, March 13, 2014, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel with the Rev. Jim Binnix, officiating. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park.

Oleta was born Oct. 11, 1937, in Rotan, Texas and married Charles Clanton Feb. 11, 1955, in Odessa,

Texas. She graduated from Odessa High School and had worked at Hemphill Wells, Village Shoes, Walls and First National Bank. She and Charlie owned and operated Lakeway Grocery from 1990 to 1998. She loved gardening, sewing and spending

Frances Billalba McKiski



Frances Billalba McKiski, 60, of Big Spring, died Sunday, March 9, 2014, at Midland Memorial Hospital. Vigil services will be 7 p.m. Wednesday at Myers & Smith Chapel. Funeral mass will be 11 a.m. Thursday at Holy Trinity Catholic Church with Msgr. Bernard L. Gully officiating. Burial will follow at Mount Olive Memorial Park.

She was born April 10, 1953, in Big Spring to Rosalia and Ruben Billalba. She was a lifetime resident of Big Spring. She graduated from Big Spring High School and Valti Reeves Cosmetology School. She was a hairdresser in Big Spring for more than 35 years and owned House of Charm.

She is survived by two daughters, Denise Gonzales of Midland and Denita Zamora and husband, Robert, of Odessa; two sons, Travis McKiski of Big

time cooking for her family.

She was a member of Midway Baptist Church.

She is survived by her husband, Charlie Clanton of Big Spring; one son, Randy Clanton and wife, Tricia, of Big Spring; one daughter, Angie Sloan and husband, Iain, of Coahoma; two sisters, Barbara Daniels of Big Spring and Billie Parsons of Giddings; three grandsons, Chance Clanton, Cory Clanton and Chase Clanton, all of Big Spring; two granddaughters, Kyla Clanton of Big Spring and Jordan Matthews of Coahoma; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Rupert and Jessie (Watley) Townsend.

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

Paid obituary

Spring and Mark McKiski and wife, Corina, of Big Spring; five sisters, Beatrice Stevens of Lubbock, Mary Lou Lujan and husband, Santos, of Big Spring, Adelina Correa and husband, Albert, of Canyon, Nora Paul and husband, Peter, of Las Vegas, and Delia Cruz and husband, Mike, of Amarillo; two brothers, Ruben Billalba of Grand Prairie and Tommy Billalba and wife, Olga, of Big Spring; and nine grandchildren, Ryan Robles, Patrick Robles, Esian Fuentes, Cecily Zamora, Kierra Zamora, Timothy Zamora, Cheyanne Marie Faith McKiski, Travis Russell Edward McKiski and Leonicio Bernard Ortiz.

Those serving as pallbearers are Paul Gonzales, Ryan Robles, Patrick Robles, Andrew Correa, Peter Paul, Michael Cruz and Tre Lujan. Honorary pallbearers are Timothy Zamora, Zac Bennett and Eaison Fuentes.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home and Chapel. Please pay your respects online at www.myersandsmith.com

Paid obituary

Jacques 'Jackie' Newton



Jacques "Jackie" Newton, 92, of Big Spring died Saturday March 8, 2014, at Parkview Nursing and Rehab Center. Private family services will be at a later date.

She was born March 12, 1921, to Wilma and Samuel Rawls in Fort Worth, Texas. She married Thomas J. Newton in Abilene, Texas on Feb. 17, 1945. He preceded her in death Nov. 10, 1997. She had been a resident of Big Spring for 13

years, moving to the city from Midland. She was a homemaker and housewife. She loved to bake chocolate meringue and lemon meringue pies. She also was a collector of salt and pepper shakers.

She is survived by two daughters, Terry Smith and husband Ken of San Angelo, and Sandra Fules-

day and husband Val of Big Spring; one son, Steven Newton of Albuquerque, N.M.; six grandchildren, Mike Smith of Holt, Mich., Brenda Morris and husband, Kris, of Mason, Mich., Suzanne Saenz and husband, John, of Midland, Shalon Kappler and husband Doug of Arlington, Ian Newton and wife Krista of Littleton, Colo. and Casey Brower and husband Eric of Albuquerque; and six great grandchildren, Bethany Saenz, Delaney Saenz, Nicholas Smiley, Jeffrey Brower, Jack Newton and Luke Newton.

In addition to her parents and husband, she is preceded in death by one granddaughter, Carol Jean Smith; and one daughter-in-law, Marilyn D. (Keen) Newton.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home and Chapel. Please pay your respects online at www.myersandsmith.com

Paid obituary

Police blotter

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

- MARK HOLLIS RYERSON, 26, of 801 E. 18th St., was arrested on a charge of possession of marijuana, less or equal to two ounces.
- HAYDEN DOUGLAS MCMURRIN, 24, of 801 W. Marcy Drive 23, was arrested on a charge of manufacturing/delivering a controlled substance, more than 1 gram but less than 4 grams; possession of marijuana, less than or equal to two ounces; and resisting arrest, search or transport.
- DAVID RENTERIA, 47, of 1009 N. Bell St., was arrested on a charge of hindering officers discharging official duties.
- MINOR ACCIDENT was reported in the area of Fourth and Owens streets.
- IDENTITY THEFT was reported in the 600 block of Holbert St.

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

- Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 62 inmates at the time of this report.
- HAYDEN D. MCMURRIN, 24, was arrested on charges of manufacturing/delivering a controlled substance, more than 1 gram but less than 4 grams; possession of marijuana, less than two ounces and resisting arrest, search or transport.
- DAVID RENTERIA, 47, was arrested on a charge

of hindering officers discharging official duties.

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

- Tuesday
- MEDICAL CALL was reported in the 1800 block of North Highway 87. One person was transported to Scenic Mountain Medical Center (SMMC)
- MEDICAL CALL was reported in the 700 block of W. I-20. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL CALL was reported in the 1600 block of Lancaster. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL CALL was reported in the area of 18th and Gregg streets. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL CALL was reported in the area of 7th and Gregg streets. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL CALL was reported in the 900 block of Lancaster. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA CALL was reported in the 1400 block of Tucson. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL CALL was reported in the 900 block of Abrams. One person was transported to SMMC.
- AUTOMOBILE FIRE was reported in the 800 block of Baylor. Fire was extinguished.
- FALSE CALL was reported in the 1600 block of Sycamore.

Arthur Thomas Barrett

Arthur Thomas Barrett, 88, of Abilene, died Wednesday Feb. 19, 2014, at Lamun-Lusk-Sanchez Texas State Veterans Home in Big Spring. Graveside service will be at 10 a.m. Friday at Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Abilene.

He was born June 28, 1925, in Aquilla, Texas to Caroline M. and William R. Barrett. He married Mary Frances Payne June 25, 1947 in Waco, Texas. At age 17, he entered the U.S. Navy and later went to school on the Navy GI Bill, receiving his master's degree. He worked as a systems analyst in the space program. He retired in Waco where he was involved with the Shriners. He later moved to Abilene in 1995.

He is survived by his wife, Fran Barrett, of Abilene; two daughters, Beatrice Garner and husband, Thomas, of Abilene and Caroline DeMartis of Fredericksburg, Va.; one sister, Betty Reaties and husband, Bill, of Midwest City, Okla.; four grandchildren; and three great grandchildren.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Please pay your respects online at www.myersandsmith.com

Andra Adams

Andra Adams, 58, of Sweetwater, died Tuesday, March 11, 2014, in an Abilene hospital. Services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Callie Jo Nickle

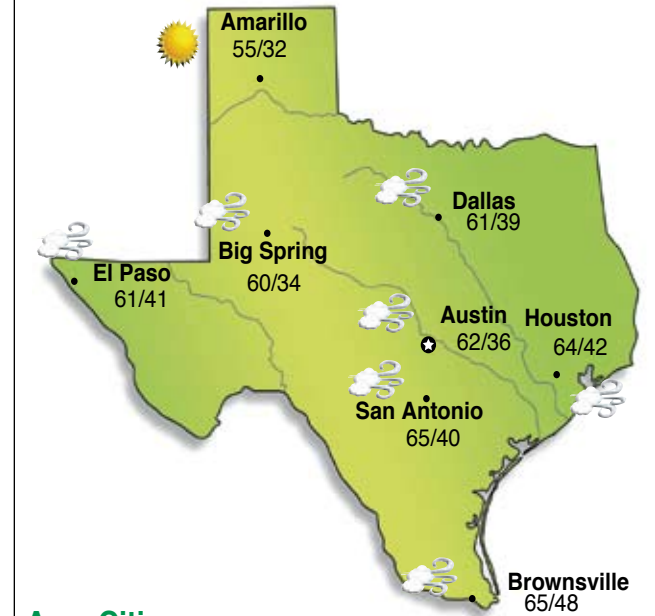
Callie Jo Nickle, 58, of Big Spring, died Tuesday, March 11, 2014, at her residence. Services are pending Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Today's Weather

Local 5-Day Forecast				
Thu 3/13	Fri 3/14	Sat 3/15	Sun 3/16	Mon 3/17
60/34 Sunny with gusty winds. High around 60F. Winds N at 20 to 30 mph.	65/42 Abundant sunshine. Highs in the mid 60s and lows in the low 40s.	74/42 Times of sun and clouds. Highs in the mid 70s and lows in the low 40s.	76/44 Abundant sunshine. Highs in the mid 70s and lows in the mid 40s.	66/38 Windy with a few showers. Highs in the mid 60s and lows in the upper 30s.
Sunrise: 8:00 AM Sunset: 7:52 PM	Sunrise: 7:59 AM Sunset: 7:53 PM	Sunrise: 7:57 AM Sunset: 7:53 PM	Sunrise: 7:56 AM Sunset: 7:54 PM	Sunrise: 7:55 AM Sunset: 7:55 PM

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Texas At A Glance



Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	60	34	windy	Kingsville	67	43	windy
Amarillo	55	32	sunny	Livingston	61	37	windy
Austin	62	36	windy	Longview	58	35	windy
Beaumont	62	39	windy	Lubbock	57	30	pt sunny
Brownsville	65	48	windy	Lufkin	60	35	windy
Brownwood	61	33	windy	Midland	59	36	sunny
Corpus Christi	64	44	windy	Raymondville	66	45	windy
Corsicana	59	35	windy	Rosenberg	62	38	windy
Dallas	61	39	windy	San Antonio	65	40	windy
Del Rio	68	44	windy	San Marcos	63	37	windy
El Paso	61	41	windy	Sulphur Springs	59	35	windy
Fort Stockton	58	39	windy	Sweetwater	59	36	windy
Gainesville	58	34	windy	Tyler	57	36	windy
Greenville	59	33	windy	Weatherford	60	35	windy
Houston	64	42	windy	Wichita Falls	61	35	sunny

Support Groups

THURSDAY

- Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, open discussion noon to 1 p.m.; women's meeting; 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. Non-smoking closed discussion meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

- Spring Tabernacle Ministries has a faith-based support group for those who need help finding and continuing to walk down the path God has for each of us. Meetings are at 11 a.m. until noon and again at 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at 1209 Wright St.

- Weight Watchers meets at 6 p.m. at St. Paul Lutheran Church. Weigh-in is at 5:30 p.m. Weigh-in is confidential.

- Circle of Hope, a Celebrate Recovery group, meets at 6:30-8 p.m. at Spring Creek Fellowship, located in the College Park Shopping Center.

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Take Note

• American Legion Post 506 Fish Fry is Saturday at 3203 W. Highway 80 from 1 a.m. to 2 p.m. Delivery is 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Plates are \$10 each and carry-out is available. Call 263-2084. Everyone welcome!

• The Big Spring Senior Center dance is open to all ages. No alcohol, or smoking. Our parking lot is now well lit, and we are handicapped accessible. The cost is \$8.00 per person. March 14 "Prowlers," March 21 "Prowlers," March 28 "Midnight Express."

• Howard County A&M Club is accepting applications from high school students who are graduating this May and have been accepted at Texas A&M University for fall 2014. Students must be Howard County residents and will enroll for at least 12 hours. Deadline for applications is April 1. More information and the application may be found on the club website at www.westexags.com

• Howard County Fair Association is in need of volunteers to cross stitch squares for the Howard County Fair quilt to be raffled at the fair. Theme this year is "Hummingbirds." Patterns are from easy to more difficult, so you do not have to be an expert. Squares may be picked up at the Heritage Museum front desk Tuesday through Saturday. For more information, call Suzanne Markwell at 214-256-1674.

• The Prom Closet will be back this year to provide beautiful barely worn or never worn prom dresses at no charge for area girls. For more information call Christian Fair at 816-3573.

• We are in need of donated items for our garage sale fundraiser, this Saturday from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. If anyone is interested in donating, drop-off times will be on Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. First Church of the Nazarene, 1400 S Lancaster. For more information, call 267-7015.

• Scenic Mountain Medical Center's Yellow Rose Café has been temporarily closed to the public for routine repairs and maintenance. The café will remain closed until repairs are complete. A completion date for the project has not been set. Patient meals will continue without interruption throughout the process. The hospital will issue an announcement release once the Yellow Rose Café is ready to reopen. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. For more information, contact Amanda Duforat, marketing coordinator, at 268-4699.

• The Powwow Committee of Big Spring has been restructured and is seeking new members, according to committee secretary Greg Bodin. "The winds of change are blowing. Whether you are a Native American or are interested in Native American culture and would like to be a part of the 10th anniversary Big Spring Powwow, please accept our invitation to attend a meeting," Bodin said. For more information, contact Vice President Randy McKinney at 432-267-4843 or President Richard Lesser at 432-935-0125.

• Victim Services is a non-profit independent community-based program serving victims of all violent crime, including, but not limited to violent crimes of assault, sexual assault and domestic violence. Victim Services advocates are available 24

hours a day, 365 days a year to provide crisis intervention or accompaniment to the hospital and law enforcement agencies as needed. If you can commit to 30-hour training, an interview process background check and attend training. We need you. For more information, call Linda Calvio at 432-263-3312.

• The Big Spring State Hospital Community Relations office is accepting donations of magazines. They should be brought to the Community Relations office on campus. For more information, call Jamey Stegall at 268-7535 or james.stegall@dshs.state.tx.us

• Big Spring and surrounding counties are in need of foster families. Foster parents are the caretakers for the children in the community who have been abused or neglected. For more information on becoming foster parents or adoptive families, call the Children's Protective Services office at 263-9669.

• Crossroads Hospice is in need of volunteers. Volunteers are the backbone of the hospice team, by bringing light and love into people's lives. For more information on joining, contact Eva Robison at 432-263-5300 or come by 421 S. Main.

• Do you have a minute? An hour? How about making a difference in someone's life? Become a hospice volunteer. We can work around your schedule. If interested, please call Kara Daniels at Compass Hospice, 432-263-5999, or apply in person at 602 S. Main St.

• You don't have to be a senior citizen to enjoy country-western danc-

ing. The Big Spring Senior Center hosts a dance every Friday from 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. A different band will be featured every night. Dancing is a fun way to exercise, so come enjoy the fun and meet new friends. Cost is \$8 per person. For more information, call 267-1628.

• Mobile Meals is in need of volunteer delivery drivers. If you can donate one hour per week to help deliver meals to the elderly, call Macaria Cantu at 263-4016.

• Home Hospice is seeking volunteers. Volunteers are needed for in-office duties as well as sitters, deliveries and crafts. To find out more information or to volunteer, call 264-7599.

• The mission of CASA of West Texas is to promote and support quality volunteers who speak for the best interest of abused and neglected children in court in an effort to find each child a safe, nurturing and permanent home. We need your help. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Sara Basaldua at 1-877-316-8346 or visit www.BecomeaCASA.org or www.casawtx.org.

• Legal Aid of Northwest Texas is accepting appointments from 2 p.m. until 5 p.m. the first and third Wednesday of each month. Individuals seeking legal advice for matters concerning family law, divorce, custody and child support issues, social security cases, employment and housing may contact the office to schedule an appointment. Criminal cases are not accepted. Anyone recently served with legal documents should call the office immediately at 800-926-5630 or 432-686-0647.

FIRE

Continued from Page 1

trucks, an ambulance and a command unit. The scene commander quickly called a second alarm and two more fire trucks were dispatched to the scene. A third

alarm was called and County Volunteer Fire Department personnel came in to assist.

In all, said Ferguson, there were 18 vehicles and 38 personnel fighting the blaze and keeping it from spreading.

"As of 4:30 a.m., the

fire was under control and mostly out, however, fire crews had remained on the scene," the fire chief said.

Ferguson added that the cause of the fire is under investigation by the fire marshal's office.

Fire Marshal Carl Condray said at mid-

morning today it was too soon to determine a cause for the fire. He said the Howard County Chaplains Corps responded and was able to acquire housing for the residents.

"One house was destroyed and I'd say the other suffered extensive

damage. It's probably not worth repairing," said Condray.

One home contained a family of four while two people lived in the other home.

Condray said Red Cross had also been contacted and the public will be notified if

donations of food, clothing, household goods or other items are needed for the families.

CITY

Continued from Page 1

provider Atmos Energy that will result in residential bills increasing by an average of 77 cents a month.

The agreement was negotiated between Atmos and a consortium of West Texas communities, including Big Spring, Midland and Odessa.

Big Spring City Manager Todd Darden said the \$8.3 million rate hike agreement stipulates that the city will pay the same rate for natural gas as all other communities in Atmos'

West Texas Division. This had been a point of contention for the West Texas coalition, as Lubbock and Amarillo officials had negotiated cheaper rates for their cities.

"This agreement we're bringing before you is something that is fair for all our member cities," Darden told council members.

In other business Tuesday, the council approved:

- The Big Spring Economic Development Corporation's annual audit and the city's comprehensive financial report.
- A plan by Texas De-

partment of Transportation to remove one or two parking spaces from the southeast corner of Third and Main streets.

• A collection fee of \$240 plus 30 percent of the amount owed for past-due ambulance charges. The collection effort will be spearheaded by American Municipal Services, a firm that specializes in collecting past-due EMS fees.

• An agreement with Parkhill, Smith & Cooper to oversee \$1 million in renovations to the municipal auditorium. Planned work includes replacing the drapes, lighting and sound systems, as well as add-

ing restrooms and improving seating, Public Works Director Johnny Womack said.

• An agreement with Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission for a \$15,000 grant which will be targeted for the city landfill.

• Naming two pavilions at Bert Andries Park in honor of Max

Webb and Pat DeAnda.

• The city's investment report for the fourth quarter of 2013.

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

FISHING

Continued from Page 1

promoted officials to postponed the event which was schedule for last Saturday in hopes clear skies. The event is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. at the Dora Roberts Community Center. A number of door prizes will be given throughout the 3-1/2 hour tour-

ney. Prizes will also be given in the categories of first fish caught, largest fish caught and most caught by 4 p.m. Participants will need to bring their own fishing gear and bait.

For more information, contact event coordinator Ken McIntosh at 432-517-4821.

Contact Lyndel Moody at citydesk@bigspringherald.com

bigspringherald.com or by 263-7331, ext. 234.

sudoku

ANSWERS

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

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Fidel Martinez, 57, died Saturday. Funeral mass will be 10 a.m. today at Holy Trinity Catholic Church.

Frances Billalba McKiski, 60, died Sunday. Vigil services will be 7 p.m. tonight at Myers & Smith Chapel. Funeral mass will be 11 a.m. Thursday at Holy Trinity Catholic Church with burial at Mount Olive Memorial Park.

Jacques "Jackie" Newton, 92, died Saturday. Private family services will be at a later date.

Arthur Thomas Barrett, 88, died Wednesday February 19, 2014. Graveside service will be at 10 a.m. Friday at Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Abilene.

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Opinion

“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.

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LETTER POLICIES

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.

- 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 e-mailed to editor@big-springherald.com or mailed to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721.

DAILY PRAYER

Let us cast away doubt, oh Lord, and put our faith in thee.✠

Amen

Back on four wheels with the top down

Unless you're too young to be reading this for yourself, it's likely you have lived long enough to know that life can be difficult sometimes. We aren't always given an easy path to travel. Things happen to all of us that challenge our very survival, some a result of our own choices, and some because of the world just being a real place with real problems from which no one is immune.

Some lessons we learn again and again. One of my all-time favorite bumper stickers was on an older car in Houston which read, "Oh no! Not another learning experience!" I have a feeling most of us have been there, and even though they can be hard to endure, those challenges have the potential to make us better, stronger, and much better people if we conquer them.

Anyone who knows me will tell you I love life. I try not to let one day be anything less than fun and productive. It's in my DNA and I really enjoy living and experiencing the joy that every day offers me. Yet, I certainly know the pain and struggle that everyday existence can dish out to any and all of us at any given moment. One phone call, a doctor's report, a poor decision, or any number of other issues can drastically alter our course in less time that we can blink. However, there are some powerful truths that can serve as excellent guidelines for us when we find ourselves in those circumstances and I was privileged to be reminded of a few of them a couple of days ago.

Monday was an interesting day for me as I faced an unexpected situation and I re-learned a few important principles that I feel will continue to provide light on my path for some time. Maybe my sharing it with you will illuminate your path a little too,

but to make it truly significant, I must give you a little background first.

When I was a youngster, more than anything in this world I wanted a Cushman Eagle motor scooter. Some of you won't even know what I am talking about, but some of you are smiling right now because you had one, or, like me, wanted one. To us boys who were too young to get a driver's license, a Cushman Eagle was the closest thing to being cool you could imagine. To this day, I've never owned one, and now they are cost-prohibitive in my world. However, when I left my Texas home and went to college in Tennessee, I bought a motorcycle. I didn't tell my parents. I was too far away to give them CPR so I just kept it to myself for a long time.

The story of me acquiring my first 2-wheel mode of transportation is classic. I had never ridden a motorcycle in my life but early one morning I boarded a Greyhound bus in Cleveland, Tennessee, and rode to Asheville, N.C., to pick up a Yamaha 305 I had purchased from a friend. I didn't know the first thing about motorcycles. I didn't even know how to start the engine. I wasn't told anything about how to shift the gears. Yet, I climbed onto the seat of this small motorcycle and bravely started the magnificently beautiful 170-mile journey through the Smokey Mountains and the Nantahala National Forest back home to my college dorm in Cleveland. It jerked and sputtered as I learned how to get it in gear, and because of God's mercy and grace on a poor fool, I actually made it back to school safely. Then, over the next few months, I actually became quite experienced as a rider.

Later in life I succeeded in talking myself, and my sweet hesitant wife, into buying an even bigger bike. She and I did some touring in Tennessee and in Northern California. But that was many years ago, so when I climbed into the saddle of my son's 1,700cc motorcycle on Monday to ride it to Big Spring from Sweetwater, I was terrified.

It was late afternoon and for the first 20 miles, I was staring straight into a West Texas sun making it next to impossible to see anything. Trucks go very fast on the Interstate and they cause tremendous wind currents, and there must have been a thousand or more that passed me. (At least, that's the way it seemed to me.) I won't say that my whole life flashed before my eyes, but I will admit to doing enough praying to make me much closer to God than I probably was when I felt the urge to insert the key into the ignition.

So, what did I learn? First, when you're afraid, the only way to conquer your fear is to persevere and trust in God to help you make it through. I honestly wanted off of that motorcycle within five minutes of pulling onto I-20, but I refused to give in to my fear.

Secondly, I remembered how precious my family is to me. In the time I was riding home I thought about everybody I would miss if I didn't make it. Go ahead and laugh, but I was really wishing I had told more people how much I loved them before I started the journey. When I did arrive home safely I hugged my wife, my son and daughter-in-law, my grandkids, the dog, and I even called my 87-year old parents just to hear their voices.

Finally, I learned all over again how much I depend on the mercies of God.

Without apology or embarrassment, I admit that I made sure there was nothing in my life that would need an explanation if I was to stand in His presence as a result of this impulsive decision to revisit my youthful days on a motorcycle.

Oh, how good it is today to be back on four wheels with the top down.

You may not agree with anything I've said, but I column as I see 'em.

Eddy Prince is senior pastor at Grace Fellowship Church of God in Big Spring. He can be reached by email at pastorprince@msn.com.

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 Bill McClellan at newsdesk@bigspringherald.com.

- By mail at P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721

Make work pay more

“It is time to give America a raise,” President Barack Obama proclaimed in support of his proposal to raise the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 by 2016.

Many Republicans in Washington oppose the Democrats' proposed wage hike of nearly 40 percent. Former Republican candidate for governor of California Ron Unz, however, thinks D.C. Republicans should give the proposal serious consideration.

Unz is working to get a measure on the ballot to raise California's minimum wage to \$12 an hour. Unz told me the smart move for Washington Republicans would be to support Obama's proposal to raise the minimum wage but oppose the president's plan to expand the earned income tax credit.

Unz has a consistent theme: Conservatives should support laws that make work pay and pay more than welfare.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that a \$10.10 minimum wage would result in the loss of 500,000 jobs, but it also would increase the take-home

pay of 16.5 million workers and lift 900,000 above the poverty level. “The savings in government social welfare payments would be enormous,” quoth Unz.

Republicans have used the CBO prediction of a half-million lost jobs to hammer Democrats. There is no free lunch. Some low-wage workers won't find jobs, and the cost of goods will increase to pay for higher wages. Unz is very aware of how government mandates can hinder job creation. He sees Obamacare, for example, as a “disaster” that has driven up the cost of hiring people.

The cost of Obamacare, he told me, doesn't go into workers' pockets, whereas “the benefit of raising the minimum wage is that the dollars go to the workers.”

Irwin Stelzer of the Hudson Institute recently made a conservative case for a higher minimum wage in The Weekly Standard. A raise to \$10.10, he wrote, would raise pay by almost \$5,000 per year for someone who works a 30-hour week. “Surely a policy that increases both aggregate incomes and the gap between the value of work” and what Americans can pocket without working, Stelzer wrote, “is worth another look.”

Given the high unemployment rate among Americans younger than 25, Stelzer told me, Wash-

ington should want a wage that creates “a greater incentive to go to work.”

One way to look at the status quo is that the government has provided benefits that allow employers to underpay their workers.

Unz wrote in an email that the CBO predicts 98 percent of workers will retain their low-wage jobs and that that demonstrates “that their economic value to their employer was vastly greater than their current rate of pay.”

“When 98 percent of workers are paid below their true economic value, any assumptions of a truly efficient market in labor are absurd,” Unz wrote, “and the rectifying impact of a higher minimum wage becomes absolutely justified.”

Stelzer believes that if workers take home higher pay, increased consumer spending could in turn create jobs.

At the very least, a higher minimum wage would reward Americans for working. And that's a good thing.

Email Debra J. Saunders at dsanders@schronicle.com. To find out more about Debra J. Saunders and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.



EDDY PRINCE



DEBRA SAUNDERS

News in brief

Investigation into CIA detention and interrogation program dogged by fresh controversy

WASHINGTON (AP) — A marathon Senate investigation into allegations of CIA torture during the Bush-era war on terror is veering toward partisan political territory and possibly the federal courts after unusually pointed accusations against the spy agency, including potential criminal wrongdoing.

As a result of Sen. Dianne Feinstein's remarks Tuesday, yet another investigation may be in the offing to sort out what the CIA did — or didn't do — to help or hamper Senate investigators.

Already, the episode has the markings of a classic Washington controversy as interpretations of facts diverge, some lawmakers choose sides, others suggest the new probe and the White House seeks a middle ground.

At its core, the controversy involves Feinstein's allegation that a CIA search of a computer network it set up for Senate investigators may have violated the Constitution and federal law.

"As far as allegations of the CIA hacking Senate computers, nothing could be further from the truth," the agency's director, John Brennan, said Tuesday, denying an allegation that Feinstein, D-Calif., did not make in her extensive remarks on the Senate floor.

India asked to join hunt for missing plane as authorities unsure which way jet was headed

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia asked India to join the expanding search for the missing Boeing 777 near the Andaman Sea — far to the northwest of its last reported position and a further sign Wednesday that authorities have no idea where the plane might be more than four days after it vanished.

The mystery over the plane's whereabouts has been confounded by confusing and occasionally conflicting statements by Malaysian officials, adding to the anguish of relatives of the 239 people on board the flight — two thirds of them Chinese.

"There's too much information and confusion right now. It is very hard for us to decide whether a given piece of information is accurate," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang told reporters in Beijing. "We will not give it up as long as there's still a shred of hope."

The mother of passenger Zou Jingsheng, who would only give her name as Zou, wept and spoke haltingly about her missing son while staying at a hotel near the Beijing airport. She expressed frustration with the airline and the Malaysian government over their handling of the case.

"I want to talk more, but all this is very stressful, and after all it is my son's life that I am concerned about. I just want to know where he is, and

wish he is safe and alive," she said.

Airline at center of jet disappearance has catalog of woes

HONG KONG (AP) — Within an industry notorious for impoverishing shareholders and irking customers, Malaysia Airlines has stood out for its years of restructurings and losses. The company now has global recognition of a far more unfavorable kind after one of its jets disappeared four days ago with 239 people aboard.

There has been no suggestion that the unrelenting financial pressures faced by the airline and its 19,000 employees somehow played a role in the disappearance of flight MH370 en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing. But the revelation this week that the jet's co-pilot allowed two female passengers to ride in the cockpit for the duration of a flight two years ago has invited scrutiny of the professionalism of top-level staff.

Among Asian carriers, Malaysia Airlines has built a reputation for high-standard service and safety since being founded in 1937, bagging an array of industry awards in recent years for its food, cabin crew and overall service. Its most recent fatal incident was nearly two decades ago, when one of its planes crashed near the Malaysian city of Tawau, killing 34.

Yet the accolades in the past decade have not been sufficient to halt the ebb of customers and revenue to low-cost competitors, mostly notably to AirAsia founded in 2001 by Malaysian businessman Tony Fernandes. The nimbler discount competitors have expanded rapidly, while Malaysia Airlines has been like a supertanker, slow to change direction. State ownership and a powerful union have impeded efforts to adapt.

Travelers are likely to "shun" the airline in reaction to "an incident of such proportion" as a jet vanishing, said Shukor Yusof, aviation analyst at S&P Capital IQ, a division of Standard & Poor's. "It's going to make things even worse," he said.

Republican victory in Fla. congressional special election could be warning sign for Democrats

CLEARWATER BEACH, Fla. (AP) — After months of railing against President Barack Obama's health care overhaul, Republicans scored a key victory in a hard-fought congressional race that had been closely watched as a bellwether of midterm elections in November.

Republican David Jolly defeated Democrat Alex Sink in a Florida special election Tuesday that largely turned on the federal health care law, with both sides using the race to audition national strategies in one of the country's few competitive swing-voting districts.

The implications of the dueling messages for control of Congress in November inspired both parties to call in star advocates like former President Bill Clinton and former vice presi-

dential candidate Paul Ryan, in addition to blanketing the district with ads, calls and mailings. More than \$11 million was spent on the race, according to the Sunlight Foundation, a nonprofit group that tracks government information.

While Republicans held the congressional seat for more than four decades until the death of Rep. Bill Young last year, the district's voters favored Obama in the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections. Democrats were hopeful, clearing the field for Sink, the state's well-known chief financial officer and the party's gubernatorial nominee in 2010. Republicans failed to recruit their top picks, leaving Jolly to fight a bruising three-way primary.

This stretch of beach towns and retirement communities on the Gulf Coast is the type of terrain where Democrats need to compete if they hope to win seats in the House and keep control of the Senate. Analysts said the loss could bode badly for the party, which is already saddled with an unpopular president and a slow economic recovery.

Pistorius murder trial: analyst testifies about toilet door, cricket bat

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP) — A South African forensic analyst has said at the Oscar Pistorius murder trial that a cricket bat was used to strike the toilet door at the athlete's home, in testimony focusing on the events of the night when Pistorius fatally shot his girlfriend.

Police Col. J. G. Vermeulen on Wednesday lifted the bat in court and showed where it hit the wooden, bullet-marked door, another key piece of evidence that was erected in the courtroom.

Pistorius has said he shot Steenkamp by mistake, fearing she was an intruder in the night, and then bashed the door open with a cricket bat to get to his girlfriend when he realized what had happened. The prosecution says the Feb. 14, 2013 killing was intentional and followed an argument between the couple.

Obama to meet with Ukrainian prime minister in sign of support

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a diplomatic dig at Russia, President Barack Obama is hosting the new Ukrainian prime minister at the White House, a high-profile gesture aimed at cementing the West's allegiance to Ukraine's fledgling government.

The meeting Wednesday between Obama and Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk comes as a pro-Russian area of Ukraine readies for a referendum Sunday to determine its future. Voters in the Crimean Peninsula will be given two options: becoming part of Russia, or remaining in Ukraine with broader powers.

The U.S. and Europe have declared the referendum illegitimate, saying Ukraine's central government must be involved in decisions about its territory. The dispute over the future of the former Soviet republic has conjured up echoes of the Cold War tensions between East and West.

White House spokesman Jay Carney said Yatsenyuk's visit was meant to signal "that we strongly support Ukraine, the Ukrainian people and

the legitimacy of the new Ukrainian government."

Amid the symbolism of Yatsenyuk's visit to the U.S., the Ukrainian leader will also be seeking financial assistance from Washington. Yatsenyuk says his country needs the West's help to defend itself against neighboring Russia, a nation he said is "armed to the teeth."

Cold. snow returns to the Midwest and northeast U.S. after brief period of relative warmth

CHICAGO (AP) — The Midwest and the Eastern Seaboard are bracing for another blast of below-normal temperatures and heavy snowfall after a few days of temperatures that moved slightly above normal for this time of year.

The National Weather Service says a storm developing over the middle Mississippi Valley as rain late Tuesday will change to snow and move northeastward to the Gulf of Maine by Thursday. It is expected to dump up to 8 inches of snow in the Chicago area and northern Indiana and more along the Great Lakes in Ohio, Pennsylvania and upstate New York before dissipating over Canada.

Chicago has already been buried by 75.5 inches of snow this winter — fourth most on record dating back to 1884-1885, according to the weather service. The snowfall expected into Wednesday could push the seasonal total into third place, ahead of the 77.0 inch total from 1969-1970.

Southeastern Michigan, where up to 9 inches is forecast, may come close to breaking a 133-year-old snowfall record. The storm will likely move the Detroit area close to the seasonal snow total of 93.6 inches set in 1880-1881, according to the weather service.

Indianapolis was expecting a temperature drop of about 40 degrees over a 24-hour period overlapping Tuesday and Wednesday, said Chad Swain, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service.

Congress to continue haggling over legislation to curb sexual assaults in the U.S. military

WASHINGTON (AP) — The turmoil over how to end an epidemic of sexual assaults in the U.S. military is far from over as Congress haggles over legislative remedies and new details emerge about a high-profile case involving an Army general and a female captain under his command.

In a rare display of bipartisanship, the Senate unanimously approved legislation this week to better protect victims within the ranks and ban the "good soldier defense" to make sure a defendant's fate is determined solely by evidence. But the House has signaled it won't take up the bill immediately despite the momentum generated by the Senate's 97-0 vote.

The trial at Fort Bragg, N.C., of Brig. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sinclair also may act as a referendum of sorts on whether more dramatic changes in the military justice system are necessary. The Senate last week defeated a bill by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., that would have stripped commanders of their authority to prosecute sexual assault cases, placing that power with military lawyers instead.



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VOTE

Check this out! ... At the library

Brad Taylor writes an action packed thriller and in his new Pike Logan one, the action doesn't stop. Taskforce operators Pike Logan and Jennifer Cahill are use to putting their lives at risk, but in "The Polaris Protocol," (F TAY B) it's Jennifer's brother and countless more innocents who face unfathomable violence and bloodshed. Pike and Jennifer are in Turkmenistan when Jennifer gets a call from her brother, Jack. Working on an investigative report into the Mexican drug cartels, Jack Cahill has unknowingly gotten caught between two rival groups. His desperate call to his sister is his last before he's kidnapped. In their efforts to rescue Jack, Pike and Jennifer uncover a plot much more insidious than illegal drug trafficking — the cartel that put a target on Jack's back has discovered a GPS hack with the power to effectively debilitate the United States. The hack allows a user to send false GPS signals, making it possible to manipulate everything from traffic signals and banking wire transfers to cruise missiles, but only while the system's loophole remains in place. With the GPS hack about to be exploited and Jack's life at stake, Jennifer and Pike must find a way to infiltrate the cartel's inner circle and eliminate the impending threat.

Lawyers have an undeserved reputation as being underhanded and in "Dead Lawyers Tell No Tales" (F SIN R) by Randy Singer, someone is making sure that none of the lawyers in the firm of McNaughton and Clay will be left to "sing." Landon Reed is an ex-

quarterback convicted of organizing a points-shaving scheme. During his time in prison, he found forgiveness and faith and earned his law degree. Now he longs for an opportunity to prove his loyalty and worth. Be careful what you ask for. Harry McNaughton is one of the founding partners of McNaughton & Clay — and the only lawyer willing to take a chance employing an ex-con-turned-lawyer. Though Landon initially questions Harry's ethics and methods, it's clear the crusty old lawyer has one of the most brilliant legal minds Landon has ever encountered. The two dive into preparing a defense for one of the highest-profile murder trials Virginia Beach has seen in decades when Harry is gunned down in what appears to be a random mugging. Then two more lawyers are killed when the firm's private jet crashes. Authorities suspect someone has a vendetta against McNaughton & Clay, leaving Landon and the remaining partner as the final targets. As Landon struggles to keep the firm together, he can't help but wonder, is the plot related to a shady case from McNaughton and Clay's past, or to the murder trial he's neck-deep in now? And will he survive long enough to find out?

Cassandra King newest book is "Moonrise" (F KIN C). When Helen Honeycutt falls in love with Emmet Justice, a charismatic television journalist who has recently lost his wife in a tragic accident, their sudden marriage creates a rift between her new husband and his oldest friends, who resent Helen's intrusion into their tightly knit circle. Hoping to mend fences, the newlyweds join the group for a summer at his late wife's family home in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. Helen soon falls under the spell not only of the little mountain town

and its inhabitants, but also of Moonrise, her predecessor's Victorian mansion, named for its unique but now sadly neglected nocturnal gardens. But the harder Helen tries to fit in, the more obvious it is that she will never measure up to the woman she replaced. Someone is clearly determined to drive her away, but who wants her gone, and why? As Emmet grows more remote, Helen reaches out to the others in the group, only to find that she can't trust anyone. When she stumbles on the secret behind her predecessor's untimely death, Helen must decide if she can ever trust — or love — again.

Now let's go to the tenth century with Bernard Cornwell and his Saxon tales: "The Pagan Lord" (F COR B), a dramatic story of divided loyalties, bloody battles and the struggle to unite Britain. At the onset of the tenth century, England is in turmoil. Alfred the Great is dead and Edward his son reigns as king. Wessex survives but peace cannot hold: the Danes in the north, led by Viking Cnut Longsword, stand ready to invade and will never rest until the emerald crown is theirs. Uhtred, once Alfred's great warrior but now out of favor with the new

king, must lead a band of outcasts north to recapture his old family home, that great Northumbrian fortress, Bebbanburg. In "The Pagan Lord", loyalties will be divided and men will fall, as every Saxon kingdom is drawn into the bloodiest battle yet with the Danes; a war which will decide the fate of every king, and the entire English nation.

Back in the current century, "The Eye of God" (F ROL J), a Sigma Force novel, New York Times bestselling author James Rollins delivers an apocalyptic vision of a future predicted by the distant past. In the wilds of Mongolia, a research satellite has crashed, triggering an explosive search for its valuable cargo: a code-black physics project connected to the study of dark energy — and a shocking image of the eastern seaboard of the United States in utter ruin.

At the Vatican, a package arrives containing two strange artifacts: a skull scrawled with ancient Aramaic and a tome bound in human skin. DNA evidence reveals that both came from the same body — the long dead Mongol king Genghis Khan. Commander Gray Pierce and Sigma Force set out to discover a truth tied to the fall of the Roman

Empire, to a mystery going back to the birth of Christianity, and to a weapon hidden for centuries that holds the fate of humanity.

We are open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 until 2; the internet/video room closes at 5:30.

You may reach us at 264-2260; fax number is 264-2263. Our website is <http://wtls.tsl.state.tx.us/howard-county>.

Hollis McCright is director of the Howard County



HOLLIS
MCCRIGHT

Sudoku Answer on Page 3

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.

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

www.sudoku-puzzles.net

In Sunday's Big Spring Herald



Spring Fling!

Ten festivals across America that will inspire you to get outdoors and breathe in the fresh springtime air.

AmericanProfile

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Good Play Overcomes Bad Luck

South dealer.

Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ Q J 10 8
♥ 9 8 3
♦ A 9 4
♣ K Q 5

WEST
♠ 6 3
♥ A 6 5
♦ Q 10 8
♣ J 10 9 7 2

EAST
♠ 9
♥ Q J 10 7 2
♦ 7 5 2
♣ A 8 4 3

SOUTH
♠ A K 7 5 4 2
♥ K 4
♦ K J 6 3
♣ 6

The bidding:

South West North East
1♥ Pass 3♠ Pass
4♠

Opening lead — jack of clubs.

Luck plays a big part in many deals, but there are quite a few occasions when good play can overcome bad luck. Consider this case where the East-West cards are badly stacked against declarer in four spades.

Let's say South covers West's jack-of-clubs lead with the queen, losing to East's ace, and back comes the queen of hearts. South's king is taken by West's ace, and a heart is returned to East's ten, followed by a third round of hearts. Declarer ruffs,

draws trumps and later goes down one when a diamond finesse loses to West's queen.

Without a doubt, South was unlucky. The ace of clubs, ace of hearts and queen of diamonds were all badly placed. Had any one of these cards been in the opposite hand, South would have made the contract easily.

Nevertheless, South should have made four spades. His error occurred on the very first trick, when he should have played the five of clubs from dummy rather than the queen! Once East is credited with the ace of clubs after West leads the jack, following low from dummy is clearly correct.

West's jack will presumably win the trick, but whatever he plays next, South has the situation fully under control. Let's say West shifts to a trump. Dummy wins and leads the king of clubs through East's ace, establishing a club trick on which declarer can later discard a heart. South thus loses only a club, a heart and a diamond.

Note that East cannot stop the contract by overtaking West's jack of clubs with the ace at trick one and returning a heart. If he does that, South loses a club and two hearts right away, but later discards two diamonds on the K-Q of clubs to finish with 10 tricks.

Tomorrow: The clues point the way.

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Tony Claxton photo (www.claxtonphotography.com)

Forsan High School's Matthew Mims was named the District 6-A Offensive MVP in basketball. Mims was one of five Buffaloes honored by the district's coaches by being named to the 6-A all-district squad.

Mims, Buffs highlight 6-A all-district selections

By TOMMY WELLS
Sports Editor

Matthew Mims and the Forsan High School Buffaloes turned in a stellar outing this season on the basketball court. Proof of the Buffaloes success is evident in the fact that the team had five players earn all-district honors. The five FHS standouts were among 20 athletes named to the District 6-A honor roll.

Matthew Mims highlighted the Buffaloes' selections as he was named the District 6-A Offensive MVP for his efforts this season.

A senior guard, Mims averaged more than 15 points per game this season for the Buffaloes and helped carry them to the regional quarterfinal

2013-14 6-A All-District Team Most Valuable Player	
Brennan Fowler	Smyer
Offensive MVP	
Matthew Mims	Forsan
Defensive MVP	
Nic Lucero	Smyer
Newcomer of the Year	
Luke Vedder	Smyer
All-District	
Tyler Rabel, Sundown; Tanner Rodriguez, Seagraves; James Albus, Smyer; Kade Fannin, Forsan; Tyler Evans, Forsan; J.T. Breyman, Forsan; Ke'shawn Hood, Tahoka; Preston Hammonds, Tahoka; Lucas Hernandez, Plains; Alex Barrientes, Plains.	
Defensive Team	
Mo Sanchez, Sundown; Uriel Martinez, Seagraves; T.J. Escabedo, Smyer; Clayton Galloway, Forsan; Carlos Moralez, Tahoka; Zack Wilkins, Plains.	

round of the Class A, Division I state playoffs. He suffered a partially torn ACL in the Buffaloes' area win over 62-50 win over Iraan and missed

the team's final game, a 50-45 loss to Farwell.

Forsan's Kade Fannin, Tyler Evans and J.T. Breyman were all named to the 6-A first-team all-district squad. All seniors, the three FHS players were joined on the squad by Sundown's Tyler Rabel, Seagraves' Tanner Rodriguez, Smyer's James Albus, Tahoka's Ke'shawn Hood and Preston Hammonds and Plains' Lucas Hernandez and Alex Barrientes.

Forsan's Clayton Galloway highlighted the district's defensive selections. The FHS senior was joined on the squad by Sundown's Mo Sanchez, Seagraves' Uriel Martinez, Smyer's T.J. Escabedo, Tahoka's Carlos Moralez and Plains' Zack Wilkins.

Big 12 tourney to be wide open race

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Kansas coach Bill Self was chatting this week with someone who brought up the possibility that some unfortunate team with a No. 1 seed in the NCAA tournament might have to play its second game against Oklahoma State, which was once considered a Final Four contender.

"I said, 'Just think if that happens in your conference tournament,'" Self responded.

After winning their 10th straight regular season title, the Jayhawks earned the top seed when the Big 12 tournament begins Wednesday night at the Sprint Center. But the reward is a first-round bye and a potential matchup with the eighth-seeded Cowboys in Thursday's quarterfinals; the two teams split their two meetings this year.

Oklahoma State plays No. 9 seed Texas Tech in the first game Wednesday night. Seventh-seeded Baylor takes on No. 10 seed TCU in the nightcap of a double-header.

"I think we've always had very competitive Big 12 tournaments," Self said, "but I don't know if I can ever remember where if there's a final between whatever

seeds there are, it would be absolutely not a major surprise to anybody. It's going to be a pretty special weekend."

The Big 12 has been the runaway leader in conference RPI all season, and some believe that it could land seven or eight teams in the NCAA Selection Sunday.

Just consider the games that will be played Thursday: Along with Kansas getting Oklahoma State or Texas Tech, second-seeded Oklahoma will play the Baylor-TCU winner, No. 3 seed Texas will play No. 6 seed West Virginia, and No. 4 seed Iowa State will play No. 5 seed Kansas State.

"This league," Texas Tech coach Tubby Smith said, "is by far the toughest in the country."

That's why the Jayhawks still believe they can earn a No. 1 seed to the NCAA tournament, despite their 23-8 record. Meanwhile, Oklahoma State (20-11) is teetering around the bubble, and a win over Texas Tech might be enough to push the Cowboys firmly into the dance.

Knocking off the Jayhawks would certainly do the trick.

See **BIG 12**, Page 14

Lady Steers to open district play on Friday

The Big Spring High School Lady Steers will kick off District 4-3A softball play this Friday with a trip to Abilene to face the Wylie Lady Bullogs.

Big Spring coach John R. Sparks said he thinks the BSHS girls are ready for district competition.

"We have some things to work on, but I think, overall, we are ready to start our district run, and play the kind of softball we are capable of playing," said Sparks. "We have a team that will be competitive. I

am excited for these young ladies to get started and battle for a district title."

The Lady Steers, 9-6 overall, competed in the Gold bracket of the Snyder Invitational Softball Tournament over the weekend. Big Spring posted a 1-2 mark.

After dropping their first-round game to Andrews by an 11-1 score, the Lady Steers upended Colorado City in the consolation semifinals, 8-6. They lost to Shallowater in the consolation final, 9-2.

Cowboys' Ware among free agents looking for new homes

A couple of accomplished NFL pass rushers suddenly became available when DeMarcus Ware and Julius Peppers were released to create room under the salary cap in two of the biggest moves at Tuesday's start of the free-agency signing period.

The Cowboys let Ware and his 117 sacks go.

"A decision like this, involving a man who is a cornerstone player in the history of your franchise, is extremely difficult," Dallas owner Jerry Jones said. "We were also in very strong agreement that playing

for the Dallas Cowboys would be one of the options we would both be exploring."

The Bears cut ties with Peppers, who has 118½ sacks in 12 seasons, as part of a series of moves aimed at improving their defense, including a five-year contract with former Raiders end Lamarr Houston.

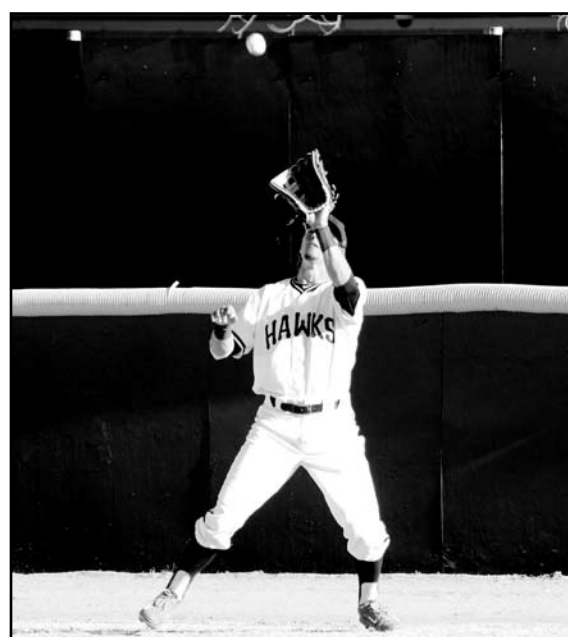
With the cap rising \$10 million to a record \$133 million, a crop of players quickly found new homes as soon as the market officially opened Tuesday afternoon — and safeties and offensive linemen

were popular commodities.

Amid it all, the Ware and Peppers departures might have been the most significant developments.

The 31-year-old Ware, who went to seven Pro Bowls while in Dallas, was set to count \$16 million against the salary cap. By releasing him now, the Cowboys, who were right up against the cap, saved more than \$7 million. Ware had a career-low six sacks last season, his ninth in Dallas. He missed time with a thigh injury, then had

See **NFL**, Page 14



Tony Claxton photo (www.claxtonphotography.com)

Dane Steinhagen catches a ball in the outfield during a recent Hawks' game. Howard College will return to action on March 18 in Plainview with a pair of games against Wayland Baptist. The Hawks' next home game will be March 21 against NMJC.

'Spring Bash' tourney set for March 21-23

The Jester's First Annual Spring Bash Rag Ball Tournament will be held on March 21-23 in Big Spring.

Registration for the tournament will begin at 6:30 p.m. The cost for registering is \$1- per player.

The top three places will receive T-shirts.

The three-day tournament will be played at the Comanche Trail Park field. A schedule of games will be available after all teams have registered.

For more information contact Dominique Gonzales at (432) 935-1124 or Anthony Saracho at (432) 816-4761.

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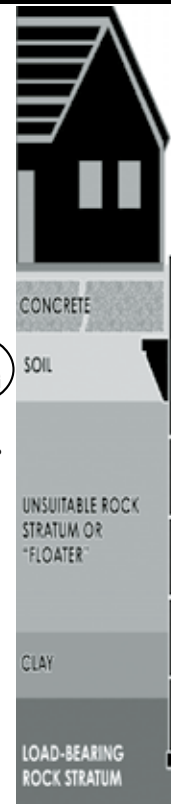
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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR AN AIR QUALITY STANDARD PERMIT FOR PERMANENT ROCK AND CONCRETE CRUSHERS
PROPOSED AIR QUALITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 117100

APPLICATION. TUBBS QUARRY LLC, 1000 Richie Road, Big Spring, Texas 79720-8022 has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for an Air Quality Standard Permit, Registration Number 117100, which would authorize construction of a permanent rock crusher. The facility is proposed to be located at 9000 South Highway 87, Big Spring, Howard County, Texas 79720. This link to an electronic map of the site or facility's general location is provided as a public courtesy and not part of the application or notice. For exact location, refer to application.

<http://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/hb610/index.html?lat=32.131944&lng=-101.4425&zoom=13&type=r>

This application was submitted to the TCEQ on January 29, 2014. The executive director has determined the application was technically complete on February 11, 2014.

PUBLIC COMMENT. Written public comments about this application may be submitted at any time during the public comment period. You may submit public comments either in writing to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Office of the Chief Clerk, MC-105, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087, or electronically at www.tceq.texas.gov/about/comments.html.

If you choose to communicate with the TCEQ electronically, please be aware that your email address, like your physical mailing address, will

become part of the agency's public record. The deadline to submit public comments is 30 days after newspaper notice is published.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS. A written response to all relevant comments will be prepared by the executive director after the comment period closes. The response, along with the executive director's decision on the application, will be mailed to everyone who submitted public comments and requested to be added to the mailing list. The response to comments will be posted in the permit file for viewing. The executive director shall approve or deny the application not later than 30 days after the end of the public comment period, considering all comments received within the comment period, and base this decision on whether the application meets the requirements of the standard permit.

CENTRAL/REGIONAL OFFICE. The application will be available for viewing and copying at the TCEQ Central Office and the TCEQ Midland Regional Office, located at 96900 W Interstate 20 Ste 100, Midland, Texas 79706-2636, during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, beginning the first day of publication of this notice.

INFORMATION. For more information about this permit application or the permitting process, please call the Public Education Program toll free at 1-800-687-4040. Si desea informacion en Espanol, puede llamar al 1-800-687-4040.

Further information may also be obtained from TUBBS QUARRY LLC, 1000 Richie Road, Big Spring, Texas 79720-8022, or by calling Ms. Monique Wells, Environmental Consultant, CIC Environmental, LLC at (512)292-4314.

Notice Issuance Date: February 14, 2014 #8211 March 12, 2014



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- Grandpa sold his sailboat
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Tomorrow's Horoscope

Leo Moon Goes Busking

The events of the day won't feel epic or life changing, and yet there will be fun pops of interest as the Leo moon plays cosmic street performer to Neptune, Venus, Uranus and Pluto. Each planet has a different reaction to the entertainment, and we will follow suit, laughing, crying or applauding the day's drama.



HOLIDAY MATHIS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Everyone needs some degree of certainty about life, and you usually need less than others. That's why it's hard for you to understand why someone close to you seems to long for you to behave predictably.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The reason people sometimes tease those they like in a special way is because it is easier to elicit irritation than affection. The one who pays attention, even if that attention is annoying, is crushing on you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You can tell quite a bit about people by the way they put themselves together, but it's nothing compared to what you

learn when you hear them speak. As your sign mate Ben Jonson said, "Speak that I may see thee."

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Looking back on this day, the obvious best part will be the inspired folly you endeavor with a friend. So when someone says, "Want to come along?" join in the fun.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Passion is a flash pot -- surprising, surging bright and disappearing just as quickly as it came. Bonded, committed love takes longer to catch on, and it burns longer, too.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'd rather quietly observe today than express yourself. You're not trying to exercise great self-control or to weave a mystery, for that matter, but that's the effect as you focus on studying others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). When you can't seem to figure out how to get what you want in the moment, it won't be smart to stick around and try different tactics. Instead, remove yourself, get some perspective and come back.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You know more now than you give yourself credit for. You've learned the most

from the hard situations you've been in, though some of that learning still needs to be claimed. Own your experience.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll have your choice of friends and allies. If you choose someone with a strong work ethic, you'll build something together. If you choose someone with a strong pleasure ethic, you'll enjoy life together.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You are not afraid of making mistakes and prefer to make your own. That is why you can hold back from offering advice when people so obviously need it but won't ask for it and likely would only be annoyed by it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). In order to be creative -- and you will need to be creative in order to solve today's problems -- the two sides of your brain must work together. Read out loud to get the hemispheres communicating.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You get the feeling that you are being given a choice in what you do, but that the choice is one of default. You want to shake whatever controls are on you. Good news: You will only be manipulated insofar as you permit it.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (March 12). In the next seven weeks, you'll beautify your home surroundings and get organized. You'll be ready for the demands of May, which are all positive opportunities to increase the flow of love and money through your realm. Much good comes of focusing on what you love most and excluding all that distracts you from that. Capricorn and Cancer people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 22, 14, 9 and 1.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: In response to a question about the meaning of birthmarks, the reading continues...

"Seven of (my moles) are small dark moles." Moleomancy, also called moleosophy, is a divination technique based on types and placements of birthmarks. While not as popular as astrology, palmistry, tarot reading and the like, moleosophy has nonetheless been practiced in many different cultures throughout the ages. In some of those philosophies, moles are considered marks of karma or scars from a past life. For instance, one who had a past life as a warrior who was injured or killed by a sword to the abdomen might, in this life, have

a birthmark over the place of injury. If the injury was sustained in an act of nobility, the mark is a kind of badge of courage. If the injury was a result of victimization, the mark represents a wound that is to be healed, forgiven or perhaps avenged.

It is commonly believed that the more prominent birthmarks represent more significant karma, as well as secret powers, talents and spiritual resources.

As for your seven small dark moles, much depends on placement. More on this tomorrow.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Dynamic Pisces diva Liza Minnelli is one of the many stars of "And the Oscar Goes To..." a documentary about the history of the Academy Awards. This Hollywood and Broadway legend applies the high energy of her Mercury and Venus in powerhouse Aries to the task of maintaining an ambitious and constant concert and appearance schedule.

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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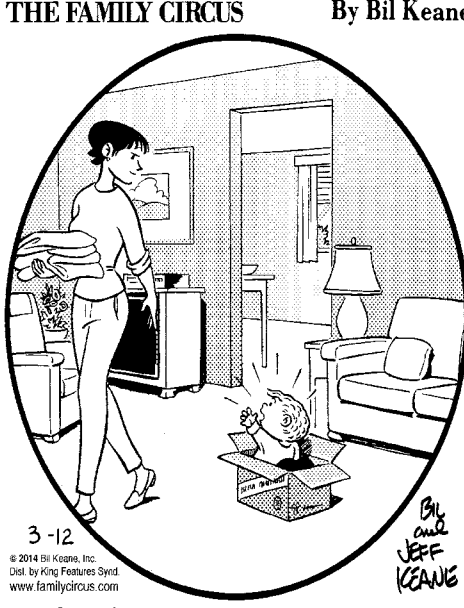
BIG SPRING HERALD

TV schedule grid with columns for station (KMGD, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLT, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KPBT, KWTT, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN) and rows for time slots (5:30 PM to 1:30 AM).

DENNIS THE MENACE

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

HAGAR



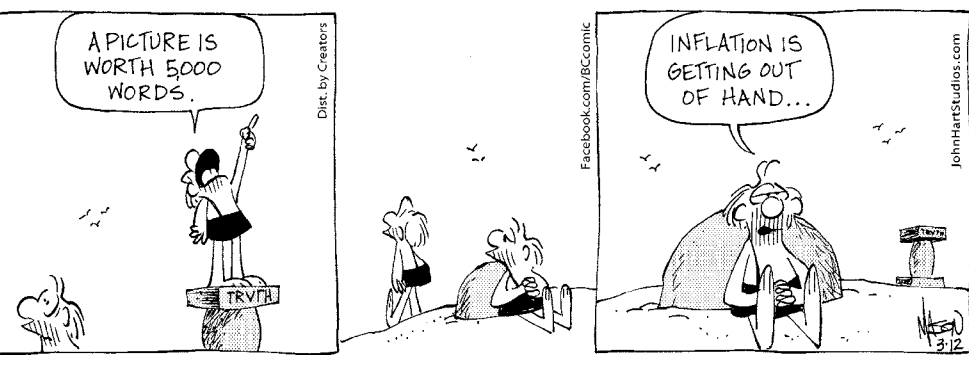
IT'S NOT RAINING CATS AN' DOGS, MOM. IT'S MORE LIKE KITTENS AN' PUPPIES.

Careful, lady! The water's pretty deep where you're walking!

BLONDIE



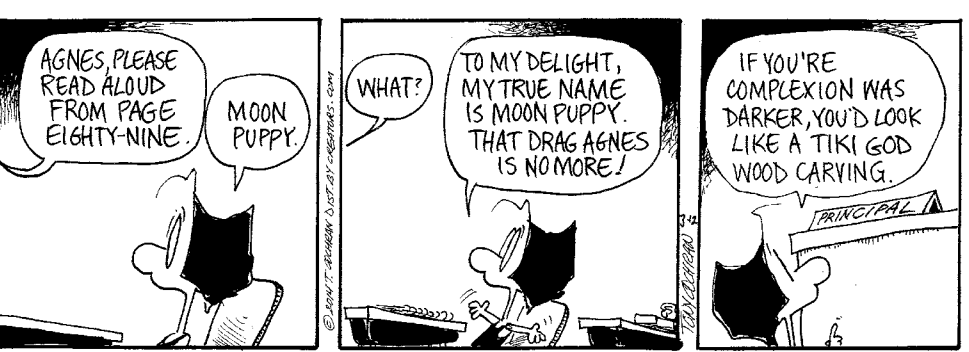
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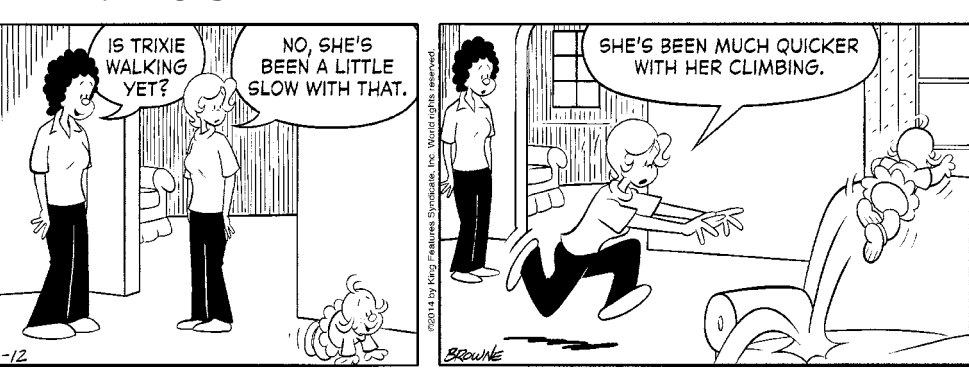
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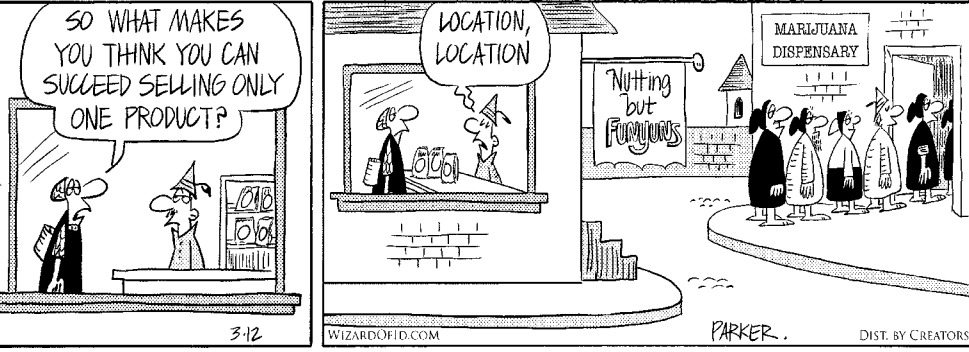
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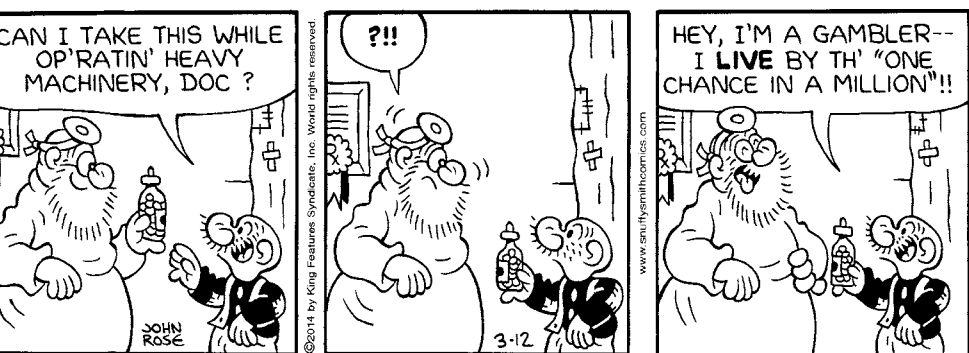
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BETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Wednesday, March 12, the 71st day of 2014. There are 294 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On March 12, 1664, England's King Charles II granted an area of land on the East Coast of present-day North America known as New Netherland to his brother James, the Duke of York. On this date: In 1864, Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant assumed command as General-in-Chief of the Union armies in the Civil War. In 1912, the Girl Scouts of the USA had its beginnings as Juliette Gordon Low of Savannah, Ga., founded the first American troop of the Girl Guides. In 1914, American inventor George Westinghouse died in New York at age 67. In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered the first of his 30 radio addresses that came to be known as "fireside chats," telling Americans what was being done to deal with the nation's economic crisis. In 1934, a 6.6 magnitude earthquake shook much of northern Utah along with parts of Idaho, Montana, Nevada and Wyoming. In 1938, the Anschluss merging Austria with Nazi Germany took place as German forces crossed the border between the two countries. In 1939, Pope Pius XII was formally crowned in ceremonies at the Vatican. In 1951, "Dennis the Menace," created by cartoonist Hank Ketcham, made its syndicated debut in 16 newspapers.

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merging Austria with Nazi Germany took place as German forces crossed the border between the two countries. In 1939, Pope Pius XII was formally crowned in ceremonies at the Vatican. In 1951, "Dennis the Menace," created by cartoonist Hank Ketcham, made its syndicated debut in 16 newspapers.

Newsday Crossword

HERE'S THE PITCH by Charles Slack Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

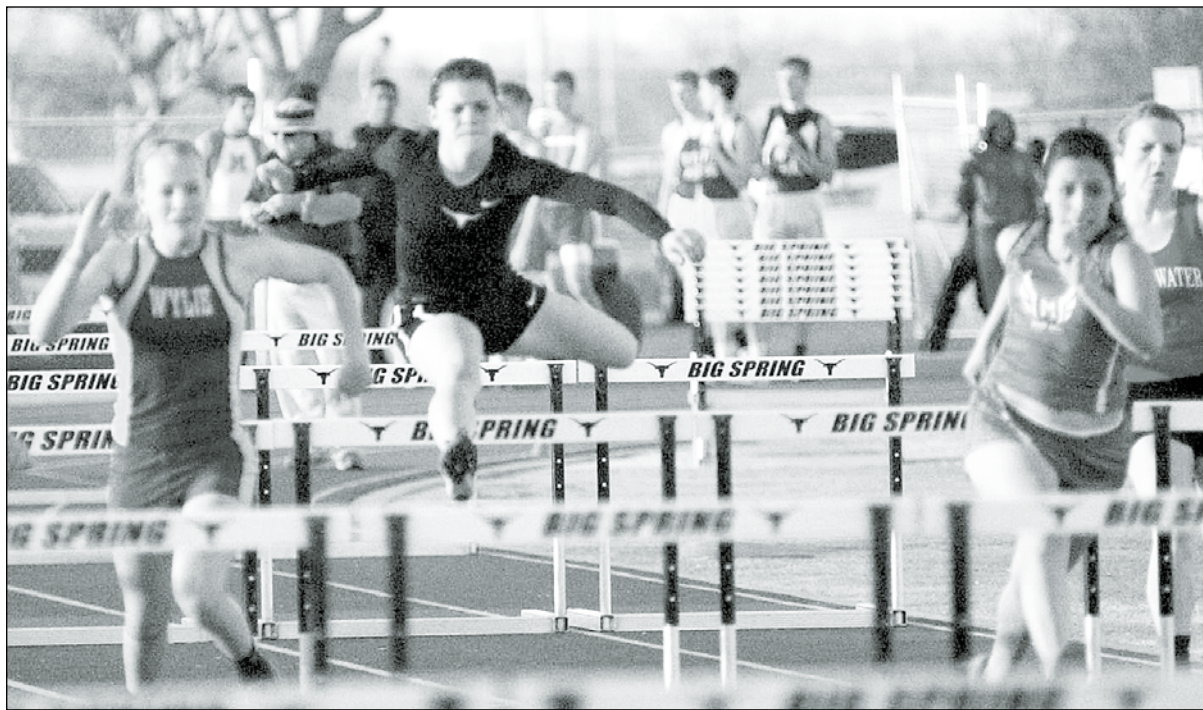
- ACROSS 1 Attorney's workload 6 Diplomatic skill 10 Possesses 13 Honda's upscale brand 14 Sailing boat 16 Antlered animal 17 Invite lots of friends over 19 Grabbed lunch 20 Farm machine 21 Practice boxing 22 Solemn promise 23 Dutch cheese 25 Lose traction 27 Defers, with "off" 30 Explosion sound 32 Attack from above 35 Important "numero" 36 Tops with frosting 38 Artist's stand 39 Have trouble saying "s" 41 Recurring sequence 43 Metal in a piano 44 Finishes second 46 Person from Aberdeen 47 Big name in SUVs 48 Captures 50 Fireplace residue 51 Debt reminder 52 Crack of dawn 54 Slangy greeting 56 IRS expert 58 Self-images

- 60 Betting setting 64 Slithery swimmer 65 Dampen future events 67 Genetic material 68 Fiery crime 69 Santa-like 70 Discontinue 71 Back-to-school mo. 72 Springs in deserts

- 6 Cooking meas. 7 Word of woe 8 Group of troops 9 Wrecks completely 10 Express relief 11 Female singer 12 Present unfairly 15 Fool's gold 18 Language of the Koran 24 Thanksgiving parade sponsor 26 Attract 27 Tugs at 28 Civil War side 29 Mix greens and dressing 31 Tourist magnet 33 Italian physicist 34 Vote into office 37 Splash clumsily 40 Andean land

- 42 Moral principles 45 Roman philosopher 49 Dextrose and fructose 51 Honeydew cousin 53 Old West pursuit group 55 Google competitor 56 Give up formally 57 Ivy League school, familiarly 59 Discontinue 61 "Beware the ___ of March" 62 Tip of a plane 63 Hasn't paid yet 66 Kitchen pest

Crossword grid with numbers 1-72 indicating starting positions for clues.



Herald photo/Tommy Wells

Moving along ...

Big Spring's Emily Smith (center) clears a hurdle during a junior varsity heat in the girls' 100-meter hurdles race on Friday at the Big Spring Invitational Track and Field meet at Blankenship Field. Smith and the BSHS team are scheduled to return to action on March 21 by competing in the Mustang Relays in Andrews.

Pistorius trial: cricket bat, toilet door shown

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP) — Oscar Pistorius was probably on his stumps when he fatally shot his girlfriend through a toilet door, a forensic analyst said Wednesday at the double-amputee athlete's murder trial.

The matter of whether Pistorius was on his stumps is critical because it tests his assertions about what exactly happened on the night he killed Reeva Steenkamp in his bathroom on Feb. 14, 2013.

The athlete has said he fearfully approached the bathroom on his stumps and shot Steenkamp by mistake, thinking she was an intruder. According to his account, he then put on his prostheses and tried to kick

down the locked toilet door, and battered it with a cricket bat to get to his girlfriend after realizing what he had done.

Testimony Wednesday focused on the angle from which Pistorius hit the toilet door with a cricket bat, which could determine whether he was on his stumps, or was wearing his prostheses.

Police Col. J.G. Vermeulen, a forensic analyst, said he believed Pistorius was on his stumps when he fired through the toilet door, based on the angle of the bullet marks in the door, which was on display in the courtroom.

However, Vermeulen said the bat was used to hit the door from a low position, and he knelt and swung Pistorius' cricket bat at the door to demon-

strate his point. "It's quite low down on the door," Vermeulen testified about one of the marks he said were made by the bat. He said it was "not the normal position that I would expect from a mark from a cricket bat."

He said marks on the door were consistent with Pistorius "being in a natural position without his prostheses."

Defense lawyer Barry Roux countered that Pistorius

hit the door with a "bent back" and that the low marks were consistent with such a body position.

Vermeulen also said a steel plate in the main bathroom had been damaged by being hit with a "hard" object, or after the object fell against it. The steel plate was new evidence.

Prosecutors say Pistorius intentionally shot Steenkamp, a 29-year-old model after a fight.

CGA holding 4-man scramble on March 23

The Chicano Gold Association will be holding a 4-man scramble on March 23 at the Comanche Trail Golf Course.

Sign-ups will be held from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. A shotgun start will be held at 10 a.m.

A blind draw will be

held for teams closest to the pin on all par threes.

Entry fee is \$25. Mulligans are available for

Ginobili leads Spurs past Bulls, 104-96

CHICAGO (AP) — It didn't take long for the San Antonio Spurs to show the Chicago Bulls why they're leading the NBA.

Manu Ginobili scored 22 points and Tony Parker had 20 points and nine assists, and the Spurs beat the Bulls 104-96 Tuesday night for their seventh straight win and 10th in their last 11.

San Antonio jumped out to a big advantage early, taking a 38-14 lead after one quarter and going up 61-33 into halftime. That helped them improve to 24-6 on the road, the NBA's best mark away from home.

Kawhi Leonard added 16 and nine rebounds for the Spurs (47-16), who maintained their hold on the NBA's best record. With the win they stayed a half-game ahead of Oklahoma City and Indiana, who both won.

"Wonderful game, we were very sharp," Ginobili said. "We made a lot of shots in the beginning, which gave us a lead that ... it's easier to play like that."

Parker had 18 at halftime and went 8 for 15

from the field for a team that made 51 percent overall against one of the NBA's best defensive clubs. Ginobili was 9 of 11.

Also the league's top 3-point shooting team at 39.2 percent, San Antonio made 12 of 21 from behind the arc, including four from Ginobili.

That and the big first half added up to another win for the Spurs, who are 14-3 since a 96-86 loss to Chicago on Jan. 29 and can improve on that Wednesday at home against Portland. The Spurs' roster is finally healthy, something coach Gregg Popovich noted.

"We seem like we're playing pretty consistently now," Popovich said. "I don't think we're going to win every game down the stretch."

The Bulls, meanwhile, were coming off a dramatic 95-88 win Sunday over the Heat but couldn't build off that victory, falling to 1-2 on a season-high six-game homestand that also has games with the Rockets, Kings and Thunder.

D.J. Augustin led the Bulls with 24 points.

Fever acquire pick with trade

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — The Indiana Fever have traded guard Erin Phillips to the Phoenix Mercury for forward Lynnetta Kizer and a first-round draft pick.

Tuesday's deal gives Indiana two of the top nine selections in April's WNBA draft, with its own pick at No. 5 and the Mercury's slot at nine.

Phillips played on Indiana's 2012 championship team, but she missed most of last season with knee problems. She has career averages of 6.9 points, 2.0 rebounds and

2.1 assists heading into her seventh season.

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BIG 12

Continued from Page 7
"We're just trying to worry about the next game," Oklahoma State coach Travis Ford said, "and worrying about all that other stuff doesn't really do you any good."

In that case, here are five things that fans SHOULD worry about: **BUBBLE WATCH:** Oklahoma State isn't the only team on the NCAA tournament bubble. Baylor (21-10) would feel much better with a win or two, while West Virginia (17-14) hopes the momentum it picked up by knocking off Kansas last weekend will propel it to enough wins in Kansas City to make a case on Selection Sunday. "I think if we won two we'd be in great shape," said Mountaineers coach Bob Huggins, "but I think if we can win that first one that we would be pretty good."

CHAMPIONSHIP CHALLENGE: Kansas is the only current member to have won the Big 12 tournament since 2005 — twice since then, Missouri won the title. In fact, Oklahoma and Iowa State are the only current schools besides the Jayhawks and Cowboys to have won. "No matter what people say, no matter what other teams do," Oklahoma State's Marcus Smart said, "it goes through Kansas."

STAR WATCH: There will be stars-a-plenty at the Big 12 tournament. Andrew Wiggins of Kansas is a potential No. 1 draft pick, Iowa State's Melvin Ejim is the Big 12 player of the year and Smart is also a potential lottery pick. But one player who won't be on the floor is Jayhawks center Joel Embiid, who's been ruled out for the Big 12 tournament and unlikely for the NCAA tournament because of a stress fracture in his back.

HOMECOURT ADVANTAGE: Local schools Kansas and Kansas State always pack the Sprint Cen-

Big 12 Men's Basketball Tournament Schedule

Wednesday, March 12
G1: Okla. St. vs TTech..... 6 p.m.
G2: Baylor vs. TCU..... 8:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 13
G3: Iowa St. vs Kan. St. 11:30 a.m.
G4: Kansas vs. G1 winner... 2 p.m.
G5: Okla. vs. G2 Winner..... 6 p.m.
G6: Texas vs. W. Va..... 8:30 p.m.

Friday, March 14
G7: G3 Win. vs. G4 Win. 6 p.m.
G8: G5 Win. vs. G6 Win. 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 15
G9: G7 Win. vs. G8 Win. 8 p.m.

ter, but Iowa State also tends to draw well — its campus is a reasonable drive from Kansas City. That means it'll be tough to secure a ticket to Thursday's first session, when the Cyclones play the Wildcats and Kansas is also in action in a tantalizing double-header.

LONGSHOTS: Even longshots have coaches concerned this year. Texas Tech is the No. 9 seed but has wins over Oklahoma State, Baylor and Texas on its resume. And nobody thought TCU would go winless in the league, so the No. 10 seed Horned Frogs could be primed for a first-round upset of the Bears. "We're going to do our best to keep within striking distance, like we have all year long, and give ourselves a chance down the stretch," TCU coach Trent Johnson said.

NFL

Continued from Page 7
offseason elbow surgery.

About 5½ hours after free agency began, one of the top players available, three-time Pro Bowl safety Jairus Byrd, agreed to terms with the Saints, part of a merry-go-round of moves at his position. Other safeties swapping clubs: Michael Jenkins, from Saints to Eagles; Donte Whitner from 49ers to Browns; Antoine Bethea from Colts to 49ers; T.J. Ward from Browns to Broncos; Mike Mitchell from Panthers to Steelers; Ryan Mundy from Giants to Bears.

In addition to jettisoning Peppers and adding Houston and Mundy, Chicago agreed to one-year deals with linebackers Jordan Senn and D.J. Williams.

Two of the most sought-after cornerbacks also were on the move. Alterraun Verner, who had five interceptions for Tennessee last season, agreed to a four-year contract with Tampa Bay and Aqib Talib left New England for a six-year deal with Denver.

Verner, 25, could wind up being a replacement for Darrelle Revis, who might be traded or cut to create more salary-cap room for the Bucca-

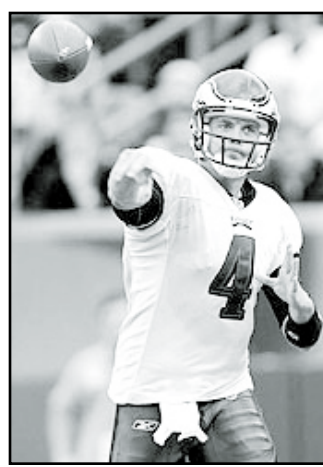
neers. Deals for offensive linemen were highlighted by Pro Bowl left tackle Branden Albert's five-year contract with the Dolphins. Albert left Kansas City to take over the position played at the start of last season by Jonathan Martin, whose exit from Miami in October led to an NFL inquiry into bullying on the team.

Late Tuesday, Martin was traded by the Dolphins to the 49ers.

Left tackle Jared Veldheer and the Cardinals agreed to a five-year contract worth up to \$35 million. Veldheer left the Raiders, who replaced him by giving former Rams lineman Rodger Saffold a five-year deal. Another left tackle, Eugene Monroe, agreed to a five-year contract to stay with the Ravens.

Former Jets right tackle Austin Howard agreed to a five-year, \$30 million contract, with \$15 million guaranteed after starting every game the last two seasons in New York.

Guards switching teams: Zane Beadles was joining the Jaguars from the Broncos, pending a physical; the Falcons agreed to terms with Jon Asamoah, who left the Chiefs; the Redskins struck a deal with Shawn Lauvao, who left the Browns. The Redskins also agreed to terms with Cardinals



Courtesy photo
Former Stephenville quarterback was cut by the Buffalo Bills on Tuesday.

receiver Andre Roberts and special teams standout Adam Hayward and scheduled a visit with cornerback Corey Graham.

The Jaguars also were busy, including a trade that sent quarterback Blaine Gabbert to the 49ers for a sixth-round draft pick, an agreement with former Vikings running back Toby Gerhart, and re-signing cornerback Will Blackmon to a two-year deal.

Kick returner and receiver Dexter McCluster went to the Titans from the Chiefs; defensive end Arthur Jones joined the Colts from the Ravens; defensive end Tyson Jackson and defensive tackle Paul Soliai joined the Falcons; and defensive tackle Earl Mitchell left the Texans for the Dolphins.

Others released in-

cluded Bills quarterback Kevin Kolb (who failed a physical), Falcons safety Thomas DeCoud, Steelers linebacker LaMarr Woodley, 49ers cornerback Carlos Rogers, Eagles safety Patrick Chung, and Bengals center Kyle Cook.

Among players staying put:

—RB Darren McFadden was given a \$4 million, one-year contract by the Raiders.

—KR-WR Brandon Tate re-signed with the Bengals.

—PK Adam Vinatieri, the 41-year-old with four Super Bowl rings, agreed to a two-year contract with the Colts. Other PKs getting new contracts: Nick Folk (Jets), Phil Dawson (49ers), Dan Carpenter (Bills).

—CB Vontae Davis re-signed with the Colts.

—RB Joique Bell is now signed with the Lions for \$9.3 million over three years, with \$4.3 million guaranteed.

—LB Perry Riley and WR Santana Moss re-signed with the Redskins.

—DT Jonathan Babineaux got a three-year contract from the Falcons.

—TE Anthony McCoy got a one-year deal from the Super Bowl champion Seahawks after he missed all of last season with a torn Achilles tendon.

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