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BIG SPRING HERALD

TUESDAY

DECEMBER 23, 2014



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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

RINGING IN THE HOLIDAYS



HERALD photo/Lyndel Moody

Cool, gray weather didn't keep away the shoppers or volunteers for the Salvation Army from Bealls Department Store located in the Spring Town Plaza. Festively dressed bell ringers Duane Louis Shackelford, director of the SA Boys and Girls Club; 8-year-old Adryen Guerra; 11-year-old Lilliana Acosta; and Polly Sanchez of the Boys and Girls Club collected donations for the Salvation Army organization in front of the department store.

Bid OK'd to tear down show barns

By **STEVE REAGAN**
 Staff Writer

The old show barns at the Howard County fairgrounds are about to go the way of the dodo bird.

During their Monday meeting, county commissioners approved a \$25,000 bid for the demolition of the three show barns adjacent to the main fair building in west Big Spring.

Commissioners awarded the bid to M. Hasty Construction of Plainview.

The metal buildings, constructed in the mid to late 1950s, were rarely used outside of some annual stock shows, and even those have relocated to other venues, Howard County Judge Mark Barr said.

"They've just become very dilapidated," he said recently. "The plumbing is shot, you can't keep them cool in the summer or warm in the winter and people don't want to use them anymore."

Demolition should be fairly straightforward, although the county will have to pay for asbestos abatement before the buildings can be torn down.

No timeline has been set for the demolition.

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

Holiday closings approach

Herald Staff Report

City and county employees will receive a four-plus day weekend to observe the Christmas holidays.

Howard County offices will close at noon Christmas Eve, Wednesday, and stay closed until 8 a.m. Monday morning, Dec. 29.

On Christmas Eve, city of Big Spring offices will close at 3 p.m. and not reopen until 8 a.m., Monday, Dec. 29.

The landfill will reopen on Saturday, from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

There will be no sanitation pick up on Wednesday, through Friday.

Emergency services will continue normal operations. Emergency Utilities Department will also be on call and can be contacted at 264-2392.

Colorado City State Park officials say ...

Take a hike!

Herald Staff Report

COLORADO CITY — Take a hike, say Lake Colorado City State Park officials.

Park employees will hold "Hike for your Health" beginning at 10 a.m. on New Year's Day.

"Start off 2015 on the right foot or the left, depending on how you head down the trail," said Martha Martinez, park office employee. "We might pick up the pace a little and take a few breaks for some stretches and exercises along the way, while we en-

joy being in nature."

The guided walk is expected to end around noon.

Colorado City State Park is one of a number of state parks sponsoring hikes on Jan. 1.

See **HIKE**, Page 3

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

Joe Cocker dies of lung cancer at 70

DAVID BAUDER

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Joe Cocker, the raspy-voiced British singer

er known for his frenzied cover of "With a Little Help From My Friends," the teary ballad "You Are So Beautiful" and a contorted performing style uncannily parodied by John Belushi on "Saturday Night Live," has died. He was 70.

His London-based agent, Barrie Marshall, said Cocker died Monday of lung cancer in

Colorado, where he has lived for the past two decades.

Cocker, an interpreter more than a writer, became a star through his dazzling transformation of the Beatles' "With a Little Help From My Friends." Featuring a gospel-styled arrangement and furious call and response between Cocker and the backup singers, the song became a No. 1 hit in England and the highlight of his characteristically manic set at the Woodstock festival in 1969.

In a statement Monday, Paul McCartney remembered

See **COCKER**, Page 3



ALL OF THESE STARS, AND THEY PICKED ONE TO GUIDE THEM? NO WONDER IT'S CONSIDERED A MIRACLE.

Dec. 23
 2 shopping

Book Now For New Year's Eve!

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Obituaries

Thelma Money



Thelma Banks Manuel Money, 93, of Big Spring, died Saturday, Dec. 20, 2014 at her great-niece's home. The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 26, 2014, at Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Funeral service will be at 1 p.m. Saturday at Myers & Smith Chapel with Pastor Lester Brown, Pastor Holston Banks and Minister Bernadette Banks Young, officiating.

Thelma was born June 5, 1921, in Webberville, Texas to Jim Etta (Banks) and Robert Banks. During World War II, she worked at an aircraft plant in California. She moved to Big Spring in 1963. She married James Manuel on Sept. 7, 1966. He preceded

her in death on Aug. 18, 1989. She later married L.C. Money on June 19, 1996 and he passed away on March 18, 2009.

She went to Howard College and was the first black woman to attend Valta Reeves College of Cosmetology in addition to cosmetology. She was also a cook, having worked at Howard College, Webb Air Force Base and the Ramada Inn. Thelma's other hobbies included fishing and sewing.

She is survived by one step-daughter, Hattie B. Wilson of Pecos; one step-son, Donald Lee Hall of Pecos; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents and husbands, she was preceded in death by seven brothers and three sisters.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at www.myersand-smith.com

Police/Sheriff

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

- ERICA KATHY ANN ESCAMILLA, 27, of 1312 Sycamore, was arrested on a warrant for driving while license invalid; no driver's license-when unlicensed (two counts); and driving while license invalid.

- BURLARY OF A BUILDING was reported in the 3200 block of E. FM 700 and the 3600 block of W. Highway 80.

- BURGLARY OF A HABITATION was reported in the 1800 block of S Gregg St.

- MINOR ACCIDENT was reported in the 2600 block of S. Gregg St. and in the area of east 178/179.

- THEFT was reported in the 1300 block Robin St.

- ASSAULT was reported in the 3600 block of W. Highway 80.

- MAJOR ACCIDENT was reported in the area of mile marker 181 Service Road.

- THEFT was reported in the 2500 block of Kelly Circle and in the 1600 block of Fifth St.

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

Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 58 inmates at the time of this report.

- ERICA KATHY ANN ESCAMILLA, 27, was arrested on warrants for CAPIAS/driving while license invalid; and CAPIAS no driver's license (two counts).

Support Groups

WEDNESDAY

- 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.

- Stepping Stone Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets at

Spring Town Plaza (inside the mall, across from the movie box office, next to Sears). Open meeting at 7 p.m.

- A Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder support group meeting is at 6:30 p.m. at the VA Medical Center Veteran's Healing Center.

FRIDAY

- 7 p.m. — The Stepping Stone Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets at Spring Town Plaza (inside the mall, across from the movie box office, next to Sears).

- 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.

MONDAY

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

Healing Center.

- 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 main entrance of the church.

- Stepping Stone Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets at Spring Town Plaza (inside the mall, across from the movie box office, next to Sears). Open meeting at 7 p.m.

TUESDAY

- 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.

- 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.

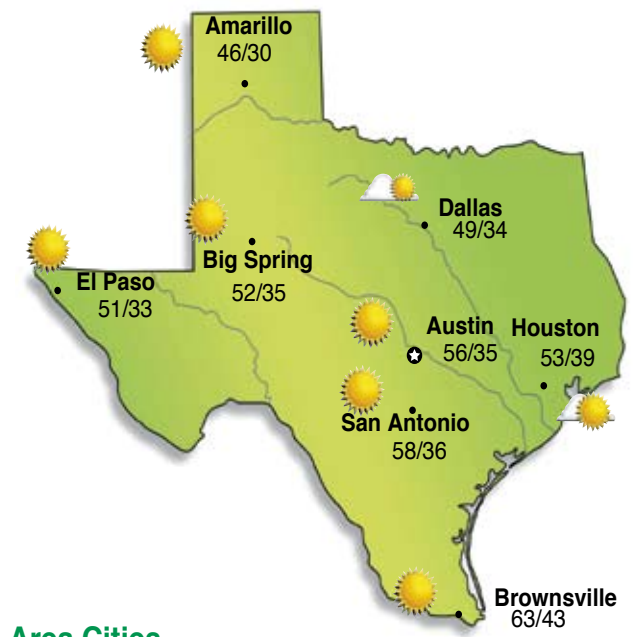
Local 5-Day Forecast

Wed 12/24	Thu 12/25	Fri 12/26	Sat 12/27	Sun 12/28
52/35 A mainly sunny sky. High 52F. Winds WNW at 10 to 15 mph.	62/42 Mix of sun and clouds. Highs in the low 60s and lows in the low 40s.	67/34 Mix of sun and clouds. Highs in the upper 60s and lows in the mid 30s.	45/28 Morning clouds followed by afternoon sun.	52/36 Times of sun and clouds. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the mid 30s.
Sunrise: 7:44 AM Sunset: 5:47 PM	Sunrise: 7:45 AM Sunset: 5:47 PM	Sunrise: 7:45 AM Sunset: 5:48 PM	Sunrise: 7:45 AM Sunset: 5:49 PM	Sunrise: 7:46 AM Sunset: 5:49 PM

AmericanProfile

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Texas At A Glance



Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	51	36	sunny	Kingsville	61	39	sunny
Amarillo	46	30	sunny	Livingston	50	35	pt sunny
Austin	56	35	sunny	Longview	48	33	pt sunny
Beaumont	51	35	mst sunny	Lubbock	49	31	sunny
Brownsville	63	43	sunny	Lufkin	52	35	pt sunny
Brownwood	51	33	sunny	Midland	52	34	sunny
Corpus Christi	59	43	sunny	Raymondville	63	40	sunny
Corsicana	50	34	pt sunny	Rosenberg	54	37	sunny
Dallas	49	34	pt sunny	San Antonio	58	36	sunny
Del Rio	58	35	sunny	San Marcos	56	36	sunny
El Paso	51	33	sunny	Sulphur Springs	46	34	mst sunny
Fort Stockton	52	37	sunny	Sweetwater	51	36	sunny
Gainesville	47	31	pt sunny	Tyler	49	35	pt sunny
Greenville	48	32	pt sunny	Weatherford	49	34	pt sunny
Houston	53	39	mst sunny	Wichita Falls	48	31	sunny

National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	65	39	t-storm	Minneapolis	33	26	cloudy
Boston	53	53	rain	New York	55	54	rain
Chicago	36	31	mixed	Phoenix	61	41	sunny
Dallas	49	34	pt sunny	San Francisco	65	52	sunny
Denver	50	30	sunny	Seattle	54	41	rain
Houston	53	39	mst sunny	St. Louis	38	32	mixed
Los Angeles	74	52	sunny	Washington, DC	66	55	rain
Miami	82	69	pt sunny				

Moon Phases



UV Index

Wed 12/24	Thu 12/25	Fri 12/26	Sat 12/27	Sun 12/28
3	3	3	3	3
Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

The UV Index is measured on a 0 - 11 number scale, with a higher UV Index showing the need for greater skin protection.

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Take Note

- Calling it "a child safety measure," Scenic Mountain Medical Center will no longer publicize the first baby of the New Year. "Like many hospitals around the country, we've based this decision on guidance provided by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, which has cautioned against these kinds of announcements because of the potential risk of abduction or identity theft," said a SMMC spokesperson. "The birth of a baby is a joyous event and we know there is always interest in the first baby of the new year, but our first obligation is to the safety and privacy of our patients, which is why we have made this decision."

- Scenic Mountain Medical Center will be hosting two public forums on re-enrollment

to the Health Insurance Marketplace. Representatives will be on hand to answer any questions you might have and to set up appointments for enrollment. The first event will take place at the YMCA at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 14 and the second event will be at the Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club on Jan. 20 at 6 p.m. Both events are free to attend and open to the public. For more information or to RSVP, call Amanda Duforat at 268-4699.

- Reservations are being taken for shirts and transportation for Howard County Day in Austin. The one-day event is meant to highlight the economic importance of Howard County to Texas law makers. Howard County Day in Austin is set for Feb. 10, 2015. Reservations are now

being taken for a seat on a bus leaving from the Dorothy Garret Coliseum to attend the event. The charge is \$40 per person and the deadline to register for a seat is Feb. 2. Shirt order deadline for a Howard County shirt is Jan. 7.

The cost is \$29. For more information, contact Teresa Darden at the Big Spring Economic Development at 264-6032.

- A hungry child cannot learn. Food2Kids - Big Spring was created

to provide nutrition for hundreds of children who do not get a substantial meal on the weekends. F2K began last November and this volunteer program now serves more than 300 children weekly. Once

the need has been identified, F2K fills a sack of food to send home each Friday during the school year. You can help. Donations can be sent to Food2Kids - Big Spring, P.O. Box 1641, Big Spring 79721.

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State Briefs

Firefighters battle structure fire

Herald Staff Report

County firefighters responded to a structure fire in 4300 block of Parkway, south of Big Spring this weekend.

The call about a structure fire came in about midnight Monday, according to Big Spring fire department officials with both Howard County volunteer and Big Spring firefighters responding. The structure was an vacant house which had not been used in sometime.

About 50 percent of the home was destroyed, officials said.

Pilot dies in small plane crash

ODESSA, Texas (AP) — A pilot from Colorado has been killed in the West Texas crash of a single-engine plane used for aerial patrols of oil and gas fields.

The Texas Department of Public Safety says 28-year-old Jeffery Michael McNamee of Littleton, Colorado, died in Monday's crash near Odessa.

Investigators are trying to determine what caused the Cessna 172 to crash into a field and burn.

Federal Aviation Administration records show the plane was registered to a company that does aerial patrols for energy companies. The FAA says the wreckage was discovered when dispatchers lost contact with the pilot and sent another aircraft to search for the plane.

Feds report marijuana seizures in Texas for FY2014

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A new federal report says Border Patrol agents working in Texas seized nearly 874,000 pounds of marijuana during fiscal year 2014.

The San Antonio Express-News reports most of the seizures took place in the Rio Grande Valley sector in South Texas — 654,162 pounds.

The Laredo sector reported 123,383 pounds of confiscated marijuana.

The Homeland Security Department report indicated that 2,432 pounds of cocaine were seized within the five Border Patrol sectors in Texas and that most was confiscated in the Rio Grande



Courtesy photo
Big Spring Intermediate School students Jackie Deleon and Bree Voight received a \$50 certificate to the water park courtesy of the Big Spring Rotary for having perfect attendance for the first semester. Students who had perfect attendance for the first semester were placed in a drawing and Ken MacIntosh drew the winners for BSI. Pictured in the back row are teachers Kari Eggleston, Jay Kenney and Ken MacIntosh.

Valley.

The report covered the period Oct. 1, 2013, to Sept. 30, 2014.

Texas district spends \$16K on pigs investigation

ROUND ROCK, Texas (AP) — An Austin-area district has spent \$16,000 on an investigation that cleared a trustee in a dispute over two potbelly pigs in a school barn.

The review for the Round Rock Independent School District found no wrongdoing by Terri Romere.

The Austin American-Statesman reported Monday that the dispute involved pigs named Pinky and Blacky.

The animals spent part of last summer at a high school ag barn.

Attorneys hired by the district, over concerns raised by board member Chad Chadwell, found no evidence that Romere abused her power. The review determined the pigs belonged to one of her real estate clients.

Romere says the pigs were in a pen she pays for and her son used them for an advanced degree project.

Chadwell says he might revisit the issue later.

HIKE

Continued from Page 1

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department officials expect hundreds of New Year's Day hikers at

state parks as a healthy way to start the new year.

Agency officials say more than 1,500 people took part in 2014 New Year's Day hikes at the 59 state parks.

Some parks this time

around are advertising New Year's Day yoga and a chance to run with rangers on certain stretches of trail.

Various trails range from short, flat nature areas to more challenging hikes such as

Lighthouse Trail at Palo Duro Canyon State Park in the Texas Panhandle. Department officials also suggest the Peak Fitness Challenge at Franklin Mountains State Park in El Paso.

There is no cost for

the program, however adults will need to pay daily entrance fees of \$4. Children 12 and under are admitted free. There is no charge for those with a valid Texas State Park Pass.

Lake Colorado City

State Park is located at 4582 FM 2836 near Colorado City.

For more information about the Jan. 1 hike, contact Martinez at 325-728-3931 or martha.martinez@tpwd.texas.gov.

COCKER

Continued from Page 1

hearing Cocker's cover of the song he and John Lennon co-wrote for Ringo Starr and finding it "just mind blowing," a "soul anthem."

"I was forever grateful for him for doing that," McCartney said. "I knew him through the years as a good mate, and I was so sad to hear that he had been ill and really sad to hear today that he had passed away."

Cocker's "Mad Dogs & Englishmen" tour and travelling party of 1970, featuring Leon Russell and numerous top session musicians, produced a film and a recording that went gold. But future success was more sporadic, and Cocker suffered from both drug and financial problems.

He had a top 10 hit in 1975 on "You Are So Beautiful," his voice cracking on the final, emotional note, and won a Grammy Award in 1983 for his "Up Where We Belong" duet with Jennifer Warnes, the theme of the movie "An Officer and a Gentleman."

His cover of Bryan Adams' "When the Night Comes" was featured in the film "An Innocent Man" and became a top 20 single in 1990.

Cocker, who received an Order of the British Empire in 2011 for his contribution to music, released 40 albums and continued to tour after the hits stopped. His other popular covers included "Feelin' Alright," "The Letter" and "Cry Me a River," a song previously recorded by one of Cocker's greatest influences, Ray Charles.

His voice, at times

so worn it seemed in danger of shredding, was just one part of his legend. No Cocker fan could forget his intense, twitchy stage presence, his arms flailing, his hips stretching, his face contorting. Among those watching were Belushi, whose expert imitation became a feature of his early National Lampoon shows and eventually a part of popular history when he joined Cocker in 1976 for a duet of "Feelin' Alright" on "Saturday Night Live."

Years later, Cocker told The Associated Press' Mary Campbell that he was playing an imaginary piano and air guitar while singing — the elements that contributed to this unique style.

"That was the frustration of not being able to play, really," he said.

Cocker was born in Sheffield, South Yorkshire, and was singing

with local bands by the time he was a teenager. His early groups included Vance Arnold and the Avengers and the Grease Band, which backed him on "With A Little Help From My Friends."

Cocker moved to Crawford, Colorado, a town of fewer than 500 people, in the early 1990s. He and his wife, Pam, ran a children's educational foundation — the Cocker Kids Foundation — that raised funds for the town and schools, and ran the Mad Dog Cafe for several years in town, said Tom Wills, publisher of The North Fork Merchant Herald, a local community newspaper.

Wills said Cocker bought about 40 acres of property and built a hillside mansion — which he called Mad Dog Ranch — when he moved to Colorado.

A group of Cocker's

friends gathered Monday at community radio station KVNF to play Cocker's songs.

"He had a long battle with cancer. We're trying to do a little tribute for him," said Bob Penetta, a real estate agent and board member of the Cocker Kids Foundation.

Cocker is survived by his wife, Pam; a brother; a step daughter and two grandchildren. A private memorial is planned. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to The Cocker Kids' Foundation, P.O. Box 404,

Crawford, CO. 81415.

MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL

24th & Johnson 267-8288

Thelma Banks Manuel Money, 93, died Saturday. The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. Friday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Funeral service will be at 1 p.m. Saturday at Myers & Smith. Norman Rockwell Calendars are in!

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kids' corner

What's the Difference?

There are five things different between Picture A and Picture B. Can you find them all?



Answers: 1. Woman's hair is orange 2. Man has a goatee 3. Wrapping paper missing gold design 4. Girl has bow 5. Stocking has name

THIS DAY IN...



HISTORY

- 1814: THE WAR OF 1812 BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BRITAIN ENDS.
- 1818: THE FIRST PERFORMANCE OF "SILENT NIGHT" TAKES PLACE IN AUSTRIA.
- 1871: THE OPERA "AIDA" PREMIERES IN CAIRO, EGYPT.



THESE TWO SHOPPING DAYS ARE POPULAR FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO JUMP-START THEIR HOLIDAY SHOPPING.

ANSWER: BLACK FRIDAY & CYBER MONDAY



DEBIT

remove from a customer's account

How they SAY that in...

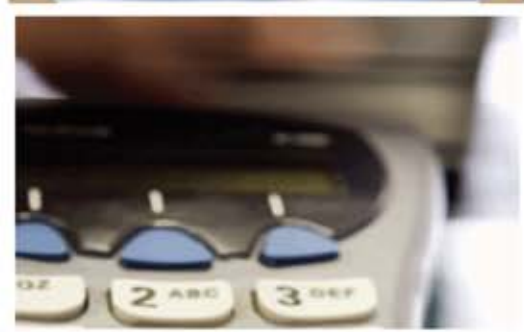
- ENGLISH:** Buy
- SPANISH:** Comprar
- ITALIAN:** Comprare
- FRENCH:** Acheter
- GERMAN:** Kauf

Did You Know?

THE AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SPENDS ROUGHLY \$1,000 ON HOLIDAY GIFTS, DECORATIONS, FOOD, CARDS, AND POSTAGE.



GET THE PICTURE?



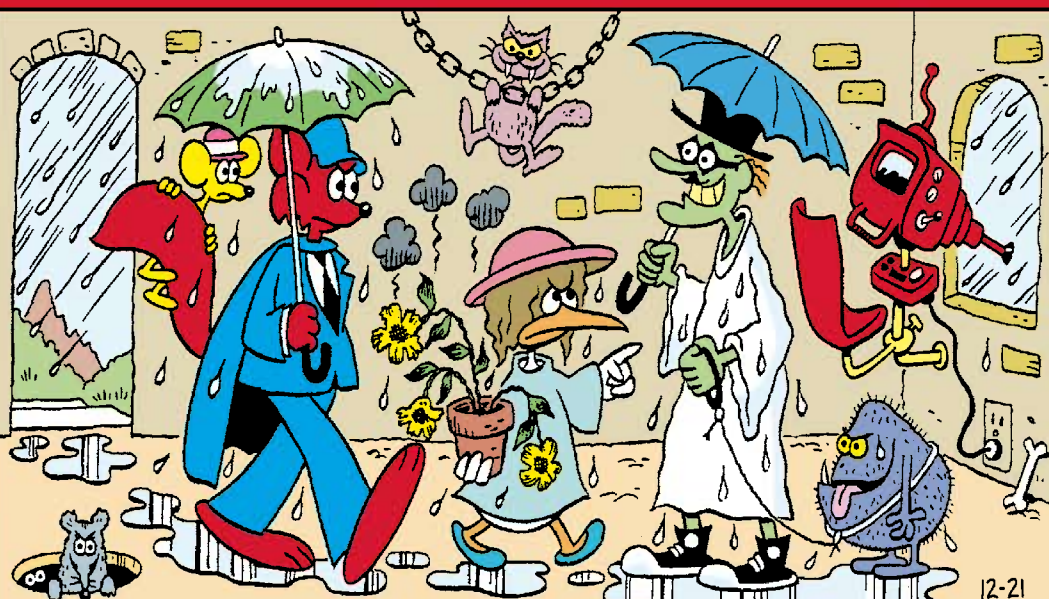
Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: CREDIT CARD MACHINE

SLYLOCK FOX and COMICS FOR KIDS

BY BOB WEBER JR.

A citizen claims Count Weirdly zapped her flowers with his laser blaster in the past 10 minutes. Weirdly claims he's innocent and insists he just returned from walking his creature. Slylock Fox suspects Weirdly splashed water on himself and the creature to support his alibi. What evidence led Slylock to believe the count was not out walking?



Solution -- Count Weirdly's umbrella is completely dry!

Spot six differences between these panels.

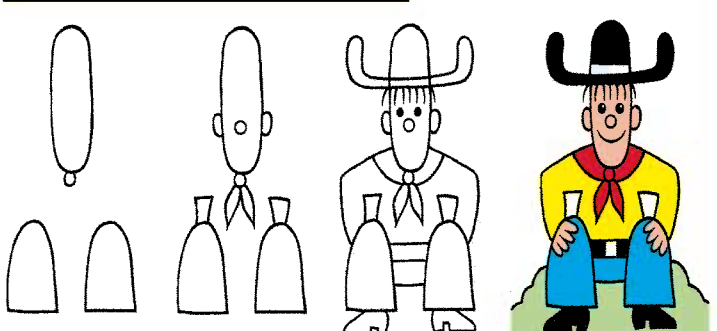


Answer --- Dog collar, moon, star, mouse, scarf and whiskers.

www.facebook.com/SlylockFox

HOW TO DRAW a cowboy

BOB WEBER JR + SR



YOUR DRAWING



Submit your drawing to www.kidcartoonists.com

Which one of the following wild cats cannot roar?
a) Lion
b) Tiger
c) Cheetah
d) Jaguar

ANSWER --- c)

News in brief

Key North Korean websites back online after earlier shutdown amid tension over Sony hack

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Key North Korean websites were back online Tuesday after an hours-long shutdown that followed a U.S. vow to respond to a crippling cyberattack on Sony Pictures that Washington blames on Pyongyang.

The White House and the State Department declined to say whether the U.S. government was responsible for the Internet shutdown in one of the least-wired and poorest countries in the world.

Although North Korea is equipped for broadband Internet, only a small, approved segment of the population has any access to the World Wide Web. Few North Koreans have access to computers; those who do are typically able to connect only to a domestic Intranet.

Though it denies responsibility for the Sony hack, Pyongyang has called it a "righteous deed" and made clear its fury over "The Interview," a comedy that depicts the assassination of the North's authoritarian leader, Kim Jong Un, the head of a 1.2 million-man army and the focus of an intense cult of personality.

South Korean officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because of office rules, said the North's official Korean Central News Agency and the Rodong Sinmun newspaper, which are the main channels for official North Korea news, had earlier been down. But the websites were back up later Tuesday. Among the posts glorifying the ruling Kim family was one about Kim Jong Un visiting a catfish farm.

Women excised from public life, abused by Islamic State militants in Syria and Iraq

BEIRUT (AP) — The gunmen came to the all-girls' elementary school in the Iraqi city of Fallujah at midday with a special delivery: piles of long black robes with gloves and face veils, now required dress code for females in areas ruled by the Islamic State group.

"These are the winter version. Make sure every student gets one," one of the men told a supervisor at the school earlier this month.

Extremists are working to excise women from public life across the territory controlled by the Islamic State group, stretching hundreds of kilometers (miles) from the outskirts of the Syrian city of Aleppo in the west to the edges of the Iraqi capital in the east.

The group has been most notorious for its atrocities, including the horrors it inflicted on women and girls from Iraq's minority Yazidi community when its fighters overran their towns this year. Hundreds of Yazidi women and girls were abducted and given to extremists as slaves. A report by Amnesty International released Tuesday said the captives — including girls as young as 10-12 — endured torture, rape and sexual slavery, and that several abducted girls committed suicide.

In day-to-day life, the group has also dramatically hemmed in women's lives across the Sunni Muslim heartland that makes up the bulk of Islamic State group territory, activists and residents say. Their movements are restricted and their opportunity for work has shrunk.

New York police union leader ratchets up rhetoric to defend police after shooting deaths

NEW YORK (AP) — Patrick Lynch was hollering.

Standing outside a Brooklyn hospital after the bodies of two slain police officers were taken away, the head of the nation's largest police union railed against Mayor Bill de Blasio for failing to support the rank-and-file, enabling protesters and creating a climate of mistrust that allowed the tragedy to happen.

"That blood on the hands starts at the steps of City Hall, in the office of the mayor," Lynch said. "After the funerals, those responsible will be called on the carpet and held accountable."

Such theatrics aren't new for the excitable, amped-up Lynch. But his ongoing war of words with the mayor in recent weeks is a notch up even for him.

Just days before Officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos were shot to death in their car, Lynch had suggested officers sign a petition barring the mayor from attending their funerals should they die on the job.

NYC mayor, battered by criticism, calls for temporary halt to protests after officers killed

NEW YORK (AP) — As the New York Police Department mourns two of its own, Mayor Bill de Blasio pleaded for a pause in protests and rancor amid a widening rift with those in a grieving force who accuse him of creating a climate of mistrust that contributed to the killings of two officers.

De Blasio called on Monday for a halt of political statements until after the funerals of the slain officers, an appeal to both sides in a roiling dispute centered on the deaths of unarmed black men at the hands of white police officers.

"We are in a very difficult moment. Our focus has to be on these families," de Blasio said at police headquarters. "I think it's a time for everyone to put aside political debates, put aside protests, put aside all of the things that we will talk about in all due time."

De Blasio's relations with the city's police unions have tumbled to an extraordinary new low following Saturday's shooting, an ambush the gunman claimed was retaliation for the police-involved deaths of Eric Garner in New York and Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.

In a display of defiance, dozens of police officers turned their backs to de Blasio at the hospital where the officers died, and union leaders said the mayor had "blood on his hands" for enabling the protesters who have swept the streets of New York this month since a grand jury declined to indict an officer in Garner's chokehold death.

Neuroscientists say torture leaves long-term psychological scars

WASHINGTON (AP) — At times, waterboarding rendered al-Qaida terror suspect Abu Zubaydah hysterical. But later, a message to CIA headquarters described an interrogator merely lifting his eyebrow and snapping his fingers, leading Zubaydah to "slowly (walk) on his own to the water table" to lie down.

The Senate torture report released earlier this month describes how the CIA's harsh interrogation program sought to make detainees passive and powerless to resist, using techniques from sleep deprivation to stress positions to waterboarding to induce a state that psychologists call "learned helplessness." "Compliant" was the interrogators' description of Zubaydah.

Whatever it's labeled, specialists say the brain clearly can become conditioned by extreme fear and stress, notwithstanding CIA assertions that what was done would not cause any permanent mental or physical harm.

In that Senate report are "dramatic examples that clearly indicate that people are going to be damaged psychologically for a very long time," said Dr. Vincent Iacopino, an adviser to the nonprofit Physicians for Human Rights who has long treated survivors of torture from around the world.

He ticked off a list: post-traumatic stress disorder, other anxiety disorders, depression, enduring personality changes.

Cuba says anything up for discussion with Washington, except asylum for US fugitives

HAVANA (AP) — Cuba's point person on U.S. relations says anything is up for discussion as the two countries move to re-establish diplomatic ties, from anti-drug cooperation to joint environmental agreements.

But there's at least one area where Cuba appears unwilling to budge: Asylum for fugitives whom the U.S. has long sought to extradite from the communist-run country.

"Every nation has sovereign and legitimate rights to grant political asylum to people it considers to have been persecuted," the Cuban Foreign Ministry's head of North American affairs, Josefina Vidal, told The Associated Press.

"We've explained to the U.S. government in the

past that there are some people living in Cuba to whom Cuba has legitimately granted political asylum," Vidal said, noting also that the two countries have no extradition treaty in effect.

Vidal's comments in a Monday interview were the clearest sign yet that Cuba has no intention of extraditing America's most-wanted woman, Joanne Chesimard, following a historic detente announced by last week by President Barack Obama and Raul Castro of Cuba.

Balancing homework with grown up jobs: about 15 percent of Honduran children are employed

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — Roberto Castellanos has the hands of a construction worker and the homework of a 6th grader.

Roberto, who just turned 12, spends eight hours a day at a repair shop, sanding and painting ice cream carts for the daily pay of \$2.50 in Honduran lempiras. When classes resume after the Christmas holidays, he says, he will cut back to five hours at the shop so that he can go to school in the afternoon and, hopefully, still have time to play soccer on the weekend.

"My life is organized. I work in the day and study at night," Roberto says.

Wise beyond his years, Roberto says he knows that many people consider child labor to be exploitation, but he sees it as opportunity — a means to survive the gang-controlled capital of a country with the world's highest homicide rate.

"Here, every day that passes is another day I am alive," Roberto says.

Family looks to federal investigation after Milwaukee prosecutor declines charges in shooting

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Family members of a Milwaukee man shot and killed by a city police officer say they aren't giving up hope that the officer will be charged.

Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm announced Monday that former Officer Christopher Manney, who is white, acted in self-defense when he shot Dontre Hamilton, who is black, 14 times in April. But later in the day, U.S. Attorney James Santelle announced that the Department of Justice, his office and the FBI will review whether Manney violated federal civil rights laws.

Nate Hamilton, Dontre Hamilton's brother, said the family hopes federal investigators can take a more objective look at the case than Milwaukee authorities.

The Hamilton family led about 100 protesters through downtown intersections Monday. The march was peaceful, and the family says more actions are planned Tuesday.

Proposed Manger Square tunnel looks to tame Bethlehem's snarling traffic

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (AP) — It's Christmas season and the little town of Bethlehem is jammed with a big-city problem: Traffic snarling streets everywhere, including around the church marking the spot where tradition says Jesus was born. The city is considering a dramatic solution to the problem — digging a tunnel under Manger Square.

Traffic is a mess year-round. It may be the biblical town of grottos and shepherds' fields in the minds of many around the world, but Bethlehem is a modern densely populated town of 28,000 with a dizzying weave of small streets that practically guarantee traffic jams.

"Bethlehem is going through a crisis," said Anton Salman, a city councilor. "We think that the solution to this traffic is to build an underground passage between the two sides of the square."

Bethlehem's municipality hopes to eventually build several tunnels around the Palestinian city, where the urban development problems are myriad. Bethlehem is sandwiched on three sides by other towns. From the north and southeast, it is hemmed in by Israel's separation barrier and Jewish settlements, leaving it little choice but to build vertically.

It is also a main transit point for drivers between the northern and southern parts of the West Bank, compounding its congestion.

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Dazed and confused ... temporarily

BIRD POOP

Carefully lifting one end of the lid on a shoebox barely enabled me to see the scarlet tip of a bird's tail. There was no mistaking that vivid red.

The woman who had brought it struggled to keep her composure. As a cold wind swirled around our front porch, she touched my hand while unable to speak.

Having been in the midst of a crossword puzzle when she rang our doorbell, I tore off an edge of the newspaper and handed it to her along with the nub of my favorite pencil.

Sensing her dilemma, I suggested she write her name and phone number. After I promised to call her, she nodded and hurried back to her car.

Back inside, and hearing Art's query, "Was that a bird?" came my answer, "Another window strike!" Seeing the all too familiar, shoebox delivery, he left his breakfast to help.

In our garage, a quiet retreat would hopefully allow the bird to recover. From the box no movement could be detected. As we slowly raised the lid we could

see a male, Northern cardinal, resting on a bed of tissues.

During the rest of the morning, no sound was heard from the box. After lunch a welcome thump-thump echoed from the bird's enclosure.

Dazed and "absolutely out of it" when he arrived, the cardinal had awakened to find himself in a semi-dark place. Although daylight came through air holes, the bird did not know where he was. He proceeded to explore and escape if possible. To me, those were welcome noises and possible signs of recovery.

Reaching into his box, my hand immediately felt sand and grit coating his regal attire. Fortunately, my first attempt at grabbing him, without being bitten, had been successful.

Intolerant of my assistance, he readily found a branch in a long enclosure we had created for his recovery. While holding him, I had never felt in other birds of his size the vibrant energy being emitted from his very presence.

Almost entirely red, except for the black patch of feathers surrounding the base of his large, thick bill, he would raise and lower his crest as if to accentuate his feelings. He was brilliant in comparison to a female. She would be gray-brownish above, with reddish wings, crest, and bill. Her drab coloration had been nature's way of secreting her away while

building her nest and brooding her young.

Placed at the opposite end of his container were sunflower seeds, cracked corn, wild birdseeds, crickets and mealworms. A large, shallow bowl of water would hopefully encourage him to repair his disheveled condition.

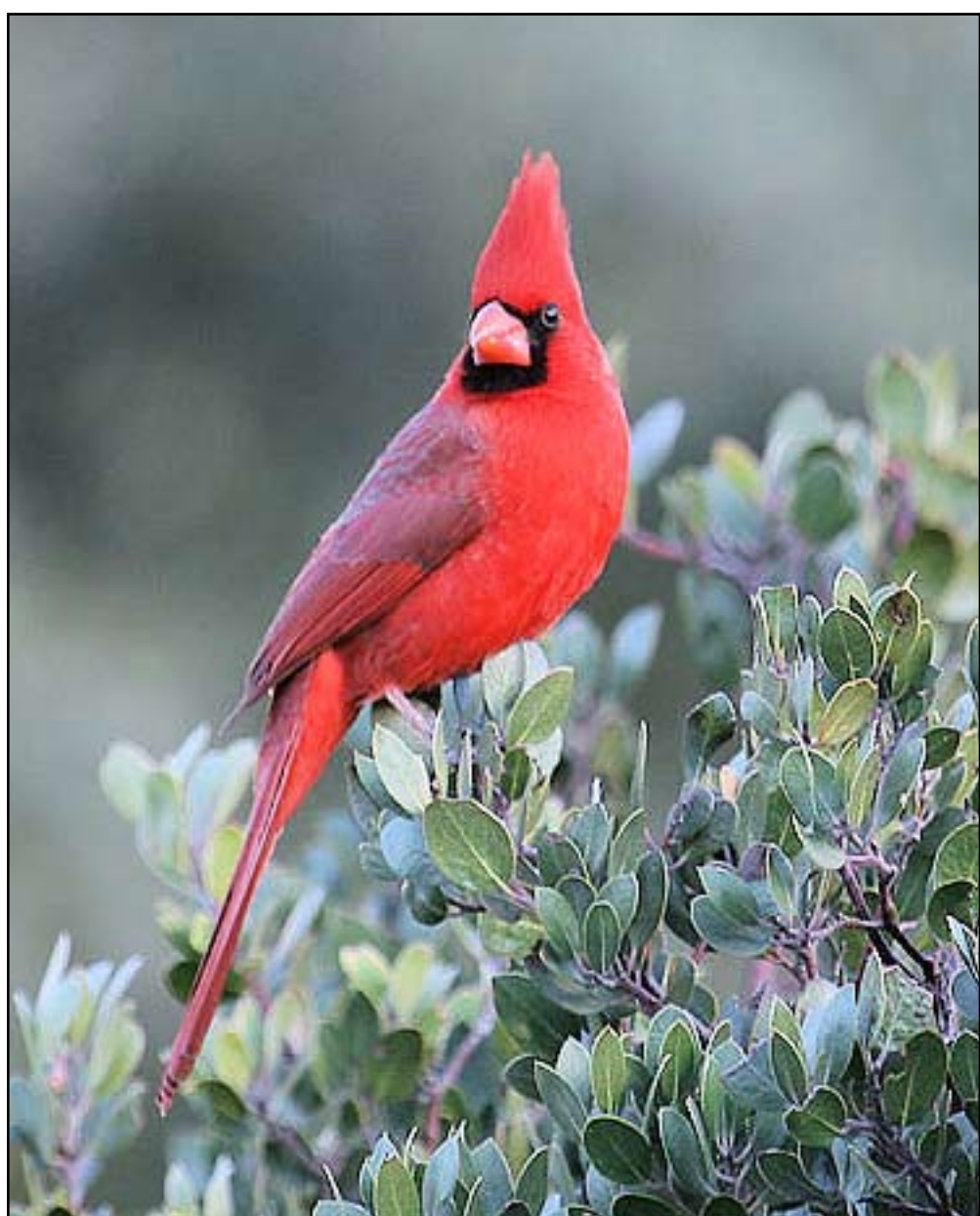
By early afternoon, the cardinal had bathed and preened his royal coat. He exuded confidence and determination. Impatient to leave, he wanted no more of our hospitality.

Watching him repeatedly fly from one end of the enclosure to the other encouraged me to call the woman who had been so distraught. After my brief emphasis on preventing future window strikes and wanting to release him in familiar surroundings, she said that the cardinal's mate had remained in nearby trees. "You must come! Release it here! You must see what my husband started while I was at your house."

As she led me through her home, she told me they had wanted to share their love of birds with family and guests during this Christmas season. Several days before the cardinal's collision, they had installed a new bird feeder not far from the large picture window that graced their dining area.

"What a mistake that was!"

While she had been delivering the cardinal to us, her husband had



Courtesy photo

Secretive in choosing a nest site, the Northern cardinal is more public in announcing its presence with distinctive, easily recognizable songs. The name "cardinal" was first used to describe the red songbird because it was reminiscent of the brilliant red robes worn by religious leaders.

taken the initiative to move the feeder and its pole to a much safer distance. Once home, she discovered that he, too, had been deeply touched by the bird's plight.

In their backyard the cardinal returned to familiar surroundings. After scanning its ter-

ritory carefully, it then visited several trees before disappearing into a dense canopy of foliage offered by a live oak.

Driving home, I thought of the next day, Christmas Eve. While one family watched from inside, another family would be reunited and enjoy a new

accommodation. Each family, human and avian, could celebrate in its own customs and traditions.

Bebe McCasland is author of "The Scoop from Bird Poop." She is federally and state licensed to rehabilitate wild birds.

Sam's spirit will always be with us

I heard a story several years ago about a man who hated Christmas. We'll call him Sam.

Sam didn't hate the true meaning of Christmas, but he hated the commercial aspects of it, the overspending and the frantic running around getting the last minute gifts.

I had no idea what to get Sam, then an inspiration came in a very unusual way. Our school wrestling team was having a match shortly before Christmas. It was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner-city church.

These youngsters were dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoestrings seemed to be the only thing holding them together. They presented a sharp contrast to our boys in their sharp blue and gold uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes.

As the match began, I noticed that the other team was wrestling without headgear, which is a kind of light helmet designed to protect a wrestler's ears. It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously

could not afford. Well, we ended up beating them very badly. We took every weight class. And as each of their boys got up from the mat, he swaggered around in his tatters with false bravado, a kind of street pride that couldn't acknowledge defeat.

Sam, seated beside me, shook his head sadly, "I wish just one of them could have won," he said. "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them."

Sam loved kids, all kids, and he knew them, having coached little league football, baseball and soccer. That's when the idea for his present came.

That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store and bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes and sent them, anonymously, to the inner-city church. On Christmas Eve, I placed the envelope on our tree addressed to Sam; the note inside told Sam what I had done and that this was his gift from me. His smile was the brightest thing about Christmas that year and in succeeding years.

For each Christmas, I followed the tradition. One year I sent a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year a check to a pair of

elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas, and on and on. The envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was always the last thing opened on Christmas morning and our children, ignoring their new toys, would stand with wide-eyed anticipation as Sam lifted the envelope from the tree to reveal its contents. As the children grew,

the toys gave way to more practical presents, but the envelope never lost its allure.

Last year Sam died due to dreaded cancer, and when Christmas came around, I was still so wrapped in grief that I barely got the tree up. Then, on Christmas Eve, I placed an envelope on the tree, and in the morning, it was joined by three more. Each of our children, unbeknownst to the

others, had placed an envelope on the tree for Sam.

The tradition has grown and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing around the tree with wide-eyed anticipation watching as the envelope is opened. Sam's

spirit, like the Christmas spirit, will always be with us. May we remember the reason for the season, and always be true to the Christmas spirit.

Darrell Ryan is director of school safety for the Big Spring Independent School District.



BEBE
MCCASLAND



DARRELL
RYAN

Sudoku Answer on Page 11

sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9 with no repeats. That means no number is repeated in any row, column or box.

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

www.sudoku-puzzles.net

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Strange Exchange

East dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.
NORTH
♠ A K 4
♥ J 9 8 5 3
♦ A J 7 2
♣ 7

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

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

SOUTH
♠ —
♥ A K Q 10 7
♦ 10 9 8 5 4
♣ A K J

The bidding:
East 3♠ South 4♥ West Pass North 6♥
Opening lead — three of diamonds.
Assume you reach six hearts on the bidding shown and West leads a diamond. Considering that only the K-Q-6 of diamonds are missing, and that West is leading that suit rather than the suit his partner bid, it should not take you long to conclude that West's three is a singleton. You therefore go up with the ace of diamonds and, after drawing two rounds of trumps, look for a way to escape two diamond losers.

One possibility is to enter dummy

with a trump and lead a club to the jack. If the finesse succeeds, you can then discard two diamonds from dummy on the A-K of clubs and so lose only one diamond trick.

This is not an attractive line of play, however, because East — who almost surely has seven spades and has already shown up with one heart and (presumably) three diamonds — is unlikely to have the queen of clubs.

A much better approach is to assume that West has the queen of clubs and no more diamonds, in which case you are certain to make the slam.
Acting on this assumption, you enter dummy with a trump, cash the A-K of spades, discarding two diamonds, and ruff dummy's last spade. You then cash the A-K of clubs, discarding a diamond from dummy, and continue with the jack. When West covers with the queen, you let him win the trick as you discard a second diamond from dummy.

Poor West has nothing but clubs left at this point and is forced to lead one. This allows you to discard dummy's last diamond as you ruff in your hand, and the outcome, strangely enough, is that the only trick you lose is a club.

Tomorrow: Sylvia strikes again.

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Murray impresses Cowboys with toughness

IRVING, Texas (AP) — NFL rushing leader DeMarco Murray had Dallas coach Jason Garrett believing he would play with a broken hand almost as soon as the injury happened.

Once the star running back made it through a playoff-clinching win over Indianapolis, it hardly mattered that he had a season-low 58 yards. The impact of his decision on the Cowboys couldn't be measured that way.

"The mindset and mentality that he had — starting in the locker room last week, on the plane ride, after the surgery," Garrett said. "He just didn't waver. 'I'm playing, coach.

Coach, I'm playing. Coach, I'm playing.' It was with a look that was so determined that its impact on our football team was so strong."

Murray broke his left hand in a win at Philadelphia that gave the Cowboys (11-4) the NFC East lead. He had surgery the next day, was doing individual drills with protective padding two days after that, and had 22 carries in a 42-7 win over the Colts that clinched the division title and ended Dallas' four-year playoff drought.

"It affected me a little bit," said Murray, who matched his season low in per-carry average at 2.6 yards from the previous week against the Eagles.

The way the game played out, the Cowboys really didn't need him. His most significant contribution was a 1-yard plunge that capped four straight possessions with a touchdown to start the game, giving Dallas a 28-0 lead.

But the fact he was out there could reverberate in the playoffs and beyond, with the 26-year-old Murray's contract up and the Cowboys having to decide whether and how much to pay him.

"This day with DeMarco Murray is going to be one that I'll never forget," Garrett said. "He's about as tough a guy I know mentally. He's about as tough a guy as I know physi-

cally. It's not easy to do what he did."

Head coach Jason Garrett said Murray came out of the game with "flying colors."

"That's easy for us to sit here and talk about him coming through in flying colors," Jones said. "How would you like to have your hand broken and go up through there and have everybody and 20-something players out there to step on it or hit it."

The Cowboys are in an interesting position for their regular-season finale at Washington (4-11). Dallas still has a shot at a first-round bye, but doesn't even have to win in the most likely scenario for get-

ting it.

As for the question of sitting Tony Romo and other regulars, Murray needs just 29 yards to break all-time NFL rushing leader Emmitt Smith's franchise record of 1,773 yards from 1995. Garrett said that won't weigh into the decision of who plays or how long they play.

"And it's not important to DeMarco either," Garrett said Monday. "It's good for our football team when DeMarco is running the ball well and we control the game by running the football. But the idea that we're going to get a player some kind of statistic, it's not really part of our thinking."

Injury ends Manziel's rookie season

CLEVELAND (AP) — Perhaps fitting, Johnny Manziel's final play was a 1-yard loss.

He didn't get very far in his rookie season.

Manziel will sit out Cleveland's finale with a hamstring injury he sustained during Sunday's loss to Carolina in his second career start.

Manziel's injury, coupled with a shoulder injury to Brian Hoyer, could force the Browns to start undrafted rookie quarterback Connor Shaw, who spent the season on the team's practice squad, in the season finale at Baltimore.

Once again, the Browns' quarterback situation is a total mess.

Coach Mike Pettine said Monday that Manziel's injury needs several weeks to recover, meaning the hyped first-round draft pick will end his first NFL season where it began — on the sideline.

The Browns only got to see Manziel in two starts and he was on the field for just 72 plays, making it difficult to evaluate him as their future quarterback.

Pettine believes Manziel made progress in his limited opportunities and developed on and off the field.

"He's made strides and I know it was a lot to throw at him as a rookie just coming from the system in which he played. And I just think it's difficult sometimes to evaluate the player when you're not necessarily playing at

a high level around him," Pettine said.

Manziel was 3 of 8 for 32 yards against the Panthers before he went down in the second quarter. The 22-year-old said he tweaked his hamstring earlier in the game, and he may have hurt it worse on a sprint out which ended with him being driven out of bounds by two Carolina defenders.

Manziel's first-season stats weren't much. He finished 18 of 35 for 175 yards and two interceptions.

"The sample size is tough," Pettine said. "Going back and looking at it, he did some good things."

Hoyer, who started the first 13 games before being benched, replaced Manziel and rallied the Browns (7-8) before they fell 17-13, extending their losing streak to four. Pettine said Hoyer hurt his right shoulder when he was hit making a long throw in the second half.

Pettine said it could be several days before the Browns know if Hoyer can play against the Ravens.

"I just know he is very sore today and the day after is usually very difficult," Pettine said.

If Hoyer can't go, the team will turn to Shaw, an undrafted free agent signed by the Browns in May. Shaw will likely get the bulk of snaps in practice over the next few days and Pettine said the team is exploring bringing in another quarterback.



Who's In?



Who's Out?

A look at the ins and outs of the NFL playoff races

By **BARRY WILNER**

AP Pro Football Writer

With five of the six playoff slots in both conferences decided, some would think much of the drama of the schedule's final week has been removed.

Think again.

Nine of the 10 teams already qualified for the Super Bowl chase have something to play for on Sunday.

Start with the defending league champion Seahawks (11-4). Excluding any Week 17 ties in the multitude of scenarios, Seattle not only will get the NFC West title by beating St. Louis, but also home-field advantage throughout the NFC playoffs. Not a pleasant thought for its opponents.

"They're playing awesome football," Cardinals cornerback Patrick Peterson said. "You can't take nothing away from that ballclub. They have a championship pedigree, what it takes to win on the road, what it takes to win the division. Obviously, it's not over yet, but they're one step closer."

New England (12-3) doesn't need to show up against visiting Buffalo on Sunday; it al-

ready owns the top seed in the AFC. The Patriots already are the first team since the current postseason format was adopted in 1990 to get five consecutive first-round byes.

Everyone else is still scrambling.

Denver (11-4), after losing Monday night's game at Cincinnati (10-4-1), has the AFC West secured. But their home game with Oakland (3-12) has significance because a loss could force the Broncos to play in the wild-card round.

The Bengals grabbed a playoff berth by beating Denver. They travel to face already-qualified Pittsburgh (10-5) on Sunday for the AFC North crown.

Indianapolis (10-5) has the AFC South title and will be either the No. 3 or No. 4 seed. The Colts are at Tennessee (2-13), which has the inside track for the top overall draft pick through 15 games.

The remaining AFC wild-card spot could go to Cincinnati or Pittsburgh, barring winning the North division; San Diego (9-6); Baltimore (9-6); Houston (8-7); or Kansas City (8-7). The Chargers have the easiest task:

win at KC and advance.

But all of them remain alive heading to the weekend, with Jacksonville (3-12) at Houston, and Cleveland (7-8) at Baltimore.

The sixth NFC spot will go to the survivor in the South, where Atlanta (6-9) hosts Carolina (6-8-1). Yes, a losing team will not only make the postseason, but will be the No. 4 seed and host a game on wild-card weekend.

"It says a lot about the guys in here," Panthers tight end Greg Olsen said. "Every year you set out to try to win your division. We have one game left and it is right in front of us."

With Seattle, Arizona, NFC East champ Dallas, Green Bay and Detroit all at 11-4, byes are up for grabs. The Cowboys have the most difficult road to get the top seed because the Packers host the Lions and both own the tiebreaker over Dallas. The Cowboys need a victory at Washington (4-11), an Arizona loss and a tie at Lambeau Field.

Oops, sorry, didn't mean to throw draws into the mix, but in that case it's essential.

NFL Playoff Scenarios

WEEK 17

AFC

CLINCHED: New England - AFC East and first-round bye; Denver - AFC West; Indianapolis - AFC South; Pittsburgh and Cincinnati - playoff berth.

NEW ENGLAND (vs. Buffalo)

— Clinches home-field advantage throughout AFC playoffs

DENVER (vs. Oakland)

Clinches first-round bye with:
— Win or tie, OR
— Cincinnati loss, OR
— Cincinnati tie and Indianapolis win

CINCINNATI (at Pittsburgh)

— Clinched playoff spot
Clinches AFC North with:
— Win or tie
Clinches first-round bye with:
— Win and Denver loss or tie, OR
— Tie and Denver loss and Indianapolis loss or tie

PITTSBURGH (vs. Cincinnati)

Pittsburgh clinches AFC North with:
— Win

SAN DIEGO (at Kansas City)

Clinches playoff spot with:
— Win, OR
— Tie and Baltimore loss or tie

BALTIMORE (vs. Cleveland)

Clinches playoff spot with:
— Win and San Diego loss or tie, OR
— Tie and San Diego loss

KANSAS CITY (vs. San Diego)

Clinches playoff spot with:
— Win and Baltimore loss and Houston loss or tie Houston

HOUSTON (vs. Jacksonville)

Clinches playoff spot with:

— Win and Baltimore loss and San Diego loss

NFC

CLINCHED: Arizona - playoff berth; Seattle - playoff berth; Detroit - playoff berth; Green Bay - playoff berth; Dallas - NFC East.

DALLAS (at Washington)

Clinches home-field advantage throughout NFC playoffs with:
— Win and Arizona loss or tie and Detroit/Green Bay tie
Clinches first-round bye with:
— Win and Seattle loss or tie and Arizona loss or tie, OR
— Win and Detroit/Green Bay tie, OR
— Tie and Seattle loss and Arizona loss, OR
— Tie and Seattle tie and Arizona loss or tie and Detroit/Green Bay does not end in a tie

DETROIT (at Green Bay)

Clinches NFC North with:
— Win or tie
Clinches home-field advantage throughout NFC playoffs with:
— Win and Seattle loss or tie and Arizona loss or tie, OR
— Tie and Seattle loss and Arizona loss and Dallas loss or tie
Clinches first-round bye with:
— Win, OR
— Tie and Dallas loss or tie, OR
— Tie and Seattle loss and Arizona loss

GREEN BAY (vs. Detroit)

Clinches NFC North and first-round bye with:
— Win
Clinches home-field advantage throughout NFC playoffs with:

— Win and Seattle loss or tie

SEATTLE (vs. St. Louis)

Clinches NFC West with:
— Win OR
— Tie and Arizona loss or tie, OR
— Arizona loss
Clinches home-field advantage throughout NFC playoffs with:
— Win and Detroit/Green Bay game does not end in a tie, OR
— Win and Dallas loss or tie, OR
— Tie and Arizona loss or tie and Dallas loss or tie and Green Bay/Detroit tie
Clinches first-round bye with:
— Win, OR
— Tie and Arizona loss or tie and Dallas loss, OR
— Tie and Arizona loss or tie and Green Bay/Detroit tie

ARIZONA (at San Francisco)

Clinches NFC West with:
— Win and Seattle loss or tie, OR
— Tie and Seattle loss
Clinches home-field advantage throughout NFC playoffs with:
— Win and Seattle loss or tie and Green Bay loss or tie, OR
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CAROLINA (at Atlanta)

Clinches NFC South with:
— Win or tie

ATLANTA (vs. Carolina)

Clinches NFC South with:
— Win

Memphis tops BYU in Miami Beach Bowl

MIAMI (AP) — They battled for 60 minutes, then again for two overtimes and literally fought after the final play.

And for Memphis, the end result was a win 76 years in the making.

Paxton Lynch threw four touchdown passes and rushed for three more scores, Jake Elliott kicked a 54-yard field goal to end the first extra session and Memphis wasted a pair of double-digit leads before rallying to beat BYU 55-48 in the inaugural Miami Beach Bowl on Monday.

Roderick Proctor caught an 11-yard pass from Lynch to put Memphis up in the second overtime, and from there

things just got worse.

After DaShaughn Terry sealed the win by picking off BYU quarterback Christian Stewart in the second OT, tensions and emotions took over. Dozens of people from both sidelines spilled toward the middle of the field, many punching and grabbing. Cameras caught BYU defensive back Kai Nacua — who had blood streaming from his face — coming from behind to punch in the head Memphis tight end Alan Cross, who was being restrained by someone from the Tigers' staff.

There was no immediate word on disciplinary action from either team.

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Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Barbara Maxine Pavolich, Deceased, were issued on December 16, 2014, in Cause No. P-14360, pending in the County Court of Howard County, Texas, to: Karen Maxine Owen and John George Pavolich, Jr.
All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

Estate of Barbara Pavolich
c/o John Pavolich, Jr.
1713 Idaho Ave. San Angelo, Texas 76904
DATED the 18th day of December, 2014
Shonda K. Folsom
Attorney for Estate of Barbara Pavolich
State Bar No.: 24066591
P.O. Box 2211
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Tomorrow's Horoscope

Saturn Change

The sixth planet from the sun represents the cosmic discipline delivered by the universe before we learn to discipline ourselves. It's parental, authoritarian and practically no fun at all - that is until it reaches the realm of Sagittarius. Things begin



HOLIDAY
MATHIS

to lighten up with this transit, as optimism becomes the new default setting.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). We are all works in progress. Because you're the one who has to do the work, you may as well be the one who decides what end result you are going for.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You've been thinking about the thing you want to be a part of. The only problem is that it doesn't yet exist. So create it. You are capable, and there are many people who will believe in your vision.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Doing your best is one thing. Doing what's needed is entirely another. When what's ideal and what's necessary happen to clash, go with what's necessary.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Look at it like a game and get into a playful mood. There is a process to master, competition to contend with, rules to abide by and a prize at the end.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You strive to be organized, more contained with your energy and better focused on the things that really matter. Seek relationships that support

you as you improve.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). A relationship that has natural momentum does not need to be pushed along. Pull back and you just might notice that things accelerate without your effort.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The kind of friend you need is one you can insert into any social situation without a worry as to what weirdness they will spout. Good people like this are rare treasures.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Because time is your most valuable asset, it is extremely costly to try different tactics. Even if the experiments are free, you cannot afford them. An adviser who's been through it already is worth the investment.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You need an equal to sharpen your talent on. Seek the company of someone whose abilities impress you. You'll realize how far along you are when you have a worthy opponent.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The theories are all well and good, but the way to bring your heart and head into union is simply to act. Make your move. Tonight, family dynamics are complex, and you navigate them beautifully.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Politics will play into each and every situation today. The awareness of this will make you more powerful. You'll get what you want when you give them what they want.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). It takes a strong person to acknowledge weakness. Knowing how you need to work on yourself and being willing to do what's necessary will give you a serious advantage.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 23). Your creativity is going strong. You don't set out to impress, but you can't help yourself. Next month brings a promotion. In February, you'll make a sacrifice, and something truly beautiful will come out of your selflessness. March brings a happy conclusion. June has you traveling. Aquarius and

Cancer people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 23, 1, 14 and 44.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "I'm a Virgo, and I've recently gotten involved in a business venture that is very exciting and creative and has the possibility to be lucrative. In the past three weeks, my dreams have been riddled with cautionary tales having to do with this venture. I usually don't have such vivid dreams, and I can't help but think my subconscious mind is trying to tell me something. On the other hand, I don't want to be scared off by a few bad dreams produced by my fear of the unknown. Are my dreams psychic, or are they just fearful for no good reason?"

As a disciplined Virgo, you will find that your dreams are more controllable than you think. Before you go to sleep, imagine the outcome you would like for your business in vivid detail. Then ask the dream weaver in your head to assist you with only helpful dreams. Upon awakening, write down your dreams in as much detail as possible. And if you don't immediately know what the dream means, look at some of the dream's occurrences and ask, "What does this remind me of?" Follow your stream of thought and be willing to welcome whatever valuable information comes up.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Zoologist Martin Kratt and his brother, Chris Kratt, have introduced children to the wild world of animals with shows like "Zoboomafoo" and "Wild Kratts." Kratt was born when the sun and moon were in ambitious Capricorn and Mercury was in worldly Sagittarius. His Venus and Mars in Aquarius points to the importance of philanthropy and contribution.

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

Dear Annie: Two years ago, my sister called crying that they were going to lose their house. She didn't realize her husband hadn't been making the mortgage payments. She said she wouldn't have taken all those vacations or eaten out in fancy restaurants if she had known they couldn't afford it.



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

Of course I jumped in to help. My husband spent a day making sure all the money was transferred into the right accounts in time to stop the bank auction. This was a loan, not a gift, but without interest charges.

Now I feel betrayed. My sister and her husband continue to spend money frivolously. They took a big vacation and lied to me so I wouldn't know. They've been eating out again. They promise to make payments, but rarely do. Any amount is overdue and in tiny increments. Now they've stopped inviting us to get-togethers.

Is this any way to treat the people who kept you from being thrown out on the street? We have never hounded them for the money, but I know now this was a big mistake. We must have had "sucker" written on our foreheads.

I am extremely hurt that my sister would do this to me. It's not even the money anymore. It's being lied to repeatedly by someone I loved and trusted. An apology might help, but I don't see it happening. What do I do? -- Extremely Disappointed

Dear Disappointed: If your sister knew how to be more frugal, she wouldn't have needed your loan. Her lies and avoidance are how she deals with her guilt. We suggest you remove all vagueness about this. Have a lawyer draw up papers

with the amount loaned, the amount repaid and a schedule of monthly payments. Insist that all of you sign it, and then remind her when she's late with a payment. Be nice, but firm. She won't like it, but once the loan is repaid, you can start with a clean slate.

Dear Annie: My dad constantly calls me at work to ask when I'm going to come over to see Mom and my adult sister who still lives at home. But when I do make the time to visit, he can't be bothered to talk to my husband, my kids or me, and my sister doesn't bother to come up from the basement.

This has been going on for the past 20 years. I no longer feel welcome there. My dad is retired, but can't find a moment to stop by my place or even ask how his grandchildren are. But he somehow manages to visit my brother's kids. I've called him on this, and he says he's not well enough to come to my place, but every day he stops by the donut shop that's two minutes from my home.

I've never asked them for anything and don't expect anything. However, my brother's

children are the apples of their eyes. Why does he keep asking me to visit when he doesn't want to see me? -- Can't Be Bothered and Don't Care

Dear Can't: Where is Mom in all this? It sounds as though Dad wants to see you, but has no idea how to relate to you. If you know when he is at the donut shop, feel free to stop by. And if you are willing to put in the effort, family counseling might help all of you communicate better.

Dear Annie: I was sympathetic to "Trying My Best," the guest who is allergic to cats. We, too, have a relative who cannot visit our home due to his severe allergies to our cats and a dear friend who can visit for a meal, but cannot tolerate longer periods of time in our home.

We follow the procedures outlined in this letter when our friend visits, and we host our relative at a restaurant. But other guests don't seem to understand that the cats aren't temporary visitors. This is their home, and they are part of our family. And in some cases we like the cats a lot more than we like the guests. -- Jim

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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sudoku

ANSWERS

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

www.sudoku-puzzles.net

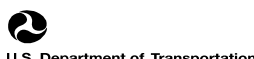


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- 1/2 oz. dry vermouth
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- 1 long day
- 1 diminishing attention span
- 1 too many

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- Mama found the missing piece for her china set...
- Papa bought a great used car ...
- Little Brother traded his baseball cards for a guitar...
- Big Brother found an awesome set of free weights...
- Cousin Bill found a great apartment ...
- Big Sister found a great new job...
- Aunt Sue found a dining room table...

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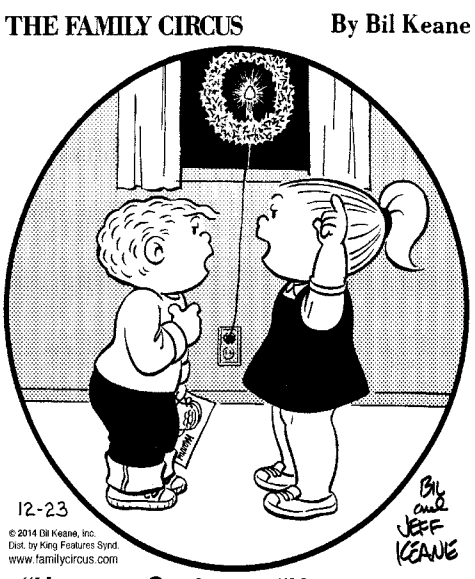
TV schedule table with columns for station (KMID, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLT, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KPBT, KWWT, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN) and program details.

DENNIS THE MENACE



How about if I tell you the stuff I already have and you take it from there?

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

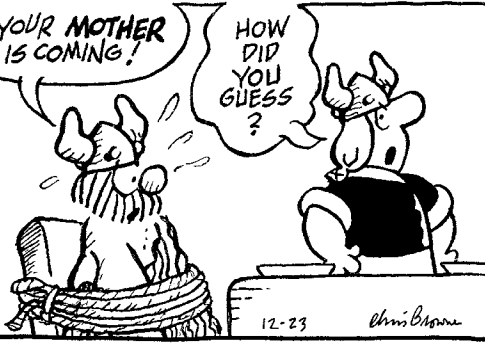


How can Santa see us all the way from the North Pole? He uses Google Earth.

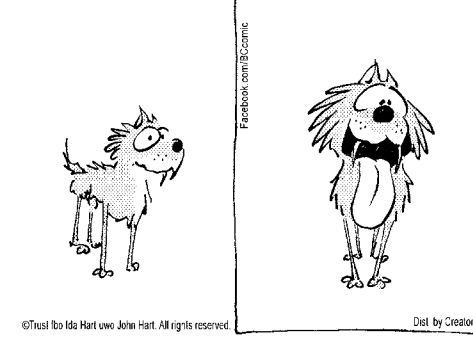
HAGAR



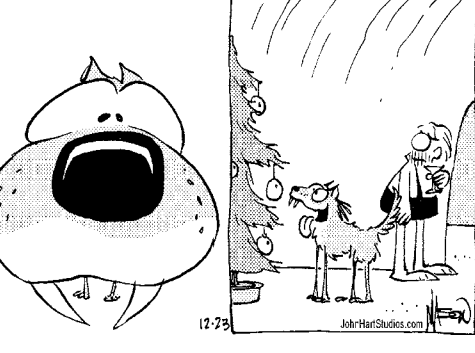
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WIZARD OF ID



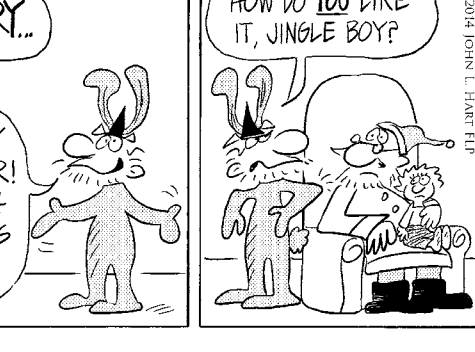
AGNES



HI AND LOIS



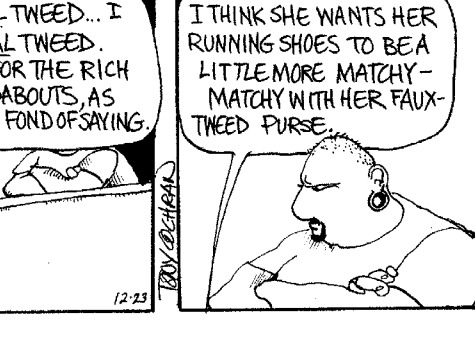
THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BEETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, Dec. 23, the 357th day of 2014. There are eight days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On Dec. 23, 1954, the first successful human kidney transplant took place at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston as a surgical team led by Dr. Joseph Murray removed a kidney from 23-year-old Ronald Herrick and implanted it in Herrick's twin brother, Richard, who was dying of chronic nephritis. (Because the donor and recipient were identical twins, tissue rejection was not an issue. Richard Herrick lived until 1962; Ronald Herrick died in 2010.)

MAKING CONTACT

Making Contact by Billie Truitt Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

Answer to previous puzzle crossword grid with words like SNAP, ODES, PRONE, TUNA, NAPE, ROWER, etc.

Newsday Crossword

ACROSS 1 Milwaukee's state: Abbr. 5 Fall guy 10 Specify 14 Foul smell 15 Math proportion 16 Diabolical 17 The ___ Ranger (Western hero) 18 San Antonio landmark 19 Fixes a squeak 20 Get angry 23 On, as a lamp 24 They may intersect aves. 25 Strong point 28 'Honest' president 31 Country home 35 'That's all ___ wrote' 36 Cuba or Aruba 39 One on the move 40 Memorizing perfectly 43 Neck-and-neck 44 South Seas getaway 45 Double-curve letter 46 Start playing tennis 48 Fully prepared 49 Spiteful 51 Shade tree 53 Guy's date 54 'Don't be a stranger' 63 Leave off the list 64 Mexican chip dip 65 Factual 66 Bullets and cannonballs

DOWN 1 Red Riding Hood's adversary 2 Admired celebrity 3 PlayStation maker 4 New Orleans cuisine 5 Make by hand 6 Sentry's order 7 Nevada's eastern neighbor 8 Silent performer 9 Stuffed Winnie bears 10 Light in a tavern window 11 Enthusiastic 12 Flour factory 13 Alternatively 21 Naturally belong 22 Off-road ride: Abbr. 25 Fireplace residue 26 Remove whiskers 27 Break off 28 Assumed name 29 Get clean in the tub 30 Call off a project 32 Easy strides 33 Bare minimum 34 Pretentious 37 Certain NCO 38 Small speck 41 One who plays the market 42 Be victorious in 47 Antlered beast 50 Many 52 Flat-topped hills 53 Small biting flies 54 Laundry batch 55 Television award 56 Clock reading 57 British noble 58 'Not guilty,' for example 59 Fails to be 60 Egg on 61 Medical breakthrough 62 Take notice of

Navy, San Diego St. set to run in Poinsettia Bowl

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Navy is back in a Navy town, ready to take on San Diego State in what's essentially another home game for the Aztecs. And Rocky Long will be in his element during Tuesday night's Poinsettia Bowl at Qualcomm Stadium. As a quarterback at New Mexico, Long ran a triple-option offense. As San Diego State's defensive-minded coach, he'll use his 3-3-5 alignment to try to stop junior quarterback Keenan Reynolds and the rest of the Midshipmen. "If you're a football purist this will be the best football game you have ever seen," Long said Monday. "It's the best offense ever designed," Long added. "Veer,

wishbone — there are about six different options they have off that. I have no idea how to stop it. You can stop it on the grease board. Now it's about execution. "We do know how to line up. But what it comes down to is if we can handle it as a team." Navy leads the nation with 345.1 yards rushing per game and San Diego State's defense allows 145.6 yards rushing. The Midshipmen will have their hands full, too. San Diego State sophomore Donnell Pumphrey has 1,755 yards, needing 88 to break SDSU's single-season rushing record of 1,842 set by George Jones in 1995. Pumphrey ranks fourth in the nation with 146.25 yards

**COLLEGE FOOTBALL
FBS BOWL GLANCE
Tuesday, Dec. 23
Boca Raton (Fla.) Bowl**
Marshall (12-1) vs. Northern Illinois (11-2), 6 p.m. (ESPN)
Poinsettia Bowl
At San Diego
Navy (7-5) vs. San Diego State (7-5), 9:30 p.m. (ESPN)

rushing per game. "They are going to run the football, establish the run," Navy coach Ken Niumatalolo said. "So they put you in a bind because he is such a good back. They have physical linemen. But if you go up to stop the run, they really good at throwing the football."

In today's other bowl game, Marshall will face Marshall to play Northern Illinois in the first Boca Raton Bowl. Marshall quarterback Rakeem Cato took a knee when he learned the Thundering Herd were bound for the inaugural Boca Raton Bowl. And then he said a prayer of thanks. "It's a huge blessing, and not only for me," Cato said on the eve of Tuesday night's game against Northern Illinois. "We have 30-plus guys on our team from Florida." Ten Northern Illinois players hail from the Sunshine State. For the Floridians, the game means a chance to finish the season in front of lots of family and friends.

Cato, for example, said the crowd will include more than 20 of his relatives and dozens of friends from his native Miami. "It'll be a lot — sisters, brothers, coaches, pastors, my daughter, my grandmother, my cousins," he said. "Everybody." Cato threw for 3,622 yards and 37 touchdowns to lead Marshall (12-1) to its first Conference USA title. Northern Illinois (11-2) won the Mid-American Conference for the third time in four years, and reached the 11-win mark for the fifth season in a row. Cato will be playing his final college football game less than an hour up Interstate 95 from his hometown.

Scoreboard

FOOTBALL National Football League American Conference

East					South					West							
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
12	3	0	.800	459	296	10	5	0	.667	431	359	10	5	0	.667	431	359
8	7	0	.533	364	336	8	7	0	.533	349	290	9	6	0	.600	389	292
3	12	0	.200	246	377	3	12	0	.200	246	377	7	8	0	.467	289	317
12	3	0	.800	459	296	10	5	0	.667	431	359	10	5	0	.667	431	359
8	7	0	.533	364	336	8	7	0	.533	349	290	9	6	0	.600	389	292
3	12	0	.200	246	377	3	12	0	.200	246	377	7	8	0	.467	289	317
12	3	0	.800	459	296	10	5	0	.667	431	359	10	5	0	.667	431	359
8	7	0	.533	364	336	8	7	0	.533	349	290	9	6	0	.600	389	292
3	12	0	.200	246	377	3	12	0	.200	246	377	7	8	0	.467	289	317
12	3	0	.800	459	296	10	5	0	.667	431	359	10	5	0	.667	431	359
8	7	0	.533	364	336	8	7	0	.533	349	290	9	6	0	.600	389	292
3	12	0	.200	246	377	3	12	0	.200	246	377	7	8	0	.467	289	317

W L Pct GB

W	L	Pct	GB
21	7	.750	—
20	7	.741	½
20	9	.690	1½
18	11	.621	3½
14	13	.519	6½

Northwest Division

W	L	Pct	GB
22	7	.759	—
13	15	.464	8½
12	16	.429	9½
9	20	.310	13
5	21	.192	15½

Pacific Division

W	L	Pct	GB
23	3	.885	—
19	9	.679	5
15	14	.517	9½
12	16	.429	12
8	19	.296	15½

Monday's Games

Charlotte 110, Denver 82
Chicago 129, Toronto 120
Houston 110, Portland 95
Utah 97, Memphis 91
Atlanta 105, Dallas 102
San Antonio 125, L.A. Clippers 118
Golden State 128, Sacramento 108

Tuesday's Games

Chicago at Washington, 7 p.m.
Boston at Orlando, 7 p.m.
New Orleans at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Minnesota at Cleveland, 7 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Miami, 7:30 p.m.
Denver at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
Portland at Oklahoma City, 8 p.m.
Charlotte at Milwaukee, 8 p.m.
Dallas at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Golden State at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m.

W L Pct GB

W	L	Pct	GB
25	5	.833	—
13	21	.382	5A
11	23	.324	9
9	25	.262	13
5	29	.146	17

25. H. Sam Houston (13-2)

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.
Beaumont Central	Lancaster (8-4)	South Oak Cliff	Beaumont Ozen	El Paso Bel Air	El Paso Address	Dallas Wilson	Dallas Kimball	FB Elkins (12-2)	FW Arlington Heights	Mansfield Summit	FB Bush (9-5)	Frisco Liberty	Austin LBJ	Terry (10-3)	Houston Yates	FW Dunbar	Rockwall Heath	Houston Madison	FB Marshall	Houston King	Humble (15-2)	Sharyland	Edinburg Vela	Mission Veterans

TABC HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL RANKINGS

BOYS			
W	L	Pct	GB
18	9	.667	—
16	10	.615	1½
14	14	.500	4½
9	19	.321	9½
5	23	.179	13½

1. Atascocita (14-0)
2. Plano West (10-1)
3. Desoto (13-2)
4. Killeen Harker Heights (11-2)
5. Duncanville (15-3)
6. Converse Judson (17-4)
7. Schertz Clemens (12-2)
8. North Shore (12-5)
9. Amarillo (14-2)
10. Cy-Lakes (10-3)
11. Clear Lake (12-1)
12. SA Brennan (13-1)
13. Clear Creek (12-2)
14. Cy-Woods (7-4)
15. Richardson (11-3)
16. Lake Travis (15-2)
17. Lewisville (8-5)
18. L Hebron (10-3)
19. Plano East (11-1)
20. Cedar Hill (13-0)
21. FB Travis (13-2)
22. Pearland Dawson (14-3)
23. North Crowley (9-4)
24. SA Brandeis (15-2)

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