



Texas Gov. Rick Perry covers his face in prayer as Cornerstone Church pastor John Hagee and son Matthew, right, pray for the good of the political candidates in attendance at the sermon in San Antonio in November.

2006 brings another victory to Rick Perry

By **KELLEY SHANNON**
AP Political Writer

AUSTIN — This year brought another victory for Republican Gov. Rick Perry and more Texas House seats for Democrats, and now conservative Perry is finishing the political season with a moderate tone.



Perry

Whether he sticks with that approach in the 2007 legislative session will be clear soon as lawmakers return to Austin on Jan. 9. Certainly, Perry won't have a looming campaign to worry about when the Legislature meets.

He secured his second

full term as governor by winning in November and hasn't indicated any plans to run again in four years, though there's no term limit that would prevent him from doing so. He will be the state's longest serving governor if he completes his term.

"This is a candidate who's won every election he's ever entered, and this is his last rodeo," said Austin political consultant Bill Miller, predicting that Perry's own views will shape his governing more so than election concerns.

Fellow Republicans — House Speaker Tom Craddick and Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst — rule the Legislature. But Perry

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McEwen optimistic about city's future

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

City Mayor Russ McEwen says there are plenty of exciting things to look forward to for Big Spring in 2007.

According to McEwen, one of the most important goals he and other city officials have is making sure the funds from the recently approved bond election are utilized in the most effective manner possible.

"As we move forward I think one of the most important goals we should have for 2007 involves the proceeds from the

bond elections," said McEwen. "As we begin to work with the streets in downtown Big Spring and the sports complex, I feel like we need to make sure we make the most of these funds."

Voters gave the two projects the go-ahead during the November election. Proposition 2, \$5.08 million for improvements to youth sports facilities, didn't pass overwhelmingly — just 2,125 for to 1,891 against. But the \$9.2 million for improvements to streets and roadways was approved by a margin of 2,614 votes to 1,420.

The streets project will allow

"I feel like we're headed in the right direction, and I feel like we'll continue to do so."



McEwen

reconstruction of Scurry and Main streets from First Street north to near FM 700 and the reworking of First and Second streets in the downtown area, to include sidewalks and period lighting.

The sports complex project will broaden the Roy Anderson softball complex so that it will offer baseball, softball, soccer and football in what McEwen described as a "first class" facility.

McEwen said he and city officials will also be ready to lend a helping hand to the Dallas-based Settles Hotel Development Company, which purchased a downtown landmark in December.

"We're trying to do everything we can to see to it that the effort to renovate the Settles Hotel comes to fruition," said

McEwen. "This is a very important part of our efforts to revitalize the downtown area."

The city council accepted a \$75,000 offer from the company — led by Big Spring native G. Brint Ryan — to purchase the abandoned Settles Hotel in November. Cursory estimates for the project, which would renovate the structure into a mixed use commercial and residential complex, have been placed between \$10 million and \$12 million, according to officials with local economic devel-

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Holidays stress city's refuse pickup efforts

But collection crews will be working hard to get the job done, official assures

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

The Christmas Holiday weekend has a lot of area residents talkin' trash, as city of Big Spring sanitation crews struggle to catch up with an overwhelming offering of

refuse.

According to Todd Darden, director of public works for the city, his offices have received numerous calls from area sanitation customers complaining about trash pickup.

"City offices and city

hall have been receiving complaints since the holiday," said Darden. "People want to know why their trash hasn't been picked up yet."

The answer, according to Darden, is two-fold.

"Taking off for the Christmas holiday natu-

rally put us behind from the start," said Darden. "We've had crews working diligently to get caught up. However, that brings us to the second problem, which is the sheer amount of trash that's being picked up."

Darden said city sanita-

tion crews normally pick up an estimated 125 tons of trash each day, compared to the estimated 200 tons crews have been picking up each day since the holiday.

"The amount is really amazing," said Darden.

"Of course, it's not help-

ing us get caught up."

Big Spring isn't the only city having trouble picking up its Christmas mess, according to Darden, who said the city of Odessa is in a similar position as well.

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SNOW FOR SALE

LOVELAND, Colo. (AP) — Call it a winter sale. Jim and Mary Walker are selling snow on eBay. Starting bids were holding steady Friday at 99 cents for samples from "Blizzard I and Blizzard II."

The Walkers got the idea for selling snow after shoveling mounds from two storms a week apart that dumped more than 4 feet along the Front Range.

"I figured eBay has ghosts and all sorts of weird stuff, so why not snow?" said Mary Walker. How much snow the winning bid gets depends. Walker's auction notice suggests avoiding shipping and handling charges by stopping by their home and picking it up — in a dump truck.

CHAMBER TICKETS

Tickets go on sale this week for the annual Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce Banquet, set for Thursday, Jan. 18.

Tickets are \$22 each and will be available at the chamber office. Businesses interesting in decorating a table for the banquet — and promoting themselves in the process — can get more information on doing that by calling 263-7641.

The deadline to purchase tickets is Jan. 15.

Local celebrity Tumbleweed Smith will be guest speaker for the banquet, which will include presentation of the Man and Woman of the Year.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- Jan. 6, Fifth Annual Chili Cookoff benefiting West Texas Centers for MHMR Children in Need Fund, to be held at the Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 3188.
- Jan. 11, RSVP Travel Showcase, Dora Roberts Community Center.
- Jan. 17-20, Howard County Junior Livestock Show.
- Jan. 18, Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce Banquet.
- Jan. 19, Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Jan. 20, 18th Annual Boss Hogg Chili Cookoff, Harley Davidson Shop.
- Jan. 25, Hangar 25 Air Museum annual membership meeting.

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Obituaries

Edith Ellene Thompson Russell



Edith Ellene Thompson Russell, 90, of Big Spring, died Friday, Dec. 29, 2006, in a local hospital. Graveside services will be held at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2007, at Trinity Memorial Park, with the Rev. Jim Wright, associate pastor of First United Methodist Church officiating.

The family will receive friends from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday at the funeral home.

She was born Oct. 2, 1916, in Bosque County and married George Russell July 16, 1949, in Brownwood. He predeceased her in death Dec. 8, 1984. Mrs. Russell was an educator and graduated from North Texas University with a degree in home economics. She taught in schools across Texas, including Big Spring where she began teaching in 1946. She was a devoted mother, wife, grandmother and great-grandmother. She took great pride in keeping her home, cooking and raising her girls and taking them to gymnastic meets. She loved to read and sew.

She was a long-time member of Wesley United Methodist Church where she taught Sunday school for many years. She was a member of First United Methodist Church for a number of years prior to her death.

Survivors include two daughters, Susan and husband, Clark Lowery of Big Spring and Ruth and husband, Bob Seiwel of Lake Jackson; three sisters, Dorothy and husband, Don Lewis of Burkburnette, Mildred and husband, Jay Reeves of Bangs and Jo Lockett of Brownwood; and sister-in-law Loreta Thompson of Brady. She is also survived by six beloved grandchildren, Erin Lillian of Lake Jackson, Craig Seiwel of Galveston, Ashley Rains of Austin, Alyssa Rains of Big Spring, C.J. and Mitchell Lowery of Lubbock; five great-grandchildren, Tristan, Kayli, Kori, Brandon and Cody and numerous nieces and nephews. Also preceeding Mrs. Russell in death were her parents, Blue and Lula Thompson; sister Ruth Gladine Thompson and brother Ezelle Thompson. She will be greatly missed by family and friends.

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

Paid obituary

Samuel Sanders

Samuel Sanders, 69, of Coahoma, died Monday, Jan. 1, 2007, at his residence. His services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Take Note

HERITAGE MUSEUM IS WORKING with Tumbleweed Smith to produce a video documentary on the life of Pat McCormick, the famous woman bull-fighter from Big Spring.

If you have information to share about her, you are invited to come to the museum between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 11. Comments will be videotaped for use in the documentary.

A FUND HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED at Big Spring Government Employees Federal Credit Union, 503 E. FM 700, to help defray funeral expenses for Tory Mitchell. To contribute, make the donation in care of Annie Farr or simply request that it go to the Tory Mitchell fund.

THE POWWOW COMMITTEE OF BIG SPRING is planning its 2007 Powwow and is in need of new members and volunteers. Anyone interested in Native American dancing or just interested in helping to bring an exciting weekend event to Big Spring is encouraged to contact Robert Downing at 263-3255 or Randy McKinney at 267-4843.

CHRIST COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP IS COLLECTING INFANT CAR SEATS AND CARRIERS. These are given to new mothers who cannot afford them.

To donate your old or new car seats and carriers, call Karen Allen at 263-3517 or leave a message at Christ Community Fellowship, 263-love. All donations are appreciated.

ROAD TO RECOVERY, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, seeks volunteers to drive cancer patients to treatment in Midland. This requires just a few hours commitment each month. To volunteer, or to request a ride for treatment, call Nancy Koger at 267-7809.

THE PET PATROL helps locate lost pets and owners of found pets. To volunteer or for more information, call Melanie Gambrell at 267-PETS (7387).

Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity between 10 a.m. Saturday and 7 a.m. today:

- **ANTHONY DAILEY**, 40, of Kentucky, was arrested Saturday on a Virginia warrant.
- **MANUEL MATA**, 20, of 700 N. Moss Lake Road, was arrested Sunday on a charge of minor in consumption of an alcoholic beverage.
- **RYAN KENDRICK**, 29, of 910 W. Third Street, was arrested Sunday on a Howard County warrant and a charge of failure to identify.
- **JASON THREATS**, 28, of 2611 Fairchild, was arrested Sunday on a Howard County warrant and charges of evading arrest and driving while license invalid.
- **ANGELA MCGEE**, 24, of 603 E. 15th Street, was arrested Sunday on charges of possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of a prohibited weapon.
- **THEFT** was reported:
 - in the 1300 block of Tucson.
 - in the 900 block of Willia.
 - in the 1100 block of Lamesa.
- **FAILURE TO IDENTIFY AS A FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE - GIVING FALSE INFORMATION** was reported in the 1000 block of Lancaster.
- **EVADING ARREST OR DETENTION WITH A VEHICLE** was reported in the 500 block of Fifth Street.
- **BURGLARY OF A HABITATION** was reported in the 4000 block of Sixth Street.
- **ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE** was reported in the 2600 block of Dow.

Sheriff's report

The Howard County Sheriff's Office reported the following activity:

- **FIREWORKS PROBLEM** was reported:
 - in the 1900 block of Eubanks.
 - in the 200 block of Wooten.
- **SHOTS FIRED** was reported in the 2400 block of Gatesville.

Support Groups

MONDAY

• Encourager's Support Group for all widows and widowers meets the first and third Monday of the month. For more information, call Nancy Hale at 398-5239.

TUESDAY

• The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) support group meets from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Howard County Library, 500 S. Main. Anyone who has a mental illness or has a friend or family with mental illness is invited to participate. Call Felicia Talley at 268-3835 for more information.

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

• Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. and closed discussion meeting 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

• RSD (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, a chronic pain disease), a new support and informative group meets at 213 Circle. Call Lucy at 264-1213 for more information.

• Dual Recovery Anonymous (DRA), 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Howard County Library Basement Community Room. DRA is a 12-step meeting for those who have a desire to stop drinking and/or using drugs and also have a mental or emotional illness.

All meetings are non-smoking and coffee is not available but members can bring their own coffee or non-alcoholic beverage. For more information, call Deidra F. at 263-0027, ext. 236 during regular business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Bulletin Board

If you have items for the Bulletin board, contact the Herald news room at 263-7331 or email editor@bigspringherald.com

TUESDAY

- Coahoma Senior Citizen luncheon is set for 11 a.m. in the Coahoma Community Center.
- Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- League of Latin American Citizens LULAC Chapter 4791 meets at 6 p.m. in the board room of the YMCA. For more information, contact Jennifer Patton at 714-4185 or 263-6351 or 816-6962.
- Texas Motorcycle Rights Association meets at 7 p.m. in the Spanish Inn. The public is invited. Call 268-6421 for more information.
- VFW Post 2013 meets at 7 p.m. in the VFW Hall, 500 Driver Road.
- Sheriff's Posse meets at 7 p.m. in the clubhouse on the Andrews Highway.
- Alzheimer's Association, the Greater West Texas Chapter meets at 2 p.m. in the Howard County Library conference room, 500 S. Main.
- Gospel Singing in the Kentwood Activity Center at 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome.
- Order of the Eastern Star No. 67 meets at 7:30 p.m. at 221 Main.

WEDNESDAY

- Optimist Club meets at 7 a.m. in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- Senior Circle meets at 10:30 a.m. at Scenic Mountain Medical Center for Sit and Be Fit Chair Aerobics. Those 50 years and older are invited to attend. Call 268-4721.
- Downtown Lions Club meets at noon at the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- Duplicate Bridge Club meets at 1 p.m. in the Big Spring Country Club.
- Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie meets at 7 p.m. in the Eagles Lodge at 703 W. Third.

THURSDAY

- Gideon International Big Spring Camp U42060 meets at 7 a.m. in Herman's Restaurant.
- Coffee Club meets at 10 a.m. in Gale's Sweet Shoppe.
- Kiwanis Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane. Call 267-6479.

Weather

Tonight...Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 20s. East winds around 10 mph becoming light and variable.

Tuesday...Mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s. Light and variable winds.

Tuesday night...Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of rain or snow. Lows in the lower 30s. Light and variable winds.

Wednesday...Mostly cloudy. Slight chance of rain or snow in the morning...Then a chance of rain and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs in the mid 40s. South winds around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Wednesday night...Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of showers. Lows in the mid 30s.

Thursday...Mostly sunny. Not as cool. Highs in the lower 60s.

Thursday night...Mostly clear. Lows in the upper 30s.

Friday...Sunny. Highs around 70.

Friday night...Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 30s.

Saturday...Mostly cloudy. Much colder. Highs in the mid 40s.

Saturday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 20s.

Sunday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the mid 50s.

24506

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5 dead, hundreds without power following Panhandle storms

AMARILLO (AP) — Skies cleared over much of the Texas Panhandle on Sunday but roads were still icy following brutal wintry weather that left at least five people dead and knocked out power to thousands, officials said.

The storm hit the region hard Friday and Saturday, creating dangerously slick roadways that led to three fatal wrecks in the Amarillo area.

A man and two children died Saturday when the car in which they were riding slid into an oncoming train, Randall County sheriff's spokesman

Danny Alexander said. A woman and another child were injured in the accident.

Arron Jimenez, her half brother and her three children were returning from a grocery shopping trip to get supplies for a seafood dinner for a New Year's celebration when the accident occurred. Jimenez's 3-year-old daughter Kandice and her 4-month-old son Richard died in the crash, as did her half brother Patrick Suhl, 20.

"It was so wet and slippery and icy and I couldn't stop and we basically jumped the railroad tracks and landed on top

of it," Jimenez said in a story for Monday's edition of the *Amarillo Globe-News*. "At that point, we were in shock, and the only thing we could see was the train coming at us. We unbuckled Richard. Patrick had Richard, and I got out. Kandice was still in the car, and I told Patrick to grab her. I started running and the next thing I knew, the train hit the car, and I jumped on top of Anjolina."

Anjolina, 1-1/2, and Jimenez were injured.

"My son died trying to save the two things he loved the most," Patrick Suhl's mother,

Eve, said. "Why God decided to take them, I don't know. I'll never know."

Jimenez's husband, Santana, is a Marine serving his third tour of duty in Iraq, the newspaper reported.

On Friday, Amber Nichole Hajje, 20, of Amarillo, died when the car she was riding in slid out of control on a slick overpass and struck another vehicle, according to the Amarillo Police Department. Dominic Archie, 19, also of Amarillo, died Saturday in a similar accident, police said.

The storms, which intensified

Saturday afternoon, knocked out power to thousands of customers in the region.

About 1,000 homes and businesses remained without electricity Sunday evening, Wes Reeves, a spokesman for Xcel Energy, told The Associated Press. As many as 4,000 customers were without power earlier in the afternoon.

"We've had a lot of pole damage out in the rural areas," Reeves said. "They're being pulled down by lines that are weighted by ice, but the wind is the real problem now."

POLITICS

Continued from Page 1A

has the power of the veto and the bully pulpit as the chief executive, and he will again try to make his mark when lawmakers convene. That may mean working more closely with Democrats, who have larger numbers in the House than last session.

Craddick, too, could feel pressure from inside and outside his party. Rep. Brian McCall, R-Plano, is hoping a coalition of Democrats and disgruntled Republicans will help him topple Craddick, who's been House speaker since 2002. Some legislators complain that Craddick's leadership style is too authoritarian. House members will elect a speaker on the session's first day, with 76 votes needed to win.

Republicans held an 85-64 majority in the House before this year's election, but Democrats

gained five seats. The GOP is expected to hold an 81-69 edge once a special legislative election runoff in Houston is decided between two Republicans, likely in January.

Perry and other state Republican leaders will have to strike a middle balance to get things done, said political strategist Kelly Fero, who worked on several of the winning Democrats' legislative campaigns.

"The bridge between the partisan divide is now narrower," Fero said. "When it's in the middle, that's when good government happens."

Republicans hold a 20-11 advantage in the state Senate.

Since the election, Perry has been talking more frequently in public about working with members of both political parties. His spokesman, Robert Black, said that's nothing new.

"The fact is that Governor Perry has always worked bipartisanship with Republicans

and Democrats who are willing to work in a bipartisan manner," Black said.

Perry finished his fall campaign aggressively courting GOP conservatives — by labeling Democratic opponent Chris Bell a Washington liberal; taking the stage at an ultra-conservative televangelist's church; and refusing to talk much about immigrant policy though championing a border crime crackdown.

His campaign took frequent jabs at Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn, a feisty former Republican who left the party and ran against Perry as an independent, and occasionally swiped at independent comedian candidate Kinky Friedman.

But Perry's demeanor seemed to subdue after the election. He said he wanted to expand on the bipartisan work done in the 2006 school finance special legislative session.

"We need less partisan-

ship. We need less cynicism. We need more bridge building," Perry said the morning after the election.

Over the next few weeks he denounced proposed anti-immigrant legislation as divisive. He spoke in more detail than he had been about the need for a guest worker program for Mexican immigrants and of the cultural and economic ties between Texas and Mexico. That brought praise from groups as diverse as the People for the American Way, which describes itself as a progressive constitutional rights organization, and the Texas Association of Business, the major business lobby group that often champions conservative causes.

Explaining the switch in tone, Black said the

governor has long recognized there's a difference between politicking and governing.

Big issues in the coming legislative session are expected to be the property tax appraisal system; higher education funding and admissions; immigration and border security; and, as always, public education funding.

Perry has hired outgoing Sen. Ken Armbrister, a conservative Victoria Democrat, to be his legislative director, meaning he will push the governor's agenda with lawmakers. Armbrister is known as someone who works with legislators of both political parties, Black said.

"It should signal to both houses," Black said, "he wants to get things done."

Also part of the political and legislative equation will be maneuvering among statewide Republican elected officials for future higher office, Miller said.

It's widely believed that Dewhurst and Republican Attorney General Greg Abbott are considering runs for other offices. Both easily won re-election in November.

"The whole Republican lineup is going to shift in the next four years," Miller said. "I think the posturing and positioning of Republican candidates for other offices statewide, you'll begin to see the view of that early on."

TRASH

Continued from Page 1A

"We want to apologize to the city residents for any inconvenience this may have caused," said Darden. "We're trying to get to everyone as quickly

as possible." Darden said customers with complaints should call the city sanitation department at 264-2383.

Contact Staff Writer Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail at citydesk@bigspringherald.com

CITY

Continued from Page 1A

opment agency Moore Development.

And while McEwen is hesitant to make any steadfast predictions for 2007, he said he's confident the city is on the right track.

"I feel like the community will continue to progress in a positive way," said McEwen. "I feel like we're headed in the right direction, and I feel like we'll continue to

do so."

Contact Staff Writer Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail at citydesk@bigspringherald.com

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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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John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

Bill McClellan
News Editor

OUR VIEWS

Shallow promise

Incoming House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., pledged to run the "most open" Congress in history. Unfortunately, that promise doesn't seem to extend to letting the American people see what's really happening on the House floor. In a letter released the Friday before Christmas, Pelosi delivered a lump of coal to C-SPAN, which had asked to be freed from the restrictive rules that — since House proceedings first were televised in 1979 — have kept the cameras under control of the House and limited footage to tight shots of the podium or the lawmaker who's speaking. Senate rules are similarly constraining. As C-SPAN's president, Brian Lamb, explained in his letter to Pelosi asking that the cable network's cameras be permitted in the chamber, "This compromise was crafted long ago to convince wary members to allow congressional sessions to be televised, and in the ensuing years it has become an anachronism that does a disservice to the institution and to the public. ... Rules and established practices prevent congressional cameras from taking individual reaction shots or from panning the chamber, leaving viewers with an incomplete picture of what's happening in the House of Representatives."

Through its years of televising floor proceedings, and its sober, unbiased coverage of congressional hearings and other events, C-SPAN has demonstrated that it is both essential and responsible. There is no reason to prevent its cameras from operating freely in both the House and Senate. Pelosi, however, disagrees. "I believe that the dignity and decorum of the United States House of Representatives are best preserved by maintaining the current system of televised proceedings," she wrote to Lamb.

But why shouldn't those who want to see what's going on in the House — it's the people's House, after all — be able to have the same view as if they were in the chamber? What's to hide — lawmakers orating to an empty House, or, to take one example, then-Majority Leader Tom DeLay buttonholing a balky member during the Medicare prescription drug vote in 2003?

C-SPAN may have better luck with another of its requests: to have immediate access to voting records. As Lamb explained in his letter, the House has had electronic voting for decades, but "official public release of individual votes is still delivered long after a vote has closed" — often hours later. Pelosi said she had asked the House clerk to look into a change; it's hard to imagine that this can't be done.

— The Washington Post

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Democratic hopefuls lining up

It is just now 2007, and the field of Democratic contenders for the presidency in 2008 is filling up. John Edwards is in, as is Joe Biden and Tom Vilsack. The two former nominees could end up either in or out: Kerry shouldn't run, but might, and Gore is a complete wild card. The rock stars are getting ready to plunge: Hillary is officially looking. So is Obama. And for both, the conclusion will be inescapable. If not now, when?

It just might be the most exciting Democratic race in 40 years.

The Hillary-Obama matchup as a main event is tough to beat — not just a woman and a black, but this woman taking on this black man. Whether Barack Obama is qualified to be president is a question that will be much discussed. But what he has accomplished to date in becoming a national figure is evidence of the sort of talent for the business of politics that a presidential nominating campaign both tests and rewards.

Can he go from state to state dazzling people, winning in the rooms you have to work, inspiring volunteers and caucus goers, and collecting contributions? That's an easy question. If you were inventing a candidate to challenge

Hillary on both high drama and sheer toughness, you couldn't do better than a black man running to her left on the war, and on the future to her past, with the kind of rock star charisma and all-things-to-all-people appeal that reminds most people more of Bill than Hillary.

But you also have a "second tier" that in another year might be considered more than that: Edwards, the former North Carolina Senator and vice-presidential nominee who is currently leading the Iowa polls; Senator Joe Biden, who sets the bar on foreign policy expertise; and even the two former nominees, each of them imagining that the party will turn to them to fulfill their fates.

There is certainly a scenario that has one of the white men riding to the rescue (of course, it just looks that way) when or if one of the frontrunners stumbles and we really are forced to confront the question of whether we will nominate the other. Is America ready for a woman or black president is a big question, and its legitimacy will be debated almost as much as its merits, but it won't go away.

The challenge for the "other" candidates is to command attention, which is what John Edwards tried to do by choosing a usually slow news week to announce. He obviously didn't count on Gerald Ford dying, much less on him having as much to say after as he did beforehand. The fact that Ford is getting so much press for having been willing to criticize the

current president is telling. George Bush is more newsworthy than Gerald Ford. Former presidents and would-be presidents have this much in common.

Hillary and Obama attract media attention like magnets. For Edwards/Biden/Vilsack, etc., there must be efforts to create it. Of course, everyone has the potential to stand out at a debate, and in primary campaigns there tend to be many debates, but even those are down the road. In the meantime, amid the business of building an organization, collecting money and seeking endorsements, criticizing those who command more attention than you is one of the easiest ways to draw flies. Bush and McCain are the two most obvious targets, and the war, the obvious topic.

"Will Democrats really stand up to Bush?" people are always asking me. Usually, they're thinking about the Democrats in the House and Senate.

The Democrats running for president certainly will.

They have no reason not to. And there's a bumper crop of them, already going, with every incentive to be as noisy as possible when they do.

To find out more about Susan Estrich and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com.

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Ford's impressive accomplishments

Gerald Ford saw himself as a healing president. After the trauma of Watergate and Richard Nixon's resignation, Americans were divided and disillusioned.

Ford wanted to unite the nation and reassure citizens that their president was honest. During one of my interviews with the former president, he reflected: "In the relatively short period of time that I served, the major problem was to restore integrity and public confidence in the White House, which we did."

Ford did that, but he did more. Across many policies, he left an imprint that later presidents followed. He continued Cold War containment against communism while negotiating a new arms-control agreement with the Soviet Union. Domestically, an overriding issue involved the economy. Ford became president during an economic crisis. In 1974, inflation ran at 11 percent and in late 1974 the nation slipped into its worst recession since the Great Depression.

The new president rose to the challenge. He had majored in economics at the University of Michigan and enjoyed economic policy-making. As president, he focused on inflation, calling it the country's No. 1 domestic enemy. He believed in restraining government spending to lower inflation, using the federal budget as a tool to do so. His years on the House Appropriations Committee had made Ford a budget expert, and he kept a vigilant watch on federal spending. He vetoed an astounding 66 bills, saying that the vetoes saved \$43 billion.

He encouraged a tight monetary policy at the Federal Reserve, and by adjusting fiscal and monetary policies Ford presided over a sizable drop in inflation, which stood at 5.7 percent in 1976.

The anti-inflation focus has been a mainstay of government policy ever since. That marked a significant shift. After the Great Depression, policy-makers had

concentrated on keeping unemployment low.

After Ford, they instead fixed their attention on inflation, a stance exemplified by Alan Greenspan, who chaired Ford's Council of Economic Advisers and who later used his formidable powers as Federal Reserve chairman to control inflation through interest rates.

Ford wanted to attack inflation by another means, deregulation. Government regulations increased business costs, which companies passed on to consumers as higher prices. Ford became the first president to implement comprehensive studies on deregulating various industries.

Although his term proved too short to implement these reforms, succeeding presidents did: Jimmy Carter, for example, deregulated the airline and trucking industries, and Bill Clinton did the same for cable television. The most important deregulation effort that Ford began was in energy policy. In an ill-fated attempt to reduce inflation, Nixon had imposed price controls on domestically produced oil. The controls caused the 1970s energy crisis because they discouraged oil companies from producing oil, which the classic law of supply and demand predicted. Ford induced Congress to pass legislation to remove oil price controls gradually; Carter continued the process, and Ronald Reagan finished it. So, by the 1980s, America experienced no crippling oil shortages as during the 1970s.

Ford's foresight in energy policy extended to alternative fuels and conservation. He encouraged power plants to switch from oil to coal, which became the country's No. 1 energy source. He signed legislation that allowed right turns at red traffic lights, saving gas that motorists wasted while idling.

His conservation measures also included corporate average fuel economy standards for automakers and appliance labeling for consumers, which helped them to choose energy-efficient household appliances. Today, coal remains the nation's foremost fuel, and Americans still benefit from right-

on-red and appliance labeling, 30 years after Ford left office.

The 38th president showed the same long-range vision in diplomacy. He began meetings with leaders of America's industrialized allies; all presidents since Ford continued these sessions, today known as the G-8 summits, which allow the heads of state to coordinate economic policies. As his signal foreign policy achievement, Ford pointed to the 1975 Helsinki Accords. By fostering greater movement of people and information in Eastern Europe, these accords encouraged citizens there to agitate for more freedom and helped to bring down the Iron Curtain.

During just 895 days, Ford achieved much. His accomplishments loom larger when they appear as policy foundations that guided future presidents and benefited future Americans. That perspective would please Ford. As president, he knew that the problems he faced — inflation, the energy crisis and post-World War II boundaries in Eastern Europe — resulted from actions previous presidents had taken. He recognized that his decisions would affect future chief executives, and he took pains to make the right choices.

Paradoxically, Ford also benefited from being an unelected president. Many of his policies, observed Ford's economic adviser Paul MacAvoy, grew "out of the fresh earth" because he explored and judged them on their merits rather than on campaign promises he had made. Above all, Ford took a long-term view on policies. He once wrote, "A politician is interested in the next election. A statesman is concerned with the next generation." That principle guided Ford's thinking, and it explains why his actions resonate through the years, extending far beyond his presidency. That impact stands as one of Gerald Ford's great legacies.

Yanek Mieczkowski is an associate professor of history at Dowling College on Long Island, who has authored "Gerald Ford and the Challenges of the 1970s."



YANEK
MIECZKOWSKI

Universities attractive targets for hackers

Am I the only one that really misses college? The camaraderie, football frenzy, good ol' fashion freshmen hazing and more parties than you could shake a stick at?

Today's college students may have to add something new to the list of college reminiscence — identity theft.

Universities have become attractive targets for hackers who are taking advantage of the openness of the schools' networks, their decentralized security and the personal information they keep on millions of young adults.

A major database breach at UCLA that went undetected for more than a year and a smaller breach at the University of Texas are the latest examples of how vulnerable colleges are to such attacks, security experts said.

At least one such incident has occurred at UC Davis (University of California). In March 2005, someone hacked into a main computer in the plant biology section, potentially compromising the names and Social Security numbers of about 1,100 UCD students, faculty, visiting speakers and staff.

Letters were sent to notify everyone whose personal information was stored on the computer, but there was no evidence that hackers actually retrieved or used any personal data on the computer. New computer security measures were being developed at the time in response to

changes in state law.

Universities account for more than 50 data breaches on a list of more than 300 so far this year as tracked by the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse. Hackers have broken into computer systems at Georgetown University, Ohio University, the University of Alaska and Western Illinois University, among others.

"They are a major category, if not the major category," Clearinghouse director Beth Givens said.

The UCLA breach was discovered Nov. 21 when the university noticed a hacker was fishing through the database specifically for names and Social Security numbers. Officials said the hacks date back to at least October 2005.

University officials say only a small number of records containing Social Security numbers were accessed, probably fewer than 5 percent of the 800,000 total records. The university notified the FBI, which has launched a probe into the incident.

Hackers also might have obtained the personal information of 6,000 people who worked for, applied to or attended the University of Texas at Dallas, school officials said last week. The information includes names and Social Security numbers, the school said. In some cases, addresses, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers also might have been obtained.

In both cases, school officials stress there is no indication that any of the information has been used to obtain phony credit cards or commit identity-theft crimes.

Yet, One reason university databases make such attractive targets is that

"We are striving very hard to strike exactly the right balance, recognizing we do need to protect information. But we don't want to undercut the way the university works in regards to open communications."

Social Security numbers are routinely used to identify students.

"It is about time that Social Security numbers receive more protection or that they no longer be used for identifying individuals within the university system," Givens said.

UCLA no longer uses Social Security numbers to identify students, according to Jim Davis, the university's chief information officer.

In addition, the school has tightened security by requiring that all computers connecting to its networks be inspected and have the latest antivirus software and other security programs installed.

Computers used for administrative purposes have even tougher security software installed that allows for central monitoring and updating of security software.

Of course, we all know security software — especially "tougher" software — drags a system's resources down, so don't be surprised when students and professors alike start shutting those safeguards down in favor of more speed.

Davis said the university tries to balance the need for libraries and

other research facilities to have more open access to data with the need to keep sensitive information concentrated and secure.

"We are striving very hard to strike exactly the right balance, recognizing we do need to protect information," he said. "But we don't want to undercut the way the university works in regards to open communications."

Universities also need to communicate freely with other educational institutions and the public to foster research.

"On the academic side, we want people to see what we do and who we are, within limits," said David Farber, professor of Computer Science and Public Policy in the School of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University.

Universities do take seriously, however, the need to separate sensitive personal data from academic data that is more open, Farber said.

"On the administration side of the house, they are running a business and should behave like a business," he said.

Tougher penalties for data breaches also need to be enacted, said Robert Brownstone, an attorney

at the Silicon Valley law firm Fenwick & West LLP.

Despite several attempts, there is no strong federal law mandating that universities notify everyone whose information has been compromised due to security breaches. Laws in 33 states vary in notification requirements placed on universities and corporations.

Notification is not enough, Brownstone said. Tough financial penalties also need to be included in future legislation.

"It's kind of a backward stick," Brownstone said. "Theoretically, it would make a company want to take tougher security measures. But if the only real penalty is you have to send a notice

out, even that strong statute is deficient."

Credit card numbers, Social Security numbers, dates of birth and other items of personal information can be sold on the black market and used to make illegal online purchases. Young adults, with their usually blank credit histories, make ideal targets for identity theft.

The UCLA and University of Texas breaches are among the latest involving universities, financial institutions, private companies and government agencies.

Contact Staff Writer Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail at citydesk@bigspringherald.com



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Texas airlines could be reshaped by consolidation

By DAVID KOENIG
AP Business Writer

Texas is home to three of the most financially stable airlines in a troubled industry, and at least two of them could undergo big change if a wave of merger mania sweeps the skies.

Houston-based Continental Airlines Inc. is widely reported to be in early talks of a merger with United Airlines.

And if those two strike a deal — or if US Airways Group Inc. can pull off its \$8.4 billion bid for Delta Air Lines Inc. — analysts say it will put pressure on Fort Worth-based American Airlines to grow by acquiring another carrier.

Of the three Texas-based carriers, only Southwest Airlines Co. seems to be flying above the merger discussions. But the Dallas-based airline could take advantage of any wheeling and dealing by grabbing assets such as airport gates.

U.S. airlines have lost more than \$50 billion since the start of 2001 due to a recession, terrorism and intense competition, especially from low-cost carriers that started price wars. Things have begun looking up. The airlines that existed before deregulation, including American and Continental, have slashed costs while raising fares, and analysts say the industry might post a profit for 2006.

Still, industry officials say there are too many airlines flying too many flights that keep prices below the cost of shuttling vacationers and business travelers across the country and around the world. And they say another economic downturn could mean a return to multi-billion-dollar losses.

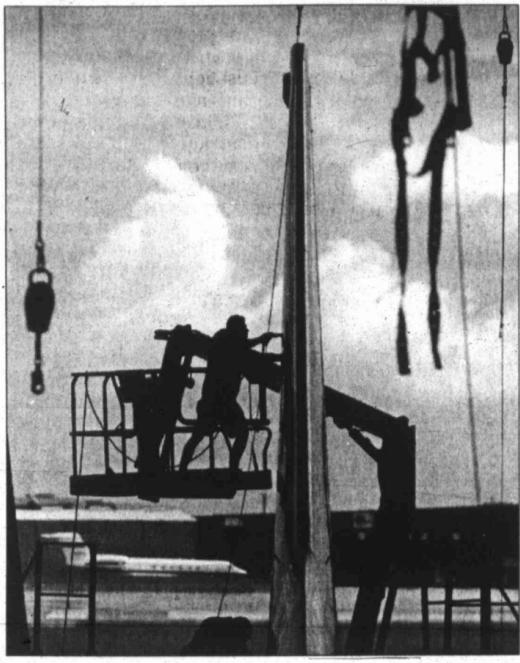
That's where merger talk comes in.

The outcome could affect how we travel, what we pay in air fares and which airlines are left standing to serve passengers.

"Consolidation is going to happen at some point," says Ray Neidl, an analyst for Calyon Securities, who said it could take place through mergers, antitrust exemptions that let carriers work together more closely, or by some airlines going out of business.

Neidl said Continental, with a hub near New York City and strong routes in Latin America and Europe, would be a great fit for any other airline, although antitrust issues in Texas would probably rule out a deal with American. UAL Corp.'s United is weak along the East Coast and the Sunbelt, making it an especially good partner for Continental, he said.

United is bigger, but it just came out of bankruptcy in February. Continental is in better



A Southwest Airlines 737-700 is serviced at Love Field in Dallas.

financial health, having earned a profit in four of the last six quarters — that passes for success these days in the airline business — and owning a relatively young and efficient fleet of planes.

If United and Continental combined without shedding many assets, the company could surpass American Airlines as the largest U.S. carrier by revenue. The last time American's lead was threatened, in early 2001, the unit of AMR Corp. went out and bought bankrupt TWA to stay on top, and analysts say a similar scenario could unfold in 2007.

"Certainly American would feel threatened if United and Continental did something," said airline consultant Darryl Jenkins. "They don't have to do anything, but American would look at its own acquisition plans."

Northwest Airlines

Chief Executive Gary Corp. is widely seen as the most likely target if American goes hunting for an acquisition. Northwest has strong routes to Asia, where American is weak, and it has hubs in Minneapolis and Detroit.

The biggest hurdle for American could be financial. AMR has about \$20 billion in long-term debt, and company executives have said paying that down is even more important than buying newer aircraft to spruce up its aging fleet. But analysts say private equity funds, hedge funds and banks would make financing available.

Dallas-based Southwest Airlines Co. is the nation's strongest carrier financially, having earned a profit every quarter for the past 15 years, right on through the recession of early 2001 and the terror attacks later that year.

Kelly said recently that Southwest would consider bidding for airport gates or planes if other airlines must divest assets as part of a merger. Analysts think Southwest is interested in landing slots at New York's LaGuardia Airport, which might become available if US Airways and Delta strike a deal, and in Boeing 737 aircraft.

Southwest has acquired two other carriers in the past, but the betting is that the airline isn't interested right now.

"They would be the last one involved in mergers," said Betsy Snyder, an analyst with Standard & Poor's rating service. "They might buy some assets here and there, but in terms of buying another airline, what would it get them?"

Southwest's past acquisitions of Muse Air in 1985 and Morris Air in 1993 helped it expand into Seattle and add planes, but Southwest now has an extensive route system and can't find many late-model Boeing 737s at other carriers.

Neidl, the Calyon analyst, said investors are driving up airline stock prices partly out of the belief that consolidation

will lead to fewer flights and higher fares — and more consistent profits.

But not everyone is sure about the impact on fares.

Terry Trippler, a long-time airline watcher who tracks the industry for myvacationpassport.com, said if a US Airways-Delta deal leads to fare spikes,

they would be temporary. "If a particular market is underserved and overpriced, we will see a low-cost airline or a new airline fill the gap," Trippler said.

That might not be what airline investors want to hear.

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Electricity market nearing milestone

But will consumers realize any benefit?

By JIM VERTUNO

Associated Press Writer
AUSTIN — Seven years in the making, Texas' grand move to deregulate its electricity market hits an important milestone with the new year.

On Jan. 1, the state drops its "price to beat," allowing electricity giants such as TXU Corp. and Reliant Energy to adjust their basic rates up or down as they see fit, without getting approval from state regulators.

Power companies call it a key step forward for consumers, who should benefit from market shifts downward and by shopping around for cheaper electricity.

Consumer advocates, however, say prices are already too high and com-

plain that Texans pay some of the highest rates in the country.

Household electric bills have actually gone up, not down, in the early stages of competition, and they see little sign of any real savings once the regulated price disappears.

"This is one of the key promises of electric deregulation, to lower prices," said Tim Morstad of AARP, a nonprofit organization with 2.2 million members ages 50 and older in Texas.

Officials at the state Public Utility Commission say they believe Texas is the first state to eliminate a regulated rate for the majority of its residential customers.

So what happens with

the switch on Jan. 1?

Well, the lights won't flicker or turn off. But it will be up to consumers to find the best deal they can once the benchmark rate disappears.

If they haven't done so already, consumers should be ready to start shopping for competitive prices, Morstad said. Some plans are short-term, others lock in rates for a few years. Some will have flexible pricing.

"They should be looking for any new deals," Morstad said. "It's a good day to check into the different offers that are out there."

TXU spokeswoman Sophia Stoller said that's exactly what is happening, adding the company will be marketing new plans for customers to choose from.

"They are becoming more educated and they're going to see different incentives," Stoller

said.

If you're now paying the benchmark rate and don't find a new plan, expect to get rolled into one by default. For example, TXU will place such customers in a month-to-month plan, Stoller said.

State lawmakers began the move to deregulation in 1999 and Texans were first allowed to choose their providers in 2002.

While the old monopolies, also known as "legacy providers," were required to offer the benchmark "price to beat" set by regulators, competitors were allowed to offer lower prices.

In 2005, the legacy companies were allowed to offer alternative deals, as long as they offered the benchmark rate as well.

But the competitive shift has been slow to take hold.

In theory, full deregulation is supposed to drive prices down. Yet even

with other plans available, only a third of Texas households get electricity from new competitors. Consumer advocates and lawmakers complain that prices remain too high.

State regulators allowed companies to raise the benchmark rate to compensate for the higher cost of natural gas after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Consumer groups were angered when natural gas rates later went down but the benchmark rate stayed up.

"Everyone acknowledges the price to beat, right now, is inflated," said Terry Hadley, spokesman for the Public Utility Commission. "We look at it as a positive that it's disappearing."

The PUC has a Web site, <http://www.powertochoose.com>, to help consumers check rates and find competitive offers. But consumer groups estimate that hundreds of

thousands of Texas households are still paying the inflated benchmark rate, strongly suggesting they aren't getting good enough offers to switch.

And if discounts are calculated against an artificially inflated benchmark rate, Texans aren't getting the price breaks they deserve, Morstad said.

AARP plans to lobby state lawmakers in 2007 to create something similar to the soon-to-be-eliminated benchmark rate. It would include a mechanism that would lower the rate as electricity production costs fall.

In November, TXU Corp. CEO John Wilder defended electricity deregulation and warned against stopping the process already in motion.

"The biggest risk is taking away the freedom to choose. It's a very, very powerful thing," Wilder said.

Drought took its toll in 2006, but next year could be wetter

By BETSY BLANEY

Associated Press Writer

LUBBOCK — Rancher John Welch sees barren pastureland everywhere these days, forcing him to consider his least desirable option.

"We're going to have to start to sell cows if we don't get some rain," said Welch, who manages up to 10,000 head of cattle on Spade Ranches across West Texas.

"That's the factory," he said, referring to his calf-producing mother cows. "You hate to sell the factory."

Texans are about to bid farewell to a dry, hot year that had the nation's No. 2 agriculture state reeling from the worst single-year losses for crops and livestock. The drought, now in about its 20th month, also sparked deadly wildfires and dropped lake levels to their lowest point for this time of year since 1978.

As much as 20 percent of the state remains in exceptional drought and a similar percentage is enduring extreme drought, Texas Cooperative Extension drought specialist Travis Miller said.

The forecast through April could improve conditions. A weak to moderate El Nino weather pattern shows increased chances for above normal rainfall statewide.

The first 11 months of 2006 rank as the 31st driest January-through-November stretch since 1895. Average rainfall for that period was 23 inches, down from the normal of 26.02 inches, the National Weather Service said. Compounding the lack of rainfall is a statewide average temperature of 68.9 degrees, the second warmest January through

November on record.

"You put those together and it's not good," NWS meteorologist Victor Murphy said.

Those conditions have also taken a toll on Texas' lakes. Statewide, levels fell 1 percent from October to November and are down 7 percent from a year ago, according to the latest Texas Water Development Board report.

The drought cost the state — the nation's leading producer of cotton and cattle — \$2.5 billion in lost crops and \$1.6 billion in livestock losses.

The cotton crop, coming off a record 8.5-million-bale harvest in 2005, was projected to be down 32 percent for 2006. Most of the drop resulted from 2.2 million acres of dryland cotton that never grew.

About three-fourths of the state's hay crop didn't

make it, forcing cattle ranchers to pay more for what remained or pay higher prices for hay

trucked in from out of state.

In addition, more than 21,000 fires burned about

2 million acres in Texas from January through early November, according to the Texas Forest

Service. More than half of that acreage was in the

See DROUGHT, Page 9A

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After all the border hubbub, little change expected in 2007

By ALICIA A. CALDWELL
Associated Press Writer

EL PASO — Before the November elections, border security and immigration reform topped the agendas of politicians at nearly every level of government.

Gov. Rick Perry campaigned for re-election as a champion of border security, pledging to help secure the border and promising \$5 million to a border camera project. Congressional Republicans pushed a bill criminalizing immigrants. And President Bush signed a bill to build 700 miles of fencing along the Mexican border.

But with the cameras down for now, the House bill a bust and some of Bush's closest Texas allies saying it's unlikely a fence will ever be built, it looks like life on the Texas-Mexico border may not be so different in 2007.

So does that mean Texas and immigration reform supporters have kissed and made up?

Not quite. Some state lawmakers have already announced a host of tough-on-illegal-immigration bills for the legislative session starting next month, including one aimed at challenging the automatic citizenship of children born in the

U.S. to illegal immigrants.

Other proposals include a plan to tax money sent to Latin America, and elimination of in-state college tuition for illegal immigrants.

State Rep. Leo Berman, who drafted two of the bills, said Texas has to do something about illegal immigration because the federal government hasn't.

"The buck stops here, and Texas has to lead the way," the Tyler Republican said.

Berman said if his bills make it Perry's desk, popular support should be too great for the governor to ignore them. He knows the bill challenging automatic citizenship would be instantly challenged. But he said his effort is designed to elicit a court review of the 14th Amendment, which grants U.S. citizenship to anyone born in the United States.

Perry has said he doesn't support Berman's citizenship challenge, saying such legislation is divisive.

"We need to look at ways to be bringing people together rather than driving wedges between them," he said this month.

Perry has pledged to continue border security

plans, including Operation Rio Grande, a state-led effort he says has reduced crime by as much as 60 percent along parts of the border.

Immigrant advocate groups, including the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas and the League of United Latin American Citizens, have vowed to fight legislation such as Berman's.

Rebecca Bernhardt, an ACLU lawyer who works on immigration and border security issues, said the ACLU will do its part to derail any legislation designed to intimidate and scare people. The ACLU of Texas will support more comprehensive security bills.

"We have some border security proposals that are really focused on improving accountability," Bernhardt said. "We're promoting proposals that would really focus on spending money on what is going to make Texas safer."

Two Democratic state senators have filed bills that would require more oversight of law enforcement agencies receiving border security grants, and prohibit authorities from asking a person's immigration status.

The governor has also said he would support a federal guest worker pro-



Fort Worth Star-Telegram photo/Kelley Chinn
Texas National Guardsman Clarence Johnson uses binoculars inside a sky box to keep an eye on the border near the Rio Grande river in Hidalgo. Johnson's duty is to report any possible illegal border activity to border agents, but not to arrest or detain suspects.

gram, but that would have to come out of Congress.

Perry spokesman Ted Royer said the governor plans to ask the Legislature for \$100 million to keep funding border security plans, including Operation Rio Grande and Operation Linebacker, a security operation run by members of the Texas Border Sheriffs Coalition.

Perry's state-funded cameras, which beam live footage of the border to the Internet for anyone to view, are expected go back online sometime next year.

Other immigration reform advocates believe

they have only a limited window of opportunity in 2007 to press for action in Austin or Washington.

Fernando Garcia, of the Border Network for Human Rights in El Paso, said he and other advocates believe reforms must be made in the first

nine months of 2007 or the issues will be lost in the 2008 presidential election.

"We have a real opportunity to (get) something substantial, that would include a broad legalization plan for people already in the United States," Garcia said.

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Odds and Ends

MURFREESBORO, Ark. (AP) — An Arkansas man has found a 2.37-carat white diamond at the world's only diamond-bearing site where visitors are allowed to search for and keep the gems they find.

Gary Dunlap of Jefferson named the diamond he found the Star of Thelma to honor his wife of more than 10 years. Dunlap's find was the fourth-largest diamond found in 2006 at the Crater of Diamonds State Park in Murfreesboro.

In all, 486 diamonds have been found at the park this year.

Dunlap found the gem Sunday while looking near a Bois d'Arc tree on the park's 37.5-acre search field. He said he felt certain the shiny stone was a diamond when he picked it up off the ground. Dunlap has visited the park about a dozen times but this was his first diamond find.

In March, a state trooper from Nowata, Okla., unearthed the 4.21 yellow Okie Dokie Diamond.

In September, a Point, Texas, couple found the 6.35-carat brown Roden Diamond.

The following month, a visitor from Ripon, Wis., found the 5.47-carat yellow Sunshine Diamond.

The largest of the 25,000 diamonds found at the park since it became a state park in 1972 is the 16.37-carat Amarillo Starlight. A visitor from Texas found the white diamond in 1975.

CINCINNATI (AP) — An employee at a Hamilton County jail has been accused of stealing toilet paper, paper towels and hygiene kits intended for inmates, prosecutors said.

A grand jury on Friday indicted Nicholas Diehl, 60, a data-entry worker,

on a felony charge of theft in office.

While the value of the items Diehl is accused of stealing is less than \$100, the case is about a violation of the public trust, said Assistant Hamilton County Prosecutor Bill Anderson.

"He was not only stealing from the sheriff, but the taxpayers of Hamilton County," Anderson said.

Diehl was arrested Dec. 5 after he was caught loading the paper products in his car outside the jail, prosecutors said. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of up to a year in prison.

Diehl has an unlisted phone number and could not be reached for comment.

DROUGHT

Continued from Page 7A

Panhandle, where 12 people died and ranchers lost 5,000 miles of fence and 5,000 cattle in March wildfires.

Texas sent more cattle to auction in the late spring and summer than in 2005 because of the drought, Texas Department of Agriculture spokeswoman Beverly Boyd said. Lack of forage and hay prompted producers to cull their herds to cut losses.

"It's very difficult to feed out of a drought," Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association president C.R. "Dick" Sherron said. "A lot of old

timers will tell you it's impossible."

In September, about 24,000 Texas producers in 216 drought-stressed counties became eligible for \$16.1 million from the federal Livestock Assistance Grant Program.

"It's truly a tough situation for a large number of our ag producers," Miller said. "There are people who are going to lose their businesses if they don't get some kind of relief."

Part of that relief could come in the form of more federal disaster assistance. The U.S. House and the Senate decided earlier this month to send an unfinished budget to next year's Democratic-controlled Congress.

U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, recently told Texas Farm Bureau members she had "every confidence" the disaster assistance would

materialize. "It's been our top legislative priority for some time now," farm bureau spokesman Gene Hall said. "We hope Congress

comes through with that as soon as possible after the new Congress convenes."

But farmers and ranchers know money won't

solve all their problems. "There's no substitute for a good rain," Hall said. "We're, along with everyone else, on our knees praying for that."

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♥A K 6 4
♦A 10
♠A K 7 5

WEST
♠J 10 8 4
♥Q J 10 9 7 5
♦5
♣9 2

EAST
♥K 9 2
♦—
♠7 6 2
♣Q J 10 8 6 4 3

SOUTH
♦Q 6 5
♥8 3 2
♠K Q J 9 8 4 3
♣—

The bidding:
East South West North
3♦ Pass Pass Dbie
Pass 5♦ Pass 6♦
Dbie

Opening lead — queen of hearts.

This deal, played at an international tournament in Tokyo a few years ago, features an amusing exchange between Martin Hoffman and Jeremy Flint, two British experts holding the East-West cards. Flint's double of six diamonds called for an unusual lead and helped Hoffman find the deadly heart opening.

Flint ruffed dummy's king of hearts, reducing declarer's 12 top tricks to 11, but then returned a low spade. South played the queen, thereby regaining his 12th trick, and soon claimed the rest.

"That spade return gave him the slam," Hoffman wailed.

"Bet you 2,000 yen he can always make it," countered Flint.

"You're on," Hoffman replied, "but the winner has to buy the next two beers."

Flint agreed and pointed out that after any other return — say a club — declarer wins and runs six diamonds, producing this position:

North
♦A
♥A
♦A 7 5

West Immaterial

East
♦K 9
♠J 10 8

South
♦Q 6 5
♥8
♠4

Declarer now leads a heart to the ace, and East is in trouble. If he throws a spade, South cashes the spade ace, catching the king, and takes the last three tricks with the club ace, diamond four and spade queen. If East instead discards a club, declarer cashes the ace and ruffs a club, and dummy takes the last two tricks with the ace of spades and seven of clubs.

And so, Flint won the battle but, as it turned out, lost the war! In Japan, two beers cost 12,000 yen!

Tomorrow: Trump manipulation.
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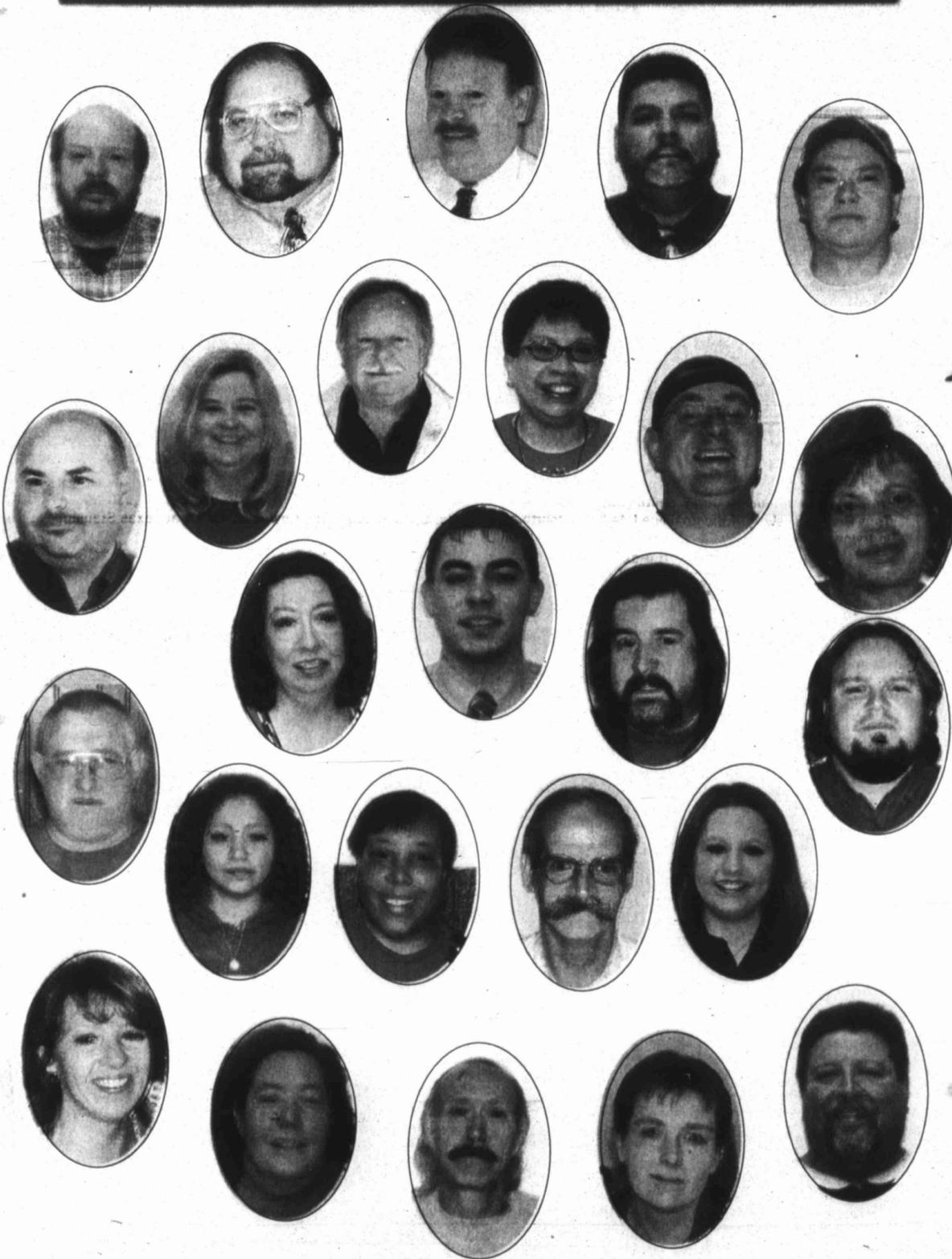
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Sports

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Do you have an interesting sports item or story idea? Call Sports Editor Mike Grimes at 263-7331, ext. 237. Email results to: sports@bigspringherald.com

Monday, January 1, 2007

BOWLS

All times Eastern

Sunday, Dec. 31
MPC Computers Bowl
At Boise, Idaho
Payout: \$750,000
Miami 21, Nevada 20

Monday, Jan. 1
Outback Bowl
At Tampa, Fla.
Payout: \$3 million
Penn State (8-4) vs.
Tennessee (9-3), 11 a.m.
(ESPN)

Cotton Bowl
At Dallas
Payout: \$3 million
Auburn (10-2) vs.
Nebraska (9-4), 11:30
a.m. (FOX)

Capital One Bowl
At Orlando, Fla.
Payout: \$4.25 million
Wisconsin (11-1) vs.
Arkansas (10-3), 1 p.m.
(ABC)

Gator Bowl
At Jacksonville, Fla.
Payout: \$2.5 million
Georgia Tech (9-4) vs.
West Virginia (10-2), 1
p.m. (CBS)

Rose Bowl
At Pasadena, Calif.
Payout: \$17 million
Southern Cal (10-2) vs.
Michigan (11-1), 5 p.m.
(ABC)

Fiesta Bowl
At Glendale, Ariz.
Payout: \$17 million
Boise State (12-0) vs.
Oklahoma (11-2), 8:30
p.m. (FOX)

Tuesday, Jan. 2
Orange Bowl
At Miami
Payout: \$17 million
Wake Forest (11-2) vs.
Louisville (11-1), 8 p.m.
(FOX)

Wednesday, Jan. 3
Sugar Bowl
At New Orleans
Payout: \$17 million
LSU (10-2) vs. Notre
Dame (10-2), 8 p.m.
(FOX)

Saturday, Jan. 6
International Bowl
At Toronto
Payout: \$750,000
Cincinnati (7-5) vs.
Western Michigan (8-4),
Noon (ESPN2)

Sunday, Jan. 7
GMAC Bowl
Mobile, Ala.
Payout: \$750,000
Southern Miss (8-5) vs.
Ohio (9-4), 8 p.m.
(ESPN)

Monday, Jan. 8
BCS National
Championship
At Glendale, Ariz.
Payout: \$17 million
Ohio State (12-0) vs.
Florida (12-1), 8 p.m.
(FOX)

Sunday, Jan. 14
Hula Bowl
At Honolulu
East vs. West, 8:30
p.m. (ESPN)

Monday, Jan. 15
Las Vegas All-
American Classic
East vs. West, 4 p.m.
(NFL)

Saturday, Jan. 20
East-West Shrine
Classic
At Houston
East vs. West, 7 p.m.
(ESPN2)

Saturday, Jan. 27
Senior Bowl
At Mobile, Ala.
North vs. South, 4 p.m.
(NFL)

Broncos cornerback shot to death

By ARNIE STAPLETON
AP Sports Writer

DENVER — Denver Broncos cornerback Darrent Williams was shot and killed in a drive-by shooting in downtown Denver early Monday morning.

Team spokesman Jim Saccamano said police called him about 3 a.m. from the scene of the shooting and told him three people had been shot and that Williams had been killed.

A little after 2 a.m., a white Hummer limousine was sprayed with bullets from a vehicle that pulled up along its side, said Sonny Jackson, spokesman for the Denver Police Department.

Three people in the limousine were hit and were taken to area hospitals, where one man was pronounced dead, Jackson said. The other man and woman who were shot were not identified.

Jackson said police were

searching for the suspects and interviewing witnesses.

"We have no motive yet," Jackson said. "We're hoping to talk with witnesses to find out where they were coming from, and that might give us some clues."

Saccamano said he spoke with coach Mike Shanahan and others in the organization.

"Complete shock. We're speechless. It takes words

See WILLIAMS, Page 2B



Denver Broncos cornerback Darrent Williams gets psyched before the start of a ball game. He was shot and killed in a drive-by early Monday morning, officials said.

Colorado Springs Gazette
MCT photo/ Bryan Oller



Fort Worth Star-Telegram/MCT photo/Sharon M. Steinman
Detroit Lions defenders Corey Smith (93), Paris Lenon (53) and Kenoy Kennedy (26) stop Dallas Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo (9) short of the goal line late in the fourth quarter. The Lions defeated the Cowboys, 39-31, at Texas Stadium in Irving.

Toothless Lions defeat Cowboys

Dallas blows chance to win NFC East but will be in playoffs

By STEPHEN HAWKINS
AP Sports Writer

IRVING — The Dallas Cowboys ended 2006 the same way they began it: with a deflating loss to a bad team, the identical record and big questions.

Except there's one big difference. The Cowboys are going to the playoffs this time, no matter how poorly they've played the last month.

The Cowboys blew their last chance to stay alive in the NFC East race and build some much-needed momentum for the playoffs with a 39-31 loss Sunday to Detroit.

"We didn't want to go into the

playoffs like this," nose tackle Jason Ferguson said.

"We are definitely going in backwards from the way we wanted to," Tony Romo said. "We may not scare anyone right now. We win a game or two and that will change."

With consecutive losses for the first time this season, the Cowboys (9-7) open the playoffs Saturday at Seattle.

Detroit (3-13) lost by winning, giving up the No. 1 overall pick by scoring its most points since the 2003 opener. Jon Kitna was 28-of-42 passing for 306 yards and four touchdowns, two to Roy Williams.

The final day of 2006 was marked by repeated mistakes by Romo, the Pro Bowler who had an interception and lost two of his four fumbles, and a couple of huge miscues by cornerback Terence Newman that overshadowed his 56-yard punt return for a TD. Newman's personal foul wiped out an interception return for a score on the game's first snap, and he muffed an earlier punt that led to a Detroit touchdown.

Back on New Year's Day 2006, the Cowboys were lifeless in a 20-10

See COWBOYS, Page 2B

NFL Playoff

Glance
By The Associated Press

Saturday, Jan. 6
Kansas City at
Indianapolis, 4:30 p.m.
(NBC)
Dallas at Seattle, 8 p.m.
(NBC)

Sunday, Jan. 7
New York Jets at New
England, 1 p.m. (CBS)
New York Giants at
Philadelphia, 4:30 p.m.
(FOX)

Divisional Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 13
AFC game, TBA (CBS)
NFC game, TBA (FOX)

Sunday, Jan. 14
AFC game, TBA (CBS)
NFC game, TBA (FOX)

Conference
Championships
Sunday, Jan. 21
AFC game, TBA (CBS)
NFC game, TBA (FOX)

Super Bowl
Sunday, Feb. 4
Miami
AFC Champion vs. NFC
Champion, 6 p.m. (CBS)

Pro Bowl
Sunday, Feb. 11
At Honolulu
AFC vs. NFC, 6 p.m.
(CBS)

Mavs extend winning streak to 10

DENVER (AP) — No Dirk Nowitzki. No problem for the Dallas Mavericks in extending their winning streak to 10 games.

"Everybody knew Dirk was out of the lineup," Dallas forward Josh Howard said. "We needed some people to pick it up and not just me."

Howard had 28 points and 17 rebounds to lead the Mavericks to their 10th straight victory, 89-85 over the Denver Nuggets on Sunday night.

"I was trying to stay aggressive," Howard said. "But it was more of a

matter of me going out there and playing my great game."

Howard has scored 20 or more points in 10 his past 17 games while averaging 23 points.

"This is the top," Dallas coach Avery Johnson said. "We could easily have found an excuse for this game, but these guys are playing some tough, hard-nosed basketball."

Howard had nine points in the fourth quarter and made a key basket in the last minute. Jason Terry scored nine of his 21 points in the final period for the Mavericks, miss-

ing star Dirk Nowitzki because of a sinus infection.

Allen Iverson had 28 points and eight assists for Denver, and Earl Boykins added 20 points. Marcus Camby had 13 points and 13 rebounds in his first game back after missing four games because of a broken finger.

"I sat out the last four games," Camby said. "I felt like I couldn't miss anymore time."

Dallas outscored Denver 26-16 in the fourth quarter.

"This one was hard to

take," Iverson said. We had it. We had the game and didn't finish it out."

Terry connected on two short jumpers in the opening minute of the fourth quarter, getting Dallas to 69-67, but the Nuggets regrouped to go ahead 72-67 after Eduardo Najera's layup and 76-69 on Najera's follow with 7:35 remaining.

"The Nuggets had our backs to the wall at that point," Johnson said. "But we just wouldn't let ourselves buckle."

Dallas tied it at 79 after

See MAVS, Page 2B

Chiefs back into playoffs

By DAVE GOLDBERG
AP Football Writer

Denver seemed headed to the playoffs.

Then the 49ers' Walt Harris, Frank Gore and Joe Nedney got in the way, giving Kansas City the NFL's last playoff spot by knocking out the Broncos 26-23 in overtime.

The New York Jets also made it and so did the Giants, who had all but clinched their NFC post-season berth by beating Washington on Saturday night.

But the most improbable team was the Chiefs, who started the day at the bottom of the potential playoff teams.

It looked especially dark after the Broncos took a 13-0 lead against double-digit underdog San Francisco. But the 49ers rallied behind Gore's running; an interception return for a touchdown by Harris, and Nedney's four field goals, the last a 36-yarder with 1:56 left in overtime.

That knocked out Denver (9-7) and put in Kansas City (9-7) which beat Jacksonville 35-30. The Chiefs needed more help than that and got it — losses by Tennessee, 40-23 to New England and Cincinnati, which was beaten 23-17 in overtime by Pittsburgh.

The Jets got the other wild-card spot by beating Oakland 23-3 and moved up to the fifth seed when Denver lost. The Jets will go to New England next Sunday after splitting the season's series with the Patriots, including a 17-14 win Nov. 12 in Foxborough.

The top seeds stayed the same.

San Diego (14-2) beat Arizona 27-20 to secure No. 1 in the AFC and Baltimore (13-3) stayed No. 2 and got the other first-round bye by beating Buffalo 19-7. Indianapolis (12-4) beat Miami 27-22 and will play host to the Chiefs on Saturday.

In the NFC, Chicago (13-3) had already wrapped up the top seed before its 26-7 loss to Green Bay and New Orleans (10-6) had a first-round bye and the second seed before losing to Carolina 31-21. Brett Favre, who threw for 285 yards, hinted strongly after the game that he might retire.

Philadelphia won its fifth straight by beating Atlanta 24-17 to win the

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MAVS

Continued from Page 1B

Terry's 3-pointer and a jump shot by Demean George with 5:08 left.

Camby gave Denver its last lead, 82-81 with a free throw with 2:32 left and Devin Harris gave Dallas the lead right back with a jump shot with 2:16 remaining.

Boykins and Yakhouba Diawara missed badly on 3-point attempts on Denver's next two possessions, while Erik Dampier and Howard were converting two free throws each to make it 87-82 with 1:16 left.

Iverson hit two free throws for Denver, but Howard buried a 15-foot shot with a minute left to put Dallas ahead 89-84. Najera had a free throw for the game's final point.

NFL

Continued from Page 1B

NFC East, which has three playoff representatives. The Eagles had already clinched by the time they played because Dallas lost to lowly Detroit 39-31 in an early game.

The Eagles will play host next Sunday to the Giants while the Cowboys play Saturday night in Seattle, which beat Tampa Bay 23-7.

In other games Sunday, it was St. Louis 41, Minnesota 21; and Houston 14, Cleveland 6.

Texans 14, Browns 6

In Houston, the Texans were outgained 306 to 177 yards, but got a win over Cleveland (4-12) thanks to several costly errors by the Browns.

The victory gives the Texans (6-10) back-to-back wins for the first time since 2004 and marks the first time Houston has won a season finale. It also triples its win total from last year's dismal season.

Rookie Chris Taylor scored his first career touchdown on a 5-yard run and finished with 99 yards.

Packers 26, Bears 7

In Chicago, the Packers totally outplayed the Bears even though Green Bay (8-8) had been eliminated earlier in the day.

The 37-year-old Favre was superb in what he said could be his finale.

"If this is my last game, I want to remember it," Favre said, his voice cracking and tears streaming from his eyes. "It's tough. I love this game."

COWBOYS

Continued from Page 1A

season-ending loss to a St. Louis team that had lost four straight games. Dallas had been eliminated from the playoffs by games played earlier that day.

Now, like then, there are questions about whether coach Bill Parcells is coming back. He's still got at least one more game left.

"This is pretty low. I am just disappointed," Parcells said. "This is my life. This is what I have been doing all these years. Of course, I take it personal."

The Cowboys have a short week to get things straightened out, or it could be another one-and-done in the playoffs like 2003 in Parcells' first season.

"It's not about turning it around now," he said. "We just have to play a good game. I believe in the players, and I do think we can do some things well, but

just this last couple of weeks here we have not done them the way I hoped we would."

The Cowboys have allowed 132 points the last four games, the exact amount they gave up the previous eight games. And they lost all three games at home during that stretch.

Roy Williams caught the first two TDs for Detroit, a great one that withstood replay and another with 2 seconds left in the first half. Mike Williams caught a 21-yarder that put Detroit ahead for good and Mike Furrey punctuated his TD by firing the football into a plastic Cowboys logo behind the end zone, knocking it off the wall and putting a crack in it.

"I didn't think the star would come down," he said. "I didn't want to do that. But all the guys enjoyed it."

The Raiders did, too. Now Oakland gets the top overall pick and the Lions will go second.

WILLIAMS

Continued from Page 1B

away. A terrible tragedy," Saccomano said.

Hours before the shooting, the Broncos lost to San Francisco 26-23 in overtime, eliminating them from the playoff race.

The 24-year-old Williams finished the season with 88 tackles, 78 of them solo, and four interceptions.

He was a second-round pick in the 2005 draft and started nine games as a rookie due to injuries. This season, he took over as the starter for Lenny Walls alongside Champ Bailey, and was second on the team with four interceptions and tied for third with 86 tackles.

On Sunday against the 49ers, he had three tackles and returned two punts for 50 yards before leaving the game with a shoulder injury late in the second half.

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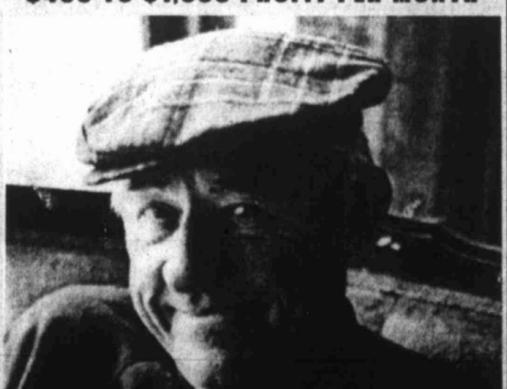
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BIG SPRING HERALD

Tomorrow's Horoscope

BY HOLIDAY MATHIS
The Gemini moon's favorite pastime is word play. It's the perfect time to invent your own sayings, stretch your vocabulary or verbally spar with a witty and worthy opponent. As the sign of twins, the Gemini moon could have you repeating yourself, doing double takes and making duplicates, all for the sake of clear communication.



HOLIDAY MATHIS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Two great things could happen to you today. The first is that you get what you want. The second is that you don't. Rejection is the universe's protection. Later, you'll look back and say, "Whew! That was close!"

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Small talk? Don't have time. Artistry and style? After the dishes are

done! Try not to be militaristic in areas that require a more nuanced approach, like romance, or you could wind up hurting feelings.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Purchases from the Internet, wholesalers, discount stores, etc. are winners. And it's not so much about the actual money you'll save. It's more that you get a sense of pride from realizing how financially capable you are.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Fortuitous meetings are featured in the p.m. Something that starts out all business turns into riotous fun. And when Aquarius or Pisces people are involved, you're even more "on" than you thought.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your planets bode for an upside-down experience. You may as well dream by day, because your subconscious is busy being logical by night. You have an especially comfortable time relating to a Paurus person.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Friends urge you to

disclose the scintillating details of recent goings-on. Some facts about your life are no one's business but your own! The secret you keep inside grows in power, giving you fuel for what you must do next.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Not usually one to have a narrow view of things, you might still get hung up on the details. A few key words from the lips of someone you care about require further investigation. There seem to be many shades of "true."

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Wherever you go, you'll make friends — especially if you share your inherent kookiness. Being the new person on the scene gives you an advantage. Secret crushes are revealed tonight!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The atmosphere hums with surprises and opportunity. Just because something didn't work out in the past doesn't mean it can't in the future. All relationships are picking up momentum, especially love relationships.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). If it's artificial, it won't satisfy you. You're on a mission to find purity — raw foods, straight truth and paper instead of plastic. Tonight, you demand and get the bottom line.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Your exceptional work makes you the talk around the office. Don't worry. You can live up to your legacy. Time spent alone is personally rewarding tonight — but the next best thing is time spent with an Aries person.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Someone you've been trying to impress is also trying to impress you. The planetary spotlight is on quality, longevity and durability. See the big picture, and let the details work themselves out for you.

Yes! Pisces and Scorpio are both water signs who feel love on a deep level and take nothing about a relationship very lightly. Beware: He will always be on to you if you lie or betray him. Cheating would, more than likely, mean an end to the relationship. If you're ready to be completely true, this is a fantastic match.

"When I'm with co-workers or talking to the boss, I get super-nervous. I shake, drop things or lose my train of thought. Will I ever get better? (June 30, 1949)"

With so many Cancer influences in your chart, you're hyperaware of your surroundings and the moods of others. Uranus conjuncts your sun and makes you somewhat of an eccentric, and therefore your solutions on the job are brilliant — just not the norm. Being afraid you won't fit in could be the main problem. Learn to celebrate your uniqueness, and this problem goes away. A career coach, counselor, hypnotist or improvisa-

tion class will help.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Suave Capricorn Tye Diggs has taken his striking chiseled features from stage to screen and back again. But do not let the insanely good looks fool you; Diggs is a disciplined and trained actor who smartly lets his face get him in the door and his talent lead the way. Diggs happily found his soul mate — fellow fab musical actress Idina Menzel — while lighting up the first Broadway production of "Rent." Capricorns are born workaholics who often wind up finding love at work!

If you would like to write to Holiday Mathis, please go to www.creators.com and click on "Write the Author" on the Holiday Mathis page, or you may send her a postcard in the mail. To find out more about Holiday Mathis and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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Annie's Mailbox ®: Advice for those in need

Dear Readers: Today is the beginning of a new year and the idea that we can start fresh and make this year better than the last. We wish you good health and happiness, and offer one of our favorite essays. We think it is appropriate:

Success
by Bessie Anderson Stanley

He has achieved success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much; who has enjoyed the trust of pure women, the respect of intelligent men and the love of little children; who has filled his niche and accomplished his task; who has left the world better than he found it, whether by an improved poppy, a perfect poem or a rescued soul; who has never lacked appreciation of Earth's beauty or failed to express it; who has always looked for the best in others and given them the best he had; whose life was an inspiration; whose memory a benediction.

Dear Annie: My 6-year-old son was talking about his recent field trip at school. After hearing about all the fun they had and what they learned, he told me one of his classmates had to stay at school. When I asked why, my son told me the boy didn't have the money.

It had not occurred to me that \$5 for a field trip was out of reach for one of his classmates. I would gladly have paid the few dollars for another child to go if I had only known.

Parents, when those field trip notices come home, if you can, consider covering the cost for another child. Ask your teachers if there is a need, or just send in a few extra dollars. And, teachers, I am the parent who asks you to let me know if you need anything. This is a need I didn't think about. Please ask me. Thank you. — A Parent in Any School

Dear Parent: Many parents don't realize some children cannot afford field trips. Bless you for caring enough to make a difference.

Dear Annie: All medical doctors should give their female patients (age 40 and over) a bone density test. Even men should have one. My former doctor neglected to have me tested. Unfortunately, I developed osteoporosis and broke my hip, which



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

required a partial hip replacement.

If I had been given a bone density test years ago, chances are I wouldn't have all this pain and suffering now. Please tell your readers so they don't have to go through what I did. — Concerned in Madison, Wis.

Dear Madison: We hope all our readers, any age, male or female, will make a New Year's resolution in 2007, and those over 40 should include a bone density scan. Thank you for the reminder.

Dear Annie: Every time I read a letter regarding ADD and ADHD, I am tempted to write. Today, I decided the time is right.

There is a wonderful magazine I have been subscribing to for a few years now. It is called ADDitude Magazine. You can find it on the Internet at additudemag.com. As the mother of two boys with ADD, this has given me a wealth of information and access to experts. Please share this information with others. — Paying Attention

Dear Paying Attention: There is indeed a great deal of information on ADD and ADHD at this website (free), and anyone who is interested in subscribing to the actual magazine can do so (about \$20 for six issues) by accessing the website or calling 1-888-762-8475. Our thanks for the resource.

Dear Annie: I have a 22-year-old daughter, "Jane," from my previous marriage. She is a senior in college and engaged to "Don," a 31-year-old carpenter.

Jane and Don have moved in together and plan to marry soon. Don has custody of his two children, and is fighting for custody of his 3-year-old girl by a different mother. The older children are an absolute delight — a credit to Don's parenting. The

mother of the 3-year-old neglects the girl terribly, which is why Don wants custody. My daughter loves the children, and they adore her.

Although Jane's relationship was difficult for me to handle at first (and I voiced my concerns very clearly), I don't see any choice but to accept it now. If she is happy, I am happy.

The problem is my live-in partner of seven years, "James." He is vehemently against Jane's relationship with Don and does not want to have anything to do with the children. They are not allowed to set foot on our property. James believes that accepting the children is not in their best interest, since the relationship between Jane and Don could end and then the children would be emotionally harmed.

Jane has invited James and me to her apartment for Christmas dinner. I want to go, but James refuses. He says he will instead volunteer in a soup kitchen. I think his position is irrational and is causing damage to his relationship with Jane, which was formerly very good. It also makes it extremely awkward when Jane wants to visit me. I've tried talking to James and even went to a counselor. James said he would do whatever the counselor said, but the counselor would not voice an opinion. James reads your column faithfully. What do you think? — Caught Between a Rock

Dear Rock: We hope James is paying attention because this is for him: **KNOCK IT OFF!** There are no guarantees in marriage. For the foreseeable future, these children are part of Jane's family. If you can accept and love them with an open heart, all of your lives will be enriched.

Dear Annie: I am 46 years old and have been a registered nurse for over 20 years. I spent the majority of my practice in the ER, but decided to step out of my comfort zone and now work as a nurse on a cruise ship.

The problem? I am totally burned out. I would rather eat glass than practice nursing for another 20 years. I'm so ready to change careers, but haven't a clue as to where to go or what to do next. How do I go about discovering my next working life? Do I need a career

counselor? How do I find one? — Bewilderedly Yours

Dear Bewildered: A qualified career development professional will be able to assess your abilities, uncover your interests and guide you in the right direction. To find someone, try your local libraries, colleges and universities, and also the National Career Development Association (ncda.org) at 1-866-FOR-NCDA (1-866-367-6232). Good luck.

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Out of Ideas," whose co-worker suffered a brain injury. I supervise 13 employees in my workplace. It's a pity the co-worker suffered such a terrible accident, but it does not change the fact

that her erratic behavior affects the workplace. Businesses are required to make REASONABLE accommodations for people with handicaps. It is not the co-workers' place to adapt to unacceptable behavior that causes disruption and unpleasantness.

The correct solution for this problem is to order a "Fitness For Duty" medical evaluation. If the co-worker is determined to be unable to function as expected, the company can place her on short-term or long-term disability, then replace her with someone who can perform all the necessary duties. — Not Politically Correct

Dear N.P.C.: Many people wrote to say we bent over too far backward for

the brain-damaged co-worker. You are right that if she is incapable of doing her job, the others in the office should not be penalized.

Annie's Snippet for New Year's Day (Credit Benjamin Franklin): "Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better man." (Annie says you can be a better woman, too.)

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, P.O. Box 118190, Chicago, IL 60611.



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MONDAY

Table with 28 columns representing different TV channels and their programming for Monday. Columns include WFAA, KMLD, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLE, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KPBT, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN, and SCIFI.

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This Date In History

By The Associated Press Today is Monday, Jan. 1, the first day of 2007. There are 364 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On Jan. 1, 1863, President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring that slaves in rebel states were free.

Hank Williams Sr., 29, died of a drug and alcohol overdose while en route to a concert date in Canton, Ohio. In 1959, Fidel Castro led Cuban revolutionaries to victory over Fulgencio Batista. In 1979, the United States and China held celebrations in Washington and Beijing to mark the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

In 1999, the euro, the new single currency of 11 European countries (later 12), officially came into existence with the start of the New Year. Birthdays: Author J.D. Salinger is 88. Former Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., is 85. Actor Ty Hardin is 77. Actor Frank Langella is 67. Rock singer-musician Country Joe McDonald is 65. Writer-comedian Don Novello is 64.

Answer to previous puzzle grid with words like PROSPER, QUELLED, RECLUSE, UNLOOSE, ATTIRE, ADVANCE, IRATE, PEKOE, GAP, SAGS, TOTE, SNIPE, ECO, XANADU, ONES, ENCRUST, TARGET, RATE, GUTS, POPEYE, DORMERS, ARIA, RAYONS, EHS, JINKS, LESS, SWAP, AGA, ERASE, FORTE, MATADOR, ERUDITE, AMALGAM, GYRATED, SISTERS, GEYSERS.

Newsday Crossword

SINCERELY by Sally R. Stein Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS 1 ___ and cons 5 Cost 10 Playwright George Bernard 14 Japanese wrestling 15 Submarine-shaped sandwiches 16 Stereo system 17 Formal okay 20 Ultimatum, for example 21 Out-in-the-open 22 Distress signal 24 Toothpaste holder 26 F sharp alias 30 "No bid" 32 Fedora or beret 35 Wonderland visitor 36 What a cash register records 37 Took a bus 38 "Mouth," "Maude" and "music" 41 Give lunch to 42 Artery's opposite 43 Desirable feature 44 Make a mistake 45 H. Ross ___ 46 Feats 47 Portions of corn 48 Feeling blue 50 Minor arguments 53 Fla. Marlins' division 58 Exceed accepted limits 63 A Great Lake 64 1057, to Caesar 65 Get ___ the ground floor 66 Have on, as a 67 Detect with one's nose 68 Complete collections 9 Sixth sense, for short 10 Rude push 11 Honeybee's home 12 A great distance 13 Shrivel 18 Soft color 19 Steals from 23 Convent dwellers 24 Innate abilities 25 Software buyer 26 Embarrassing mistake 27 Handbill 28 "Chopped" party spread 29 Scored 100 on 31 Backyard area 32 Rodeo mount 33 Found a sum 34 Tries out 37 Stood up 39 At any time 40 Walk like a duck 45 In the ___ (long ago) 47 Old-time anesthetic 49 Blacksmith's need 50 Gush forth 51 Undiluted 52 Where India is 54 Yale students 55 Top-rated 56 Take notice of 57 Change for a \$20 59 ___ Pinafore 60 Shade tree 61 Day before a holiday 62 Zilch

