

# BIG SPRING HERALD

Reflecting A Proud Community

MONDAY  
February 23, 1998

50 cents

## CRMWD's John Grant named to 31-county regional water planning board

By JOHN H. WALKER  
Managing Editor

John Grant, Colorado River Municipal Water District general manager, is among 20 people named to develop a long-range water plan for West Texas.

Grant was named by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to serve in Region F, the designation given a 31-county area stretching from the Mason and Kimble counties in the Hill Country to Loving County.

"The benefit of this effort is that locals in these regions will look at their water needs for the next 50 years," said Janice Cartwright of the TWDB.

Cartwright said the effort is necessary to ensure Texans will have water for personal consumption, for industrial growth and for the environment well into the 21st Century.

By naming Grant to the Region F board, the TWDB involves the Colorado River Municipal Water District, which began planning for the region's long-term survival 50 years ago when the then-Colorado River Municipal Association met for the first time in Big Spring's Settles Hotel.

Much of the area in Region F is served by the CRMWD, which supplies water to more than 400,000 persons in West Texas.

The statewide effort is a result of legislative action in 1997 to add Texas to the list of state's with a long-range water plan. Until that time, Texas was one of only five states nationally — and three in the west — without such a plan.

Under Senate Bill 1, initially introduced by State Sen. J.E. "Buster" Brown of Lake Jackson, the state was required to plan for future water usage.

One of the many changes made to Brown's initial offering was the requirement that TWDB divide the state into regional districts that would handle the planning for that particular area of the state.

All of the regional plans then

must be approved by the TWDB and merged into a statewide plan that must be finished by 2001.

From that point on, any monies for development of water projects or permits for new water rights can only be released if those projects are specified in the regional plan.

Counties in Region F include Andrews, Borden, Brown, Coke, Coleman, Concho, Crane, Crockett, Ector, Glasscock, Howard, Irion, Kimble, Loving, McCulloch, Martin, Mason, Menard, Midland, Mitchell, Pecos, Reagan, Reeves, Runnels, Schleicher, Scurry, Sutton, Tom Green, Upton, Ward and Winkler.

### REGION F BOARD MEMBERS

Region F board includes:

- John Grant, general manager, Colorado River Municipal Water District, Big Spring.
- Marilyn Egan, Runnels Co. Judge.
- Jeffrey Sutton, Crockett Co. Judge.
- Will Wade, city of San Angelo.
- Len Wilson, city of Andrews.
- John Gayle, city of Snyder.
- John W. Laefter, Huntsman Polymers, Odessa.
- Kenneth Diershoke, Wall farmer.
- John W. Jones, McCulloch Co. farmer.
- Frances Mertz, San Angelo Nature Center.
- Stuart Coleman, Coleman Distributing, Brown Co.
- Dale Higginbotham, TU Services, Rover Authority.
- Lora Tankersley, Irion Co. Underground Water Conservation District.
- Cindy Crowley, Schleicher Co. Underground Water Conservation District.
- Richard Gist, Zephyr WSC, Brown Co.
- Braulio Nathidad, Madera Valley WSC, Reeves Co.
- Ray Stoker, Odessa attorney and former chair, Texas Transportation Commission.
- Steven C. Hofer, Stubbleman & Associates, Midland.

— Texas Water Development Board

## More than a plane, F-4E is redemption

Work progresses on jet destined for Vietnam Memorial

By KATHY GILBERT  
Staff Writer

It's more than just a plane — it's redemption. For the men and women who fought the Vietnam war, fixing up the F-4E "Phantom" jet sitting in Hangar 18 speaks to something deeper than nuts, bolts and a strong metal pedestal.

"Some of us still have a bad taste about (the Vietnam) war," project co-crew chief and Vietnam veteran Roger Holmes said, "it's good to get that taken care of."

Holmes and co-crew chief Gary Osburn, also a Vietnam veteran, are leading volunteers in restoring the plane on nights and weekends from January through May. The fighter plane is scheduled to be mounted on a pedestal next to the helicopter at the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in time for Memorial Day.

The 19,000-pound, 63-foot-long, 38-foot-wide plane required an entourage of 22 vehicles to move it from Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls to its home in Hangar 18 in Big Spring last December.

The F-4E is part of their personal history, Holmes and Osburn, former Air Force mechanics said as they worked on the plane Saturday.

An air combat historian since childhood, Holmes worked on F-4s, F-105s and T-38s from 1969 to 1973 as part of the 18th TAC (Tactical Air Command) fighter wing, a mobile unit based in Okinawa, Japan. As crew chief, he was an expert on F-4s.

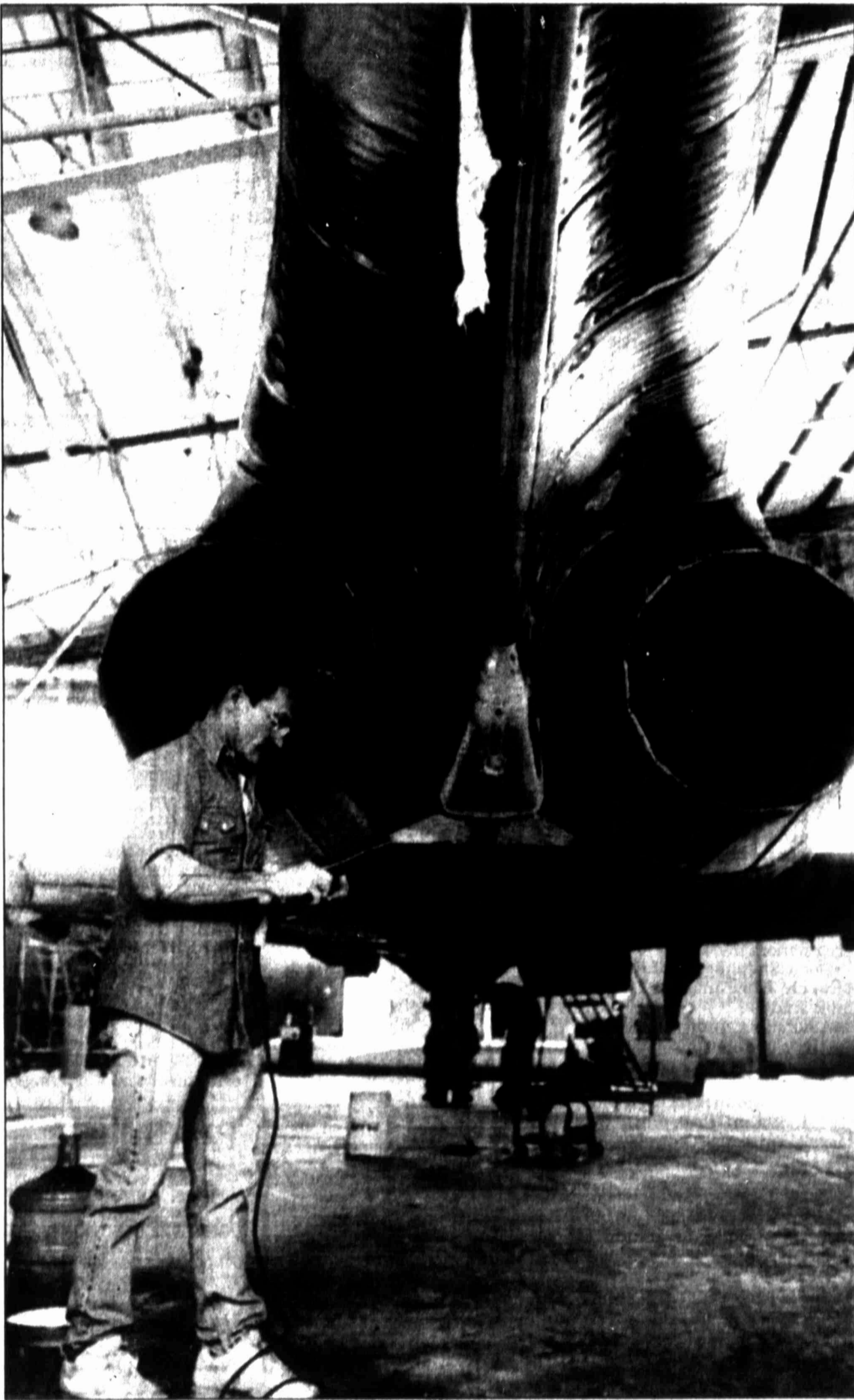
"That airplane is the crew chief's airplane," Osburn said, "when it's on the ground, it's his."

"We just let the pilots borrow it," Holmes added.

Osburn, a retired aircraft maintenance specialist and Big Spring native, had worked on many F-4s after he enlisted in 1972.

"The work is coming along pretty good," Osburn said. "We're prepping it for painting in about two weeks, and taking measurements for the pedestal today," he said.

The crew chiefs said community support had been overwhelming. Donations of materials, paint, and volunteer time



Vietnam veteran Gene Wilson repairs the tail of the F-4E "Phantom" jet Saturday during one of the many workdays required to prepare the plane for permanent static display at the Big Spring Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in May.

HERALD Staff Photo/Kathy Gilbert

### WEATHER

Tonight:



Tonight, fair. Lows 40-45. Tuesday, partly cloudy, breezy and warm. Highs from the mid 70s to near 80. Tuesday night, mostly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Lows in the 40s. Extended forecast, Wednesday, partly cloudy and windy. Highs in the upper 60s to mid 70s. Thursday and Friday, partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 30s to near 40. Highs in the 60s.

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To reach all departments, please call 263-7331

## Howell trial

Jury selection under way as suspected serial rapist faces additional sentencing

By STEVE REAGAN  
Staff Writer

Jury selection began Monday morning in 118th District Court in the aggravated sexual assault trial of suspected serial rapist Ricky DeWayne Howell.

Howell faces charges of aggravated sexual assault and burglary with the intent to commit sexual assault. Both charges carry prison terms of between 5-99 years or life.

Howell, who is suspected in a string of sexual assaults in West Texas, has already been convicted of two counts in Lubbock and is currently appealing the two life sentences he received there.

District Attorney Hardy Wilkerson said that the fact Howell has already been assessed two life sentences will not sway his efforts once the trial begins Tuesday morning.

"There's two things," Wilkerson said. "First, I don't want him getting away with any freebies. Second, I think the community, in a high-profile case like this, deserves to have all the facts ... and feel like justice is being served in Howard County."

"In short, he still needs to answer for what he did here," Wilkerson added.

Instead, Wilkerson intends to try the case as if the prior convictions didn't exist.

"... I think the community, in a high-profile case like this, deserves to have all the facts ... and feel like justice is being served in Howard County."

— HARDY WILKERSON  
118th District Attorney

"These cases stand on their merits," he said. "The fact of his prior convictions is irrelevant. His prior convictions are on appeal, so they can't be mentioned, anyway."

Howell, of Snyder, stands accused of two sexual assaults which occurred in Big Spring in December 1996. In addition to the assaults in Lubbock, he has been implicated in similar incidents in Odessa, Sweetwater and Abilene.

Both Big Spring victims are described as white females in their early to mid-50s. According to their affidavits, their assailant was a white male, in his early to mid-30s, standing about 5 feet, 8 inches tall and wearing female clothing.

Howell was arrested last February in Lubbock in connection with a pair of sexual assaults there. Local authorities filed charges against him shortly afterward.

## Early voting under way for March 10 primaries

By CARLTON JOHNSON  
Staff Writer

For candidates seeking elected office in Howard County in the March 10 primary, the answers to who will win are still two weeks away, but early voting begins today for voters who won't be able to vote on March 10.

Early voting will be in County Clerk Margaret Ray's office each day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will continue through March 6.

Ray said her office will also

be open Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for early voting.

The first day for residents to submit an application for a ballot by mail was Jan. 9, according to Ray.

Residents who wish to receive a ballot in the mail must make an application to Ray's office before the end of the business day on March 3.

The county clerk's office began mailing out ballots to residents who have requested them on Jan. 24 and those ballots must be received at the county clerk's office by 7 p.m. March 10.

## Earls comes full circle with Rape Crisis/Victim Services

By KATHY GILBERT  
Staff Writer

Gail Earls has come full circle.

One of the founders and a long-time board member of the Rape Crisis/Victim Services Center in Big Spring has recently been tapped to become its new director.

"I've made the full circle," Earls said, "I helped found the center and been on the board for 13 years. Now I'm the director." "We're very glad to have (Earls) in that



EARLS

position," board President Wayne Wheat said. "I guess we're guilty of liking someone who reflects some of our biases."

Earls outlined an ambitious program of expansion and change for her first term in the new position.

A full-time counselor is a priority. "All of (the staff and volunteers) are advocates," she said, "but counselors know the right questions to ask."

Another goal is to recruit and train a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) to conduct medical rape exams.

"It's a really neat program," Earls said. "It's another trauma when a lady is raped and a doctor examines her."

Earls also wants to work "more fully" on

servicing all five counties in the Rape Crisis/Victim Services service area. "Our goal is to get to a client in 10 minutes. To do that, we need to train volunteers in all five counties."

Martin, Borden, Glasscock and Mitchell counties are already on the list, and Earls is interested in drawing in Lamesa and Dawson County as well.

Education is another aspect of the center Earls wants to build. "We want to talk to schools, and teachers, and let them know we're here before it happens," she said.

An advisory board made up of people from other counties, and including the

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# Annan wins written agreement from Iraq for unlimited access

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — In a "major step" toward ending the crisis with Iraq and forestalling a U.S. military strike, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan won a written agreement from Iraq to give weapons inspectors unlimited access to Saddam Hussein's presidential palaces.

Annan withheld details of the accord until he could return and present it to the U.N. Security Council on Tuesday. The United States, proceeding with its military buildup, withheld judgment on the success of Annan's emergency mission.

"I am hopeful and perhaps even confident that this agreement will take us beyond the crisis," Annan said. "I did not come here with ultimatums."

"What we doing today is a major step," the U.N. chief said. "It is a good agreement and I am hopeful the council will accept it."

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, who signed the agreement for his government, said Iraq's commitment resulted from Annan's diplomacy — not from the threat of a U.S. strike.

"It was diplomacy — wise, balanced United Nations — world diplomacy that enabled us to reach this agree-

ment. Not saber rattling," Aziz said, referring to the nearly 25,000 U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf. "This is an agreement of reason."

Asked by Cable News Network if the agreement covers only the eight presidential sites that are at the core of the dispute, Annan replied that the accord is "much broader than that."

He confirmed that the agreement addressed the U.N. inspectors' right to unlimited access to suspected weapons sites. Iraq earlier had offered to allow inspectors into presidential sites for two months.

The United States had vigorously opposed such a limit, and agreement on that point reportedly was clinched only when Annan met Saddam for three hours Sunday.

"I can say categorically, there are no time limits or deadlines in the agreement," Annan said.

He also expressed hope that troubles with Iraq could be resolved quickly and that economic sanctions imposed on Iraq for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait would be lifted.

"We will try to do our work in a reasonable period," he said.

Annan said he consulted with all five

permanent members of the Security Council — the United States, Britain, China, Russia and France — during his three-day negotiations here. Asked about U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's reaction, Annan said "she did have some questions, which I addressed, and I think we will be talking further when I get back to New York."

Annan was leaving Baghdad today for Paris and on to New York.

An endorsement by the Security Council would save Iraq from a punishing U.S. air attack, and save Washington from strong international opposition to such a strike. It would also be a triumph for Annan.

Annan's deal-making meeting with Saddam took place at the Republican Palace, one of eight presidential sites that Iraq had declared off-limits to U.N. weapons inspectors.

The inspectors are trying to determine if Iraq has complied with U.N. orders, issued at the end of the 1991 Persian Gulf War, to destroy all long-range missiles and weapons of mass destruction. That condition must be met before economic sanctions can be lifted. Baghdad says it has destroyed

the proscribed weapons.

Asked when the sanctions will be lifted, Annan said "that will be determined by the completion of the work" of the weapons inspectors and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In Washington, White House spokesman Mike McCurry said preliminary accounts had been received from Baghdad, but he refused to assess them. "We've got a lot of serious questions. It's a very serious matter at a serious time, and we want to get some questions answered," he said.

The crisis over weapons inspections has brought the Persian Gulf to the brink of war. The United States has sent a naval armada and 25,000 troops to the region to mount air strikes on Iraq.

Pro-Iraq protests have erupted across the Arab world — Jordan had to send out tanks Sunday in one desert city to contain them — and sent Israelis scurrying for gas masks and diplomats preparing to leave. Israel decided Sunday to distribute antibiotics to protect against a biological attack.

Britain, America's strongest backer for a military strike, credited the accord to pressure applied on Iraq.

"Saddam is a man who only makes an agreement under pressure," Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said.

France and Russia, which have been critical of U.S. policy toward Iraq, said the accord was vindication for diplomacy.

Paris "constantly defended the idea of a diplomatic solution," the French Foreign Ministry said.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin expressed satisfaction with the accord, saying Moscow had supported a diplomatic solution "from the very beginning."

The fifth permanent Security Council member, China, also welcomed the deal. Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao was quoted as saying China hoped the accord would "drive away the war haze" and provide a basis for a "fundamental settlement of the weapons inspection issue."

And in Israel, there was concern and some relief. "The whole world would rather see this resolved by diplomacy rather than force, provided that the danger of an Iraqi attack, nonconventional or otherwise, is eliminated," said David Bar-Ilan, top adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

## FBI continues search in anthrax case

LAS VEGAS (AP) — With the key evidence turning out to be an innocuous vaccine rather than a lethal biological weapon, authorities must sort out what to do with two men who in just days went from suspected terrorists to bumbling scientists.

Federal prosecutors' decision could be revealed as early as today at a detention hearing for Larry Wayne Harris. Harris and William Leavitt Jr. were arrested last week and charged with felony counts of possessing a biological agent for use as a weapon.

Those charges now could be reduced or thrown out altogether.

Leavitt was released from jail on his own recognizance Saturday, when FBI tests found the material seized from the men was a safe anthrax vaccine rather than a military-grade capable of slaughtering a city.

Harris, put on probation after a 1995 conviction for carrying another biological agent, bubonic plague bacteria, remained jailed in downtown Las Vegas.

FBI agents continued to investigate, and on Sunday they removed boxloads of materials

from Leavitt's home in the farming community of Logandale, about 50 miles northeast of Las Vegas.

It was not known what was taken. FBI agents at the scene declined to comment. FBI officials said over the weekend only that their investigation was ongoing.

Leavitt's attorney, Lamond Mills, called the search "a fishing expedition."

"I think they're embarrassed, and I think they're looking for anything they can find to bring charges against Bill Leavitt," Mills said.

In Maryland, meanwhile, a government lab was testing material seized from Harris' Ohio home to determine if it is a dangerous — and illegal — biological agent, federal sources have said.

The arrests of Leavitt and Harris on Wednesday in Henderson, Nev., just outside Las Vegas, triggered a nationwide scare about biological weapons. The fears were only heightened by U.S. officials' weighing of a military strike against Iraq for refusing to let United Nations investigators

look for some of the very same kind of weapons.

Leavitt's attorneys contend he was planning to use the material to test an unorthodox disease-killing machine he was considering buying for \$2 million from a man who later tipped off the FBI.

That informant, Ronald Rockwell, has said he turned in Leavitt and Harris last week when Leavitt claimed to possess the deadly anthrax bacteria, which could kill thousands of people. Leavitt's attorneys said Rockwell is a con artist who double-crossed the two men when the deal to buy the machine turned sour.

Leavitt has a fire safety supply company in Las Vegas and has also been involved in non-mainstream research seeking cures for AIDS and MS.

Leavitt's friends said they were relieved that he was released from jail.

"I just knew that whatever it was, he wasn't doing what they said he was doing," said Jeff Buynak, who rents a small one-story house from Leavitt. "He's a good, honest citizen and works hard."

## UAW rejects CAT offer despite support of union leadership

PEORIA, Ill. (AP) — The United Auto Workers rank-and-file rejected both their leadership's advice and a contract offer from Caterpillar Inc., ensuring their 61/2-year labor battle will continue.

The Local 974 union hall exploded in applause when it was announced Sunday that the company offer was rejected 58 percent to 42 percent.

UAW leaders had recommended approval, saying the proposal was better than the one rejected in December 1995.

But union members didn't like it any better, ensuring the world's leading maker of earth-moving equipment still would not have a contract with the UAW since the last one expired Sept. 30, 1991.

"The whole proposal wasn't a good enough issue for anyone to accept," said Bill Wheat, a union worker who had been fired. "The wages and benefits was something they could have accepted in '91 but not in '98."

Caterpillar officials said they would not comment until they received official vote totals from the union.

"We'll keep moving on," said Jim Clingan, president of Local 974 in Peoria. "We'll try to find ways to put pressure on the company, to bring them back to the bargaining table. The membership clearly spoke."

Many UAW members were opposed to provisions that required the union to grant "amnesty" to members who abandoned past strikes to

return to work. But the contract did not force Caterpillar to rehire 50 workers it had fired during the dispute, Clingan said.

The deal, according to the written description given to UAW members, lowered wages for new workers, while giving the Peoria-based company greater power to limit overtime and use temporary workers. It also required the union to drop unfair labor practice complaints against Caterpillar.

But the six-year contract would have given current CAT workers raises and increased pension benefits, along with job security until 2001.

The agreement would have covered roughly 13,000 Caterpillar workers.

## 27 dead as tornadoes rip Florida

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — El Nino-driven storms spawned tornadoes today that ripped through central Florida, killing at least 27 people, destroying hundreds of structures and lodging cars into trees.

"We've had so many touch-downs we can't keep track of them," said Angela Braden, spokeswoman for the Seminole County sheriff's office. "Some people slept right through it. They woke up and their house was gone."

The tornadoes were reported from Daytona Beach on the Atlantic Coast to the Tampa Bay area on the Gulf Coast. The storms had moved up into Georgia by mid-morning, closing schools and driving some people from their homes.

Walt Disney World reported no damage, but one person died in the city of Kissimmee, south-east of the theme park. Orlando, which includes tourist spots like Sea World and Universal Studios Florida, was spared the worst of the storm.

Eleven people were killed in Seminole County, Braden said. Much of the county's damage from the El Nino-powered

storms late Sunday and early today was near the Sanford airport just northeast of Orlando.

Roofs lifted from homes littered fields. Pink insulation and shiny sheet metal from mobile homes hung high in trees like giant confetti. A red pickup truck lodged in a tree.

"We just hid in the bathtub until it was over," said John Burch, whose house lost its roof.

At least 14 people died and 200 structures were damaged in Osceola County to the south-east, said Jeter Walker, emergency management spokesman.

"Big, big tornadoes did this," Walker said.

One of the tornadoes shredded the Ponderosa Park campground behind Osceola County stadium, spring home of Houston Astros. Seven people were killed.

Another six were killed in the Buenaventura Lakes area. All that remained of an 86,000-

square-foot shopping center in that area was exposed concrete and twisted metal.

"It's just a facade. Everything behind it was torn up," said Stephen LaFreniere, manager of the 27-store strip mall.

In Volusia County, a man was killed when his trailer home was destroyed, sheriff's investigator Derrick Clark said. His girlfriend heard the roar of the approaching storm and ran next door for safety, but he refused to go. The trailer was demolished in the three minutes she was gone.

Clark said two other people were unaccounted for early today near Lake Harney, just northeast of Orlando. Officials also had rescued a boater whose craft apparently capsized.

"We're looking at a wide path of destruction along (U.S.) Highway 92 here," Clark said.

One person also died at a retirement community in Orange County.

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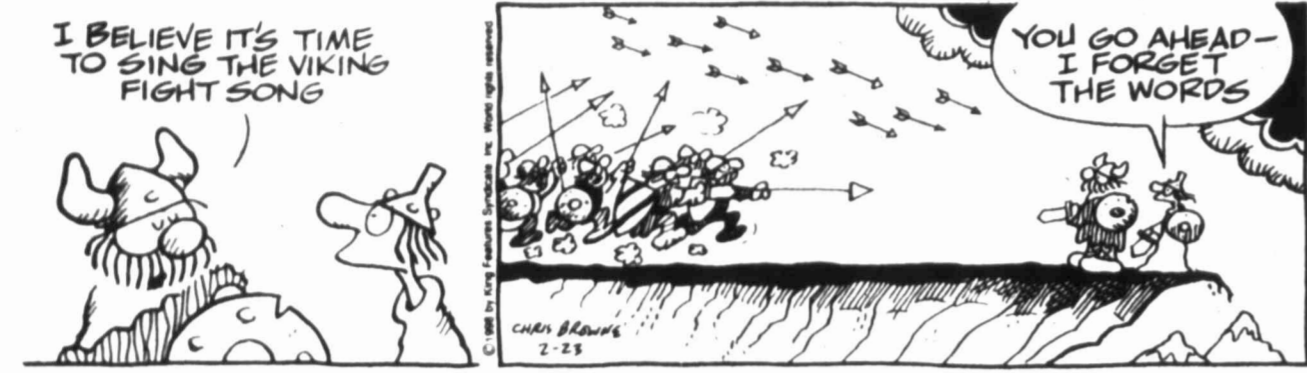






MONDAY FEB. 23 TV schedule table with columns for time slots (6:30, 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10:30, 11:30, 12:30) and station numbers (2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31, 33). Rows list various programs like News, Simpsons, Antiques Roadshow, etc.

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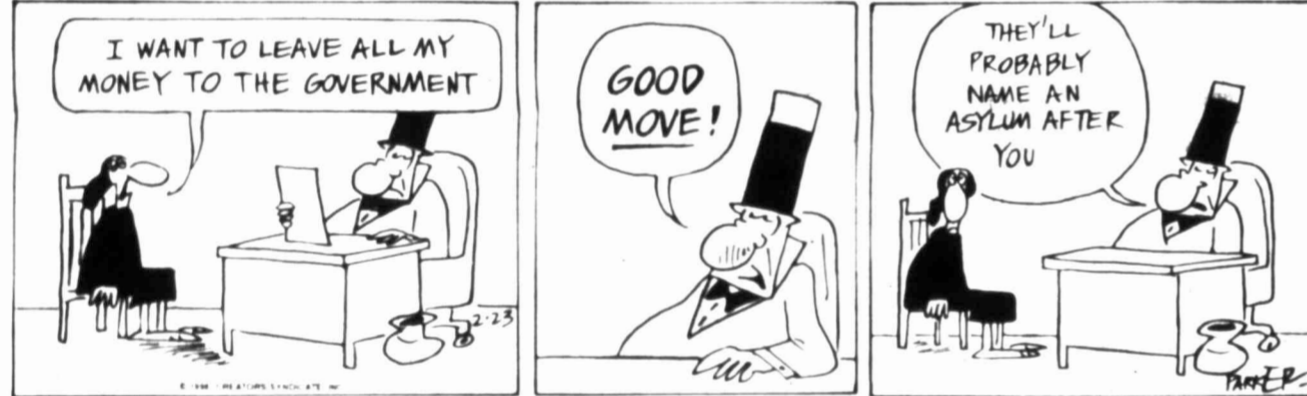
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SNUFFY SMITH



BETLE BAILY



THIS DATE IN HISTORY

Today is Monday, Feb. 23, the 54th day of 1998. There are 311

days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Feb. 23, 1945, during World War II, U.S. Marines on Iwo Jima captured Mount Suribachi, where they raised the American flag.

On this date:

In 1685, composer George Frideric Handel was born in Germany.

In 1822, Boston was granted a charter to incorporate as a city.

In 1836, the siege of the Alamo began in San Antonio, Texas.

In 1847, U.S. troops under Gen. Zachary Taylor defeated Mexican Gen. Santa Anna at the Battle of Buena Vista in Mexico.

In 1848, the sixth president of the United States, John Quincy Adams, died of a stroke at age 80.

In 1861, President-elect Lincoln arrived secretly in Washington to take office after an assassination plot was foiled in Baltimore.

In 1870, Mississippi was readmitted to the Union.

In 1905, the Rotary Club was founded.

In 1927, President Coolidge signed a bill creating the Federal Radio Commission, forerunner of the Federal Communications Commission.

In 1954, the first mass inoculation of children against polio with the Salk vaccine began in Pittsburgh.

In 1981, an attempted coup began in Spain as 200 members of the Civil Guard invaded the Parliament, taking lawmakers hostage. The attempt collapsed 18 hours later.

Ten years ago: President Reagan named William L. Ball III to succeed James H. Webb Jr. as Navy Secretary.

Presidential hopeful Bob Dole defeated Vice President George Bush in the South Dakota and Minnesota Republican primaries; among Democrats, Michael S. Dukakis won in Minnesota, Dick Gephardt in South Dakota.

Five years ago: President Clinton won United Nations support for a plan to airdrop relief supplies to starving Bosnians during an Oval Office meeting with Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

One year ago: Scientists in Scotland announced they had succeeded in cloning an adult mammal, producing a lamb named "Dolly." Ali Hassan Abu Kamal, a Palestinian teacher, opened fire on the 86th-floor observation deck of New York City's Empire State Building, killing one person and wounding six others before shooting himself to death. In eastern India, nearly 200 people were killed when fire swept through a tent erected for a religious festival.

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Saturday's Puzzle Solved section showing the completed crossword grid and the words used.

Big Spring Herald advertisement with contact information: 915-263-7331 (Fax) 915-264-7205. Lists staff members like Chuck Williams, John H. Walker, Edwin Vela, etc.