

Government asks Texas judge to delay telecommunications ruling

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Texas judge brought a third regional Bell company Wednesday under his ruling that allowed two others to offer long-distance telephone service. At the same time, the government joined AT&T, MCI and Sprint in requesting a delay in implementing the order.

To avoid "considerable disruption" to the telecommunications market and to preserve the status quo, the Justice Department asked U.S. District Judge Joe Kendall of Wichita Falls, to stay his Dec. 31 decision until an appeal is heard.

On the same day, Kendall granted a request by Bell Atlantic, the largest regional Bell company, which provides local phone service from Maine

to Virginia, to join the case, Bell Atlantic spokeswoman Susan Kraus said. It originally was brought by the regional Bells, SBC Communications and US West.

The development means that if the ruling takes effect, Bell Atlantic as well as the first two would be able to use it. Bell Atlantic would offer long-distance service to local phone customers along the East Coast, Kraus said.

Kendall ruled that a key portion of a 1996 telecommunications law discriminates against at least two Bells — SBC Communications and US West — because it does not apply to GTE Corp., Southern New England Telephone Co., Frontier Corp. and other local

phone companies.

The overturned provisions required all five Bells to open their local phone markets to competitors as a condition of winning federal approval to provide long-distance service to local customers.

Specifically, Kendall ruled that the provisions constitute a "bill of attainder" — punishing the Bells for the past anticompetitive sins of their one-time parent, AT&T, and for any offenses that they may commit in the future. The Constitution bars Congress from passing any "bill of attainder" that inflicts punishment without a trial.

Courts have rarely held a law to be unconstitutional on these grounds. In its motion to Kendall, the government said

the Supreme Court has done so only twice in this century. Both times the law at issue was enacted in response to the perceived threat of the Communist Party, the government said.

"Unlike restrictions barring individuals from certain professions because of their beliefs, economic regulation that restricts the business activities of corporations (such as the overturned provisions) is routine and has not been traditionally reviewed as punitive," the government brief said.

Under the provisions now overturned, the Bells enjoyed unprecedented access to the long-distance market because they superseded a 1982 consent decree that barred them from the business. That decree broke

up the Bell System into a long-distance company, AT&T, and seven regional Bell companies to provide local phone service. After mergers, five regional Bells now exist.

On Friday, AT&T, MCI and Sprint asked the judge to suspend his decision.

Kendall's decision initially paved the way for SBC Communications and US West to offer long-distance service to their local customers. The companies say they intend to offer service but are not doing so yet.

The Justice Department, with support from the Federal Communications Commission, said, "The court's decision threatens to derail a major enactment of Congress that was formulated after years of hear-

ings and debate." All the Bells supported the 1996 law.

If Kendall denies the stay, long-distance companies say they'll ask the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans for a stay. That court handles appeals for Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

If the appeals court doesn't grant one, MCI said it would then ask Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia to intervene. Scalia has jurisdiction over such matters in the 5th circuit.

In the meantime, long-distance companies are preparing to appeal to the 5th circuit Kendall's Dec. 31 decision. If the decision is upheld, long-distance companies intend to go to the Supreme Court to get it reversed.

Governor of Mexico's Chiapas state resigns after massacre in village

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The governor of Chiapas state resigned Wednesday, the second top official to step down after the massacre of 45 Indian peasants by government supporters.

Julio Cesar Ruiz Ferro submitted his resignation at noon, and the legislature of the southern state was meeting to consider it, according to Ruiz Ferro's private secretary, Alejandro Bastar Cordero.

In Mexico City, a joint commission of the Senate and the House gave permission to Roberto Albores Guillen to step down from his seat in the lower house. The Chiapas native, a member of the legislative mediation commission on the state, was presumed to be replacing Ruiz Ferro.

The governor was the second top official to resign over the massacre two weeks ago in the hamlet of Acteal. Interior Secretary Emilio Chuayffet resigned on Saturday, saying he wanted to spend more time with his family.

No high-level government officials have been charged in

the massacre, although local ruling party officials from towns surrounding Acteal have been charged with murder.

The mayor of the area, Jacinto Arias Cruz, is accused of organizing the massacre, and the leader of the nearby village of Los Chorros is accused of buying the weapons. Both are members of the ruling party.

Neither Chuayffet nor Ruiz Ferro has been directly implicated in the massacre, but both have been accused of not doing enough to prevent it.

Ruiz Ferro's government is accused of ignoring numerous warnings about the violence, and then trying to cover it up after the fact. Critics say Chuayffet ignored brewing violence in Chiapas until it reached a boiling point.

Both resignations were prompted by the Dec. 22 massacre of 45 unarmed Indians, most of them women and children, by gunmen allegedly linked to the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party, of which Ruiz Ferro and Chuayffet both are members.

The gunmen burst into the

hamlet of Acteal as villagers prayed in their wooden church, then hunted down fleeing villagers and shot them, almost all in the back.

Officials of the diocese in San Cristobal de las Casas called Ruiz Ferro's office as the massacre began to report gunfire in the area. Ruiz Ferro's government secretary said he called local police, who told him the village was quiet.

In addition, opposition congresswoman Patria Jimenez, who was in the area, said she called Ruiz Ferro's office three times the day before the massacre to warn him about rumors of an impending attack.

She said his secretary took all the calls and said he would get back to her within minutes. He never did.

"There will be other events like it as long as the government doesn't listen to the clamor and the blood of the people," the Rev. Pablo Romo, of the San Cristobal diocese, said.

The state government also was accused of hurriedly collecting the bodies and rushing them to the state capital in

what critics said was an attempt to cover up the scope of the massacre.

Ruiz Ferro had blamed the massacre of a combination of "Chiapas' history of conflicts between ethnic and community groups, land disputes, political and religious differences."

Critics accuse his government of funding paramilitary groups like the one that committed the attack. It is still unclear where the gunmen from Acteal, all poor Indian peasants, got the money to buy their weapons, including AK-47s.

Interviewed after the massacre, Ruiz Ferro tried to justify the existence of the paramilitary groups given that Zapatista rebels operate in the region.

"It is hard to 'sterilize' a situation like this, and say there are arms on one side but there can't be any weapons on the other," he said.

He said the formation of a Zapatista town council in the nearby village of Polho made local government supporters feel threatened.

One of state's first charter schools agrees to have contract pulled

AUSTIN (AP) — A proposed charter school that got \$240,519 from the state without opening has agreed to have its contract revoked. Whether and how the state can recoup the money has yet to be determined.

The proposed Cypress Lodge Charter School was planned for East Texas' Caddo Lake. It was among Texas' first free-standing charters approved in an effort to promote educational innovation.

The Cypress Youth Foundation received about \$21,000 monthly from the state from September 1996 through June 1997 based on repeated assurances the school would begin operating, according to the Texas Education Agency.

But it wasn't able to raise additional money it needed to open.

"We have signed an agreement to revoke the charter. We tried to find another financial backer for the school, but we were unsuccessful," lawyer Kevin O'Hanlon, representing the Cypress Youth Foundation of Dallas, told The Dallas Morning News.

Attorneys for the state and the foundation signed an agreed order to terminate the school charter. The agreement still requires a signature from an associate education commissioner, TEA spokeswoman Debbie Graves Ratcliffe said Wednesday.

The State Board of Education will consider the charter revocation next week.

Cypress Lodge is the only one of 20 independent charter schools approved by the state that isn't running.

State-funded charter schools operate independently of local school districts, may be run by private entities and don't have to follow numerous state regulations.

As for the \$240,000 in state funds, O'Hanlon said the Cypress Youth Foundation spent the money on legitimate

start-up costs. He said it will try to work out a repayment plan.

Mrs. Ratcliffe said the revocation agreement includes a statement that the state has the right to continue to seek reimbursement.

"We still intend to do all we can to recover the money," she said. "What the next step will be hasn't been decided yet."

Several other charter schools have run into financial problems. Thirteen charter schools that are operating were overpaid more than \$2 million because they overestimated enrollment for the 1996-97 school year, according to a state report.

Mrs. Ratcliffe said the TEA has worked out repayment plans with those schools, which the state board will consider.

A new state law allows up to 100 more charter schools over the next two years under existing criteria.

In addition, an unlimited number of such schools will be allowed if 75 percent of the student body consists of students considered at risk of falling or dropping out.

Mrs. Ratcliffe said stricter policies have been instituted to prevent financial problems in the future.

Gov. George W. Bush is a staunch backer of charter schools. His spokeswoman, Karen Hughes, called the Cypress Lodge situation part of a learning experience.

"TEA has assured us they have put stricture financial controls in place to try to prevent this from happening again," she said.

"Gov. Bush continues to believe that competition and innovation such as charter schools are key to improving our public schools. The vast majority of charter schools are operating successfully. That doesn't mean there won't be a few mistakes or problems along the way."

Scurry County child pornographer loses appeal

AUSTIN (AP) — The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals has made it clear that child pornographers will get no leniency in Texas.

The state's highest appeals court for criminal cases on Wednesday reversed a lower appeals court ruling and said Cecil Don Vineyard, who had been convicted of two counts of possession of child pornography, was not a victim of double jeopardy.

Police raided Vineyard's

Scurry County farm house in West Texas in April 1993 and discovered both a videotape and a photograph containing child porn subjects.

Vineyard was convicted of possession of child pornography for the videotape and then was convicted of the same offense for the photograph.

Vineyard was sentenced to 10 years in prison for each.

The trial court ruled that the prison time for the second conviction wouldn't begin until

Vineyard had served his sentence for the first.

In appealing, Vineyard claimed the second prosecution violated double jeopardy, a statute that protects someone from being prosecuted twice for the same crime.

The 11th Court of Appeals in Eastland agreed and overturned the trial court, ruling that both convictions hinged upon a "film image" — not the fact that a film image was contained in both a videotape and photo-

graph.

The Legislature didn't intend "that the simultaneous possession of more than one film image creates more than one 'unit of prosecution,'" the 11th Court of Appeals said.

The Court of Criminal Appeals, however, disagreed, saying, "We hold the Legislature intended in cases like this to make possession of each item of child pornography an 'allowable unit of prosecution.'"

Survey shows drug use up among Texas students

AUSTIN (AP) — Use of illegal drugs by Texas students in grades 7 through 12 increased in 1996, continuing an upward trend since 1992, according to a study by the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

About 34 percent of all secondary students in 1996 had used some type of illicit substance during their lifetime, up from 22 percent in 1992, but still below the 1988 rate of 39 percent, the study said.

The survey, conducted by TCADA every two years and released Wednesday, was based on responses from nearly 107,000 students in over 70 school districts in grades 7 through 12.

Marijuana use increased in 1996 with 31 percent of secondary students saying they had tried it at least once, up from 20 percent in 1992, but still just below the peak of 32 percent in 1988.

"Alcohol continues to be the most widely used substance among Texas secondary students," the study said.

"In many ways, curtailing alcohol consumption is more problematic than reducing the use of illicit drugs because of the availability of alcohol and the perception among adolescents that drinking alcohol is not as dangerous as using other drugs."

The survey revealed six strategies to help keep kids off drugs, including encouraging a child to participate in extracurricular activities.

According to the study, students who participate in extracurricular activities have positive relations with parents and friends while also being less likely to use or experiment with illegal drugs.

The five other ways for parents to keep their kids off drugs, according to the survey, are:

- Show support for child in school events.
- Encourage child to have healthy relationships with friends.
- Talk to child. Make sure they know that use of drugs is unacceptable.

Support substance abuse prevention programs at school.

- Encourage child to work at getting good grades.

Students earning grades of C or lower report two to three times as much drug use as students earning A's and B's, the study said.

Those participating in three or more extracurricular activities were much less likely to report they smoked marijuana, the survey said.

The study was based on the responses of 106,924 secondary students in 72 school districts. The sample contained 51,103 males (48 percent) and 55,558 females (52 percent).

Of the sample, 45 percent were Anglos, 16 percent were African

Americans, 31 percent were Hispanics, and 8 percent were of other races.

Survey highlights:

- Except for uppers, male students were more likely to abuse substances than female students, especially in the higher grades. In 1996, 47 percent of male high school seniors reported lifetime use of any illicit drug versus 38 percent of female seniors.
- Hispanic students reported the highest prevalence use for alcohol, inhalants, any illicit drug, marijuana, cocaine and crack.
- Anglo students had the highest prevalence rates for hallucinogens, uppers, downers, steroids and Ecstasy.
- Black students had the highest rates of use for the category "marijuana only."

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EDITORIAL

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

-FIRST AMENDMENT

Opinions expressed on this page are those of the Editorial Board of the Big Spring Herald unless otherwise indicated.

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OUR VIEW

Harley Group does more than just ride and have fun

What comes to mind when you think of the Big Spring Harley Owners Group? Probably not the fact that it is one of our community's most successful service clubs. Sure, they ride motorcycles. HOG members even parade their bikes proudly through our local streets, and ride in our annual Christmas parade. Riding and having fun, known as the R and F principles, are an important part of being in the group. But if you have been following HOG's activities, you might notice something else. HOG was vital to the effort to acquire and mount both the Huey helicopter, and the new F4 Phantom jet at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. They raised money and provided manpower. Their efforts to improve our community go back a decade. As early as 1988, HOG members were raising money to help a homeless family of nine. Two years later, the group made a Christmas wish come true for a 7-year-old with cerebral palsy: They bought her a king-sized tricycle. Their "poker run" events have been used to collect canned food for local pantries. Among the agencies their efforts have supported are the Northside Community Center and the Salvation Army. A motorcycle show was one of the fundraising tools at the most recent Muscular Dystrophy Association Labor Day Telethon. This Christmas, the group raised close to \$1,000 for local families — in only one week. This is far from a complete list of the group's service activities, but it shows that supporting many causes in our community is a high priority for HOG. But they are not all work and no play: Evidence this Saturday's 9th Annual Boss Hog Chili Cookoff, to begin at 9 a.m. at the Harley Davidson Shop. With lots of chili cooking, live music and plenty of Harley owners expected, this event is one way the group will show its social side. Your \$5 ticket promises all the chili you can eat, after judging of entries begins at 1 p.m. So whatever image you have of motorcycles and the people who ride them, HOG might be worth another look. And even if you don't own a motorcycle, this weekend's chili cookoff would be a good time to get to know some of those who do. While you're there, shake a few hands. Consider all HOG has done to make our community a better place.

OTHER VIEWS

The Unabomber trial is in something of a muddle now because of the defendant, Theodore Kaczynski, apparently doesn't care for his lawyers. They have wanted to portray him as crazy, which he probably is, but it's just as crazy for the trial to proceed in the direction it is headed, especially when Kaczynski has offered the prosecution a way out. He is willing to plead guilty and stay in prison with no chance of parole, it's reported, if the government will agree not to execute him. That offer apparently doesn't sit well with some of the 29 injured survivors of the Unabomber's 16 bombings or with the families of three who were killed. Maybe it doesn't fit with the sense of justice of many in the public at large. But if Kaczynski is mentally ill — his lawyers say he is a paranoid schizophrenic — it's contrary to morally grounded legal principles to trot him off to be slain, or, for that matter,

to try him as though he were mentally competent. Other arguments have also been advanced to save Kaczynski's life. His brother David, who provided the government with information leading to the arrest, says he was assured at the time that prosecutors would not seek the death penalty. If true, the government is surely under some obligation to keep its word. And even if it's not true, it has been noted, the government's refusal to bargain could serve to dissuade potential informants. While the death penalty has its place, it's not always appropriate even for the most heinous of crimes, and insisting on it is not always rational. At some point, you have to start wondering whether the prosecution isn't simply being political, doing what it figures the public wants, whether that's right or not. Jay Ambrose
Scripps Howard

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 - By mail at P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721

A rather low-tech approach to toy-giving

The African rain stick was the only gift I gave to a child last year that I understood. It needs no assembly, no explanation.

Pebbles — I think they are pebbles, maybe seeds — tinkle like a spring rain whenever you turn the hollow stick upside down, hourglass-style. The sound is comforting.



Rheta Johnson
Syndicated Columnist

Everything else that passed for a toy was beyond my comprehension. And that's because almost everything else made a generous contribution to the bulging pockets of Mr. Bill Gates. My niece Chelsey's new com-

puter game Oregon Trail had a clear premise and educational pretensions: "Experience the adventure of The Oregon Trail and stake your claim in the Old West! Survival hinges on the many crucial decisions you'll make."

But the concept was flawed. To ford the Snake River on a computer is as absurd as it gets.

Think about it. To teach survival skills on a computer is like leading the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in a rousing round of rap. Chelsey would be better off fording the real creek right outside my real window.

The Oregon Trail on a computer screen is like a postcard from Paris — pretty, but no substitute. You simply cannot experience dangerous currents without getting your feet wet.

"I hope I get lots of electronics this year," nephew Ben said shortly after I presented him with a bow and arrow. (To be honest, I didn't understand

the compound bow.) Electronics? For today's kids that's an umbrella term that includes computers, cameras, Nintendo, CD players and personal TVs with built-in VCRs.

Children are no greener than we were in our Santa-eligible years. I can remember ambitious lists longer than my arm.

But kids are a whole lot more sophisticated in their choices. Their wish lists are typed on computers and printed by lasers, not scrawled with pencils on the backside of old envelopes. Kids use more AA batteries in a week than we did in a decade.

Not wanting to be remembered as a hopeless fuddy-duddy, I made an effort this year to be both high-tech and considerate.

I bought a cassette player that is clear and allows the user to see its working innards.

I bought computer games and two Buzz Lightyears. I bought

things that talk and chirp and glow in the dark.

I don't care much what other adults think of me and my gifts anymore; if the robe's the wrong color or the cigar the wrong brand, tough.

The kids in my life are another matter. I care mightily what they think and constantly curry favor. I want to be hip. I'm too young to have that blank, grandmotherly stare when the youngsters carry on a lively discussion about the Spice Girls or Bubba Bear.

When Ben caught the jet that zoomed him home, he wore a backpack full of electronics. He wouldn't get bored on board, he said, because of his personal CD player. He could listen to Weird Al while winging it over Arkansas and Kansas. If Weird Al grew old, he could crank up Game Boy.

It is a grand gulf to cross, this canyon between computers and the old-fashioned gadgets of a fading century.

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Lawmakers urged to take care of surplus

By TOM RAUM
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan submitted a spending plan to Congress in 1981 that he said would balance the budget by 1984. He missed his target by at least 15 years. Politicians have long been playing a balancing act with the federal deficit — predicting a land of honey and surpluses always just over the horizon. Reagan reset his zero-deficit marks to 1986, then 1991, even as deficits kept soaring. In 1985, Congress even passed a law — the Gramm-Rudman Act — requiring a balanced budget by 1992. None of the efforts paid off.

But now, with an apparent balanced budget looming, leaders are scrambling for election-year advantage — amid warnings from economists, including those from previous administrations, that any surplus could be slight and temporary.

"The cynic in me notes that before it's achieved, politicians of both parties want to use up the surplus," said Murray Weidenbaum, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers in Reagan's first term.

"Nature abhors a vacuum as much as politicians abhor a budget surplus," said Weidenbaum, now an econ-

ics professor at Washington University in St. Louis.

Weidenbaum suggested divided government may help spawn ultimate restraint — with President Clinton vetoing GOP tax cuts and the Republican Congress rejecting Clinton spending increases.

Jumping the gun on congressional Republicans, still away on winter break, Clinton announced his Feb. 2 budget for fiscal 1999 would be balanced — three years earlier than forecast in last summer's budget pact.

"We have come a very long way," Clinton said. Press secretary Mike McCurry upped the rhetoric Tuesday, calling the "turnaround in the U.S. economy" in Clinton's presidency as important as "the geopolitical struggle against communism."

House Speaker Newt Gingrich also weighed in Tuesday, writing Clinton that he supported "your commitment" to balance the budget early — so long as "meaningful tax relief to American families" is in the mix.

Republicans are pushing for election-year tax cuts plus more spending on defense and transportation.

Clinton is supporting modest tax breaks for child care and pollution-fighting businesses and is expected to seek new spending on education, biomed-

ical research, food safety inspections and an expansion of Medicare coverage.

But wait. There still isn't a budget surplus.

Furthermore, the national debt — the accumulation of decades of annual deficits — stands at \$5.4 trillion.

"I'd rather have it before we spend it. I'm old-fashioned," said David Wyss, chief financial economist for DRI/McGraw-Hill, a Lexington, Mass., forecasting service.

Despite White House optimism for a small surplus in 1999, Wyss' organization is not projecting a balanced budget until 2002, due to an expected slowing of economic growth.

The last time there was a budget surplus was in fiscal 1969, when Richard Nixon was president.

But the \$3.2 billion surplus was something of a fluke. An income tax surcharge to finance the Vietnam War, pushed through Congress the year before by President Johnson, produced a temporary surge in revenues.

Before that, you have to go back to 1960 — at the end of Dwight Eisenhower's presidency — to find a surplus.

The still-expanding economy and an unexpected \$50 billion windfall in revenues is helping

bring the deficit down quicker than expected.

Economist Michael Boskin, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers in the Bush administration, says Clinton is merely taking credit for a good economy — and deficit-reduction efforts that began with his GOP predecessors.

Now at Stanford University, Boskin said any early surplus should be used "to start to pay the debt down" and for some "modest tax cuts," rather than new spending.

And, he added, "let's keep our fingers crossed" there's no recession.

There's still "a lot of water to go over the dam" before a balanced budget, said Bill Frenzel, a former Republican congressman from Minnesota active on budget issues.

"We've had these enormous increases in revenues, but no changes in congressional and presidential spending patterns," said Frenzel, now a scholar at the Brookings Institution.

Furthermore, he said, "Nobody is looking for a recession, but we know that recoveries are periods that don't last forever — unless somebody has rewritten the book."

EDITOR'S NOTE — Tom Raum covers national affairs for The Associated Press

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Mallard Fillmore by BRUCE TINSLEY

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Big Spring Herald

Thursday, January 8, 1998

Christian historian says teens need ancient wisdom about dating

By DEBBIE L. JENSEN
Features Editor

Lots of adults warn teenagers about the perils of dating, but the message is often missing something. What it needs, according to a Christian historian who will visit Big Spring this weekend, is a Pilgrim perspective.

Richard "Little Bear" Wheeler, founder of Mantle Ministries, will talk to teens Saturday at First Baptist Church. He also plans two performances Friday, aimed at a wider audience.

"For my talk with teens, I put on a Pilgrim costume," Wheeler

explained. He said he urges teens to consider a change from "dating."

"In the older days, people courted," Wheeler said.

Dating, the historian explained, did not come into existence until about the 1930s, and the word was printed in dictionaries in 1934.

"I present an alternative that is healthy and wholesome," he said. "It prevents the sexual impropriety that could come with dating as we know it."

For a decade, Wheeler has been presenting historical dramas with a Biblical perspective to groups of all ages. His ministry is based in Bulverde, near San Antonio.

A former professional actor, Wheeler wears costumes of many of his characters, including the Pilgrim and George Washington.

His message, especially at the hard-to-reach teenage audience,

RICHARD "LITTLE BEAR" WHEELER

What: Historical dramas with a Christian perspective
When: Friday, 1:30 and 4 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.
Where: First Baptist Church, 705 W. Marcy
Who: Friday's shows are for adults and children, Saturday is aimed at teens and parents

istry is based in Bulverde, near San Antonio.

A former professional actor, Wheeler wears costumes of many of his characters, including the Pilgrim and George Washington.

His message, especially at the hard-to-reach teenage audience,

gets through, Wheeler said.

"Using the costume, and a bit of humor, before you know it, I'm giving the punch line," he said.

Deede Cauley, who helped to bring Wheeler to Big Spring, agreed.

"I saw him at a conference in

Dallas, and he was just wonderful," she said. "The audience loved him."

A full costume fitting the time period of his drama adds to the interest, Cauley said.

"He's researched these things so well, and he is a wonderful storyteller."

In one of the dramas he will perform Friday, Wheeler will play the part of Washington at age 21.

"My aim is to show Biblically how we have forgotten much of our history," he said.

Friday's shows, scheduled at First Baptist at 1:30 and 4 p.m., are billed as "for children and

adults." The Saturday event, beginning at 10 a.m. at First Baptist, is slated for teens and parents.

Wheeler's local visit is sponsored by Concerned Women for America of West Texas. Cauley said the club was surprised to be able to bring Wheeler to Big Spring, because his schedule is usually booked 22 months in advance.

They are expecting visitors from Midland, Odessa and New Mexico for his shows.

Call Suzanne Haney at 263-7147, or Luan Stallings at 398-5506 for more information.



HERALD photo/Jonathan Garrett

Students in Janie Conley's class at College Heights Elementary School must be animal lovers. The students voted recently to spend the money left over from their Christmas party as a donation for the Big Spring Humane Society. Shown are students, from left, Steven Chavez, Cassie Emerson and Ashley Barnett, petting "Jose" in the arms of Margaret Lloyd, Humane Society board member.

HERALD photo/Jonathan Garrett

Child may move forward when held back in school

QUESTION: My 6-year-old son has always been an energetic child with some of the symptoms of hyperactivity. He has a short attention span and flits from one activity to another. I took him to his pediatrician, who said he did not have

problem, if the parent is committed to it. That's why home-schooling is the fastest-growing educational movement in the United States today.

QUESTION: When it comes to education, you have said that the right factual information can and should lead to conceptual learning. But aren't you putting too much emphasis on the memorization process, which is a low academic goal?

DR. DOBSON: The human brain is capable of storing some 2 billion bits of information in the course of a lifetime. There are many avenues through which that programming can occur, and memorization is one of them.

Let me put it this way. If you ever have to go under a surgeon's knife, you'd better hope that the physician has memorized every muscle, every bone, every blood vessel and every Boy Scout knot in the book. Your life will depend on his ability to access factual information during the operation.

Obviously, I strongly oppose the perspective held in some academic circles that says, "There's nothing we know for certain, so why learn anything?"

Those who feel that way have no business teaching. They are salespeople with nothing to sell!

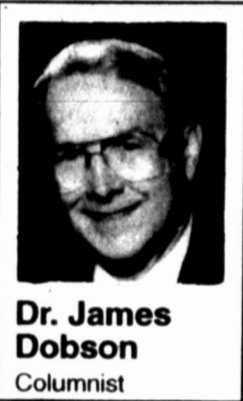
QUESTION: Is it inevitable that sexual desire must diminish in the fifth, sixth and seventh decades of life?

DR. DOBSON: There is no organic basis for healthy women or men to experience less desire as they age. The sexual appetite depends more on a state of mind and emotional attitudes than on one's chronological age. If a husband and wife see themselves as old and unattractive, they might lose interest in sex for reasons only secondary to their age.

But from a physical point of view, it is a myth that men and women must be sexually apathetic, unless there are disease processes or physical malfunctions to be considered.

Dr. Dobson is president of the nonprofit organization Focus on the Family, P.O. Box 444, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80903; or www.fotf.org. Questions and answers are excerpted from "Solid Answers."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. James C. Dobson's "Focus on the Family" appears each Thursday as a cooperative effort of Scenic Mountain Medical Center and the Big Spring Herald. Letters to Dr. Dobson may be sent to P.O. Box 444, Colorado Springs, Colo.; 80903.



Dr. James Dobson
Columnist

Cat lovers make home feline friendly

SAN DIEGO (AP) — If a man's home is his castle, then this house is a kitty kingdom.

What started out as a small remodeling project — including the installation of a floor-to-ceiling scratching post — has grown into more than 100 feet of elevated catwalks and a home designed around the whims of Bob Walker and wife Frances Mooney's nine cats.

"You do something for your cats and it takes on a life of its own," Walker said.

To say the least, Walker, 48, and Mooney, 47, are professional picture framers and artists by trade. They decided to create an area for their cats that would challenge their feline instincts and keep them active in a 1,500-square-foot home.

Now, TomCat, Jerry Lee, Bernard, Charlotte, Denise, Frank, Louise, Little Jimmy and Molly are in cat heaven.

They first installed a support column and beam to hang a leaded glass window. The column became a fiber-covered scratching post, intersecting with a bright pink beam for catwalking.

The cats took to it immediately. Toy mice hang suspended from their tails in cages, just a paw's reach away from the catwalks.

A mouse skull-and-crossbones portal leads to a special "cats only" green room.

CAREER CORNER

OCCUPATIONAL TITLE: Commercial diver
DUTIES: Perform underwater activities using scuba gear or diving suits. They are involved in oil drilling, construction repairs on docks and ships. They may cut or weld metal, photograph surroundings or harvest sea life.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT: They work under water most of the time. They work with other people at times and the work can be very stressful.

HELPFUL HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES: Graphics, math, science and metal trades

CONTINUING EDUCATION/TRAINING: Apprenticeship, (more than 3 years) military, technical school

SOME SOURCES OF TRAINING OR EDUCATION: To learn which schools offer training as a deep sea diver, please contact the Association of Commercial Diving Educators at 1707 N.E. Indian River Drive; Jensen Beach, Fla.; 33457.

CERTIFICATION/LICENSES: Each diver must be certified to use the diving equipment.

SALARY: Experienced divers receive several hundred a day. (at least \$200)

JOB PROSPECTS: Average to good.

Career Corner is provided courtesy of Roger Goertz, Career Technology Instructor at Big Spring High School.

Exceptional Eagle

Boy overcomes difficulties of rare physical disorder to achieve Scouting's highest rank

MESA, Ariz. (AP) — Eighteen years ago Gwyn Rogers was told her baby boy would never walk or talk and would likely live in an institution. For lack of a medical term, doctors called Daniel Rogers a "Funny Looking Kid."

Today, he's an exceptional teenager.

Daniel was recently awarded the rank of Eagle Scout. It is the highest honor in the Boy Scouts of America organization, one which only 2 to 4 percent of Scouts nationwide ever achieve — even without a disability.

The high school senior has Sotos Syndrome, a rare genetic disorder that causes physical overgrowth, delayed fine motor skills and learning disabilities. Daniel weighed almost 10 pounds at birth and his head, hands and feet were disproportionately large.

The syndrome occurs in about one in 10,000 births, and common characteristics of those born with it include large foreheads and wide-set eyes slanted downward.

When Daniel was 6 years old, he had the bone age of a 12-year-old. In the third grade, he wore size 13 shoes. By fifth grade, he stood 5-foot-8.

Doctors predicted Daniel would be 7 feet tall, but he stopped growing at 6-foot-3, and now weighs about 230 pounds.

He wears size 19EEE shoes, and the tips of his mother's fingers only reach to the first knuckle of his giant hand.

Daniel was officially diagnosed at 9 months, but because the syndrome is so rare, doctors had little information to offer his family. Their prognosis was so disheartening that Gwyn started the Sotos Syndrome Support Association in 1980. Today the group has 300 families worldwide.

Gwyn and Charles Rogers gave their sixth child every available opportunity. He received occupational, physical and speech therapy through an early childhood education program for severely handicapped children, and lots of love and support at home.

Daniel didn't say his first word until age 3, but after 15 years of speech therapy his words are clear, though halting, as he carefully thinks out what he wants to say. He's had to work hard at reading, math and language.

"He's a very persistent young man. He would just try over and over again. He would just never give up," his mom said.

"I do not like anybody telling me I can't do anything," he said.

To achieve the rank of Eagle Scout, Daniel organized volunteers to paint a huge map of the

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Library open house Saturday
Friends of the Howard County Library are sponsoring an open house Saturday in honor of the one-year anniversary of the opening of the new library building. Hours are 1-3 p.m., and activities include refreshments, historical displays and tours of the facility.

Need college aid?
Financial Aid Information Night for high school juniors and seniors and their parents is planned today at the Coahoma High School Library. The Howard College financial aid director and staff will answer questions and assist in filling out financial aid forms. Attendance is free and all are welcome to attend.

THE LAST WORD

If you're not allowed to laugh in heaven, I don't want to go there.
Martin Luther

Anyone who has begun to think places some portion of the world in jeopardy.
John Dewey

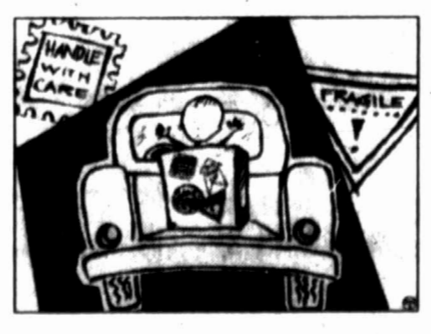
The only time a woman wishes she were a year older is when she is expecting a baby.
Mary Marsh

NEWS YOU CAN USE

For safety's sake: Don't ride in the back of a truck

(NAPS) — Trucks are seen on the roads more and more these days — for work, hauling and even family transportation. But the U.S. Department of Transportation's Auto Safety Hotline wants to warn the public that the cargo bed of a pickup is no place for a child. Consider:

- The cargo area of a pickup has been the source of injuries and death to hundreds of people each year. More than 100 children are killed each year after being ejected from the back of a pickup.
- Most non-collision deaths were caused by swerving, braking or rough roads. In one-third of the cases, the victim was sitting on the tailgate, standing up or "horsing around."



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SLICE of life!



EAGLE

Continued from page 5A.

United States on the playground of Mesa's Lincoln Elementary School, where his mother teaches. He hopes it will help the children learn American geography.

"I think the main thing that got me through this is my parents and the teachers that were good influences to me, that I could do anything if I put my mind to it," he said.

Daniel performed in his high school production of "The Music Man," and has been involved in the school chorus. He sang in the Powell Junior High Young Americans choir and was on the wrestling team until a heart condition forced him off the mat. The Mesa Unified School District gave him its first Courage and Commitment award for his effort on the team.

In 1996, Exceptional Parent magazine, a publication for families with special needs children, named Daniel one of its top 25 role models for the future.

Daniel listened quietly as his mother spoke about the characteristics of Sotos Syndrome and the challenges he has faced because of his size and disability.

"With my syndrome, people have actually treated me normal. They treat me like I'm anyone else," he said when asked how other people react to him.

His mother, however, reminded him of earlier years spent standing alone on the school playground. He wasn't invited to a birthday party until the fifth grade. He had seizures that frightened both children and adults.

"Oh yeah," he said. "When I was in elementary school, they were afraid of me until they got to know me because I was the biggest one there."

"He was taller than some of his teachers," Gwyn Rogers added. "I cried sometimes when I'd watch him on the playground all by himself."

Daniel looked at his mother. "You watched me? I didn't know that," he said.

SCHOOL NEWS

Bauer Magnet School

The students at Bauer Magnet School are very lucky to have a great music teacher like Susan Dawes. Each nine weeks, the students in Mrs. Dawes' extended day music classes have the opportunity to participate in the Clapping Contest. This contest is one where students are challenged to "clap out" extremely difficult rhythms. The contest gets tougher as the participants are narrowed down to just the very best. On Dec. 17, the contest came to a close with these results: Winner: April Tatad, 2nd place: Alicia Correa, 3rd place: Austin Tarleton, 4th place: Brittany Anderson, 5th place: Corey Green.

These fourth and fifth grade students worked (clapped) very hard in the Clapping Contest at Bauer Magnet School and clapped out some very challenging rhythms. We would like to congratulate them. Way to go!

By Mrs. Graves' fifth grade class

TAKE TIME OUT FOR YOURSELF READ THE BIG SPRING HERALD

See you in Recipe Corner

If you have any recipes you would like to see published, please submit them to the Herald office at 710 Scurry or mail them to: P.O. Box 1431; Big Spring, Texas; 79721.

We print "Recipe Corner" the second Wednesday of each month with local readers' recipes.

If you have quick, low fat or just tasty, traditional recipes, send them in!

Especially for kids and their families
The Mini Page

By BETTY DEBNAM

Great Dates in '98

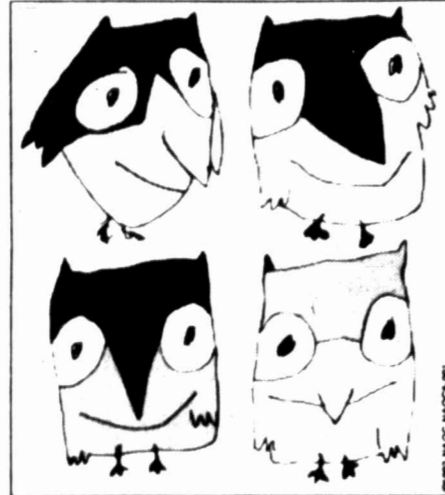
A Kid's 1998 Calendar

Looking forward to the year

1998 should be great! The Winter Olympics will be from Feb. 7-22 in Nagano, Japan.

Figure skating is one of the most popular sports for people to watch. It will probably be one of the highlights of this year's Olympics.

There will also be new medal sports: women's ice hockey, men's curling, women's curling, and snowboarding.



"Snowlets" are the official mascots for the Nagano Winter Olympics. They are based on the owl, a symbol of wisdom.

The United Nations has named 1998 the International Year of the Ocean. The U.N. is hoping people will understand how important oceans are to life on Earth.

Expo '98, a world's fair, will have the theme "The Oceans, a Heritage for the Future." It will be in Lisbon, Portugal, May 22-Sept. 30.

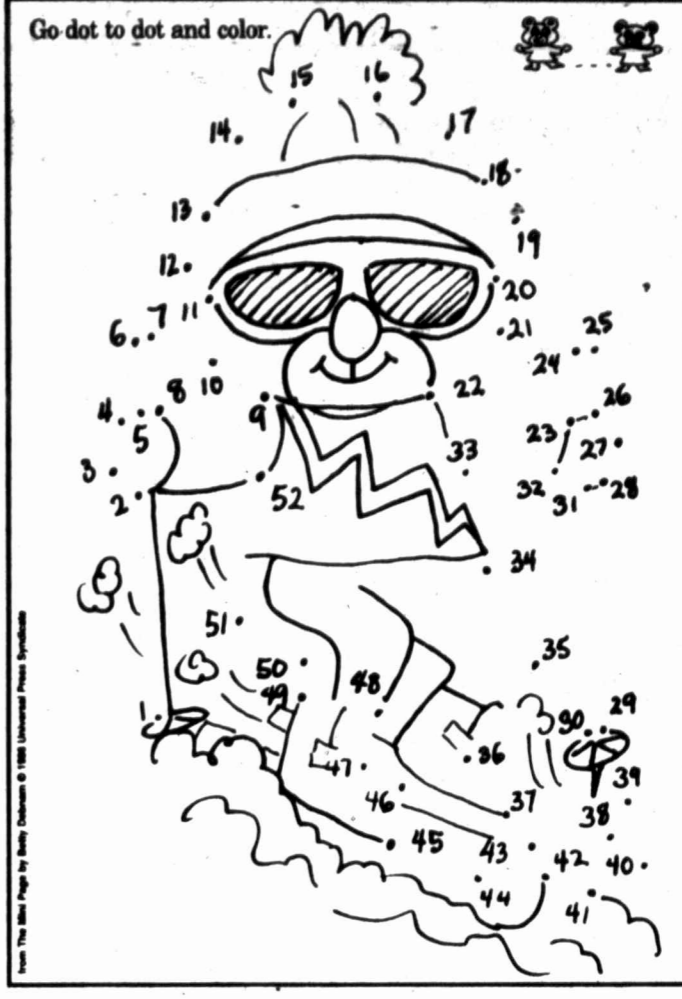
January calendar grid with holidays: Dec. 31-Jan. 28 (Ramadan, Islamic month of fasting), Jan. 1 (New Year's Day), Jan. 19 (Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday holiday).

February calendar grid with holidays: Black History Month, National Children's Dental Health Month, Groundhog Day, Feb. 22 (Winter Olympics), Feb. 14 (Valentine's Day), Feb. 16 (Presidents' Day).

March calendar grid with holidays: Music in Our Schools Month, Women's History Month, Newspaper in Education Week, March 17 (St. Patrick's Day), March 20 (First day of spring).

April calendar grid with holidays: April Fool's Day, Birthdays of Buddha, Buddhist holiday, Passover, April 12 (Easter), April 19-25 (National Library Week), April 22 (Earth Day).

The Mini Page Book of Presidents features a black-and-white picture of each president, along with such information as dates of birth and death, dates served as president, political party, signature and important achievements. It also features stories about the president's Cabinet, political terms, and a visit to the White House. To order, send \$4.95 plus \$1.50 each for postage and handling. Send only check or money order payable to Andrews McMeel Publishing, P.O. Box 419242, Kansas City, Mo. 64141.



MIGHTY FUNNY'S Mini Jokes. Includes jokes like 'THREE PEOPLE WENT TO SCHOOL UNDER THE SAME UMBRELLA. WHY DIDN'T THEY GET WET?' and 'IT WASN'T RAINING!'.

Rookie Cookie's Recipe Winter Wonderland Stew. Includes ingredients list and cooking instructions.

TRY 'N FIND CALENDARS. Words about calendars are hidden in the block below. Includes a word search grid.

Mini Spy... Mini Spy and her friends are having a New Year's Day party. See if you can find: letter A, word MINI, ladder, ruler, candle, fish, letter H, bell, letter B, lips, bird, lima bean, snake.

May calendar grid with holidays: Asian-Pacific Heritage Month, National Bike Month, Be Kind to Animals Week, May 5 (Cinco de Mayo), May 10 (Mother's Day), May 25 (Memorial Day holiday).

June calendar grid with holidays: Dairy Month, National Safety Month, Flag Day, June 21 (First day of summer), June 21 (Father's Day).

July calendar grid with holidays: Independence Day, July 5-11 (National Family Fitness Week), July 19-25 (Space Week).

August calendar grid with holidays: International Clown Week, National Smile Week, Perseid meteor showers, August 13 (International Left-Handers Day), August 19 (National Aviation Day).

September calendar grid with holidays: Labor Day, National Hispanic Heritage Month, Citizenship Day, Sept. 21-22 (Rosh Hashanah, Jewish New Year), Sept. 23 (First day of fall).

October calendar grid with holidays: Fire Prevention Week, National School Lunch Week, Columbus Day, Oct. 18-24 (National School Bus Safety Week), Oct. 24 (United Nations Day), Oct. 31 (Halloween).

Calendar exercises: Circle dates that are important to you such as family and friends' birthdays. Look through your newspaper for stories and ads that talk about the new year.

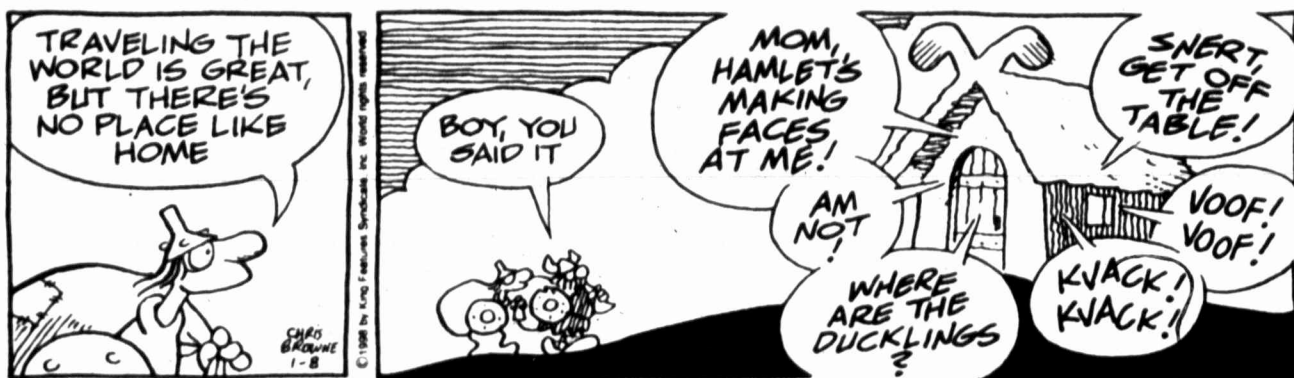
November calendar grid with holidays: National Chemistry Week, Veterans Day, American Education Week, Nov. 15-21 (National Geography Awareness Week), Nov. 16-22 (National Children's Book Week), Nov. 26 (Thanksgiving).

December calendar grid with holidays: Pearl Harbor Day, Hanukkah, Ramadan, Islamic month of fasting, Dec. 21 (First day of winter), Dec. 25 (Christmas), Dec. 26 (Kwanzaa).

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION Tomorrow's workforce is in today's classrooms. The Mini Page Sponsored by: Norwest Bank, Dorothy Garrett Scenic Mountain Medical Center, Fina Refinery.

THURSDAY JAN. 8. TV schedule table with columns for station (KIMD, KPEJ, KERA, etc.), time, and program details.

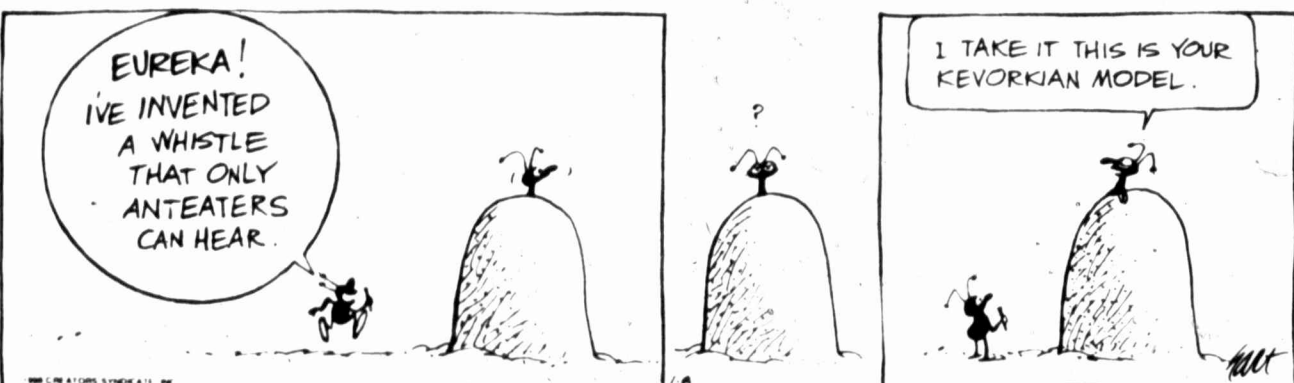
HAGAR



BLONDIE



B.C.



FAMILY CIRCUS



DENNIS THE MENACE



GEECH



"Look, Dolly! I can see my voice!"

"Boy, Mr. Wilson must be really mad at his chimney. He said he's gonna have his flue shot!"

WIZARD OF ID



THIS DATE IN HISTORY

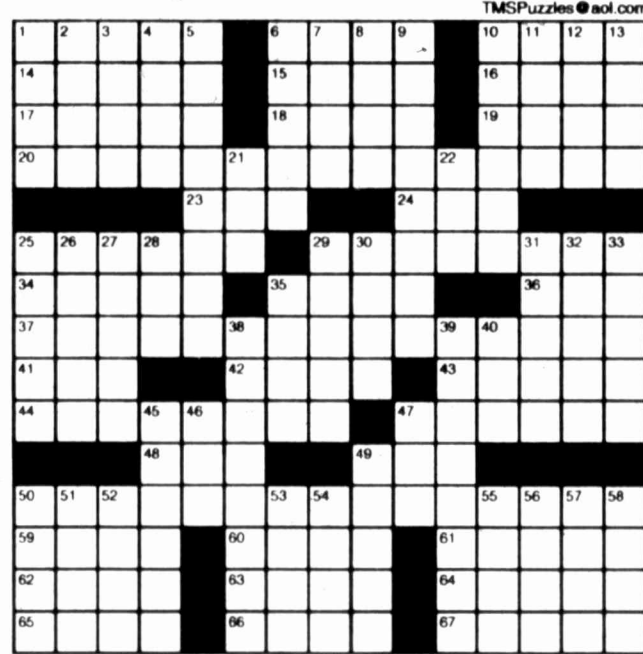
The ASSOCIATED PRESS Today is Thursday, Jan. 8, the eighth day of 1998. There are 357 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Jan. 8, 1935, rock 'n' roll legend Elvis Presley was born in Tupelo, Miss. On this date: In 1642, astronomer Galileo Galilei died in Arcetri, Italy.

In 1815, U.S. forces led by Gen. Andrew Jackson defeated the British in the Battle of New Orleans - the closing engagement of the War of 1812. In 1894, fire caused serious damage at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

THE Daily Crossword

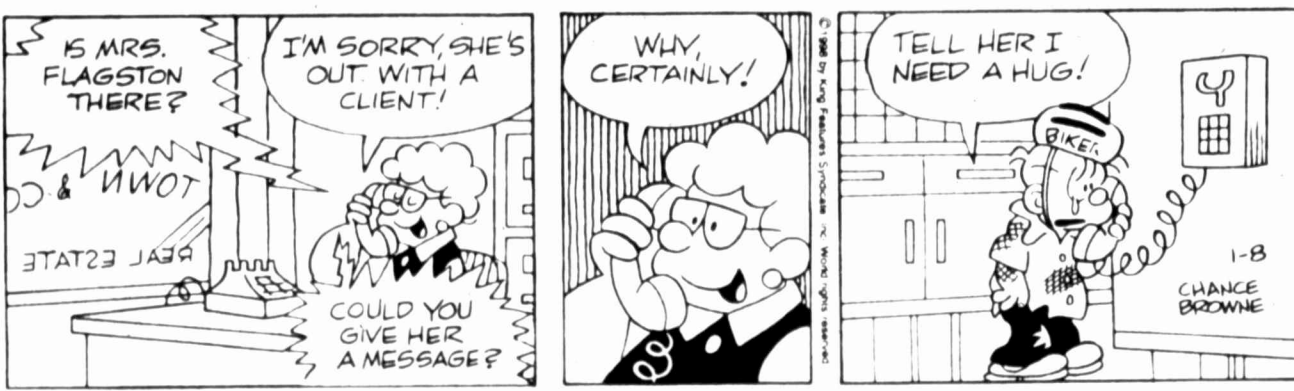
- ACROSS 1 Use a scale 6 Mediocre 10 Tolstoy hero 14 Mongolian range 15 Norwegian saint 16 Roman tyrant 17 Small land mass 18 Stir up 19 Scotch shot 20 Ran afoul of the law 23 ... the season to be jolly 24 Tic-toe tie 25 Hotelier Conrad 29 Stiff hairs 34 Above it all 35 Smile broadly 36 Literary collection 37 Knocked out 41 Night before 42 Ex-GIs 43 The Netherlands 44 In a tranquil manner 47 Crooner Johnny 48 N. African nation 49 Pipe residue 50 Ailing 59 Exploited laborer 60 Move like The Blob 61 Type of newspaper 62 Look after 63 Skin pit 64 Sgt. Bilko 65 Poetic works 66 Three-handed card game 67 Soft drinks



By Gerald R. Ferguson Portland, OR



HI AND LOIS



GASOLINE ALLEY



SNUFFY SMITH



BEETLE BAILY



BIG SPRING HERALD

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In 1918, President Wilson outlined his 14 points for peace after World War I. In 1959, Charles de Gaulle was inaugurated as president of France's Fifth Republic. In 1964, President Johnson declared a "War on Poverty." In 1973, secret peace talks between the United States and North Vietnam resumed near Paris. In 1976, Chinese premier Chou En-lai died in Beijing at age 78. In 1982, American Telephone and Telegraph settled the Justice Department's antitrust lawsuit against it by agreeing to divest itself of the 22 Bell System companies. In 1987, for the first time, the Dow Jones industrial average closed above 2,000, ending the day at 2002.25. In 1994, Tonya Harding won the U.S. Figure Skating Championship in Detroit, a day after Nancy Kerrigan dropped out following the clubbing attack on her knee. (The U.S. Figure Skating Assn. later stripped Harding of the title because of her involvement in the attack.) Ten years ago: An Arizona state grand jury indicted Gov. Evan Mecham and his brother, Willard, on charges of concealing a campaign loan. (Both were later acquitted.) Five years ago: Serb gunmen shot and killed Bosnia deputy prime minister Hakija Turajlic in the presence of French peacekeepers. At post offices across America, commemorative Elvis Presley stamps went on sale on what would have been "the King's" 58th birthday. One year ago: The state of Arkansas put three men to death in the second triple execution since capital punishment was reinstated in 1976. The Supreme Court heard arguments on whether to allow physician-assisted suicide. Russian President Boris Yeltsin was hospitalized with early signs of pneumonia. Today's Birthdays: Actor-comedian Larry Storch is 75. Actor Ron Moody is 74. Comedian Soupy Sales is 72. Broadcast journalist Sander Vanocur is 70. CBS newsmen Charles Osgood is 65. Singer Shirley Bassey is 61. Country-gospel singer Cristy Lane is 58. Physicist Stephen Hawking is 56. Rock musician Rocky Krieger (The Doors) is 52. Rock singer David Bowie is 51.

