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BIG SPRING HERALD

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2017



VOLUME 112, NUMBER 409 COPYRIGHT 2017 50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

Don't come knocking



HERALD photo/LYNDEL MOODY

The Rev. Joel Miller, Head Chaplain of the Howard County Emergency Services Chaplain Corps holds a no soliciting, no trespassing sign. The non-profit agency is selling the signs for \$6 apiece as a fundraiser. The signs can be mounted on or near the outside doorway as a deterrent to unwanted visitors.

By LYNDEL MOODY
 Staff Writer

A fundraiser for the Howard County Emergency Services Chaplain Corps is aimed at keeping unwanted guests from coming to your doorway. "A door-to-door sales man kept coming up, coming up (to his house) and I'd ask him not to come back," said Joel Miller, who oversees the Chaplain Corps pro-

gram. "My wife is on a walker and if I am not there, it's a lot of trouble for her to get up and answer a door. He is selling the same thing. He was coming back every two weeks." After seeking advice from a Big Spring police officer on how to handle the issue, Miller ordered an outside sign to be placed by the doorway stating no soliciting, no trespassing.

Howard County Chaplain Corps kicks off sign fundraiser

"It's an aluminum sign you put on the door or your wall outside your house that says no soliciting, no trespassing," he explained. "It is a deterrent only. Once they are there and you ask them to leave or if they continue to come back, then you can go and file trespassing charges on them."

The "no soliciting signs" are \$6 apiece and money from the sales will go to support the Chaplain Corps and the United Way of Big Spring and Howard County

The Howard County Emergency Services Chaplain Corps provides spiritual comfort to people in crisis and first responders as well as provide one-time only financial assistance for people in an emergency situation. A large portion of the funding for the Chaplain's Corps comes from the United Way, Miller said

"The money we get from United Way helps people from Big Spring. We help law enforcement, we help fire department, we help the court system, the hospital, or anybody we need to help," Miller said.

Eight chaplains provided 24-hour emergency services to the county ranging from assisting police in giving death notices to

See **CORPS**, Page 3

Paul's PCs lights up for Valentine's Day



HERALD photo/Sandrena Koning

By SANDRENA KONING
 Staff Writer

Valentine's festivities are in full swing at a local Big Spring business.

Paul Johnson of Paul's PCs regularly decorates for the holidays, and Valentine's Day is no exception when it comes to his décor. Paul's PCs is celebrating the essence of the holiday with beautiful metallic roses, red draped garland, and LED hearts.

"There's a Valentine's lighted decoration the whole month," said Johnson. "Every holiday we offer lighted decorations: Valentine's Day, Easter, 4th of July, Halloween, Christmas.. we decorate."

In addition to festive lighting, Paul's PCs is giving away chocolate starting on Wednesday, Feb. 8 and will continue through Valentine's Day on Tuesday, Feb. 14; excluding Sunday, Feb. 12.

"We're giving away Valentine hearts in assorted chocolate, while supplies last," said Johnson. "Limit one per customer. No age limit."

According to Johnson, active participation in the community is important for him and his business. Holiday displays and giveaways are

See **PAUL**, Page 3

Investigators say found human remains identified as Zuzu Verk

ALPINE, Texas (AP) — Human remains found in a shallow West Texas grave last week have been identified conclusively as those of a missing college student, investigators confirmed Monday.

Dental records helped confirm the identity of Zuzu Verk, a 22-year-old Sul Ross State University student from Keller, a Fort Worth suburb, Brewster County Sheriff Ronny Dodson said during a Monday news conference.



Alpine Police Department via AP, File

This photo provided by Alpine Police Department shows Robert Fabian. Fabian, Verk's boyfriend, was jailed on a charge of tampering with evidence by concealing a human corpse but other charges were expected, Brewster County Sheriff Ronny Dodson said.

Verk had been reported as missing since Oct. 12, when she failed to show up for work and

See **ZUZU**, Page 3

SMMC gets heart healthy

Special to the Herald

With heart health in the forefront during the month of February, Scenic Mountain Medical Center (SMMC) heart healthy in the next Healthy You event.

Charisse Ward, M.D., M.P.H. will be the featured speaker at the Healthy Heart, Healthy You event scheduled at Hotel Settles on Thursday, Feb. 16.

"Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, for most ethnicities. According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), someone has a heart attack every 42 seconds and each minute someone in the United States dies from heart disease," said Amanda Duforat, SMMC marketing manager. "Scenic Mountain Medical Center wants to educate and support our community when it comes to matters of the heart. We are ex-

cited to have Dr. Ward speaking about heart healthy symptoms, treatments and preventative measures."

This year's event will begin with a free health expo at 4:30 p.m. where local health providers and businesses will be featuring their services. Doors to the ballroom will open at 6 p.m.

"We want people to know that there are services right here in their own backyard. When it comes to healthcare, we want it to be one less drive out of town," Duforat said. "This is a great way for us to educate our community and support local businesses, at the same time."

Dr. Ward is board certified in Internal Medicine and Cardiovascular Medicine. She has an interest in the care and treatment of diabetic wounds, peripheral vascular disease and limb preservation.

See **SMMC**, Page 3

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Obituaries

Bobbie Louise Voss



Bobbie Louise Voss, 93, of Big Spring, died Sunday, Feb. 5, 2017 at her residence. Graveside funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2017 at the Peace Chapel at Trinity Memorial Park.

She was born to Robert Newton and Annie Pearl Jones on June 1, 1923 in Lamesa, Texas and married Howard C. Voss Oct. 24, 1946 in Long Beach, California. He preceded her in death June 9, 1989.

Bobbie worked for Pacific Telephone Company in Long Beach, California for a number of years before being transferred to Big Spring in 1951 where she worked as an operator for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. She later retired from Gamco Industries. She had been a resident of Big Spring for 66 years.

Survivors include three sisters, Dell Ledbetter

of Moore, Oklahoma, Betty Brown of Vincent and June Williams and husband, Daryll of Phoenix, Arizona; seven nieces and nephews, Cindy Longorio and husband, Don, Brenda Conner, Charlotte Hall and husband, Raymond and Barbara Morgan and husband, James all of Big Spring, Connie Coates and husband, Donald of Moore, Oklahoma, and Kevin Williams and Troy Dawson both of Phoenix, Arizona.

She was also preceded in death by her parents.

The family would like to thank Cindy and Donald Longorio for caring for Bobbie the last 15 years.

Honorary pallbearers will be Wesley Longorio, Chad Conner, Michael Hatfield, Donald Longorio and Amanda Longorio.

The family suggests memorials to Home Hospice of Big Spring, 111 E. 7th St., Suite A, Big Spring, Texas 79720.

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

Paid obituary

Erlinda Luna

Erlinda Luna, 70, of Big Spring, died Monday, Feb. 6, 2017 at a local hospital. Services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory.

Fire/EMS

Big Spring Fire Department/EMS reported the following activity:

• **MEDICAL CALL** was reported in the 1000 block of W 6th. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL CALL** was reported in the 1800 block of N. Hwy 87. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL CALL** was reported in the 1600 block of Cardna.

• **MEDICAL CALL** was reported in the 600 block of Ridgelea. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL CALL** was reported in the 1400 block of E. 6th. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL CALL** was reported in the 1500 block of Sycamore. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL CALL** was reported in the 1800 block of N. Hwy 87. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL CALL** was reported in the 1000 block of E. 12th. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL CALL** was reported in the 200 block of Algerita.

• **MEDICAL CALL** was reported in the 3200 block of Parkway. One person was transported to SMMC.

Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity:

• **EDWARD GLEN MEYERS**, 51, of 1800 S Monticello Street was arrested on a charge of driving with suspended/invalid (no insurance) license.

• **LUIS MIGUEL LOPEZ**, 33, of 1111 West 7th was arrested on a warrant from another agency.

• **ALONZO GONZALES**, 26, of 623 Caylor Drive was arrested on warrants for speeding and failure to appear.

• **DERRICK TODD DRAKE**, 30, of 1902 Settles Street was arrested on a charge of unauthorized use of a motor vehicle.

• **AUSTIN MICHAEL HENSON**, 18, of 625 State Street was arrested on a warrant from another

agency.

• **HENRY RODRIQUEZ**, 50, of 1606 Harding Street was arrested on warrants for assault causing bodily injury and criminal mischief (greater than \$100 but less than \$750).

• **BURGLARY OF A VEHICLE** was reported in the 1000 block of N Main Street.

• **THEFT** was reported in the 3800 block of Dixon Street and the 1700 block of E. FM 700.

• **BURGLARY OF A HABITATION** was reported in the 700 block of W. 7th Street.

• **HARASSMENT** was reported in the 3600 block of W. Hwy 80.

• **DISTURBANCE** was reported in the 3100 block of S. Hwy 87.

Take Note

• 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. Feb. 6 and 7 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 a 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, Mon-

day through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Volunteers can assist with a variety of functions, including The Chalet Resale Shop, various fund-raisers 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. For more information, call Linda Calvio at 432-263-3312.

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just a few ways Paul's PCs tries to promote happiness and pride in Big Spring. Johnson emphasized that this was his way of giving back to the community.

"It's like charity, to help the public be happy," Johnson said. "We're not

doing it for profit."

Paul's PCs is located at 1911 S Scurry, Big Spring, TX 79720.

Contact Staff Writer Sandrena Koning at 432-263-7331, ext. 234, or email reporter@bigspringherald.com



HERALD photos/Sandrena Koning

At top left, a lighted red heart is hung off the fence at Paul's PC, top right, located at 1911 S. Scurry St., as part of a Valentine's Day display. To celebrate the holiday, Paul's PCs will be giving away Valentine hearts in assorted chocolate while supplies last. The display will continue through the month of February.

CORPS

Continued from Page 1

helping families who've lost their homes to fire with temporary housing and supplies.

The Chaplain Corps is one of 15 area agencies support by the local United Way. One of the requirements to be a participating agency is to hold a fundraiser for the United Way, but that money is then returned to the agency during the allocation's process, Miller said.

Last year, the Chaplain Corps sold In God We Trust bumper stickers.

"That was our best fundraiser every," Miller said. "I still have some stickers if anyone wants to purchase one"

"The "no soliciting" signs will be on sale at the Big Spring Chamber of Commerce, 215 West Third St., or can be purchased by contacting Miller at 432-213-1221.

Contact Staff Writer Lyndel Moody at 263-7331, ext. 235, or email citydesk@big-springherald.com.

SMMC

Continued from Page 1

She completed her fellowship training at Yale New Haven Medical Center in general cardiology, heart failure/heart transplant/mechanical circulatory support, peripheral vascular and interventional cardiology.

"Being able to have Dr. Ward speaking to the connection between heart health and overall health is something we are excited about. Providing a rounded education on health, for our community is one of our big focuses for 2017," Duforat said.

Tickets to the event are \$20 a person or \$250 for a reserved table of eight. Tickets can be purchased at 1601 W. Eleventh Place, Room 411 and 412, or by calling, 432-268-4699.

Subscribe to the Herald!

ZUZU

Continued from Page 1

a school exam. She was last seen alive the night before, when she and boyfriend Robert Fabian attended the movies together. Neighbors reported hearing the pair arguing that night.

Fabian, 26, of Alpine, was jailed on a charge of tampering with evidence by concealing a human corpse but other charges were expected, Dodson said. Bond was set at \$500,000. His attorney did not return messages Monday from The Associated Press.

Verk's remains were found Friday scattered near a shallow grave near the remote West Texas college town of Alpine, about 200 miles southeast of El Paso.

"It's a disgrace. And to think that in such a shallow grave, that the animals wouldn't have eventually dug the body out — they weren't thinking. I guess they aren't as smart as they think they are," Dodson said of whoever buried the body.

"Why was she killed? And exactly how? Those are the big questions now," the sheriff said.

The report Monday from forensic pathologists performing the autopsy in Dallas merely confirmed what

investigators were confident they already knew from what they found around the shallow grave, Dodson said.

"Knowing what we knew about the case, which we can't reveal, when I walked up there, I just knew," Dodson said. "I had to call the chief and said, 'I think we got her here.'"

Chris Estrada, 28, a friend of Fabian, was jailed Monday in Phoenix on a corpse concealment warrant from Texas, awaiting return. Investigators said Fabian called Estrada the night Verk disappeared. Members of Fabian's family also remain under investigation, Dodson said.

The murky world of graft in Mexico

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Look to your right: There's the Pillar of Light, a towering monument shaped like a vanilla wafer cookie.

A company was allegedly allowed to overcharge the equivalent of millions of dollars for steel used in its construction.

Look to your left: A sculpture commemorating 43 teachers' college students who were "disappeared" in 2014 in the southern state of Guerrero, by police officers allegedly in league with drug cartel thugs and corrupt local officials.

This is the newest addition to the ubiquitous open-air tour buses crisscrossing Mexico City each day: The Corruptour, which instead of taking folks to historic plazas and churches, shines an unflattering spotlight on the murky world of graft.

"The goal is to awaken Mexicans' consciousness about the problem of corruption, which is

so serious and seems to be getting more and more expansive," said Tania Sanchez, a 44-year-old volunteer guide.

"It's about informing the people who ride about practices of corruption, illustrating it with the places we visit — only in a fun way."

Mexico ranked 123rd out of 176 countries on Transparency International's 2016 Corruption Perceptions Index, released last month, and people here commonly cite graft as a major concern along with other issues like security.

Corruption in Mexico runs the gamut from daily annoyances — a police officer shaking you down for a few bucks to avoid a traffic ticket, a city inspector demanding a bribe not to shut down a business — to shocking scandals involving government contracts worth billions of dollars.

The Corruptour first launched in 2014 in the northern city of Monter-

rey. A week ago it began offering free, twice-every-Sunday runs through the capital, financed entirely by private donations and with what organizers say was an initial \$5,000 budget.

During the 90-minute tour, recordings piped through speakers mock the seamy histories behind each of 10 stops. Guides invite passengers to share their own experiences with graft, and to discuss strategies to fight back. They also engage with bemused bystanders along the route, coaxing pedestrians and taxi driv-

ers to join in chanting "No more corruption!"

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David Garcia, 2, died Wednesday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home. A fund has been established at Myers & Smith Funeral Home to help the family with the funeral expenses.

Francisco L. Gonzales, Sr., 72, died Friday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Charlie McCalister, 57, died Saturday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

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Sheriff wants jailers to identify inmates in US illegally

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — The sheriff of Tarrant County wants to establish a partnership allowing county jailers to identify inmates who are in the country illegally and begin deportation proceedings, rather than wait on federal agents.

Sheriff Bill Waybourn tells the Fort Worth Star-Telegram he wants to train 12 jailers to look in the jail for those in the country without legal permission.

He says the move would only pertain to people in jail and deputies will not be questioning people on the street about their immigration status.

Normally the work falls on U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement but federal law allows the agency to partner with local law enforcement to conduct the work.

Harris and Lubbock counties, as well as dozens more in other states, have agreements in place with ICE.

Texas restaurant owner shrugs off 'America first' slight

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — The owner of an Italian restaurant in San Antonio says he would welcome back the customers who recently scribbled on a receipt that they won't return because he is Mexican.

Fernando Franco, who owns Di Frabo, says his manager showed him the receipt Friday, shortly after the couple had left.

The message noted that the food was "tasty" and the service "attentive," but concluded: "The owner is 'Mexican.' We will not return. 'America first.'"

Francisco says he's been inundated with messages of support.

He says he's not sure how the customers knew he was the owner or that he's a native of Mexico.

He says he'll frame the receipt as a reminder of how politicized the U.S. has become.

Officials: Man who killed officer died by police gunfire

LITTLE ELM, Texas (AP) — An investigation has determined that a man who fatally shot a police detective during a standoff last month at a suburban Dallas home died in an exchange of gunfire with officers.

Investigators hadn't previously indicated whether 46-year-old Rudy Garcia died by police gunfire or whether he shot himself during the Jan. 17 standoff in Little Elm.

City officials said in a statement Monday that a medical examiner's investigation determined the manner of death.

Detective Jerry Walker was among officers who responded to the home on a report of a man armed with a long gun.

Investigators say Garcia shot Walker and then was subsequently killed during an exchange of gunfire with other officers.

Garcia was found dead hours later when authorities sent a robotic device into the home.

1 killed, 2 hospitalized after helicopter crashes near Galveston

GALVESTON, Texas (AP) — A helicopter pilot has died and two passengers pulled from the waters off Galveston Island after their copter crashed.

Coast Guard Petty Officer Andy Kendrick says the passengers Monday evening were either being taken to or from the tanker Eagle Vancouver that was about 50 miles offshore.

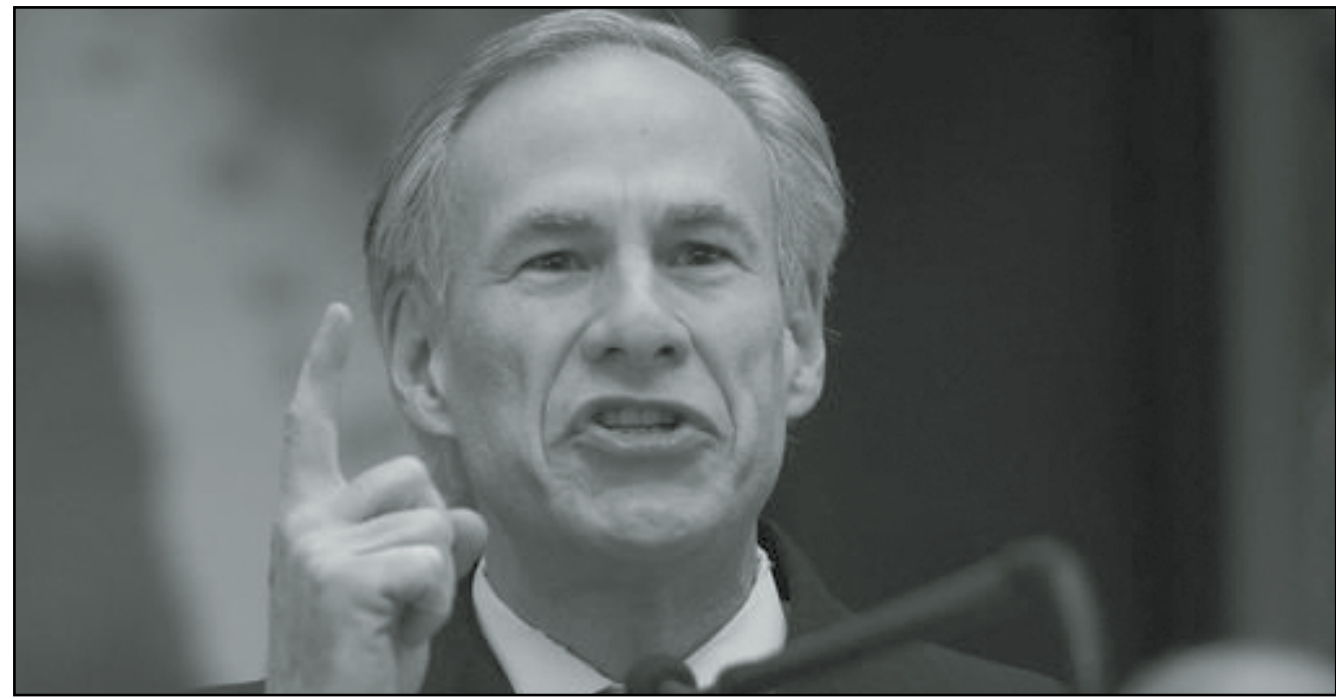
Kendrick says the helicopter company, Republic Helicopters of Santa Fe, just northwest of Galveston, lost contact with the pilot shortly before 8 p.m. and notified the Coast Guard.

A Galveston County sheriff's boat found the wreckage in West Bay, more than two miles from Galveston Island's Jamaica Beach.

The body of the unidentified pilot was recovered. The passengers were taken to a hospital and their conditions were unknown.

Kendrick says it's not clear if the two passengers were members of the tanker crew.

What to Watch: Hiring freeze, ethics bill, sanctuary cities



In this Jan. 31, 2017, file photo, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott delivers his State of the State address to a joint session of the House and Senate at the Texas Capitol in Austin. Abbott's headline-grabbing declaration of a state agency hiring freeze effective through August may not actually send shockwaves through state government given sizable exceptions. And even Abbott says it's only expected to save Texas \$200 million, relatively little in a \$106 billion budget.

By **WILL WEISSERT**

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — It was a headline-grabbing declaration that could boost Gov. Greg Abbott's fiscally conservative

credentials: An immediate state agency hiring freeze effective until the end of August.

But it's also an order not likely to send shockwaves through state government, or the budget

that pays for it all.

Abbott's directive only applies to agencies under the governor's direction. That exempts those

See **TEXAS**, Page 5

Public information scarce about possible teacher misconduct

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A newspaper's review of records shows information about hundreds of teachers who have voluntarily surrendered their licenses after possible improper conduct with students but never were charged isn't readily made available to the public by the Texas Education Agency.

An analysis by the Austin American-Statesman also has found the state agency doesn't track if a teacher has been charged or convicted of a crime. The newspaper reported Sunday that in many cases, school districts keep the information secret and teachers are allowed to take other teaching jobs or positions where they are in contact with children.

The Statesman said of 686 teachers between 2010 and 2016 who surrendered their licenses or whose licenses were revoked amid investigations for possible improper student relationships, 53 percent never were criminally charged. The allegations ranged from sending flirtatious text messages to kissing or having sex in classrooms.

Forty percent were charged and convicted or given a deferred sentence. Eighty-four of those teachers

were sentenced to prison or jail, 160 were given deferred adjudication similar to probation, and 27 had charges dismissed or weren't indicted.

"We now have a bar that shows that, in slightly (more) than half of these cases, nothing happens," state Sen. Paul Bettencourt, R-Houston, said of the newspaper's findings. "You also have to remember that they're innocent until proven guilty. But I think statistics show right now that, either through admission or omission, we're not getting to the root of what is happening."

In his State of the State address last week, Gov. Greg Abbott called on lawmakers to crack down on improper teacher-student relationships.

The State Board for Education Certification maintains a website of teacher licenses, but listings for misconduct are not specific. The misconduct mentioned on the site could also include sanctions for stealing money from a district or helping a student cheat on tests.

In addition, while Texas law bars teachers who surrender their licenses or lose them from

taking teaching jobs at a traditional public school, they can be hired by charter or private schools.

Prosecutors say teachers initially suspected by school officials of engaging in improper behavior with students aren't charged in some instances because school districts mishandle the cases before law enforcement gets involved, victims are unwilling to cooperate or there's not enough evidence to prove that crimes have been committed. In other cases, the teachers' alleged behavior doesn't rise to a criminal level.

Beverly Mathews, director of the special victims division at the Travis County district attorney's office, said persuading victims to cooperate is among the biggest hurdles.

"It's always difficult for a child of any age to talk about something so private, that had been so secret," she said.

And even when a victim does come forward, prosecutors told the newspaper they typically need other evidence or another witness. Otherwise, it's the teacher's word against the student's.

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Dallas-area water tower being demolished after 2015 tornado

ROWLETT, Texas (AP) — Work has begun to topple a Dallas-area water tower severely damaged during a late 2015 tornado outbreak that claimed more than a dozen lives.

City crews in Rowlett (row-LET) on Monday did preparatory work to bring down the tower. The demolition involves cutting the support legs and then pulling the tank over using a cable system and heavy equipment.

Rowlett authorities say the city's water utility system has taken over previous functions of the tower, which won't be replaced. Officials expect demolition and site restoration to take about three weeks. Tornadoes slammed parts of Dallas and Collin counties on Dec. 26, 2015. The storms damaged or destroyed more than 400 buildings in Rowlett, located 15 miles northeast of Dallas.

Thirteen lives were lost in the storm area.

Official asks Texas Rangers to help find lost Brady jersey

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick is asking the Texas Rangers to help locate Tom Brady's missing jersey, which disappeared from the New England Patriots locker room after the Super Bowl.

The Republican said in a statement Monday that Brady's jersey "was stolen" after the Patriots beat the Atlanta Falcons 34-28 at Houston's NRG Stadium, and that city police were already investigating.

Patrick said Texas places "a very high value on hospitality and football," adding: "It is important that history does not record" that Brady's jersey was stolen in the state.

He continued "whoever took this jersey should turn it in" since the "Texas Rangers are on the trail."

Brady said after the game that the jersey was missing and joked that he expects to see it soon on an online auction.

Texas officer hurt in DWI stop that triggered shooting

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Authorities in Austin say a police officer was hospitalized after being struck by a suspected drunken driver who then escaped harm when a second officer fired on the driver.

Police say the incident occurred early Monday when the two officers stopped the motorist.

A 19-year veteran officer reached into the vehicle in an effort to remove the keys from the ignition but the driver sped away, injuring the officer.

The second officer fired at the unidentified driver but did not strike him.

Spike strips were used to later stop the driver and he was taken into custody.

KVUE-TV cites interim police Chief Brian Manley as saying the injured officer was later released from a hospital.

Songwriters group wants payments from Padre Island beach bar

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, Texas (AP) — The biggest beach bar in Texas is being sued by an association that represents songwriters and publishers complaining they haven't been paid for their songs played or performed there.

South Padre Island-based Clayton's beach bar is one of 10 establishments nationwide named in a federal lawsuit by the American Society of Composer, Authors and Publishers. The trade group, known as ASCAP, represents more than 600,000 independent songwriters, composers and music publishers.

The group's legal affairs vice president says the bar doesn't have an annual license, meaning songs by cover bands or DJs or being streamed at the bar violate copyright laws.

Clayton's Clayton Brashear tells The Brownsville Herald he hasn't been served with the complaint and pays a monthly license subscription fee to a streaming service to play music.

TEXAS

Continued from Page 4

run by other statewide officials, like the Land and Agriculture Commissions.

On its surface, the freeze could still mean belt-tightening at places like the roughly 60,000-employee Health and Human Services Commission. But Abbott excused one of that agency's key arms, the Department of Family and Protective Services, as the state scrambles to hire new case workers and improve a foster care system so troubled that a federal judge has ruled it violates some youngsters' constitutional rights.

Also exempted are state positions directly affecting public safety. And, agencies can apply for waivers to get around the freeze on a case-by-case basis.

Abbott estimated in his State of the State address that the move should save Texas \$200 million. That sounds impressive but gets less so when considering that the current state budget is worth around \$106 billion.

While awaiting the full extent of the hiring freeze fallout — or lack thereof — here are some other events in Texas politics likely to make news this week:

ETHICS REFORM

On track to be perhaps the first piece of legislation approved by the Senate is a bill removing from office and stripping of their state pension elected officials convicted of a felony. Sponsored by Sen. Van Taylor, the proposal would also prohibit former members of the Legislature from immediately become lobbyists.

Passed out of the chamber's State Affairs Committee last week, it could hit the Senate floor in a matter of days. In addition to Republican Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, who has been indicted for defrauding investors,



Democratic Rep. Dawnna Dukes of Austin is facing 15 counts of abuse of power and records tampering. She's accused of misusing campaign funds and ordering state staff to work on non-official business.

The bill might not affect either Paxton or Dukes should it become law, though.

In 2015, a sweeping ethics reform package that would have accomplished many of the same things stalled after versions approved in the Senate and House couldn't be reconciled because of disputes over a "dark money" provision that would have mandated that political nonprofits publicly disclose their largest donors. Abbott also vetoed another 2015 ethics bill that was approved by both chambers.

Taylor's bill avoids the "dark money" question, but the issue should roil the House as the lower chamber considers its own ethics reform proposals in coming weeks.

SANCTUARY CITIES

On a similar fast-track but garnering far more attention is the Senate's hotly contested "sanctuary cities" bill.

The State Affairs Committee used a post-midnight vote to approve mandating police statewide to enforce federal immi-

gration laws — despite hearing hours of sometimes tearful testimony from hundreds of Texans who warned that it would spark racial profiling and promote a culture of fear and law enforcement mistrust among the Latino community.

Similar proposals have stalled in the Legislature over the years. But with President Donald Trump vowing to get tough on immigration, Abbott offering his full-throated support and the bill set to hit the Senate floor this week, its chances of becoming law look stronger than ever.

UT REGENTS

Abbott's three new choices for the University of Texas System Board of Regents, former UT regent Janiece Longoria, ex-state Sen. Kevin Eltife and businessman Rad Weaver, have already cleared the Nominations Committee and are expected to win full Senate approval soon. That should come easily despite the chamber's only two black members objecting to the fact that the governor's picks contained no African-Americans.

Still, speedy approval might be fitting since a UT regents meeting is set for Wednesday and Thursday, and the trio won't be able to attend unless they've been confirmed.

Ex-convict commuted by Obama arrested on drug charge

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A 68-year-old San Antonio man whose life prison sentence was commuted by President Barack Obama is back in jail after authorities say he crashed his car into another vehicle while fleeing from officers following a drug deal.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Henry Bemporad on Friday ordered Robert Gill held without bail pending a Feb. 16 hearing.

Gill was arrested in 1990, convicted and sentenced to life for cocaine and heroin distribution conspiracy. While in prison, he studied law and petitioned the president for a second chance. Obama com-

mutated Gill's sentence in 2015, making him one of about 1,700 federal inmates commuted by Obama as part of a campaign to give relief to nonviolent offenders.

He'd been working as a paralegal at a San Antonio law firm, according to the San Antonio Express-News.

Gill now is charged with possession with intent to distribute 500 grams or more of cocaine.

Federal court records showed that hours after he met with a federal probation officer on

Thursday, Gill bought 1 kilogram of cocaine, about 2 pounds. He'd been under surveillance since last month after authorities received information that he'd become involved in illegal drugs. After an exchange in a parking lot where he received a black backpack, a Bexar County sheriff's deputy attempted to pull him over and he fled at high speed, according to court records.

The documents say he collided with another vehicle and tried to flee again but was stopped

by other officers. Cocaine was found in the backpack and he told authorities he planned to sell it, according to the court records.

"I'm so disappointed to hear that he got arrested again," said Ronald Schmidt, a lawyer who had represented Gill. "We all have free will, and apparently, he made a bad decision again and he's going to have to suffer the consequences again. That's unfortunate."

If convicted, Gill now faces between five and 40 years in prison.

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Free tuition? Not the same as free college, students say

By CAROLYN THOMPSON

Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — They don't mean to sound ungrateful, but ... New York public college students who would stand to gain from the nation's most ambitious free-tuition proposal are quick to point out a sobering reality from their own meager finances: Free tuition doesn't mean free college.

Take Brooklyn College senior Florencia Salinas, who despite having her tuition nearly covered in full through scholarships and grants, still expects to graduate with a daunting \$50,000 in debt. Or Buffalo State College junior Avery Edwards, who despite similar financial aid expects to owe \$20,000 after collecting his degree next year.

That's because tuition, at around \$6,500 a year, is just about a third of the typical four-year student's total public college bill in New York. Room and board are the bigger-ticket items at nearly \$13,000 a year, and student fees and books tack on another \$3,000.

Those extra expenses would not be covered under Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo's Excelsior Scholarship proposal, which would pay only the difference between financial aid and tuition at State University of New York or City University of New York campuses for full-time students from families earning \$125,000 or less.

Students interviewed by The Associated Press said that any tuition help is welcome, but they could also use help paying for the many other costs of a college education.

"It's less that my parents would have to pay. It's less that I would have to pay," said Nigel Peters, a sophomore at Buffalo State College, part of the state's sprawling public college system, which includes 64 State University of New York and 24 City University of New York institutions.

But "enough?" he said. "No, not at all."

The 19-year-old's parents in Queens work overtime to keep the financial burden off of him and his twin sister, who attends college in Delaware. His mother, who already juggles positions in accounting and retail, recently picked up a third job, at an arena box office. They make too much to get aid now, he said, but "we don't make enough so that my parents don't have to work their behinds off to put me and my sister through school."

He would welcome tuition help, he said, especially with plans to pay his own way his senior year. But even if it's covered by then, Peters said, he still

will likely work at his minimum-wage job over breaks and need loans to pay for everything else.

Most of Salinas' debt comes from housing costs, so the Cuomo plan probably wouldn't have helped her graduate in better financial shape. The 22-year-old computer science major said she would rather see the state put the money into the faculty and facilities at CUNY.

Cuomo's proposal, which still faces approval by lawmakers, is one of an increasing number of plans across the country that seek to address the nation's suffocating \$1.2 trillion in student debt.

Democratic Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo has proposed making two years of community college or the final two years of a four-year degree free at a public college in that state. A plan from Democratic Colorado gubernatorial candidate Mike Johnston would require volunteer service as a condition of two free years of college or job training.

All differ from independent Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders' no-tuition plan, which became a major issue during the presidential campaign. Sanders' plan would have eliminated tuition at public universities and colleges, while Cuomo's "last-dollar" approach pays the tuition after awards from the state and federal sources of aid are applied.

It's a distinction that troubles advocates for lower-income students, who say the program, while expanding aid to the middle class, won't improve anything for them because their tuition is already covered. They warn it might hurt needy students if it takes away some of the flexibility they now have to use federal Pell awards for expenses other than tuition.

"Our goal is to provide the most students with the



AP photo

In this Wednesday Feb. 1, 2017, photo, Brooklyn College students walk between classes on campus in New York. They don't mean to sound ungrateful, but New York public college students who would stand to gain from the nation's most ambitious free-tuition proposal are quick to point out a sobering reality from their own meager finances: Free tuition doesn't mean free college.

greatest opportunity," Cuomo spokeswoman Dani Lever said, "and that goal is met by the Excelsior Scholarship program."

The New York program also comes with a push to get students to tap into existing state and federal financial aid programs that could lower their costs even more. SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher estimated New Yorkers leave \$174 million of federal aid untouched each year.

Lawmakers at a budget hearing last month also worried that the \$163 million estimated cost of the New York proposal is too low. Cuomo budget officials said they based the estimate in part on free community college programs in other states. The program would also draw on the state's existing \$1 billion Tuition Assistance Program.

SUNY enrolls 403,000 undergraduate students and CUNY 245,000 students. Based on 2014-15 enrollment, about 40,000 students who meet the criteria would begin to have their tuition paid.

Said state Sen. Kenneth LaValle, a Long Island Republican: "All the bean counters say there's no way."

Trump: Allow those into US who 'want to love our country'

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE

Associated Press

MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump vowed Monday to allow only people who "want to love our country" into the United States, defending his immigration and refugee restrictions as he made his first visit to the headquarters for U.S. Central Command.

Trump reaffirmed his support for NATO before military leaders and troops and laced his speech with references to homeland security amid a court battle over his travel ban on people from seven majority-Muslim countries. He did not directly mention the case now before a federal appeals court after a lower court temporarily suspended the ban.

"We need strong programs" so that "people that love us and want to love our country and will end up loving our country are allowed in" and those who "want to destroy us and destroy our country" are kept out, Trump said.

"Freedom, security and justice will prevail," Trump added. "We will defeat radical Islamic terrorism and we will not allow it to take root in our country. We're not going to allow it."

Trump touched upon various alliances in his remarks, noting, "we strongly support NATO."

He spoke Sunday with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. A White House statement said the two "discussed how to encourage all NATO allies to meet their defense spending commitments," as well as the crisis in Ukraine and security challenges facing NATO countries.

Trump once dismissed the trans-Atlantic military alliance as "obsolete," and he would decide whether to protect NATO countries against Rus-

sian aggression based on whether those countries "have fulfilled their obligations to us."

Earlier, Trump sat down for lunch with a room full of troops in fatigues from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines, as well as senior members of his White House staff.

Trump made small talk with some of the soldiers, discussing everything from football to military careers.

"Gonna make it a career?" Trump asked one person.

"C'mon, you have to stay," he urged another.

Trump also hailed New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady, saying he "cemented his place" in football history after his fifth Super Bowl win Sunday.

Trump, who is also commander in chief of the U.S. military, stopped at the base on the way

back to Washington after his first weekend away from the White House. Trump spent the weekend at his estate in Palm Beach, Florida, with first lady Melania Trump, who had not appeared in public since shortly after her husband took office.

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HC hits big against Wayland Baptist



Tony Claxton photo (www.claxtonphotography.com)

Above, Tate Ellison hits a home run. Howard College baseball played the Wayland Baptist JV team in a double header on Monday. Both games were 7 innings. They won the first game 8-3 and the second game 12-2. The second game was a run-rule shortened 5 1/2 inning game.

BSHS boys golf place 4th in tourney

Special to the Herald

The Big Spring Steers Varsity Boys Golf team placed 4th this past weekend in the Del Rio Golf Classic.

Big Spring High School was the only 4A school represented in a field of 23 5A and 6A schools. This was the first time that Big Spring High School competed in the 6A - Del Rio Golf Classic. The tournament was split between two courses which saw the Big Spring Steers compete at the Leaning Pines Golf Course located in the Laughlin Air Force Base. The Steers got off to a good start and were tied for fourth at the end of the first day. On the second day, the Steers would compete on a much more difficult golf course, San Felipe Springs. The boys held their own against some tough weather conditions and competitors.

The Big Spring Steers held fourth place at the end of competition, and Nolan Otto placed second individually amongst the field of 115 golfers. The next tournament for the varsity boys will be the Big Spring Golf Invitational on Feb. 10-11.

New England Patriots: Champion's lament

Belichick notes that New England is playing catch-up once again

By ARNIE STAPLETON
AP Pro Football Writer

The New England Patriots have some more catching up to do.

Bill Belichick hardly took time to relish the greatest comeback in Super Bowl history when he declared "in all honesty, we're five weeks behind in the 2017 season to most teams in this league."

After overcoming a 25-point deficit to win their fifth title, the Patriots will pick last in the NFL draft April 27 in Philadelphia. Last year, they were stripped of their first-round pick in the "Deflategate" ruling that included a September suspension for Super Bowl 51 MVP Tom Brady.

Cleveland had the worst record in the league at 1-15 and will pick first, followed by San Francisco, Chicago and Jacksonville. Among the possible top picks is Texas A&M edge rusher Myles Garrett, whom many project will follow in Super Bowl 50 MVP Von Miller's footsteps.

Between now and draft weekend, prospective rookies will be poked, prodded and peppered by NFL personnel. Some players will get extra scrutiny at the NFL combine in a month or on their pro days in March because of discipline issues or health

concerns.

Some have already seen their slide based on poor decisions or plain bad luck, and others are steadily climbing all the mock drafts.

Two running backs who are projected high picks — Leonard Fournette of LSU and Christian McCaffrey of Stanford, skipped their bowl game a year after Notre Dame linebacker Jaylon Smith cost himself millions by blowing out his left knee in the Fiesta Bowl.

Smith was projected as a potential top-five pick before his injury, and instead went to the Dallas Cowboys in the second round with the 34th overall pick. The difference in guaranteed contract money is about \$19 million.

McCaffrey, the 2015 Heisman Trophy runner-up, sat out the Dec. 30 Sun Bowl between Stanford and North Carolina after an injury-



AP photo

New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick celebrates after the NFL Super Bowl 51 football game against the Atlanta Falcons Sunday, Feb. 5, 2017, in Houston. The New England Patriots won 34-28.

marred 2016 season "so I can begin my draft prep immediately." Three days later, Fournette said he would miss LSU's Citrus Bowl matchup with Louisville on Dec. 31 to rest an injured ankle.

Both would love to be like Dallas rookie running back Ezekiel Elliott, who led the Cowboys' turnaround from bottom-feeder to the NFC's top playoff seed. Elliott didn't like Fournette and McCaffrey bailing on their teammates, tweeting, "I would do anything to play one more time with my brothers in that scarlet and gray."

When others pointed out he skipped his senior sea-

son to enter the draft, Elliott tweeted: "there is a difference between not coming back for your last year and not finishing your last season."

Tell that to Jake Butt. Michigan's star tight end is this year's cautionary tale after tearing an ACL in the Wolverines' 33-32 loss to Florida State in the Orange Bowl.

Other college stars who will draw extra attention from teams trying to pry the Lombardi Trophy from Belichick and Brady:

JOE MIXON: The Oklahoma running back set the school's single-season record for all-purpose yards last season, but he was suspended for

the 2014 season after punching a woman in the face. Mixon's lawyers released video in December of him breaking Oklahoma student Amelina Molitor's jaw and cheekbone in July 2014, and heavy criticism of Mixon and Sooners coach Bob Stoops followed. Mixon gave a tearful public apology a week later.

CHAD KELLY: The Ole Miss QB is both a character concern and a health risk. He was leading the SEC with 2,758 passing yards when he tore his right ACL and lateral meniscus and underwent surgery in November.

See PATS, Page 13

Low-tech: College football yet to embrace sideline computers

By RALPH D. RUSSO

AP College Football Writer

Two years ago, the NCAA passed a proposal that encouraged college football to embrace technology by putting tablet computers on sidelines and cameras in helmets.

Two years later, college football is still behind the times when it comes to using technology to coach players during games.

"If you look now at high school football, a lot of high schools around the country, a lot of states around the country, allow the use of iPads," said

South Dakota coach Bob Nielson, chairman of the football rules committee.

"From a college standpoint, in terms of comparing what the NFL is doing and even what some of the high schools are doing, we're just not doing anything with regard to technology on the sideline or in the press box."

Progress stalled for two reasons: —Hearing about the glitches and shortcomings of the technology from their NFL brethren, some coaches were skeptical.

—Figuring out how to pay for it and make sure it can work in an equitable

way is no small task for administrators.

"I think the fact is the rule was ahead of the ability to adopt," said Big 12 Commissioner Bob Bowlsby, who heads the NCAA's football oversight committee.

So for now, everything is on hold. "The (rules) committee completely backtracked," NCAA coordinator of officials Rogers Redding said. "People are still saying what are we going to do? But nobody's really pushing to do anything."

Going forward, the NCAA football competition committee will take the

lead on technology.

At minimum, Nielson said he would like coaches stationed in press boxes and on sidelines to have access to computer-generated video and images of the game.

Seems simple, but just getting another secure and reliable Wi-Fi signal into a stadium can be problematic at some schools.

"There are some purely technical components of it there are challenging in some locations," Bowlsby said. "The one thing that is always going to be in play is whatever one team has, the other team has to have."

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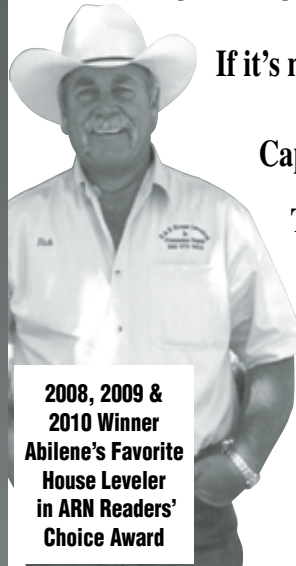


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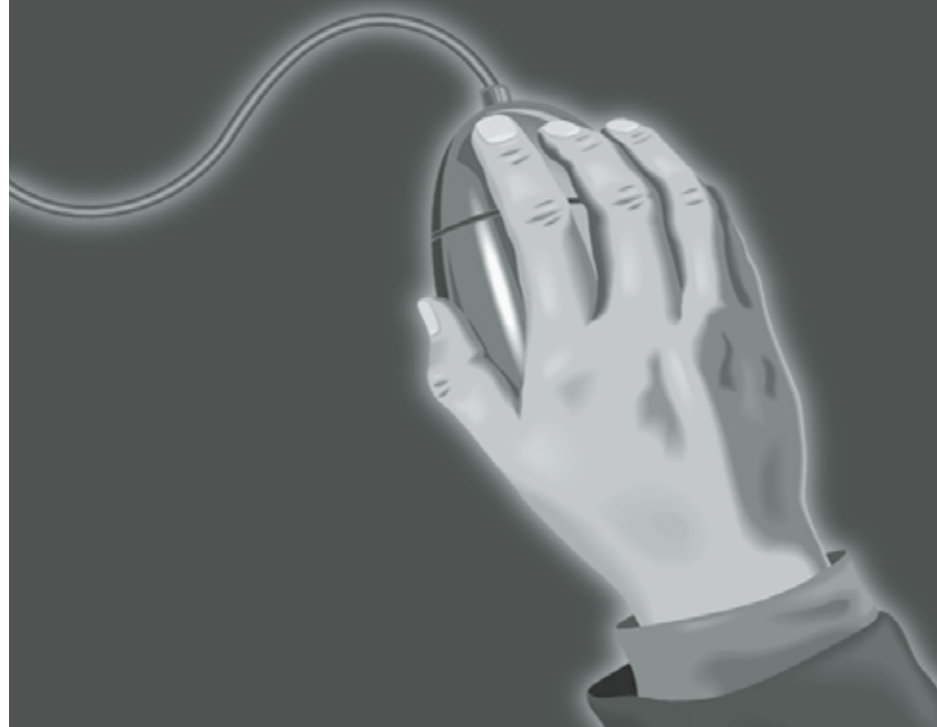
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Tomorrow's Horoscope



HOLIDAY MATHIS

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You own a lot of items. Something about that will be today's main problem. You may find yourself in elimination mode. Instead of asking, "Will I use this someday?" ask, "Do I use it now? Does it work well? Do I love it?"

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're not entirely comfortable making people work for your respect and attention, but it happens that way sometimes. Though you're too compassionate to make them work (SET ITAL) too (END ITAL) hard, some amount of effort is good for all.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You may hear the words of contrition you have been waiting for, but how valuable is an apology really? Ultimately it will be deeds, not words, that bring a situation back into balance.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The cat doesn't agonize about when, where and how to catch the mouse. It watches, alert, and when it feels an advantage it pounces. You benefit from going deeper into the feline nature of your sun-

sign symbol. Be the cat.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). When you take a moment to watch the grace of a bird, the elegant pattern of leaves or the peaceful way the grass recognizes the wind, you are letting the nature spirits energize you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Resist the temptation to get involved in the struggle. You may want to make things right, but this is not your battle. The combatant's interests are not your interests. You grow stronger with every conflict you avoid.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The greatest asset you have for making a contribution to the world is yourself. Follow the essential rule every skilled company owner understands: Protect the asset.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Conversations get increasingly interesting -- not because of what is said, but because of what's in the pause. Silence will be the connective essence of words.

CAPRICORN

(Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Maybe not today, but someday you'll regret settling for a poor quality of attention from the people around you. Stand up for yourself. If they don't show signs of respect, go where your input will be better appreciated.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The day features a rather intricate game. You've a talent for strategy today. Plan several moves in advance. A temporary move backward will lead to a giant move forward.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You'll have success when you employ your instinct about what other people like. You're so adept at placing yourself in the hypothetical, seeing things how others might, empathizing-- perhaps because you find the exercise enjoyable.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Feb. 7). You'll hear magic words this month. Your opinion of yourself isn't based on what others think, but it's nice to be awarded, which you will be -- twice this year. March and June are your best financial months.

The expansion that happens in September will help you make a difference in someone's life. Gemini and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 12, 18, 33 and 28.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "I'm a Libra, and my husband is a Taurus. Is it ethical for me to hide some of our money? I don't want it for myself. It's more because his pattern is to spend everything in his account and go into debt for things he wants but doesn't need. If I'm ever to have any financial peace I'm afraid I'm either going to have to divorce him or do some secret accounting. This would be easy for me, since I do all of the bill paying and bookkeeping anyway."

Your husband was born under the sign of money, luxury and stubbornness. Taurus men are extremely difficult to convince on most matters, but when it comes to money and what he wants to buy, prepare to have no influence whatsoever. As long as he makes money, he feels that it's his right to spend it how

he wishes, no matter how many bills, needs or children are involved. Since you are sitting in the financial driver's seat, my advice is to implement the savings plan you believe is a good idea and show him a statement each month to inform him the dollar amount of his debt and checking account. He may be spending simply because he doesn't have a hands-on reality about the budget.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Ashton Kutcher has gone from sweeping floors at a factory job to sweeping scores in the arena of new media, with a lot of television and movie stardom in between. With his sun, moon, Mercury and Venus in Aquarius, this proud daddy is deeply and famously philanthropic, determined to make a difference in the world his children will inhabit.

To write to Holiday Mathis, visit www.creators.com/author/holiday-mathis and click "Contact." COPYRIGHT 2017 CREATORS.COM

Mercury Enters Aquarius

Many have a sense that they are living out a series of default decisions instead of a deliberate design. Of course it's hard to have a clue about what one really wants until the experience of what is most certainly unwanted. To design a better life, start envisioning it now, while Mercury crosses into Aquarius, the sign of the future.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Work under pressure, handle crises, impress your peers, be independent, stand out in a crowd -- yes, that's one way to go. Or you can chill until you're quiet enough on the inside to see what needs to be done and why.

Sick of the Negativity

Dear Annie: I'm writing to you regarding one of my best friends, "Melanie." Melanie and I are both in our late 20s. We met in college and bonded over our senses of humor and our preference for staying in and watching a movie over go-

ing out to frat parties. She's been there for me during some hard times. She's one person I can rely on to always answer my calls and be there for me, and I appreciate her.

But she seems unable or unwilling to get out of the rut she's been in for the past few years, and it's become increasingly frustrating to lis-

ten to her complaining about the same things every day. She took a retail job out of college, just to make ends meet until she could find something in her field. Five years later and she's still there, and in the meantime, I've had to hear about it pretty much every day.

I've tried to help her look for jobs and sent her lots of links to job postings, but I'm pretty sure she hasn't actually applied to any of them. She always has a list of reasons -- e.g., "I'm not really qualified for that," "I don't have time to apply for jobs," "I need to

update my resume." She tends to play the victim in a lot of areas of her life.

And that's part of why I'm scared to confront her. I want to tell her that she's been talking about these same problems for years and it's time to change, but I know she'd be offended.

Lately, I find myself screening her phone calls because when I get home from a long day of work, I just don't want to hear the negativity. I feel bad for avoiding her. I want to be a good friend. What should I do? -- Emotionally Exhausted
Dear Emotion-

ally: It's frustrating to watch a friend languishing in a rut that she could easily climb out of. But if you tried to yank her out of it, she'd only pull you down into the wallowing hole with her, and that would be a toxic place to be. So keep a healthy distance between you and that aspect of her, not just for your sake but also for hers; by listening to her venting about the same problems every day, you're actually enabling her not to change.

So draw the line. Tell her your New Year's resolution is to not dwell on negatives. Whenever she starts up the "woe is me" routine, tell her that you're happy to discuss solutions but if she just wants to talk about the same problems again, you're not able to listen. Eventually -- let's hope -- she'll get out of that rut all on her own. That will give her the self-confidence to keep the momentum going.

Dear Annie: Your answer to "Worried About Mom," who is looking out for his or her elderly mother and trying to protect her finances, perpetuates a misunderstanding about

power of attorney. Someone's having power of attorney does not allow him or her to take control of the other person's checking account as you said. Power of attorney allows someone to do things for the other person -- "for" being the operative word there; it can't be against the person's will. In this case, "Worried About Mom's" power of attorney cannot stop his or her mother from giving money to the ne'er-do-well sister. Having the mother found incompetent and obtaining a legal guardianship would be the only thing that could do that. -- Heard It All Before in Lafayette, Ind.

Dear Heard: Thank you for your insight. I encourage anyone in such a situation to consult an attorney for proper legal advice.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com. To find out more about Annie Lane and read features by other Creators Syndicate columnists and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com. COPYRIGHT 2017 CREATORS.COM

Annie's Mailbox

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

A bird in the hand

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

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

WEST
♠ J
♥ 10 9 6 3
♦ 9 7 2
♣ K Q J 7 4

EAST
♠ Q 9 4 2
♥ J 8 5
♦ 6 3
♣ A 10 6 5

SOUTH
♠ A K 8 6 3
♥ K 7 4
♦ K J 5
♣ 8 2

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass
4 ♠

Opening lead — king of clubs.

West started by cashing the K-Q of clubs. He could have made life more difficult for declarer by continuing with a club, but he shifted to the ten of hearts instead.

South put up dummy's ace and cashed the spade ace, felling West's jack. Had the contract been five spades, declarer would have had no choice but to play the king next, hoping West had started with the doubleton Q-J.

But South could afford to lose a trump trick and still make his contract, so he decided to guard against the possibility that East had started with the Q-9-4-2 of spades. If East actually had this holding, cashing the king of spades would establish two trump tricks for East.

South therefore led a low spade to dummy's ten at trick five, retaining the K-8-6 in his hand. East took the ten with the queen and returned a club, yielding a harmless ruff-and-discard, but declarer was in full control. He ruffed with the six, crossed to dummy's queen of hearts and led a spade through East's 9-4 to the K-8 to secure the contract.

It is true that if West had held the doubleton Q-J of spades, South's method of play would have cost him a trick. But overtricks are of minor importance when declarer's primary concern — the contract — is in jeopardy.

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.

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

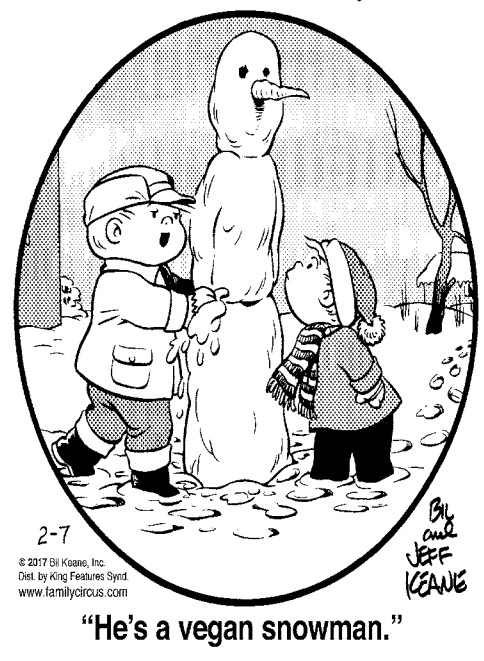
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Table with 20 columns (KMID, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLE, KWES, KMLM, KPBT, KWWT, KWES2, WTBS, TNT, ESPN, ESPN2, FSN, USA, A&E, DISC) and 24 rows (5:PM to 1:AM) listing TV programs and channels.

DENNIS THE MENACE



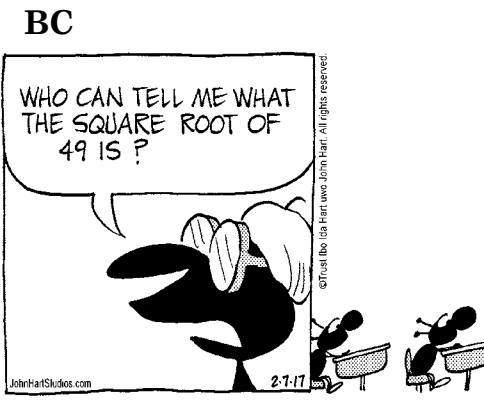
THE FAMILY CIRCUS



HAGAR



BLONDIE

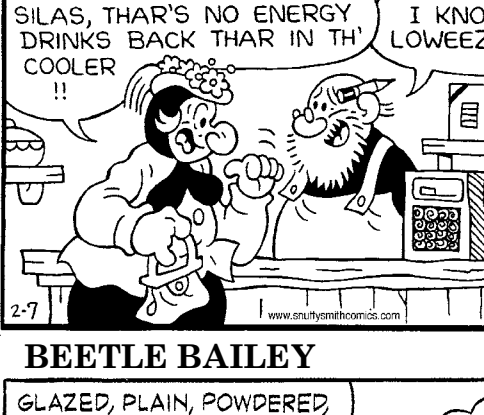
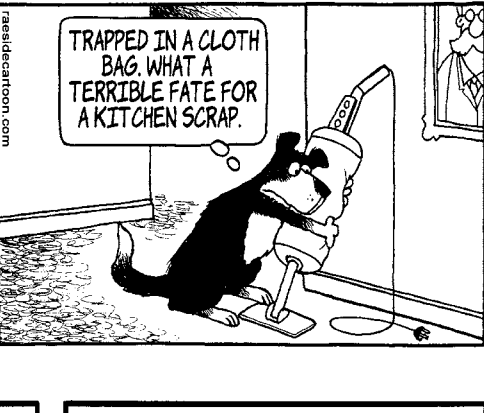
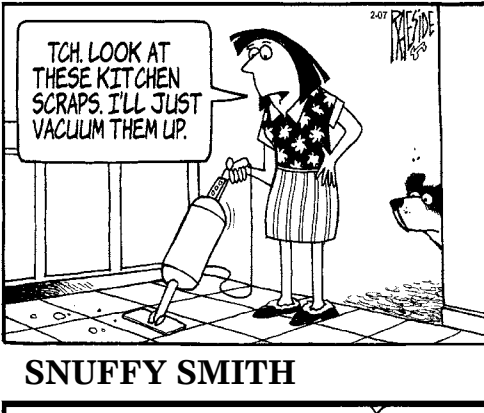
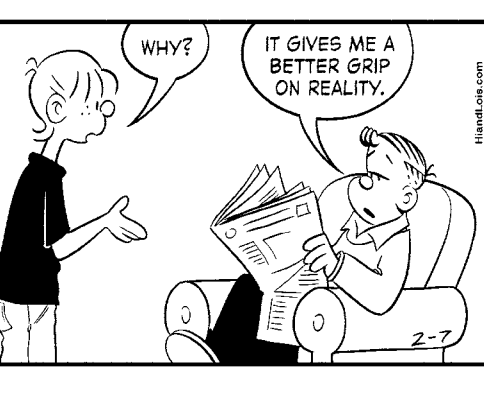
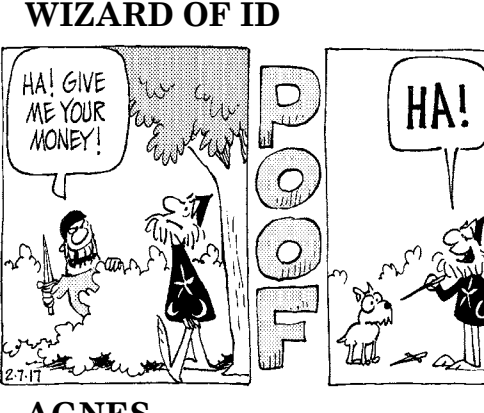


This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, Feb. 7, the 38th day of 2017. There are 327 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On Feb. 7, 1817, America's first public gas street lamp was lighted in Baltimore...

vote through a national referendum, 12 years after a previous attempt failed. In 1984, space shuttle Challenger astronauts Bruce McCandless II and Robert L. Stewart went on the first untethered spacewalk...

of Baghdad, killing all seven people on board. The Food and Drug Administration approved alli (AL-eye), a diet pill that could be bought without a prescription.

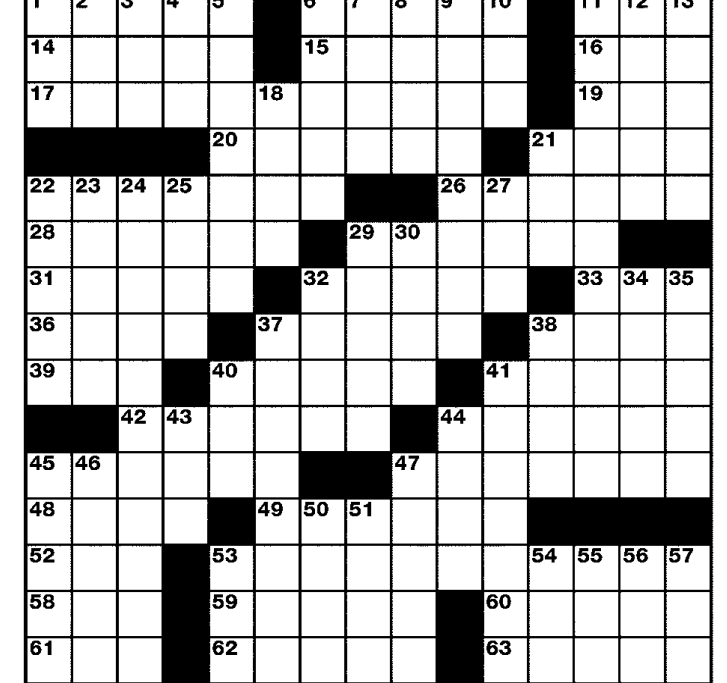


Newsday Crossword

- ACROSS 1 Diamond weight 6 Gown, for example 11 Sheep's cry 14 Mosey along 15 Tiny amounts 16 Caterer's coffee pot 17 Wood beneath train tracks 19 Tractor-trailer truck 20 Tidbit of food 21 Years and years 22 Apt to spread rumors 26 Most meager 28 Watches for 29 Brief rainfall 31 High-pitched woodwind 32 Commit a theft 33 Lively Irish dance 36 Admit guilt, with "up" 37 Brief in duration 38 Well- (wealthy) 39 Approx. landing hour 40 Auto transmission choices 41 Group like a union 42 Coveting things too much 44 Stovetop feature 45 Cooks over boiling water 47 Phase near the end of a space flight 48 Sly 49 Tall buildings 52 French friend

CONNECT FOUR

- 9 Wind-driven vessel 10 Point opposite NNW 11 Fast-food restaurant 12 Ram constellation 13 Nervous feeling 18 "How clumsy of me!" 21 "___ we there yet?" 22 Minor mistake 23 Baby hooting bird 24 Breakfast meat 25 Takes a chair 27 Hole-punching tool 29 Newspaper piece 30 His-and-__ bracelets 32 Roe source 34 Person doing nothing 35 Run out of water or ideas 37 Be dazed 38 Revolve or rotate 40 Precious stone 41 "I suppose" 43 Sunbeam 44 Arctic ice mass 45 Hindu guru 46 Stopwatch, for example 47 Has tenants 50 Racetrack shape 51 Wilma Flintstone, to Fred 53 Glide on snow 54 Prohibition 55 Yes, in Paris 56 Sgt. or cpl. 57 Cozy room



Answer to previous puzzle TWAS FROM WAGER NOPE RAGE ELUDE TREE AILS BORES EXPENSE ACCOUNT ACE OAF BLOUSE CLAM GOO RANGY ORES RUT EXCHANGESTUDENT WED ERAS PEACE SRS TEEM PEWTER SOD PAN EXPIRATIONDATE APRENT ROLE CORN SARGE AWOL TRIO TYPES PASS SEED

Steers take home 4th at Del Rio Golf Classic



Tony Claxton photo (www.tonyclaxtonphotography.com)

Pictured from left: Jack Everett, Jordan Dunn, Nolan Dominguez, Coach Ariel Falcon, Ryan Dimidjian, and Nolan Otto.

PATS

Continued from Page 7

His long list of off-the-field troubles include getting kicked off the Clemson team in 2015, an arrest after a bar fight in 2014 and sparking a brawl at his brother's high school football game. "I've made stupid mistakes in the past. I can't deny that," he said. "But ... I've learned from it."

SETH RUSSELL: Like Kelly, Baylor's QB went to the Senior Bowl, where he sat in on meetings and observed practices even though he couldn't play in the game. Russell broke his left ankle in a loss at Oklahoma in November. He had 2,126 yards passing with 20 touchdowns and eight interceptions, and also ran for 506 yards and eight more scores. He was 14-3 as the Bears starter.

SHAWN OAKMAN: Baylor's career sacks leader went undrafted last year after finishing his eligibility in 2015. He was indicted last July on a charge of sexually assaulting a woman. The school was criti-

cized after Oakman was seen on the sideline at the Bears' game against Rice in 2016. Coach Art Briles was removed last year following a report alleging the private Baptist university mishandled complaints of sexual assault, a cloud that could hang over other Bears prospects.

DALVIN COOK: The Florida State running back has both a long list of accomplishments and arrests. He topped 1,000 yards in all three seasons and ran for 46 career TDs. He's No. 2 on the ACC career charts in yards rushing and is the ACC's all-time leader with 5,399 yards from scrimmage. His run-ins with the law include accusations he punched a woman outside a bar, brandished a firearm and mistreated dogs.

COREY DAVIS: The Western Michigan wide receiver might not work out at the combine in Indianapolis because of ankle issues. Davis could have been a high draft pick had he left after his junior year last season, but he returned for his senior season and had 97 receptions for 1,500 yards and 19 TDs.

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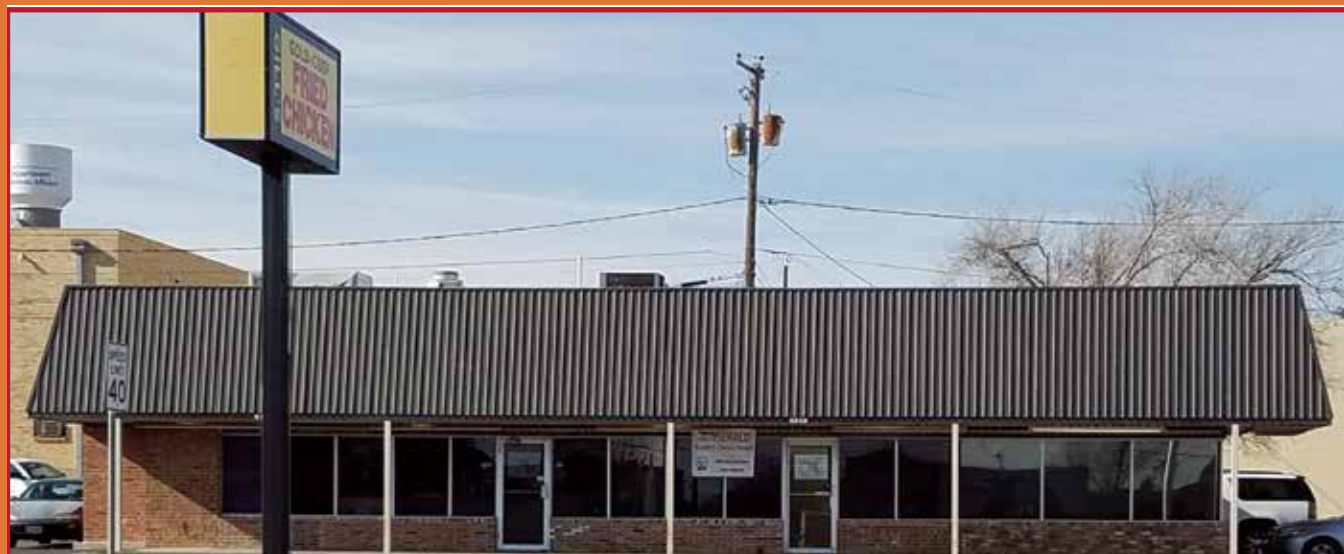
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Voters await economic revival in a part of pro-Trump America

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN, Wis. (AP) — She tugged 13 envelopes from a cabinet above the stove, each one labeled with a different debt: the house payment, the student loans, the vacuum cleaner she bought on credit.

Lydia Holt and her husband tuck money into these envelopes with each paycheck to whittle away at what they owe. They both earn about \$10 an hour and, with two kids, there are usually some they can't fill. She did the math; at this rate, they'll be paying these same bills for 87 years.

In 2012, Holt voted for Barack Obama because he promised her change, but she feels that change hasn't reached her here. So last year she chose a presidential candidate unlike any she'd ever seen, the billionaire businessman who promised to help America, and people like her, win again.

Many of her neighbors did, too — so many that for the first time in more than 30 years, Crawford County, Wisconsin, a sturdy brick in the once-mighty Big Blue Wall, abandoned the Democratic Party and that wall crumbled. The rural county lent Donald Trump 3,844 votes toward his win. More came from formerly blue counties to the north and to the south, and on and on. Some 50 counties stretching 300 miles down the Mississippi River — through Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois — transformed in one election season into Trump Country.

They voted for Trump for an array of reasons, and the list of grievances they hope he now corrects is long and exacting: stagnant wages, the cost of health care, a hard-to-define feeling that things are not getting better, at least not for people like them.

Palestinians ask world to punish Israel for settlement law

JERUSALEM (AP) — A Palestinian Cabinet minister on Tuesday called on the international community to punish Israel for a contentious new law, just hours after the Israeli parliament adopted the bill to retroactively legalize thousands of West Bank settlement homes built unlawfully on private Palestinian land.

The explosive law, approved by lawmakers late on Monday, is the latest in a series of pro-settler steps taken by Israel's hard-line government since the election of Donald Trump as U.S. president. It is expected to trig-

ger international outrage and a flurry of lawsuits against the measure.

"Nobody can legalize the theft of the Palestinian lands. Building settlements is a crime, building settlements is against all international laws," said Palestinian Tourism and Antiquities Minister Rula Maayaa. "I think it is time now for the international community to act concretely to stop the Israelis from these crimes."

Trump is seen as more sympathetic to Israel's settlement policies than his fiercely critical predecessor Barack Obama, and the Israeli government has approved plans to build thousands of new homes on occupied territory since Trump took office. Using a biblical name for the West Bank, Israeli Cabinet minister Yariv Levin said the law was "a first step in a series of measures that we must take in order to make our presence in Judea and Samaria present for years, for decades, for ages."

"I do believe that our right over our fatherland is something that cannot be denied," he said.

Amnesty: As many as 13,000 hanged in Syria prison since 2011

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian authorities have killed as many as 13,000 people — possibly more — since the start of the 2011 uprising in mass hangings at a prison north of Damascus known to detainees as "the slaughterhouse," Amnesty International said on Tuesday.

In a new report covering the period from 2011 to 2015, Amnesty said 20-50 people were hanged each week at Saydnaya Prison in killings authorized by senior Syrian officials, including deputies of President Bashar Assad, and carried out by military police.

The report referred to the killings as a "calculated campaign of extrajudicial execution."

Amnesty has recorded at least 35 different methods of torture in Syria since the late 1980s, practices that only increased since 2011, said Lynn Maalouf, deputy director for research at Amnesty's regional office in Beirut.

Other rights groups have found evidence of massive torture leading to death in Syrian detention facilities. In a report last year, Amnesty found that more than 17,000 people have died of torture and ill-treatment in custody across Syria since 2011, an average rate of more than 300 deaths a month.

Senate set to confirm education secretary by narrow margin

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate is poised to confirm President Donald Trump's nominee for education secretary by the narrowest possible margin, with Vice President Mike Pence expected to break a 50-50 tie.

The vote planned around 12 noon EST Tuesday comes an all-night speaking marathon by Democrats on the Senate floor, in a show of opposition to the nominee, Betsy DeVos. She is a wealthy GOP donor who has devoted herself to boosting alternatives to public education, sparking concerns among educators that she won't be a strong champion for the nation's public school systems.

Two GOP senators, Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, have announced plans to oppose DeVos in a Senate split 52-48 between Republicans and Democrats. That will leave her with a tie vote if all other Republicans support her and all Democrats oppose her as expected, and will require Pence to put her over the top. A vice president breaking a tie on a Cabinet nomination would be a first in the history of the Senate, according to the Senate historian's office.

The chamber went to brief, intermittent quorum calls as senator after senator completed his or her remarks and yielded the floor to a colleague. And a lone Republican senator, South Carolina's Tim Scott, went to the floor to speak, as well, arguing that lawmakers' focus should be not on DeVos, but on ways to improve the education system.

Emotions ran high ahead of the vote as constituents jammed senators' phone lines with calls and protesters gathered outside the Capitol, including one person in a grizzly bear costume to ridicule DeVos' comment during her confirmation hearing that some schools might want guns to protect against grizzlies.

Trump's church politics idea has wide reach, beyond GOP base

ATLANTA (AP) — Republican President Donald Trump's pledge to scrap limits on church political activity could have sweeping effects that extend beyond his conservative supporters to more liberal congregations, including the black evangelical church that has long been a key component of the Democratic Party's electoral machinery.

Yet many prominent black religious leaders say they like the law the way it is. And across the spectrum there are questions about whether church-

es could be pulled into the campaign finance vortex and effectively become "dark money" committees that play partisan politics without disclosing donors.

"This opens up a can of worms that would undermine the church's moral authority," said the Rev. Raphael Warnock, senior pastor at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church, where civil rights icon the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. once preached.

In South Carolina, the Rev. Darrell Jackson doubles as a state senator. He allows politicians to attend Bible Way Church services in Columbia, but says he doesn't even ask his parishioners to vote for him. "That's crossing a sacred line," Jackson said.

Trump reignited the issue last week when he used the National Prayer Breakfast to repeat his campaign pledge to "totally destroy" a rarely enforced 1954 law that threatens religious and many other nonprofit entities with loss of their tax-exempt status if they engage in explicit electioneering, such as endorsing candidates or spending money advertising in a ballot initiative campaign.

Military services detail plans for \$30 billion budget boost

WASHINGTON (AP) — Buoyed by President Donald Trump's pledge to rebuild the U.S. armed forces, senior Pentagon officials have delivered to Congress plans for increasing the defense budget by more than \$30 billion to acquire new jet fighters, armored vehicles, improved training and more.

The informal proposals, obtained by The Associated Press, represent the first attempt by Trump's Defense Department to halt an erosion of the military's readiness for combat. The shortfalls outlined in the documents may provide Trump and the Republican-led Congress with a powerful incentive to strike the strict limits on military spending mandated by a 2011 budget control law.

Portions of the plans will likely be included in the formal supplemental budget for 2017 that the Trump administration is sending to Capitol Hill soon.

Top defense officials are scheduled to testify Tuesday before the House Armed Services Committee on the state of the military. They're expected to address how the fiscal caps — known as sequestration — have pushed the armed forces to a breaking point by locking them into budgets too small to address heavy demands.

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