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BIG SPRING HERALD

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 2017



VOLUME 112, NUMBER 378 COPYRIGHT 2016 50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

AAA offers Tipsy Tow on New Year's weekend

Special to the Herald
 Coppell, TX – AAA Texas encourages everyone, who is of legal drinking age and who plans to have alcoholic beverages to celebrate the New Year, to designate a sober driver, call for a cab or city approved ride sharing service, or plan an overnight stay before having their first drink.
 As a last resort, AAA Texas will offer a free community service called Tipsy Tow which aims to keep drinking drivers off the road. The service will be available from 6 p.m. on Sat., Dec. 31 through 6



a.m. on Sun., Jan. 1, 2017.
 Drivers, bartenders, restaurant managers, party hosts or passengers of a drinking driver may call 1-800-222-4357 or 1-800-AAA-HELP for a free tow home of up to 10 miles.
 Callers simply request a Tipsy Tow and will receive the free tow and ride home. A regular AAA Texas-contracted roadside service truck will be dispatched.
 For rides farther than 10 miles, drivers should expect to pay the rate charged by the tow truck contractor. The passenger and tow truck driver should agree

See AAA, Page 3A



Courtesy Photo/John Moody

Pet safety on New Year's Eve

By **LYNDEL MOODY**
 Staff Writer

As 2016 comes to a close, the resounding boom of fireworks may bring some comfort to many ready to say goodbye to this year, but for many pets, the commotion can be stressful and frightening.
 Pet owners should consider taking a few extra precautions to keep their four-footed friends safe throughout the new year celebration.
 "For most dogs who have similar storm phobias, loud noises or bangs any dog hears, even a gunshot noise can stress the animal," said Shelbi Whitehead of Sierra Animal Clinic. "The best option is to bring the dog inside to a closed confined area."
 "For dogs who are outside, the main issue is if they hear fireworks – a lot of dogs panic and jump fences and take off," Whitehead continued. "If you can't bring the dog inside the house, find a safe place for them like a dog house or a kennel."
 Another option Whitehead suggested is to place a dog anxiety jacket – a tight fitted jacket like a Thunder Jacket – on the animal which is supposed to be calming to the dog.
 "A tight sweater might help make the dog feel more secure," she added.
 Also, prescription medications are available for dogs who have very serious reactions to storms, Whitehead said.
 "For those pet owner who have those prescriptions already, I would recommend to go ahead and give them the medication before time," she said.
 And, Whitehead added, don't underestimate your dog's ability to jump a fence, no matter the pet's age, if they become startled by noise.

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



HERALD file photo

Jim Little, U.S. Air Force Col. (ret.) visits with a guest at the 2015 Silver Wings Ball. Tickets are on sale for the 2017 Silver Wings Ball which is set for Jan. 21.

Silver Wings to take flight

Annual Hanger 25 Museum fundraiser set for Jan. 21

By **AMANDA ELSTON**
 Managing Editor
 New Year's may soon be over, but for supporters of Hanger 25, the real party is just a few weeks away. On Jan. 21, the Hanger 25 museum will be hosting their 19th annual Silver Wings Ball at the Hotel Settles.
 "This is going to be our annual donation ball," said Museum Administrator Amber Stokes. "The ball

helps continue our mission at the hanger in preserving our history of the Army Corps and the pilot training school during World War II."
 Set at \$50 a ticket, the formal event boasts a cocktail hour, a dinner with three courses, and the South Plains Jazz Band.
 "We are having the South Plains Jazz Band play. They were a real hit last year," said Stokes. "It's an eight piece band. It was a touch of elegance last year to have a live jazz band."
 While guests are sampling hors d'oeuvres during cocktail hour, they can also check out items up for bid at the silent auction. In addition to a silent auction, a live auction will also be held later in the night.

See BALL, Page 3A

City, county, federal offices closed Monday

County, city, and federal offices will close offices on Monday to celebrate the New Year.
 The city landfill is also closed Monday and there will be no sanitation pick up. Emergency services for both the city and county will continue as normal throughout the holiday.
 The city's emergency utilities department will be on call and can be contacted at 264-2392.
Federal Offices and USPS
 Federal Offices and the Big Spring U.S. Post Office will also be closed on Monday to observe the federal holiday. The entire VA Medical

Center with the exclusion of the VAMC's residential areas will be closed on Monday in observance of the holiday

College, public schools between semesters
 Howard College will be open for business on Wednesday. Forsan ISD students will get an early jump on the spring semester. Students return to class on Tuesday.
 Big Spring and Coahoma students will have an extra week to lounge away before returning to class return a week later on Tuesday, Jan. 10.

Find us online at: www.bigspringherald.com

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Solar farms expected to outpace natural gas in U.S.

AP — 2016 is shaping up to be a milestone year for energy, and when the final accounting is done, one of the biggest winners is likely to be solar power.

For the first time, more electricity-generating capacity from solar power plants is expected to have been built in the U.S. than from natural gas and wind, U.S. Department of Energy data show.

Though the final tally won't be in until March, enough new solar power plants were expected to be built in 2016 to total 9.5 gigawatts of solar power generating capacity, tripling the new solar capacity built in 2015. That's enough to light up more than 1.8 million homes.

The solar farms built in 2016 were expected to exceed the 8 gigawatts of natural gas power generating capacity and the 6.8 gigawatts of wind power slated for construction this year. No new coal-fired power plants were planned in 2016.

"If 2016 planned additions pan out as operators initially expected for 2016, it would mark the first year that solar was the largest source of capacity," said Tim Shear, an economist for the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Despite the growth, utility-scale solar power still represents a tiny fraction of the supply of electricity in the U.S. Though U.S. solar power generation was expected to have grown by 44 percent in 2016 and is expected to grow more than 30 percent in

2017, it will still provide around 1 percent of the nation's electric power, according to EIA data.

Though solar remains a small player, its expected growth adds another milestone to a string of them in 2016.

In early December, the nation's first offshore wind farm began operating — the first waterborne wind farm in North America. 2016 is likely to also mark the first full year when more electricity was generated in the U.S. using power plants that run on natural gas than those that run on coal.

Renewable electricity generation — including wind, solar, hydropower and other renewables — also grew rapidly in 2016. Every month this year, renewable power generation has exceeded the renewable electricity produced during the same month the year before.

Solar farms used by electric power companies accounted for 70 percent of total solar industry growth in the third quarter of 2016, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association.

Solar growth in the third quarter brought the total nationwide solar capacity to 35.8 gigawatts, enough to power 6.5 million homes, SEIA said in a statement. California was expected to build the most new solar power plants in 2016, followed by North Carolina, Nevada, Texas and Georgia.

Support Groups

SUNDAY

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

MONDAY

• 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.

• Alcoholics Anonymous, As Bill Sees it, 615 Settles, 8 p.m. to 9 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.

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

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

Take Note

• Coahoma Junior High School 8th graders will be hosting a Pizza Inn Dough-Raiser to help raise funds for their upcoming trip to Washington D.C. The fundraiser will be held from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Monday at Pizza Inn, 700 E. FM 700.

• Lake Colorado City State Park will hold a "First Day Hike" Sunday, Jan. 1, from 9 to 11 a.m. The hike will be over modest terrain, covering nearly 2 miles, followed by a low-impact aerobics session. Participants should wear warm, comfortable clothing including gloves, ear muffs, head covering, etc. There is no cost for the hike; however, participants will need to either have a valid Texas State Park Pass or pay the daily park entrance fee of \$4 for adults. Children 12 and under are free. For more information call 325-728-3931.

• Food 2 Kids Big Spring needs you! It is time to start sacking food for Big Spring elementary students who do not receive adequate food over the weekends. Members of the community can be a part by volunteering to sack the food. It just takes a couple hours of your time and the work is very rewarding. To volunteer, just show up at the time and dates listed. For more information, call, 432-935-3998.

The next sacking session will be at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 2 and 3 at the old Lakeview High School gym located at 1107 N.W. Seventh St. To get there, take Gregg Street north and turn left on Delaney, which is the block just past the Salvation Army retail store. Delaney turns into Seventh Street, you will go over the railroad tracks and the school is on the left.

If you want additional information about getting your child on this program please contact your child's school.

• Seniors and mature adults are invited to a dance on the first, third and fifth Friday of each month at the Dora Roberts Community Center.

Dances are from 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. with live bands. No alcohol or smoking permitted. There will be a pot luck as well so bring a dish if you want to eat.

Cost is \$8 per person.

Meetings

• The Big Spring Art Association meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the basement of the Howard County Library.

• The Christensen-Tucker Post-2013 Veterans of Foreign Wars meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7 pm at 500 Driver Road. For more information, contact David Leonard, Post Commander, at 432-816-6004. All combat veterans of foreign wars are invited to come.

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

• 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.

• Membership to the Big Spring Native American Association is open to the public. People interested in Native American culture are encouraged to find out more about the organization by calling Richard "Indio" Lesser at 432-935-0125.

Volunteer opportunities

• The Scenic Mountain Medical Center volunteer program is in need of volunteers. A variety of opportunities are open for members of the community. For more information, call Anita Cline at 268-4721.

• The Big Spring State Hospital Volunteer Services Council is in need of

volunteers to fill a variety of needs to assist the hospital's patients. Applications to become a volunteer can be picked up at The Chalet, 115 E. Second St., Tuesday through Saturday between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. or at the Big Spring State Hospital Community Relations Department, 1901 N. Hwy 87, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Volunteers can assist with a variety of functions, including The Chalet Resale Shop, various fundraisers and patient events. For more information, contact Dee Lindsey, Big Spring State Hospital Director of Community Relations, (432) 268-7535 or danielle.lindsey@dshs.state.tx.us

• Home Hospice is in need of volunteers of all ages. The organization is requesting volunteers to visit patients. Volunteers set their own hours. For more information, contact Beverly Grant at 264-7599 or 432-967-0901.

• Mobile meals is in need of volunteer delivery drivers. If you would like to donate one hour per week to help deliver meals to the elderly, call Maria at 816-6474.

• Crossroads Hospice needs volunteers for patient care. Contact Eva at 263-5300.

• 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.

• Big Spring and surrounding counties are in need of foster families. Foster parents are the caretakers for the children in the community who have been abused or neglected. For more information on becoming foster parents or adoptive families, call the Children's Protective Services office at 432-263-9669.

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

Youth activities

• The Crossroads Young Marines is taking applications for another boot camp. For more information, call 432-517-4791. Young Marines welcomes boys and girls ages 8 to 18 who are still attending school.

Need help?

• The Homeownership Preservation Foundation (HPF) is an independent national nonprofit dedicated to helping distressed homeowners navigate financial challenges and avoid mortgage foreclosure. If you want to stop mortgage foreclosure and are in need of help, the time to call 888-995-HOPE is now. HPF can provide counseling free of charge, in English and 170 other languages, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. For free foreclosure help, call the hotline.



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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, TX 79721. Periodicals postage paid at Big Spring, Texas.
USPS 1431-48 USPS 0055-940 ISSN 0746-6811
BY THE MONTH HOME DELIVERY: \$9.00 monthly; \$97.20 yearly (includes 10% discount). MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$14.58 monthly Howard; \$18.33 elsewhere.

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Year's top news filled with division —and no middle ground

AP — Fed up with Europe's union across borders? Reject it. Disgusted with the U.S. political establishment? Can it.

The news in 2016 was filled with battles over culture and territory that exposed divisions far deeper than many realized. But people confronting those divides repeatedly rejected the prospect of middle-ground solutions and the institutions put in place to deliver them.

While the headlines told many different stories, the thread connecting much of the news was a decisive torching of moderation, no matter how uncertain the consequences.

"You're not laughing now, are you?" Nigel Farage, a leader of the Brexit campaign, told the European Parliament after voters in Great Britain spurned membership in the continental union. "What the little people did ... was they rejected the multinationals, they rejected the merchant banks, they rejected big politics and they said, 'Actually, we want our

country back.'" Farage was speaking only about the United Kingdom. But his observation that many people well beyond Britain shared that disdain for working within the system was borne out repeatedly in the year's biggest headlines.

In a U.S. presidential campaign fueled by anger and insults, in Syria's brutal war and Venezuela's massive protests, in fights over gay rights and migration, opposing sides rejected not just compromise but also the politics of trying to forge it.

That was clear from the year's first days, when armed activists took over a national wildlife refuge in Oregon's high desert, opposing the federal government's control of public lands.

"It needs to be very clear that these buildings will never, ever return to the federal government," LaVoy Finicum, an Arizona rancher among the activists, told reporters. Weeks later, federal agents stopped vehicles outside the refuge, ar-

resting eight of the activists and fatally shooting Finicum when he reached into a jacket that held a loaded gun.

Even in the rare cases when compromise prevailed, it was viewed with suspicion.

When a deal took effect in January limiting Iran's nuclear program in exchange for relief on sanctions, it marked the culmination of prolonged negotiation by President Barack Obama's administration. But the pact was repeatedly attacked by critics in both countries, including Donald Trump, saying it gave the other side too much.

"The wisest plan of crazy Trump is tearing up the nuclear deal," a leading Iranian hardliner, Hossein Shariatmadari, told his country's news agency.

In mid-February, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia died in his sleep, leaving a vacuum on a court where he had long been the leading conservative voice. Barely an hour after Scalia's death was confirmed, Senate Majority Leader Mitch Mc-

Connell staked out an uncompromising position on what lay ahead.

"The American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court justice," McConnell said, disregarding the fact that U.S. voters had twice elected Obama. "Therefore, this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new president."

North Carolina lawmakers prompted protests and counterprotests when they rushed through House Bill 2, voiding local gay-rights ordinances and limiting bathroom access for transgender people. Companies, the NBA and others followed through on threats to move jobs, games and performances out of the state, amplifying the division.

Tensions over U.S. policing bled into a third year. In July, a sniper killed five Dallas police officers during a protest over shootings of black men by police in Louisiana and Minnesota. A South Carolina jury failed to reach a verdict in the trial of a white

officer caught on video fatally shooting a black man fleeing a traffic stop.

Division, though, was hardly limited to the U.S.

In Venezuela, triple-digit inflation and shortages of food and medicine fueled 6,000 protests throughout the year that brought millions into the streets. But the government of President Nicolas Maduro, blamed by many voters for the chaos, blocked a recall campaign.

"If you're going to shoot me because I'm hungry, shoot me!" a young man shouted at a soldier during one protest in Caracas.

In Colombia, voters narrowly rejected a deal between the government and a guerrilla group to end a 52-year civil war. Even when lawmakers approved a renegotiated deal, the peace remained fragile.

In Brazil, senators impeached President Dilma Rousseff for manipulating budget figures, though many of the lawmakers were, themselves, tarred by

accusations of corruption. South Korean President Park Geun-hye was stripped of power in December amid allegations she let a close friend use the government for financial gain.

Meanwhile, Syria's war entered its sixth year. But despite pressure by the U.S. and its allies, Russia and the government of President Bashar Assad unleashed an assault on Aleppo to wipe out rebels, driving up the toll in a conflict that has already claimed as many as 500,000 lives.

"This is a targeted strategy to terrorize civilians and to kill anybody and everybody who is in the way of their military objectives," U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said, accusing Syria and Russia of war crimes.

"As long as war crimes are at question," a Russian government spokeswoman said, "the Americans should start with Iraq."

In Yemen, cease-fires broke down, extending a nearly two-year civil war. But with Syria capturing most international attention, a famine resulting from the turmoil was mostly overlooked.

As the fighting continued, terrorist strikes spread fear well beyond the Middle East.

A bombing at a Brussels airport in March and another attack in June at Istanbul's airport by gunmen with explosives killed a total of nearly 80 people. More than 70 died when a bomb went off in a park in Pakistan, with a faction of the Pakistani Taliban claiming responsibility. In July, a terrorist drove a truck into a Bastille Day crowd in Nice, France, killing 86 and injuring more than 400 others. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility.

AAA

Continued from Page 1A

in advance what the excess mileage charges will be and the method of payment, prior to the tow.

You do not have to be a AAA member to use the Topsy Tow service however it is only for a one-way, one-time ride for a driver and tow for that driver's vehicle. Please keep in mind the following situations do not qualify for a Topsy Tow:

A request to tow an inoperable vehicle.

A request to tow to another drinking establishment, repair facil-

ity or any other location other than the driver's home or hotel where they are a registered guest.

A request to start a vehicle, change a flat tire or deliver gas.

A request for a "taxi" service or to transport anyone other than the driver of the vehicle.

According to Texas Department of Transportation, during the 2015-2016 Christmas Holiday Season (Dec. 1, 2015 to Jan. 1, 2016), there were 2,374 hundred alcohol-related traffic crashes in Texas, resulting in 102 fatalities and 205 serious injuries.

"New Year's Eve is a

time to celebrate a new beginning but we must not forget to celebrate wisely," said Linda von Quintus, AAA Vice President of Government & Community Affairs. "Tragedies as a result of drinking and driving are entirely preventable if you plan ahead before you celebrate with family and friends. As a last resort, AAA Texas will again offer Topsy Tow this New Year's Eve so intoxicated drivers don't kill or injure themselves or others."

In addition, AAA Texas offers the following reminders to keep yourself and others safe and prevent drunk driving

arrests this New Year's Eve.

At social events, designate non-drinking drivers who can get everyone home safely.

Do not serve alcohol to anyone under age 21.

Call a friend or family member for a ride home if you've been drinking.

Never ride as a passenger in a car driven by someone who has been drinking alcohol — even after just one drink.

Keep a cab company telephone number in your wallet so you can call for a ride home.

As a party host and good friend or loving family member, offer a variety of non-alcoholic drink alternatives,

serve food as well as dessert and coffee, and provide a gift to guests who volunteer to be designated drivers.

Have a back-up plan to spend the night at the party instead of driving home under the influence.

Take the car keys away from friends and relatives who have had too much to drink.

If you encounter an impaired driver on the road, keep a safe distance and ask a passenger to call 911 (or pull over to a safe location to make the call yourself).

Remember: prescription, over-the-counter medications and illegal drugs also can impair your ability to drive safely.

BALL

Continued from Page 1A

"Each year it gets bigger and bigger," said Stokes. "A lot of local stores and boutiques help us out for both the silent auction and the live auction."

Guests also have the chance to win a one-night stay in the Sunrise Suite at the Hotel Settles while at the ball. In order to be entered into the drawing, guests can purchase one ticket for the drawing for \$5 or \$20 for five tickets.

"Last year was the first time we have ever done a room at the hotel and we got a great response," said Stokes. "We love the Settles.

They help us out so much with the ball and with the room. The suite is just awesome."

However, those interested in attending the ball should purchase tickets sooner than later.

"We stop selling right at 200 tickets," said Stokes. "Last year we sold out. We usually sell out every year. They go really fast. It's a donation ball but it is also a good opportunity to show off Big Spring and for people to come in and have a good time and to preserve our history."

The Silver Wings Ball is the museum's largest fundraiser of the year. Located at the Big Spring Airpark, the

museum holds a tremendous amount of the county's history as well as hosts a multitude of events throughout the year.

"Not only are we preserving our mission and our history, donations help out with the veteran's programs that we like to do," said Stokes. "We do things on Veteran's Day, and we do a veteran of the month and this really helps out with that. Veterans are able to come in and get appreciated. And this also really helps to maintain the museum and be there for other veteran associations like the VA. This helps us so we can help veterans."

Tickets are currently

available for the Silver Wings Ball, held on Jan. 21 at the Hotel Settles at 6 p.m. Dress is formal/Texas formal. To purchase tickets, call the museum at 432-264-1999 or e-mail hanger25@crcom.net.


"This is such a big part of our town's history and we need to continue to preserve it for our future," said Stokes.

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Franklin Morton, 67, died Thursday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.



As we pop open a brand-new year, we'd like to express our thanks and cheer for the many friends and customers like you who have helped make our dreams come true.

Thanks and best wishes for a joyous year!

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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

• **BARACK OBAMA**
President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

• **TED CRUZ**
U.S. Senator
B40B Dirksen Senate
Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-4305
Phone: 202-228-0462

• **JOHN CORNYN**
U.S. Senator
517 Hart Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-4305
Phone: 202-224-2934

• **RANDY NEUGEBAUER**
U.S. Representative
19th Cong. District
1510 Scurry
Big Spring
Phone: 432-264-0722

STATE GOVERNMENT

• **GREG ABBOTT**
Governor
State Capitol, Room 2S.1
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, 78711
Phone: 512-463-2000

• **DREW DARBY**
State Representative
Texas 72nd District

P.O. Box 2910
Austin, 78768
Phone: 512-463-0331

• **KEL SELIGER**
State Senator
Texas 31st District
401 Austin, Suite 101
Big Spring, 79720
Phone: 432-268-9909

BIG SPRING CITY COUNCIL

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— Work: 264-2401.

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• **OSCAR GARCIA** —
Home: 264-0026.

• **CRAIG BAILEY** —
Home: 264-2202.

• **JIMMIE LONG** — 267-4224.

• **JOHN CLINE** —
Home: 263-7158.

An international collection of nativity scenes

Iris Bradley of Sonora loves to show her collection of nativity scenes.

“I’ve had the pleasure of collecting them and making memories of where I bought them or the friends who gave them to me. So it’s a treat for me to be able to share it with other people.”

She has nativity scenes from forty-five countries.

“All of them are catalogued and numbered on the bottoms. I have pictures of them in the catalog so I can keep a good record of where I bought them or where a friend bought one and gave it to me. One from Argentina was hand-carried on a plane. Another one was carried on a flight from France. The one new one I bought this year is from Nepal.”

They’re all sizes. Some are

tiny enough to fit into a small matchbox. The nativities are made of all types of material, from rocks to animal fur. She enjoys the unusual ones.

“This one is from Hawaii and the person who made it used a coconut shell. This is from Alaska and has Jesus in an igloo and the three kings brought him fish. All of these on this shelf are from different countries in Africa. I appreciate that they can take something everyday and make something lovely with it. This one used banana bark. This one used cornhusks. This nativity has a zebra and a giraffe for the animals.”

When you enter her spacious home, you see nativity scenes placed with museum care on tables and shelves. They are everywhere.

“I have 315 in my total collection. I don’t have the flat space to put them all out, so some come out this year and maybe some others come out next year. It’s always changing a little bit. It takes a couple of weeks to put them out.”

When her husband was sta-

tioned in Germany in 1980, she went with him. That’s when she got serious about her collecting.

“One of the first things I bought was this one from Spain, which I thought was so cute. We were in Germany for three years and I continued to purchase different ones while we were over there. I thought it was interesting that even though we were there at the height of the cold war, with the Berlin wall and all countries behind the wall were Communist and not supposed to have any religion, but there were some artisans that were going against their government and making nativities. I appreciate that. I have several made beyond the old iron curtain.”

Her collection has items from Viet Nam, Sri Lanka, India and Russia, just to name a few of the countries represented. One shelf has 42 nativities on it, most of them from foreign countries. Her favorite is one she and her parents made when she was younger. It’s one of only two nativities she had when she went to Germany.



TUMBLEWEED SMITH

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sisters agree to support park

To the Editor:

It is seldom my sisters and I agree on anything important. However, one thing we agree on 100% is our support for a park between the Settles and the auditorium. What a great idea.

We know that Big Spring is always strapped for money for anything extra so we have decided to try to help out. We are willing to donate \$2,000.00 toward a fund for this effort. We are hoping others might agree and help out. After all, if we are not willing to support this, why should our city?

Thank you, Brent Ryan. Thank you.

Boosie Weaver
Big Spring, TX

Pat Simmons Way

Dear Editor,

December has been a busy month for me. My birthday party on December 11th marking my 90th year on this earth. It was a wonderful event with eleven hostesses that are dear friends put it together. They are, Willia Leadford, Debby Val Verde, Vicki Stewart, Melinda Flenniken, Gloria McDonald, Georgie Newsom, Jan Hansen, Teresa Darden, Debbie Wegman, Joie Elliott, & Cookie Elliott. I cannot tell you what a beautiful arrangement of the serving table and seating for the guest. Words are inadequate to express my appreciation to them and guest.

I was so happy that my son, Shelby Simmons was able to come from San Antonio, my nieces & nephews attending were Doris & Billy Ray Badgett

from Neosho, Mo; Jimmy Earnest from Temple, Tx; Doug & Leitha Earnest from Doboll, Tx; and Kay Earnest from Leander, Tx; a cousin Bill & Ramey Wilson from Pleasanton, Tx; niece, Wyvonne & Dennis Spray of Jayton, Tx; also great niece, LaVonda & Logan Dogget of Jayton, Tx, and then my son, Dennis “Snuffy” as known by most of you lives right here from Coahoma! It was grand time to have all my relatives and so many of my friends attend my party.

It was great to visit with those that attended, and Bruce Schooler was doing his thing, taking pictures! He was right in the mix of guest that visited with me. Oh, mercy that was probably some of his greatest work!!

Nearing the end of party time, the mayor called me to the stage. I thought what’s up. I could see Brandon Ensey who works with me on the Festival of Lights, and David Fort of the Parks Department, they were standing at either side of something covered, had no idea what they were about to unveil! They then removed the cover, had my name in lights, I thought it was really pretty sign, still didn’t get it!

Then, the mayor said something and I think he said, they were changing the name of Golf Course Road to Pat Simmons Way. What I said, “I don’t really remember” for the exception that I thought with this type of recognition only happened after a person died. This was truly a wonderful recognition, I don’t know why, I just do what comes

See **LETTERS**, Page 5A

LETTERS POLICY

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.

- Sign your letter.
- Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street address for verification purposes.
- We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity.

- We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per 30-day period per author.

- Form letters, letters that are unsigned or do not include a telephone number or address will not be considered.

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

CONTACT US

The Herald is always interested in our readers’ opinions.

In order that we might better serve your needs, we offer several ways in which you may contact us:

- In person at 710 Scurry St.
- By telephone at 263-7331
- By fax at 264-7205
- By e-mail at newsdesk@bigspringherald.com.
- By mail at P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721

DAILY PRAYER

May we be cheerful givers to others and cheerful takers of Your love, Lord.

Amen.

Things could have been worse

We mortals aren’t much good when routines—particularly those most mundane—are interrupted.

Men who refuse to accept this claim as “you-can-take-it-to-the-bank” stuff—or even to the pawn shop—are urged to take a simple test on which my case can rest: The next time you dress, try putting your other leg in first.

The probability of this claim playing out is greatly magnified at holiday time, when hurrying is exceeded only by scurrying. Some emerge unscathed, others not so much.

I’m going to cite three true-to-life vignettes, two that make eyes water and a third that awakens the “been there/done that” recesses of grandparents’ memories. (As if we don’t have enough evidence courtesy of our own bodies groaning about growing older, grandchildren come up with observations that nail facts down tight.)

To avoid embarrassment, I’m going to offer anonymity to the participants. (Except for a bonus vignette provided by my brother, who always has been guilty as charged.)

Trust me that the accounts are absolutely, hand-on-Bible truths, and, if pressed by compelling reason, sincerity or runaway curiosity, names can be provided later.

Scene I: A salesman, dreading a bumper-to-bumper kind of day, reaches for eye drops to jump-start his vision. He grabs a cologne bottle by mistake, freezing in place after a single squirt, thus sparing the other eye discomfort. “I look for silver linings,” he said, “Folks at the office said they never smelled such a fragrant eye.”

Scene II: Since I experienced retina repair and reattachment to its moorings back in the spring, the following account hits home. It is a “there-but-for-grace-of-God” situation in which I could have had a major role—probably even a speaking part, if not a screaming one.

Another patient for the same surgery—a man about my age—fouled up early in an attempt to administer treatment at home. He reached for a tube of ointment, forgetting he’d used Super Glue on a home project earlier. (Again, readers, you are getting ahead of me.) Yes, he picked up the wrong tube, squirted and, you can guess the rest.

He was summoned immediately to his surgeon’s office, where his eyelids were unstuck without causing any damage.

Don’t tell me the surgeon didn’t thumb quickly through medical literature for “what-to-do-now” instructions, or maybe he simply Googled. However, if doctors have truly seen everything, maybe an eye glued shut is “old hat.”

I do know this: In the future, when I see pictures of glue claimed to be strong enough to hold a truck aloft, I’ll assume photo-shopping is involved. There’ll also likely be “do-not-

try-this-at-home” warnings.

A young Oregon family doesn’t often get to see loved ones back in Texas. One such holiday visit recently occurred, and, as usual, children were farmed out to relatives for overnights.

The couple’s four-year-old granddaughter—forever clutching her dolly named Tammy—stayed with her grandparents. They were thrilled at the prospect of her visit.

After bedtime prayers, the grandparents righted themselves from their knees, only to hear their granddaughter say, “Tammy may be a little scared here tonight. This is her first time to spend the night with old people.”

And finally, this bonus bedtime account is remembered by my brother Fred. It was almost 40 years ago. First-born Alison had just finished her first day of pre-school. As he put her to bed, he wanted to allay any fears or concerns encountered at school. (Kids don’t realize parents are being introduced to a new play-book, just as they are.)

At the first pause in his blatherings, she posed a question: “Do flies have ears?” So much for the impact of his empathy and insightful musings. Clearly, she had stopped listening several minutes before he’d stopped talking.

Wishes for a new year filled with good health and much happiness are extended to you and those you love.

Dr. Newbury is a speaker in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex.

LETTERS

Continued from Page 4A

naturally with "Big Spring, My Home Town." I've enjoyed in working on different projects in attempting to make a difference in the appearance of our city... founding Keep Big Spring Beautiful in 2003 was one!! .

I'm expecting recognition of Big Spring with the restoration of our Historic Spring and what they have found out in their historical research. We can become recognized statewide and nationally when the facts in their research is revealed. People, you do not know what the history of this Spring holds!!

It is not every day that a person turns 90 years old, celebrates the twentieth year for a project, and then have a street named after her, what a day to celebrate with family and friends! What a blessing!!

Pat Simmons
Big Spring, TX

Deplorables and Democrats

To the Editor:

Can you believe the Deplorable Clinton and her other deplorables lost a third time? I wonder how much the last five or six weeks cast everyone in the U.S. Please remember the word came from Clinton so I guess these are the deplorables she was talking about. Two times was enough and the only thing I seen come out different the deplorables made money. Hopefully it has got everyone involved broke but I doubt it. I know one thing I don't believe it can get any worse. I think it is funny how she lost more vote than she had. I bet there is a better waste of money like feeding and housing people in the U.S. Which that really is not a waste but could the time and money involved be put to better use? Like new fire trucks and EMS and police department things. We are just one small place and there are more small towns. I want to know since Hillary Clinton called them deplorables is the definition for deplorables and democrats the same? From I read and see on TV they are the same. I wish everyone to have a merry Christmas and new year even whoever Clinton calls deplorables. I hope it is politically correct to say everyone have a nice, merry Christmas.

George Coker
Big Spring, TX

Solar eclipse in Big Spring this summer

To the Editor:

My lady friend, Bonnie Cushing, and I share several hobbies together: The Houston Ballet, antiques, the fine arts, and advanced amateur astronomy. We have these gorgeous telescopes and have named our venture the Celesta Fiesta Observatory. Joe Wheelock, astronomer/instructor/tour guide is our private consultant.

There is a celestial event scheduled to occur over the entire United States on Monday, August 21, 2017. It will be a solar eclipse. The states north of Texas will be a total eclipse. Joe Wheelock provided us with calculations for Big Spring for that day. Here are the redactions: The solar eclipse will achieve 75% totality. It will begin at 10:30 a.m., max at 11:45 a.m., and end at 1:30 p.m.

A solar eclipse occurs when the moon's orbit around the earth brings the moon between the sun and the earth. A resulting shadow tracks across the earth.

One should never look at the sun or a solar eclipse without very special eye safety as even a glance will damage or destroy one's eyesight!

Bonnie and I ordered 100 pairs of solar eclipse eyeglasses from Oceanside Photo and Telescope in California, telephone # (760)722-3348. We received them and we are giving them to family and friends, two nursing homes where I work, and to the beautiful friends at Houston Ballet.

Chris at Oceanside Photo and Telescope told me that the school districts in California are ordering

See LETTERS, Page 6A

Tangled in fraud probe, 100s face loss of disability checks

BY CLAIRE GALOFARO

Associated Press

MINNIE, Ky. (AP) — Donna Dye saw the coal truck come barreling over the horizon and her head started spinning with that familiar, desperate urge to end it all.

She thought of the disconnect notices, the engagement ring she pawned to keep the lights on, the house she loved and would probably lose. Life insurance was the only bill that was up to date; this way, she thought, it might look like an accident.

Months had passed since the letter arrived from the Social Security Administration. "We are suspending your disability benefits," it had said.

She thought of her husband, a proud man with a body broken from 26 years mining coal, and the fights over money they never had — until now. "Fraud," the agency had written, and the humiliation consumed them.

She thought about veering across the yellow line and slamming head-on into that truck.

For more than a year, Dye's family and hundreds of others in the coalfields of Kentucky and West Virginia have been fighting the federal government to keep their Social Security Disability checks. They have one thing in common: They hired attorney Eric C. Conn, a flamboyant master marketer who billed himself "Mr. Social Security." For years he clogged the highways with neon yellow billboards promising to help people get what they deserved from the government.

Dye thought they could trust him.

Now federal officials allege he funneled \$600 million in fraudulent claims to this impoverished pocket of Appalachia, and the government has turned off the spigot. It suspended disability payments to hundreds of Conn's former clients, propelling



AP Photo/David Stephenson

In this Monday, Dec. 19, 2016, photo, Donna Dye, who is unemployed and whose husband is disabled, sits outside her home in Minnie, Ky. She and her husband have been fighting the federal government to keep his Social Security disability checks after a local lawyer who helped them became the subject of a federal fraud investigation.

them into an unprecedented, year-long battle with the federal government. They must prove once again that they deserved disability years ago.

If they lose, their checks stop and they are billed for tens of thousands of dollars they received over the years, money the government now believes they never deserved.

The government has good reason to ferret out disability fraud. Critics call it a secret welfare program that morphed over the decades from serving the truly disabled to aiding the unemployable: the uneducated, the frail, the unfortunates who live in places where a rotting economy relies on back-breaking labor. Burgeoning claims — in Floyd County, Kentucky, 15 percent are on disability — have pushed the disability fund to the brink of insolvency.

The government has squeezed other programs for the poor, leaving many in these crumbling corners of blue-collar America with few good options. The mass suspensions laid bare their absolute dependence on disability.

Three people have killed themselves. Others caught themselves in quiet moments won-

dering whether they'd be better off dead.

Donna Dye didn't crash her car into the coal truck. Instead, she pulled over to the shoulder of the road and sat for an hour, her temples pulsing with panic, her thoughts racing. Disability had been her family's safety net; now, she thought, there was nothing to save them from flailing toward impact.

"It's like sitting in a tub of water, floating, nothing's wrong," she said. "And then somebody pulls the cork, you get sucked out and everything's gone."

Eric C. Conn opened his law practice 23 years ago in a trailer in his hometown of Stanville, Kentucky, population 500. There, he built the third most lucrative disability firm in the nation.

When the Dyes went looking for a lawyer in 2008, Conn was everywhere.

He paid young women he called "Conn's hot-

ties" to attend events across the region with his 1-800 number printed across their tank tops. He erected a 19-foot replica of the Lincoln Memorial in the parking lot of his law complex at a cost, he claimed, of a half-million dollars. He commissioned life-sized Conn effigies to sit atop billboards on the highways; in an online ad, he bragged that he had sent a local boy with terminal cancer to Disney World, and closed with a preacher's benediction giving thanks to God for Conn's kindness.

Tim Dye hurt his back in the mines years ago and a car wreck in 2008 aggravated his injuries. He had surgery for ruptured discs and disintegrating cartilage. He resisted applying for disability, his wife said, until it got to where he couldn't push in the clutch in his truck or bend over to tie his shoes.

His application was denied.

See FRAUD, Page 8A

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Take the lessons

Looking back at 2016

As another year comes to an end (mind you I'm ready to tell this year good-bye), I have to stop and think what did this year teach me. After all is said and done, as bad as it may seem, this year had to have at least one lesson that created the silver lining ...right?



AMANDA
DUFORANT

Well, while this year came in like a whirlwind, for me and several others whom I know, and never really eased up, there were some great lessons to be learned. The biggest lesson for me was, despite the hard times (and trust me, this year had A LOT of hard times), a person can still move forward. As corny as it sounds, we get to make our own choices and direct our lives.

This year alone I had to deal with loss, watch situations I could not fix, deal with financial struggle, emotional struggle, and make hard choices, while still maintaining an active role at work and mother. These situations caused a lot of tears to be shed, a lot of self-judgment (sometimes self-condemnation), several heated arguments and several times of throwing in the towel. I can't even count how many times I thought I wasn't going to make it through the year, but somehow, here I am – here we are.

I've always believed that everything we go through – good or bad – has a reason behind it. We may not like the reason and we may not understand it, but our journey has a purpose. My biggest goal in life has always been to make a difference in someone's life; to be able to say that my experiences, my struggles and my words meant something to someone.

It has always been a belief of mine that words have a power that is often ignored; they hold a power greater than most people realize. They hold anger, fear, despair and they hold happiness. The wrong word can tear a person down in five seconds flat and the right word can build them up, just the same. Many of us don't realize how powerful a word can be. For me words are all these things and more. Words are my release and my passion (always have been) and this year, I have eased myself back into finding that passion I had let slip away.

Being a journalist for five years, I shared a lot of stories. I shared a lot of my struggles and while some may question why I did that, my answer was always the same – we all have a story to tell and someone out there just might need to hear my story to know they are not alone.

Hard times are a given, but they don't have to be handled alone. The way I look at it is this, each of our peaks and valleys are nothing more than a chapter in our story. The beauty in all of it is, while we may not get to determine the peak and the valley, we get to decide the length of the chapter. There will always be chapters that overlap each other, after all you have to go through chapter 1 to get to chapter 2, but that doesn't mean the book has to close. There are times when we need to take a break and set the book down, but we should always be willing to pick the book back up and continue writing.

As I look back on this year, I realize there were several times I decided to put the pen down, close the book and walk away. The mistake I made, too often, was leaving the book closed for far too long. We may not be able to control situations that are handed to us, but we can always make the most of it and listen to the lesson it is trying to teach us. One thing this year brought me was growth – more growth than I realized.

I went into the year dealing with issues that caused me to stop and really look at the gift of life. Life can slip away from us in a heartbeat – no matter the age – and I learned that as I watched my

See **LESSONS**, Page 7A

LETTERS

Continued from Page 5A

thousands of solar eclipse eyeglasses in order to beat the rush and the supply exhaustion. The event will be covered in the national news.

The event will be spectacular and folks, especially children will be tempted to look at the event without special eye protection. Please discourage this.

Orand Carroll
Big Spring, TX

Weekly Oil Report

New Locations:

Surge Operating, LLC
7850 N. Sam Houston Pkwy West
Suite 300
Houston, TX 77064-0000
Connie Swan, Agent
(918) 621-6533

Headington Energy Partners, LLC
1700 N. Redbud Blvd., Suite 400
McKinney, TX 75069-0000
Sharon Cook, Agent
(972) 208-0432

XTO Energy, Inc.
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Midland, TX 79701-0000
Joanne Baltier, Regulatory Analyst
(432) 682-8873

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Cynthia Truby, Regulatory Manager
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Cynthia Truby, Regulatory Manager
(281) 589-5200

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Natchez, MS 39121-1287
Cynthia Truby, Regulatory Manager
(281) 589-5200

Surge Operating, LLC
7850 N. Sam Houston Pkwy West
Suite 300
Houston, TX 77064-0000
Connie Swan, Agent
(918) 621-6533

See **OIL REPORT**, Page 7A

Borden County

#8AH Dragon "20-29", drill horizontal, El: NA
Spraberry (Trend Area) Field
2.25 miles northeast of Knott
A-1052, Section 20, Block 32, T-3-N, T&P RR Co. survey
Total Depth: 10,000 feet
Latitude 032.542489, Longitude -101.541237
300' FNL, 250' FEL of 1,279.71-acre lease
300' FNL, 250' FEL of the survey

Glasscock County

#11 Oak "15", drill, El: NA, API #42-173-37452
Spraberry (Trend Area) Field
3.88 miles northeast of Midkiff
A-462, Section 15, Block 37, T-5-S, T&P RR Co. survey
Total Depth: 12,200 feet
Latitude 031.391046, Longitude -101.461172
1517.01' FSL, 1739.08' FWL of 442.5-acre lease
1517.01' FSL, 1739.08' FWL of the survey
SWR 36 (H2S)

#2001 Berry, re-completion, El: NA, API #42-173-33391
Berryhill (Strawn) Field
10 miles south of Stanton
Section 25, Block 35, T&P RR Co. survey
Total Depth: 10,500 feet
X=1571158.32, Y=852365.22
1960' FNL, 1960' FEL of 1,280-acre lease
1960' FNL, 1960' FEL of the survey

Howard County

#1AH Wyndham Unit, drill horizontal, El: NA
Spraberry (Trend Area) Field
3.47 miles northwest of Big Spring
A-1663, Section 30, Block 32, T-1-N, T&P RR Co. survey
Total Depth: 7800 feet
Latitude 032.174935, Longitude -101.295125
794' FNL, 1003' FWL of 559.42-acre lease
794' FNL, 1003' FWL of the survey

#2AH Wyndham Unit, drill horizontal, El: NA
Spraberry (Trend Area) Field
3.47 miles northwest of Big Spring
A-1663, Section 30, Block 32, T-1-N, T&P RR Co. survey
Total Depth: 7800 feet
Latitude 032.174906, Longitude -101.295116
824' FNL, 1003' FWL of 559.42-acre lease
824' FNL, 1003' FWL of the survey

#1SH International Unit, drill horizontal, El: NA
Spraberry (Trend Area) Field
5 miles northwest of Big Spring
A-561, Section 12, Block A, Bauer & Cockrell survey
Total Depth: 7600 feet
Latitude 032.164670, Longitude -101.332486
2131' FNL, 2447' FEL of 480-acre lease
2131' FNL, 2447' FEL of the survey

#5AH International Unit, drill horizontal, El: NA
Spraberry (Trend Area) Field
5 miles northwest of Big Spring
A-561, Section 12, Block A, Bauer & Cockrell survey
Total Depth: 8000 feet
Latitude 032.164698, Longitude -101.332495
2101' FNL, 2447' FEL of 480-acre lease
2101' FNL, 2447' FEL of the survey

#9H International Unit, drill horizontal, El: NA
Spraberry (Trend Area) Field
5 miles northwest of Big Spring
A-561, Section 12, Block A, Bauer & Cockrell survey
Total Depth: 8600 feet
Latitude 032.164727, Longitude -101.332504
2071' FNL, 2447' FEL of 480-acre lease
2071' FNL, 2447' FEL of the survey

#1SH Middleton "47-38", drill horizontal, API #42-227-38932
Spraberry (Trend Area) Field, El: NA
2.75 miles southwest of Vealmoor
A-1007, Section 38, Block 33, T-3-N, T&P RR Co. survey
Total Depth: 10,000 feet
Latitude 032.485474, Longitude -101.592915449' FNL, 350'
FWL of 1,319.9-acre lease
449' FNL, 350' FWL of the survey

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(432) 267-3806

2017

LESSONS

Continued from Page 6A

mom battle and beat cancer. I learned that as I watched my preemie son fight as we spent a week in NICU with so many unanswered questions. Thankfully, both those situations had a happy ending and I can say both are doing well.

It is a scary feeling not being able to control anything in either of those situations. Knowing that it really is a fine balance between life and death, however, those situations taught me you have to cherish every moment. You have to take the time to make the memories because one day that will be all we have.

Another big lesson this year involved me finally choosing myself and sticking to the decision.

Most of us dream of having the "perfect" family and successful career one day. We all have our own version of what we are striving for, but one thing is the same, once we get it we don't want to let it go - even if it isn't exactly what we hoped it would be.

I have always been a "what if" kind of person. What if I just tried a little hard, what if I just gave one more chance, what if?

I've learned over the years, we can 'what if' ourselves to death and still not be able to change a person. Sometimes no matter how much you want something to work, it just isn't in the cards. There comes a point where you have to choose loving yourself and realize it just isn't meant to be. This year, I finally made the choice to love myself and take a stand (long time coming). As scary as that decision was, as big of a struggle that may lead into, the end result is so much better than the horrible cycle of destruction staying can cause. Being alone is scary, being alone with three kids is even scarier - but knowing happiness does exist is so worth the jump.

Don't ever be afraid to love yourself and go after your dreams. Sometimes letting go is the first step to achieving all that you dream of.

All in all, 2016 was a year of more valleys than peaks, but even so, the lessons I've learned have been amazing.

The growth I've seen in myself has surprised even me and I don't plan on stopping.

As a new year approaches, I leave you with these lessons:

1. Don't ever give up your passion - when you do, you give up yourself
2. Cherish every moment, even the hard ones - memories will be all we have one day and don't forget the hard times will teach you and help you grow (if you let them)
3. Stop being the what if person - the only person you can change is yourself, don't hold yourself back for anyone
4. My story does matter, my struggles were worth it

2016 was definitely a year of struggle, but now that I really stop and look at it, it's been a much needed year.

This year pushed me outside my comfort zone, taught me several lessons and helped me grow where I needed to. I'm nowhere near ready to throw in the towel and I'm ready to take on 2017.

Amanda Duforant is a local columnist and contributor for the Herald.



OIL REPORT

Continued from Page 6A

New Oil Completions:

CrownQuest Operating, LLC
P.O. Box 53310
Midland, TX 79710-0000
(432) 684-6381

Contractor not listed

Density
Yates 1806'
San Andres 3379'
Glorieta 4163'
Clear Fork 4909'
Spraberry 6545'
Dean 7850'
Wolfcamp 7949'

CrownQuest Operating, LLC
P.O. Box 53310
Midland, TX 79710-0000
(432) 684-6381

Contractor not listed

Density
Yates 1845'
San Andres 3413'
Glorieta 4168'
Clear Fork 4944'
Spraberry 6590'
Dean 7858'
Wolfcamp 7992'

RHB Exploration & Production, LLC
1000 Ballpark Way, Suite 216
Arlington, TX 76011-0000
(325) 673-4548

Contractor not listed

Santa Rosa 294'
Seven Rivers 1300'
San Andres 1500'
Tubb 2000'
Glorieta 2400'
Clear Fork 2502'

Howard County

#3HB W.R. Hackberry Unit, API #42-227-38733
Spraberry (Trend Area) Field, new well, El: 2513' GR
8.10 miles southwest of Knott
A-1337, Section 4, Block 34, T-1-N, T&P RR Co. survey
410' FEL, 250' FSL of the survey
Latitude 032.2899493, Longitude -101.6775671
Total Depth: 8473 feet. PBTB: 8473 feet. Logs: Neutron/

Daily Potential: 1,190 Bbls 38.0 gravity oil w/ 1,235 BWPD
Gas Lift. GOR: 912
Spud: 3-22-16. Completed: 11-03-16. Pay: NA
9-5/8" @ 8356 feet w/ 1,200 sx.

MS tool @ 4396 feet w/ 1,150 sx.
5-1/2" @ 18,354 feet w/ 2,850 sx.; 2-7/8" @ 7835 feet
Perfs: 8594-18,286
8594-18,286: Frac w/ 17,050,544# sand and 413,770 Bbls frac

#9HB W.R. Bur Oak Unit, API #42-227-38769
Spraberry (Trend Area) Field, new well, El: 2507' GR
8.10 miles southwest of Knott
A-1337, Section 4, Block 34, T-1-N, T&P RR Co. survey
1620' FEL, 705' FSL of the survey
Latitude 032.2901597, Longitude -101.6813312
Total Depth: 8479 feet. PBTB: 8479 feet. Logs: Neutron/

Daily Potential: 1,094 Bbls 38.0 gravity oil w/ 1,095 BWPD
Gas Lift. GOR: 829
Spud: 5-21-16. Completed: 11-07-16. Pay: NA
9-5/8" @ 8343 feet w/ 1,200 sx.

MS tool @ 4856 feet w/ 1,050 sx.
5-1/2" @ 17,879 feet w/ 2,800 sx.; 2-7/8" @ 7835 feet
Perfs: 8660-17,807
8660-17,807: Frac / 17,076,793# sand and 421,954 Bbls frac

Mitchell County

#13 Solomon, API #42-335-35916
Coleman Ranch Field, new well, El: 2241' GR
3 miles northwest of Cuthbert
A-142, Section 71, Block 97, H&TC RR Co. survey
1089' FEL, 2604' FSL of the survey
Latitude 032.4902928, Longitude -101.0823628
Total Depth: 2999 feet. PBTB: 2998 feet.

Logs: Dual Induction Compensated Density/Neutron
Daily Potential: 12 Bbls 40.0 gravity oil w/ 40 BWPD
Pumping. GOR: tstm
Spud: 11-10-14. Completed: 11-28-16. Pay: NA
4-1/2" @ 2998 feet w/ 440 sx.; 2-3/8" @ 2492 feet
Perfs: 2502-2717
2502-2717: Acidize w/ 2,000g 15% HCl

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FRAUD

Continued from Page 5A

About three-quarters of applicants' initial claims are rejected, and many turn to lawyers to help them appeal. That means big money for attorneys doing disability claims in bulk. If they win on appeal, applicants are entitled to payments dating back to when they became unable to work and lawyers get a chunk of that money, paid directly by the agency.

Conn racked in more than \$20 million in fees.

Media reports in 2011 questioned his relationship with government-employed Administrative Law Judge David Daugherty, who approved nearly all of Conn's clients for disability. In 2013, former U.S. Senator Tom Coburn, a Republican from Oklahoma, led an investigation into abuse of the disability program. He entitled his report, "How Some Legal, Medical and Judicial Professionals Abused Social Security Disability Programs for the Country's Most Vulnerable: A Case Study of the Conn Law Firm."

For 161 pages, it described an elaborate system in which Conn paid doctors and Daugherty to rubber-stamp disability claims, using phony medical evidence.

Years passed. Conn was not criminally charged, and he remained in good standing with the Kentucky Bar Association. Donna Dye says she and her husband were unaware of any improprieties — the Social Security Administration has acknowledged there's no evidence Conn's clients were involved in the scheme. The Dyes took him their records, went to the appointments he arranged and trusted he took care of the rest.

But in May 2015, 11 months before Conn was formally accused of any crime, the Social Security Administration contacted his clients. The letters said their lawyer was suspected of having colluded with a judge and their doctors to file claims using fraudulent medical evidence. It told them their benefits were suspended, and gave them 10 days to collect their medical records from years before and prove once again they had been disabled.

Local attorney Ned Pillersdorf's phone started ringing. He heard a hundred letters were sent out and panicked. Then he heard it was several hundred, then 900. Before the scope of the chaos settled into focus, a colleague made an ominous prediction.

"There will be suicides," he said.

Within weeks, three people took their own lives, including Melissa Jude, on disability for a decade for anxiety and depression. She was on her way to Pillersdorf's office when she pulled over to the side of the road and shot herself in the head.

The death toll startled Republican Congressman Hal Rogers, whose district includes the hardest-hit counties of eastern Kentucky. He convinced the Social Security Administration to allow Conn's clients to keep their checks as they struggled in a series of hearings to prove they deserved them all along. The Appalachian Research and Defense Fund, a legal aid organization in eastern Kentucky, grew so worried they recruited the largest network of volunteer attorneys since the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Now led by Pillersdorf, the band of 150 lawyers — some of

the best disability attorneys in the nation — has become a sort grassroots suicide prevention network. "We are fighting for you," they tell people over and over. "You are not alone against the government."

Still, at least once a week, Pillersdorf fields a suicide threat. They plead publicly on Facebook that they want to die. They call his office. They call his home.

"Why live?" Kevin Robertson wrote him.

Robertson, a 41-year old with an anxiety disorder, a bad back and an eighth-grade education, lost his \$1,035 monthly draw. He hadn't worked in a decade and says his anxiety is so crippling he can barely leave his bedroom. He lost his house and everything in it.

"I know some people killed themselves," he wrote. "To be honest, Ned, I've had some crazy thoughts myself."

Another man told him he's now sleeping in his pick-up truck. A woman wrote that she and her children kept only their camping gear and went out to live in the woods.

The stress is beginning to wear on Pillersdorf now, too. His wife begged him to see a doctor. His colleagues worry he's coming undone.

"I want this nightmare to be over," he said, the fraying hems peeking from the leg of his trousers and the framed diplomas crooked on his office wall. "I don't remember what life was like before this started. And I don't know if we're at the end or the beginning."

Grocery stores in Floyd County, Kentucky, are overrun when the disability checks arrive the first week of the month. Traffic backs up on the main drag in downtown Prestonsburg, the county seat. Even the Papa John's doubles its number of delivery drivers.

The payments prop up an economy that struggled, then collapsed in recent years along with the coal industry.

One of every six working-aged adults here gets a check, more than three times the American average. Coburn attributes that to a broken system abused by those who don't truly deserve it, yet grow dependent on government benefits. They should have known better than to hire a "shyster lawyer," he said, and those who didn't deserve benefits in the first place shouldn't draw another dime. Government dependency, he believes, is the first step toward tyranny.

"Do I feel sorry for them? Yes," he said. "Do they have hardships? Yes. But do they meet the qualifications for Social Security Disability? Absolutely not. Here's what the law says: if you can do any job in the economy you don't qualify for disability. Rules have to mean something, and life isn't fair."

The disability program was not designed to be welfare. It is an insurance program. Every American worker pays a premium out of their paycheck under an agreement with the government that a percentage of their salary will be paid to them if one day they become too disabled to work.

Tim Dye started working in the mines when he was 17. He thought when he hired Conn 26 years later, he was collecting what he was due.

His family grew entirely dependent on that check. His wife worked for the county government for nearly 18 years, until she was laid off in 2015. She didn't worry too much then about losing her

job. Her husband's disability check came every month, around \$2,200. It wasn't a lot for a couple with a son still in high school and two granddaughters living with them. But it was stable and they made do, and expected life to go on the way it always had in their yellow house on the edge of a mountain.

Earlier this year, her husband went to the Social Security office for his initial re-determination hearing, thinking that his inclusion on the suspension list must have been some sort of mistake. But a vocational expert told the judge Dye's back problems wouldn't prevent him from working a desk job. He was denied, and the checks stopped coming seven months ago.

They wonder who would want to hire an old coal miner for a sit-down job, with nothing more than a high school diploma, a crippled back and an eight-year gap on his resume.

"In a month or two, we won't have nothing," he said. "We're losing everything."

The volunteer lawyers representing Conn's former clients say the deck is stacked against them: The agency is assuming fraud without having to prove to any court that any of them committed it. The Office of the Inspector General identified applications that included Conn's suspect medical evidence. But the report is confidential, no one has seen the evidence the agency relied on to determine why this particular pile of claims was assumed to be fraudulent.

Citing a 1994 law, the agency is forbidding Conn's clients from using any medical evidence from the doctors alleged to have been involved in his scheme.

Pillersdorf said many of his clients were on disability for mental illness and cognitive disabilities. Now they are expected to recall the names of the other doctors they saw 10 years ago and pray they still have the records, Pillersdorf said.

They can't go back to original files they handed over to their lawyer. Conn is alleged to have destroyed millions of pages of documents. Coburn's investigation found that he shredded 26,000 pounds of paper when the senate started to investigate. His former employees testified he burned more in a bonfire behind his office that grew so big it smoldered for four days.

He was charged with 18 crimes, including mail fraud, wire fraud, destruction of records, money laundering, making false statements and conspiracy.

Conn's attorneys did not respond to calls requesting an interview. He was released on bond pending his trial scheduled for next summer. His bail was secured by his \$1.5 million estate in Pikeville.

Of the hundreds of his clients initially suspended, about half have won their cases. The other half, including the Dyes, were cut off. Their cases

are entangled now in a series of lawsuits in federal court.

At least one judge agreed that the procedure is unfair. U.S. District Judge Amul Thapar — on President-elect Donald Trump's short list for the U.S. Supreme Court — issued an opinion last month that found a number of Conn's clients were afforded fewer protections than suspected terrorists and ordered the Social Security Administration to reconsider its process. But another federal judge sided with the agency. The question will now likely be settled by a federal appeals court. The agency declined to talk about the process.

In the meantime, many of those who lost are living with no income.

The Dyes couldn't pay the water bill, so Donna Dye designed a system of hoses and barrels to collect run off from the hill that juts up behind her house, "the old-fashioned mountain way," she says.

Then a man came to switch off the lights. He gave her enough time to get to the pawn shop, cash in her engagement ring and pay the bill.

She signed up for food stamps. But her husband is too proud to spend them. To him, disability was earned; food stamps are welfare.

She had hoped to find a job that paid almost as much as she made with the county, \$12.45 an hour. She's 49 years old, with only a GED. They live in rural Floyd County, 23 miles from the county seat, and just putting gas in their old truck to get to and from town eats up a couple hours of minimum wage work. But she gave up and put in 40 applications, from the Dollar Store to cleaning rooms at a cheap motel. She posted advertisements all over town offering babysitting or housecleaning for \$10 an hour. She's had no takers.

They raised their kids in a hollow nearby in a rickety two-bedroom house with no heat. When Tim was still working, about 10 years ago, they bought this bigger place for \$85,000 and thought it meant they'd made it to the middle class. She said it was one of the happiest days of her life, and she went out and got the big dining room table she always wanted, with eight chairs so she could have the whole family over for dinners.

The mortgage got behind by three months. The bank called to collect and she panicked. She put a sign in her yard. "Open house, everything must go." Her neighbors picked through her belongings. She sold her couch,

her dishes and every television they owned. A woman offered her \$20 each for five of her eight dining room chairs.

"This has been pure hell. Worry, just worry, that's all I do," she said and slumped into one of the three chairs she has left.

"I'm almost out of stuff to pawn."

Most people — even Conn's former clients — believe fraud is rampant in the disability system. They point to a distant relative or a man down the street, who seems healthy and able to work but still draws a check. Pillersdorf calls them "fakers," people knowingly gaming the system, and said he hasn't met one in his stack of Conn's former clients yet. The reality is much more complicated.

The very definition of disability is open for debate. Mental illness is hard to measure. Pain is impossible to see.

"There is no medical condition called disability," said David Autor, an economics professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "You can't go to a doctor and have them say, 'I've got bad news for you, son, you've got a disability.' Disability is a social construct; it's how much we want you to be suffering before you shouldn't have to work."

The nature of disability has evolved since its inception in the 1950s, when it was designed to support people with severe physical limitations — blindness, paralysis, heart disease. The program rapidly expanded in the 1970s and the federal government clamped down and kicked nearly a half-million people off the rolls. But it backfired: The public was incensed at the thought of suffering people cut off. Congress in 1984 responded by writing a more generous definition of disability which required that the agency consider pain, mental illness and combinations of less serious ailments in awarding disability.

The number of Americans in the program has skyrocketed since, from 1.8 million people in 1970 to more than 10 million today, only some of which can be attributed to aging baby boomers and more women in the workforce. Nationwide, 4.7 percent of Americans rely on Social Security Disability. But in some pockets, that number is far higher. Autor calls it the "disability belt," a swath across the South and Appalachia, where levels of education are among the lowest in the nation and jobs in mining or manufacturing have disappeared.



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Stay healthy, my friends

Cowboys look to avoid injuries as they face Eagles in season finale

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Dak Prescott and Ezekiel Elliott prefer playing over resting.

Staying healthy — not winning — is the top priority for the playoff-bound Dallas Cowboys (13-2) when they visit the Philadelphia Eagles (6-9) on Sunday because they already clinched home-field advantage throughout the NFC playoffs.

Don't tell their two dynamic rookies this game doesn't matter.

"No game is meaningless," Prescott said. "There's quality reps against a quality team that's in our division that we'll play for years to come. Any reps I can get against a

good team to make myself better and get some momentum going into the playoffs, I'll take it."

Elliott needs 178 yards to break Eric Dickerson's rookie record. There's no chance coach Jason Garrett gives him enough carries, if any, to reach that mark.

"Everything is meaningful, even though it may not matter if we win or lose," Elliott said. "We're trying to stay sharp, we're trying to have a sharp edge every week so we can go into this playoffs like a high-octane machine. We're not taking weeks off."

After watching Derek Carr and Marcus Mariota suffer season-ending injuries

See **DALLAS**, Page 2B



Dallas quarterback Dak Prescott, right, hands off the ball to running back Ezekiel Elliott during a game earlier this season. The Cowboys finish the 2016 NFL regular season Sunday at Philadelphia.

AP file photo

College football's Final Four takes the field

Huskies relish underdog role

ATLANTA (AP) — Overlooked in the College Football Playoff, the Washington Huskies know what's expected of them.

One-and-done against mighty Alabama.

Actually, after spending a few days in Atlanta, they sort of understand the logic.

Now on Eastern time, some of the Huskies tried to stay up late watching Boise State — coach Chris Petersen's former school — play in the Cactus Bowl.

"It's been 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning when some of these games have been on," moaned Washington cornerback Kevin King. "I wouldn't be up every day watching them. When you're playing those later games, everybody out here (on the East Coast) is asleep. Maybe they don't know about West Coast football. But everybody will be watching come Saturday."

That's when fourth-seeded Washington (12-1) takes on No. 1 and heavily

favored Alabama (13-0) in the Peach Bowl semifinal game.

The Tide opened as an 11-point pick, and the line has since climbed to 14 points. The Huskies are by far the biggest underdog in the three-year history of the playoff; in fact, it's the largest spread for a game that will go toward determining the national champion since the launch of the Bowl Championship Series — a one-game matchup between the two highest-ranked teams — back in 1998.

Having reveled in the underdog role all year long, Washington hopes to use the double-digit odds as further incentive to shock Alabama, and the

See **HUSKIES**, Page 2B



COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF

Now one of them could face a nerve-racking shot at receiving No. 2 Ohio State (11-1, CFP No. 3) or Clemson (12-1, CFP No. 2) wins Saturday's Fiesta Bowl and advances to the College Football Playoff championship game.

"Every kicker I think always dreams of kicking that game-winning field goal," Durbin said. "It puts a lot of pressure on you, but that's why you're in the business."

Durbin is still a non-scholarship player, taking over as the Buckeyes

Will kickers decide OSU-Clemson?

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) — Two years ago, Tyler Durbin was kicking around a soccer ball at James Madison University. Greg Huegel was a freshman watching Clemson football games from the stands.

Now one of them could face a nerve-racking shot at receiving No. 2 Ohio State (11-1, CFP No. 3) or Clemson (12-1, CFP No. 2) wins Saturday's Fiesta Bowl and advances to the College Football Playoff championship game.

"Every kicker I think always dreams of kicking that game-winning field goal," Durbin said. "It puts a lot of pressure on you, but that's why you're in the business."

Durbin is still a non-scholarship player, taking over as the Buckeyes

kicker when Sean Nuernberger injured his groin in fall practice this year.

"He's seized the opportunity and had a phenomenal year. We love him to death," special teams coach Kerry Coombs said. "The first football game of his was our opener this year."

At Clemson, Huegel practiced three or four times a week, made regular contact with special teams coach Danny Pearman and entered a kicking competition before the 2015 season.

"I knew that I wanted to walk-on just because I didn't have anything to lose," Huegel said.

After a standout first season, Huegel has a scholarship now.

Durbin knows a whole lot about pressure.

Through 11 games this season, he was 16-for-17 on field goals, with his only miss being a block against Penn State.

Then came the regular-season finale

See **KICK**, Page 2B

Don't tell Texans, Titans that Sunday's game is meaningless

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The Tennessee Titans hoped to be playing for Sunday now rests comfortably in Houston's hands for a second straight season.

The Texans and Titans insist they still have lots on the line in their regular-season finale.

Houston (9-6) can finish its first season sweep of the AFC South and extend a divisional winning streak already tied for the NFL's longest active string to 11 games. A win would cap just the third 10-win season in franchise history and first since 2012.

Better yet, the Texans could cruise into the playoffs with a fourth straight victory.

"There's a lot out there for us in this

game," Houston coach Bill O'Brien said. "I know that Tennessee wants to win. They want a winning record, and they're going to be tough. They're going to be very, very tough. Our guys need to show up ready to go. It's going to be a good game."

No thought of resting any starters for O'Brien before hosting a wild-card game.

"We're playing to win," O'Brien said.

The Titans' playoff hopes ended last week along with quarterback Marcus Mariota breaking his right fibula in a 38-17 loss to Jacksonville. The final nail came hours later when Cincinnati missed a 43-yard field goal wide

to clinch the division



Houston Texans wide receiver Will Fuller (15) is chased by Tennessee Titans inside linebacker Avery Williamson (54) after a reception during the first half of their October game in Houston.

AP file photo

with a 12-10 win.

Yet a win scratches Tennessee (8-7): first

winning record since 2011; ending a five-game

skid; losing Houston; serving notice the Titans

are coming for the AFC South in 2017.

"This can definitely lead us into the next season," Titans linebacker Brian Orakpo said. "I think we made a drastic turnaround over here, with the Titans organization especially from the years prior to this year. We did a lot of good things, so there's definitely something to hang our hat on. We just want to finish the season right."

Coach Mike Mularkey has reminded his Titans they haven't beaten Houston since he's been around. Houston has won eight of the last nine, and why not start Sunday learning how to beat divisional opponents?.

"That's why we're not in the playoffs, because

of our division losses," Mularkey said of going 1-4 in the AFC South. "This is an important football game to go into the offseason to really start the 2017 season."

Here are some things to watch Sunday when the Texans and Titans meet:

OFFENSIVE TUNE-UP: Tom Savage will start his second straight game since coming off the bench to replace Brock Osweiler. O'Brien wants Savage speeding up an offense that managed only 34 yards in the first half against Cincinnati and finished with 250. Savage also was sacked four times. Houston is averaging just 17.5 points per game, not just worst

See **TEXANS**, Page 2B

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HUSKIES

Continued from Page 1B

rest of the nation.

"We won this many games for a reason," said Sidney Jones, another Huskies defensive back. "Not many teams could do this."

Washington can certainly appreciate what a difficult journey this has been.

A national powerhouse under Don James, the Huskies spent much of the past two decades trying to rediscover their swagger. They burned through five coaches and managed just one major bowl appearance, a Rose Bowl victory at the end of the 2000 season. When things were especially grim, Washington endured six straight losing seasons — including an 0-12 debacle in 2008.

Enter Petersen, who took over in 2014 after transforming Boise State into the little school that could compete with the big boys. The turnaround took a while — the Huskies went 8-6 in his inaugural season and limped to a 7-6 mark a year ago — but it all fell into place this season.

Respect took even longer.

When the first CFP rankings came out at the beginning of November, Washington was 8-0 but stuck at No. 5 — behind a one-loss Texas A&M team. For Petersen, that played right into the us-against-the-world mindset that worked so well at Boise State.

"A lot of the guys were angry and stuff," remembered Budda Baker, the Huskies' star safety. "They were like, 'How can you put this team ahead of us? We're undefeat-

ed,' and all that type of stuff. But coach Pete came in, had a team meeting and just talked about how that's exactly the way we like it."

It all worked out in the end, of course. Even after a loss at home to Southern Cal, the Huskies claimed their playoff spot with an impressive win over Washington State to close the regular season and a blowout of Colorado in the Pac-12 championship game.

Now, they're outsiders again.

Alabama is the defending national champion and in the playoff for the third year in a row. The other semifinal will match Ohio State, which won it all two years ago, against Clemson, last season's runner-up, in the Fiesta Bowl.

"Nobody's thinking about Washington," Baker said, actually not sounding all that worked up about the perceived slight. Petersen "always talks about that type of stuff. Let all the media and everyone else talk about the other team. You work on what you need to work on."

Besides, the odds-makers won't have any say in the outcome of the game.

If it's any consolation to the Huskies, the underdog prevailed in half of the games over the first two years of the playoff — including Ohio State against nine-point favorite Alabama in the inaugural semifinals.

"I'm just glad we can still play the game at the end of the day," offensive guard Jake Eldrenkamp quipped. "If it was up to the media, I don't think we'd have a chance. The nice thing about football is once you start the game, everything is equal on the playing field."

should see action against his former team.

The Eagles nearly beat Dallas with more at stake on Oct. 30. They wasted a 10-point lead in the fourth quarter and Prescott tossed a touchdown pass to Jason Witten in overtime.

Here are some things to watch for when the NFC East rivals meet in the regular-season finale:

THE OTHER ROOKIE QB: Carson Wentz, the No. 2 overall pick, is second behind Prescott in yards passing and TD passes by rookies. Wentz is two completions away from breaking Sam Bradford's rookie record. He will become the first QB to start 16 games for the Eagles since Donovan McNabb in 2008.

KICK

Continued from Page 1B

against Michigan.

In an intense, close game, Durbin missed twice, once from 37 yards, later a 21-yard chip shot.

Combs approached his downcast kicker.

"I walked down there and saw him after he missed the second one," Coombs said. "I don't usually talk to him during the game but I gave him my wristband." It reads E + R = O, Event plus Response equals Outcome, a program motto that coach Urban Meyer picked up from motivational speakers.

Coombs said he told his young kicker, "You're going to make the kick to win the game."

Not quite, but it was a season-saver.

Moments later, Durbin jogged onto the field and nailed a 23-yarder with a second left to send the game into overtime.

TEXANS

Continued from Page 1B

among playoff-bound teams but 29th in the NFL.

SECONDARY WOES: Playing the Titans could be just what Savage needs. Tennessee gave up 325 yards passing to Jaguars quarterback Blake Bortles last week in the Titans' lone double-digit loss of the season. Cornerback Jason McCourty missed last week with a bruised chest, and rookie LeShaun Sims couldn't finish after sustaining a concussion. Tennessee

Ohio State eventually won 30-27 in two overtimes.

"I was just thankful that the defense was able to get a stop after that miss and put me in a position to tie the game towards the end there," Durbin said. "It never feels good missing a kick, especially a short one like that in a big game like that. But I was relieved to get another opportunity to put it through."

Kickers, like cornerbacks, must have short memories. Fans can be brutal, too.

"It's a love-hate relationship with the fans, but you can't really worry about what they're thinking," Huegel said, "It comes with being a kicker. You get used to it."

Huegel followed his sister to Clemson. A kicker in high school, he was just "a normal student" as a freshman. But he watched the Tigers play and wanted to be a part of it all.

That led to practices, and then he was given a shot.

"He came to basically a kicker tryout and really

showed consistency and did well," Pearman said, "really liked his demeanor, his makeup. He's really been kind of a steady performer for us."

Oh, and about that story Tigers head coach Dabo Swinney likes to tell of discovering Huegel kicking a can while the would-be kicker worked at a grocery store?

Never happened.

"I've never even worked in a grocery store," Huegel said.

In 2015, his first year as Clemson kicker, Huegel made 27 of 32 field goals and 57 of 62 extra points, along the way breaking C.J. Spiller's school scoring record with 138 points.

Huegel made two field goals and all four PAT tries in last season's championship game loss to Alabama.

He hasn't had to work as hard this year.

Huegel has attempted just 17 field goals, making 12. In the last four games, he attempted one field goal, and missed.

ping the run since Week 8. Houston is allowing just 68 yards per game since then.

TITANS RUNNING BACK: DeMarco Murray ran for 95 yards against Houston on Oct. 2 in a 27-20 win by the Texans. Rookie Derrick Henry only had three carries in that game.

TITANIC TURNAROUND: Tennessee already has won five more games than a season ago (3-13). A win Sunday would tie the biggest one-year turnaround in franchise history, matching the six-win improvement of 1967 and 1974.

show that Dez Bryant wanted to be in quarterback meetings and was lobbying offensive coordinator for Scott Linehan for more passing plays. Bryant threw his first career touchdown to Jason Witten on a trick play against the Lions. Of course, Prescott had to answer a question about whether the 2014 All-Pro receiver was in the QB room: "No, not at all," Prescott said.

FINISHING STRONG: The Eagles snapped a five-game losing streak by defeating the Giants 24-19 last Thursday. That allowed the Cowboys to clinch the NFC East and the No. 1 seed. Despite a disappointing season after starting 3-0, Philadelphia looks to end on a high note with a two-game winning streak.

DALLAS

Continued from Page 1B

ries broken legs last week, every coach has to be wary of playing his starters in a game with no playoff implications. But Garrett didn't give any indication he planned to sit his best players.

Dallas had nothing at stake Monday night, but Prescott played the entire game and led Dallas to a 42-21 win over the Lions.

Tony Romo could make his season debut for the Cowboys whenever Prescott finishes his tuneup, though owner Jerry Jones said the veteran doesn't need any reps to be ready for the playoffs. No. 3 quarterback Mark Sanchez

ber, who has played defensive end in the past, will likely be there after seeing some time in that spot against Detroit.

LAST BACKS STANDING: The Eagles have placed three running backs on injured reserve this month, including leading rusher Ryan Mathews. Rookie Byron Marshall should get much of the workload in his second career game, along with veteran Darren Sproles. Marshall, undrafted out of Oregon, spent most of the season on the practice squad.

"You don't want to just practice and then go home on the weekend and watch like a fan," he said.

DEZ AT QB? Executive vice president of personnel Stephen Jones joked on his radio

"I'm very fortunate," Wentz said. "I think, first of all, it goes to the guys up front doing a great job protecting me. But ultimately, I'm very fortunate. This is a fluky game. Things happen. I've just got to thank the Lord for that, for sure."

DEPLETED D-LINE: The Cowboys are likely to be without three starters on their defensive line: ends DeMarcus Lawrence (back) and Tyrone Crawford (hamstring/shoulder) and tackle Terrell McClain (ankle). All three figure to be ready for the playoffs. But to get through this game, Dallas signed end Richard Ash off Jacksonville's practice squad after putting Ryan Davis (knee) on injured reserve. Linebacker Kyle Wil-

son, who has played defensive end in the past, will likely be there after seeing some time in that spot against Detroit.

LAST BACKS STANDING: The Eagles have placed three running backs on injured reserve this month, including leading rusher Ryan Mathews. Rookie Byron Marshall should get much of the workload in his second career game, along with veteran Darren Sproles. Marshall, undrafted out of Oregon, spent most of the season on the practice squad.

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James savors 'magic ride' during 2016

CLEVELAND (AP) — Not everyone wants 2016, month after month of messy moments and mayhem, to end.

For LeBron James, it was a charmed year.

"A magical run," he said. "I felt like Aladdin on my flying magic carpet."

On top of the world. James soared in his second season back in Cleveland, his homecoming was capped by an historic comeback in which he led the Cavaliers to an NBA title to ending the city's 52-year sports championship drought.

There was no stopping James this year. He mesmerized on the court, his game showing no signs of decay in his 14th season. He is ascending in every statistical career list and might be better than ever.

But numbers don't reveal the full measure of James, who this year broadened his business profile and made a deeper commitment to philanthropic and social causes — in Ohio and across the country. The face of the league is also the front man for an entire region transformed by his return.

The Akron wunderkind who has spent half his life being pegged as the "Next Michael Jordan" has surpassed immense expectations. He turned 32 on Friday and

calls his 31st year like no other.

A third NBA title. Finals MVP. Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year. Sports Illustrated Sportsman of the Year. A White House visit. Husband. Father of three. The adoration of millions.

"It's been a great year and I can say, yes, it's been the best because I'm in the present and I'm a present type of guy," he told the AP recently. "But not just to see everything I've been able to accomplish individually, but also the things that I've been able to do to inspire others with my foundation and people in this city, it's been a great year for sure."

Cleveland doesn't just look different, it feels different. James can take some of the credit.

Downtown is nearly unrecognizable, revived by new hotels and apartment buildings and a renewal of The Flats, a trendy area with bars and restaurant on the banks of the Cuyahoga River, which famously burned in the 1970s. Young Clevelanders, who for decades fled after college for opportunities elsewhere, are coming back — just as James did.

There's also something deeper. The population has been flushed with a civic pride that in part has grown by what



Lebron James, second from left, and his Cleveland teammates celebrate winning the 2016 NBA championship.

James and the Cavs did in June. He's given Clevelanders swagger and it doesn't hurt that he's one of them.

Perhaps the best snapshot of Cleveland's triumphant year was James wearing a "Cleveland Or Nowhere" T-shirt while cheering for the Indians during the World Series.

"I look at the accomplishments, and none of it is for me," he said. "It's for my wife and my kids and my mother and my in-laws, all my friends, all the kids in the foundation, everyone I tried to inspire. I accomplished everything for them to be happy. I do everything because of them and for people to be able to say, this is who we are and

be confident about it. That's what matters to me."

Now that he's got three rings — halfway to Jordan's six — the debate over whether James can one day pass His Airness as the greatest player in league history has intensified.

James has always left the argument for others to ponder. Even though it makes for good talk radio and bar stool banter, James won't join the discussion.

"Our games are so different," he said when asked about Jordan at 32. "He was much more of a scorer, and did a lot of post work at that time. But our games are just different. His body is different. So you recognize the dominance

that someone had at that age, but there's no similarities in our games at all."

In the eyes of Cleveland coach Tyrone Lue, James can't be compared to any one player. He's an amalgamation of talent.

"He's got the explosiveness and power of Dominique Wilkins, the scoring ability of Jordan at times," Lue said. "The court vision and the way he pushes the pace like Magic Johnson. And as far as a comparison between him and Jordan, the comparisons I have is when you're on top, the best player in the league for so long and having to carry that each and every year and never get

knocked down off that

pedestal, that's a big accomplishment because guys are coming for you. You're a target."

As his grand year trickles to its final hours, James isn't looking too far ahead.

How do you top the greatest year of your life?

"You don't even try," he said. "You start from scratch and say, 'All right, it's 2017, let's see what happens.' I've never been a New Year's resolution guy. I don't need to make goals when I've been living my life the right way for a long time. You don't want to start over, you say, let's see what happens, continue to give praise to the man above and live your life and continue to inspire people."

'Bama QB Hurts deftly handling himself on, off field

ATLANTA (AP) — Jalen Hurts' go-karting trip with Alabama teammates hit a wall because things "kinda got a little hectic."

The team became surrounded by fans wanting pictures and autographs during a trip to Andretti Karting. One little kid dressed up as him for Halloween with pipe cleaners mimicking his long dreadlocks. "That was cute to me," Hurts said.

No. 1 Alabama's freshman quarterback has learned to deal with the trappings of being the starting quarterback for Nick Saban's 'Bama dynasty while learning to read defenses and master plays on the field. He's led the Crimson Tide (13-0) into a playoff semifinals matchup with No. 4 Washing-

ton (12-1) in Saturday's Peach Bowl at the Georgia Dome.

The 18-year-old Hurts is trying to join Oklahoma's Jamelle Holieway as the only freshman quarterback to lead his team to a national championship.

"I'm not the type of guy to just say no — no pictures, no autographs — because that's disrespectful," Hurts said. "You have to treat the fans the best way you can. But we have a security guard and I walk around with him when I know stuff is going to go down. And he said, 'Look, Jalen I don't have a problem at all with saying no.' So I'm like, 'It's better coming from you than me.'"

Facing the Huskies defense is tough enough, but Hurts is also navi-

gating life as a celebrity figure among Alabama fans. Not that he's complaining.

By all accounts, the Southeastern Conference's offensive player of the year has handled the off-the-field challenges as well as he has the ones on the field. He has started the last 12 games and so solidified the job that the team's other three quarterbacks are transferring after or, in Blake Barnett's case, during the season.

So having to wear a hoodie around Tuscaloosa is a small price to pay, even if sometimes people still come up and tell him: "You can't hide."

"I mean, it's my lifestyle now," Hurts said. "I'm kinda getting used to it. It is what it is. I

always embrace it, and here I am trying to embrace it."

His teammates and coaches embraced him quickly.

Offensive coordinator Lane Kiffin watched him throw at Channelview High School and says he came back telling Saban: "Coach, I think this guy's a first-round draft pick."

Tight end O.J. Howard recalls watching Hurts talking to a strength coach on the sidelines during fall camp after throwing an interception — and then coming right back and firing a touchdown pass.

"That's when we found out he was just so composed, he didn't let it rattle him or anything," Howard said. "He said, 'I'm going to bounce back. I'm good.'"

That, Howard said, is "when I thought I knew he was going to be the quarterback."

Hurts, who played for his father in high school, has already had the most prolific rushing season of any Alabama QB, with 841 yards and 12 touchdowns. He's also passed for 2,592 yards and 22 touchdowns against nine interceptions.

But he has failed to reach 175 passing yards in five of the Tide's last seven games. Washington's defense has picked apart more seasoned passers and leads the nation with 33 forced turnovers.

"If you get pressure on him he makes not

the greatest decisions," Huskies cornerback Sidney Jones said. "But when he has time to set his feet he looks like a great quarterback."

Linebacker Keishawn Bierria calls Hurts a "super athletic" playmaker who benefits from a terrific supporting cast. The Huskies are hoping that they can benefit from his youth, even if Hurts does have 12 starts under his belt.

"You always want to try to get inside his head and rattle him," Bierria said. "But he has a great team surrounding him. It might be a little difficult but that's our goal."

This time, there won't be a security guard to fend them off.

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In win-now NFL, patience can be a virtue

ALAMEDA, Calif. (AP) — When the Oakland Raiders lost the first 10 games in general manager Reggie McKenzie's third season back in 2014, fired his hand-picked coach and fell to 11-37 under his leadership, few would have questioned owner Mark Davis had he made a change.

Instead, Davis stuck with McKenzie, and is receiving the dividends for his patience this season.

The Raiders have used a young core led by 2014 draft picks Derek Carr and Khalil Mack; two strong free-agency classes aided by McKenzie's moves early in his tenure to get the salary cap in order; and more shrewd pickups in the draft and from street free agents. Oakland (12-3) is back in the postseason for the first time since 2002, with a chance to wrap up the AFC West on Sunday.

"We were in constant communication throughout the four years leading up to this year," McKenzie said about Mark Davis, who showed more patience than his father Al did when he had six coaches in his final nine seasons before dying in 2011.

The Raiders aren't the only contender that has benefited from patient leadership. Similar moves have paid off to various extents in Dallas, Detroit and Tennessee.

Cowboys owner Jerry Jones stuck with coach Jason Garrett despite one playoff berth and winning record in his first five full seasons. Now, Dallas is the top seed in the NFC.

Garrett began his tenure with three straight 8-8 seasons, but Jones

believed he was learning on the job. The Cowboys then went 12-4 the following year before dropping to four wins in 2015 when Tony Romo missed most of the season. They rebounded this season behind rookie quarterback Dak Prescott and running back Ezekiel Elliott.

"I can't say enough the job that Jason is doing," Jones said. "Now, I have seen Jason do some really good things. Last year was, I think, a little 'come to Jesus' for everybody. And we didn't do well. And we certainly didn't make the kinds of adjustments this year to be going with our third-string quarterback is remarkable. And, so, I am excited. But let me not slight it at all. I am just thrilled with Jason's job he's done coaching."

Many expected Bob Quinn to fire Jim Caldwell in Detroit after taking over as general manager last offseason with the Lions coming off a 7-9 year. Instead Caldwell came back for a third season and his calm ways seemed to help the Lions rally from an NFL record eight fourth-quarter comebacks.

The Lions head into the final weekend needing to beat Green Bay to win the franchise's first division title since 1993. Detroit also could get into the playoffs as a wild card if Washington loses to the Giants.

If Detroit makes the playoffs, Caldwell will likely be back next year for a fourth season. If the Lions fall short, Caldwell's chances of being retained could take a hit.

Tennessee general manager Jon Robinson could have eas-



Dallas head coach Jason Garrett celebrates with wide receiver Dez Bryant (88) after a Cowboys' touchdown earlier this season.

ily searched for his own coach after taking over the Titans last January. He decided to give interim coach Mike Mularkey a chance at the full-time job despite a 2-7 record in place of Ken Whisenand in 2015 and two failed tenures in Buffalo and Jacksonville.

Tennessee was in position to win the AFC South before a loss last week, a development Robinson said might not have been possible without the continuity of keeping Mularkey on board.

"Mike and his staff have done a real good job of promoting confidence with the players and really harping on guys on what they can do, and telling them we can compete against these guys, and telling them we can go out and we can win football games," Robinson said. "Not just play and give a good showing, but win."

But patience is far from the norm in the NFL, as evidenced by

Buffalo's decision to fire Rex Ryan this week after less than two full seasons, part of an AFC East revolving door of coaches outside of New England.

Since Bill Belichick arrived in 2000, the Bills, Jets and Miami have combined for 23 coaches as they all try to chase the Patriots.

After being fired after one season by the Jets in 1994 and lasting three seasons in New England, Carroll has found great success first in college at USC, then in his third NFL job with the Seahawks, winning a Super Bowl and making five straight playoff appearances.

In fact, 13 out of the last 19 Super Bowls have been won by coaches on their second or third jobs.

But it doesn't guarantee success. Just look at what happened in Los Angeles and Jacksonville this season.

The Rams brought coach Jeff Fisher along for the move from St.

Louis despite failing to post a winning record in his first four seasons. Things only got worse as the offense stagnated, No. 1 overall pick Jared Goff struggled to get on the field, and Fisher was fired with a 4-9 record.

It was a similar situation in Jacksonville, where the Jaguars brought coach Gus Bradley back despite a 12-36 record his first three seasons, only to fire him earlier this month with the Jaguars mired at 2-12.

The conundrum for executives is figuring when one more season could be enough for a coach or GM to turn things around, and when it's a lost cause.

Things in Oakland didn't look bright when Mark Davis decided to stick with McKenzie. His first two drafts yielded few key contributors and most of the free agents were second-tier players as Oakland placed a high priority on getting the cap in order after years or mis-

management under Al Davis.

But there were signs of hope in the play of Carr and Mack as rookies during that 3-13 season in 2014 that saw coach Dennis Allen get fired after four games.

McKenzie then hired coach Jack Del Rio, added key free agents such as Pro Bowlers Rodney Hudson and Kelechi Osemele on the offensive line, Pro Bowl safety Reggie Nelson, big-play receiver Michael Crabtree and pass rusher Bruce Irvin.

A strong 2015 draft class led by Pro Bowl receiver Amari Cooper, and several undrafted free agents who are making a big impact, have the Raiders back in the playoffs. They will go there without Carr, who broke his right leg last week.

"We felt like we had some players to build on," McKenzie said. "I would be fooling myself if I didn't say I thought we could compete, and win some ballgames."

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Goodbye, 2016!

HERALD file photos

Around the country and the world, between a contentious presidential election, tensions between police and protestors, and the deaths of a slew of beloved celebrities, 2016 hasn't been that bad. We've had free hugs donated gladly by local artist Rae Ripple; school artistic and athletic activities; our very own Howard College turning 70 years old; the introduction of a new tradition called "Artober" - a downtown artistic festival in October; and the continuation of old traditions such as the Blessing of the Pets by Holy Trinity Catholic Parish; patriotic parades in Big Spring, Coahoma, and Forsan; local Boy Scouts of America and Young Marines programs. Of course, into every life a little rain must fall, and Howard County had a lot of rain this year, with hail and tornadoes included. A few fires too. But all in all, it has been a wonderful year in the Crossroads. Here's wishing all area residents a hap-



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A Critical Ear: But can you drink the water?

I don't consider myself to be a compulsive type, but I can get a little intense about music. For instance, I have spent a good part of my life dedicated to a search for the quintessential mariachi version of "Malaguena Salerosa."



RIK
HAMBY

I have spent literally hundreds of dollars in search of it. Even as a young man I would travel to Villa Cuna or Juarez with my friends on our individual quests. Theirs might have been in a different direction than mine, but I would sit in Ma Crosbey's, the Cadillac Bar, or the Submarino Club and listen as a variety of mariachi groups auditioned in exchange for a ten dollar tip from me. As an adult I would chase the same definitive example from exclusive resorts in Punta Mita or Cancun to low dives like Tommy's Rendevous. I am sad to say the perfect version I seek is still undiscovered — though I confess the sound track from "Kill Bill, Vol. 2" comes close.

The Christmas carol "O Holy Night" has much the same effect on me. It is my favorite. I weep openly when I hear it sung by virtually anybody. My drunk yard man could sing it with his leaf blower on high and I am sure I would wail like a baby. It is Christmas to me.

A few evenings ago, my wife and I went to the Big Spring Symphony's Christmas Concert. As usual, it was a solid, eclectic evening performed by expert musicians under the wonderful direction of Keith Graumann. A local touch was provided in the form of Big Spring's High School's wonderful Meistersingers, along with solos from our own Lawrence Thibeault and Tara Trowbridge. As usual, Lawrence's famous ability lit up the room. The equally talented Ms. Trowbridge was next. Both performers give credit to this community. On this evening they rivaled one another, to everyone's joy and satisfaction. On the next concert occasion, undoubtedly Mr. Thibeault will blow the doors off of the concert but on this particular evening I was riveted by Tara. It could have been her song choice — "O Holy Night" — wouldn't you know. It soared. She hit notes I have never even heard before. I am told celebrity chef Stephen Pyles — a regular attendee and loyal supporter of the Big Spring Symphony — cried like I did.

OK, so I am compulsive in some areas. I will continue my hunting in obscure cantinas of Mexico seeking the ultimate "Malaguena Salerosa." But as far as the essence-version "O Holy Night," I have found it. And I only had to go to the City Auditorium, right here in Big Spring.... and I could drink the water. Ok, almost.

Brother of JonBenet Ramsey sues CBS for \$750M over series

By SADIE GURMAN

Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — The older brother of JonBenet Ramsey is suing CBS and others for \$750 million, saying his reputation was ruined after a television series that concluded he killed his 6-year-old sister two decades ago.

In the lawsuit filed Wednesday, Burke Ramsey claims that the network, its production company and the experts interviewed in the series on the unsolved murder conspired to defame him for publicity and profit.

The series, called "The Case of JonBenet Ramsey," aired in September ahead of the 20th anniversary of JonBenet's death.

The beauty pageant star was found dead in the basement of her family's home in Boulder, Colorado, the day after Christmas in 1996.

A prosecutor cleared her parents and brother in 2008 based on DNA evidence.

But the district attorney currently overseeing the case has said it was premature to exonerate the Ramseys and ordered additional tests using new DNA testing technology that authorities hope will further the investigation.

Police have collected and studied thousands of pieces of evidence and say the case remains open.

CBS spokesman Dustin Smith declined to comment on the lawsuit, which is the second Burke Ramsey has filed over the television series.

In October, Ramsey, 29, sued a forensic pathologist featured on the show who said he bludgeoned his sister to death.

The pathologist is also named in the latest lawsuit, which was filed in Michigan, where Burke Ramsey lives.

The new lawsuit says CBS and its featured experts set out to conduct a "sham reinvestigation" of the murder with "the preconceived the story line" that Ramsey killed his sister and conspired with his parents to cover it up.

"The accusation that Burke Ramsey killed his sister was based on a compilation of lies, half-truths, manufactured information, and the intentional omission and avoidance of truthful information about the murder of JonBenet Ramsey," the lawsuit says.

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Thursday: Breakfast: Waffles, sausage, fruit, fruit juice, milk variety; Lunch: Pizza, garden salad, vegetable medley, orange smiles, milk variety, fruit variety

Friday: Breakfast: Cinnamon roll, bacon, fruit,

fruit juice, milk variety; Lunch: Hamburger, hamburger garnish, coleslaw, sweet potato fries, apple slices, milk variety, fruit variety

Big Spring Senior Center

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Thursday: Chicken strips with gravy, french fries, carrot raisin salad, peaches, bread, milk

Friday: Chopped BBQ on bun, pinto beans, potato salad, onion slice/cherry pepper, vanilla pudding, milk

Reynolds and Fisher die just before HBO film on their lives



AP photo

By DAVID BAUDER

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The deaths of actress and writer Carrie Fisher and her Hollywood legend mother, Debbie Reynolds, on successive days this week lend a special poignancy to an upcoming HBO film about their relationship.

The film, "Bright Lights: Starring Debbie Reynolds and Carrie Fisher," is expected to premiere on the pay cable network sometime this spring.

HBO representatives did not respond to questions Thursday about whether the stars' deaths would change plans for the premiere, or whether the documentary would be changed to reflect what happened.

Although it hasn't been on television, "Bright Lights" was shown earlier this year at film festivals in New York and in France at Cannes.

The filmmaking couple Fisher Stevens and Alexis Bloom of New York made it. A representative said they weren't available for interviews.

Fisher died Tuesday at age 60 after being stricken on an airplane flight last week.

Her mother was rushed to the hospital and died the next day. "She said, 'I want to be with Car-

rie,'" her son, Todd, told The Associated Press. "And then she was gone."

In appearances at the festivals, the filmmakers described the project as Fisher's initial idea. Her mother was about to give her final live performances in Las Vegas two years ago at age 82, and Fisher wanted to document them.

"Bright Lights" became an examination of the lives of two women, once estranged, who were living in their final years next door to each other in a compound in Beverly Hills, California. "Their loving interdependence seems unbreakable," the Hollywood Reporter wrote in a review.

Fisher was dealing with the mental illness that fueled some of her memorable writing through the years, and both women were dealing with the toll that increased frailty was taking on Reynolds.

A key part of the film was about whether Reynolds would be well enough to accept a lifetime achievement award.

"The axis on which the film turned was their relationship and their love, even

though show biz warps the best of people and warps the best of relationships and I'm sure to some degree they would agree it's warped their family," Bloom told The Los Angeles Times this fall. "But at the center of it is love, and that's sort of undiminished."

Fisher and the filmmakers said it was initially difficult for Reynolds to get used to the idea of a documentary on their lives. She was comfortable with cameras, but expected to have a script.

"The film is as disorderly in its structure as the messy family history it surveys," the Hollywood Reporter wrote in its review. "Time spent with these wonderful subjects makes that seem sweetly appropriate."

The affection that the filmmakers have for their subjects "is quite contagious," the publication said.

Although HBO hasn't made clear when "Bright Lights" will air, the network said it is repeating its previous film about Fisher's life, "Wishful Drinking," Sunday at 9 p.m. ET.



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Roger's Reviews: Sing



By **ROGER CLINE**

Staff Writer

In 600 B.C., a Greek slave named Aesop wrote a series of short stories using animal characters to illustrate succinct, pithy morals.

Although not as brief as Aesop's famous fables, "Sing," the new animated feature from Illumination Entertainment, also features anthropomorphic animal characters and a very prominent moral.

"Sing" centers around Buster Moon (Matthew McConaughey), a koala bear theater owner (stage, not screen). Buster's theater, the Moon, is down on its luck, so Buster decides to host a singing contest with a modest \$1,000 prize to draw in contestants. Unfortunately (or perhaps, fortunately), his assistant Miss Crawly (Garth Jennings), an aging lizard, mistakenly types \$100,000 instead. The accidental prize draws scads of contestants including housewife pig Rosita (Reese Witherspoon), wise-guy mouse crooner Mike (Seth MacFarlane), goth rocker porcupine Ash (Scarlett Johansson), teen hood gorilla Johnny (Taron Egerton), and painfully shy elephant Meena (Tori Kelly).

Each of the main characters comes complete with his or her own story. Meena is too shy to sing at the audition, so prompted by her granddad (Jay Pharoah), she returns the next day where she snags a stagehand job; Johnny struggles to balance his "job" as a lookout/getaway driver for his Big Daddy's (Peter Serafinowicz) gang with his love of singing and Buster's contest; Ash has to deal with her loser boyfriend Lance (Beck Bennett) who mistakenly believes he is the star of the act; Mike has to keep away from some irate Russian mafia bears; and Rosita must deal with her exhausted and inattentive husband Norman (Nick Offerman), her crowd of piglets, and the feisty German schwein Gunter (Nick Kroll) that Buster has paired her with for the competition.

Of course, Buster himself must keep the lights on at the crumbling theater, keep the secret that his prize box barely has \$1,000 in it, and search for a way to raise the rest of the advertised award (his rich best friend Eddie (John C. Reilly) the sheep and his grandmother Nana (Jennifer Saunders

and Jennifer Hudson) seem like likely prospects) while holding off the bank's foreclosure llama Judith (Rhea Perlman).

Of course there's a whole horde (herd?) of other animals who unsuccessfully audition for the show to hilarious effect.



"Sing" is a bright, well-crafted, fun to watch movie

with interesting characters, intersecting story lines, and a lot of great music. Let me emphasize that last point: There is a lot of great music in this movie. The list of songs in the closing credits crawl lasts literally about 10 minutes. There are different styles, too; from Mike's Sinatra-esque crooning, to Ash's prickly metal, to Meena's R&B, to Rosita's Top 40, to Johnny's soulful a cappella and piano-backed numbers.

None of the stories in "Sing" are particularly original. They all follow well-explored tropes, but that doesn't make them boring. The inventive par of "Sing" is the way it ties each of these tried-and-true tales to its central story, and to its message "Don't let fear stop you from doing what you love."

There are also some great visuals. Bioluminescent squid used as living neon in signs. Rosita's Rube Goldberg-style housewife machine. The Japanese "idol"-style kitten team who can't quite comprehend they've been cut from the show.

I really enjoyed "Sing," as did the many, many children who inhabited the theater during my viewing, at 10:45 a.m. on a Monday. If that audience was any indication, "Sing" will do very well at the box office. Eight and a half stars out of 10.

Sing
Director: Garth Jennings and Christopher Lourd-delet

Writer: Garth Jennings
Production Company: Illumination Entertainment

PG, 108 min., Animation/Comedy/Drama, Dec. 21, 2016

Roger saw this movie at Big Spring's own Cinemark Cinema 4, located in the Spring Town Plaza, 1801 E. FM 700. For more information visit www.cinemark.com and enter the ZIP Code 79720.



Who's who in Howard County: Jarry Fulgham

Where do you work?: Big Spring ISD

Where were you born? Gallup, N.M.

What city do you live in?: Big Spring

Who makes up your family? Daughter and son-in-law, Jeff and Tisha York; son, Duane Fulgham; five grandchildren, Baylee, Jaycie, Kade, Taelyn & Deegan.

What are your hobbies? Reading and fishing

What is your favorite book? "Left Behind"

What is your favorite TV show? "Timeless"

What is your favorite movie? "Avatar"

Where would you visit if you could go anywhere? Hawaii

To submit an engagement, wedding announcement, birth, or any club news, call 432-263-7331 ext 232 or email life@bigspringherald.com

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BBB's top 10 consumer scams of 2016

It's a new year, but unfortunately scams that happen every day are not. With the help of consumers and the more than 30,000 scam reports they filed, Better Business Bureau has compiled a list of the top scams of 2016. BBB Scam Tracker confirmed that the IRS/tax scam continues to be the top scam of the year. These were the top 10 scams of 2016:

- IRS/tax scam — This scam topped the list with

your local BBB and BBB nationally. How this scam works: an imposter, someone claiming to be with the IRS, will call you and tell you that you owe money to the government and if you don't pay now, you will be arrested. Scam-



HEATHER MASSEY

mers threaten you to send them money via a prepaid debit card or wire transfer, and many people pay out of fear. BBB advises you to hang up — the IRS and other government agencies won't call you to collect money or ask you to make a payment via a prepaid card or wire transfer.

- Debt collections scam — You receive a phone call from someone claiming that you have an unpaid debt. You are threatened with

garnishments, lawsuits, and even jail time if you don't pay right now. The scammer will often use Caller ID spoofing and pretend to be a government agency or law enforcement in order to further invoke fear and make you send money.

- Sweepstakes/prizes/gifts scam — With this scam, you receive a phone call, email or letter claiming that you've won a prize in a sweepstakes, perhaps that you've never entered. In order to receive

the prize, you're instructed to send a fee to cover expenses associated with processing, insurance or delivery. However, this prize is not real. If you've really won, you should never have to pay money to claim a prize.

- Online purchase scam — This scam occurs when consumers pay for an item they never receive. While many online shopping sites are legitimate, there are

See **BBB**, Page 5C



US stocks head for big gains in 2016 despite early stumble

The Associated Press

In a year with no shortage of surprises and stomach-churning turns in the market, stock investors can feel pretty good about 2016. Wall Street repeatedly bounced back from steep slumps, including the worst start to any year for stocks, the second correction for the market in five months and investor fears of a global slowdown. It also weathered plummeting oil prices and the surprising outcomes of Britain's vote to leave the European Union and Donald Trump's U.S. presidential election win. A turnaround in company earnings growth, more stable oil prices, a steadily improving U.S. economy and job market all helped keep the market on an upward tra-

jectory. More recently, investor optimism that the Republican election sweep will usher in a bevy of business-friendly policies spurred the market to new heights. "It's been the year of the unlikely happening, but the crazy thing about the unlikely happening is you would expect that to lead to big sell-offs, and we experienced the exact opposite," said J.J. Kinahan, TD Ameritrade's chief strategist. "The more things happened that were unlikely, the more we seemed to rally." As of Tuesday's close, the Standard & Poor's 500 index, the broadest measure of the stock market, was on track to end the year with a gain of 11 percent after an essentially flat finish in 2015. Including dividends, the total return was 13.4 percent. That

means if you invested \$1,000 in an S&P 500 index fund at the beginning of the year you'd wind up with \$1,134 at the end of the year. Other major market indexes were also on course to post solid gains. The Dow Jones industrial average was headed for a gain of 14.5 percent, a surge that had the 30-company average flirting with crossing the 20,000 mark. The Nasdaq composite was on track for an 9.6 percent gain. Small-company stocks trounced the rest of the market, however, especially since the election. The Russell 2000 index soared more than 21 percent in 2016. Investors anticipate that smaller companies will benefit more from an improving U.S. economy than their larger rivals because they tend

to do far more of their business domestically. They also have fewer ways to dodge taxes through overseas subsidiaries, so they'll have more to gain if corporate taxes go down, and they'll also have less to lose if trade frictions flare up. For the most part, markets overseas also fared better than in 2015. In Europe, Britain's market was headed for a 13.2 percent gain, despite jitters that rocked the market following the summer's "Brexit" vote to leave European Union. Indexes in Germany and France were on their way to gains of 6.8 percent and 4.6 percent, respectively. Japan's Nikkei was on track to eke out a gain of 1.8 percent, and Hong Kong's benchmark in-

See **STOCKS**, Page 5C

Public Records

Howard County Justice of the Peace Outstanding IBC Warrants:

- Marcus Joe Anderson, 2621 Chanute Dr., Big Spring
 - Steve Antoine, 1425 E. 6th St. #19, Big Spring
 - Corina Avila, 1800 Winston St., Big Spring
 - Katie Cole L. Baker, P.O. Box 3372, Big Spring
 - Wayne Richard Buyce, 4042 Morningside Way, Canyon Lake
 - Vanessa Malu Calderon, 2600 Chanute Dr., Big Spring
 - Raymond Carroll, 712 E. 17th St., Big Spring
 - Gloria Cerna, PO Box 55, Lamesa
 - Pedro Chavarria, 1408 E. Sixth St., Big Spring
 - Matilda Cortez, 302 N. St. Teresa, Stanton
 - Hannah Deaton, 19634 Atasca Oaks Dr., Humble
 - Tina Marie Ellis, 4002 Austin Ave., Snyder
 - Selena Bethani Enriquez-King, 100 E. Parker, Midland
 - Jose Enrique Faz, 509 N. Goliad, Big Spring
 - Juana Fierro, 406 N.W. 5th St., Big Spring
 - William Gene Garner, 704 Rosemont, Big Spring
 - Anthony Ray Garza, 117 E. Davis, Big Spring
 - Guillermo Gomez, 2107 Morrison, Big Spring
 - James Michael Griffin, 303 Butler St. #502, Atlanta
 - Christina Nichole Gutierrez, 2809 25th St., Snyder
 - Dylan Hammons, 4401 E. 11th Place, Big Spring
 - Adela Juarez Hernandez, 908 NW First St., Big Spring
 - Matias Hernandez Jr., 620 E. 4th St., San Angelo
 - Kaleb Hill, 910 Baylor, Big Spring
 - Shatiya Lasha Jenkins, 4590 N. Texas #198, Odessa
 - Stephanie Ford Johnson, P.O. Box 483, Coahoma
 - Keith James Kochmick, 1003 Stadium, Big Spring
 - Aaron Christopher Mack, 2134 Bonham Ave., Odessa
 - Ruann R. Martinez, 1005 N.W. 2nd St., Big Spring
 - Heriberto Palafox Mora, 1311 Mobile St., Big Spring
 - Felicia Ornelas, 538 Westover No. 236, Big Spring
 - Nicole Preston, 1605 E. 11th Place, Big Spring
 - George Anthony Robinson Jr., 1905 Wasson Rd. #14, Big Spring
 - Andy Rodriguez, 1904 Runnels Street, Big Spring
 - Linda Eva Rodriguez, 2519 Gunter Circle, Big Spring
 - Juan Romero, 2504 March Circle, Big Spring
 - Veronica Romero, 103 Becker Road, Big Spring
 - Yuri Lozano Rubio, 421 Cedar, P.O. Box 173, Colorado City
 - Polly Ann Rusk, 4201 W. Highway 80, Big Spring
 - Stacie Lyanne Salas, 5102 Wasson Road, Big Spring
 - Shane Skaggs, 1 Courtney Place 301, Big Spring
 - Brandy Logsdon Stanislaus, 2507 Carol Dr., Big Spring
 - Kendra D. Tatum, 412 S. Moss Lake Rd., Big Spring
 - Joe Anthony Villarreal, 2206 Cecilia, Big Spring
 - Ricky Lynn Waltenbaugh, 538 Westover Road Apt. #133, Big Spring
 - Linda Cortez White, 6601 E. Robinson Rd., P.O. Box 429, Coahoma
 - Tamara Ruth Whitt, 3706 Connley, Big Spring
 - Jamie Wiggins, 1905 Wasson Rd. Apt. #28, Big Spring
- Marriage Licenses**
- Esmeralda Reyes, 52, and Melissa Jane Puga, 42, both of Big Spring.
 - Jonathan Sean Gomez, 31, and Melinda Dawn Gar-
- See **PUBLIC**, Page 6C

Where to sell your unwanted stuff online and earn extra cash

NEW YORK (AP) — If you're cleaning out your closets for the new year, or need some spare cash after the holidays, your old stuff can help fill up your wallet. A number of websites and apps make it easier to sell used smartphones, furniture and clothes. Here's where to go to sell your unwanted stuff and earn some extra bucks:

GADGETS

If you got the latest tablet or smartphone during the holidays, don't let the old ones go to the forgotten junk drawer. Gazelle and NextWorth will buy your unwanted electronics depending on its condition. Recent-

ly, Gazelle was offering \$215 for an iPhone 6s in good condition on Verizon's cellphone network. Other options include Apple, which will pay you in Apple Store gift cards for some products. And retailers Target and Best Buy will take your electronics online or at some of its stores in exchange for gift cards. You can also try selling unwanted electronics on eBay, which may charge listing fees, or Facebook's recently launched marketplace, which is free, and found within the social media company's app.

CLOTHING

For women's, men's

or children's clothing, there's Poshmark. The company charges \$2.95 for items sold for under \$15 and takes 20 percent for items sold for more than \$15. With ThredUP, the website will send you a box to fill with brand-name women's or children's clothing that it tries to sell for you. You can keep 5 percent to as much as 80 percent of the amount an item is sold for, depending on the sell price. At Tradesy, you can list designer bags, shoes and clothing, with Tradesy taking as much as 17.8 percent of the sale price.

See **STUFF**, Page 5C



BBB

Continued from Page 4C

scammers that set up fraudulent sites in order to steal personal or financial information, or your money. Do your research and make sure you're shopping on a legitimate, secure site or from a reputable seller.

- **Employment scam** — Scammers may say they have a job opening or can guarantee job placement if you first pay a fee to cover the cost it takes to place you in a job. However, after you pay, the job doesn't materialize. If a potential employer asks you to pay the company to cover the costs of testing, training or background checks, consider it a red flag.

- **Government grant scam** — This scam comes in the form of a phone call, email or letter informing you qualify for a government grant. In order to receive the grant you must first send a processing or delivery fee, usually by wire transfer or a prepaid debit card. BBB advises you to never send money by wire transfer or a prepaid card to someone you don't know or haven't met in person. It's almost impossible to trace this type of payment once it's gone.

- **Tech support scam** — You get a call or a pop-up on your computer claiming to be from Microsoft (or Norton, or Apple) about a problem on your computer. They say if you give "tech support" access to your hard drive, they can fix it. Instead, they install malware on your computer and start stealing your personal information.

- **Advance fee loan scam** — An advance fee loan may seem like an easy way to get cash fast, but may end up being a burden because of high interest rates and unaffordable payment terms. Advance fee lenders charge an upfront fee and will

"guarantee" you a loan despite your credit history, and chances are, you won't get your money back. Also, real lenders, like banks or credit unions, will check your credit history — even if your credit history is good. A lender who isn't interested in your credit history is an immediate red flag.

- **Fake check or money order scam** — This scam can happen any time someone is paying you for goods or services, even when you are selling something online. You receive a check in the mail that is larger than the amount owed and you are asked to deposit the check and wire the difference. However, the check ends up being a fake and when it bounces, you are the one out of the money.

- **Phishing scam** — Phishing is an attempt to acquire personal information, such as usernames, passwords and credit card numbers by claiming to be a trustworthy person or business. You may receive an email telling you that you've won a contest or that a business needs to verify your personal information. However, links in the email can take you to a site that downloads malware on your computer to search for your sensitive data. BBB advises you to never open emails or click on links from sources you don't know. Keep in mind that legitimate businesses won't ask you to confirm your personal information through email.

Heather Massey is the Regional Director for the Permian Basin office of Better Business Bureau serving Central, Coastal, Southwest Texas and the Permian Basin. Heather is available for media interviews and speaking engagements. You can reach her by phone: (432) 741-2592 or email: hmassey@permianbasin.bbb.org.

Pay for millions to increase as minimum wage rate rises

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — It will be a happy New Year indeed for millions of the lowest-paid U.S. workers. Nineteen states, including New York and California, will ring in the year with an increase in the minimum wage.

Massachusetts and Washington state will have the highest new minimum wages in the country, at \$11 per hour.

California will raise its wage to \$10.50 for businesses with 26 or more employees. New York state is taking a regional approach, with the wage rising to \$11 in New York City, to \$10.50 for small businesses in the city, \$10 in its downstate suburbs and \$9.70 elsewhere. Some specific businesses — fast-food restaurants and the smallest New York City businesses — will have slightly different wage requirements.

"This \$1.50 increase, I cannot even comprehend or tell you how important this will be," said Alvin Major, a New York City fast-food worker. The 51-year-old father of four helped lead the fight for the increase in his state, one of several successful efforts by fast-food workers and other low wage

workers around the country. "The price of food has gone up. Rent has gone up. Everything has gone up. ... This will make a difference for so many people."

Voters in Arizona, Maine, Colorado and Washington approved increases in this year's election. Seven other states, Alaska, Florida, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, Ohio and South Dakota, are automatically raising the wage based on indexing. The other states seeing increases are Arkansas, Connecticut, Hawaii, Michigan and Vermont. Additional increases are slated for later in the year in Oregon, Washington, D.C., and Maryland.

In Arizona, the state Chamber of Commerce and Industry filed a lawsuit challenging the increase, which will raise the minimum wage from \$8.05 to \$10. On Thursday, the Arizona Supreme Court refused to temporarily block the raise.

Workers and labor advocates argue the increases will help low-wage workers now barely making ends meet and boost the economy by giving some consumers more money to

spend. But many business owners opposed the higher wages, saying they would lead to higher prices and greater automation.

Some restaurant owners may consider reducing portion sizes or charging for side dishes that were once included in the price of a meal to absorb the increase, according to Melissa Fleischut, president of the New York State Restaurant Association.

"I'm sure prices will go up where they can, but restaurants want to avoid sticker shock," she said. "They're going to have to get creative."

The adjustments in New York, California and several other states are part of a series of gradual increases to a \$12 or \$15 hourly wage.

The minimum wage will also go up this weekend in 22 cities and counties, including San Diego, San Jose and Seattle.

The high number of states and localities raising the wage this year reflects the successful work of fast-food workers and organized labor, according to Tsedeye Gebreselassie, senior staff attorney at the National Employment Law Project.

STOCKS

Continued from Page 4C

index was down 1.5 percent.

Few anticipated the kinds of gains for U.S. stocks this year in January, when the market kicked of the year in a deep slump that knocked the Dow, Nasdaq and S&P 500 into a correction, or a drop of 10 percent or more from their recent peaks. For the S&P 500, it was the second correction in five months.

Fear that an economic slump in China could spark a global economic

slowdown and alarm as the price of crude oil fell below \$30 a barrel to its lowest level in 12 years triggered the market slide.

Weak U.S. economic data didn't help.

The downturn was a surprise to many investors. Few expected another market correction so soon, and the Federal Reserve's move in December 2015 to raise interest rates for the first time in nearly 10 years signaled to many that the U.S. economy was healthy.

By the end of March, the market had started to regain its footing. By April, it recouped its

losses and continued to mostly head higher. Then, toward the end of June, investors got blindsided by the Brexit vote. That dragged the market sharply lower and sent investors piling into U.S. bonds.

The slide lasted only a couple of days, and once again the market headed mostly higher.

Throughout the summer and into early fall, stocks rode an encouraging wave of developments: The U.S. job market continued to post strong monthly gains. Consumer confidence strengthened. More companies began to report better earnings and revenue for the third quarter, snapping a losing streak of five quarters for S&P 500 companies, according to S&P Global.

And crude oil prices stabilized, holding above \$50. An agreement by OPEC and other major oil-producing nations to cut production next year in an effort to mitigate a glut in global supplies helped support energy prices. U.S. benchmark crude

remains far lower than it was in mid-2014, when it topped \$100 a barrel.

The market jitters returned as the race between Trump and Hillary Clinton began to tighten, leading to a nine-day slump for stocks ahead of Election Day.

Wall Street had largely seen Clinton as more likely to maintain the status quo, while viewing Trump's policies as less clear. The billionaire's surprise win initially set off a sharp sell-off in Asian markets, signaling more pain for U.S. investors. But the opposite happened.

Global financial markets soon steadied and U.S. stocks kicked off a rally that extended well into December, driving the major U.S. stock indexes to record highs.

Investors are now betting that Trump and a Republican-controlled Congress will have a clear pathway to boost infrastructure spending, cut taxes and relax regulations that affect energy, finance and other businesses.

That agenda has

flipped investors' priorities since the election away from defensive assets like bonds, utilities and phone companies, which traders had favored for much of this year, to financial, industrial and small-cap stocks.

It's also increased expectations of higher inflation and interest rates next year, which could make some fixed-income investments like bonds, less attractive.

The anticipation of higher interest rates led to a sell-off in bonds since the election that sent bond prices lower and drove up the yield on the 10-year Treasury note to the highest level in more than two years. The yield, which is used to set interest rates on many kinds of loans including mortgages, bottomed out at 1.36 percent in July and went as high as 2.60 percent in mid-December.

The move away from bonds, utilities and other safe-play assets is likely to continue as long as investors believe that Trump's eco-

nomics policies will lead to economic growth and usher in higher interest rates.

"The investment landscape has changed due largely to the election," said Terry Sandven, chief equity strategist at U.S. Bank Wealth Management. "We're set up for equities."

December also saw the Federal Reserve boost its interest rate by a quarter-point.

The central bank also signaled that it could begin to gradually raise interest rates as employment and inflation increase.

Even with the gains this year, market strategists say the current bull market, now in its seventh year, should continue, as long as company earnings continue to improve.

"As you look at 2017, the market is not cheap, so earnings have to grow, and they should grow," said David Chalupnik, head of equities for Nuveen Asset Management. "We have a year and a half to two years of the bull market left."

STUFF

Continued from Page 4C

You can also selling used clothing on eBay, which may charge some listing fees.

FURNITURE
For couches, mirrors and other household items, try Craigslist or Facebook marketplace. Some good photos in the listing, and measurements of the items, can help them better attract a buyer. But with those options, only accept cash or online payments such as PayPal, since requests to pay by check can be a sign of a scam.

If you live in New York, Washington or northern New Jersey, AptDeco lets you list used furniture and can arrange for shipping and delivery, but charges sellers 23 percent of the price an item is sold for.

GIFT CARDS

If you got a gift card over the holidays you know you won't use, you can sell them at a number of sites including CardCash, Cardpool and Giftcard Zen. How much money you get depends on a number of factors, including how likely someone else will want to buy it from the gift card seller. Recently, CardCash was offering \$87 for a \$100 gift card from Target, a \$13 loss. You can also try selling it on your own through eBay.

TOYS

For unopened toys such as Lego sets or American Doll dresses, try the Brian's Toys website. It will quote you the price it will pay on its site, or download the Brian's Toys app, which lets you scan the toy's barcode for a quote. You can also try eBay, Craigslist or Amazon to sell unwanted toys.

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Alon management to attend refiners conference

Special to the Herald

DALLAS — Alon USA Energy, Inc. (NYSE: ALJ) announced that its management will attend the Wolfe Research 2017 Refiners Conference to be held on January 4 in Boston, Massachusetts.

Shai Even, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, will hold one-on-one meetings with investors to discuss both Alon USA En-

ergy and Alon USA Partners, LP (NYSE: ALDW).

The related meeting materials will be available beginning the morning of January 4 on the Investor Relations section of the Alon USA Energy website at <http://ir.alonusa.com/> as well as on the News & Events section of the Alon USA Partners website at www.alonpartners.com.

Alon USA Energy, Inc.,

headquartered in Dallas, Texas, is an independent refiner and marketer of petroleum products, operating primarily in the South Central, Southwestern and Western regions of the United States. Alon owns 100 percent of the general partner and 81.6 percent of the limited partner interests in Alon USA Partners, LP, which owns a crude oil refinery in Big Spring, Texas, with a crude oil throughput

capacity of 73,000 barrels per day and an integrated wholesale marketing business.

In addition, Alon directly owns a crude oil refinery in Krotz Springs, Louisiana, with a crude oil throughput capacity of 74,000 barrels per day. Alon also owns crude oil refineries in California, which have not processed crude oil since 2012. Alon owns a majority interest in a renewable fuels project in-

California, with a throughput capacity of 2,500 barrels per day.

Alon is a leading marketer of asphalt, which it distributes primarily through asphalt terminals located predominately in the Southwestern and Western United States. Alon is the largest 7-Eleven licensee in the United States and operates approximately 300 convenience stores.

News in brief

Texas ice cream maker Blue Bell wants precautions eased

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Chronicle is reporting Texas-based ice cream maker Blue Bell wants federal regulators to ease precautions in place since a deadly listeria outbreak and allow the company to return to more normal procedures followed by its competitors.

The newspaper, reviewing documents obtained under a federal open records request, says Blue Bell has been working for months with a laboratory to develop tests to meet federal Food and Drug Administration requirements, prevent future outbreaks and help Blue Bell improve its economics.

An attorney for Blue Bell, Joseph Levitt, has written the FDA that it's time for the company "to transition to the industry norm."

Blue Bell had to shut its flagship Brenham creamery for several months after last year's recall was linked to 10 listeria cases in four states, including three deaths in Kansas.

US stocks edge lower in early trading; oil heads down

(AP) — U.S. stocks edged lower Friday morning on the final day of trading for the year. Technology stocks fell the most, while banks and real estate companies eked out small gains. Trading was subdued ahead of the New Year's Day holiday.

KEEPING SCORE: The Dow Jones industrial average slid 25 points, or 0.1 percent, to 19,794 as of 10:14 a.m. Eastern time. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 5 points, or 0.3 percent, to 2,243. The Nasdaq composite gave up 29 points, or 0.5 percent, to 5,402.

BIGGEST LOSER: Chipmaker Nvidia fell \$2.04, or 1.8 percent, to \$109.40. The stock also had a steep loss on Wednesday but is still by far the biggest gainer for the year in the S&P 500 index, having more than tripled in value.

NOT PUMPED: Opko Health slumped 15.8 percent after a trial of a long-acting human growth hormone product produced disappointing results. The stock lost \$1.81 to \$9.65.

SHARP MOVE: Iconix Brand Group rose 3.6 percent after the company said it would sell its Sharper Image brand for \$100 million to ThreeSixty Group, the largest Sharper Image licensee. Iconix shares added 32 cents to \$9.28.

China to ease curbs on foreign investment after complaints

BEIJING (AP) — The Chinese government said Friday it will ease restrictions on foreign investment in sectors ranging from banking and internet

services to rail equipment and motorcycles, in response to mounting complaints from foreign business groups and governments.

An official with China's National Development and Reform Commission, the economic planning agency, said service sectors such as accounting and auditing, architectural design and ratings services will be open to foreign investment.

In manufacturing, barriers to foreign investment will be lowered in sectors such as rail transportation, motorcycles and ethanol fuels, according to an official transcript of a briefing by Ning Jizhe, vice-chairman of the commission.

The moves are part of a set of guidelines approved by China's Cabinet this week Beijing says are aimed at leveling the playing field for foreign companies and boosting investment, which has been slowing. No specific details were immediately released.

Ning said the guidelines would "help ensure and promote fair competition between domestic and foreign companies" and attract more investment. He said foreign investment in China rose 3.9 percent from January to November, slower than the rate of growth in the previous year.

China would also work to open up areas typically deemed sensitive by the government, such as internet services, telecoms and education, in "an orderly way," Ning said. But the extent to which such sectors would be liberalized was unclear. Earlier this year, China passed a law on cybersecurity seen as enabling the ruling Communist Party to exert greater control over the internet and technology products and moved to more tightly control schools.

Premier Li Keqiang, who chaired the State Council's executive meeting that passed the guidelines Wednesday, said China should take measures with "great effectiveness in attracting foreign capital," according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

"China's economy develops as we continue our opening-up strategy," Li was quoted as saying. "Besides advanced technology and experience in management, China also needs capital investment from overseas."

The Chinese leadership is trying to shore up economic growth which has cooled steadily over the past six years as communist leaders try to steer it to more self-sustaining growth based on consumer spending instead of trade and investment.

Run-DMC sues Wal-Mart, Amazon for \$50M

NEW YORK (AP) — The rap group Run-DMC filed a \$50 million lawsuit in New York accusing Wal-Mart, Amazon, Jet and other retailers of selling products that traded on the group's name without

permission.

A founder of the group and owner of the Run-DMC brand, Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, was listed as the plaintiff in the lawsuit, which was filed Thursday in the Southern District of New York.

The complaint said the defendants are "advertising, selling, manufacturing, promoting and distributing multiple products" in the group's trademarked name. The products include glasses, hats, t-shirts, patches, wallets and other items.

The lawsuit alleged that the retailers have improperly profited, diluted and harmed the Run-DMC brand, which it said has generated more than \$100 million in revenue since its inception in the 1980s.

Run-DMC was founded in New York in 1981 by McDaniels, Joseph "Run" Simmons, Darryl "DMC" and Jason "Jam Master Jay" Mizell, who was fatally shot in his Queens recording studio in 2002. McDaniels and Simmons later announced that the group was officially disbanding.

The group's hits include "King of Rock," "It's Tricky," and "Can You Rock It Like This."

In 2009, Run-DMC was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Italian premier chides ECB for lack of transparency

MILAN (AP) — Italy's premier said Thursday that he was taken aback by the European Central Bank's move to significantly increase the amount of money needed to save the troubled bank Monte dei Paschi di Siena.

Paolo Gentiloni said that the government would discuss the final figure with the ECB, but that such talks "do not put in discussions the tranquility, the capacity and the relevance of our intervention."

The comments echo those by his finance minister, Pier Carlo Padoan, who chided the ECB in an interview with the business daily *Il Sole 24 Ore* for not being transparent in how it arrived at the 8.8 billion-euro figure.

The government last week approved a 20 billion-euro fund to secure banks at risk, chief among which was Monte dei Paschi, Italy's third-largest lender, which had failed to raise enough capital on its own.

Monte dei Paschi had been trying but failed to raise 5 billion euros in new capital after failing an EU stress test last summer.

Gentiloni said the higher capital requirement for the bank means the government would put in 6.6 billion euros. The government has said that the 20 billion euros it has earmarked remain sufficient to reinforce the banking sector, which is under pressure from a high level of bad loans that won't be paid back.

PUBLIC

Continued from Page 4C

cia, 37, both of Big Spring.

County Court Judgments

(Note: The State of Texas is listed as prosecutor for all county court judgments)

Defendant: Michelle R. Randle
Offense: Interfering with an emergency request for assistance

Sentence: \$250 fine, 180 days in jail. Probated 12 months.
Date: Dec. 20, 2016

District Court Filings

Portfolio Recovery Associates LLC vs. Joseph Necaie, contract - consumer/commercial debt

Discover Bank vs. Debra Bogard, contract - consumer/commercial debt

State of Texas vs. State of Texas, writ of habeas corpus

US Bank National Association vs. Ricky Williams II, Julius Williams, Latoya Williams, Allante Williams, Denise Richard, Charlotte Bradford, Stephanie Blake-Richardson, Yolanda Blake, Janice Bradford, real property

Warranty Deeds

Grantor: Frankie O. Hazelwood

Grantee: Jesus Duarte
Property: Lot 8 and E/25 feet Lot 9, Blk. 29, Cole and Strayhorn Addition

Date: Dec. 22, 2016

Grantor: Bennie Green
Grantee: Bennie and Kathy Green

Property: Lot 26, Blk. 3, College Park Estates Addition
Date: Dec. 22, 2016

Grantor: Johnnie Leon Hobbs aka Leon Hobbs, and Frances Levier Hobbs aka Frances Hobbs

Grantee: Kenneth De La Garza dba F&G Construction

Property: Surface estate only of Lots 4, 5, and 6, Blk. 33, College Park Estates No. 6
Date: Dec. 28, 2016

Grantor: Kase Construction Inc.

Grantee: Jimmy Johnson
Property: Lots 1, 2, and 3, Blk. 54, Original Town of Big Spring
Date: Dec 28, 2016

Warranty Deeds with Ven-

dor's Liens

Grantor: Cleo Shive, Individually and as heir of Rex A. Shive, deceased.

Grantee: Brooks Family Partnership

Property: Surface estate only of a 160.16-acre tract in NE/4 Sec. 35 Blk. 31, T-1-N, T&P Railroad Co. Survey

Date: Dec. 22, 2016

Grantor: Michael Shawn Eason and Mara M. Eason

Grantee: Victor and Eunice Ramirez

Property: Lot 12, Blk. 19 Cole and Strayhorn Addition

It's Your Year!

You deserve the best, and we hope 2016 makes all of your dreams come true. That's our New Year's wish for you!

The support of fine folks like you has helped make our dreams come true, and we are sincerely grateful for your loyal patronage. Happy New Year, friends!

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MISSING!
One years old
Jack Russell Terrier
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Lost around West 18th
Please Call (432)270-0067

Help Wanted

Appraiser- Howard County Appraisal District

Howard County Appraisal District is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Appraiser. The successful applicant will do office and field work associated with the appraisal of residential, rural, commercial and personal property in HCAD. Candidates must have organizational skills, along with effective communication and people skills. A high school diploma is the minimum education requirement, college preferred.

Must be physically able to complete on site measurement and inspection of property over rough and uneven terrain, as well as stand and/or sit for extended periods of time. Position requires bending, reaching, lifting heavy file boxes and moving up and down steps and steep grades.

Salary will commensurate with experience. The Appraisal District provides excellent Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Long Term Disability and a 401A Retirement Plan.

Mail resumes to:
Lisa Reyna, RPA, CCA
Chief Appraiser
Howard County Appraisal District
PO Drawer 1151
Big Spring, TX 79721-1151

Help Wanted

BIG SPRING STATE HOSPITAL RETIREMENT AND PAYFLEX BENEFITS

Registered Nurses
Job Posting #298933 & #303578
Earn up to \$5,312.11 per month (DOE)


Licensed Vocational Nurses
Job Posting #298944
Earn up to \$3,678.00 per month (DOE)

Psychiatric Nursing Assistants
Job Posting # 295342
Varied Shifts
Starting salary \$1,962.85 per month

Contact our Job Center for Job Descriptions or to Arrange a Campus Tour
432-268-7341 or
432-268-7298 or
Complete an application online at
<https://jobshportal.hhsc.state.tx.us/>

Big Spring State Hospital
1901 North Highway 87,
Big Spring, TX 79720

Help Wanted



DRIVER --- Penta Petro has immediate openings for fuel transportation drivers in Big Spring. Excellent Pay with benefits. Must be 23 years of age, possess CDL/Hazmat/Tanker and must have fuel transportation experience. If qualified please contact Shae at 432.689.0660. www.penta-petro.com

Hiring experienced heavy equipment operators for oilfield dirt work/construction. 1-2 years operator experience required. Dozer experience a plus. Pay DOE. Health, vision, and dental insurance 100% paid! Apply in person: 9400 S. Service Rd., Coahoma, TX, or call 432-394-4604 for more information.

La Quinta Inn @ 1102 W. I-20 is hiring for housekeeping. Apply in person. NO phone calls.

Help Wanted

The City of Big Spring is now accepting on-line applications.

Please apply at www.mybigspring.com

Full Time Positions

- Non-Certified & Certified Police Officer
- Utility Service Worker
- Park Maintenance Worker
- Golf Maintenance Worker
- Sanitation Truck Driver

For more information call

Human Resources at (432) 264-2346

Public Notice

the following date/time for the purchase of the items/services listed below:

Date/Time: Tuesday, January 17, at 2:00 p.m., for the following:

RFP # 17-013 Copier Leases

Proposals are to be opened and read aloud in the City Council Chambers at 307 East 4th Street, Big Spring, Texas 79720, with award to be made at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Big Spring City Council. Proposal information and specifications may be obtained from the Office of the Purchasing Agent, 1380 Airpark Drive East, Bldg. #19, Big Spring, Texas 79720. All proposals must be marked with the date of the proposals and a general description of the proposal item(s).

The City of Big Spring reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any or all formalities.

#9267 January 1 & 8, 2016

Help Wanted

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Apply Online www.richesondq.com

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Charge Nurse- LVN Full Time
RN Nursing Supervisor- PRN
Maintenance Assistant- Full Time
Activities Assistant- Full Time
Full Time Scheduler. No License or Cert required.

Lamun-Lusk (432)268-8387
1809 US-87 Big Spring 79720

NOW HIRING APPLY TODAY

Cline Construction has immediate opening for CDL-A Driver. Apply in person at 1807 N. FM 700, Big Spring.

Howard County Road and Bridge is accepting applications on a Maintenance Tech III or IV, now thru January 3, 2017.

Must have or obtain a CDL License within 6 months of employment, Class A & Tanker are preferred. Must be able to pass Drug Test.

Must know Basic Roadway Maintenance and Repair. Must know Light and Heavy Equipment operation. Motor-grader operation preferred.

You may pick-up applications at Howard County Road and Bridge, 3604 Old Colorado City Hwy, Monday thru Friday, 7:30am till 4:00pm.

Medication aide Split shift
Nurse 2p - 10p
Ins Dependents
Big Spring Center for Skilled Care, 3701 Wasson Rd., Big Spring, TX., ph #(432) 606-5012.

Real Estate for Rent

1 acre of land for RV/Mobile Home (not in trailer park) for \$500/month
Call 432-213-5631

1 left-kingsize(4rms) 1 bdrm furnished apt. \$600.00. Super private. 1 person only. nonsmoking/pets. wtr.gas.elec paid. Expect to see very nice apt. Credit qualify. 611 Runnels 432-270-0707

1010 A Nolan. New duplex. 2 bed/2 bath w/kitchen appliances. No bills paid \$975/month, \$500/dep. Call 432-267-7449 or 432-634-8101

107 East 25th St. 3 bedroom, 1 bath. Stove, refrigerator, washer/dryer. No smoking/no pets. References required. \$1,000/month, \$1,000/dep. Call 432-213-2319

1206 East 11th Place. 3 bed, 2 bath, 2 car garage, CH/A, living/dining room. \$1,400/month plus deposit.

602 George 3 Bedroom/1 Bath
1250 month plus deposit.

No HUD/no bills paid.
(432) 267-2296

1400 Nolan
Nice 2 bedroom/1 bath w/ shed
C/HA
\$750 w/ \$500 dep
Call 432-517-2876

1732 Purdue- 3 BDR, 2 bath, CH/CA, tile floors. Rent 1075, deposit 900. Application required. 432.816.1255

2 & 3 bedroom house.
Rental references required.
Call Randy 432-466-9358 for details. No text please!

2402 Marcy Drive
3 bedroom.
Nice house w/garage \$1000/month, \$900/dep
No HUD/No pets/No smoking
Rental references required.
Call 432-270-3849

Complex Community
Federal Credit Union is now accepting applications for the Teller position in Big Spring, Texas.

The Teller provides full service to the member by processing all financial transactions accurately and in a timely manner, answers questions of the members and utilizes knowledge of available credit union products and services to expand member relationships.

Qualifications include:
Previous cash handling experience, proven communication skills, High School Diploma, at least 18 years of age and a member focused attitude.

This full time position comes with medical, dental, vision, 401(k) and more.

Applications can be found and dropped off at any branch location or at 503 East FM 700 in Big Spring.

TownePlace Suites by Martiott Now Hiring: Breakfast Attendant, House-keeping, Laundry Attendant, Maintenance and Bartenders. Applications can be picked up at: 1011 N. San Antonio St., Big Spring, Tx 79720

Accounting Assistant, knowledgeable in A/P, A/R, data entry and payroll. Benefits available include Health, Dental & 401k, pay D.O.E.

Apply in person at 1611 S. Gregg.

Endurance Lift Solutions has an immediate opening for a CDL Driver at our Big Spring, Texas facility. Responsibilities include: drive truck with capacity of more than three tons to transport and deliver materials. Maintain driver logs, operates a wench truck with gin poles. Qualified individuals must possess a valid CDL license, pass pre-employment physical and drug test. This full-time position offers competitive wages, health insurance, and 401 K. Apply in person at 3604 Bethel Drive Big Spring, Texas.

Community Supervision Officer Position Available

Would you like the opportunity to supervise and help people in the community? We are looking for someone with a bachelor's degree to join our great team and start an exciting career with many benefits and the opportunity to make a difference! Applications and a list of qualifications are available at Adult Probation, Howard County Annex, 315 South Main, Suite B, Big Spring. (432)264-2245 Applications are due by January 17th. Only applicants selected for an interview will be contacted.

Dixie Electric is hiring, licensed electricians and apprentices with experience. We are also hiring, foreman, linemen, and operators with experience. CDL recommended.

Please contact Chris Braswell at 432-924-2180 or Josef Nairn at 432-213-0425. You can also apply in person at 3611 N Hwy 87, Big Spring Texas.

Pate TRUCKING

Now Hiring
CDL Driver
Full-Time
Call (432) 664-0652

SAND BLASTER LOOKING FOR BLASTER/PAINTER/COATER. APPLY IN PERSON 3262 EAST I20 IN STANTON

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If interested please email ltrackard@homehospicewtx.com
Equal opportunity employer.

West Texas Centers

Mental Health Part Time Rehab Provider: Employee will perform psychosocial rehabilitation and skills training services to reduce the symptoms of and disabilities of mental illness. Services will be delivered primarily in the community. Bachelor degree from an accredited college or university with a major in social, behavioral or human services. Applicant must live with 70 mile radius of duty site. \$21.84 an hr.

MH UM Care Manager: Collect, analyze, and document information from medical records and providers. Bachelor degree from an accredited college or university with a major in social behavioral or human services. Salary \$17.94 hr \$1434.92 bi weekly \$37,308 annually.

Mental Health Rehab Provider: Employee will perform psychosocial rehabilitation and skills training services to reduce the symptoms of and disabilities of mental illness. Services will be delivered primarily in the community. Bachelor degree from an accredited college or university with a major in social, behavioral or human services. Applicant must live within 70 mile radius of duty site. \$19.79 hr \$1583.08 bi weekly \$41,160 annually.

Provider Service Part Time positions this position provides services to persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Services range from skills training, to assistance with daily living activities. Services are provided in the home, the community and in a vocational setting. Schedules are flexible. GED or High School Diploma. Hrly \$12.90.

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Items for Sale

Seasoned Oak Firewood. \$385/full cord, & \$200/half cord. Delivered & Stacked. Call 512-913-7406.

Public Notice

CITY OF BIG SPRING NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Pursuant to the authority granted by the City Council of the City of Big Spring, Texas, the City of Big Spring will receive sealed proposals on

Public Notice

The Colorado River Municipal Water District is accepting applications for following positions:

Equipment Operator - Responsible for maintaining the District's raw water pipelines, pump stations, and wells. Entry to intermediate level position

For additional information visit www.crmwd.org

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Applications available at 409 Runnels or www.wtcmhmr.org. 279761

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NURSE PRACTITIONER
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REHAB THERAPY TECH
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<https://jobshportal.hhsc.state.tx.us>
OR CALL (432) 268-7341 or visit us at:
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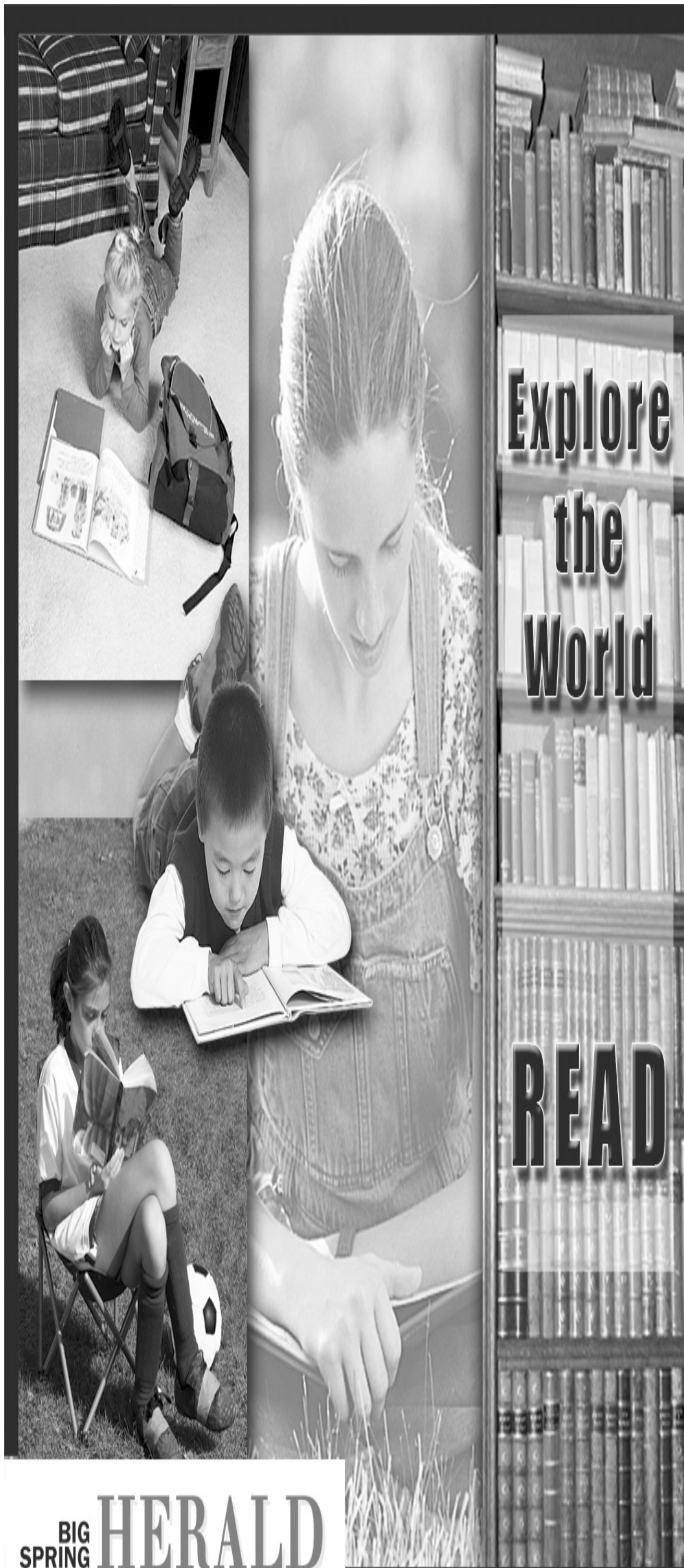


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sudoku

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.

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

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Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Achieving the impossible

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

The bidding:
South West North East
1♦ Pass 2♥ Pass
3♦ Pass 4NT Pass
5♦ Pass 6♦
Opening lead — jack of spades.
One of the most remarkable hands on record is this gem, which appears in the book "Reese on Play." West's A-10-8-7 of diamonds over declarer's J-9-6-5 appear to constitute two sure trump tricks. Even when all four hands are studied, the slam appears impossible to make.
Nevertheless, the contract can be made. The play starts innocently enough when South wins the spade lead in his hand and leads a low diamond.
West follows with the seven, and the queen wins as East shows out.

Prospects for the slam, which appeared a moment before to be a near certainty, suddenly change to a near impossibility. No finesse against West's potent holding is possible, and the contract seems doomed.
Standard procedure in such situations calls for declarer to picture a hand West might have that would allow the contract to be made.
South should conclude that his only chance lies in attempting to arrange an endplay that would snuff out one of West's two seemingly sure trump tricks.
The plan can succeed only if West has a hand where he has to follow suit as the winners in each side suit are cashed. At the same time, South must reduce his trump length to equal West's.
Accordingly, at trick three the ace of hearts is cashed, and a low heart is ruffed. Three rounds of clubs are taken, and the jack of hearts is ruffed. Two high spades are then cashed, ending in dummy.
Ten tricks have now been played. Dummy has the king of hearts and K-3 of diamonds, while South has the J-9-6 of diamonds and West the A-10-8.
The king of hearts is led next, and South trumps it with the jack. If West overruffs, he has no safe return. If he underuffs, he scores only his ace of trumps. West has no recourse, and his second trump trick vanishes.

Tomorrow: Famous Hand.
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Tomorrow's Horoscope



HOLIDAY MATHIS

you're winning or losing? It's not so obviously determined. But of course, if you're in the race, that's something. No one ever won a race without being in it.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Don't try to appear smart. Just try to be clear. Smart people (that's you!) don't need to prove they're smart. Maybe you're suffering from your own abilities. Shake it off.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You have to know what the problem is before you can solve it. But be careful; maybe there is no problem. Maybe it won't take a solution to make everything better, only a different mindset.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your way is to do more than is asked of you, no matter what is asked. It helps that you place yourself around the kind of capable and generous people who ask you to do only what's logical, fair and necessary.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). It doesn't take much more effort to put your individual

stamp on everything you contribute. In fact, it will be easier to lend your personal touch to the job at hand than to approach it in a generic way.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Though it's not helpful to open up your business to too many outside opinions, the periodical review of an objective party will be invaluable to your operations. "A guest sees more in an hour than the host in a year." -- Polish proverb

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). One way to conserve and focus your energy is to stay out of drama. Ignore the controversial Facebook post and that catty remark around the watercooler. The befits to minding your own business will be enormous.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Noise is the enemy of communication. The way to a clearer signal is to cut out everything that is not the message. Your efforts to express yourself in a succinct and direct way will earn you respect and status.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).

When sunshine touches your skin, your heart will be warmed, and your spirit will be lighter. Positive thoughts will flood your mind, improving your situation instantaneously.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Your self-control will be strongest in the morning, so anything that requires harder thinking or greater discipline should be scheduled in the morning, when this will be easier to pull off.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You can be true to the one you love and yet not do everything this person wants you to do. Keep relationships fair and balanced by making sure you take care of yourself before you take care of them.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 1). With a little education and a solid support system, you'll push past what's been holding you back for years. A professional development could inspire you to start a lucrative side business. You'll witness the power of love in February. Your shrewd judgment will lead to financial gain

in March and October. Cancer and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 7, 20, 4, 44 and 28.

FORECAST FOR THE WEEK AHEAD: Like glamorously clad Academy Award presenters, Jupiter and Saturn glide to form a united front at the cosmic lectern and announce the good news: (SET ITAL) Everyone who puts the work in gets to be a winner. (END ITAL) That is not to say that all who invest the effort get the grand prize, but that's just a trophy and a title. The real win is in what's gained through the process of striving for greatness. Those who understand the value of a process are most likely so taken with their work that all the accolades are merely gravy on top of the main attraction.

The other heavenly boon comes from our sister planet, Venus, the goddess of love, as she moves into the realm of art and spirit. In Pisces, the tone of love can be intensely imaginative, poetic and soul-stirring. Pisces is the most empathetic

sign, and while Venus flies this realm, loved ones can come to very clear understandings of one another as they step into one another's life, actions and feelings. These are weeks to walk miles in other people's moccasins and finally know why they do the things they do. This isn't about conversing or deal-making; it's about quiet observation and shifting perspective.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Two great American patriots were born Jan. 1. Born in 1735, Paul Revere was a member of a pre-Revolution secret society called the Sons of Liberty. He famously warned his fellow patriots on a midnight ride, "The British are coming!" Born in 1752, seamstress Betsy Ross designed the first American flag. Capricorns are known for their leadership ability and work ethic.

To write to Holiday Mathis, visit www.creators.com/author/holiday-mathis and click "Contact."
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Jupiter Sprinkles Luck on Day One

If there's still glitter on the floor from last night, don't bother cleaning it up just yet. Jupiter and Saturn align to sprinkle a little more in the air, mostly in the form of fortuitous meet-ups, lucky mistakes and, best of all, instances in which past work that seemed random and nonsensical suddenly pays off in truly unexpected and wonderful ways.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You've done some pretty unconventional things to get where you are. To be honest with oneself is liberating; to be judgmental against oneself will have the opposite effect.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). How do you know whether

Letting Oneself Go

Dear Annie: I am in a loving, wonderful relationship with a loving, wonderful man,

"Marco." He's supportive and kind, and he makes me feel like a million bucks. This is in sharp contrast to past relationships, in which I've been belit-

led or not appreciated or I've turned into someone I don't like. I was with wrong guy after wrong guy after wrong guy.

After my most

recent breakup, I realized that I needed to make myself happy and turned my life around. I began a new exercise routine, stopped smoking and focused on my well-being. Once I was at peace with myself, I was able to say yes to a friend's attempt to fix me up with a "great guy" from her work. And here we are, almost a year later.

The issue is that I am getting too used to being comfortable, and it's beginning to show in my waistline. Rather than wake up early to go for a jog, I stay in bed snoozing with Marco. It was easy to stick with boring healthful food when I was cooking for myself, but as a couple, we enjoy making delicious and fattening foods. We both have hectic jobs and don't get to spend as much time together as we'd like, so using up that time by working out feels like a waste. Annie, how do I stay healthy in my healthy relationship? -- Gabby on the Gulf Coast

Dear Gabby: As

we get more comfortable in romantic relationships, we tend to get into comfier pants -- the kind with forgiving elastic waistbands. It's fortunate that you've noticed this one year into your relationship, as opposed to 10. It shouldn't take too long to get back into those good habits.

Your vibe attracts your tribe, and Marco became a part of your life because you were taking care of yourself. Try inviting him along for a morning jog. Couples who get out and do things together are happier. Bonding through constructive, healthy activities can help you both grow into more well-rounded individuals.

And if Marco isn't too pumped about hitting the gym, don't let that stop you from going on your own. You are still in the honeymoon phase and feel as if you want to spend every waking moment together. But you can't indulge that craving all the time -- just as you can't indulge every craving for cake. Moderation

is the key to health in all areas of life.

Dear Annie: This is in response to "Family Divided," who wrote about not being able to agree with her sister on political issues.

About 40 years ago, I attended a seminar for supervisors where I worked. One thing I remember is the advice that when you're dealing with those under your supervision whom you disagree with about a subject that's not important, you should just agree to go along with them. This advice has been very valuable to me over the years, not only with those under my supervision but also with my managers, friends and family.

My advice to the person who has political differences with her sister: In the future, tell her she is right -- and then close the curtain to the voting booth and cast your ballot for the candidate of your choice. -- Doug

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Annie's Mailbox

Newsday Crossword

SATURDAY STUMPER by Brad Wilber
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS**
- 1 Wag
- 8 Frolicsome
- 13 Symbol for an object
- 15 Surfboard storage site
- 16 Banjo sequence
- 17 Caterer's discard
- 18 In public
- 19 Diversionary tactic
- 21 "Take it away!"
- 22 ___ Center (Atlanta tourist attraction)
- 23 Is swooning over
- 24 See 27 Across
- 25 Film often shot in stages
- 27 With 24 Across, ill-fated grocery debut of 1985
- 28 Out now
- 29 Cast off
- 31 Check from an act
- 33 Sale announcement of a sort
- 35 Square since the '80s
- 37 Mexican progenitor
- 39 Earliest-born Oscar actor (*Disraeli*, 1929)
- 42 Choice to minimize clashing
- 45 Word with etymology similar to "feud"
- 47 What Aqua Chem is made to remove
- 48 As recently as
- 49 Oversee a port transfer
- 51 Spot hiked by Twain in *A Tramp Abroad*
- 52 Awardee of America's oldest pro-sports trophy

- 53 Source of brilliant bands
- 54 Angel's opposite
- 55 Italian progenitor
- 57 Ilsa, to Rick
- 59 They might range from green to red
- 60 Sarcastic shout of nonsuccess
- 61 Merest hints
- 62 Virtuosity

- DOWN**
- 1 Washouts
- 2 Word in an endocrine system diagram
- 3 Kick oneself for
- 4 Name of two *Bridge of Spies* co-writers
- 5 You're instructed to "beat it" in "Eat It"
- 6 Tried to sell
- 7 Bring pessimism into
- 8 "How often have I ___ beneath rain": Faulkner
- 9 Name associated with honesty
- 10 Some investment criteria
- 11 Bulls' traditional rivals
- 12 What Katharine Hepburn called herself
- 14 Legendary turcoat knight
- 15 Program executors, for short
- 20 Together again
- 23 Golf attire staple
- 24 Gosling collaborator in *The Big Short*
- 26 Word from the Greek from "fine language"
- 28 Scrutinize
- 30 Ankle tickler, maybe
- 32 American acquisition of 2001
- 34 Point (to)
- 36 Orange sauce in French cuisine
- 38 Insulate
- 40 They're cured for heroes
- 41 Harry Potter novels et al.
- 42 Activity for stunt coordinators
- 43 Depict as innocent, say
- 44 Insincere agreement
- 46 Certain wind shield
- 49 What clubs hit you with
- 50 Metaphorical floor
- 53 "Fire" brigade?
- 54 Mishandled
- 56 Spousal ___
- 58 Woman in white in 100+ ads

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13						14		15			
16								17			
18				19			20			21	
22			23						24		
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							38		39		40 41
42 43 44						45		46		47	
48					49				50		51
52				53						54	
55				56				57		58	
59								60			
61										62	

Answer to previous puzzle

BLANC	RELY	JIFF
ROMEO	ELIE	AVER
ADMAN	DAMN	CALI
GEORGE	CLOO	KNIT
ALA	SNAZZ	
HAJJ	MRX	FRIZ
ESAU	PARTICLES	
NEIL	HEXED	HARP
SALIVATES	OMNI	
AAH	STP	LISON
STINT	SAW	
PENN	ANGEL	INAJO
ANTE	NCAA	LOCAL
DORM	TOSS	MIAMI
EROO	TISPY	ARISE

sudoku

ANSWERS

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



Photo by Richard Shotwell/Invision/AP

In this Friday, July 10, 2015 file photo, from left, Carrie Fisher, Mark Hamill and Harrison Ford attend a panel at Comic-Con International in San Diego, Calif. On Tuesday, Dec. 27, 2016, a family publicist said Fisher died at the age of 60. With the loss of several icons of Generation X's youth, the year 2016 has left the generation born between the early 1960s and the early 1980s, wallowing in memories and contemplating its own mortality.

With the loss of its celebrities, Gen X ponders mortality

Princess Leia was our first girl movie heroine, and we made our moms braid brunette yarn so we'd have earmuff buns for Halloween. Carol Brady of "The Brady Bunch" was the ideal mother we probably didn't have, because our moms had to work and left us latchkey kids home alone, with TV and processed food our only companions.



AP Photo

Carrie Fisher and Florence Henderson — and other icons of Generation X's youth — are now gone, stolen by the cruel thief that is 2016. The year has left the generation born between the mid-1960s and the early 1980s wallowing in memories and contemplating its own mortality.

"It's a very melancholy time," sighed Shelly Ransom, a 47-year-old speech-language pathologist in Darien, Connecticut. "This is really bringing back a lot of teen angst feelings. These people are supposed to still be the voices of my generation. It's sad to see these artists not there to be our voice."

Or, as weary, 51-year-old Lawrence Feeney, a filmmaker from New Port Richey, Florida, put it: "You lose George Michael and Carrie Fisher in a three-day span, you feel like you've gotten a couple of daggers thrown at you."

Throughout the year, office conversations, dinner party discussions and social media have exploded with incredulity, sadness and fear, as one '80s celebrity after another died, starting in January with David Bowie.

The feelings have been particularly acute for Gen X, whose members came of age when many of these cultural figures were popular.

We adored Bowie in the movie "Labyrinth" and danced to "Modern Love" at prom. We remember reading the words "Purple Rain" on the theater marquee and wondered why that little guy in high heels was so sexy. We made out fervently in cars in high school as George Michael crooned on the FM dial (Remember radio? It came decades

before Spotify, and you couldn't pick your music).

"We were the generation that was going to change the world. When I was a young man, I watched people my age stand in front of tanks in Tiananmen Square and tear down the Berlin Wall. Now I find myself complaining about arthritis in my hands and taking care of my aging parents," lamented Rob Withrow, a 43-year-old landscape business owner in Palm Bay, Florida.

He added: "The musicians I admired growing up are now dying off. Hopefully, I still have quite a few more decades left in me, but the reality of dying is much clearer to see."

Of course, this happens to every generation: Our idols die off, and we suddenly feel our youth slipping away.

But Lou Manza, a professor of psychology at Lebanon Valley College in Annville, Pennsylvania, said baby boomers and older generations weren't as invested in or connected to their celebrities. Gen X had MTV, which put pop stars like Prince and Bowie into our homes in heavy rotation.

That, combined with the immediacy and intimacy of 21st-century social media — we knew when platinum-haired punk rocker Billy Idol turned 61 because Facebook informed us, for instance — amplifies the sadness.

"Our parents in the '70s would hear about a celebrity death on the nightly news, or the next day in the newspaper," Manza said. "Now, there's more and more of an immediacy with every successive generation."

Sarah McBride Wag-

ner, a 37-year-old writer in Weirton, West Virginia, said social media has created a place for collective mourning.

"We've never met these people. Yet we're all so affected by it," she said. "Being a shared grief both makes it bigger and easier."

For some, the death of beloved childhood figures reminds us of the passing of people closer to us and of the march of time, which seems more like a fast jog.

"We're at the age now when we really start to see ourselves in our parents. My son just turned 10, and it occurred to me as he hung out with my parents that it's really not going to be too many more years before my husband and I are my parents, and he is us," said Amanda Forman, a 38-year-old mother of three and a writer from Flourtown, Pennsylvania.

The Signal Mountain Quilter's Club and Crafters had busy year



Special to the Herald

Members of the Signal Mountain Quilter's Club and Crafter's Guild were very busy the past year.

The group recently made a quilt for the Southwest Parkinson's Society in Lubbock. It will be used to help raise funds for the Parkinson's Society's annual Wine and Chocolate fundraiser which will be held in February 2017. The quilt was designed "Tulip Greenhouse".

After decorating their tree for the annual Heritage Museum Christmas Tree Forest, the group placed crafted blankets and afghans around the base of the tree.

Those blankets and afghans were then distributed by Guild members to residents of Big Spring Center for Care after the Christmas Forest event ended.

Last Christmas, the club held a fund-raiser for the Children's Miracle Network. The toys, blankets, afghans, and quilts were to Children's Miracle Network for Medical Center Health System Odessa Texas.

The 1st prize was won by Courtney Young, 2nd prize was won by Marie Oliver, and 3rd prize was Marlene Underwood from the Dora Roberts Rehab Center.



Courtesy photos

Older British royals outpace youngsters in public duties

LONDON (AP) — Prince Philip has been saying since he turned 90 five years ago that he's cutting back on his public schedule to reflect his advancing years.

Perhaps Philip has slowed down some. But Queen Elizabeth II's husband certainly is no slouch. Figures re-

leased Wednesday show he made 110 public appearances this year, compared to the 80 royal engagements racked up by his grandson Prince William.

The figures compiled by Britain's Press Association from official court circulars published each day show that the royals who are

over 60 seem to be working harder than the next generation.

The busiest was the queen's daughter, Princess Anne, who had engagements on 179 days.

Prince Charles, heir to the throne, worked 139. Of course, William has an excuse. He and his wife, Kate, are raising two young children.

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