

HERALD

BIG SPRING

MONDAY
April 13, 1998

Reflecting A Proud Community

50 cents

Republicans to make decision during Tuesday's commissioner's runoff election

By **JOHN H. WALKER**
Managing Editor

It's the end of the line for one candidate or the other in the Republican race for Precinct 2 commissioner.

Incumbent Jerry Kilgore and challenger John Wayne Metcalf will work one last day to try and get their voters to the polls Tuesday to see who will carry the party's banner against Democrat Roosevelt Shaw in the November General Election.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. Tuesday. Residents who live in

boxes 101-112, 301-306, 401-408, 410, 202-205 and 208 will vote at Goliad Middle School. Voters who live in boxes 207 and 409 will vote at Coahoma City Hall.

Persons who voted in the March 10 Republican primary, or those who didn't vote at all, are eligible to vote in the runoff. Persons who voted in the Democratic primary are not eligible to vote.

A total of 359 persons voted early for the runoff election, one of four on the ballot for Republicans.

The other three runoffs are county-wide for Republicans and include the

WHERE TO VOTE:

- Goliad Middle School — Boxes 101-112, 301-306, 401-408, 410, 202-205 and 208.
- Coahoma City Hall — Boxes 207 and 409.

hotly contested race for attorney general between Barry Williamson and John Cornyn.

Being in a runoff for the Precinct 2 seat is nothing new for either Kilgore or Metcalf. In 1994, Metcalf led after the primary but lost in the runoff.

Back on March 10, Kilgore received 451 votes, or 45.56 percent of the vote to Metcalf's 356 votes, or 35.96 percent.

Ken Mayhall drew 183 votes, sending Kilgore and Metcalf into the runoff.

Both candidates looked at going into a runoff as a somewhat unpredictable event.

Metcalf says he was surprised by the outcome of the March primary, but he appreciates the votes he received.

"Runoffs are where the danger zone is," Metcalf said. "I want to push the fact that I don't want anymore tax increases nor do I want anymore pay increases for commissioners."

"We've tried to see as many people as we could and just make contact," Kilgore said. "I wanted to make sure the voters who voted in the March 10 primary come back out for the runoff." (Staff writer Carlton Johnson contributed to this report.)

Dog thefts puzzling to resident

By **CARLTON JOHNSON**
Staff Writer

A stolen female German Sheppard named Shelby and a male Chinese Pug named Bugsy have Big Spring resident Tammy Davidson wondering why anyone would want to steal a part of her family.

According to Davidson, her animals were stolen from her backyard in the 1600 block of E. 5th.

Davidson has filed a report with the Big Spring Police Department and said an area veterinarian has told her that she also has had a German Sheppard stolen recently.

"I'm absolutely sick about this," Davidson said. "I have fliers all over the place and have gone to the Humane Society, house to house in my neighborhood and to the post office to see if anything would help me get my dogs back."

Davidson said she is not sure if other people have reported their dogs being stolen, but has been told by other residents that they have had German Sheppards and other valuable dogs stolen.

According to the BSPD, Davidson's report is the only theft report involving a German Sheppard that has been filed recently, but two to three months ago, there was a rash of thefts involving pit bulls and rottweilers.

"People don't seem to care about this and it bothers me because I keep my dogs locked up," Davidson said. "I love my animals and I don't feel like this is right. There is something going on. It's ridiculous to live in a town where people know each other, but no one will say anything about something like this."

It was about a year ago that the BSPD and Big Spring City Council faced a similar situation with residents Denise Freeman and Karen Ivey, who was lucky enough to have her Great Dane returned to her after a county resident recognized her dog's picture on television.

"There is a problem with animals being taken and dumped," Ivey told the council then. "Through persistence, I got my dog back."

She added, "I have tagged my dogs, but it does no good."

Mayor Tim Blackshear told Ivey and Freeman that until someone is caught or seen (in the act of stealing animals) everyone involved is going to have a hard time, which seems to be the case with Davidson.

MS Walk benefits local patients

By **DEBBIE L. JENSEN**
Features Editor

Jonel Smallwood will be part of Big Spring's first-ever MS Walk on April 25 — but she won't be pounding the pavement.

It's just that walking any distance has become more and more difficult for Smallwood, who is fighting multiple sclerosis. But the event means a lot to her, and she plans to help with registration and in any other way she can.

"I keep trucking along, doing what I can," she said. "I'm not a quitter, so I just keep pushing."

Smallwood, a former teacher, found out she had MS in 1984, when strange symptoms went unexplained after months of tests. Now she takes a shot every day to try to prevent and lessen the effects of her symptoms.

Smallwood said she is glad to help with the walk, which will help raise money for research into treatments and a cure for MS.

"You always need more money for research," Smallwood said. The local walk is hoped to raise more than \$10,000.

Lois McDaniel may or may not be able to attend the walk, but her former co-workers at the city of Big Spring will make sure she's represented. The Big Spring resident discovered she had MS in 1986, when she was only 14.

For many years, McDaniel said, few people knew she had the disease. Then a series of severe attacks put her in a



HERALD photo/Linda Choate
Multiple sclerosis fighter Lois McDaniel, shown with daughter Mary Ashley, has hopes for research into a vaccine or cure for the disease. She will be represented by a group of her former co-workers at the MS Walk in Big Spring April 25.

wheelchair and left her unable to work.

Her mobility has improved now, but McDaniel, who last July gave birth to a daughter, has concerns about the future. She wants to be certain the disease is not going to affect her daughter.

"I'm hopeful for a vaccine for

her, to prevent her getting it," McDaniel said. "I wish they would come up with something."

A Big Spring native with strong ties to the MS Walk is Tricia Tompkins, currently a student at Texas Tech working

See **MS WALK**, Page 1

Fina

Community Advisory Panel's goal is to help tie refinery, community residents together

By **CARLTON JOHNSON**
Staff Writer

Big Spring's Fina Refinery will be changing plant managers as of May 1, but not its commitment to community involvement, according to Plant Manager Phil Carruthers.

Carruthers is leaving Big Spring for Fina's corporate office in Dallas and will serve as general manager of high density ethylene, but before departing has announced the formation of the Fina/Howard County Community Advisory Panel (CAP).

CAPs are a valuable way to bring together refinery employees and community members, according to Carruthers.

"The expected result is a relationship built on mutual respect, trust and shared wisdom," Carruthers said. "The selection process for the CAP has a goal to recruit a diverse volunteer panel providing a reflection of our community."

The charter panel members are Virginia Belew, Ken Darensbourg, Eddie Earls, Brian Jensen, Bebe McCasland, Nancy Welch, Frances Wheat and Ed Williamson.

"The panel will expand to 12 members in the near future and possibly more thereafter," Carruthers said. "Liz Sorely is



CARRUTHERS

the facilitator. The role of the facilitator is to be an independent observer, keep meetings on an agenda and to encourage panel members to express their thoughts, their questions and suggestions to refinery management.

According to Carruthers, the CAP held its first meeting in February with the goal of drafting a set of by-laws for the group.

"CAP members voted to meet monthly to become knowledgeable about the health, safety and environmental issues of the Big Spring refinery," Carruthers said. "The frequency of meeting will be discussed after the initial training phase. Meeting last for about an hour and a half and follow the agenda selected by panel members." Other interested person may attend CAP meeting as guests of panel members.

CAP members, in order to increase their knowledge of the refining process, have selected meeting agenda items that will allow them to learn about what goes on behind the fences at the refinery.

"I would like to understand the basic process taking place in refinery and better the health and safety issues," Williamson said.

"We need to know the emissions and sources of pollution from the refinery and what actions are taking place to reduce the releases," McCasland said.

The CAP will provide a bridge

See **FINA**, Page 2

Big Spring among first markets for Citra

By **CARLTON JOHNSON**
Staff Writer

Big Spring, Midland and Odessa residents are among the first residents nationwide to sample Citra — the newest soft-drink from the Coca-Cola Company.

In Big Spring the product is already in most 7-Eleven stores as well as H-E-B and Wal-Mart.

Customers got to taste the new product Saturday, as Coca-Cola Company gave customers a sampling of the new citrus drink in 20-ounce bottles during a special promotion at a local grocery store.

According to Big Spring Coca-Cola representatives, the product has been on the market since January and the company has only been doing what's called a "soft sell" of the product until now.

According to Coca-Cola USA executives, Citra's unique combination of crisp citrus flavor and optimal carbonation are expected to make it a favorite in the fast-growing market for citrus drinks.

Citra is expected to be available in 50 percent of the U.S. this month, according to Coca-Cola spokesperson Diana Garza.

In a statement released Thursday about Coca-Cola's expanded marketing of Citra, Vice President of Marketing Frank P. Bifulco Jr. said Citra is enjoying a level of success that well exceeds the company's own expectations which was the impetus for making Citra available on a broader basis.

"Key measures such as brand awareness, future purchase intent and incremental growth in immediate consumption-focused channels were higher than expected, underscoring the solid initial results of the brand," Bifulco said.

The rollout of Coca-Cola's newest product will be backed by a multi-dimensional marketing campaign including radio, television and outdoor advertising as well as product sampling and couponing.

Citra's packaging features bright yellow graphics with an infusion of purple and green, according to Garza. The new soft drink is available in 20-ounce, single-serve PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottles, as well as 6-, 12- and 24-packs and in one-, two- and three-liter bottles.



HERALD photo/Linda Choate
Friends Convenience Store clerk Helinda Saiz displays Coca-Cola's newest product, Citra.

See **DOG**, Page 2

WEATHER

Tonight:



Tues:



Wed:



Thur:



Tonight, clear. Lows in the upper 40s. Tuesday, sunny and breezy. Highs 80-85. Tuesday night, fair. Lows upper 40s to lower 50s. Extended forecast, Wednesday, partly cloudy. Highs upper 70s to lower 80s. Thursday and Friday, partly cloudy, Lows mid 40s to lower 50s. Highs in the lower to mid 70s.

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BSISD administrator seeks city council position

By **CARLTON JOHNSON**
Staff Writer

One of the four candidates seeking the vacant District 5 city council position is Joann Smoot, a four-year resident of Big Spring and an administrator with the Big Spring Independent School District (BSISD).



SMOOT

Smoot is joined in the race for the District 5 council seat by fellow hopefuls Maria Douglas, Jeff Hupselman and Ron Booth.

"Four years ago I made the choice to move to Big Spring," Smoot said.

If for no other reason, Smoot says her husband Carl, four children, membership in the Greater Big Spring Rotary Club and First United Methodist Church and involvement with her children's school activities are enough to qualify her as a good solid candidate for the city council.

"Big Spring is where I choose to live and I believe residents should give back to their city as a volunteer or community servant," Smoot said. "I am no different than the lifelong citizen who wants Big Spring to prosper."

"In my position with BSISD I am responsible for running a business," Smoot added. "That business is the foodservice department. My responsibilities are on a smaller scale than what the city faces each day as a business."

As food service director,

Smoot formulates and manages a \$1.5 million budget, makes purchasing decisions and has extensive knowledge of bidding requirements.

"With a staff of 85 people, I deal with personnel issues ranging from salaries to worker's compensation," Smoot said. "Constant decisions must be made concerning equipment and facilities. My department also deals with federal and state regulations."

Because Smoot answers to the

See **COUNCIL**, Page 2

OBITUARIES

Nellie Mae Smith

Graveside service for Nellie Mae Smith, 91, Big Spring, will be 11 a.m. Tuesday, April 14, 1998, at Wanette Cemetery in Wanette, Okla. Mrs. Smith died Sunday, April 12, at her residence. She was born on May 16, 1906, in Shawnee, Okla. to Charles and Nannie Priscilla Maier. She married A.D. Smith on Aug. 1, 1926, in Shawnee, Okla. He preceded her in death on March 4, 1994. Mrs. Smith came to Big Spring in 1959 and was a homemaker. She was a member of Cedar Ridge Church of Christ.



SMITH

Survivors include: three daughters, Corene Morton of Midland, Nola Gluege of Big Spring, and Bonnie Koening of Austin; five grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. The family suggests memorials to: Alzheimer's Association of the Permian Basin; P.O. Box 3389; Midland, Texas; 79702, or the American Heart Association; Howard County Division; P.O. Box 1223; Big Spring, Texas; 79721-1223. The body will lie in state on Monday evening at the funeral home. Arrangements under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home.

Leona Roman

Leona Roman, 64, Knott, died on Sunday, April 12, 1998, in a local hospital. Service will be 2 p.m. Tuesday, April 14, 1998, at Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel with Larry Marshall, minister of Knott Church of Christ, and Rev. Bob Manning, minister of Knott Baptist Church, officiating. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park. She was born on Nov. 1, 1934, in Howard County, and married Jerry Roman on Sept. 10, 1954, in Knott. She had lived in Howard County all of her life and attended school and graduated from Knott. She was a home-



ROMAN

maker. She was a member of Knott Baptist Church. Survivors include: her husband, Jerry Roman of Knott; two daughters and sons-in-law, Rene and Joe Paul Beall of Knott, and Leah and Ricky Hughes of Big Spring; three grandsons, Wes Hughes, Jerrod Beall and Stuart Beall, all of Knott; one granddaughter, Kara Hughes of Big Spring; one great-grandson, Colten Hughes of Knott; three sisters, Shirley Weaver and Mary Ray, both of Big Spring, and Jean Brummett of Vealmoor; and three brothers, John Daugherty of Nacogdoches, Ben Daugherty of Big Spring, and Oren Lancaster, Jr. of Knott. The family suggests memorials to the church of your choice. Arrangements under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home.

Julian Duran

Service for Julian Duran, 62, Big Spring, is pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home. He died Monday, April 13, 1998, in a local hospital.

Virgil Lee Strickland, Sr.

Funeral service for Virgil Lee Strickland, Sr., 68, Abilene, was 10 a.m. today at Elliott-Hamil Chapel of Faith, with Rev. T. Gerald Cates officiating, and assisted by Ian Gray. Burial was in the Buffalo Gap Cemetery. Abilene Honor Guard conducted military rites. Mr. Strickland died Saturday, April 11, 1998, in an Abilene hospital. He was born in Cutoff Island, New Harmony, Ind. He had been a resident of Abilene since 1955. He married Hattie Kay Canon in 1960 in Abilene. He was a member of Calvary Bible Church and owner of Strickland Tower Service since 1973. He was a paratrooper for the 11th Airborne in the U.S. Army. Mr. Strickland had been a lifetime member of the D.A.V.

Survivors include: his wife, Kay Strickland, Abilene; two sons, Jerry Wayne Strickland, North Vernon, Ind., and Virgil Lee (Butch) Strickland, Jr., Merkel; one daughter, Kay Lee Ann Rollins, Big Spring; two sisters, Zula Mae Robinson, Poseyville, Ind., and Dora Vaughn, Titusville, Fla.; two half-sisters, Golda Churchwell of New Harmony, Ind., and Arleta Manis of Thompsonville, Ill.; six grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews. Memorials may be sent to the American Lung Association; P.O. Box 25460; Austin, Texas; 78764; or Hendrick Hospice Care; P.O. Box 1922; Abilene, Texas; 79604. Arrangements under the direction of Elliott-Hamil Funeral Home, Abilene.

MS WALK

Continued from Page 1 on a master's of business administration. Tompkins' brother Troy is this year's project coordinator. "It makes me very proud to realize he's doing this," Tompkins said, "realizing that he probably wouldn't be doing this if it weren't for me." Tompkins, who found out she had MS in August of 1994, said this year's Big Spring MS Walk will be a very special day in many ways. "I told one of my friends this is the biggest day of my life," she said. "I have friends coming to walk in it who come out not just for my cause, but for others who are much worse off than I am. It's a pretty incredible feeling." This year's walk will be dedicated to the memory of Chris Pierce, who died earlier this year after a lengthy battle with the disease. Money raised by the walk will be split 60-40 between programs

in the West Texas Division and for national research. There are estimated to be about 750 people in the West Texas Division area affected by the disease, and 20-25 people locally.

The walk begins with registration at 9 a.m. at First Baptist Church. The route is described as a "scenic walk through the neighborhood," and lunch will be provided by Furr's Cafeteria. For information, call the MS Society office in Midland, (915)670-8248.

FINA

Continued from Page 1 for the public to voice concerns and questions and gives refinery personnel an opportunity to address those issues, according to Carruthers. "A CAP does not replace other communications activities with the community," Carruthers said. "A CAP is simply a means to discuss issues of concern to the community in a very positive manner for both the community and Fina. In fact, we think the CAP will provide valuable guidance to Fina in communicating important safety and health issues to the community."

CITRA

Continued from Page 1 Big Spring's Western Container Corporation, which has produced bottles for several years for Coca-Cola products, expects the new Citra product will increase the demand for its 20-ounce bolt bottle. Western Container began producing its bolt bottle in December 1998 and commercialized the new bottle as part of Coca-Cola's release of Surge, a high caffeine, low carbonation, citrus drink designed to challenge PepsiCo's Mountain Dew.

DOG

Continued from Page 1 Freeman had a rare Basenji stolen and said she addressed the council last spring because she wanted to make people aware of the problem of dog theft, but she decided to return to the council to try to get some type of support established. Although Davidson has reported her animals stolen and the matter is being investigated, a constant problem for the BSPD is that many people do not report stolen dogs to the police department. According to Animal Control officials, the BSPD has a difficult time declaring a problem with stolen animals when people don't register their animals with the BSPD shelter and when an animal is stolen most owners don't report it to the police. Registering animals and reporting incidents of theft will go a long way in assisting the BSPD in their investigations and although it did not do much good for Davidson, one thing people can do to help prevent animal theft is have a good fence around their yard with the gates locked. It was mentioned by Freeman and Ivey last year that some stolen animals may be purchased by research facilities, but area officials say one way to combat the possibility is to tattoo or microchip animals because research facilities will not buy tattooed or microchipped animals.

COUNCIL

Continued from Page 1 BSISD board of trustees, she says she knows that the bottom line is that she is in the business of service and customer satisfaction just as the operation of a city is a service to the people that are its residents. "I'm not an expert in all areas of running a city," Smoot said. "I do believe that it takes different talents and knowledge to

BIG SPRING AROUND THE TOWN

make a good council. "The council should have a general knowledge of the workings of the city, be capable of setting policy and focus on supporting city leaders in order to carry out the day-to-day task of efficiently running the city," Smoot said. "I see in Big Spring a city that is run with good leadership." Since moving to Big Spring, Smoot says she has witnessed several controversial issues in the city. "That's not uncommon when you are growing just as Big Spring is doing," Smoot said. "I see a lot of positives about the city that many long time residents might overlook. For example, the city that I formerly resided in was writing grants to build an amphitheater and I was involved in that grant writing."

"Little did I know that I would move to a community that already had a wonderful amphitheater facility," Smoot added. "There is nothing more I would like to see than Big Spring continuing on a positive course and taking advantage of the resources we already have available."

Smoot says many people have asked her what her "issue" is and her response is she is a concerned citizen who wants a better place and a better life for her family.

"I have some skills that I can offer to the voters of District 5 and the city of Big Spring," Smoot said. "I reside in District 5, my home phone number is listed and I welcome any questions."

BRIEFS

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL is selling six flavors of frozen cookie dough in three-pound tubs for \$10 each. The sale begins Tuesday, continuing through April 20. The dough is from the Red Apple Baking Company, and includes such flavors as chunky chocolate, radical raisin/datmeal, macadamia madness and others. For more information, call the school at 263-0203. ANIMAL VACCINES WILL BE given on Saturday, April 18, at the Coahoma Fire Department, 214 N. First, from 9 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 5 p.m. The cost is \$5 for rabies and \$10 for distemper/parvo. For more information call the Coahoma City Hall at 394-4287.

JUNIOR AND SENIOR BIG Spring High School parents who care about their children, are asked to attend the After Prom Party planning every Monday at 7 p.m. in the Big Spring High School Library. For more information call Susan McLellan at 267-5759 or Lee Ann Rollins at 267-4959 or 264-5072.

CORRECTION

In Thursday's School News section, Dane Richardson was misidentified in a photo provided by Forsan High School. Richardson is one of five students who will be advancing to the Regional UIL Literary Meet April 25 in Abilene.

MARKETS

May cotton 62.69 cents, up 29 points; May crude 15.43, down 13 points; Cash hogs steady at 50 cents higher at 35.50; cash steers steady at 50 cents lower at 66; April lean hog futures 51.02, up 35 points; April live cattle futures 68.27, up 20 points. courtesy: Delta Corporation. Noon quotes provided by Edward D. Jones

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Table with 2 columns: Index, Volume, and various market data points.

DERRICK WILBERT, 17, was arrested for no driver's license. HARASSMENT reported in the 400 block of Pennsylvania. THEFT reported in the 2300 block of Wasson, the 1700 block of E. Marcy, the 300 block of Owens, the 400 block of Birdwell, the 1600 block of Oriole, the 2900 block of Hunter's Glen and the 9000 block of Willia. CRIMINAL TRESPASS WARNING reported in the 700 block of W. U.S. Interstate 20 and the 1700 block of E. Marcy. BURGLARY/VEHICLE reported in the 200 block of Jefferson, the 700 block of Douglas and the 2900 block of U.S. Highway 80. ASSAULT reported in the 500 block of Westover, the 1600 block of Martin Luther King, Jr., the 1000 block of W. 6th, and the 600 block of Aylesford. BURGLARY/BUILDING reported in the 1000 block of Baylor. CRIMINAL MISCHIEF reported in the 1900 block of Alabama and the 2600 block of Wasson. BURGLARY/HABITATION reported in the 3300 block of U.S. Highway 80.

FIRE/EMS

Following is a summary of Big Spring Fire Department/EMS reports: Friday 1:21 p.m. - 600 block East FM-700, trauma call, service refused. 4:34 p.m. - 4th and Gregg, traffic accident, patient transported to Scenic Mountain Medical Center, service refused by three. 10:41 p.m. - 1800 block East Marcy, traffic accident, seven patients transported to SMMC. Saturday 10:51 a.m. - 1200 block Douglas, medical call, patient transported to SMMC. 1:00 p.m. - 3200 block Parkway, medical call, patient transported to SMMC. 6:24 p.m. - 1500 block Tucson, medical call, patient transported to SMMC. Sunday 7:30 a.m. - 500 block W. 17th, medical call, patient transported to SMMC. 9:37 a.m. - 400 block Aylesford, medical call, patient transported to SMMC. 12:31 p.m. - 900 block Mountain Park, medical call, patient transported to Shannon Medical. 2:33 p.m. - 6500 block CR 846, medical call, patient transported to SMMC. 3:12 p.m. - 3200 block Parkway, medical call, patient transported to SMMC. 5:15 p.m. - 1400 block E. 6th, medical call, patient transported to SMMC.

RECORDS

Sunday's high 86 Sunday's low 52 Average high 75 Average low 48 Record high 100 in 1972 Record low 27 in 1959 Precip. Sunday 0.00 Month to date 0.00 Month's normal 0.46 Year to date 2.71 Normal for the year 2.68

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JOHN WAYNE METCALF REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE FOR HOWARD COUNTY COMMISSIONER - PRECINCT 2 I WANT: City & County Unity, Better County Roads, Fire & Law Protection, To Be A Conservative Leader. I DON'T WANT: Commissioner Pay Raises, Higher Taxes, To Be A Rubber Stamp Commissioner. WHO CAN VOTE: Anyone that voted in the Republican Primary or anyone who did not vote at all is eligible to vote in the run-off election. WHERE: People in 207, vote at Coahoma City Hall. All others in Precinct 2, vote at Goliad Middle School.

MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL 24th & Johnson 267-8288

NALLEY-PICKLE & WELCH Funeral Home Trinity Memorial Park and Crematory 906 Gregg St. (915) 267-6331

Robert Francis Penner, 79, died Friday. Services will be 10:30 AM, Tuesday, at Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel. Graveside services will be at 11:00 AM, Wednesday, at Grove Hill Cemetery in Dallas.

Nellie Mae Smith, 91, died Sunday. Graveside services will be at 11:00 AM Tuesday at Wanette Cemetery, Wanette, Oklahoma. Leona Roman, 63, died Sunday. Services will be 2:00 PM Tuesday at Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park. Julian Duran, 62, died Monday. Services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home.

Big Spring Herald ISSN 0748-6811 USPS 0055-940 Daily except Saturday. BY THE MONTH HOME DELIVERY: Evenings and Sunday, \$8.65 monthly; \$93.42 yearly (includes 10% discount for yearly). MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$12.50 monthly Howard & Martin Counties. \$13.25 elsewhere. The Herald is a member of the Associated Press, Audit Bureau of Circulation, American Newspaper Association and West Texas Press. Periodicals postage paid at Big Spring, Texas, 79720-9998. POSTMASTER: Send change of address to: Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, Texas, 79720.

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Tornado Watch: Will El Nino change twisters' path?

FORDLAND, Mo. (AP) — Each spring, with every light dark green cloud, Jamey Wright's father would usher the family into a cellar, out of storms' way. Wright professes no fear today, but he learned early to respect the weather.

That may be good, because since 1950 the geographical center of tornado activity in the continental United States is Fordland, about 175 miles southeast of Kansas City — and, more precisely, on Wright's 136 acres.

Nearly five decades of data averaging twister latitudes and longitudes place Wright's property in the middle of the action although, to his knowledge, no tornado has ever hit his farm.

Perhaps one never will. With tornadoes, the past offers no clue to the future. And statisticians attach little significance to such a finding.

But Joe Eagleman, a meteorology professor at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, has plotted a similar "center of activity" on graphs for individual years. Such a spot, he says, is usually in central or southern Missouri.

Weather is a favorite topic for farmers here and April, the start of tornado season, keeps the conversation flowing. The big talk this year is El Nino, already blamed for rain and storms in the West and Southeast.

Though Wright insists "you can't outguess the weather," tornado experts are already watching for the funneling winds and guessing about El Nino's impact.

"The atmosphere is chaotic," says Howard Bluestein, meteorology professor at the University of Oklahoma, Norman. "It's very, very slight changes in what happens at the beginning — slight changes in what happens right now — that will affect what happens a week from now tremendously."

A factor or not, El Nino faces tough precedents. The planet's fiercest tornadoes touch down most often in the United States. On average, 836 sightings are reported each year.

From its Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Okla., the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

recorded more than 38,000 segments — twisters that stay on a straight path — between-1950 and 1995.

Those storms caused nearly 71,000 injuries and more than 4,100 deaths. That's an average of two injuries per twister, according to data compiled from newspaper accounts and National Weather Service reports.

An Associated Press analysis of that data shows that 75 percent of the tornadoes touched down in 17 states — in the Plains, Midwest and Southeast. These include Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas and Wisconsin.

Just this past week, tornadoes swept through Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi, leaving dozens of deaths in their wake.

Meteorologists do agree that El Nino — the intense warming of the Pacific Ocean off South America — has intensified in the United States and shifted

south the jet stream's winter winds, bringing floods to southern California and heavy rains and winds to Florida.

Will El Nino add kick to this season's tornadoes?

Predictions fluctuate like a meteorologist's wind gauge. William Monfredo, a graduate student at Mississippi State University in Starkville, is sanguine. Earning a master's degree in geoscience, he studies tornado data, El Nino statistics and atmospheric models. His conclusion: The Midwest will see fewer strong tornadoes.

Many side with farmer Wright, claiming flat-out that no one can make a sound prediction. KU's Eagleman and Joe Schaefer, director of Norman's center, say their studies show no definite correlation. Adds colleague Louis Wicker, a professor at Texas A&M University, in College Station: "I've chased storms, and I've been doing that for 18 springs. I can say with some confidence I have no clue."

With expertise rooted in local lore, some of Fordland's 530 residents offer their own ideas, the-

ories and memories of "the big ones."

Mary Jane Keen, Fordland's city clerk, insists that tornadoes follow the railroad tracks that cut through the heart of town. Other residents, including Wright, agree on the town's safe zone: the Dogwood General Store, 12 miles southeast of town, where Route Z crosses state Route 14.

"Z highway, two miles down the road, can get a downpour. Three miles down Highway 14 can get rain showers. We get nothing," says Mark Dever, whose family owns the store. "We haven't figured that one out yet."

The Wrights have had close calls. Wright remembers one unsettling evening, 20 years ago, when a neighbor joined him on his porch, about five miles south of town, to count funnel clouds as they formed. His wife, Diana, recalls the 1980s, when a storm forced her to find shelter inside the solid red bricks of Fordland Elementary School.

As a youngster growing up in nearby Diggins, Roger Bowers,

now an alderman in Fordland, remembers a tornado that came through during the early 1970s. Other family members bolted, "trying to get out before it took the house," and headed for a ditch. He and two relatives ended up outside, clinging to a clothesline pole.

Wright, along with other cattle ranchers south of town, considers his dairy barns shelter for humans as well as animals. Those 3-foot-deep pits, where farmers walk as they hook rows of cows to milking machines, are fine places to huddle.

Whether El Nino makes the season worse or not, Fordland is already bracing for storms, swapping three empty propane tanks for labor from the volunteer fire department to install a used tornado siren. It is to be sounded when a funnel cloud is spotted.

Spruced up with bright yellow paint, the siren — Fordland's first — hangs halfway up the town's water tower. But Wright is no more, or less, reassured.

"I don't worry about storms," he says. "Ain't much you can do."

Boomer parents bury heads on kids' marijuana use

NEW YORK (AP) — Baby Boomer parents just don't get it when it comes to drugs and their kids, a study by the Partnership for a Drug Free America shows.

The group's 10th poll showed that parents are consistently out of touch when it comes to the allure of marijuana on the nation's youth, and the easy access they have to the drug.

"Boomers — many of whom have 'been there, done that' — are surprisingly and ironically out of step with the reality of drugs in their children's lives," said Partnership President Richard D. Bonnette.

The poll found that parents underestimated the availability of marijuana, their children's view of its risks, and whether their children's friends were smoking.

"Few parents believe their children are at risk," said Bonnette. "Few sincerely believe their children are exposed to drugs, that drugs are widely available in the

schools their children attend. Nor do they know when drugs are likely to become a part of their children's lives."

Past Partnership studies showed that 60 percent of the Boomers had tried marijuana at least once.

The current study indicated that among children ages 9 to 12, the number who had tried marijuana was up from 334,000 in 1993 to 571,000 last year — an increase from 3 percent to 5 percent of children in that age group.

Marijuana use among ages 13 to 16 remained stable, but there was a significant increase among 17- and 18-year-olds — from 41 percent in 1996 to 48 percent last year.

Yet, the study indicated, parents believe their children are immune to those numbers. Some examples:

• Among parents, 43 percent believed their teens could find marijuana easily. Yet 58 percent of children said pot was readily available.

• Thirty-three percent of the parents thought their kids viewed marijuana as harmful. Among teens, only 18 percent — less than one in five — felt that smoking marijuana was risky.

• Among parents, 45 percent felt their teen had a friend who smoked marijuana. Among teens, 71 percent said they had a friend who had used marijuana.

• Twenty-one percent of parents thought their teen could have experimented with marijuana, while 44 percent of the teens said they actually had.

The Partnership is a private, nonprofit coalition of communications industry professionals, known for its anti-drug advertising campaign.

The survey was conducted last year among 1,922 children, 6,975 teens and 815 parents.

The margin of error for the children's data was plus or minus 2.2 percentage points; the teens, plus or minus 1.2; for the adults, plus or minus 3.4.

Clinton catches heat on make-up of panel set to help race relations

HOUSTON (AP) — A White House town meeting intended to smooth race relations has angered Latino activists who say the panel slights Hispanics.

Felipe Lopez, a basketball player at St. John's University, is the only Hispanic on the 11-member panel, which also includes President Clinton and nine athletic figures — six blacks and three whites.

"Whenever there's a dialogue on race, it's always black and white. They should begin considering Hispanics as part of the dialogue," Alfonso Maldonado, director of the Houston chapter of LULAC, said Sunday.

Lopez is just a token, the group said.

The 90-minute town hall meeting, part of the president's initiative on race, will discuss the impact of race in sports from the playground to the pro level. The forum will be televised on ESPN.

The cable sports network, which chose the panelists, announced the selection of Lopez on Sunday, after LULAC officials wrote Clinton to protest the absence of Hispanics. However, ESPN spokesman Chris LaPlaca said Lopez agreed to be a panelist on

Saturday. "We were looking for a variety of perspectives from different sports and ethnic backgrounds," he said. "We've been working very hard to address all that."

White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said ESPN sent out invitations to about two dozen Hispanic athletes, who declined for various reasons.

Lopez, a 23-year-old Dominican who lives in New York, said he doesn't mind being the only Hispanic on the panel and considers it an honor.

"It's great for myself, not only to be the only Hispanic there but one of the panelists. I will try to give my view about things," he said.

Joining Lopez on the panel are NFL Hall of Famer Jim Brown, Minnesota Vikings coach Dennis Green, track-and-field star Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Georgetown basketball coach John Thompson, New York Jets receiver Keyshawn Johnson and ESPN analyst Joe Morgan, all of whom are black.

Also on the panel are San Francisco 49ers President Carmen Policy, San Diego Padres owner John Moores and Georgia athletic director Vince Dooley, all of whom are white.

Houston ISD tries to eliminate social promotions

HOUSTON (AP) — Social promotion — or moving students up to the next grade who aren't academically ready — is the target of a proposal Houston school trustees will consider on Thursday.

The plan by Superintendent Rod Paige would essentially end the Houston district's long-standing policy limiting the number of times a student can be held back, the Houston Chronicle reported.

The policy, which until recently was a Texas Education Agency rule, said that students may be retained only once in elementary school and once in middle school. The idea is to prevent students from gaining too many years on their classmates.

Paige's proposal comes in the midst of a campaign by Texas Gov. George W. Bush to end social promotion statewide. Bush is drafting his own proposal to be presented to the

Legislature next year.

Last year, 6 percent of all students in the Houston Independent School District were held back while 7.7 percent were promoted despite failing grades.

The problem is most obvious in the ninth grade, where thousands of students promoted out of middle school can't pass their high school coursework to earn graduation credits.

As a result, the ninth-grade enrollment in HISD is about 19,000 students, compared with about 15,000 in eighth grade, 12,000 in 10th grade and 7,000 in 12th.

"Our high school is full of students who have been placed in high school simply because of their age, not because of their proficiency," said Austin High School teacher Debbi Savage. "Every high school in HISD deals with that problem on a yearly basis."

But, as teachers know all too well, merely retaining a child and forcing him to repeat a grade doesn't solve the problem either.

"The biggest problem we've had is we tend over the years to look at social promotion as an either-or," said Gayle Fallon, president of the Houston Federation of Teachers.

"Either we pass them on when we shouldn't or we retain them and have the 20-year-old third grader. And we don't look at what is a much better option, which is stop the child, pull him out and teach him what he doesn't know."

Fallon and Houston Education Association President Jon Dansby, a middle school counselor, worry that Paige's proposal so far lacks detail on what intervention strategies and resources will be used to help kids keep pace academically.

But Paige said he is seeking

input from teachers, principals and administrators before filling in more details.

According to the proposal, which is now before the board on first reading, students would have to attend summer school if they don't meet promotion standards beginning at least for some grades at the end of the 1998-99 school year.

Promotion standards would be based on three criteria — whether the student passes certain portions of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills, whether he is close to grade level on the Stanford Achievement Test and whether his classroom grades are passing.

Students who fail to meet at least two of the three standards would not be promoted to the next grade until they receive help from a program designed to boost performance for students considered at-risk.

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NOTICE
REPUBLICAN PARTY PRIMARY RUNOFF GLASSCOCK COUNTY
EARLY VOTING FOR THE RUNOFF IN GLASSCOCK COUNTY WILL BEGIN ON APRIL 6 AT THE COUNTY DISTRICT CLERKS OFFICE IN THE COURTHOUSE GLASSCOCK COUNTY AND WILL END ON APRIL 10 AT 4 PM
VOTING HOURS ARE 8 AM TILL 4 PM
CANDIDATES IN RUNOFF ARE:
ATTORNEY GENERAL RACE:
BARRY WILLIAMSON & JOHN CORNYN
JUDGE COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS PLACE 1:
VICKI ISAACKS & MIKE KEASLER
JUDGE COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS PLACE 2:
HARVEY HUDSON & CHERYL JOHNSON
GLASSCOCK DISTRICT/COUNTY CLERK:
DONNA EGEMEYER & CLAUDIA BROWN
GLASSCOCK COUNTY COMMISSIONER PRECT. 2:
WAYNE M. "TEX" HALFMANN & TERRY LANKFORD
ELECTION DAY APRIL 14, 1998 (TUESDAY)
POLLING PLACES
PRECINCT 1 ST. LAWRENCE CATHOLIC CENTER (2408 FM 2401 ST. LAWRENCE)
PRECINCT 2 CHURCH OF CHRIST (200 SOUTH MAIN ST. GARDEN CITY)
PRECINCT 3 DRUMWRIGHT COMMUNITY CENTER (2200 DRUMWRIGHT ROAD)
PRECINCT 4 METHODIST CHURCH (400 NORTH MAIN ST. GARDEN CITY)
PLEASE VOTE

MONDAY

APR. 13

Table with 33 columns representing different TV channels (KMYD, KPEJ, KERA, etc.) and rows listing programs and their start times (6:30, 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10:30, 11:30, 12:30).

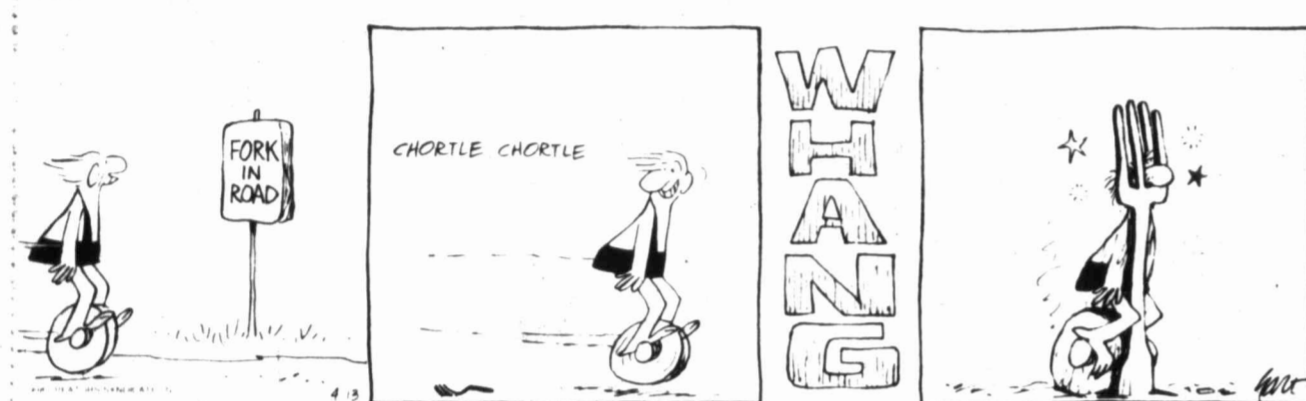
HAGAR



BLONDIE



B.C.



FAMILY CIRCUS



DENNIS THE MENACE



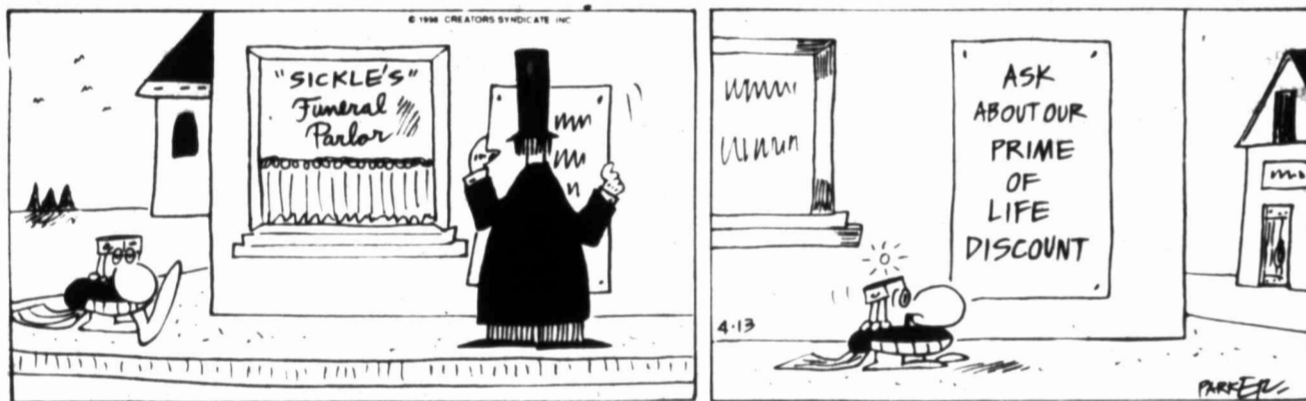
GEECH



"Friday the 13th sneaked up on us and came on a Monday."

"I LIKE FISH, BUT HE REALLY LIKES FISH!"

WIZARD OF ID



THIS DATE IN HISTORY

Today is Monday, April 13, the 103rd day of 1998. There are 262 days left in the year.

THE Daily Crossword

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

HI AND LOIS



GASOLINE ALLEY



Saturday's Puzzle Solved section with a grid and solutions for various words.

SNUFFY SMITH



BETLE BAILY



Big Spring Herald advertisement with contact information and subscription details.

edict was abrogated in 1685 by King Louis XIV, who declared France entirely Catholic again. On this date: In 1742, Handel's "Messiah" was first performed publicly, in Dublin, Ireland. In 1743, the third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, was born in present-day Albemarle County, Va. In 1870, the Metropolitan Museum of Art was founded in New York. In 1943, President Roosevelt dedicated the Jefferson Memorial. In 1958, Van Cliburn became the first American to win the Tchaikovsky International Piano Contest in Moscow. In 1970, Apollo 13, four-fifths of the way to the moon, was crippled when a tank containing liquid oxygen burst. (The astronauts managed to return safely.) In 1986, Pope John Paul II visited a Rome synagogue in the first recorded papal visit of its kind. In 1992, the Great Chicago Flood took place as the city's century-old tunnel system and adjacent basements filled with water from the Chicago River. Ten years ago: A commandeered Kuwaiti jetliner took off from Cyprus for Algeria, after the pro-Iranian Shiite Muslim hijackers on board freed 12 hostages. Five years ago: Pulitzer Prizes were awarded to David McCullough for his biography "Truman," to Robert Olen Butler for his collection of short stories "A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain" and to Tony Kushner for his drama "Angels in America: Millennium Approaches." The gold medal for public service went to The Miami Herald for its Hurricane Andrew coverage. One year ago: With tanks, sharpshooters and thousands of police deployed to protect him, Pope John Paul II preached forgiveness during a mass in Sarajevo. Tiger Woods became the youngest person to win the Masters Tournament and the first player of partly African heritage to claim a major golf title. Today's Birthdays: Former Minnesota Gov. Harold Stassen is 91. Author Eudora Welty is 89. Actor Howard Keel is 79. Movie director Stanley Donen is 74. Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, R-Colo., is 65. Actor Lyle Waggoner is 63. Actor Edward Fox is 61. Playwright Lanford Wilson is 61. Actor Paul Sorvino is 59. Movie and TV composer Bill Conti is 56. Rock musician Jack Casady is 54. Actor Tony Dow is 53. Singer Al Green is 52.