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**A sign at the Howard County Courthouse directs voters to the office where they can cast early ballots in the Howard College tax rate rollback election.**

# Early voting brisk in rollback election

**By AMANDA ELSTON**  
 Managing Editor

Almost 300 people have cast early ballots in the Howard College tax rollback election, officials said.

The first day of early voting Monday brought out 114 voters to the Howard County Courthouse while more than 200 voted Tuesday, according to information released by the county elections administrator's office.

Voters will decide if the college will keep its adopted tax rate of 25 cents per \$100 valuation or if it will drop back to 23 cents per \$100 valuation. If the proposition passes, the college district will lose approximately \$630,000 of projected tax revenue.

In August, college trustees approved

a seven cent hike in the tax rate from the previous year which was two cents above the rollback rate.

Junior college district residents will be able to participate in early voting until Jan. 15 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the first floor of the courthouse. Registered voters must show an acceptable form of photo identification before voting which includes a Texas driver's license issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), a Texas election identification certificate issued by DPS, or a Texas personal identification card issued by DPS.

Election day is Jan. 19 at the Dorothy Garrett Coliseum, located on the Howard College Campus, 1001 Birdwell Lane. Polls will be open on election day from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.



**Participants take off from the start line of the 2014 Run 2 Love.**

# Run 2 Love registration now open

**By JULIE BASS**  
 Staff Writer

On your mark, get set, register! Early registration for the annual Run 2 Love 2 Run has begun!

Run 2 Love 2 Run is a 5k run/walk which takes place at the Big Spring State Park and is the first run of the new year.

"Run 2 Love 2 Run is a fun 5k Valentine's Day-themed run," said event organizer Ron Alton. "We will have individual and couples awards for first through third place as well as best Valentine themed costume."

This year, the first three finishers will receive stuffed animal toys. There will also be youth awards so that the whole family can enjoy the outdoors and participate in the run.

See **RUN**, 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.

54414 79720 9

# Gun measure should have only limited impact

**By RYAN J. FOLEY**  
 Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama's move to tighten controls on guns could curb the unregulated buying and selling of weapons over the Internet and at gun shows. But the overall effect on violence in the U.S. could prove to be modest.

"It's not ever going to be difficult to get a firearm, just like it's not ever going to be difficult to get illegal drugs," said James Jacobs, a New York University law school professor. "What makes us think that we can now create a regime that will make guns hard to obtain for someone who wants to obtain them?"

The president used his ex-

*"It's not ever going to be difficult to get a firearm, just like it's not ever going to be difficult to get illegal drugs. What makes us think that we can now create a regime that will make guns hard to obtain for someone who wants to obtain them?"*

James Jacobs  
 New York University law professor

ecutive authority Tuesday to clarify that anyone "in the business" of selling firearms must obtain a federal license and conduct background checks on prospective buyers, regardless of where the sales take place. Currently, many

private sellers online and at gun shows do not bother to get licenses, and weapons sales over the Internet have become a booming business.

The White House and others can't say how many transactions the step will block or

how much bloodshed it may prevent.

But the new controls probably wouldn't have prevented several of the grisly mass shootings around the country that have led to demands for tighter gun laws, and may affect only a fraction of the nation's 30,000 annual gun deaths.

The president's action "has potential impact — the degree or the type, it's hard to predict," said University of Pennsylvania professor Susan Sorenson, who studies violence prevention. "And it's really important to acknowledge that we can't just have one change and expect that to change things wildly."

See **GUNS**, Page 3

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## Obituaries

## Bessie Stoker



Bessie Elaine Stoker, a longtime resident of Sand Springs, Texas, died Friday Jan. 1, 2016, at University Medical Center in Lubbock, Texas at the age of 71.

She was born Nov. 2, 1944, in Big Spring, Texas. Bessie attended Coahoma High School and Howard College. She worked as a supervisor at the Big Spring State Hospital. She loved her family, cooking, and reading her bible. She was kind, caring and giving; she had a wonderful smile and a great sense of humor.

She is survived by her daughter, Disa Reeves and her husband, Randy, of Lubbock; son, Danny Stoker of Sand Springs; granddaughter, Jessica Eller; and great-grandson, Chase Eller of Levelland.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 7, 2016, Myers and Smith Chapel. The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2016, at Myers & Smith Funeral Home, with burial at Trinity Memorial Park.

Pallbearers will be Danny Stoker, Randy Reeves, Gene Hector, Blaine Ridden, and Pat Robinson. Honorary pallbearer will be Chase Eller.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at [www.myersand-smith.com](http://www.myersand-smith.com)

*Paid obituary*

## Kenneth Robinson



Kenneth Robinson, 76, of Odessa, Texas, passed away Saturday, Jan. 2, 2016.

Kenneth was born in Big Spring on Aug. 10, 1939, to Bill and Birdie Mae Robinson and graduated from Garden City High School in 1957. He married Karen Salmon Sept. 1, 1967, in Crane, Texas.

He worked in the oilfields of West Texas for most of his life.

He was part owner of SRS Corp. in the boom years of the 1980s and finished out his career with Waters and Waters of Goldsmith. He loved to fish, but his greatest love and joy was his grandson, Jake.

Kenneth is survived by his wife Karen of Odessa; his son, Randall Wayne Robinson of Austin; his daughter, Suzanne Robinson Phillips, son-in-law, Will Phillips, and grandson, Jake William Phillips, all of Elgin, Okla.; five sisters, Deanie Craft of Gar-

den City, Deborah Robinson of Big Spring, Becky Robinson Curnutt of Lubbock, Betty Davis of Coahoma and Birdie Wooten of San Angelo; seven brothers, John Robinson of Garden City, Richard Robinson of Eunice, N.M., Gary Robinson of Austin, Jim Robinson of Eldorado, Melvin Robinson of Robert Lee, Jerry Don Robinson of Fort Worth and Loren Robinson of Kingsland; his mother-in-law, Patsy Salmon of Odessa; a sister-in-law and her husband, Janis and Freddie Southerland of Odessa; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Bill and Birdie Mae; a brother, Bill Robinson; and two sisters, Viola Hillger and Mary Hillger.

Special thanks to Star Hospice and Deerings Nursing Home, both of Odessa.

No services are planned at the request of Kenneth and his family. In lieu of flowers, donations to the charity of your choice in Kenneth's honor are appreciated. Condolences may be sent to the family online at [acreswestfuneral.com](http://acreswestfuneral.com).

*Paid obituary*

## James 'Jim' Merrick



James Robert "Jim" Merrick, 79, of Amarillo, died Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2016.

Services will be at 1 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 7, 2016, at Boxwell Brothers Ivy Chapel with Royce Mason of Great Plains Western Church in Washburn officiating. Burial will be in Memory Gardens Cemetery. Arrangements are by Boxwell Brothers Funeral Directors, 2800 Paramount Blvd.

Jim was born Dec. 12, 1936, in Big Spring to Bob and Mamie Lee Merrick. He was a Navy veteran.

Jim married Joyce Lankford April 9, 1960, in Ackery.

Jim worked security for Owens Corning and later Bell Helicopter. He was proud to have helped orga-

nize the Osage Fire Department, which later became the Randall County Fire and Rescue. He also served with the Randall County Sheriff's Department from 1970-1980. Jim was proud to be on the board of the Texas Air and Space Museum and was a member of Great Plains Western Church in Washburn.

He was preceded in death by a brother, Jerry Merrick.

Survivors include his wife of 55 years, Joyce Merrick, of the home; three sons, Gary Merrick and wife, Kim, and Joel Merrick, all of Amarillo, and Keith Merrick and wife, Amy, of Stinnett; three brothers, Johnny Merrick and Jackie Merrick, both of Big Spring, and Jake Merrick, of Hinton, Okla.; three sisters, Joyce Ann Turner of Ropesville, JoNell Rowlett of Dallas and Julie Merrick of Lubbock; 10 grandchildren; and a great-grandchild.

Sign the online guestbook at [www.boxwellbrothers.com](http://www.boxwellbrothers.com).

*Paid obituary*

## Benny Islas



Benny Islas, 51, of Coahoma died Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2016. Vigil services will be at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday at Myers & Smith Chapel. Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Thursday at Holy Trinity Catholic Church.

He was born Feb. 10, 1964 in Big Spring to Inez Ontiveros Islas and Val Islas. He grew up in Coahoma and attended Coahoma schools. He worked most

of his life in the oil field. He was a lifetime resident of Howard County and a member of Holy Trinity Catholic Church.

He was an avid Dallas Cowboy fan and he loved music.

He is survived by two daughters, Brandi Cisneros of Midland and Marissa Islas of Big Spring; one son, Steven Islas and his wife, Andrea, of Houston; mother, Inez Islas of Coahoma; two sisters, Debbie Uranga and her husband, Ambrosio, of Coahoma and Sandy Solis and his husband, Ismael, of Coahoma; three brothers, Royce Islas and his wife, Cynthia, of Big Spring, Val Islas and his wife, Cindy, of Big Spring, and Denny Islas and his wife, Sandra, of Garland; and three grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his father; one niece; and his maternal and paternal grandparents.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at [www.myersand-smith.com](http://www.myersand-smith.com)

## Elizabeth Jo Sledge



Elizabeth Jo Sledge, 82, of Big Spring, died Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2016, in a local nursing home. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, Jan. 8, 2016, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel, with the Rev. Mark Lindsey officiating. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park, Big Spring.

The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 7, 2016, at Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory.

Jo was born July 23, 1933, in Big Spring, and married Bobby Sledge Nov. 6, 1953, in Big Spring.

She was a member of First Baptist Church of Big Spring.

Jo is survived by her husband of 62 years, Bobby Sledge of Big Spring; two daughters, Karen Nachlinger and husband, Larry of Hermleigh, TX, and Lisa Sledge of Lake Colorado City, TX; five grandchildren; seven great grandchildren; one sister, Wanda Jones of Big Spring; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by a daughter, Becky Sledge Wall; her parents, James "Jim" Vida (Russell) Kinsey; one brother, James Kinsey Jr.; and two sisters, Mollie Smith and Sarah Sweeten.

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

## Janelle Clark

Janelle F. Clark, 78 of Big Spring died Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2016 in an assisted living facility. Services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home.

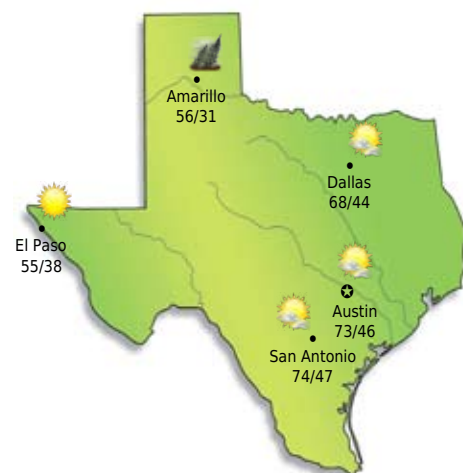
## Frances Jones

Frances L. Jones, 86, formerly of Big Spring, died Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2016, in a McKinney hospital. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home and Crematory.

## Local 5-Day Forecast

Thu 1/7	Fri 1/8	Sat 1/9	Sun 1/10	Mon 1/11
<b>62/37</b>	<b>59/29</b>	<b>47/21</b>	<b>50/22</b>	<b>46/24</b>
Sunny skies with gusty winds developing later in the day. High 62F. Winds WSW at 20 to 30 mph. Winds could occasionally gust over 40 mph.	Partly cloudy and windy. Highs in the upper 50s and lows in the upper 20s.	Plenty of sun. Highs in the upper 40s and lows in the low 20s.	Partly cloudy. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the low 20s.	Plenty of sun. Highs in the mid 40s and lows in the mid 20s.
Sunrise: 7:48 AM Sunset: 5:56 PM	Sunrise: 7:48 AM Sunset: 5:57 PM	Sunrise: 7:48 AM Sunset: 5:58 PM	Sunrise: 7:48 AM Sunset: 5:59 PM	Sunrise: 7:48 AM Sunset: 6:00 PM

## Texas at a Glance



## Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Ablene	55	43	Cloudy	Kingsville	68	56	Cloudy
Amarillo	53	32	Cloudy	Livingston	59	54	Cloudy
Austin	56	48	Cloudy	Longview	57	48	Cloudy
Beaumont	63	55	Cloudy	Lubbock	49	33	Rain
Brownsville	73	60	P Cloudy	Lufkin	58	51	Cloudy
Brownwood	52	42	Cloudy	Midland	58	42	Cloudy
Corpus Christi	67	55	M Cloudy	Raymondville	72	58	M Cloudy
Corsicana	53	49	Cloudy	Rosenberg	64	57	Rain
Dallas	51	46	Cloudy	San Antonio	59	49	Cloudy
Del Rio	61	47	Cloudy	San Marcos	56	49	Cloudy
El Paso	54	37	Cloudy	Sulphur Springs	51	47	Cloudy
Fort Stockton	61	39	P Cloudy	Sweetwater	55	42	Cloudy
Gainesville	49	42	Cloudy	Tyler	54	48	Cloudy
Greenville	49	46	Cloudy	Weatherford	50	44	Cloudy
Houston	63	56	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	54	45	Cloudy

## Sheriff

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

Note - Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 57 inmates at the time of this report.

• **TRIG DANIEL GILKEY**, 19, was booked by the HCSO on a warrant of possession of marijuana, less than 2 ounces.

• **IVY LYNN LEDESMA**, 33, was booked by the BSPD on warrants for failure to appear, bail jumping and failure to appear and 11 counts of parent contributing to non-attendance.

• **VANESSA C. OLIVAS**, 33, was booked by the HCSO on a charge of sentence - theft more than \$20,000 but less than \$100,000.

• **EDDIE GLENN OVERTON**, 24, was booked by the BSPD on a charge of park, stand/stop on a sidewalk.

• **MICHAEL DAVID PETERS**, 25, was booked by the GCSO on charges of interfering with an emergency request for assistance and terroristic threat of a family/house member.

• **RONALD WAYNE STINSON**, 35, was booked by the BSPD on a charge of theft of property, more than \$100 but less than \$750.



## BIG SPRING HERALD

[www.BigSpringHerald.com](http://www.BigSpringHerald.com)

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## Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity:

• **RONALD WAYNE STINSON**, of 4302 S. 87 Hwy. was arrested on a charge of theft of property, more than \$100 but less than \$750, shoplifting.

• **IVY LYNN LEDESMA**, 33, of 1503 E. Cherokee was arrested on 13 warrants from other agencies.

• **EDDIE GLENN OVERTON**, 24, of 7503 N. Service Rd. was arrested on a charge of stop, stand or park on a sidewalk.

• **STOLEN VEHICLE** was reported in the 3100

block of N. Hwy 87.

• **MINOR ACCIDENT** was reported at the intersection of Gregg and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets and in the 2600 block of S. Gregg St.

• **BURGLARY OF A HABITATION** was reported in the 2400 block of N. Birdwell Lane.

• **CRIMINAL MISCHIEF** was reported in the 2700 block of Wasson Rd. and the 3600 block of W. Hwy 80.

• **THEFT** was reported in the 2000 block of S. Gregg St.

**Local 5-Day Forecast**

Thu 1/7	Fri 1/8	Sat 1/9	Sun 1/10	Mon 1/11
<b>62/37</b>	<b>59/29</b>	<b>47/21</b>	<b>50/22</b>	<b>46/24</b>
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**Texas at a Glance**



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Brownwood	52	42	Cloudy	Midland	58	42	Cloudy
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Corsicana	53	49	Cloudy	Rosenberg	64	57	Rain
Dallas	51	46	Cloudy	San Antonio	59	49	Cloudy
Del Rio	61	47	Cloudy	San Marcos	56	49	Cloudy
El Paso	54	37	Cloudy	Sulphur Springs	51	47	Cloudy
Fort Stockton	61	39	P Cloudy	Sweetwater	55	42	Cloudy

**GUNS**

Continued from Page 1

For one thing, studies have shown that criminals are more likely to get guns directly from friends or other social connections than at gun shows or flea markets.

The president also called for the hiring of more than 230 additional examiners and other staff to process the millions of background checks received annually. But even with added manpower, there's no way to completely eliminate human error like the clerical mistakes that allowed Dylann Roof, the young man charged in the Charleston, South Carolina, church massacre, to buy a weapon even though he should have been disqualified after an earlier drug arrest.

The White House did not set a threshold for the number of guns someone has to sell to be covered by the licensing and background check requirement. But it warned that people can

be charged with a federal crime punishable by up to five years in prison for selling as few as two firearms when there is evidence they are running a business, such as selling weapons in their original packaging and for a profit.

Theresa O'Rourke of Downers Grove, Illinois, said she hopes Obama's action will deter illegal transactions that have deadly consequences. Her best friend, 36-year-old Jitka Vesel, was killed in 2011 by a stalker who had illegally purchased a gun from a seller he met through Armslist.com, an online gun site. The seller was sentenced to prison after pleading guilty to an illegal sale.

"People do it now because it's easy," O'Rourke said. "But if we say upfront that if you break the law and you are going to go to prison, most people are going to take a step back and say, 'You know what? It's not worth it.'"

She and other gun control advocates said too many individuals

make a living selling guns without obtaining the \$150 license and following requirements to conduct background checks, keep detailed sales records and face federal inspections.

Private sales — often carried out in person after Internet advertisements connect sellers and buyers — can be exploited by convicted felons, domestic abusers and others who cannot pass a background check, critics say.

Private sales have increasingly gone online over the last decade, but precise data is hard to pin down. GunBroker.com, which calls itself the world's largest online auction site for firearms and accessories, says it has grown every year since 1999. It now boasts 750,000 active listings on any given day. Armslist claims 7 million site visits per month.

One in 20 guns advertised through Armslist last year was linked to an unlicensed seller who had listed at least 25 guns, according to recent research published

by Everytown for Gun Safety, a gun control group backed by former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg. A 2013 investigation by that group's predecessor, Mayors Against Illegal Guns, found that more than 3 percent of potential buyers on Armslist had criminal records that would bar them from owning firearms.

Armslist, which was founded after Craigslist banned gun ads in 2007, says in a disclaimer on its website that it doesn't get involved in transactions and that buyers and sellers must follow all state and federal gun laws. Still, guns sold through ads on the site have been linked to some fatal shootings.

A lawsuit filed in October alleges that an abusive husband purchased a handgun through an Armslist ad and used it to kill his wife and two other women at a salon in suburban Milwaukee in 2012. The man, Radcliffe Haughton, was able to buy the gun even though a judge had issued a restraining order days earlier that should

have made him ineligible. He went online to say he was "looking to buy ASAP," and made the purchase in the parking lot of a McDonald's, the lawsuit says.

Armslist owner Jonathan Gibbon called Obama's moves "well-meaning but ultimately ineffective." He said many private sellers want to conduct background checks but are discouraged by a "costly and burdensome" system that requires them to go to licensed dealers and pay fees.

"Further scrutiny of law-abiding people will not stop criminals," he said.

Everytown president John Feinblatt called the clarification a welcome if modest step.

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Expires 1-31-2016 274568

**Take note**

For more information, contact Sherry Hodnett at 264-7911 or 432-213-0150.

- Mobile meals is in need of volunteer delivery drivers. If you donate one hour per week to help deliver meals to the elderly, call Kim Plew at 263-4016 or 213-7960.

- Victim Services is a non-profit independent community-based program serving victims of all violent crime, including, but not limited to, assault, sexual assault and domestic violence. Victim Services advocates are available 24 hours of day, 365 days a year to provide crisis intervention or accompaniment to the hospital and law enforcement agencies as needed. If you can commit to 30-hour training, an interview process and a background check, we need you. For more information, call Linda Calvio at 432-263-3312.

**MLK Walk**

A march to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. will be held at 6 p.m. Monday, Jan 18 on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. The march will commence at the corner of Gregg St. and Martin Luther King Boulevard. Youth organization and other groups are welcome. Please bring your favorite lighting devices to light your path.

**Meetings**

- The Big Spring Art Association meets every third Tuesday, September through May at 7 p.m. in the basement of the Howard County Library. Everyone is welcome to attend. Memberships are available. The annual dues are \$20.

- The Big Spring Symphony Board of Directors meets every first Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. at the symphony office, 808 Scurry Street.

- The Kiwanis Club of Big Spring meets at noon every Thursday in the Cactus Room at Howard College. Visitors are welcome.

- Order of the Eastern Star Big Spring Chapter 67 meets the third Tuesday of each month at 219 Main St. Dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. Lodge meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. For more information, contact Jimmy Ruth at 271-2176.

- Staked Plains Masonic Lodge No. 598 meets the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. (dinner is at 6 p.m.) at 219 1/2 Main St. All Masons are welcome.

**Volunteer opportunities**

- Home Hospice is in need of volunteers of all ages. The organization is requesting volunteers to sit with patients, make items for patients and help with office work. Volunteers set their own hours.

**RUN**

Continued from Page 1

To register, go online to PermianBasinEvents.com. Early registration fees are \$20 for individuals or \$35 for a couple and day of registration fees are \$25 for individuals or \$40 for a couple.

"Runs at the Big Spring State Park have a view off of a 200 foot limestone ridge and the elevation gain makes it a more challenging course," said Alton.

The Run 2 Love 2 Run will take place on Saturday, Feb. 13 at 10 a.m. with registration closing at 9 a.m. Parking will be by the Summit Playground. The front gate will be closed at 9:45 a.m. for the 10 a.m. start. The gate will be reopened at 11 a.m.

Long sleeve event t-shirts proclaim to all that you Run 2 Love 2 Run.

For more information visit PermianBasinEvents.com or call Ron Alton at 432-263-4931.

**MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL**

24th & Johnson 267-8288

Lyle Moore, 44, died Friday. The family will receive friends from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM Thursday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Bessie Stoker, 71, died Friday. The family will receive friends from 6:00 PM until 7:00 PM Wednesday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Funeral services will be at 11:00 AM Thursday at Myers & Smith Chapel with burial at Trinity Memorial Park.

Benny Islas, 51, died Tuesday. Vigil services will be at 7:30 PM Wednesday at Myers & Smith Chapel. Funeral Services will be at 2:00 PM Thursday at Holy Trinity Catholic Church.

Cynthia Smith, 59, died Thursday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

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**Charles Myers**  
Attorney At Law

**Family Law And Criminal Law**

Ward & Myers, L.L.P.

**432-683-3700 • Midland, TX**  
charles@wardmyers.com

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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 writers and not those of the Big Spring Herald unless otherwise indicated.

## ADDRESSES

### FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

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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 at editor@bigspringherald.com.
- By mail at P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721

## LETTER POLICIES

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor. We ask you to follow these guidelines:

- Sign your letter.
- Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street address for verification purposes.
- We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity.
- We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per 30-day period per author.
- Letters that are unsigned or do not include a telephone number or address will not be considered.
- Letters should be e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com or mailed to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721.

## DAILY PRAYER

May we have a cheerful demeanor, Lord, showing Your love to everyone we meet.

Amen

# You can't legislate righteousness

Is there anybody who seriously believes gun control legislation will have any measurable effect on violence and mass killings in America? Even though there is a law against speeding, in any given hour of the day or night between Big Spring and Midland probably a hundred motorists could be ticketed for speeding. There are laws against all sorts of things that do absolutely nothing to stop people from breaking them, and that's not a new problem in America. In fact, choosing to ignore laws that don't suit you has been a human trait since the beginning of time.

It's really not the passing of more laws, or even regulations designed to control any specific entity, object or activity that will have any substantial effect on a problem like crime. The President and Congress can pass laws 'til the cows come home and whatever changes said laws may usher in will be negligible at best and may actually facilitate the problem even more. History proves that theory.

For almost a century, the nation has experienced a sustained link between the regulation of weapons and the regulation of alcohol and drugs. In 1919, the passage of the 18th Amendment ushered the nation into the era of Prohibition. The restrictions on the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcohol had a marked effect on criminal activity. With the advent of bootlegging, organized crime spread outside of the nation's ethnic enclaves and became a dominant economic force in urban centers across the country.

As underground profit margins surged, gang rivalries emerged, and criminal activity mounted. The homicide rate across the nation rose 78 percent during Prohibition. In Chicago alone, there were more than 400 gang-related murders a year. According to scholar Edward Sullivan, writing in 1929, Prohibition resulted in "the greatest crime record ever attained by a nation."

In 1933, the legislature passed the 21st Amendment, effectively bringing an end to Prohibition; in its aftermath, the government passed the National Firearms Act of 1934, the first federal regu-

lation on guns in U.S. history. With the epidemic of alcohol-related violence and the sensationalized run of such criminals as John Dillinger, Al Capone, and Bonnie and Clyde, American lawmakers saw a pressing need to regulate the spread of weapons into the general population.

The law, which levied sharp regulations and high taxes on gun sales, focused on weapons generally associated with gangster violence: "A shotgun or rifle having a barrel of less than eighteen inches in length, or any other weapon, except a pistol or revolver, from which a shot is discharged by an explosive if such weapon is capable of being concealed on the person, or a machine gun."

In response to the law's passage, the National Rifle Association (NRA) formed its legislative affairs division, what would become the organization's powerful lobbying arm.

Nearly 50 years later, in 1982, Ronald Reagan ushered in his famous "war on drugs." The federal government embarked on a massive anti-drug campaign, with strict regulations and harsh penalties. Between 1980 and 1984, funding for FBI anti-drug initiatives ballooned from \$8 million to \$95 million.

In the years that followed, new technologies, political and military alliances, and immigration patterns coalesced to create a rapidly expanding drug trade in the United States, particularly in the nation's inner-city communities, where deindustrialization resulted in rampant unemployment.

By 1987, the rate of industrial employment among minority workers had dropped to 20 percent, down from roughly 70 percent as late as 1970. With few opportunities for legal employment, an underground drug economy blossomed.

And just as Prohibition created the space for organized crime to grow in the 1920s, the war on drugs bred gun-related violence throughout the nation.

According to scholar Michelle Alexander, "crack hit the streets in 1985... leading to a spike in violence as drug markets struggled to stabilize, and the anger and frustration associated with joblessness boiled." As scholar David Kennedy writes, "[c]rack blew through America's poor black neighborhoods like the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse."

Once again, as violence

surged, questions of gun regulation made their way into federal policy conversations. In 1986, after four years of complex negotiations and divisive politicking, Congress passed the Firearm Owners Protection Act. While the law did create a widespread ban on the ownership and transfer of any automatic weapon not registered before May 19, 1986, basically the law had the effect of limiting the regulatory power of the federal government.

The legislation was alternately celebrated as "necessary to restore fundamental fairness and clarity to our nation's firearms laws" and condemned as a "national disgrace". Debates over firearm regulation in recent American history have arisen out of the incidents of mass shootings that have been occurring with frightening frequency. Our society is obsessed with violence and killing and guns have become the easy target for condemnation. But, I seriously wonder if more laws and regulations will do anything more than disarm the innocent? Black market guns are already big business.

Am I opposed to all gun control legislation? Of course not. Properly conducted background checks are reasonable and sensible. But does making it harder to buy a gun keep them out of the hands of criminals? Of course not. Did Prohibition stop people from buying alcohol? Of course not. Do speed limit signs keep people from driving 90 mph? Of course not.

Why? Because what is really needed to heal the ills of our nation is not more laws, or even stricter policing and enforcing of the ones already in existence. What must happen for any marked change to occur is for the hearts of humankind to experience transformation. People have to realize how vitally important morality and decency is to a civilization and its society. Common sense in human relationships needs a strong comeback and a renewed appreciation for human life, both born and unborn, is desperately needed.

How can that happen? Is it possible for America to be upright again? A fundamental return to Godly principles and prayer is our only hope. You can't legislate righteousness.

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

## High taxes, regulations, & a swell economy

In the mythology of the right, California must fail. Its high taxes, strict environmental rules and thick book of regulations are all ingredients in the conservative recipe for economic meltdown. That California is prospering nicely throws a pie in the face of its harshest critics.

To get around this clash of ideas and reality, an alternative version of California-going-down has been created. It is built on cherry-picked facts, numbers out of context and anecdotes. And the right continues churning out stories of companies "fleeing" California.

The conservative City Journal has devoted its winter issue to what's wrong with California. One piece accuses "coastal elites" of destroying drought-plagued almond farmers by "privileging the needs of fish over the needs of people." (What the fish need is a minimum water flow to their habitats to save them from extinction.)

Not to mess up a sweet fairy tale, but the "coastal elites" and the farmers are often one and the same people. The largest producer of nuts in the state is a company owned by Beverly Hills billionaires Lynda and Stew-

art Resnick. Hedge funds and banks have also gotten into the almond game, now that a lucrative Asian market has sent nut prices soaring. Thus, in the jaws of a multiyear drought, California "farmers" continue to plant water-gulping almond trees.

What else is wrong with California? A state minimum wage raised to \$10 an hour from \$9. That Wal-Mart is raising wages to \$10 nationwide should offer a hint that \$10 an hour is not extraordinarily high.

Zoning and environmental regulations have made California real estate quite expensive, especially along the coast. This is true, although having the Pacific Ocean on a long border hampers development, as well.

One reason zoning and environmental regulations make real estate more expensive is they also make it more desirable.

One shouldn't have to explain this to The Wall Street Journal, but one does after reading its commentary about "the mismatch between supply and demand" in California housing prices.

Actually, supply and demand don't match or mismatch. Supply is supply, and demand is demand. When demand rises faster than supply, prices rise. That's the law of supply and demand working as it's supposed to.

The writer is obviously trying to say that imposing high standards for preserving the quality

of life causes housing costs to rise. OK. Those who can't pay the price — or who want bigger spaces — can and often do consider other parts of the country.

Though the decisions by Toyota and Occidental Petroleum to transfer their headquarters to Texas may energize California's critics, they represent narrow slices of a bigger picture. A new study from Beacon Economics and Next 10 shows that California remains a powerhouse in attracting companies and well-to-do people.

In 2013, California ranked fourth in job creation by new businesses and fifth in creation of new businesses (a growth rate of 5.5 percent). From 2007 to 2014, 49,000 more people with a bachelor's degree moved into the state from other states than moved out.

So is California an easy place in which to do business? It's not. Is it a paradise for less skilled workers? Sadly, no. Few places are these days.

What the strong numbers do mean, Beacon partner Chris Thornberg told the Los Angeles Times, is "that being 'business friendly' is not the be-all and end-all of economic development." He went on: "When you actually look at the data, you'll find that as kooky as California is, it's not a state that's underperforming."

Let the critics carp. But do correct them..



EDDY PRINCE



FROMA HERROP

# Ports-to-Plains: Critical for domestic trade

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the sixth in a series of articles highlighting the Ports-to-Plains project.*



MICHAEL REEVES

The economies of communities are dependent upon primary industries those industries producing a product sold outside the community bringing money into the local economy. Having the ability to move those products outside the community to markets is critical to the recruitment of primary industries. Movement by trucks on highways, like the Ports to Plains Alliance Corridor, plays a significant role in expanding and maintaining those economies. With the base economies of agriculture and energy, domestic trade is a discussion about moving those products and other manufactured goods. The Corridor passes through a nine state region including Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming, South Dakota, North Dakota and Montana.



Ports to Plains Alliance

The Freight Analysis Framework (FAF3), by the FHWA Office of Freight Management and Operations, summarizes those domestic movements. The FAF3 estimates that in 2015 almost \$96 billion was exported from these nine states to markets within these states by truck. This estimate does not include the truck movements within each state, only those exporting goods out of state into the other nine states. This value has grown from about \$87 billion in 2002, a growth of 10% over the period.

Looking to the future in 2040, the FAF3 projects a 104% increase in value of goods exported to corridor states from 2015. This accounts for \$195 billion in domestic exports between corridor states.

### 2015 Estimated Exports to Corridor States

- Texas \$31,740
- Oklahoma \$17,217
- Colorado \$13,225
- North Dakota \$9,840
- South Dakota \$6,237
- New Mexico \$5,935
- Nebraska \$4,958
- Wyoming \$4,549
- Montana \$2,113

### 2040 Estimated Exports to Corridor States

- Texas \$70,926
- Oklahoma \$29,963
- North Dakota \$27,723
- Colorado \$24,474

- South Dakota \$19,359
- New Mexico \$15,805
- Nebraska \$12,997
- Wyoming \$12,170
- Montana \$6,345

The data pictures a dramatic increase in the number of truck moving along the corridor. As trucks move north/south they will either use a safer, more efficient Ports to Plains Alliance Corridor or add to the already congested Interstate 35 and Interstate 25.

In upcoming weeks this series will further define the economic impacts of the Ports to Plains Alliance Corridor by describing its role in Canada and Mexico trade as well as local roadside services (retail) and manufacturing and distribution (primary industries) impacts.

*Ports-to-Plains is a grass roots alliance of over 275 communities and businesses, including alliance partners Heartland Expressway, Theodore Roosevelt Expressway and Eastern Alberta Trade Corridor Coalition, whose mission is to advocate for a robust international transportation infrastructure to promote economic security and prosperity throughout North America's energy and agricultural heartland including Mexico to Canada. Additional information on the Ports-to-Plains Alliance is available at [www.portstoplains.com](http://www.portstoplains.com).*



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## News in brief

### North Korea says it tested H-bomb, though advance doubted

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Soon after the ground shook around its nuclear testing facility, North Korea trumpeted its first hydrogen bomb test — a powerful, self-proclaimed “H-bomb of justice” that would mark a major and unanticipated advance for its still-limited nuclear arsenal.

Pyongyang’s announcement Wednesday was met with widespread skepticism, but whatever the North detonated in its fourth nuclear test, another round of tough international sanctions looms for the defiant, impoverished country.

The test likely pushed Pyongyang’s scientists and engineers closer to their goal of building a warhead small enough to place on a missile that can reach the U.S. mainland. But South Korea’s spy agency thought the estimated explosive yield from the explosion was much smaller than what even a failed H-bomb detonation would produce.

The test was met with a burst of jubilation and pride in Pyongyang. A North Korean television anchor, reading a typically propaganda-heavy statement, said a test of a “miniaturized” hydrogen bomb had been a “perfect success” that elevated the country’s “nuclear might to the next level.”

A large crowd celebrated in front of Pyongyang’s main train station as the announcement was read on a big video screen, with people taking videos or photos of the screen on their mobile phones and applauding and cheering.

### H-bomb: More powerful than Hiroshima bomb, fits on missile

TOKYO (AP) — The announcement Wednesday from North Korea that it had carried out a nuclear test brought to the front lines of global attention a phrase not often heard since the Cold War — “the H-bomb.”

As opposed to the atomic bomb, the kind dropped on Japan in the closing days of World War II, the hydrogen bomb, or so-called “superbomb” can be far more powerful — experts say, by 1,000 times or more.

North Korea’s first three nuclear tests, from 2006 to 2013, were A-bombs on roughly the same scale as the ones used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which together killed more than 200,000 people. Pyongyang announced Wednesday that it had detonated its first H-bomb; while seismic data supported the claim of a large explosion, there was no immediate way to confirm the type.

Atomic bombs rely on fission, or atom-splitting, just as nuclear power plants do. The hydrogen bomb, also called the thermonuclear bomb, uses fusion, or atomic nuclei coming to-

gether, to produce explosive energy. Stars also produce energy through fusion.

“Think what’s going on inside the sun,” says Takao Takahara, professor of international politics and peace research at Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo. “In theory, the process is potentially infinite. The amount of energy is huge.”

### Obama measures wouldn’t have kept guns from mass shooters

The gun control measures a tearful President Barack Obama announced Tuesday would not have prevented the slaughters of 20 first-graders at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, or 14 county workers at a holiday party in San Bernardino, California.

Obama’s executive action expands mandatory background checks to gun shows, flea markets and online sales, adds more than 230 examiners and staff to help process them and calls on states to submit accurate and updated criminal history data.

Those measures are seen as crucial to stemming gun suicides — the cause of two-thirds of gun deaths — by blocking immediate access to weapons. But, an Associated Press review shows, they would have had no impact in keeping weapons from the hands of suspects in several of the deadliest recent mass shootings that have spurred calls for tighter gun control.

The shooters at Sandy Hook and San Bernardino used weapons bought by others, shielding them from background checks. In other cases, the shooters legally bought guns.

In Aurora, Colorado, and at the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C., men undergoing mental health treatment were cleared to buy weapons because federal background checks looked to criminal histories and court-ordered commitments for signs of mental illness.

The Obama administration is making changes in that realm by seeking to plug certain Social Security Administration data into the background check system and by helping states report more information about people barred from gun possession for mental health reasons.

### Iraq offers to mediate between Saudi Arabia, Iran

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iraq on Wednesday offered to mediate between Saudi Arabia and Iran after tensions soared following the kingdom’s execution of a Shiite cleric and attacks on two Saudi diplomatic posts in the Islamic Republic.

The standoff has seen Saudi Arabia sever diplomatic ties with its longtime regional rival and could hinder efforts to resolve the conflicts in Syria and Yemen, where Riyadh and Tehran back opposite sides, as well as

affect the implementation of the Iran nuclear deal.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari proposed mediation during a news conference in Tehran, but also referred to the execution of Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr as a “crime.” Saudi Arabia and its allies say al-Nimr was found guilty of terrorism charges, and that condemnations of the execution amount to meddling in Riyadh’s internal affairs.

Iraq has undertaken a delicate balancing act amid the latest regional turmoil. The Shiite-led government in Baghdad relies on Iranian help to battle the extremist Islamic State group, but is also trying to repair ties to oil-rich Saudi Arabia, which last week sent an ambassador to Baghdad for the first time in 25 years.

Speaking alongside Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, al-Jaafari said Iraq’s place in the heart of the Middle East allows it to play a role in trying to “alleviate tensions.”

### German police: New Year assaults may be linked to crime ring

COLOGNE, Germany (AP) — Police in Germany said Wednesday they are investigating whether a string of sexual assaults and thefts during New Year’s celebrations in Cologne is linked to a known criminal network in the nearby city of Duesseldorf.

The assaults last week have prompted outrage in Germany and a fresh debate about immigration, after police said the perpetrators appeared to be of “Arab or North African origin.”

A more nuanced picture of what happened in the New Year’s Eve chaos outside the Cologne train station emerged Wednesday.

Police said about 1,000 men gathered there and that smaller groups surrounded individual women, harassed them and stole their belongings. Police do not believe all 1,000 men were involved in the attacks, though they have not said how many were.

The interior minister of North Rhine-Westphalia state, where Cologne and Duesseldorf are located, told news agency dpa that police have identified three suspects but have not yet arrested anyone.

### US sees Assad staying in Syria until March 2017

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration’s best-case scenario for political transition in Syria does not foresee Bashar Assad stepping down as the country’s leader before March 2017, outlasting Barack Obama’s presidency by at least two months, according to a document obtained by The Associated Press.

An internal timeline prepared for U.S. officials dealing with the Syria crisis sets an unspecified date in March 2017 for Assad to “relinquish” his position as president and for his “inner circle” to depart. That would

be more than five years after Obama first called for Assad to leave.

The timeline is based on a broad U.N.-endorsed plan that was initially laid out at an international conference in Vienna in November. Syria, according to that strategy, would hold elections for a new president and parliament in August 2017 — some 19 months from now. In the interim, Syria would be run by a transitional governing body.

Countless hurdles lie ahead for implementation of this latest blueprint for ending five years of conflict that has killed more than a quarter-million people, created the worst European refugee crisis since World War II and allowed the Islamic State group to carve out a would-be caliphate across parts of Iraq and Syria.

Not the least of those hurdles is the growing rift between Sunni-led Saudi Arabia and Shiite-ruled Iran, which back opposite sides in the Syria conflict and had to be lobbied heavily to agree to meet in Vienna to craft a way forward for the war-torn country. Saudi Arabia executed a prominent Shiite cleric and then severed diplomatic relations with Iran this week after its embassy in Tehran was stormed by a mob protesting the death.

### Armed group in Oregon fears raid; critics decry goals

BURNS, Ore. (AP) — The small, armed group occupying a remote national wildlife preserve in Oregon has said repeatedly that local people should control federal lands — a sentiment that frustrates critics who say the lands are already managed to help everyone from ranchers to recreationalists.

With the takeover entering its fourth day Wednesday, authorities had not removed the group of roughly 20 people from the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in eastern Oregon’s high desert country. But members of the group — some from as far away as Arizona and Michigan — were growing increasingly tense, saying they feared a federal raid.

Arizona rancher LaVoy Finicum said Tuesday evening that he believes federal officials have issued warrants for the arrest of five group members — including himself and Ammon Bundy — but Finicum offered no details.

The FBI in Portland referred calls to the Harney County Joint Information Center, which said in a statement it had no information on arrests or arrest warrants and that authorities were “still working on a peaceful resolution.”

Bundy said they would take a defensive position anticipating a possible raid. Late Tuesday, the group moved a large plow vehicle to block the refuge’s driveway.

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# Closing of homeless shelter for vets underlines woes

By MARTIN KUZ

San Antonio Express-News  
LAREDO, Texas — John Perez thinks back on his experience in war as a time when life made sense.

Deployed to Iraq in 2006 with the Marines, he served as an operations specialist, arranging the logistics for truck convoys delivering fuel and supplies to U.S. troops. He enjoyed the complexity of the work as much as the clarity of purpose.

What bewildered him was returning to the civilian world after his honorable discharge in 2008.

He left the military hoping to save a marriage that unspooled over the next two years. In 2012, he lost his job at a retail store when his bosses refused to alter his work schedule so that he could attend community college.

As Perez began taking classes, he ran through a series of low-wage jobs that paid too little for him to keep his apartment. By this summer, he had slipped into homelessness, couch-surfing from one friend's house to another.

He recovered a measure of stability in August after learning about a veterans transitional center housed inside the Rio Grande Plaza Hotel on the fringe of Laredo's downtown. Since opening in February, the program has provided shelter for more than 100 homeless veterans, creating a refuge from uncertainty.

"This place has been a godsend," said Perez, 29, looking out the wall-to-wall windows on one side of his seventh-floor room, with views of the border-town sprawl that spreads across the Rio Grande into Nuevo Laredo. "It gives you a chance to catch your breath."

But the forces of progress soon will engulf the oasis. The center closed Thursday because of the hotel's pending sale and renovation, and half the 28 veterans enrolled in the program at the start of December will have moved out by month's end.

Perez and the others will hold on to their rooms until late spring in exchange for working at the hotel 100 hours a month, tending to main-

tenance, housekeeping and similar tasks. Then they, too, must pack up and leave.

"It's a blow," said Perez, who attends Texas A&M International University on the GI Bill and wants to teach high school. The median rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Laredo tops \$700 a month, and he wonders if more couch-surfing lies ahead. "I try not to dwell on that."

The center's demise on the last day of 2015 overlapped with the passing of a five-year deadline for a national campaign to end veterans homelessness. President Barack Obama and federal officials set that target date when they launched the initiative in 2010.

The effort, if failing to reach its original goal, has succeeded in reducing the number of veterans living on the streets and in shelters by more than a third, from 74,000 to fewer than 48,000.

Much of the decline has occurred in large metro areas, including San Antonio, where housing officials had placed 694 veterans in permanent housing this year as of Dec. 15.

Houston, Las Vegas and New Orleans are among a handful of cities where officials declared in the past year that they had eliminated veterans homelessness. Virginia's governor announced last month that his state had accomplished the feat.

A federal rental assistance program run by the departments of Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs has proven crucial to the campaign across the country.

Eligible veterans receive a voucher that covers 70 percent or more of their rent, and they gain access to mental health counseling, drug and alcohol treatment, job training and other support services.

HUD has awarded 79,000 vouchers since 2008, with 650 vouchers allocated to San Antonio, one of some 225 cities that signed on to a nationwide initiative to end veterans homelessness this year. Local officials credit the program with helping to lower a homeless veterans population that was estimated at 849 to 1,000 in January.

By contrast, Laredo



KGNS TV

has received 15 vouchers, a consequence of joining the program only this year, after the VA hired a housing case manager to work at its outpatient clinic here. Veterans advocates calculate that 75 to 110 former service members lack permanent housing in the city of 250,000 residents.

Given the scarcity of vouchers, the veterans center has lightened the burden on Laredo's emergency and transitional shelters.

John Navarro, 25, a former Army specialist diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder linked to his tour in Iraq in 2011, struggled to find work after leaving the military and returning to his native Laredo two years ago. Running out of family and friends with whom he could live, he moved into the transitional center this summer.

In January, he will start classes at Laredo Community College using the GI Bill while working at the hotel to hang on to his room. The program has given him a sense of direction that he has sought since the Army.

"This isn't some vacation home," he said. "You're here because you're trying to get your life together. That's why you hate to see it closing."

Gabriel Lopez founded the South Texas Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans Association in 2008. A veteran of both wars, he had come back to his hometown of Laredo a year earlier following two decades in the Navy.

He formed the advocacy and support group in part to ease his re-entry

into civilian life. Yet shadowed by anxiety and depression from his combat tours, he wound up homeless for a time.

The ordeal shaped his belief that, then as now, the city lags in responding to an obvious and deepening need.

"The problem of homeless veterans is real and it's right in front of us," he said. "Politicians always say they want to help when it's election time. After that, they disappear."

Lopez organized the veterans transitional center after Bill Collier, the Plaza's primary owner, approached him about a plan to house former service members.

A Lubbock oilman whose late father served in World War II, Collier, who knew of Lopez's advocacy work, offered to provide rent-free rooms to homeless veterans. Lopez agreed to coordinate the transitional program, connecting them to support services through the VA and nonprofit groups that could steer them toward independence.

The two men anticipated that the center would attract perhaps 10 to 15 veterans. By spring, more than 40 had moved into the 15-story hotel, some with spouses and young children.

The Plaza had plenty of vacancies among its 207 rooms to accommodate them. Built in 1975 and resembling a giant Gatling gun barrel propped upright, the hotel shows signs of age — threadbare car-

pet, scuffed walls, wan lighting — that might provoke paying guests to demand a refund.

For Manuel Martinez, on the other hand, Room 507 feels like something better than home. "To me, this is heaven," he said.

Martinez, 56, finished a six-year stint in the Army in 1983. Following his divorce in 1995, he slipped in and out of homelessness and sobriety for much of the next 20 years, wandering from Florida to Minnesota, Virginia to North Dakota.

The Laredo native heard about the transitional center when he traveled home in the spring to look after his dying mother. His room's sparse furnishings consist of two beds, two chairs and a dresser, along with a table and TV. A coffee maker sits atop a small refrigerator that on a recent afternoon was bare except for a jar of mayonnaise and a hunk of cheese. A paper plate on the dresser held a couple of brittle tortillas.

"Look at all this," Martinez said with a smile. Slight of build, he stood in the middle of the room, thin arms stretched wide as if welcoming the sunlight through the windows. "Am I lucky or what?"

He will stay at the hotel for another few months, making use of his con-

struction and carpentry skills around the property while continuing to search for a job with Lopez's guidance.

"I'm tired of being on the streets," he said. "I want to work."

The hotel's imminent sale coincides with the construction of an outlet mall on an adjacent property. Collier, who estimates the Plaza will require as much as \$4 million to renovate, hopes the new owners will retain the remaining veterans as employees.

Along with two friends, he has pumped more than \$300,000 into the transitional center, including utilities and other operating expenses.

In August, attempting to defray costs, he changed the rent-free policy, charging those who stayed longer than 90 days a maximum of \$225 a month. (Veterans unable to afford that amount paid less.)

Collier has solicited support from city officials to relocate the program to one of any number of vacant buildings in Laredo. He has heard nothing in response.

"They all want to talk about veterans, especially if they get in front of a TV camera or a crowd," he said. "But then they never follow through."

Mayor Pete Saenz replied to an interview request about the veterans center with a three-paragraph statement emailed through a spokeswoman.

Calling the program's closing "a great loss," he wrote, "I am confident that our other agencies will help to fill that void."

In August, the city council approved a measure to give veterans priority on the waiting list for city-owned rental units. Webb County Commissioner Jaime Canales, who has talked with Collier about how to rescue the program, conceded that public officials "haven't backed up their rhetoric to step up for veterans."

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## Forsan, Coahoma grab wins

Herald Staff Report

OZONA — The Forsan Buffaloes did it with defense Tuesday night.

The Buffs chalked up their first district win of the season by relying on their defense and some timely shooting en route to a 56-49 win over Ozona.

The Buffaloes trailed, 24-21, after the first half, but scored 19 points in the third quarter to grab the lead and then held on for the victory.

"It was a really close game down the stretch but the guys fought through Ozona's defense to pull out the win," Forsan Coach Gary Huckabee said. "I thought we showed a ton of tenacity."

Josh Evans and Garrett Evans were the leading scorers for Forsan with 18 and 12 points, respectively.

The Buffs return to action Friday when they host Eldorado. Game time is 8 p.m.

### Coahoma 62 Westbrook 58

WESTBROOK — Two hot-shooting quarters gave the Coahoma Bulldogs a big enough cushion to take a 62-58 win over Westbrook in boys' basketball action Tuesday night.

The Bulldogs jumped out to a 24-12 lead after one quarter, then expanded that lead to 57-43 heading into the fourth. The offense hiccuped in the final eight minutes, scoring only 5 points, but Coahoma was able to withstand Westbrook's late rally.

Four Bulldogs scored in double figures, led by Mason Moore's 15 points. Adam Clark and Britton Heath scored 11 points apiece, and Jon Bermea added 10 for Coahoma, which returns to action Friday at home vs. Borden County. Tip-off is at 6:30 p.m.



Tony Claxton photo (www.claxtonphotography.com)

Big Spring's August Alexander attempts a three-pointer during the Lady Steers' game against Tuscola Jim Ned Monday night in Steer Gym.

## Hall vote: Will Griffey set record? Will Bonds get boost?

By BEN WALKER

AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK — Fewer than 500 people get a vote, but most every baseball fan seems to have a vehement opinion on who belongs in the Hall of Fame.

With the election results on deck, a look at what to watch for when the newest members of Cooperstown are announced today at 5 p.m. CST:

**JUNIOR'S JURY:** Ken Griffey Jr. takes his first swing at a truly huge number — will he break the record for the highest voting percentage

ever? Tom Seaver set the bar at 98.84 percent when he was picked on 425 of 430 ballots in 1992.

About one-third of the voters revealed their choices early, and www.bbhoftracker.com said they all listed Griffey. What would hurt his chances? His last 10 years were injury filled, resulting in no seasons with 100 RBIs and just one over .300.

**JUICED UP:** Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens, Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa haven't come close to getting the required 75 percent for induc-

tion. Tarnished by links to steroids, they're almost certain to get shut out this time, too. Yet they could get a boost because about 100 retired writers have lost their vote. There's an assumption — not proven — that a younger electorate might take a different stance on the issue of performance-enhancing drugs.

**CLOSING TIME:** Trevor Hoffman is second on the career saves list with 601 and clearly ranks among the best relief pitchers ever. Even so, the early returns show him falling short in his first try.

Why? Only a handful of relievers have been enshrined, and Hall voters don't quite seem to have a handle on how to evaluate modern-day closers. Mariano Rivera will have no such worries when he's eligible in a few years.

**THE TWEENERS:** Mike Piazza, Jeff Bagwell and Tim Lincecum all drew over 50 percent in the last election and figure to be knocking on the door this time.

Raines might be the most curious case. The leadoff man was among the game's most dynamic players in the 1980s

and had perhaps only one major fault — he wasn't as good as Rickey Henderson.

**PETE AND REPEAT:** Every year, Pete Rose gets a couple of write-in votes. They don't count, of course, because he's not allowed on the ballot. Commissioner Rob Manfred recently rejected Rose's appeal to overturn a lifetime ban for gambling. The career hits leader still has his sympathizers, but at 74, it's getting harder and harder to imagine he'll ever see his plaque hanging in the Hall.

## UT earns 1st Big 12 win

By JIM VERTUNO

AP Sports Writer

AUSTIN, Texas — Far from pretty, Texas' win over Kansas State was certainly gritty. And it earned new coach Shaka Smart a very important milestone: his first Big 12 victory.

Isaiah Taylor scored 17 points and the Longhorns overcame a tough shooting night with some key late-game 3-pointers to beat the Wildcats 60-57, snapping a two-game losing skid.

"When it comes to the result, we always want to win, especially coming off a couple of losses, you want to get it any way you can," Smart said.

Javan Felix scored 14 for Texas (9-5, 1-1 Big 12) and his 3-pointer with just under 4 minutes left gave Texas

its first lead of the second half. Barry Brown scored 15 for Kansas State (10-4, 0-2), but two 3-point attempts in the final seconds were both partially blocked.

The win also let Texas and Smart avoid the program's third 0-2 start in the Big 12 in four years.

"A must-win," said Taylor, a junior who has experienced the rugged road through the Big 12.

The Longhorns still struggled to find offensive rhythm after losing senior center Cam Ridley to a foot injury for 8-to-10 weeks three games ago. But despite a 6 of 23 shooting effort on 3-pointers, the Longhorns got key long-range baskets from Felix and Connor Lammert down the stretch to secure the win.

## Mavericks win 22nd straight at home against Sacramento

By SCHUYLER DIXON

AP Sports Writer

DALLAS (AP) — Deron Williams has been back with his hometown Dallas Mavericks for a couple of months now.

He might have finally had his homecoming parade. Or homecoming dogpile, if you will.

Williams hit a 3-pointer at the buzzer in the second overtime, and the Mavericks pulled out a wild 117-116 victory over Sacramento on Tuesday night for their 22nd consecutive home victory against the Kings.

Williams took an inbounds pass from Devin Harris with 2.3 seconds left, pump faked to get Rudy Gay to fly by him in the left corner and the ball went in after the horn sounded.

toward the hoop, Williams backpedaled a few steps to his right and bumped Kings coach George Karl back into a seat on the Sacramento bench just as the ball went in. An instant later, teammates swarmed Williams on the court.

Dirk Nowitzki hit an earlier 3 as the Mavericks scored the last eight points after falling behind 116-109 with 1:20 left in the second overtime.

DeMarcus Cousins scored 35 for his third straight 30-point game for the Kings, including a buzzer-beating layup for a 98-all tie at the end of regulation.

Former Dallas guard Rajon Rondo was out with back spasms in his first visit since an acrimonious split after an ill-fated half-season with the Mavericks.

Dallas' run against Sacramento is the second-longest current streak versus one team in the NBA behind San Antonio's 32-game run against Golden State, according to STATS.

The Kings haven't won a regular-season game in Dallas since Feb. 27, 2003, when they won 126-124 in overtime. Sacramento did win a game in Dallas during a five-game playoff series victory over the Mavericks in 2004.

The Kings just missed out on snapping the long Dallas skid a night after winning in Oklahoma City for the first time in 15 tries.

"I think it was an incredible game," Cousins said. "There were big shots from them, big shots from us. I guess it was just whoever made the biggest shot."

**The Big Spring Herald is seeking freelance writers to help cover area sporting events. We will pay per article for all material we publish. Contributors must have internet access, as all articles will be submitted via email. If interested, submit one or more samples of your writing to: editor@bigspringherald.com**



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Case No. 15 AD 12

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to adopt

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Ann T. Rider (12507) 200 E. First, Suite 200 Wichita, Kansas 67202 (316) 265-7600 Attorney for Petitioners

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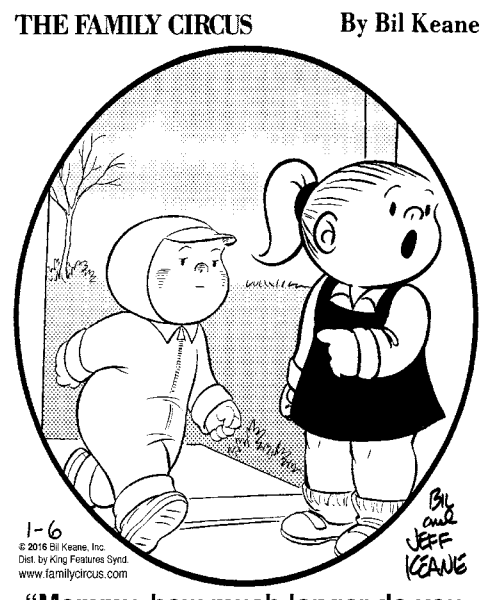
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	Midland	Spanish	Odessa	Odessa	Telemundo	Midland	Odessa	Odessa	Odessa	Midland	Atlanta	Atlanta	Sports	Sports	Sports	New York	New York	Discovery
5:PM	News ABC	Hotel	Big Bang	News CBS	Tele	News	With Schol-ars	Scully: World Show	Mama's	American	Seinfeld	Castle (DVS)	SportsCenter	Around Pardon	Basket Big 12	NCIS (DVS)	Duck D.	Alaskan Bush
6:PM	Jeopardy!	Muchacha	Mod Fam	News	Caso Cer-rado	News	Mani	PBS News-Hour	M*A*S*H	Fam. Guy	Seinfeld	Castle (DVS)	NBA Bas-ketball: New York Knicks at Miami Heat.	College Basketball: Florida at Tennessee.	Cowboys	NCIS (DVS)	Duck D.	Alaskan Bush
7:PM	Wheel	Antes Muerta que	American Idol	Broke Girl Mike	Celia (SS)	Myst-Laura	Upd Dollars	Nature (DVS)	NOVA (DVS)	Hap.Days Laverne	Supernatural	Castle (DVS)	College Basketball: California at Oregon.	NBA Basketball: Grizzlies at Thunder	Mavs Live	Movie: G.I. Joe: Retaliation (DVS)	Duck D.	Alaskan Bush
8:PM	Mod Fam blackish	Pasion y Poder	TMZ	People's Choice Awards 2016	Bajo el Mismo Cielo	Law & Order: SVU	Light of the Southwest	NOVA (DVS)	Hap.Days Laverne	Supernatural	Castle (DVS)	College Basketball: California at Oregon.	NBA Basketball: Grizzlies at Thunder	Mavs Live	Movie: G.I. Joe: Retaliation (DVS)	Duck D.	Alaskan Bush	
9:PM	American Crime	Creo/los Hombres	Mod Fam	News	Tele	News	HaYesod	Movie: Particle Fever (DVS)	Heroes	Seinfeld	Big Bang	Castle (DVS)	College Basketball: Grizzlies at Thunder	Mavs Live	NCIS: Los Angeles	Duck D.	Alaskan Bush	
10:PM	Jimmy Kimmel Live	Noticiero	Two Men	Late Show- Colbert	Titulares	Tonight Show	M.25	World (Off Air)	Raising Billy	Conan	Conan	Castle (DVS)	SportsCenter	NBA	Basketball	NCIS: Los Angeles	Duck D.	Alaskan Bush
11:PM	Nightline	Contacto Deportivo	How I Met Cleveland	James Corden	Bajo el Mismo Cielo	Seth Meyers	McDonald Upd	Perry Mason Mystery	King	Cougar	Cougar	CSI: NY	SportsCenter	NFL Live	NBA	NCIS: Los Angeles	Duck D.	Alaskan Bush
12:AM	Extra	Corona de lagrimas	Middle	Insider	Señora Acero (SS)	News	Zola Lev.	King	Cougar	Cougar	CSI: NY	SportsCenter	NFL Live	NBA	NCIS: Los Angeles	Duck D.	Alaskan Bush	
1:AM	Paid	Alma	Law Order: CI	ET	Paid	Paid	Paid	King	Cougar	Cougar	CSI: NY	SportsCenter	NFL Live	NBA	NCIS: Los Angeles	Duck D.	Alaskan Bush	
2:AM	Paid	Hotel	Law Order: CI	ET	Paid	Paid	Paid	King	Cougar	Cougar	CSI: NY	SportsCenter	NFL Live	NBA	NCIS: Los Angeles	Duck D.	Alaskan Bush	

**DENNIS THE MENACE**



"DENNIS DOESN'T THINK ABOUT WHAT HE'S DOING BECAUSE HE'S TOO BUSY THINKING ABOUT WHAT HE'LL DO NEXT."

**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** By Bil Keane

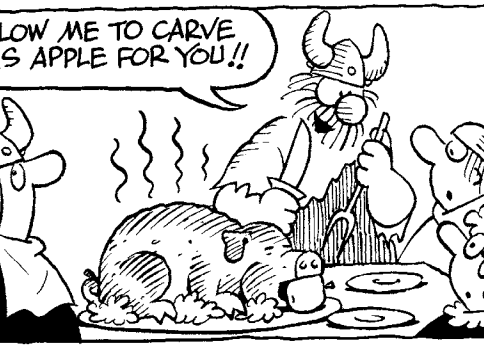


"Mommy, how much longer do you think it'll be before PJ gets his cold this year?"

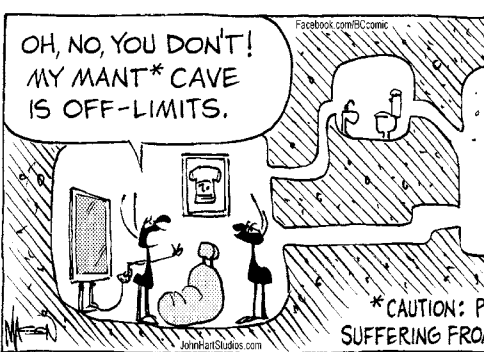
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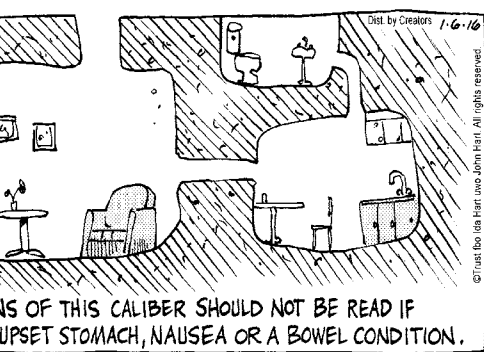
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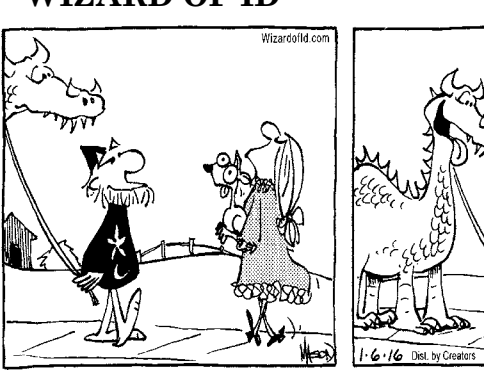
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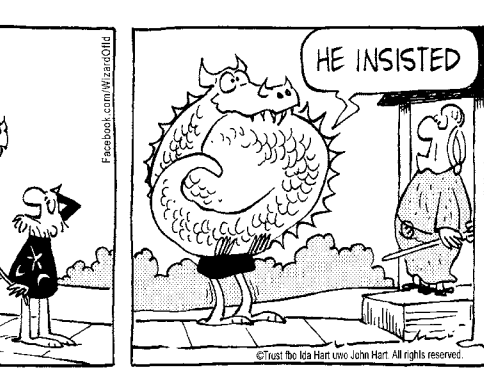
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**AGNES**



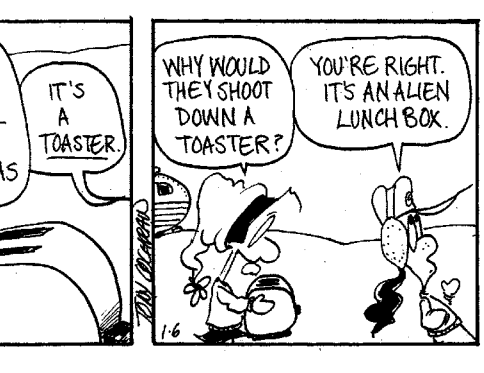
**HI AND LOIS**



**THE OTHER COAST**



**SNUFFY SMITH**



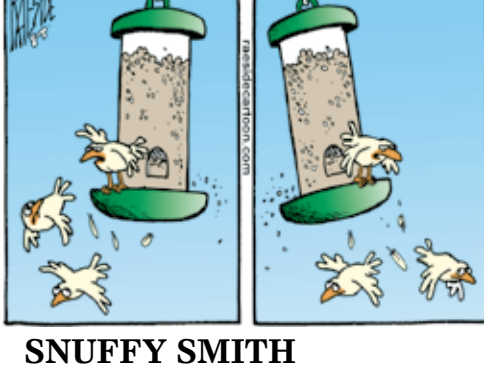
**BEEBLE BAILEY**



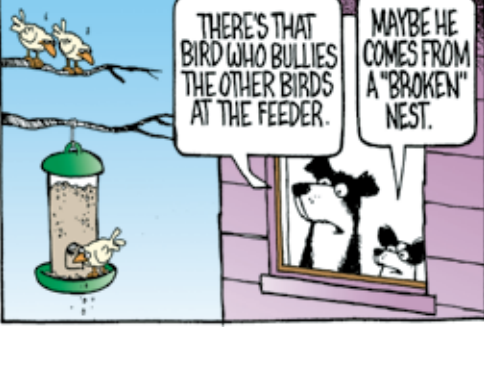
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**BEETLE BAILEY**



**BEETLE BAILEY**



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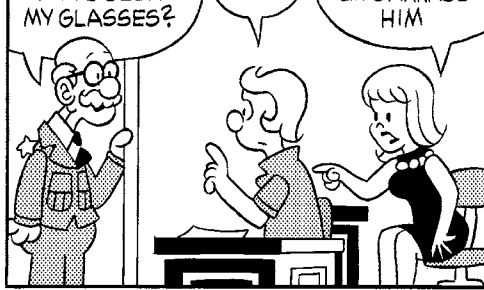
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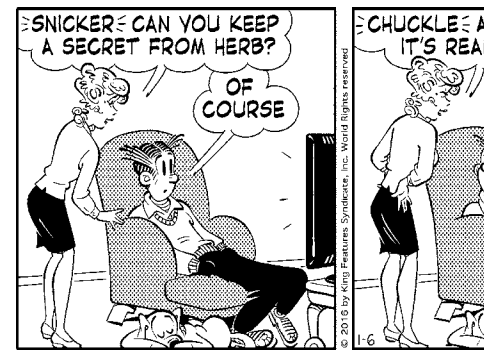
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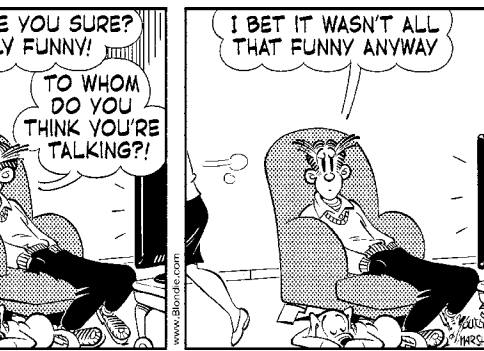
**BEETLE BAILEY**



**BLONDIE**



**BLONDIE**



**This Date In History**

Today is Wednesday, Jan. 6, the sixth day of 2016. There are 360 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 6, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in his State of the Union address, outlined a goal of "Four Freedoms": Freedom of speech and expression; the freedom of people to worship God in their own way; freedom from want; freedom from fear.

On this date:

In 1540, England's King Henry VIII married his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves. (The marriage lasted about six months.)

In 1759, George Washington and Martha Dandridge Custis were married in New Kent County, Virginia.

In 1838, Samuel Morse and Alfred Vail gave the first successful public demonstration of their telegraph in Morristown, New Jersey.

In 1912, New Mexico became the 47th state.

In 1919, the 26th president of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, died in Oyster Bay, New York, at age 60.

In 1945, George Herbert Walker Bush married Barbara Pierce at the First Presbyterian Church in Rye, New York.

In 1950, Britain recognized the Communist government of China.

In 1963, "Oliver!" Lionel Bart's musical adaptation of the Charles Dickens novel "Oliver Twist," opened on Broadway. "Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom" premiered on NBC-TV.

In 1974, year-round daylight saving time began in the United States on a trial basis as a fuel-saving measure in response to the OPEC oil embargo.

In 1987, the U.S. Senate voted 88-4 to establish an 11-member panel to hold public hearings on the Iran-Contra affair.

In 1994, figure skater Nancy Kerrigan was clubbed on the leg by an assailant at Detroit's Cobo Arena; four men, including the ex-husband of Kerrigan's rival, Tonya Harding, went to prison for their roles in the attack. (Harding denied knowing about plans for the attack.)

In 2001, with Vice President Al Gore presiding (in his capacity as president of the Senate), Congress formally certified George W. Bush the winner of the bitterly contested 2000 presidential election.

Ten years ago: Al-Qaida's No. 2 official, Ayman al-Zawahiri said in a videotape that a recent U.S. decision to withdraw some troops from Iraq represented "the victory of Islam." Hugh Thompson, Jr., a former Army helicopter pilot honored for rescuing Vietnamese civilians from his fellow GIs during the My Lai massacre, died in Alexandria, Louisiana, at age 62. Velvet-voiced singer Lou Rawls died in Los Angeles at age 72.

Five years ago: U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates announced he would cut \$78 billion from the Defense Department budget over the next five years, an effort to trim fat in light of the nation's ballooning deficit.

Thought for Today:  
"A little learning is not a dangerous thing to one who does not mistake it for a great deal."  
William Allen White,  
American newspaper editor  
(1868-1944)

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Answer to previous puzzle

PARIS	ICES	PEEP
ARISE	NOVA	OREO
LINED	BOIL	TURK
MAKEA	COLLAR	PIE
TAX	MISTER	
ERASER	FAINT	
TART	GAIT	SOSO
SPEAK	OFF	THE
TACO	RENO	KIND
KAYOS	PASTOR	
HASSLE	EEL	
ALA	ALBUMS	SLEEVE
SOLD	PERP	EATING
THEY	EAST	GRAND
EASE	DDAY	ESSES

**Newsday Crossword** NO ROOM by Carolyn Stewart Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

**ACROSS**

- WWII surrender celebration
- Mosque leader
- Few
- Author Jong
- City near Carson City
- Campus courtyard
- Blacksmith's iron block
- Prefix for social weapons
- Inquiry with an unjustified assumption
- Feel bad about
- Ado
- In the matter of
- AFL's union partner
- Santa costume part
- Blueprint detail
- Prophet
- Armed conflict
- Prepared for a trip
- How Germans say "I"
- Doctrines
- \_\_\_ and crafts
- Jai alai basket
- Collector's goal
- Herbal brews
- Bad habit
- List-ending abbr.
- Saint's acceleration order
- Civil rights activist Parks
- Opinion survey
- Coffeehouse order

**DOWN**

- Cutlet meat
- Inventor Rubik
- Prima donna
- Woodstock-era music
- Conn. school
- Baghdad's land
- List of entrées
- Starts a poker hand
- Damp
- Knight trainee
- Greek liqueur
- Most important
- Newspaper execs.
- Solve, as a secret message
- Lama land
- Jellied garnish
- Place to park
- Computer troubleshooters
- 6 Down neighbor
- Watering holes
- Cognizant
- Dreadlocks wearer
- Wedding gown, for one
- Adorable
- On the roster
- Online sales, for short
- Miscellaneous
- Cable channel airing vintage sitcoms
- Cable channel airing the Senate
- Strong adhesive
- Folk stories
- Cunning
- Web surfer
- Students at 5 Down
- Besides that
- Suffix for luncheon
- At the summit of
- Food-can damage
- Steal from

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
14					15				16					
17					18				19					
20					21				22					
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25	26	27			28	29	30		31		32	33	34	
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	55	56						57	58			59	60	61
62						63					64			
65						66					67			
68						69					70			

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Tomorrow's Horoscope

Retrograde Sandwich

Yesterday Mercury turned retrograde and tomorrow Jupiter will follow suit, making today the meat in the middle of the retrograde sandwich. A spirited Sagittarius moon will promise plenty of substance in this day, more savory than sweet. A lunar square of Neptune adds some dreamy spices. Problems are opportunities to use your imagination.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19). You're apt to change the game plan fairly often, and that's why it will be better to go solo. You need the flexibility to turn on a dime without having to explain yourself or lead the troops.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20). Don't worry about the trend. You're making classic moves that will cement your



HOLIDAY MATHIS

place, whatever happens. If it makes old-fashioned good sense, it will make new-fashioned good sense, too.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21). Are you still trying to draw a tidy conclusion to a messy problem? Give it up for the day. Here's a distraction: Put a meal together for your crew tonight. Share your gift for pairing interesting flavors.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 22). You're entitled to have mixed feelings about anything at all. Don't let anyone pressure you into coming up with a slogan for your emotions. Un-mixing them into a single phrase is too reductive.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22). There's a change you'd like to see in another person, and this is something that could really happen. The way to get there is to make the very same change. Your

model will inspire and motivate a transformation. **VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You may identify with your possessions more than usual and hopefully this will not cause you to envy or overspend. Truly, the problem can be fixed with imagination, not money.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Silence isn't golden; it's worth far more than that today. If you're having trouble, know that if you chase the silence it will always outrun you. It must be seized unaware when you come upon it.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Remember when you had to give up the thing that was taking up too much space in your life to be healthy for you? Well, now a cosmic

present will drop in to fill its place, slim, efficient and a beauty to behold. **SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). There are buttons to be pushed and you have many fingers to push them with. So, what's necessary? What's kind? What's just for fun? These are the questions to ask before you start poking.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You'll call; they'll unleash the minutiae of their daily lives, including, seemingly, each detail of every thought that has crossed their mental landscape lately. Take this as a compliment. You're fun to talk to.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Intimacy can be a rocky field of contradictions. You need good shoes to navigate it, and

perhaps a walking stick to lean on. A close friend is ready to hear what's on your mind and heart. **PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20). You don't require constant reminders of your greatness or tons of reinforcement to feel stable. You know what you've done, what you have, and, most importantly, who you are, and this will give you confidence.

**TODAY'S BIRTHDAY** (Jan. 6). You stay out of the drama, do what's right and seize a coveted position in the early part of the year. Opponents will become partners in February. March brings the start of a quest that may take years to accomplish and will bring many thrills along the way. Romance and promises fill the summer months. Pisces and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 10, 15, 7 and 40.

**ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS:** "Why can't I ever seem to keep my New Year's resolutions? I make them every year, and by Feb. 1 they are always broken. Some years I've made 20 resolutions, some years five or six, and one year I only made one. But all to no avail. I don't seem to have the self-discipline necessary to do what I say I want to do or be who I say I want to be. Should I even bother?"  
Signed, Undisciplined

Aquarius." The Mercury retrograde isn't making it any easier for you! Aquarius is often extremely focused on doing good in the world and helping others to the exclusion of his or her own desires. I'll bet that a lot of your resolutions are at war with your actual priorities. For instance, you may have a resolution to lose weight. Yet it's also important for you to feed your family, and you wind up eating what you feed them, which isn't supporting your diet. These things take time and commitment to work out. I suggest that this year you have only two resolutions, the first being your No. 1 goal. The second should be a commitment: Every time you fail at goal No. 1, get back on track and try again.

To write to Holiday Mathis, visit [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com) and click "Write the Author" on her page.

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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.

Sudoku Puzzle - Easy

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

[www.sudoku-puzzles.net](http://www.sudoku-puzzles.net)

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker  
Never Give Up

South dealer.  
Both sides vulnerable.  
**NORTH**  
♠ J 9  
♥ K 5 4  
♦ Q 10 7 3  
♣ 7 6 5 2  
**WEST**  
♠ 10 6 2  
♥ J 8 7 3  
♦ 6  
♣ K Q J 9 4  
**EAST**  
♠ A K Q 8 7 5 3  
♥ 10 9 2  
♦ 9 4  
♣ 3  
**SOUTH**  
♠ 4  
♥ A Q 6  
♦ A K J 8 5 2  
♣ A 10 8

The bidding:  
South West North East  
1♦ Pass 2♦ 3♠

Opening lead — king of clubs.  
Occasionally, declarer is faced with what seems to be an utterly impossible assignment. But if he keeps his composure, he can salvage more than a few seemingly hopeless contracts.  
Take this case where South is in five diamonds and appears to have three inescapable losers. With no discards available and no long suits to establish, he can hardly be blamed for feeling he is certain to go down one.

But if declarer is from the school that doesn't give up easily, he will seek a way to hold his losses to two tricks. From the outset, he should be trying to visualize a possible distribution of the opposing cards that would allow five diamonds to be made.  
Given East's pre-emptive three-spade bid, South should feel that his chances are considerably better than would normally be expected. Accordingly, he wins the club lead with the ace and draws two rounds of trumps, noting that East follows suit to both of them.

Next come the A-K-Q of hearts, and when East follows suit to all three rounds, declarer's chances improve dramatically. Now, if East has the seven spades he would ordinarily hold for his bid, and also has the A-K-Q among them, South is certain to make the contract.  
So, after cashing the third heart, declarer leads a low spade to dummy's nine. East takes the nine with the queen and, with only spades remaining in his hand, returns the ace — on which South discards the eight of clubs! East has no choice but to lead another spade, allowing South to discard his ten of clubs as he ruffs in dummy, and the "impossible" contract is home.

Tomorrow: Hard work pays big dividend.  
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sudoku

ANSWERS

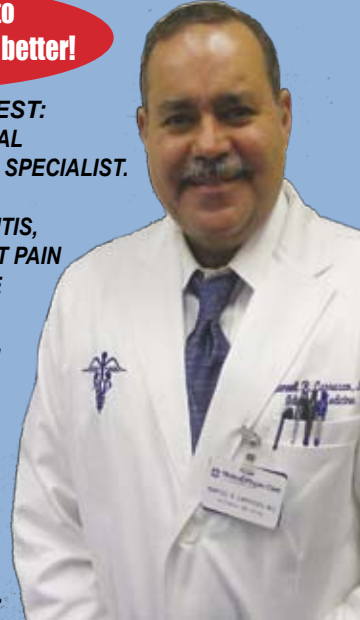
Sudoku Solution - Easy

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

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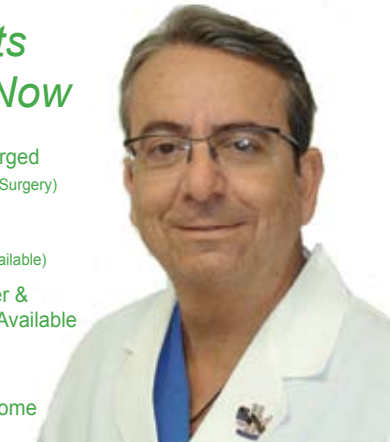
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# Are you ready for a



# NEW challenge?

## 2016 BEST LOSER FAT TO FITNESS

### Spring Challenge!



We are seeking 2 person teams ready to take part and lose weight in January, February and March competing to claim

### “The Best Loser” Spring Title and A Cash Grand Prize!

If you are ready to start losing weight, sign up for  
**The Best Loser Spring Challenge!**

We are seeking 2 person teams ready to take part in this fitness/lifestyle change, and compete for Grand Prize!

\$15 per person or \$30 per team.

• Team photos and updates will be published. Here you'll be able to follow along with the progress of each team, and see how your team measures up. These specials will be published January 31st, March 6th, April 3rd.

• We will only provide your team's **total percentage** of weight loss, not individual weight.

• At the end of the 3-month program, the winning team will be determined by the highest percentage of weight lost, and receive the “Grand Prize”.

• Contest prizes determined on number of teams.

• To join the **Best Loser Spring Challenge**, fill out the form below and return to us with your \$30 team fee, CASH ONLY, No later than **January 25, 2016**.



# Cash Prizes



**Sign-Up  
Deadline  
Monday, January 25th**

**DEADLINE  
JANUARY 25, 2016**

**(TEAM PHOTO MUST BE TAKEN, ENTRY FEE MUST BE TURNED IN AND YOU MUST WEIGH IN BY THIS DATE TO QUALIFY FOR CHALLENGE)**

**Sign us up for the Best Loser Challenge!**

Team Name (Be Creative) \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Member 1: \_\_\_\_\_ phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Member 2: \_\_\_\_\_ phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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BIG SPRING