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BIG SPRING HERALD

THURSDAY

MARCH 13, 2014



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VOLUME 109, NUMBER 126

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Local man jailed in cocaine bust; vehicles seized

BY LYNDEL MOODY
Staff Writer

A Big Spring man is still in jail this morning after his arrest Tuesday by Big Spring police on drug charges.



Franco

Rosendo Franco, 30, of 212 Johnson, was taken into custody at 408 Westover Wednesday after the Big Spring Police Department and Howard County Sheriffs Office SWAT executed a search warrant at the Westover residence, according to BSPD CID Sgt. Tony Everett

"Once inside the residence, narcotics officers found 91 grams of cocaine, 113 grams of marijuana and paraphernalia," Everett said. "Narcotics investigators also seized for forfeiture \$12,160 in U.S. currency and three vehicles,

all of which are believed to be derived from the sales of narcotics."

The search warrant was the result of an investigation by the Big Spring Police Department Narcotics Unit.

Franco is charged with manufacture/delivery of a controlled substance, cocaine, more than 4 grams but less than 200 grams and possession of marijuana, more than 4 ounces but less than 5 pounds.

"This investigation is ongoing with additional charges to follow at a later date," Everett said.

As of this 8 a.m. today, Franco has not gone before the judge for a bail hearing, according to Howard County Sheriff's Department officials.

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



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

After a winter hiatus, crews are back to work resurfacing Business I-20. This week, they are busy tearing up the old pavement on West Third Street.

Halfmann nixes runoff bid

Cost just too expensive, JP stand-in decides

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

There won't be a recount in the Coahoma justice of the peace election.

JP Linda Halfmann said she would not challenge the results of the March 4 Republican primary, which saw her finish third in a five-candidate race for the Halfmann Precinct 2 justice nomination and miss a runoff election by a single vote.



Halfmann

In the primary election, Connie Shaw and Phillip Reid garnered the most votes with 216 and 130, respec-

tively, while Halfmann was named on 129 ballots.

Results from the Republican Party primary election won't become official until the county GOP executive committee meets tonight.

Halfmann said she investigated the possibility of a recount with Elections Administrator Sandra Bloom, but decided the cost — candidates seeking recounts must foot the bill for the effort — was not worth the potential benefit.

"When I thought about it ... it would cost me \$560 for a recount and I didn't think it was worth it for just one vote," Halfmann said.

She was appointed to the Precinct 2 JP spot after Quail

Doobs' retirement in 2013.

The Precinct 2 JP position will not be the only one up for election May 27 — county Republican voters will be asked to decide between Robert "Bob" Fitzgibbons and Dale Walker for the Precinct 1, Place 2 JP spot, and there will be several state positions on the ballot, Bloom said.

Early voting in the primary runoff election will be held from May 19-23 in Bloom's office on the first floor of the Howard County Courthouse.

Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-7331 ext. 235 or by e-mail at reporter@bigspringherald.com

Powwow seeks musicians

Herald Staff Report

The 10th Annual Big Spring Powwow is putting out the call for local musicians to showcase their talents during the April 5-6 event.

"We wish to have local musicians perform with a Native American flute player during our evening break (April 5), blending different styles of music together — a jam session, so to speak," said Randy McKinney, Powwow Committee vice president. "There will not be time for a full band to set up so we are primarily looking for acoustic guitar players, percussionists and vocalists."

Anyone interested is encouraged to contact McKinney at 432-267-4843.

As usual, the Powwow will be held at Dorothy Garrett Coliseum on the Howard College campus. Admission will be \$3 for adults. Children under 12 will be admitted free with an adult.

City water restrictions are lifted

Herald Staff Report

Big Spring city officials have announced that essential upgrades to the water

treatment plant have been concluded and customers can return to the Stage 2 water restriction schedule.

The city had advised cus-

tomers to refrain from using water unless absolutely necessary while upgrades were being made, beginning at 9 p.m. Tuesday. Officials expected the restrictions to be in place for 36 hours, but completed the upgrades sooner than expected.

Operations can now return to "normal," according to officials. The current "normal" is the Stage 2 restrictions, brought on by serious drought across West Texas.

According to the city website, the Stage 2 restriction is as follows:

"Water customers are requested to voluntarily limit

the irrigation of landscaped areas to Sundays and Thursdays for water customers with a street address ending in an even number (0, 2, 4, 6, or 8), and Saturdays and Wednesdays for water customers with a street address ending in an odd number (1, 3, 5, 7 or 9) and to only irrigate between the hours of midnight until 10 a.m. and between 8 p.m. and midnight on designated watering days.

"Irrigation of landscaped areas is permitted at anytime if it is by means of a hand held hose, a faucet filled bucket, or watering can of five (5) gallons of less, or drip irrigation

system.

"Water customers are requested to refrain from washing cars and to continue to practice water conservation and to minimize or discontinue water use for non-essential purposes. Wasting of water is still prohibited at all times."

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Obituaries

Dorothy Yates Book



Dorothy Yates Book, 85, an innovator in early childhood education, died early Tuesday, March 11, 2014, at the Arbor House assisted living facility in Marble Falls, Texas. She was a devoted wife, mother, sister, and grandmother; a loyal friend; and active in her community throughout most of her life.

Dorothy Ellen Kincaid was born Dec. 26, 1928, in Abilene, Texas, the oldest of five children. Her parents were William Lee Kincaid and Naomi Hatton Kincaid, both lifelong Abilene residents. After high school, she attended Hardin Simmons University in Abilene, graduating with a degree in journalism in 1950. Hardin Simmons is also where she met her first husband, Wayland Davis Yates. They married on June 24, 1950.

The couple lived in Big Spring, Texas; Wichita Falls, Texas; and Abilene before settling in San Angelo, Texas in 1965 with their three children. Wayland Yates died in 1970 from injuries sustained in an airplane crash at Mathis Field in San Angelo.

Dorothy devoted her working life to educating

children. In San Angelo she first operated Peter Pan, a kindergarten and day care center, and later built the Sandcastle, a vibrant school that met the educational and after-school needs of infants through elementary-aged children.

Dorothy was passionate about early childhood education. She introduced her own young children and later her kindergarten classes to drama, history, Spanish, French, phonetics, numbers and art.

She met her second husband, George Edward Book, in the mid-1970s, and they married on April 17, 1977. The couple retired in the late-1980s, moving to a geodesic dome house they built on a waterfront lot in Kingsland, Texas in the Hill Country of Texas.

Dorothy also was a gifted artist who worked in acrylics, oils and multimedia. She often painted scenes that included reflective objects such as glass vases, silver teapots and mirrors. She loved to travel and to paint what she saw outdoors, capturing broad Texas vistas, clouds, wildflowers and reflections in the water.

Dorothy was preceded in death by her parents; her sisters Mary Kathleen Leach, Jean Eileen Pope and Ruby Jane Burkhart; and by one grandson, Alexander Soto Cano. She is survived by her husband, George; one brother, William Hatton Kincaid; her sons Kent Yates and Kent Book; her

daughters Brenda Spyridon, Janelle Yates and Diana Yates; her granddaughters Adrienne Cano, Crystal Tipton and Ashton Spyridon; and her grandsons Josh Kanapkey, Zach Kanapkey, Jason Kanapkey, Travis Book, Mark Yates-White and Preston Spyridon.

A visitation will be held from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m., Friday, March 14, 2014 at Putnam Funeral Home in Kingsland, Texas. A second visitation will be on Saturday, March 15, 2014 from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Putnam Funeral Home in Kingsland, Texas. A Mass will be held on Saturday, March 15, 2014 at 2 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church, 909 Avenue D, Marble Falls, Texas 78654. An online guest register may be signed at www.PutnamCares.com.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that any donations be directed to either the Alexander Cano Memorial Internship in the West Texas Collection at Angelo State University (ASU) or the Wayland Yates Memorial (Journalism) Scholarship at Angelo State University. Please send donations to: Development Office, Angelo State University, ASU Station No. 11023, San Angelo, Texas, 76909-1023; Attention: Jamie Akin.

Arrangements made by Putnam Funeral Home and Crematory, 145 Texas Avenue, Kingsland, Texas 78639. (325)388-0008.

Paid Obituary

Police blotter

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

- DAVID RENTERIA, 47, of 1009 N. Bell was arrested Wednesday on a charge of hindering officers discharging official duties.
- ANGELITA MARTINEZ, 35, of 408 Westover was arrested Wednesday on charges of delivery of a controlled substance greater than or equal to 4 grams but less than 200 grams and possession of marijuana greater than 4 ounces but less than or equal to 5 pounds.
- ROSENDO FRANCO, 30, of 212 N. Johnson was arrested Wednesday on charges of delivery of controlled substance greater than or equal to 4 grams but less than 200 grams and possession of marijuana greater than 4 ounces but less than or equal to 5 pounds.
- CINDY RENAE ALEXANDER, 35, of 3304 W. Highway 80 No. 47 was arrested Wednesday on a warrant from another agency.
- CHELSEA KRISTINE MILLSPAUGH, 27, of 213 Circle was arrested Wednesday on three warrants from another agency.
- BENITO OSCAR GONZALES, 40, of 213 Circle was arrested Wednesday on two warrants from another agency.
- MARK AARON ARCHULETTA, 38, of 511 E. 18th St. was arrested Wednesday on a warrant from another agency.
- JENNIFER GONZALES, 27, of 1315 Stadium was arrested Wednesday on charges of failed to maintain financial responsibility and driving while license invalid.
- MARCO ANTONIO LOZANO, 33, of 2521 Albrook was arrested Wednesday on a charge of driving while intoxicated BAC greater than or equal to 0.15.
- THEFT reported at County Road 1584.
- MAJOR ACCIDENT reported at 601 S. Scurry.
- BURGLARY OF A HABITATION reported at the 1500 block of Sycamore and the 2500 block of Chanute.
- SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY reported at the 2600 block of Albrook.

Sheriff

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

- Note - Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 72 inmates at the time of this report.
- ROSENDO FRANCO was booked by BSPD on a charge of delivery of a controlled substance and possession of marijuana.
 - ANGELITA MARTINEZ was booked by BSPD on charges of delivery of a controlled substance and possession of marijuana.
 - PRISCILLA IRENE HERNANDEZ was booked by HCSO on charges of driving while license invalid, violate promise to appear, no safety belt - child and delivery of a controlled substance less than 1 gram.
 - CINDY RENAE ALEXANDER was booked by BSPD on a charge of theft greater than \$1,500 but less than \$20,000.
 - MARK ARCHULETTA was booked by BSPD on a charge of theft of property greater than or equal to \$20 but less than \$500 by check.
 - BENITO OSCAR GONZALES was booked by BSPD on charges of theft of property greater than

Kimberly Michelle Husted Grigg



Kimberly Michelle Husted Grigg, 45 of Big Spring was called home Tuesday March 11, 2014. Due to Michelle's anatomical gift, she will continue to fight the battle against cancer. Michelle was born Sept. 24, 1968, in Pampa, Texas, to Carroll "Honey" and Judy "Mammaw" Husted. She has been a long time resident of Big Spring and a member of First Baptist Church. She was employed by Howard College of Big Spring at the SWCID campus as administrative assistant to the Provost for 13 years.

Michelle married Pank Grigg on July 16, 1999. Their three boys; Mason, Tucker, and Cooper were the world to her.

She is survived by her husband and three boys

of the home; her parents, Carroll and Judy Husted; sisters, Debbie Ramirez and her husband, Manuel, Keli and Jonathan Johnson, her In-laws, Joe Grigg, Cindy and Mike Seely; brothers and sisters in law; Jim and Pandi Buske, Bill and Anjie Grigg, Steven and Tonyia Grigg her nieces and nephews include the following; Randy "pooh head" and her husband Isaac, Matt, C.J. and his wife Ashtin, Stormy, Chloe, Beau, Kittie, Victoria, William, Stormie and Savannah. Along with special friends Shannon and Robby Creswell. Michelle also has a very large extended family.

In lieu of flowers the family has requested donations to assist with expenses to the following YouCaring.com search for "Michelle Grigg Fundraiser."

A memorial service will be held at First Baptist Church 10 a.m. on Friday, March 14, 2014.

The family has requested attendees bring their own favorite photo or snap shot of Michelle to help build a special memory album for her boys.

Paid Obituary

Andra Madry Adams



Andra Madry Adams, 58, of Sweetwater, Texas, died Tuesday, March 11, 2014 in an Abilene, Texas, hospital. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 15, 2014 at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel in Big Spring, Texas with Lloyd Wells officiating. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park in Big Spring.

The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday, March 13, 2014 at Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home.

She was born May 29, 1955 in San Angelo, Texas and married Lynn Adams April 17, 1987 in Big Spring.

A lifelong resident of Big Spring, she graduated from Big Spring High School in 1973. She moved to Sweetwater in 1999, where she owned and operat-

ed the Social Butterfly until retiring in 2009.

Survivors include her husband, Lynn Adams of Sweetwater; one daughter, Shelli Webb of Big Spring; two sons, Mark Webb of Pilot Point, Texas, and Michael Webb of North Richland Hills, Texas; two stepsons, Cory Adams and wife Rhonda of Plano, Texas, and Danny Adams and wife Kanji of Midland, Texas; two sisters, Paula League and husband Joe and Vonda Ross and husband Tom, all of Midland; one brother, Steve Stephens and wife Debbie of Victoria; 10 grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Nophlet and Gene Madry; two brothers, Mark Powell and Craig Powell.

The family suggests memorials to Hendrick Hospice, 1900 Pine St., Abilene, Texas 79601.

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

or equal to \$50 but less than \$500 and theft greater than \$20 but less than \$500 by check.

- CHELSEA KRISTYNE MILLSPAUGH was booked by BSPD on charges of theft of property greater than or equal to \$20 but less than \$500 by check and issuance of bad check.

- JENNIFER GONZALES was booked by BSPD on copias warrants for failed to maintain financial responsibility and driving while license invalid.

- MARCO ANTONIO LOZANO was booked by BSPD on a charge of driving while intoxicated.

- TAMELA SHELTON was booked by Glasscock County on a charge of assault causing bodily injury to a family member.

- MARK SHELTON was booked by Glasscock County on a charge of assault causing bodily injury to a family member.

- JOEY LEE SKAINS was booked by BSPD on a charge of public intoxication.

- CHARLES CHRISTOPHER COLEMAN was booked by BSPD on a charge of public intoxication.

Fire/EMS

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

Tuesday:

- MEDICAL call reported at the 1800 block of N. Highway 87. One patient transported to Scenic

Mountain Medical Center.

- MEDICAL call reported at the 700 block of W. Interstate Highway 20. One patient transported to SMMC.

- MEDICAL call reported at the 1600 block of Lancaster. One patient transported to SMMC.

- MEDICAL call reported at the intersection of 18th St. and Gregg. One patient transported to SMMC.

- MEDICAL call reported at the intersection of 7th St. and Gregg. One patient transported to SMMC.

- MEDICAL call reported at the 900 block of Lancaster. One patient transported to SMMC.

- TRAUMA reported at the 1400 block of Tucson. One patient transported to SMMC.

- MEDICAL call reported at the 900 block of Abrams. One patient transported to SMMC.

- AUTOMOBILE fire reported at he 800 block of Baylor. Extinguished.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, TX 79721. Periodicals postage paid at Big Spring, Texas.

USPS 1431-48 USPS 0055-940 ISSN 0746-6811
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Support Groups

MONDAY
• Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, noon-1 p.m., 615 Settles.

• VA Alcoholics Anonymous support group, 7-8 p.m., Veterans Healing Center.

• Take Pounds Off Sensibly (TOPS) TX 0021 meets at First Christian Church at 10th and Goliad, in the dining hall on the east side of the building. Weigh-in starts at 2:50 p.m. and meeting starts at 3 p.m. We have a different program each week. For more information, please call 517-4922 or 935-6306.

• 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. Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered recovery program dealing with life's hang-ups, hurts and habits, covering many areas. Circle of Hope group is a ministry of Spring Creek Fellowship. For further information, contact Dale at 432-270-8462.

• Reformers Unanimous International is a faith-based addictions program helping people find freedom from addiction. Meetings begin at 7 p.m. Mondays at Trinity Baptist Church in Big Spring. Enter at the back of the church.

• Stepping Stone Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets at Baptist Temple Church Fellowship Hall, 400 E. 11th Place. Open meeting at 7 p.m.

TUESDAY
• Noon — The Just For Today Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets in Room 3 at Spring Creek Fellowship, 501 Birdwell Lane.

• Big Spring and Snyder Parkinsons Support Group meeting at the Big Spring Senior Center at 10:30 a.m. the second Tuesday of the month. This is a group for all Parkinson's disease patients, spouses and caregivers. For

more information about the support group or about Parkinson's Disease, contact Jo Bidwell at the Lubbock APDA office at 806-785-0942.

• Special Parents for Special Children support group meets the first Tuesday of each month, 6:30 p.m. at Elbow Elementary. Contact Kerri Rosenbaum at 432-816-3320 or kerriroosenbaum9488@msn.com

• VA Alcoholics Anonymous support group, 7:30-8:30 p.m., Veterans Healing Center.

• Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m.; closed discussion meeting 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

• Al-Anon, 615 Settles for family members and friends of alcoholics meets at 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
• "A Journey to a New Normal," a grief support network, meets from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at 602 S. Main. For information, call 263-5999.

• RSD (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, a chronic pain disease), a new support and informative group meets at 213 Circle. Call Lucy at (432) 517-9207 for more information.

• Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m.; open 12 & 12 study meeting 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

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.. The classes take place at Spring Tabernacle Ministries, located 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 and you don't have to talk if you don't want to. Flexible payment options.

• 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. Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered recovery program dealing with life's hang-ups, hurts and habits, covering many areas. Circle of Hope group is a ministry of Spring Creek Fellowship. For further information, contact Dale at 432-270-8462.

• Stepping Stone Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets at Baptist Temple Church Fellowship Hall, 400 E. 11th Place. Open meeting at 7 p.m.

• The Young and the Breastless of Big Spring meets every first Thursday at 11:30 a.m. at Brooklyn's Deli in the Spring Town Plaza. This is a support group for breast cancer survivors.

FRIDAY
• 7 p.m. — The Just For Today Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets in Room 3 at Spring Creek Fellowship, 501 Birdwell Lane.
• AA open discussion meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at 605 Settles. Open Big Book study meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

SATURDAY
• Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. Open podium/speakers meeting 8 p.m. until 9 p.m. Open birthday night, no smoking meeting the last Saturday of each month at 8 p.m. Covered dish supper at 7 p.m.

SUNDAY
• Alcoholics Anonymous closed meeting from 11 a.m. to noon at 615 Settles. Open meeting 7 p.m. until 8 p.m.

Take Note

• Big Spring Second Chance Rescue will be having a March Madness adoption event at Tractor Supply Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., 1104 W. Interstate Highway 20.

• 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.

For more information, contact Amanda Duforat, marketing coordinator, at 268-4699.

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Tuesday, March 18 - 7:00pm

Evangelist Raymond Wright
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Everyone is welcome!
Please make plans to worship the Lord together with us and please invite someone to come with you and let's hear what the Spirit of the Lord has to say to the Church in these services.
GOD BLESS EVERYONE!

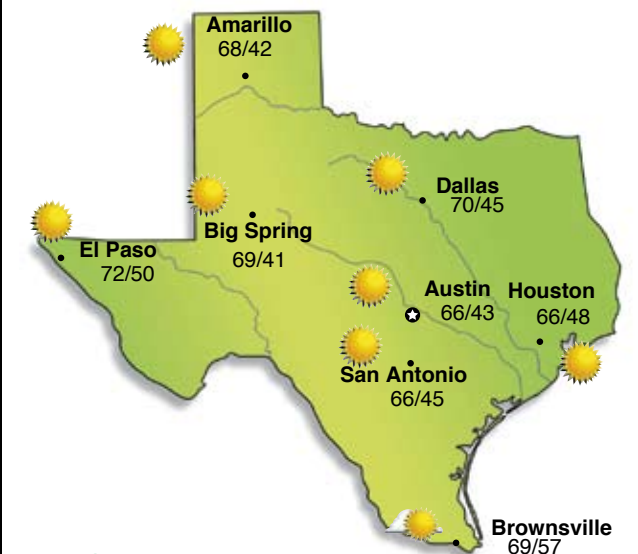
Today's Weather

Local 5-Day Forecast

Fri 3/14	Sat 3/15	Sun 3/16	Mon 3/17	Tue 3/18
69/41 Mainly sunny. High 69F. Winds SSE at 10 to 20 mph.	77/46 Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 70s and lows in the mid 40s.	76/46 More sun than clouds. Highs in the mid 70s and lows in the mid 40s.	62/38 Windy with times of sun and clouds.	72/48 A few clouds. Highs in the low 70s and lows in the upper 40s.
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	Sunrise: 7:54 AM Sunset: 7:55 PM



Texas At A Glance



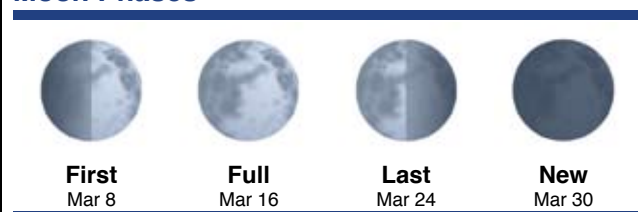
Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Ablene	70	44	sunny	Kingsville	68	52	mst sunny
Amarillo	68	42	sunny	Livingston	66	41	sunny
Austin	66	43	sunny	Longview	66	40	sunny
Beaumont	65	45	sunny	Lubbock	66	38	sunny
Brownsville	69	57	mst sunny	Lufkin	67	40	sunny
Brownwood	68	42	sunny	Midland	67	42	sunny
Corpus Christi	65	55	mst sunny	Raymondville	69	54	mst sunny
Corsicana	66	41	sunny	Rosenberg	66	45	sunny
Dallas	70	45	sunny	San Antonio	66	45	sunny
Del Rio	68	48	pt sunny	San Marcos	66	42	sunny
El Paso	72	50	sunny	Sulphur Springs	67	43	sunny
Fort Stockton	68	46	sunny	Sweetwater	69	44	sunny
Gainesville	68	43	sunny	Tyler	65	39	sunny
Greenville	68	42	sunny	Weatherford	68	43	sunny
Houston	66	48	sunny	Wichita Falls	70	45	sunny

National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	53	34	sunny	Minneapolis	45	31	cloudy
Boston	27	14	snow	New York	28	19	windy
Chicago	36	33	mst sunny	Phoenix	77	52	pt sunny
Dallas	70	45	sunny	San Francisco	68	50	sunny
Denver	59	30	mst sunny	Seattle	59	46	pt sunny
Houston	66	48	sunny	St. Louis	60	43	sunny
Los Angeles	72	53	pt sunny	Washington, DC	36	25	windy
Miami	74	61	pt sunny				

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Frances Billalba McKiski, 60, died Sunday. Funeral mass was 11 a.m. this morning at Holy Trinity Catholic Church. Burial followed at Mount Olive Memorial Park.

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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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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

LETTER POLICIES

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.

- Sign your letter.
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- 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@bigspringherald.com or mailed to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721.

DAILY PRAYER

May we remain diligent about reading Your word, Lord, for our life.

Amen

Misadventures with Obamacare

Back in September, our family received an Obamacare-induced health insurance death notice. We joined millions of other Americans whose individual market health plans died after Democrats lied about our ability to keep the plans and doctors we liked. President Obama tried to “fix” the mess he created. But as usual, the federal government’s solutions have made things even worse.

Confusion and chaos reign not just in our household, but across the country.

As I reported last fall, our letter from Anthem BlueCross BlueShield of Colorado informed us that we could no longer keep our high-deductible PPO plan with a wide doctor network because of “changes from health care reform (also called the Affordable Care Act or ACA).” The Obamacare engineers determined that the affordable plan we liked was “substandard,” forcing us to enter the Obamacare health insurance exchange, purchase a severely limited HMO plan or seek some other alternative in the shrinking private marketplace.

We reluctantly took steps to sign up with the exchange, spending hours on Colorado’s busted website, hours on the phone with shady reps and weeks waiting for some proof that we were in fact “enrolled.”

Then, a few months later, we received another letter from Anthem informing us that we

could keep our current plan until November 2014. We signed a form stating that we wanted to do so and took steps to cancel our pending Obamacare enrollment. Next, we got another letter stating that our current Anthem plan would be canceled on May 1, 2014.

Then, last week, Obama announced by administrative fiat that we could keep our plan for another two years.

Simple question: Will our plan be canceled on May 1, or will we have it for another two years? Or what?

We called the number on our Anthem health insurance card last week. Nobody picked up the phone after waiting on hold for nearly an hour.

Second try: Twenty minutes on hold.

Then, we were transferred to another number. Another 20-minute wait. Finally, a human being came on the line. After explaining our situation and posing our simple question, the rep put us on hold again. The eventual answer: He didn’t know.

After taking special note of our lengthy correspondence file, the rep then proceeded to give us the same number we had initially contacted in the first place. In response to our question about the contradictory information from his company and from the government, he informed us that Anthem has received “millions of calls” that it couldn’t process and apologized. He repeated the old phone number for us to call so we could fatten our lengthy correspondence file even more. And then: Click.

The left will blame the insurance companies, as always. But at the center of the current mess

are Obama’s desperate and now almost weekly Democratic face-saving decrees to “fix” a fundamentally broken government racket. Half of the nation’s state insurance commissioners rejected the original “fix” for noncompliant plans last fall. Several still haven’t made decisions on that first “fix,” let alone the new ones for 2015 or 2016. Nobody can count on any state that went along with the original “fix” to sign on to the subsequent ones. And only a few have weighed in on the very latest one.

While the White House and Hollywood propagandists push aggressively for Americans to “Get Covered” and get enrolled in government-sponsored care before the March 31 open enrollment deadline, millions of us are in bureaucratic limbo trying to Get Answers about the changes, the changes to the changes, and the changes to the changes to the changes to the private plans we liked and didn’t want to leave in the first place.

A former Obamacare policy adviser sheepishly concluded to The Washington Post this week: “I broadly view the administrative delays as a pragmatic realization that it is actually harder to do some of these things in reality than we thought when we put it down on paper.”

No kidding, genius. Thanks for nothing, Obamacare!

Michelle Malkin is the author of “Culture of Corruption: Obama and his Team of Tax Cheats, Crooks and Cronies” (Regnery 2010). Her e-mail address is malknblog@gmail.com.

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Hillary sick, probably of the media

It was back on Jan. 27, 1998, when Hillary Clinton first used the phrase “vast right-wing conspiracy” to describe the attacks on her husband.

She was appearing with Matt Lauer on NBC’s “Today,” the day after Bill Clinton had publicly stated: “I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky.” For Hillary, the Monica Lewinsky story was the last straw in what she firmly believed was a conservative conspiracy to get her husband. And Hillary stuck to that belief even after she learned the truth about Bill and Monica.

After all, one or both of the Clintons had been accused of all sorts of ugly things over the preceding years: Whitewater, being involved in the death of Vince Foster, controversial cattle futures trading, international drug smuggling through Mena, Ark., etc.

If you are not familiar with the lurid particulars of the past claims against the Clintons, just wait. As 2016 draws closer, the right wing will provide a refresher course for you.

In fact, it is starting already. In case you haven’t heard, Hillary Clinton may have a secret terrible illness that will prevent her from running for president in 2016. Rush Limbaugh, The Daily Caller, Matt Drudge and Roger Stone, often described as a “self-admitted GOP hit man,” have spread the rumor.

On Feb. 24 of this year, Stone, who now says he is a libertarian, tweeted: “@HillaryClinton not running for health reasons. Remember you heard it first from the #StoneZone.”

Four days later, Limbaugh began a broadcast this way: “Whispers are persisting, whis-

pers — there’s a whisper campaign, folks — that Mrs. Clinton is sick, that she will not run for the presidency because she is sick.”

Limbaugh went on to speculate that it was Democrats and not Republicans who were behind the “rumor campaign” because Republicans lack the guts for it.

“Do the Republicans have the gonads to do something like this?” Limbaugh asked. “Do the Republicans have the gonads to start a rumor that Mrs. Clinton is ill? It’s Drudge’s lead story there with a picture of Hillary looking like she’s in great stress and distress. The headline is: ‘Is She Sick?’ That’s all it takes, and people start wondering, ‘What kind of sick?’”

Limbaugh concluded: “If this indeed is established as a rumor campaign, my prediction is that a Democrat is behind it.

There will be a lot of Republicans trying to take credit for it if it’s a rumor campaign that ends up being successful in terms of damaging her chances to win the presidency.”

The same day, The Daily Caller ran a piece under this headline: “Whispers persist that Hillary won’t run: Health may be worse than disclosed.”

The piece stated: “These ubiquitous rumors of her health have been fueled in part by the supermarket tabloids. The National Enquirer wrote in 2012 that Clinton had brain cancer, something a spokesman dismissed then as ‘absolute nonsense.’ In January of this year, the Globe claimed that Clinton secretly had a brain tumor.”

Why write a piece “fueled” by supermarket tabloids?

Why not? In modern American journalism, if you haven’t gone too far, you haven’t gone far enough. If you don’t post the story and get the clicks, someone else will. To step back from crossing the line is to admit that such a line exists.

The Daily Caller did include this: “Asked about her health on Thursday, Clinton spokesman Nick Merrill said in an email to The Daily Caller: ‘To your question, very caring of you to ask. She’s 100 percent.’”

At the end of 2012, Clinton did get the flu, faint, hit her head and get taken to the hospital. Her doctors released a statement saying that she had a clot “in the space between the brain and the skull behind the right ear.”

“It did not result in a stroke, or neurological damage,” her medical team said. She was given blood thinners and was “making excellent progress.” Her doctors continued, “We are confident she will make a full recovery.”

Ironically, some conservatives said at the time she was not sick at all but faking it to avoid testifying before Congress about the attacks in Benghazi, Libya. That particular accusation may have to be scrubbed to fit in with the current accusation, that she is gravely ill with some kind of brain problem.

All indications are that she is doing just fine, however. She is currently engaged in a vigorous national speaking tour, making, some say, up to \$250,000 per speech.

To me, raking in that kind of dough is a sign of keen mental health.

If Hillary is flying around the country and knocking down a quarter-mile a speech while being ill, I’ll have what she’s having.

Roger Simon is Politico’s chief political columnist. His new e-book, “Reckoning: Campaign 2012 and the Fight for the Soul of America,” can be found on Amazon.com, BN.com and iTunes. To find out more about Roger Simon and read features by other Creators writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Web page at www.creators.com.



MICHELLE
MALKIN



ROGER
SIMON

Peril in the oil patch: Drilling boom, deadly legacy



By Lise Olsen
Houston Chronicle investigative reporter

The last thing Felipe Saiz of Big Spring, Texas, saw from behind his trademark mirrored sunglasses was the vast sun-bleached vista of the Permian Basin where he'd grown up, with its scrub trees and white caliche rock.

He was standing on a platform near the top of Rig 11 at a West Texas drill site one morning in June when, hundreds of feet below, a drilling pipe got stuck and a rig superintendent increased drill power beyond normal operating limits, court documents said.

It took only seconds. The surge toppled the aging rig's mast, with Saiz held fast to it by a red nylon safety strap. The crumpled tower crashed inches from a hut where the superintendent still sat at the controls.

Saiz's son-in-law, Frankie Reyes, a rig hand, found Saiz's body under a debris pile that took two cranes to clear away.

"I never went back after that day," said Reyes, one of at least three crew members who quit after the June 19, 2013, accident.

The boom that has brought prosperity to Texas has left a trail of death and devastation for many of the more than 100,000 workers in oil and gas exploration-related jobs. The death toll peaked at 65 in 2012 — a 10-year high and nearly 60 percent more than in 2011. Nationwide, 663 workers in oil field-related industries were reported killed in the drilling and fracking boom from 2007 to 2012, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. About 40 percent died in Texas.

But what sets apart the accident that claimed Saiz's life from thousands of other incidents reported by Texas oil field workers since 2008 is that any government official looked into it at all.

As part of a yearlong investigation, the Houston Chronicle analyzed 18,000 injury and illness claims and reviewed OSHA data and public records on hundreds of oil field accidents since 2007.

Among the investigation's findings:

- The federal government has failed for 22 years to implement safety standards and procedures for onshore oil and gas drilling, even as offshore accidents such as the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico prompted officials to improve already stringent regulations governing offshore drilling.
- At onshore oil and gas drilling sites, the

Occupational Safety and Health Administration is required to investigate only those accidents that kill workers or that cause three or more to be hospitalized. That translated to only about 150 of 18,000 work-related injuries and illnesses in the last six years in Texas.

• When OSHA did investigate, it found safety violations in 78 percent of Texas accidents, finding that many could have been prevented with safer procedures or equipment.

Work in Texas' oil and gas fields involves long hours, extreme weather and physical contact with dangerous machinery under the best of circumstances. But the dearth of safety standards, the lack of government inspections, and shoddy practices followed by many oil and gas companies have left a toll of badly injured workers.

In 2012, 79 lost limbs, 82 were crushed, 92 suffered burns and 675 broke bones in work-related accidents reported to insurance carriers.

"It's like the Wild West out there," said Joseph Melugin, a Houston attorney who has represented workers disabled in oil field accidents and the families of the dead. "Some well service companies go to great lengths to appear to have strong safety programs. Others don't bother."

Rules don't cover drilling

In 1992, industry and government officials developed detailed safety rules under the so-called "process safety management," program that was launched after a series of disasters at refineries and chemical plants, including a 1989 explosion in Pasadena that claimed 23 lives. Fatalities subsequently dropped, and more information is gathered and exchanged to help prevent accidents.

But OSHA officials deliberately excluded oil and gas drilling, promising instead to issue a "separate standard: to fit the industry 'uniqueness.'" That promise came in the final months of the administration of President George H.W. Bush, after which the players changed and the initiative stalled.

Drilling and well service industry leaders generally have opposed reforms in U.S. onshore operations. They insist that their mostly mobile work sites are fundamentally different from refineries, though their workers also handle hazardous substances and operate 24 hours a day.

Response to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon drilling disaster illustrates a double standard in U.S. offshore and onshore drilling oversight.

Nearly six times as many oil patch workers were killed in Texas in 2012 than died when the Deepwater Horizon rig exploded, killing 11 and spewing almost 5 million barrels of oil into the Gulf.

Offshore, federal law requires the Coast Guard to investigate offshore deaths and transportation-related accidents while the Interior Department's Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement sends specialized inspectors to investigate all injury-related accidents, as well as fires, explosions and spills involving oil rigs and platforms. Accident reports and safety recommendations have long been available on the Internet.

Inspectors take a top-down approach — holding major oil and gas operators accountable for the safety of their own employees, as well as for contract workers at offshore sites.

In the aftermath of that accident, even more inspectors with specialized training were deployed. Existing oil and gas safety rules were tightened.

"But when 60 workers die one at a time, no one pays any attention," said R. Dean Wingo, who retired in January 2013 as an assistant regional administrator for OSHA based in Texas.

"The truth is, offshore drilling is a lot safer than onshore. We see things in land drilling that were eliminated years ago offshore," Wingo said. "A lot of outdated equipment is still being used, and OSHA doesn't have any regulations specific to oil and gas at all."

Top OSHA officials told the Chronicle that responding to oil field fatalities is a high priority, and the agency has announced it will review the industry's exemption from process safety rules.

Meantime, OSHA has only 95 inspectors to oversee safety rules for all Texas work sites. Few have oil and gas-related experience or training and generally look for generic safety problems at many different job sites, from a fast-food restaurant to a construction site.

Warning signs ignored

For a month before Felipe Saiz was killed, there

had been harbingers of disaster at the Rockhouse Road well site in Howard County: failing pumps and an aging, poorly maintained oil derrick.

It's hard for his widow, Tina, and three daughters — Ashley, Marissa and Bethany — to understand now why no one had taken any action to protect him and the other workers.

Two weeks before Rig 11 collapsed near Saiz's hometown of Big Spring, OSHA inspectors had visited the site to investigate another death.

A 30-year-old floor hand, Raymond Fernandez, collapsed in triple-digit heat on June 5. A sheriff's deputy found him moaning in a shack on the rig floor. The company had hired Fernandez despite the fact he weighed more than 300 pounds and had a felony record.

After his first day on the job, he'd driven more than 100 miles home to the small town of Anson and arrived unable to breathe, his mother said.

"He said he was too hot, and they didn't furnish any water," Juanita "Janie" Fernandez said. "He went to work the next day and never came home."

OSHA officials cited Heart Land Drilling Inc. and said the company contributed to the "tragedy," by failing to protect workers from the heat. The agency proposed a \$6,900 fine. Inspectors missed other potentially lethal safety problems at the site, which they uncovered only after Saiz died two weeks later, according to their own citations.

Records from the investigation of Saiz's death show how government resources are inadequate to respond quickly — OSHA dispatched an independent consultant to handle the case. The area director responsible for that sector is based 350 miles away, in El Paso.

After Saiz died, OSHA found the company failed in its basic duty to protect workers from "recognized hazards that were causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm" by using a poorly maintained derrick and by failing to move Saiz and others to safety before attempting an unusually dangerous drilling procedure, its citation shows. OSHA proposed a fine of more than \$41,000.

Heart Land Drilling is contesting violations in both deaths. In its response to the Saizes' lawsuit, the company said in court records that the family has no right to recover any damages. Heart Land Drilling officials and an attorney representing them in that lawsuit did not respond to requests for comment.

Federal inspectors limited

Even when OSHA inspectors uncover life-threatening working conditions after responding to fatalities or complaints, they cannot shut down a drilling rig or a well site.

The Texas Railroad Commission monitors oil field fires and blowouts, considered signs of life-threatening accidents offshore. The commission can and does shut down such operations if it uncovers serious problems. But it doesn't coordinate with OSHA.

Worker safety is not part of the commission's mission, spokeswoman Ramona Nye said.

When OSHA gets complaints about problematic oil patch employers, inspectors sometimes can't find the companies they're supposed to investigate. "These are mobile work sites. When an accident happens at a rig site and the person's just injured — if you take into account whatever time that person takes to recover — that rig may be gone by the time the accident's reported," Wingo said. "So it's really hard for OSHA."

Barred from drill sites

Three companies have delayed safety investigations in Texas in the last three years by keeping OSHA inspectors from entering work sites without an inspection warrant, according to OSHA spokeswoman Diana Petterson.

That list includes Nabors Drilling USA, a Houston-based giant, which has reported four fatal accidents in Texas since 2007.

Dennis Smith, a spokesman for Nabors, said it is not company policy to block OSHA inspectors entry from work sites without a warrant. He said the company has cooperated with OSHA investigations involving fatal accidents, but acknowledged that Nabors has required inspectors to get warrants at drilling sites in Texas and North Dakota in other circumstances.

Some Texas oil and gas employers have been cited for failing to report accidents or for falsifying safety logs. A few failed to summon OSHA even when more than three workers were hospitalized or someone died.

"How long can we tolerate an atmosphere in which oil field employees are being treated as if they were outdated cellphones that can be used up, discarded and replaced?," asked Mark Murray, a Houston attorney who represented a derrick man, Brady Foret, who was nearly killed in a rig collapse that sent four workers to the hospital, and that OSHA never investigated.



SAIZ

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

The Clues Point the Way

West dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 4
♥ 8 5 3 2
♦ Q 9 7 4
♣ A 8 5 3

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

EAST
♠ A 10 9 3
♥ Q 9 7 4
♦ 5
♣ Q 10 7 6

SOUTH
♠ 8 6 2
♥ —
♦ A K J 10 6 2
♣ K J 9 4

The bidding:
West North East South
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ 3 ♦
3 ♥ 4 ♦ 4 ♠ 5 ♠
5 ♥ Pass Pass 6 ♦
Pass Pass Dble

Opening lead — king of hearts.

This deal from a team match produced a huge swing when one declarer made better use of the available clues than did his counterpart. At the first table, South became declarer at six diamonds doubled after the lengthy auction shown.

West led a heart, ruffed by South. Declarer drew trumps, then led a club to the ace and another club back and finessed the jack after East followed low. The finesse worked, but

when West showed out, declarer still had to lose a club trick. Since he also had to lose a spade, he went down one for a loss of 200 points.

At the second table, the same contract was reached after identical bidding. Again a heart was led and ruffed and two rounds of trumps were drawn. South then also played a club to the ace and a club back.

But when East followed low, declarer finessed the nine! Another club finesse was later taken, and as a result South made the vulnerable slam for a net gain of 1,740 points on the deal.

The second South's line of play illustrates how an attentive declarer can take advantage of the bidding to achieve the optimal result.

Ordinarily, the second-round finesse of the nine of clubs with this combination would be a poor play. But South had no difficulty diagnosing the true situation. The bidding strongly indicated that West's distribution was 5-5-2-1. It hardly seemed likely that West would bid up to five hearts with 5-4-2-2 distribution.

Since West had already shown up with two diamonds when the critical decision in clubs had to be made, South had every reason to believe that West had started with a singleton club. The unusual double finesse therefore became the proper play.

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.
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Sudoku Answer on Page 14

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.

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

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See **PERIL IN PATCH**, Page 6

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PERIL IN PATCH

Continued from Page 5

Foret was standing on a platform near Golden Meadow, La., around midnight on Jan. 11, 2009, when the newly repaired mobile drilling rig listed and collapsed.

Foret fell as the rig came crashing down, and three others were struck by debris, according to civil suits filed in Harris County and Louisiana.

Supervisors working for Houston-based Key Energy Services had kept drilling prior to the accident even though at least some workers noticed the rig lacked two of four locking pins required to secure its top — called a mast — to its base, according to allegations in court documents.

Death details locked away

Foret, 23, had been fit and active, earning \$53,000 a year and awaiting the birth of his first son. He awoke from a coma an altered man. He breathed with a ventilator, his jaw broken in two places, his brain and memory permanently damaged, his spine riddled with cracks.

In a related Harris County civil case, his wife, Megan, testified he'd been one of the "most lively people" she'd ever known. After the accident, he cried over things he could no longer do. He could hold his toddler for only a few minutes at a time. Nor could he bathe his child, fearing he'd forget the boy behind in the tub.

A Houston jury found both Key Energy and Stewart & Stevenson — the Texas firm that handled the rig repair — responsible and awarded Foret \$10.7 million.

Stewart & Stevenson, also based in Houston, later argued in an appeal to the First District Court of Appeals that the blame should have been shared by well operator Apache Corp. and its company man, but operator liability is limited under Texas law and the court upheld the judgment Aug. 15. The case settled in October for an undisclosed sum. Stewart & Stevenson has asked for the judgment to be vacated as part of that agreement.

OSHA has no record of the accident. Apache Corp. did its own probe, court records show. But it was the injured workers' employer's obligation to summon OSHA, said Bill Mintz, an Apache spokesman.

Key Energy Services declined comment on the accident, but emphasized federal regulations only require them to summon OSHA if three or more workers had been admitted to hospitals as inpatients.

Because OSHA investigates so few accidents, details of the vast majority of them — including information that could drive reforms — remain locked away in confidential company safety reports, insurance archives or remote courthouse files in lawsuits.

Texas-based oil executives told the Chronicle that high turnover and competing company safety standards contribute to potential dangers in an era of explosive growth.

Hiring practices vary. Some involved in recent oil field accidents employed felons or unscreened friends of friends and offered little training, records show. Others have elaborate pre-employment reviews, including hair follicle drug screens and state-of-the-art training facilities.

Rookies get riskiest jobs

Andy Hendricks is chief executive officer of Texas-based Patterson-UTI, among the nation's largest drilling concerns. Hendricks said his company has focused on hiring war veterans and others without oil field experience to fill a demand for personnel and to improve the company's accident rate, which 10 years ago was one of the nation's worst. Fresh recruits participate in a boot camp and are evaluated on how they adapt before being assigned to crews.

"We do not accept fatal accidents as part of what we do," said Hendricks, who joined Patterson-UTI in 2012 after years at competitor Schlumberger. "These are absolute tragedies that we do not want to happen again. We don't want anybody to get hurt — not one person — and that's why we've spent so much time and money to improve."

Many companies say employees have "stop work" authority if they spot hazards that should be immediately addressed. To further empower workers, Patterson-UTI issues laminated "stop work licenses" that employees can carry in their wallets and are told they can present.

But industry hierarchy puts rookies and roustabouts — mostly 20- to 30-year-olds with the most dangerous and dirty jobs — at the bottom. Under Texas laws, there's little whistle-blower protection and no guaranteed workers' compensation coverage for the injured.

More than 300 oil patch employers provide workers' comp, records show. But it isn't required, and even some large employers that reported multiple

fatalities in recent years do not provide it.

At the top of the oilfield power structure are company men employed by well operators — often independent contractors with varying levels of experience — who sometimes emphasize speed over safety.

Mark Rankin, vice president of risk management for Texas-based Basic Energy Services, one of the nation's biggest and most diversified well service companies, said inexperienced company men, differences in employer safety standards, and pressure to work faster are factors that appear to be increasing potential oil field dangers.

Both he and Alan Krenek, chief financial officer for Basic Energy, said their employees are well-trained and authorized to "stop work" but can't avoid hazards if improperly informed by others at the same site.

Krenek told the Chronicle that two Basic Energy employees badly burned in a 2010 flash fire made no mistakes and were harmed because employees of other companies at the natural gas well site failed to follow safety procedures. The OSHA accident report confirms another company's employee opened a valve that let gases escape into an open pit and caused the fire on Aug. 19, 2010.

Two truck drivers for Basic Energy arrived at the well site near the West Texas town of Ackerly, and about 15 minutes later, heard a hiss as gases flowed into a pit, an OSHA accident report shows. One of the engines of their trucks was running. The consequences were horrific.

Two deaths, one citation

One driver immediately ran to turn off his engine. Abel Garcia, 38, was only a few feet from the pit when fumes from his pumper truck ignited, engulfing him and the other driver, Fernando Zamora, 28, in flames.

Others fled into a nearby cotton field as the two truck drivers, burning alive, screamed for help.

Garcia suffered second- and third-degree burns over half of his body and survived two months. Zamora, a father of three, received treatment for nearly two years before dying on June 16, 2012.

Basic Energy was cited for one safety violation because Garcia was not wearing a flame-retardant shirt, and the company paid a \$5,000 penalty. OSHA confirms no one warned the drivers before another company employee allowed gases to escape. But OSHA oil field investigations often do not focus on the causes of accidents.

No other company was fined.

Pressure to reform

The needless deaths of men like Garcia and Zamora and so many others in the oil fields have not gone unnoticed and have begun to prompt calls for reform.

OSHA called for a safety "stand down" in 2013 and again this year — asking Texas oil and gas employers to cease operations in order to discuss fatal accidents and draw attention to safety risks.

The names of companies that participated are not public, though employers all over Texas and in other states voluntarily submitted information on hazards uncovered in the exercise last year.

OSHA has announced plans to review the process safety management standard and oil field safety rules nationwide in response to an order President Barack Obama issued after the massive fertilizer plant explosion last year in West, Texas, said

Jordan Barab, deputy assistant secretary of labor for occupational safety and health. The review encompasses all work sites that handle hazardous substances, including oil and gas drilling sites.

In 2007, the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, a government agency set up to investigate industrial disasters, probed a triple fatality in North Carolina and described onshore oil fields as one of America's most dangerous workplaces.

"I don't know that the picture has improved," said Daniel Horowitz, the board's managing director. "Obviously, the drilling boom has benefits for our country. But as drilling has expanded, there are potentially more new

and inexperienced people coming in. Safety would always be a concern when less-experienced people are coming into a potentially dangerous sector."

Horowitz said expanding OSHA's process safety management program could help prevent many oil field accidents. That program already requires employers in refineries and chemical plants to develop and follow policies on hazard analysis, worker training, and standard operating and emergency response procedures. OSHA then can issue citations and require changes if companies lack standards, do not meet industry minimums, or fail to document that they followed safety rules, such as requiring welders to obtain hot work permits to avoid fires.

William Reilly, a former Environmental Protection Agency administrator who co-chaired the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, found Texas, oil patch death toll of 65 in 2012 particularly disturbing. But since so few land-based oil field accidents are investigated, Reilly said it would be much harder to do the same kind of thorough evaluation he led of offshore accidents.

Caliche dust and dried blood

On the day Rig 11 collapsed, Tina Saiz got a cell-phone call from her son-in-law, who'd been working at the same site. She immediately asked what had happened to her husband.

"They won't let us see. They won't tell us anything," Frankie Reyes responded.

She drove to a gate off Rockhouse Road that marked the entrance, only about a mile from her mother's house. Her mother and stepfather soon joined her vigil. No one from the company or from the sheriff's department emerged to give her any answers. She watched as a helicopter landed and guessed the worst when it took off without loading anyone.

She last saw her husband before dawn on the day he died, when she drove him, her son-in-law and co-workers in their silver Chevy Yukon to a 7-Eleven minutes from the rig site. Together, they completed the morning ritual of loading a cooler with drinks he brought to work since Heart Land didn't supply water even when temperatures topped 100 degrees.

Distracted by a passing friend, they did not exchange their ritual kiss goodbye. So she'd texted him that she loved him and had gotten no reply.

Tina Saiz does not know whether the blow to the head or the fall killed her high school sweetheart, her cheerful and muscular partner of 23 years, the father of her three children. He'd celebrated his 40th birthday only three days before. She prays the end came fast.

The undertaker refused to show her what remained of the jeans and T-shirt her husband died wearing and returned only a pair of leather work boots that had been nearly new.

The boots came back to her covered in a thick layer of caliche dust and deep red splotches of her husband's blood.

A few days later, her son-in-law retrieved a final gift from Felipe's work locker. In his cellphone, she found a text message he'd typed that had gone undelivered because of the vagaries of cellphone service in the oil fields.

"I love you too," it said.

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Late rally lifts Panthers past Big Spring, 11-8

By **TOMMY WELLS**
Sports Editor

The Permian Panthers scored five times in the bottom of the sixth inning on Tuesday and then held on to claim an 11-8 victory over the Big Spring Steers in a non-district baseball contest played in Odessa. The 5-run

outburst broke open a 6-6 deadlock and dealt Big Spring its sixth straight loss.

"We played well at times, I thought," said Steers head coach Bobby Smith. "We just had a couple of miscues that cost us at the end."

Big Spring staged its own threat in the top of the sixth. The Steers put two runners

on base and appeared to take the lead on a play at home. The umpire, however, called Haegan Rodriguez out on the play.

"We thought he was safe, but that's baseball," said Smith. "The umpires aren't going to call something they don't see."

The Steers more than held

their own against Permian in the first six innings. The team pushed across six runs in the first six innings.

Smith said the team's losing streak was a bit deceiving. The team's last seven opponents have been Class 4A and Class 5A opponents.

"We started hot but have cooled down lately, but that

was by design," he said. "I wanted us to play some tougher opponents before district began. I think those games will help prepare us for the district we'll face in district."

Big Spring will close out its non-district schedule today, at home, against Seminole. Games start at noon.

Ready, set, district



Tony Claxton photos (www.claxtonphotography.com)

Haegan Rodriguez leads a solid group of batters into the start of district play. Above, he lifts a single into the air against Fort Stockton.

Steers to begin district play against rival Snyder

By **TOMMY WELLS**
Sports Editor

Big Spring High School head coach Bobby Smith knows his team hasn't been the hottest team on the planet as they get ready to begin District 4-3A action. The fact his team went into Thursday's non-district finale wasn't a huge concern - tough losses against tough opponents can make for a good team.

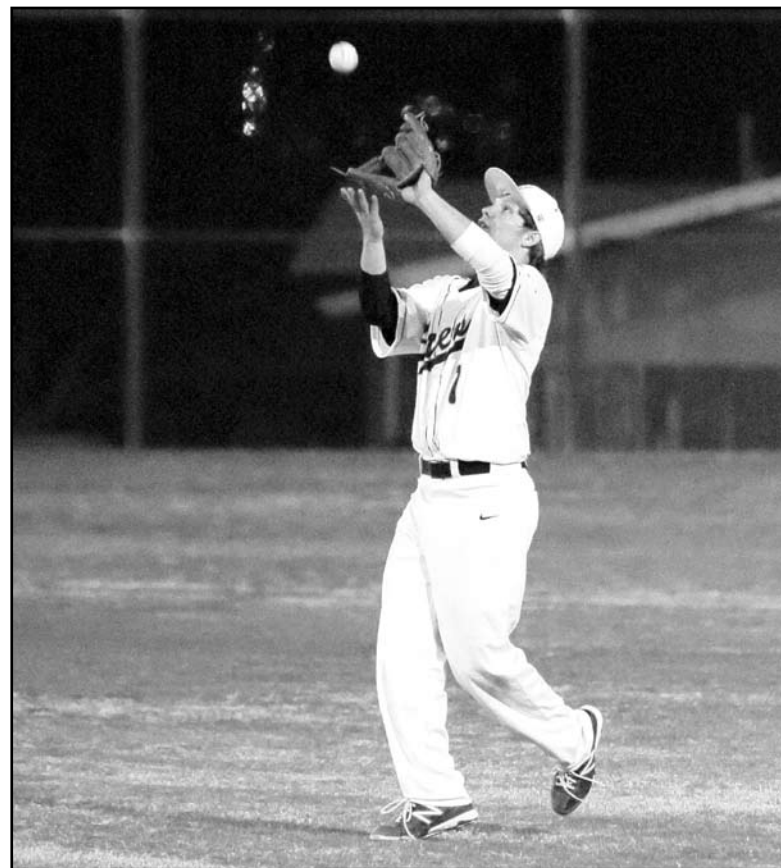
After opening the season with a win in eight of their first 10 outings, Smith said the Steers proved they could hold their own against teams their own size. Those wins were important for the fact that they allowed Big Spring to build confidence.

The true goal, however, wasn't to allow the Steers to roll through an easy schedule. It is to prepare them for a rough-and-tumble district that included solid programs in Abilene Wylie, Snyder and Sweetwater and a pair of tough darkhorse teams in Monahans and Midland Greenwood.

The best way to prepare, Smith said, was to put his team's feet to the fire by having them play a Murderer's Row of large-school programs.

Despite losing six straight games, including all five at this past weekend's Crowley Invitational Baseball Tournament.

See **STEERS**, Page 13



Big Spring second baseman catches a pop fly during the Steers' recent game with Fort Stockton. Hill and shortstop Brett Borman give Big Spring two quality middle infielders as they head into the start of District 4-3A play next week.

Browns release Weeden

CLEVELAND (AP) — The Browns have released quarterback Brandon Weeden.

A first-round pick in 2012, Weeden never panned out in Cleveland as the Browns went through a pair of coaching changes in his short time with the team. He made 20 starts, but lost his job early last season after he got hurt and Brian Hoyer came off the bench and led the Browns to two victories. Weeden was re-inserted as the starter when Hoyer suffered a season-ending injury, but lost the job to Jason Campbell.

Weeden passed for 5,116 yards and went 5-15 as a starter in two seasons.



Herald photo/Tommy Wells

Fast action ...

Adity Jimenez hands the baton to Clay-el Davenport during the junior varsity 4x100-meter relay last Friday the Big Spring Invitational track meet. The BSHS boys' and girls' teams are both scheduled to be in action next week.

Cowboys to cut ties with Austin on June 1

IRVING, Texas (AP) — The Dallas Cowboys released wide receiver Miles Austin on Wednesday, designating it as a June 1 cut.

By releasing the eight-year veteran, the Cowboys will save about \$5.5 million in salary cap space, money they likely will use to sign this year's draft picks.

Austin joined Dallas as an undrafted free agent in 2006. He was a reserve receiver and a kick return specialist for three seasons, but in

2009 became a regular. He set a Cowboys record with 250 yards receiving in his first start, an NFL record. Austin finished that season with 1,320 yards and made the Pro Bowl.

In 2010, he started all 16 games for the only time in his career and made his second Pro Bowl.

But injuries have plagued him since, and he started only eight games and missed five in 2013 because of recurring hamstring problems.

JV Steers to face Snyder, Forsan

The Big High School junior varsity teams will be busy on Monday, March 17, as both squads will be in action.

The BSHS JV "A" team is scheduled to play a

doubleheader in Snyder, beginning at 6 p.m.

The JV "B" team will host Forsan at Steer Park. The B team's game will get under way at 6 p.m.

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As always, come on down to our location at **2111 S. Gregg Street** and apply at any time! Or apply at **www.indeed.com** EOE (coming soon: company delivery vehicles for you to drive! Apply today!)

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HERALD

Tomorrow's Horoscope

Sun, Saturn and the Wilds of Civilization

It is only natural to feel like a scared animal when faced with totally unfamiliar circumstances. To survive the wilds of civilization, our inner animal must understand, predict and exert some measure of control over the environment. The cosmic lifeline today is a trine of the sun and Saturn. Keep calm and take it all in; good fortune follows.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). To a forest animal, a snapping twig could mean your cub has come home, your next meal is close by or you're in imminent danger. Be alert to the snapping twigs today and ready to respond in kind.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If you're not a monarch, CEO or traffic cop, you probably won't be able to command people to do what you want today. But if you are crafty and clever, you'll be able to engineer a desired response.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The cosmic gift offered to you today is objectivity. You will feel like a story writing itself, and you will enjoy the plot and affect it. You are both the audience and the main character.



HOLIDAY MATHIS

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Success will require half-skill and half-confidence. You don't need to worry about the confidence part. As you work on your skills, your confidence will grow quite naturally.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You didn't set out to discover how you are perceived by others, and that is part of what makes today's information from the "peanut gallery" so interesting and delightful.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Has ennui set in? Your outer world will blossom after you gently shake your inner world awake. Get back to reading more. The magic that happens in your mind as you read is real and powerful.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You'll be in mixed company: those who really want the truth and will apply it to a successful end, and those whose egos are too fragile for this. It will therefore be unwise to be too direct and honest in today's discourse.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You may not be able to use a tool you regularly employ to do your daily work. This may leave you feeling like a coyote without a sense of smell, but

ultimately it will broaden your horizons, forcing you to explore your other gifts.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Caution: You'll be tempted to rate and rank the work and appearance of colleagues, competitors and random people in magazines, but that will only lead to jealousy, envy and self-limiting thoughts. Instead, focus on you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The one who cares too much about what others think will always feel and be victim to the constraints of convention. That's not you. Try the thing you've been thinking about. It won't go right the first time, so try it several times.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You seldom think about striking a beautiful pose or executing a charming gesture, generally preferring to do what comes naturally. However, today's caper may require a stretch in this regard, and you will likely enjoy that, too.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You are multifaceted and usually can tell right away which part of your personality is best matched to the situation at hand. However, today's situation is different. Observe awhile before you decide how to react.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (March 13). You'll lavish in special attention over the next three weeks -- your sense of drama works in your favor. Your creative flair will attract employment or a highly beneficial relationship. Those in your inner circle need special care in April and May, and it's rewarding for you to provide this. August brings a lucrative venture. Aries and Libra people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 1, 33, 38 and 13.

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

"Seven of (my moles) are small dark moles." The ancient art of moleomancy is a method of divination based on the type, color, prominence and placement of birthmarks. Much depends on where your seven small moles are located on the body.

Forehead: Small moles on the forehead indicate a headstrong and perhaps noncompliant personality. This person is wary of authority and perhaps has good reason to be. The karmic path is learning whom to trust and building the courage to do so in the right situation.

Eyebrows and Temples: This placement is an indication of enhanced perspective from which

springs creativity, imagination and artistry. The negative implications could be a tendency toward delusions.

Eyelids: Small moles or discolorations of the eyelid indicate a willingness to overlook the faults and shortcomings of those close to you, perhaps as a survival mechanism. When it is no longer necessary to believe, trust and excuse people in order to survive, a person with this mole should challenge himself or herself to see the whole truth.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: William H. Macy has acted in more than a hundred movies and television shows, has won countless awards for stage and screen, and recently made his directorial debut with the critically acclaimed indie film "Rudderless." Macy is a Pisces with communication planet Mercury also in the Pisces realm of sensitive artists. His moon in Capricorn indicates a stellar business sense.

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

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Annie's Mailbox



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

Dear Annie: I am 60 years old and feel that I have accomplished next to nothing. The only worthwhile things are my husband, two children and a lovely granddaughter. They are the lights of my life.

I was let go from a previous job for something I didn't do. My current job is awful, and it stresses me out every day. But I have no computer training, so a job

change is not in the cards. Besides, businesses don't want to hire an "old" person like me. Because my job pays next to nothing, I began charging things on credit. What was I supposed to do? I'm now in deep credit-card debt and am desperate to find the funds to pay it off.

I'm a hard worker, but feel like a useless failure. Don't tell me to see a counselor, because there is no money to pay for it. If my car dies on me, I'll be walking six miles to work.

At this time in my so-called life, I thought I'd be better off than I am. Please tell me what I can do. -- *End of the Line*

Dear End: The quality of your life should not be based solely on your financial situation. Can your husband help you pay off this debt? Surely he would want to be supportive. Also try Debtors Anonymous

(debtorsanonymous.org). For a job, contact your local city hall or state government offices for help. Then try AARP (aarp.org), which offers information and resources for senior-friendly companies.

But also, please don't disregard your depression. There is free and low-cost counseling available through your local county services, the YWCA, any graduate school counseling department or medical school psychology department, United Way, the Samaritan Institute (samaritaninstitute.org) and the Abraham Low Self-Help Systems (lowselfhelpsystems.org).

Dear Annie: I've considered writing every time I read about someone who thinks their spouse is having an affair. Facebook and other social media have opened the door to secret connections, contact with old flames and private conversations with co-workers. I didn't fully understand the issue until I found that my husband was communicating with various other women this way.

I never expected this. My husband was an upstanding professional, and we had been married 25 years. When someone gets caught communicating with another and protests that "nothing happened," what they mean is that they aren't yet sexually involved. But a lot has happened. It's a betrayal. Once a husband or wife closes a window to the spouse and opens it to another person, it creates an intimacy.

A better definition of an affair is that it's something that violates trust. My husband and I now work every day to keep those windows open only to each other. He finally understands that it's not sex that makes the

affair. It's taking your emotional passion and giving it to someone other than your spouse. -- *Trusting Again*

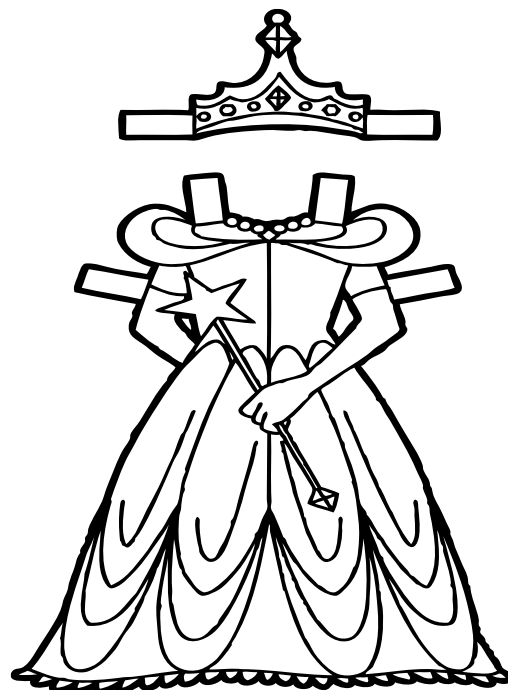
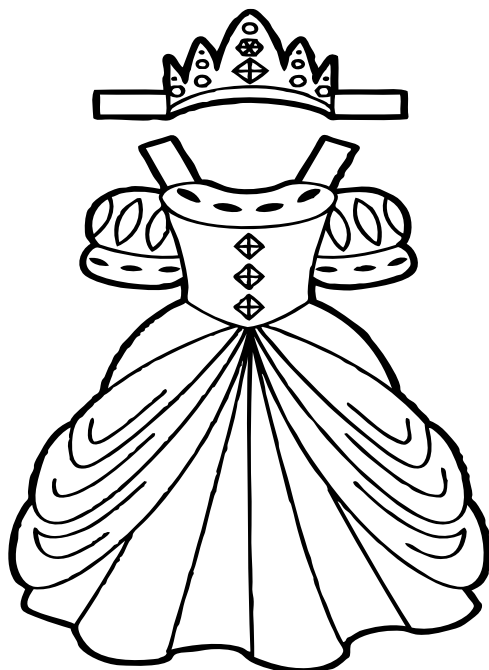
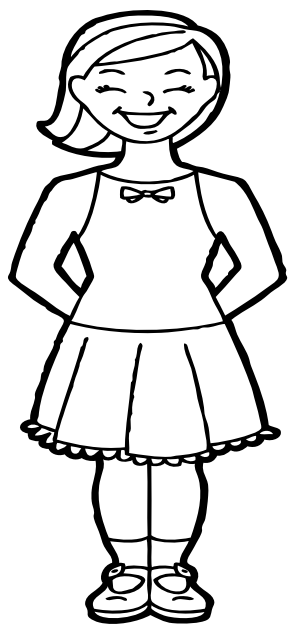
Dear Trusting: We agree that trust is the bottom line of any relationship, providing the security and confidence that allow it to survive for the long haul. We are glad that you and your husband managed to work on this together and repair your marriage. Thank you for offering both good counsel and hope for others.

Dear Annie: Your answer to "Annoyed Grandma" about a grandchild with no boundaries was right on.

Our teenage daughter begged us to go to an unsupervised party, and we said no. Her friends even told us "everyone's going." In spite of her anger, we all made it through. Two years later, she said, "Remember the party I begged you to attend? I want to thank you for not giving in. I didn't want to go, but I didn't want to lose face with my friends, and I used you as my excuse. I knew you wouldn't let me down." Tough love is worth it. -- *Mom of a Super (Now 52-Year-Old) Daughter*

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please email your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 737 3rd Street, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254. To find out more about Annie's Mailbox and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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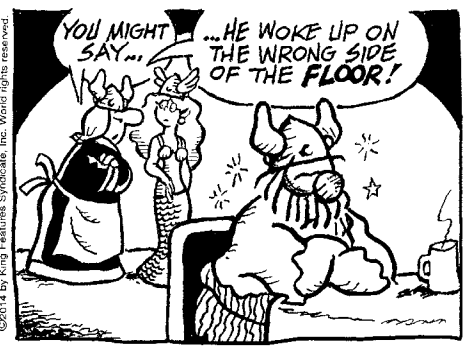
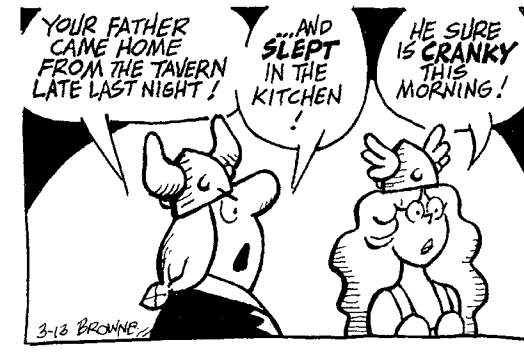
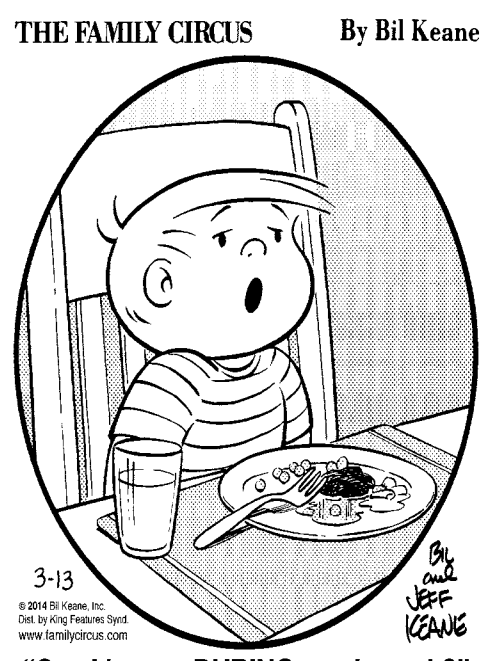
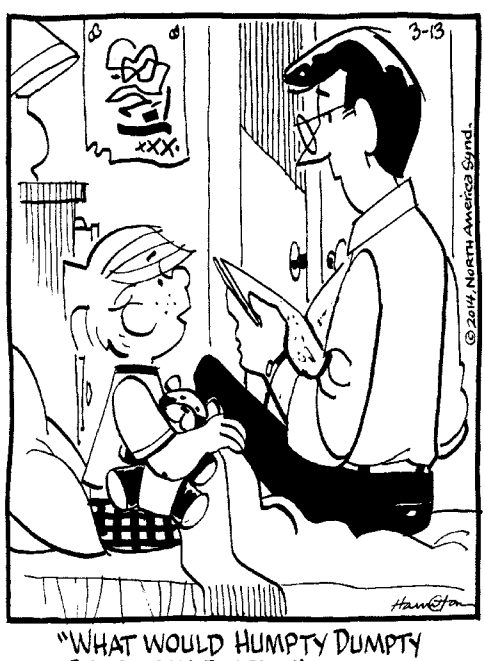


TV schedule table with columns for station (KMGD, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLT, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KPBT, KWWT, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN) and time slots (5:30, 6:30, 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 1:30) listing various programs like News, Seinfeld, and The Simpsons.

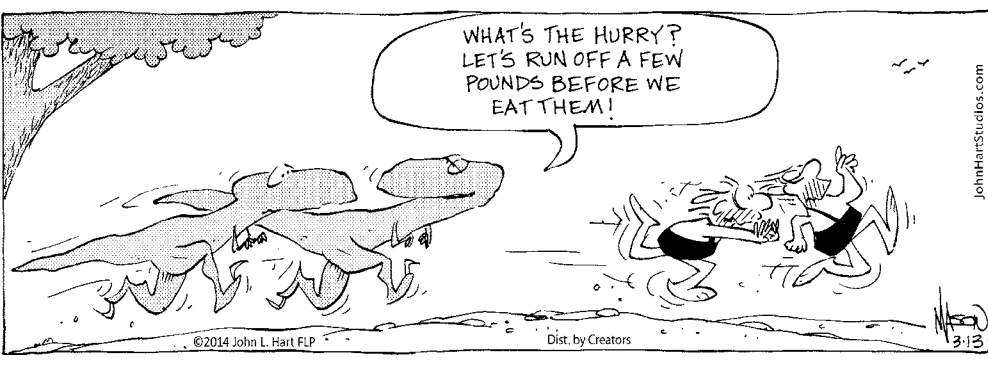
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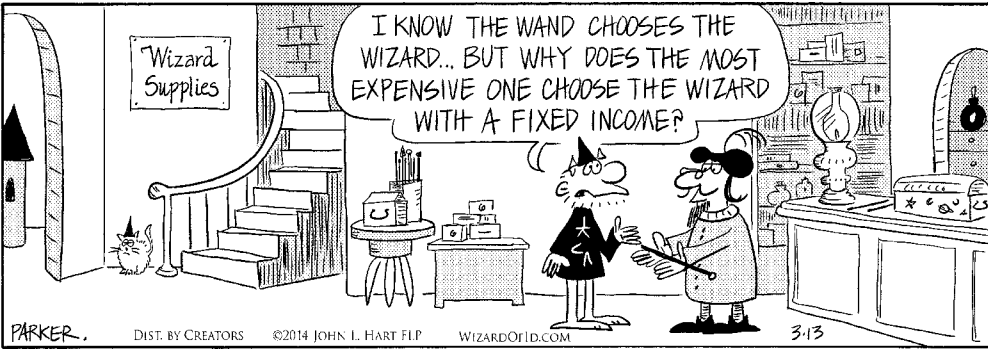
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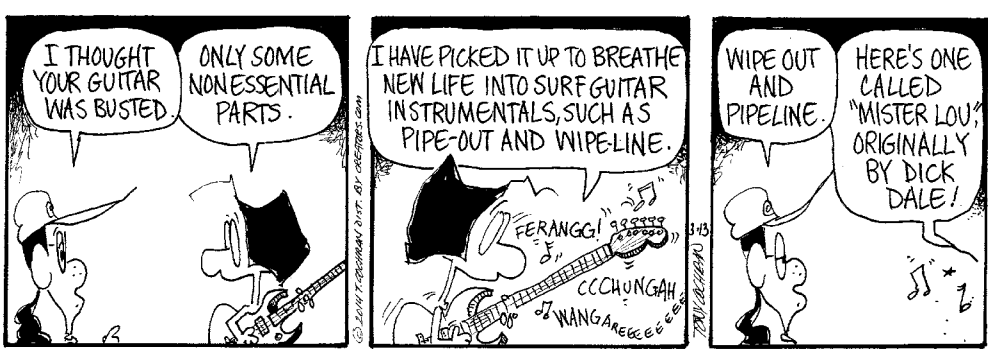
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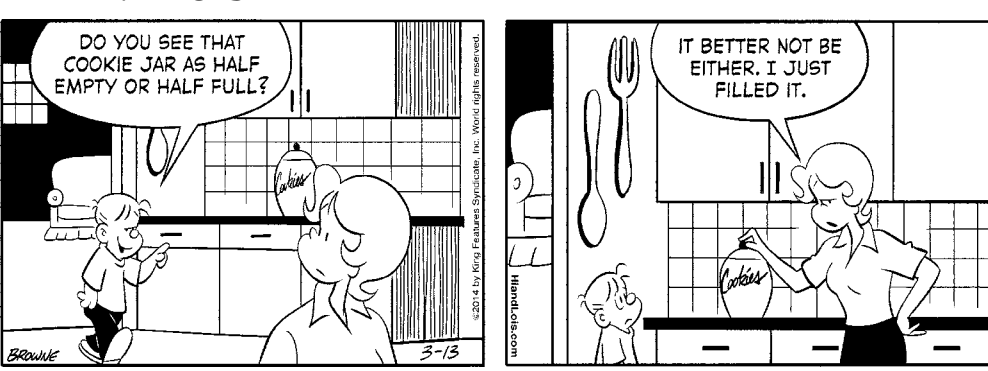
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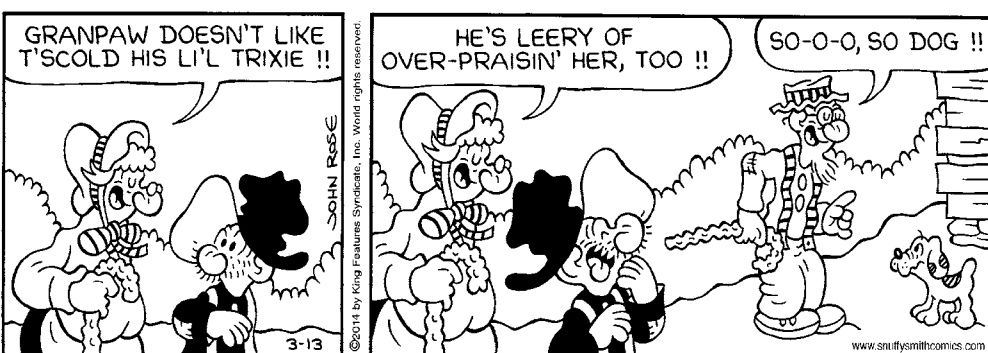
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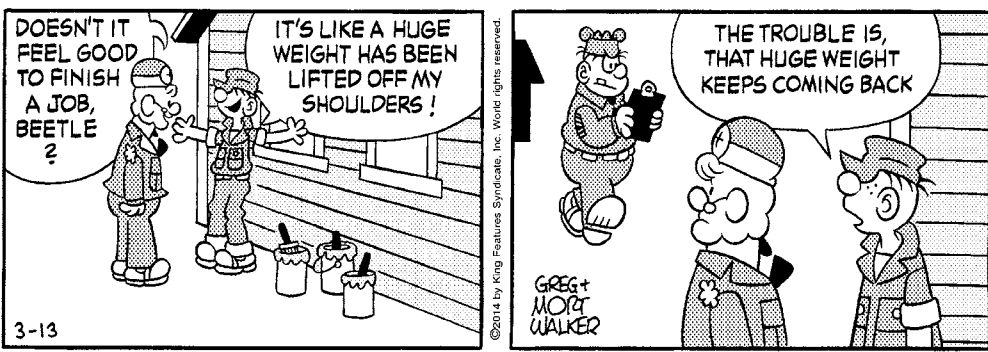
THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BEEBLE BAILEY



BLONDIE



This Date In History

Today is Thursday, March 13, the 72nd day of 2014. There are 293 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On March 13, 1964, bar manager Catherine "Kitty" Genovese, 28, was stabbed to death near her Queens, N.Y. home; the case generated controversy over the supposed reluctance of Genovese's neighbors to respond to her cries for help.

Grey, 2nd Earl Grey, who served as British Prime Minister from 1830 to 1834 (and for whom Earl Grey tea is named), was born in Falloden, Northumberland. In 1781, the seventh planet of the solar system, Uranus, was discovered by Sir William Herschel. In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed a measure prohibiting Union military officers from returning fugitive slaves to their owners. In 1901, the 23rd President of the United States, Benjamin Harrison, died in Indianapolis at age 67.

In 1925, the Tennessee General Assembly approved a bill prohibiting the teaching of the theory of evolution. (Gov. Austin Peay signed the measure on March 21.) In 1933, banks in the U.S. began to reopen after a "holiday" declared by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Answer to previous puzzle: A crossword puzzle grid with words like ACURA, THROAWPARTY, SEEDER, EDAM, SLIDE, PUTS, BAM, STRAFE, UNO, ICES, EASEL, LISP, CYCLE, WIRE, LOSSES, SCOT, GMC, SNARES, ASH, CHIT, SUNUP, HIYA, CPA, EGOS, CASINO, EEL, CAST, SHADOW, DNA, ARSON, OBESE, END, SEPT, OASIS.

Newsday Crossword

FORESTRY 101 by Bruce R. Sutphin Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS: 1 Billboards, for instance... 4 Like arcade games... 10 Marlon in The Godfather... 14 Put a limit on... 15 Highway access... 16 Extremely dry... 17 Preparatory night... 18 Doesn't bother... 20 Wall St. regulator... 21 Contents of some closets... 22 Pulmonary pair... 23 Connections... 25 Hostile force... 26 Extends one's influence... 31 Portrayed... 34 Edit further, as a film... 35 What Spaniards call love... 36 TV toon troublemaker... 37 Feels poorly... 38 News bits... 39 Heavenly bear... 40 Seat for a tot... 41 Orange juice feature... 42 Protective plating... 43 Double-curve shape... 44 Prepare to get the spare... 46 __ XING... 47 Sitting on... 48 Postal Service symbol... 51 With 52 Down, confidentially... 54 Use a straw... 57 Math calculations... 59 Action-film weapon... 60 Go sour... 61 Instructed... 62 Lithium-__ battery... 63 Paint crudely... 64 Analyzes... 65 QB's successes... 6 OPEC nation... 7 Cathedral space... 8 Foreshadowing sign... 9 Addl. afterthought... 10 Hold in high regard... 11 Fairway club... 12 Bell sound... 13 Wordsworth works... 19 Quite often... 24 Already occupied... 25 Expensive wraps... 26 Bike part... 27 Curbs, with "in"... 28 Really enjoy... 29 Refine, as ore... 30 Gusto... 31 Exercise outfit... 32 Incendiarism... 33 Not glamorized... 36 Small donkey... 38 Walkman descendant... 42 Bears witness... 44 Gaze (at)... 45 Unrefined... 46 Fallback option... 48 Founded: Abbr... 49 Pastel hue... 50 Revered advisor... 51 Time passages... 52 See 51 Across... 53 Nero's robe... 55 Eddie Bauer competitor... 56 Immobilizes... 58 Frat letter

A crossword puzzle grid with numbered squares for words.

Rangers send Adcock sent to minors

SURPRISE, Ariz. (AP) — Right-hander Nate Adcock was assigned to minor league camp by the Texas Rangers on Wednesday, a day before he is scheduled for surgery to relieve Thoracic Outlet Syndrome, a condition involving

compresses nerves, arteries and veins in his right side. Adcock was 1-4 with a 3.79 ERA with the Kansas City Royals from 2011-12 and spent last season at Triple-A. He was at the Rangers' big league spring training

as a non-roster invitee and allowed six runs over 12-3 innings in two appearances. Dr. Greg Pearl is to operate in Dallas. Texas also optioned right-handers Wilmer Font and Ben Rowen to Triple-A Round Rock

and right-hander Lisalberto Bonilla and infielder Luis Sardinas to Double-A Frisco. The Rangers assigned right-hander Armando Rodriguez and infielder Rougned Odor to their minor league camp.



Courtesy photo

Big catch ...

Debbie Newton hauled in this huge carp on Sunday afternoon, March 9, while fishing at the Comanche Trail Lake. She was fishing for trout when the carp took her bait on 10-pound test line. The fish put up quite a battle while bystanders cheered her on.

STEERS

Continued from Page 7
ament, Smith feels the measure will pay off.

"Our has scheduled has been real tough, but that is by design. I think those games will help us."

The Steers will find out just how much help it has been on Tuesday when they kick off district competition at home against Snyder. The game will start at 7 p.m. at historic Steer Park.

"We're excited about getting district started," said Smith. "Snyder is a good team. They have been doing good so far, and we'll have to come out and play well."

The showdown with Snyder will be the first of two key games on the Steers' district schedule. Big Spring will follow its game with Snyder with a showdown against rival Sweetwater on Friday, beginning at 7 p.m. in Sweetwater.

From the Steers will travel to Greenwood on March 25, host Monahans on March 28 before closing out the first half of the district play with a home game against Abilene Wylie.

Smith said he doesn't expect any of the games to be easy.

"Sweetwater and Snyder have both been playing well, and Wylie is just Wylie. They always seem to reload and have strong teams. To be honest, we expect it to be a

2014 Big Spring High School District 4-3A Schedule

Date	Team	Site	Time
M18	Snyder	(H)	7
M21	Sweetwater	(T)	7
M25	Greenwood	(T)	7
M28	Monahans	(H)	7
A4	Wylie	(H)	7
A8	Snyder	(T)	7
A11	Sweetwater	(H)	7
A14	Greenwood	(H)	7
A17	Monahans	(T)	7
A22	Wylie	(T)	4

tough district from top to bottom. I don't think they are going to be any easy games for anyone."

Big Spring, 8-9 entering the game against Seminole, has a solid core of players to help it make another push for a postseason appearance, including pitcher Adam Franco and a talented middle infield led by second baseman Hunter Hill and shortstop Brett Brorman.

Also keying the team's postseason hopes is the recent play of Jerry Watkins and centerfielder Anthony Godwin. Both have hit well in the past weeks despite facing some of the state's top pitchers.

To reach the playoffs for a second season in a row, the Steers will need to finish in the top four in the District 4-3A race. Under UIL rules, only the top four teams in the district race qualify for the postseason.

Big Spring advanced to the second round of the Class 3A state playoffs a year ago before falling to Lubbock Cooper.

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 \$5.

'Spring Bash' tournament scheduled for March 21-23

The Jester's First Annual Spring Bash Rag Ball Tournament will be held on March 21-13 in Big Spring.

Registration for the tournament will begin at 6:30 p.m. The cost for registering is \$10 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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Are you ready for some baseball ... yet again

As young boy growing up, I was raised as a young Houston Astros fan by a father that loved baseball. Every night, as a kid growing up on the west side of Odessa, my father and I would huddle around the radio (this was a few years before the Internet) and listen into the Astros as they were broadcast. (the good ol' days before Major League Baseball messed things up by switching the team to the American League).

Thanks to my father's passion (which I am proud to say I passed along to my oldest son), I grew up listening to Jimmy Wynn, Joe Morgan, Nolan Ryan, J.R. Richard and Jose Cruz.

I also grew to love baseball ... at all levels.

I even went to college to be a coach, but decided being stuck in the same room, doing the same thing every day for nine months at a time wasn't the best thing.

A few years ago, a buddy of mine (Anthony Dawson) and I agreed to coach a team here in Big Spring. With my two sons on the squad, we did OK. We qualified for the city tournament.

A few years later, I spent two seasons as a Little League coach in Colorado City, and loved every minute of it. We finished third in the league standings and missed qualifying for the Texas Little League state tournament by one game.

After the second season, I was tired and decided my time on the field was done. I stepped down as coach and moved on.

So I thought. A couple of days ago, a friend ap-

proached me about coaching a Pee Wee team this season. My oldest son, a former college pitcher, and I agreed to do it.

Now all I have to do is find a field to practice on.

I hope the kids take it easy. I'm getting old.

One of the coolest things about returning to Big Spring is running into people and names I knew 10-12 years ago.

The other day, when I came into work there was a notebook sitting on the desk. Tucked inside the notebook was piece of paper with the names and positions of all the players on the youth football team - the Steelers - I coached more than a decade ago.

One of the funniest things I noticed that roster included my youngest daughter, Kayme. Normally a member of the Steelers' cheerleading squad, we needed an extra player to field our flag football team that day. Kayme filled in as a receiver.

Honestly, I can't tell you if we won or lost, but I can still remember her running around the field with her cheerleading uniform on.

The other members of the Steelers were:

Joseph Jimenez G/LB
Thomas Young RB/DE
Philip Bacon RB/LB
Lucas Lopez G/DT
C.J. Gonzales RB/DE
Tyler Nairn RB/S
Caleb Brown G/LB
Nick Smart C/DE
Tyrone Maples RB/CB

I'm not sure what happened to those young men (I'd love to know), but I hope they have as many fun memories of that season as I do.

The book also brought back a funny memory of our youngest son when he was playing youth basketball in Big Spring. Never one to lack confidence in his abilities, Bobby wanted to play basketball after football ended. He was placed on a team that had several much older athletes, which meant he didn't play that often.

Not to be deterred, Bobby would sit on the bench and tell the coach (I'm sorry but I can't remember his name. He owned a T-shirt/sports business in town) and tell him, "Coach, put me in so I can show you my skills."

One game, the coach put him in and after he had made 6 or 7 turnovers in a row, the coach called a time and looked at him and said, "Now would be a good time to show me those skills, Bobby."

Let me assure you, he never developed those basketball skills. When he played on the varsity in high school, every team's goal was to treat Bobby like Shaq (remember Hack-a-Shaq?) because he couldn't shoot



Tommy Wells
Herald Sports Editor

a free throw to save his life.

For those of you who may not know, this weekend was a thrilling time at our house. A friend of ours, Aaron Burmeister, finished 10th in the 2014 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

He might have finished much higher but he sustained an injury on the 1,000-mile trail and was forced to slow down. He actually led the race for a good ways.

If you ever get a chance to see a sled dog race, I

recommend it.

The Howard College Hawks' recent run brought out all kinds of former HC fans. Former Herald publisher Hank Bond followed the team via John Weeks and the Internet radio broadcast from his home in eastern Kentucky.

While we're on the subject of HC basketball, you have to admire Sarah Stinnett's father, John. He was at every Lady Hawks' home game that I attended ... driving from his home in Fort Sumner, N.M.

As almost every longtime resident knows, Big Spring has put its fair

share of athletes in the pros.

Before Ryan Tannehill, there was Bubba Franks, who played with the Green Bay Packers.

We'll have a new "pro" to keep an eye on as Ricky Dominguez, a 2007 graduate of Big Spring High School, departed earlier today to begin a career with the Colorado Rockies' baseball organization.

The son of Ricky Sr. and Billie Dominguez, he will spend the next few weeks at spring training in Scottsdale, Arizona, before departing for Pasco, Washington, to be the clubhouse manager for the Tri-City Dirt Devils, a short-season Class A team.

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