



Council to eye update of airport layout plan

By STEVE REAGAN

Staff Writer

The Big Spring City Council will likely take a small step toward a big goal when they hold their regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday in council chambers.

The council is expected to give final approval to a resolution authorizing the city to enter into an agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for the



LITTLE

purpose of updating the McMahon-Wrinkle Airport layout plan.

The layout plan is a small but vital ingredient for any airport that wants the Federal Aviation Administration's approval, according to Jim Little, director of the airport.

"It outlines all the existing structures and obstacles in the

airport's vicinity," Little said. "It's a document we have to have on file with the FAA."

The city will have to pay only 10 percent of the \$60,000 cost for the layout plan — the remainder will be funded through TxDOT, Little said.

But just having a current layout is not the only reason to upgrade the plan, he added.

"We're looking at doing an upgrade of our (aircraft) approach system," Little said. "In order to get on the FAA's

list for that system, we have to have an updated layout plan."

Other items listed on the council's agenda for Tuesday include:

- Conduct a public hearing on the proposed annexation of property.

- Consider final readings of resolutions dealing with the May 12 council election, upcoming projects authorized in the November bond elections and a contract agreement with Western Container.

- Consider first readings of resolutions dealing with bond projects and approval of the city's investment policy.

- Consider approval of late homestead exemption refunds for the month of January.

- Discuss possible revisions to the city charter and Keep Big Spring Beautiful goals.

Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-7331, ext. 234, or by e-mail at reporter@bigspringherald.com.

UNWANTED SPOTLIGHT?



One-year-old Cambree Nicole Wright apparently finds the limelight a little displeasing during the Fifth Annual Rascal Razzmatazz at the Municipal Auditorium Saturday morning. The event, which featured 29 local youngsters, helped raise money for the Big Spring State Hospital's Relay for Life team.

HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

SkyWarn

NWS schedules two-hour class here on March 8

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

If a tornado watch or warning were issued for the Big Spring area, would you know what to do? If damaging thunderstorms were ripping a path toward the Crossroads area, would you know where to go?

With the severe weather season right around the corner, the National Weather Service will give area residents the chance to sharpen their storm-spotting skills and answer questions just like these Thursday, March 8.

Set for 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. at the Big Spring City Council Chambers, local emergency response officials say the SkyWarn class is a great way to brush up on your bad-weather skills.

"The SkyWarn school is put on by the National Weather Service to train people in the community on how to look at the clouds and conditions and tell what's going on," said Big Spring Police Department Lt. Terry Chamness. "It's very intense. It's very good training and it's only a two hour class."

"They will also have information on how to go online to the National Weather Service Web site and track the weather on their radar sites. That way they can see what's coming up."

Chamness said the course will cover the most common severe weather situations for the Howard County area in hopes of preparing area residents for the worst case scenario.

"It's really a lot of good information for people to have," said Chamness. "It gives people a basic knowledge of what severe weather is like in our area. Since we're getting ready to head into the severe weather season, which begins in March and lasts until October, this is really important information to have. Spring time is when we really get a lot of the severe weather — things like hail and possible tornadoes."

Chamness said the course isn't just for weather or storm buffs.

"There's no charge for the classes and the public is definitely welcome to attend," said Chamness. "Those that sign up for the class will receive a certificate from the National Weather

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DAY IN AUSTIN DEADLINE

The deadline to get on the bus headed to the state capitol March 7 for Big Spring Area Day in Austin is 5 p.m. Tuesday.

The \$40 trip rate includes round-trip transportation and lunch at the capitol. Those going should bring their own breakfast and the bus will stop for supper at Cooper's BBQ in Llano for a dutch treat meal on the way home. The bus will leave Big Spring at 4:30 a.m. and return at 10 p.m.

To make reservations, contact the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce at 263-7641. There are also Big Spring denim T-shirts available at the chamber office for those who need them.

WTAM BAND COMING

The West Texas A&M University Symphonic Band is coming to Big Spring.

The band, directed by Don Lefevre, associate professor of music, and Russ Teweleit, assistant professor of music, will perform at Big Spring High School at noon Tuesday.

The concert program includes works by Jean Baptiste Arban, James Barnes, Donald Grantham, Johan de Meij, Arnold Schoenberg and John Philip Sousa.

Dr. William Takacs, assistant professor of music, will be a featured trumpet soloist.

The concert is free to the public. For more information, call 806-651-2840.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR SLATED

The internationally acclaimed African Children's Choir will be performing at Baptist Temple in Big Spring.

The public is invited to the concert, set for 7 p.m. Friday, March 2. There is no admission fee. A love offering will be taken.

Since its inception in 1984, the purpose of the African Children's Choir has been to bring hope and joy and the love of God to people and communities throughout the world, shining the spotlight on the millions of children of Africa living in conditions of extreme poverty, war or AIDS.

For more information, contact Baptist Temple at 267-8287.



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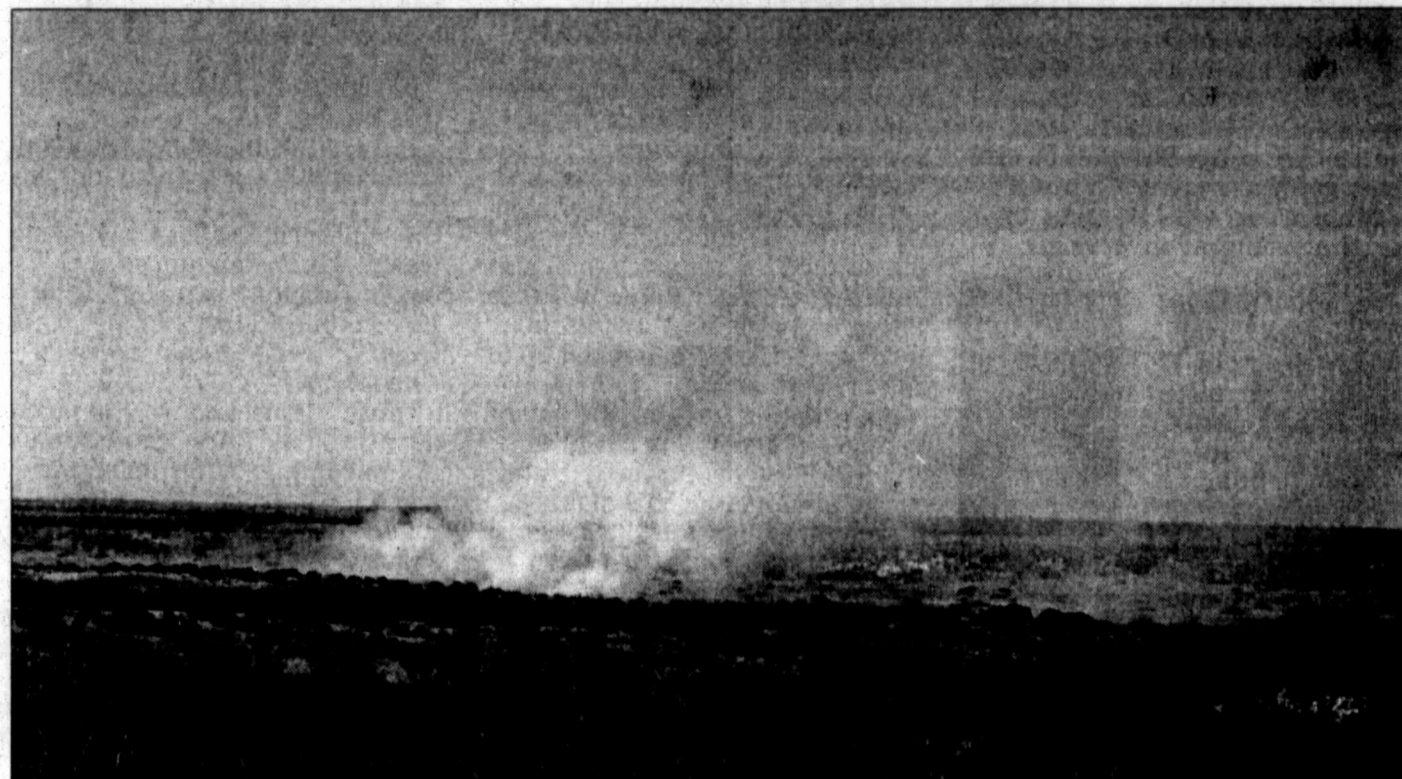
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WILDFIRES ERUPT NORTH OF BIG SPRING



HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins
The plume of smoke from this wild fire northwest of Big Spring could be seen for miles Sunday, as Howard County Volunteer Firefighters worked for several hours to extinguish a pair of blazes north of the 158 and 172 mile markers of Interstate Highway 20. According to HCVD Chief Tommy Sullivan, both fires were caused by trains traveling on nearby railroad tracks.

TEXAS NEWS BRIEFS

Texas soldier felt compelled to take action

GALVESTON (AP) — The mother of a 23-year-old soldier killed in Iraq said her son was an opinionated man who signed up for the Army because the war compelled him to take action.

Army Pfc. Travis W. Buford deployed to Iraq in October, about a year after enlisting in the service along with a cousin, said his mother Janet Buford.

The native of Douglass, a small East Texas town, died Friday of injuries suffered a day earlier when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle in Ramadi, military officials said.

Buford was killed along with two other soldiers also stationed at Fort Carson, Colo.: Staff Sgt. Joshua R. Hager, 29, of Broomfield, Colo., and Pfc. Rowan D. Walter, 25, of Winnetka, Calif.

Perry, Rendell say they're not interested

WASHINGTON (AP) — Governor or vice president? That's an easy choice, say two state leaders who have been talked about for a possible spot on the 2008 ticket.

"I got the best job in the world. Ask President Bush," GOP Gov. Rick Perry of Texas said Sunday, dismissing speculation he might be interested in serving as a running mate to the eventual nominee.

Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, a Democrat, also denied any interest in the No. 2 spot. "I like to be my own boss," Rendell said.

The two were in the capital for a National Governors Association meeting.

Downtown Austin building imploded

AUSTIN (AP) — The abandoned downtown building that symbolized the dot-com collapse of 2001 was demolished Sunday to make way for a new courthouse.

A crowd of hundreds looked on as the unfinished building came down in about 10 seconds with a series of dynamite explosions.

Intel Corp. abandoned its construction of the building in 2001 when the tech boom fizzled.

Some onlookers questioned whether the implosion was a success because edges of the concrete and metal skeleton remained standing after the implosion.

But Shala Geer-Smith, a spokeswoman for building owner General Services Administration, said the building fell according to plan.

A new federal courthouse will be built at Fourth and San Antonio streets by 2012.

Interest renewed in Ray Charles' Dallas home

DALLAS (AP) — Recent research into the South Dallas bungalow where Ray Charles lived in the mid-1950s has revived some interest in the property, but the house has no historic status that would protect its survival.

The rhythm-and-blues legend rented the house on Eugene Street in 1955 and lived there with his new bride, Della Beatrice Howard, and newborn son, Ray

Jr., for three years.

"It's a historic gem that not many people know about," said Sam Childers, a history research associate at the Old Red Museum of Dallas County History and Culture.

Childers researched the home for a "Parade" magazine history contest on little-known parts of the nation's history.

Charles died in 2004, the same year the biographical movie "Ray" was released.

The home was repainted and resold as rental property a few years ago, after sitting empty and boarded up for a while. The current owners could not be reached for comment.

David "Fathead" Newman, who attended high school in Dallas and played saxophone in Charles' band, said the home hosted band practice sessions. Charles used an electric piano there to practice and write songs.

Charles moved to Dallas from Seattle to be close to Howard and because the city's central location was convenient for the frequent touring required by his burgeoning career, Ritz said.

In Dallas, Charles was influenced by local rhythm and blues artists such as T-Bone Walker, and sometimes jammed in clubs nearby in the neighborhood, including Woodman Hall.

Charles and his family had moved to Los Angeles by the time he scored a major crossover hit in 1959 with "What'd I Say."

Authorities seize monkey, piranhas from home

PLANO (AP) — Authorities have taken a monkey, an alligator, a tarantula and six piranhas from a man's suburban Dallas home after showing up on his doorstep to investigate a hit-and-run fender bender.

Animal control officials last week cited Bobby Crawford Jr. on misdemeanor charges for his illegal collection of exotic animals.

Crawford, 42, cried Friday when discussing Darwin, an 8-year-old rhesus macaque monkey he says he has raised since it was little.

"I live for nothing else," Crawford said. "I just can't believe he is gone."

Police came to Crawford's house Feb. 7 to investigate a car accident. Crawford invited them in, where Darwin was in plain view, according to court records.

"I asked Mr. Crawford if he had any other animals he could show me and he replied, 'No,'" the officer said in court records.

But the officer immediately noticed a 50-gallon aquarium, prompting Crawford to curse and admit the six fish were piranhas.

Crawford also said he owned three American alligators named Godzilla, Blondie and Relentless. A 4-foot gator caught in December in a creek near a residential neighborhood was Blondie, Crawford said. One of the gators was confiscated Wednesday. The third has escaped, and Crawford said he does not know where it is.

Animal control cited Crawford for the gator and the monkey. A report has been filed with the state wildlife department regarding the piranhas.

Possession of exotic, harmful or potentially harmful fish or aquatic plants is a misdemeanor.

Weather Service office for Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail at citydesk@bigspringherald.com

Contact Staff Writer

WEATHER

Continued from Page 1A

Service, and if you're in law enforcement or emergency services, you can get credit for it.

"It's excellent training

for anyone to have. They change it up every year. I've gone to them for the last six or seven years, and it's just excellent information to have."

The class will be taught by Pat Vespers, meteorologist for the National

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TXU announces \$32 billion sale to private firms

By DAVID KOENIG

AP Business Writer

DALLAS — TXU Corp., Texas' largest electricity producer, said Monday it has agreed to be sold to a group of private-equity firms for about \$32 billion in what would be the largest private buyout in U.S. corporate history if shareholders go along.

Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. and Texas Pacific Group led a group that included Goldman Sachs & Co. and three other Wall Street firms that will pay \$69.25 per share for TXU. They will also assume about \$13 billion in debt.

The firms won support for the buyout from some environmentalists who have criticized TXU by agreeing to sharply scale back TXU's controversial \$10 billion plan to build 11 new coal-fired power plants that would produce tons of new greenhouse gas emissions.

They also agreed to cut electricity prices 10 percent, which they said would save TXU residential customers more than \$300 million per year, and limit prices until September 2008.

TXU directors voted Sunday night to recommend that shareholders approve the sale. The price represents a 25 percent premium to TXU's recent average closing stock price.

The deal tops the previous biggest buyout ever of \$25.1 billion set in 1988 when RJR Nabisco was acquired by Kohlberg Kravis.

Private-equity firms have often steered clear of utilities, viewing them as highly regulated businesses with relatively low return on investment. But Texas deregulated its electricity market in 2002, and TXU is generating tremendous amounts of cash and profit — Wall Street expects the company to report Tuesday that it earned about \$2.5 billion in 2006. TXU, with more than 2.3 million customers, has prospered because electric rates in Texas are tied to the price of natural gas while TXU generates much of its power more cheaply at coal and nuclear plants.

Still, TXU had flaws that might make buyers

think twice. Many Texas consumers have switched to other companies that sell electricity for less, although most of TXU's longtime customers have stood by it.

Goldman Sachs, Lehman Brothers, Citigroup and Morgan Stanley intend to be part of the TXU purchasing group, TXU said.

TXU also said former Secretary of State James A. Baker III will serve as advisory chairman to the new owners, and former EPA Administrator William Reilly and former Commerce Secretary Donald L. Evans will join the TXU board.

In recent months, environmentalists have blasted TXU in publications and advertisements, and controversy over the proposed coal plants was seen as one reason that TXU's stock price had fallen recently after a mighty four-year rise.

Texas Pacific tapped Reilly, one of its partners, to strike a compromise that won support for the sale from two environmental groups in exchange for cutting back TXU's coal program.

Henry Kravis, founding partner of KKR, pledged to make TXU into "a more innovative, customer-centric, environmentally friendly company." He said the private-equity buyers — who are often viewed as short-term investors looking to resell — see TXU as a long-term asset.

David Bonderman, founding partner of Texas Pacific, said the new owners' approach would "better manage the delicate balance between the energy needs of a growing Texas population, responsibility to the environment and the cost concerns of Texas businesses and residents."

Those remarks could be read as a rebuke to current management and Chief Executive C. John Wilder.

In a statement, Wilder said the expertise and resources of the buyers would let TXU "increase our focus on reliability, lower prices, outstanding customer service and investments in long-term environmentally sound technology."

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EDITORIAL

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

FIRST AMENDMENT

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

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OUR VIEWS

State of City address will interest us all

As 2007 begins to pick up speed, the direction of Big Spring for the coming year should be a major concern for for us all and it's one of the concerns Mayor Russ McEwen plans to share with area residents during the annual Community Luncheon.

The luncheon, which is sponsored by the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce, will feature McEwen's "State of the City" address, and is slated for Tuesday in the Dorothy Garrett Coliseum's East Room.

The annual luncheon, sponsored by the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce, is an excellent time to look at where the city has been, and where it is headed, according to Chamber Director Debbye ValVerde.

"It's a chance for people to come together and talk about what we've done, but it's also a chance to share ideas on the future of our city," she said.

McEwen said the Big Spring economy will be a large part of the presentation.

"We'll look at the state of the state of the economy and the things that are going on in the city of Big Spring," said McEwen. "Things certainly are looking more upbeat this year."

"When we did the address last year, we had a lot of things hanging over our heads, from the situation with the VA Medical Center to the attempt to bring the Air Force training center here."

McEwen said the Crossroads area seems to have traded those instabilities for a sound foundation going into 2007.

"There really seems to be a tremendous amount of stability right now in Big Spring, as far as I'm concerned," said McEwen. "We'll touch on that, as well as the future and what it may hold for the city."

ValVerde said the luncheon offers an opportunity for residents to take a close look at what's to come in 2007.

"The chamber sponsors the community luncheon each year," said ValVerde. "It's a chance for the mayor to inform the city of what his plans are for the coming year. For the chamber it's a chance to represent our members and try to focus on promoting community and economic development. I think this a perfect example — a perfect chance — for us to promote that through the mayor's state of the city address."

Tickets for the annual luncheon are priced at \$15 each and are available at the Chamber office, located at 215 W. Third Street.

For more information, contact ValVerde at 263-7641.

LETTER POLICIES

- The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.
- Limit your letters to no more than 300 words.
- Sign your letter.
- Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street address for verification purposes.
- We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity.
- We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per 30-day period per author.
- Letters that are unsigned or do not include a telephone number or address will not be considered.
- Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

May we be unquestionably honest in all we do and say and show Your love and grace, Lord.

Amen

Baptists with environmentalists?

I've never thought God cares what type of car I drive, or if I take public transportation. Or if I recycle my newspapers, or if I ask for plastic bags at the grocery store. Would it be easier to get into heaven if I buy a hybrid car, or will I be stuck in purgatory unless I give up my SUV?

I've never thought environmentalism and my religious faith to be intrinsically linked, until now.

A plan to build up to 18 new coal-fired power plants in Texas has convinced me that environmentalism shouldn't be a litmus test of my, or anyone else's, faith, or lack of such — no more than opposition to abortion and gay marriage should be a valid way to demonstrate faith.

With religious belief, no matter your denomination, comes social responsibility. And moral values should, and can, include environmentalism, along with caring for the poor, the elderly and the less fortunate, as the Letter of James in the Bible teaches.

That's the message the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT), the largest of the Baptist state conventions, is preaching to its 2.3 million members. That it's OK — it's morally acceptable — for Christians and other people of goodwill to speak out on environmental issues. And it's OK for

Texas Baptists to politically oppose Republican Gov. Rick Perry's fast-tracking of the coal plant plan, to benefit energy giant TXU Corp., which has proposed building 11 of the plants.

Texas Baptists have formed an unholy alliance with environmental groups, business leaders and the natural gas industry to block building new coal plants in Texas. The spiritual is in bed with the secular, temporarily hooked up to defeat Perry's plan.

The BGCT is framing the debate in terms of protecting children and the elderly from the harmful carbon dioxide the coal plants would dump into the skies over Texas. According to the BGCT, coal plant emissions are responsible for increased rates of asthma and other respiratory illnesses, including chronic bronchitis and lung cancer.

Texas Baptists are trying to make environmentalism the new mainstream.

It's about families — about me and my son, about everyone, not just about holdover hippies from the 1960s.

It's about how environmental issues affect all of us, in our everyday lives, and are not just the subject of an Al Gore movie. They are today's reality, not merely an inconvenient truth.

Don't worry, there won't be any tree-hugging Texas Baptists storming the capital in Austin, maybe just a ladies' prayer circle calling their state representatives. It's doubtful any deacons will be arrested protesting in the streets,

calling down politicians who support the coal plants, but a few might send e-mails.

Moderation is the buzzword for this Baptist foray.

But environmentalist activism is traditionally a big no-no for conservative evangelicals, including the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), which denounced this "neopagan religion" in a resolution at its convention last summer, calling it a "wedge issue" between Christians.

"Real" Christians — this sermon sponsored by TXU Corporation — are to conquer and subdue the earth for personal pleasure and profit. All will be made new when Jesus Christ returns to earth at the End Times, so Christians should reap and rape, plunder and pillage at will, the environment be damned. Evangelicals typically view environmentalism as a leftist special interest issue, not a politically or morally right one.

But faith can't be only about the hereafter; it is also about the here and now, and that includes protecting the environment and the health of all Texans.

Cynthia Hall Clements has worked for the legislatures of both Tennessee and Louisiana and was most recently a columnist for the Lufkin Daily News. She is presently attending law school. She can be e-mailed at cynthiahallclements_mmm@yahoo.com.

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CYNTHIA HALL CLEMENTS

SPRRY IF I GAVE THE IMPRESSION OUR TROOPS' LIVES WERE WASTED WHEN I SAID OUR TROOPS' LIVES WERE WASTED.



AKRON BEACON JOURNAL/07

I'M WAY MORE ARTICULATE THAN THAT!



Enemies of 'Real ID' deeply mistaken

Airport security lets us onto an airplane based on our state-issued driver's license. So it made sense for the 9-11 commission to recommend creating federal standards to ensure that the people flashing their driver's licenses are who they say they are.

In 2005, Congress passed the "Real ID" law to achieve just that. Though a secure form of identification is the simplest and least discriminatory tool for preventing terrorist attacks, it has lots of enemies.

Missouri state Rep. Jim Guest, a Republican, has called Real ID "a frontal assault on the freedom of Americans." It's frankly hard to see what freedom is under assault other than the freedom to lie on your driver's license. Perhaps Guest can elaborate.

Such scare talk has addled brains in places like Maine, where the legislature recently voted to demand that Congress repeal the Real ID law. Washington, Arizona, Georgia, Oklahoma and several other states are in various stages of revolt — and expressing shock at a form of ID that's routine in the liberal democracies of Europe. Cheap-labor advocates don't like Real ID because states won't have to verify that the license applicant is in this country legally. Supporters of illegal immigrants

feel likewise. The crazy fringes, meanwhile, portray a secure driver's license as the federal jackboots' weapon to control us all. Others just play the nut-job out of political expediency.

The 1986 immigration reform bill, which granted amnesty to more than 3 million illegal immigrants, originally contained a provision for a national ID system. During the debate, Rep. Edward Roybal, a Democrat from California, got up and warned, "We may face the danger of ending up like Nazi Germany." The ID provision was scratched off the bill.

These dramatics amazed the Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, former president of the University of Notre Dame and chairman of a committee on immigration in the '80s. "There were all kinds of phony excuses," he told The Washington Post.

Under Real ID, states must check that the documents presented for getting a driver's license — such as a birth certificate or passport — are genuine. The licenses must also contain a digital photo and some form of biometric data, such as a thumbprint. Driver's licenses from states that don't comply would not be acceptable proof of identification at airports or federal buildings.

Some privacy advocates insist that Real ID would foster more identification theft. They are misinformed. It would do the opposite by cutting down on the use of counterfeit IDs.

In case you haven't noticed, there are no deep, dark personal secrets on your driver's license. With Real ID, the stuff on the face of the license would be pretty much what's there now. And that "sinister" bar code would contain the same information seen on the card. It doesn't lead to your bank account or love letters.

What on earth could Maine lawmakers have been thinking — especially after having heard the testimony of a worker at their department of motor vehicles? Jennifer Pease explained that it was official policy to ignore expiration dates on passports and visas and to knowingly issue licenses and ID cards to illegal immigrants. One applicant was an Egyptian national from New York who had no intention of living in Maine and was facing deportation proceedings. His license was mailed to a post-office box in Portland.

When you have left-wingers, right-wingers, foes and friends of illegal immigrants, libertarians, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, several church leaders and the American Civil Liberties Union all lined up against a secure identity card, you know it's going to be tough sledding.

That, however, does not make it a bad idea.

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Scorsese finally basks in Oscar triumph as 'The Departed' wins

By DAVID GERMAIN

AP Movie Writer

LOS ANGELES — In a year of unparalleled diversity and international muscle at Hollywood's film honors, the Academy Awards finished as a love fest for a long-overlooked American — Martin Scorsese.

After Scorsese's five previous losses in the direction category, he won for mob epic "The Departed," which also won best picture.

Awards watchers had viewed Scorsese as a lock to win at last, and while he clearly coveted an Oscar, the director said he had not counted on anything.

"It was an overwhelming, overwhelming moment for me, I must say. I didn't know. When people say, 'It's your year, your year.' Thank God we've been able to make so many films over the last 36 years without winning awards. But we've been able to get the pictures made," Scorsese told reporters backstage. "This comes as an extraordinary surprise."

There were a couple of real surprises in the relatively predictable and bland Oscar ceremony, which ran almost four hours under the pleasant but lightweight stewardship of first-time host Ellen DeGeneres.

Front-runners Helen Mirren of "The Queen," Forest Whitaker of "The Last King of Scotland" and Jennifer Hudson of "Dreamgirls" all won. But the fourth front-runner,

Eddie Murphy, lost to Alan Arkin of "Little Miss Sunshine."

The dancing-penguin musical "Happy Feet" won for feature-length animation, beating "Cars," directed by computer-animation pioneer John Lasseter ("Toy Story"), whose film had triumphed at other key Hollywood awards.

Mirren has been on a remarkable roll since last fall as she won all major film and television prizes for playing both of Britain's Queen Elizabeths.

Along with her best-actress Oscar for "The Queen," Mirren won an Emmy as the current ruler's 16th and 17th century namesake in the TV miniseries "Elizabeth I." The two roles earned Mirren a pair of prizes at the Golden Globes and Screen Actors Guild Awards.

"That was a great year's work," Mirren said backstage.

In "The Queen," Mirren offers a remarkable portrait of Elizabeth II as both a tradition-bound aristocrat and a concerned family matriarch as she copes with the crisis of Princess Diana's death.

Mirren said she had no clue what the queen might think of the film or her performance.

"I'm not expecting a call from her majesty. Not ever. I wouldn't expect it and I wouldn't desire it," Mirren said backstage. "There are many countries in the world where one would not be allowed



Director Martin Scorsese is surrounded by cast members and others involved with "The Departed" after he won Best Director at the 79th Academy Awards at the Kodak Theater in Los Angeles Sunday night.

to make this film. It's generous of the queen and the royal family to sit back and not interfere. I do believe she is a noble person in the best sense of the word."

"The Departed" led the Oscars with four prizes, also winning for adapted screenplay and film editing. While Hollywood films and American actors still dominated, the ceremony offered its most global reach ever.

Mexican director Guillermo del Toro's dark fantasy "Pan's Labyrinth" won three Oscars, includ-

ing the cinematography prize.

The globe-trotting ensemble drama "Babel," made by del Toro's countryman Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, had seven nominations, though it won only one, for best score by composer Gustavo Santaolalla. It was the second-straight Oscar for Santaolalla, who received the same prize a year ago for "Brokeback Mountain."

"It's an amazing statement on what's going on. We have to be connected as a planet," said

Whitaker, who won best actor as Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in "The Last King of Scotland." "This year, you see people from all over the world. We need that. We need to understand that this over here is connected to this over there. We have to pay attention and understand that I affect you and you affect me."

The global theme extended to the documentary win for "An Inconvenient Truth," which chronicles Al Gore's campaign to educate people on the dan-

gers of global warming.

"This is not a political issue. It's not a political movie. Some of the solutions will have to be worked out within the political sphere, but it really should be bipartisan, and it should be seen as a moral issue," Gore said. "It is the overriding moral issue of our time."

Earlier in the evening, Gore and Leonardo DiCaprio took the stage to unveil a series of initiatives by the motion picture academy to make the Oscars more environmentally friendly.

Public assistance rolls increase despite welfare overhaul

By STEVE OHLEMACHER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The welfare state is bigger than ever despite a decade of policies designed to wean poor people from public aid.

The number of families receiving cash benefits from welfare has plummeted since the government imposed time limits on the payments a decade ago.

But other programs for the poor, including Medicaid, food stamps and disability benefits, are bursting with new enrollees.

The result, according to an Associated Press analysis: Nearly one in six people rely on some form of public assistance, a larger share than at any time since the government started measuring two decades ago.

Critics of the welfare overhaul say the numbers offer fresh evidence that few former recipients have become self-sufficient, even though millions have moved from welfare to work. They say the vast majority have been forced into low-paying jobs without benefits and few opportunities to advance.

"If the goal of welfare reform was to get people off the welfare rolls, bravo," said Vivyan Adair, a former welfare recipient who is now an assistant professor of women's studies at Hamilton College in upstate New York. "If the goal was to reduce poverty and give people economic and job stability, it was not a success."

Proponents of the changes in welfare say programs that once discouraged work now offer support to people in low-paying jobs. They point to expanded eligibility rules for food stamps and Medicaid, the health insurance program for the poor, that enable peo-

ple to keep getting benefits even after they start working.

"I don't have any problems with those programs growing, and indeed, they were intended to grow," said Ron Haskins, a former adviser to President Bush on welfare policy.

"We've taken the step of getting way more people into the labor force and they have taken a huge step toward self-sufficiency. What is the other choice?" he asked.

In the early 1990s, critics contended the welfare system encouraged unemployment and promoted single-parent families. Welfare recipients, mostly single mothers, could lose benefits if they earned too much money or if they lived with the father of their children.

Major changes in welfare were enacted in 1996, requiring most recipients to work but allowing them to continue some benefits after they started jobs. The law imposed a five-year limit on cash payments for most people in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, or TANF. Some states have shorter time limits.

Nia Foster fits the pattern of dependence on government programs. She stopped getting cash welfare payments in the late 1990s and has moved from one clerical job to another. None provided medical benefits.

The 32-year-old mother of two from Cincinnati said she supports her family with help from food stamps and Medicaid.

Foster said she did not get any job training when she left welfare. She earned her high-school equivalency last year at a community college.

"If you want to get educated or want to succeed, the welfare office don't care," Foster said. "I don't think they really care what you do once the benefits are gone."

Foster now works in a tax office, a seasonal job that will end after April 15. She hopes to enroll at the University of Cincinnati this spring and would like to study accounting. She is waiting to find out if she qualifies for enough financial aid to cover tuition.

"I like data processing, something where it's a bunch of invoices and you have to key them in," Foster said. "I want to be an accountant so bad."

Shannon Stanfield took a different, less-traveled path from welfare, thanks to a generous program that offered her a chance to get a college education.

Stanfield, 36, was cleaning houses to support her two young children four years ago when she learned about a program for welfare recipients at nearby Hamilton College, a private liberal arts school in Clinton, N.Y.

"At the time I was living in a pretty run-down apartment," said Stanfield, who was getting welfare payments, Medicaid and food stamps. "It wasn't healthy."

The program, called the Access Project, accepts about 25 welfare-eligible parents a year. Hamilton waives tuition for first-year students and the program supplements financial aid in later years. Students get a host of social and career services, including help finding internships and jobs and financial assistance in times of crisis.

About 140 former welfare recipients have completed the program and none still relies on government programs for the poor, said Adair, the Hamilton professor who started the Access Project in 2001.

Stanfield, who still gets Medicaid and food stamps, plans to graduate in May with a bachelor's degree in theater. She wants to be a teacher.

"I slowly built up my confidence through education," Stanfield said. "I can't honestly tell you how much it has changed my life."

Programs such as the Access Project are not cheap, which is one reason they are rare. Tuition and fees run about \$35,000 a year at Hamilton, and the program's annual budget is between \$250,000 and \$500,000, Adair said.

In 2005, about 5.1 million people received monthly welfare payments from TANF and similar state programs, a 60 percent drop from a decade before.

But other government programs grew, offsetting the declines.

About 44 million people — nearly one in six in the country — relied on government services for the poor in 2003, according to the most recent statistics compiled by the Census Bureau. That compares with about 39 million in 1996.

Also, the number of people getting government aid continues to increase, according to more recent enrollment figures from individual programs.

Medicaid rolls alone topped 45 million people in 2005, pushed up in part by rising health care costs and fewer employers offering benefits. Nearly 26 million people a month received food

stamps that year.

Cash welfare recipients, by comparison, peaked at 14.2 million people in 1994.

There is much debate over whether those leaving welfare for work should be offered more opportunities for training and education, so they do not have to settle for low-paying jobs that keep them dependent on government programs.

"We said get a job, any job," said Rep. Jim

McDermott, chairman of the House subcommittee that oversees welfare issues. "And now we expect them to be making it on these minimum-wage jobs."

McDermott, D-Wash., said stricter work requirements enacted last year, when Congress renewed the welfare overhaul law, will make it even more difficult for welfare recipients to get sufficient training to land good-paying jobs.

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Spinal cord stimulator can relieve pain, drug dependence

By PATRICIA ANSTETT

Detroit Free Press

DETROIT — His back pain was so severe that his grandson called him Pappa Boo-Boo. Larry Wood, 61, of Canton, Mich., received brain and back injuries in an explosion eight years ago at the Ford Rouge plant that killed six workers and injured 20 others. He had worked there 36 years as a steam engineer, servicing the monstrous boilers that fueled the sprawling Dearborn automotive complex.

Wood still lives with nightmares, trauma and memory loss.

But for the first time since one of the nation's worst industrial accidents, he is free of disabling back pain and he's weaning himself off strong, pain-relieving drugs.

He credits his new comfort to a spinal cord stimulator implanted in his back in December. It is the latest generation of the device, first used 50 years ago, now much improved, bringing relief to people with severe neck, back and leg pain.

"I've got my happy-go-lucky husband back," said Gail Wood, his wife of 20 years. She has accompanied her husband to hundreds of medical appointments, sometimes several a week, for his medical and psychological treatments. She kept a separate calendar just for his appointments. "It's been a very long haul," she said.

The explosion began at 1:02 p.m. Feb. 1, 1999, when gas inside a boiler ignited and started a fire



The cost of the device and related medical costs is about \$40,000 and typically is covered by insurance; they must be replaced every five to seven years

Source: Advanced Bionics
Graphic: Patricia Anstett and David Pierce, Detroit Free Press © 2007 MCT

that spread through the Rouge power plant.

Wood recalls the incident vividly. "The No. 6 boiler blew up, leaving a gas main on the left side wide open," he recalled. The explosion threw Wood forward, and he struck his head on a steel beam.

He was able to escape by crawling through a vent, but he went back inside the darkened, smoke-filled building with a colleague to shut off the main gas line. He then left the building again but volunteered to go back a third time to help rescue efforts, he said. That's when he slid on rubble and hurt his knee, he

said. Still, he helped a man having a heart attack get to an ambulance.

"I could feel the adrenaline running through me," he said.

He was sent to a union hall with hundreds of other workers, where he found his wife waiting for him in a sea of workers in blackened coveralls.

He returned to work a week later, and stayed in his job for six months until he was granted medical leave. By then, he had frequent nightmares and his memory was so impaired "he forgot he had grandchildren," his wife said.

His back pain worsened

until "he could barely walk in the house," or ride in a car unless he sat up off the seat when it went over bumps, Gail Wood said.

He took heavy-duty pain drugs and underwent weekly physical therapy for four years. Nothing helped until his physician, Dr. Stanley Szczeciński of Westland, Mich., referred him to Dr. Dennis Dobritt.

A pain specialist, Dobritt has been the doctor of last resort to thousands of patients over the years. He is medical director of Michigan's Tri-County Pain Consultants, a multi-disciplinary pain center with offices in Farmington Hills and Royal Oak, and another to open soon in Novi.

A board-certified osteopathic doctor and anesthesiologist, Dobritt can perform high-tech, minimally invasive pain procedures, but he also favors low-tech solutions, therapy and acupuncture, when appropriate.

For patients with severe neck, back and leg pain, unhelped by drugs and therapy, Dobritt often recommends spinal cord stimulators.

Wood's unit is made by California-based Advanced Bionics, one of three companies that make the devices. The units have two internal pieces controlled by a remote, rechargeable external unit. Electrodes positioned in the back, buttocks or neck create a tingling sensation that suppresses pain. Nearly two of every three people referred for the devices

get substantial pain relief from them, with no major complications, Dobritt said.

Wood was one of them. He claims nearly complete pain relief. "Right away, I had no pain," he said. "It was that fast."

He continues counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder. In a recurring nightmare, he finds himself running from a huge fire. Other times, he awakens thinking he is patting his body madly to put out flames.

He now sees Dobritt

only as needed and he hasn't needed to return so far.

His rosier outlook has returned, too, in just a month since the two-hour outpatient procedure. He is weaning himself from the morphine and other pain drugs that made him sleepy and depressed. A prostate cancer patient — diagnosed at age 46 — he considers himself a true survivor.

He's happy to hear the new nickname his grandkids have given him: Bionic Grandpa.

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© Puzzles by Pappocom

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9 with no repeats. That means no number is repeated in any row, column or box. Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

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Vaccines effective against certain forms of pneumonia

Shaking and chills. Severe chest pain. Sweats. Labored breathing and quickened pulse. Those who've had pneumonia before know these and other painful symptoms firsthand.

Pneumonia is a lung inflammation caused by an infection with bacteria, viruses and other organisms. Combined with the flu, it is the seventh leading cause of U.S. deaths, reports the National Center for Health Statistics, with pneumonia consistently accounting for the overwhelming majority.

People especially at risk for pneumonia include the elderly, the very young and those with underlying health problems like diabetes and heart disease.

The community-acquired pneumonia in adults is most often caused by the bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. Pneumococcal pneumonia accounts for 20,000 U.S. deaths each year and is the leading cause of vaccine-preventable death, said Mary Chavez, Pharm.D., chair and professor of pharmacy practice with the Texas A&M Health Science Center Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy.

Pneumococcal pneumonia can occur anytime during the year, but two types of vaccines can reduce the risk by 60-70 percent. The vaccines are especially recommended for those 65 and older and those 2 or older with chronic illnesses, including pulmonary or cardiovascular disease; weakened immune system; cochlear implants; and metabolic disorders, cerebral spinal leaks, renal dysfunction and hemoglo-

binopathies like sickle-cell disease.

The pneumococcal conjugate vaccine is also routinely administered to infants at 2, 4 and 6 months, followed by a booster dose at 12-15 months, to prevent seven types of penicillin-resistant strains causing invasive pneumococcal disease. Initiated in 2000, this vaccination policy has made a substantial impact in reducing pneumococcal sepsis and meningitis in children and adults, said

Manjusha Gaglani, M.B.B.S., associate professor of pediatrics at the HSC-College of Medicine.

Because pneumonia often occurs as a complication of influenza, people should get an annual flu vaccine, Dr. Gaglani said. This is especially true for those at high risk for influenza-related complications — the elderly, diabetic, pregnant, chronic care facilities residents or have chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, lung disease and kidney failure).

Contract Bridge Famous Hand

West dealer.
East-West vulnerable.
NORTH
♦ A 7 4
♥ A 8 6 3
♦ A
♠ 10 8 6 4
WEST
♦ K Q J 10 8 5 3
♥ 7 5 2
♦ J 9 3
♠ —
EAST
♦ 9 6 2
♥ K Q 10
♦ Q 10 6
♠ K 7 5 3
SOUTH
♦ —
♥ J 4
♦ K 8 7 5 4 2
♠ A Q J 9 2

The bidding:
West North East South
Pass 1♥ Pass 2♦
2♦ Pass Pass 3♦
Pass 4♥ Dble 5♦
Pass Pass Dble Pass
Pass Redble

Opening lead — seven of hearts.
Many years ago, a British Columbia team journeyed to nearby Seattle to play a team-of-eight match against a Pacific Northwest team. The U.S. team won the 64-board match by 4,240 points.

One deal produced a startling series of results and indicates how bridge players' minds run in different channels.

At one of the four tables, the bidding went as shown. The U.S. South reached five clubs doubled, North redoubled, and declarer then took all

the tricks for a score of 1,150 points.

A heart was led to dummy's ace, and declarer cashed the ace of spades, discarding the jack of hearts. After playing the ace of diamonds, South led a low trump to his nine. He then ruffed a diamond, finessed the ten of clubs, repeated the finesse to his jack and cashed the ace, catching East's king. When the diamonds turned out to be divided 3-3, the Canadian defenders wound up with no tricks to show for their double.

At the second table, something very strange occurred. All four players passed! Apparently, the U.S. North thought his hand was not good enough to open (only 12 high-card points), and South, lacking the majors and holding only 11 high-card points, also passed. Thus, North-South never bid on a hand on which they could make a grand slam! At the third table, the U.S. West opened three spades, which everybody passed! This was easily made, as the Canadian pair at this table also didn't utter a peep.

At the fourth table, the U.S. West also opened three spades. After two passes, South decided to put up a fight. He bid four diamonds, which everyone passed, and somehow went down two for a loss of 100 points.

Altogether, the U.S. team gained 1,390 points on the deal, but would have fared even better if at one table it had not passed out a hand on which it could make a grand slam!

Tomorrow: A psychological ploy.
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Monday, February 26, 2007

IN BRIEF

Howard Hawks athletic schedule

The Howard College women's basketball team will travel to face South Plains College tonight in Levelland at 6 p.m.

The women are now 13-16 on the season and 3-10 in conference while South Plains is 27-1 and 11-1, sitting on top of the conference standings.

The men's team will face South Plains, also the No. 1 ranked team in the conference, at 8 p.m. in Levelland.

The men have locked down fourth place in conference, but have a chance to move into third with a win tonight.

The Hawks are 23-6 overall and a 10-5 in conference.

Hawks fundraiser has been set

Tomorrow the Howard College Rodeo team will conduct a Cow Pattie Bingo fundraiser.

The event will be held at 1:30 p.m. on the east grounds of the Student Union Building and all squares are \$ 10. Tickets are still available.

For more information contact Coach Greg Kernick at 816-9477.

Big Spring girl's softball registration

The Big Spring Girl's Softball Association will be holding sign-ups to register for the upcoming 2007 season.

Females from ages 4 to 14 (as of Jan. 1st) are eligible to participate in the league.

Sign-ups will be held each Saturday, beginning Feb. 24, through March 17, at the Big Spring Mall.

The registration fee is \$40 and there is a discount for the second child. This fee will cover full uniforms.

A division for boys between 4 and 6 years old will be available this season.

For more information contact Ron Shafer at 213-3747.

Tour de France winner retires

Former Tour de France champion Jan Ullrich retired from cycling Monday amid continuing investigations of his alleged role in a Spanish doping scandal.

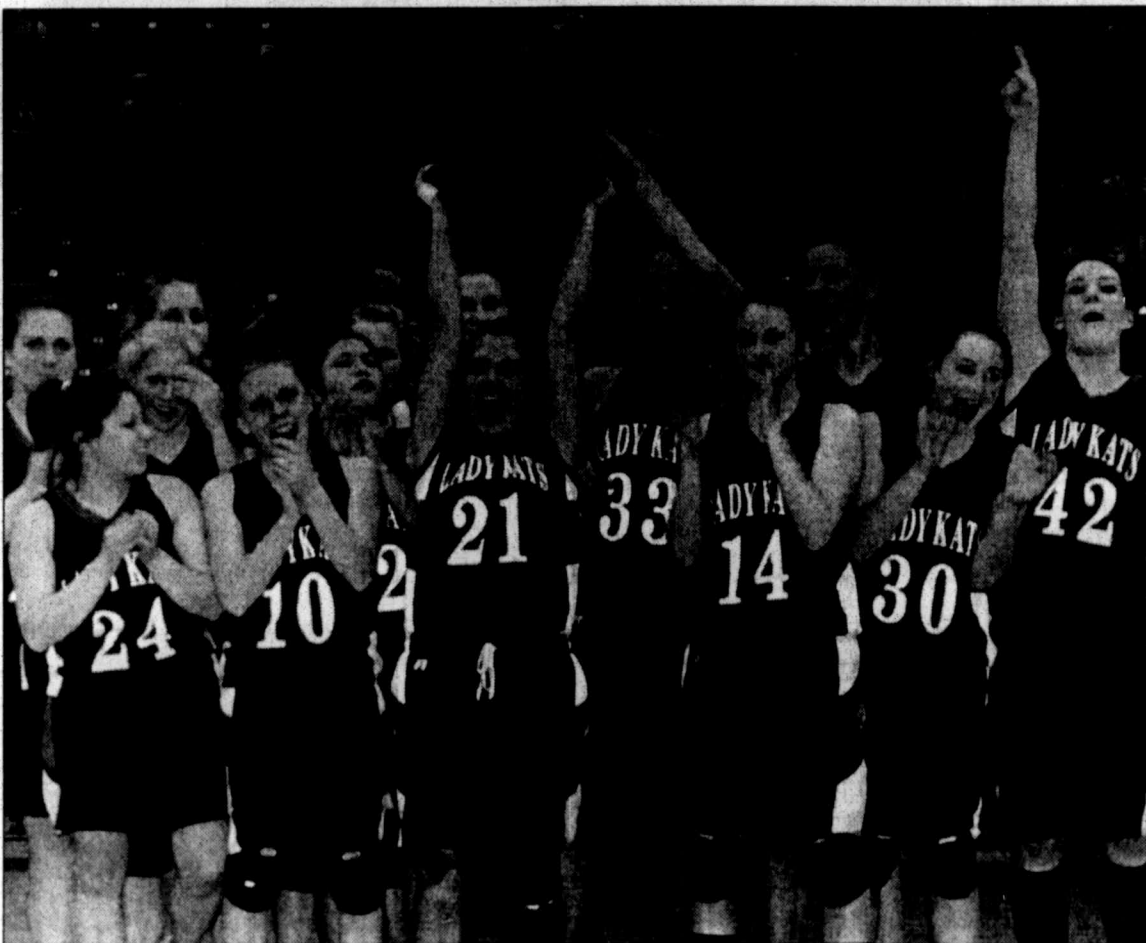
The 33-year-old German, who won the Tour in 1997 and was runner-up five times to Texan Lance Armstrong, said he will stay in the sport as a consultant for the Austrian-based Volksbank team.

"I am ending my active career," Ullrich said. He criticized the way he had been treated by cycling officials in Germany and Switzerland and by the German media.

"I feel like a serious criminal although I have nothing to reproach myself," he said.

Lady Kats' heading to Austin

Garden City's girls' team advances to state tournament for the first time



HERALD photo/James Schwartz
The Lady Kats are shown celebrating after their 36-24 victory over Roby, on Saturday in Fort Worth. Garden City returned home on Sunday and will head to Austin for the state tournament on Wednesday. The Lady Kats are 32-3 this season and will face Kennard at the Frank Erwin Center.

MIKE GRIMES
Sports Editor

Lyza Lopez came off the bench to score 11 points and lead the Garden City Lady Bearkats over Roby, 36-24, in the Class A Division II basketball tournament in Fort Worth, Saturday.

The win earns the Lady Kats a trip to the state semifinals Friday night in Austin at 7 p.m. inside the Frank Erwin Center.

The No. 6 ranked Lady Kats used their full court press and tough man-to-man defense to shut down the No. 5 ranked Roby girls' team and Lopez scored 9-of-her 11 points (team high) in the final 8:00 minutes of the game.

Over the final 2:30 Lopez and Erin Hirt, the Lady Kats starting point guard, made 8-of-8 free throws to secure the win and keep their state title dreams alive.

"For both teams, this game was a defensive struggle," Garden City head coach Brent Kirkland told reporters after the win. "I thought our kids did a good job of doing what we talked about and they played hard on every possession. When you hold a someone to 24 points your going to have a good chance of winning the basketball game."

For Roby, Kim Williams scored 11 points and Tara Schroedtor added 8 more in the losing effort.

In addition to Lopez hitting for 11 points, Hirt, the Lady Kats leading scorer this season, finished the game with 9 — K'Lanna Niehues 6 — Laura Plagens 4 and the Schwartz trio of Marissa, Macy and Morgan each added 2 points for Garden City.

Plagens led the team in rebounds with 6 and Niehues added 4.

Garden City Bearkats' upset Fort Davis to advance

MIKE GRIMES
Sports Editor

IMPERIAL — Garden City used its strong bench to upset Fort Davis, 37-31, and win the area championship Saturday night.

The victory came on the heels of hearing that the Garden City Lady Kats had upset No. 5 ranked Roby in Fort Worth to advance to the state semifinals in Austin.

An inspired Bearkats team (16-8) opened the game with a 8-5 lead in the first quarter and held on to lead the Indians 13-11, as the two teams headed for the locker rooms.

In the third quarter the Bearkats punched their ticket to the next round of the playoffs

by outscoring Fort Davis (21-6) 15-4 in the third quarter. The 13 point lead proved too much for the Indians to overcome. Fort Davis outscored Garden City in the fourth quarter 16-9, but it was not enough as the Bearkats cruised to a 6-point win.

"I thought we played excellent basketball tonight," Garden City's head coach Koby Abney told the media after the win. "Wade Jansa did a great job for us tonight and we had several guys that might not have scored a lot, but they played great defense for us."

"We're not as dependent on Taylor (Niehues) and Evan (Jansa) to outscore people now. We have other guys stepping up when it's their turn to make plays."

Neither team was comfortable from the free throw line as Garden City connected on 10-for-20 for 50 percent and Fort Davis shot under 40 percent, going 4-for-11.

Leading the way off the bench for the Bearkats was junior Wade Jansa with 10 points, Niehues 9, Evan Jansa 8 and Colton Schwartz with 4.

Defensive leader Bo Eggenmeyer harassed Fort Davis shooters throughout the game and finished with 2 points and 5 rebounds.

Garden City will face Sterling City Tuesday night at Dorothy Garrett Coliseum at 7 p.m.

This will be for the regional quarterfinal championship and the right to keep state championship dreams alive.



HERALD photo/Mike Grimes
Howard's Benson Akpan scores 2 of his 9 points on this tip in. The Hawks defeated Clarendon 76-63, Saturday night.

Hawks clinch Region V tournament

MIKE GRIMES
Sports Editor

The Howard College Men's Basketball Team earned a 73-61 win Saturday night over Clarendon College behind a zone defense that allowed only 2 points during a span of over 11 minutes in the second half.

At the same time Midland College downed Odessa College 66-65, allowing the Hawks to clinch the fourth and final playoff spot from the Western Junior College Athletic Conference for the Regional V basketball tournament to be held in Belton.

"All the stats were very deceiving tonight," Hawks coach Mark Adams said after the win, unaware of the final score between Midland and

Odessa. "We didn't play good basket tonight — let's get that straight. We had to go to a zone defense because we couldn't guard anyone man-to-man and that is very discouraging. This was a very disappointing win. We're trying to get into the playoffs and to have an effort like this is just disappointing."

Brandon Sampay led the Hawks with another double-double, scoring 12 points and pulling down 11 rebounds. The 6-foot-8 sophomore, playing his final game at Dorothy Garrett Coliseum, also had four blocked shots to help secure the win.

"Again, the stats tonight are very misleading," Adams said when asked about Sampay's performance. "Brandon had a lot of easy baskets tonight

and I don't think he played his A-game. I'm just not very positive right and maybe I need to look at the film, but we're going to have to learn from our mistakes and play much better if we want to accomplish our goals."

"We played as hard as we could tonight," Sampay explained after hearing Coach Adams remarks. "Defensive wise — Coach is right, we just didn't get back and there were plenty of things that didn't go our way tonight. That's not with how we expect to play, not at this point of the season. We're going to have to get this right and we need to play hard and just do whatever we need to do in order to get wins."

See HAWKS, Page 2B

Howard women get first home win of the season

ERIC C. RODEWALD

Special to the Herald
The Howard College Women's basketball team earned a 61-44 win over visiting Clarendon College in the final home game of the season for the Hawks.

It marked the final time for five sophomores to step on the floor at the Dorothy Garrett Coliseum and all contributed in the victory. Sophomore Kim Gilyard (El Paso) scored seven points, including a 3-pointer to open the scoring for the Hawks.

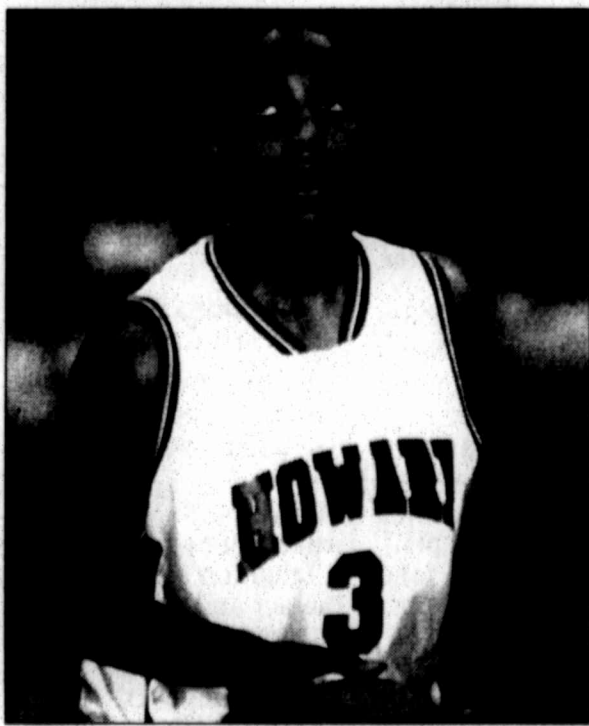
Also making the most of their final performance at the Dorothy Garrett

Coliseum were Nicole Linen (El Paso) and Sara Rondeau (Albuquerque, NM) who scored six points apiece. Linen also led the Hawks with six rebounds.

Sophomore twin towers Carole Bapoo, the 6-foot-4 player from Cameroon and Joy Ikechukwu, 6-foot-2 from Nigeria, kept Clarendon's inside threat of Kaylan Talley in check. The Hawk post players pulled down four rebounds apiece.

Leading the Hawks in scoring were freshman guards Kandace Griffin

See HOWARD, Page 2B



HERALD photo/Mike Grimes
Hawk's leading scorer Candace Lambert stares at the basket before hitting 2 of her 13 points Saturday night.

Grady rolls past Valley

MIKE GRIMES
Sports Editor

POST — Justin Tubb and Clay Mitchell led the Grady Wildcats to a 69-50 victory over Turkey Valley to win the Class A Division II Region I area playoff game Saturday night.

The Wildcats are now 29-2 this season and advance to face Lorenzo at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, at Seminole.

In the first quarter of the game, Grady set the tone as they raced to a 13-4 advantage.

Tubb's effort on the court was

See CATS, Page 2B

Kenseth bounces back with California road win

By MIKE HARRIS

AP Auto Racing Writer

FONTANA, Calif. — With crew chief Robbie Reiser back home in North Carolina on a NASCAR-enforced absence from the racetrack, Matt Kenseth and the rest of the No. 17 team just tried to remember the lessons he has taught them over the years.

Kenseth drove the Roush Fenway Racing Ford to the front and his veteran crew gave him a series of sparkling pit stops, including a very fast one Sunday near the end of the Auto Club 500 that put the 2003 NASCAR champion into the lead for good.

"It's a special win," an emotional Kenseth said after bouncing back from a disappointing Daytona 500 with his second victory of the weekend and second Nextel Cup win at California Speedway. "It's not without Robbie though. He spent the week at home while we were at Daytona building this car. Robbie built this team."

Kenseth, who got caught up in the last-lap melee the previous week at the Daytona 500 and wound up 27th after starting that lap in third, stayed away from trouble this time and took the lead with the fast stop during a caution 23 laps from the finish.

The victory, his 15th in Cup, came with engineer Chip Bolin sitting in for Reiser, sent home for four races after the team was caught cheating at the beginning of Daytona's Speedweeks. And it came less than 24 hours after Kenseth

won the Busch Series race on the same 2-mile oval.

A year ago, it was Jimmie Johnson whose team overcame the loss of crew chief Chad Knaus to get off to a strong start on the way to a championship.

"Those guys didn't let some bad luck stop them or slow them down," Kenseth said. "Everybody on this team knows what Robbie would expect them to do, whether he is here or not."

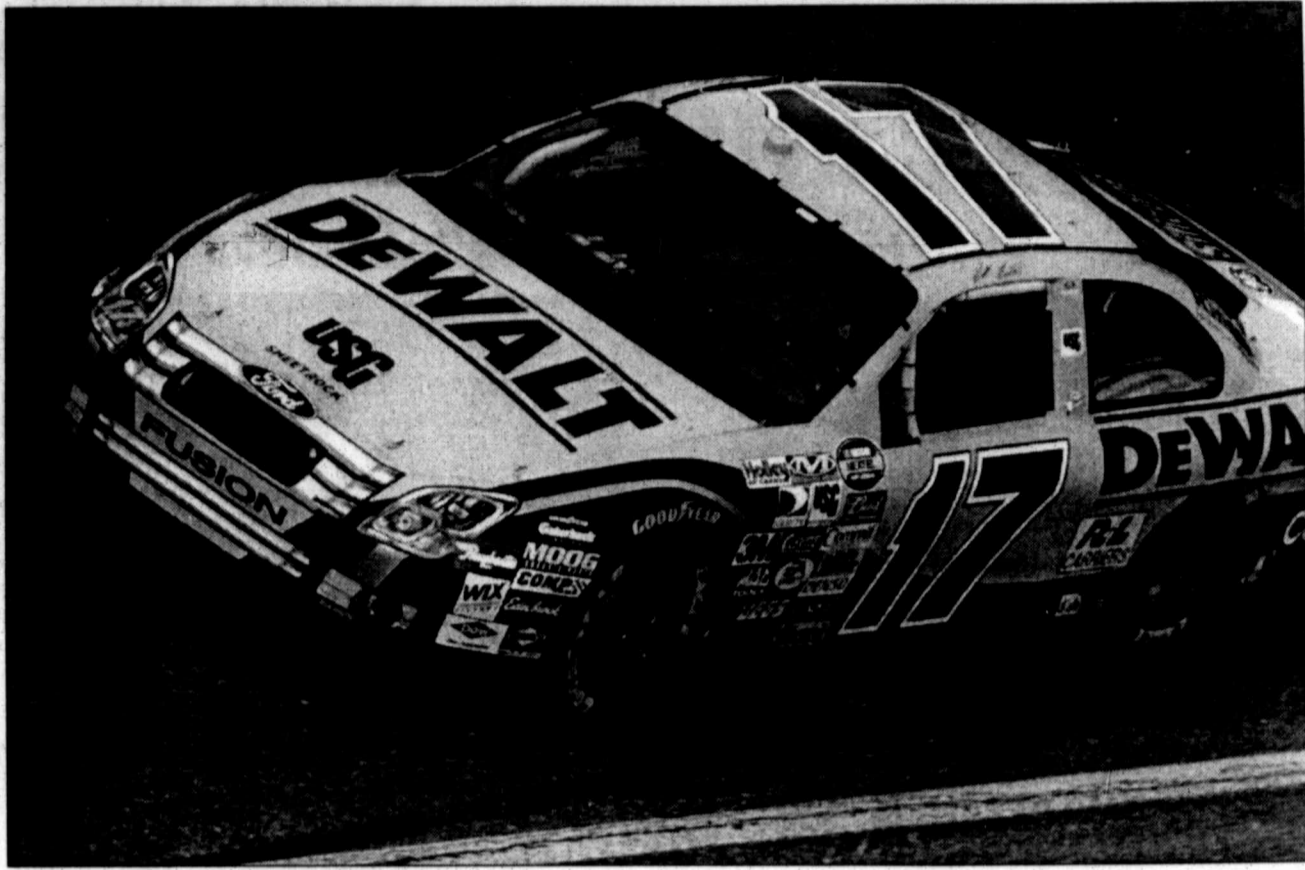
Kevin Harvick, who swept the Busch and Cup races at Daytona, came out of the final pit stop in second and was making up ground up Kenseth until rookie David Reutimann and former series champion Bobby Labonte crashed on lap 243 of the 250-lap event.

NASCAR red-flagged the race to give safety officials time to clean up the debris from the wreck. Once the cars were restarted, Harvick found he had a deflating left front tire and had to pit. He wound up 17th, the last car on the lead lap.

It was a relief to Kenseth when Harvick no longer loomed in his mirrors.

"I thought I was going to have a problem because I really thought the 29 (Harvick) was going to run me down," he said. "Then, he had his problem and Jeff (Gordon) moved up to second and I thought he might run me down. But we got a real good restart and, after that, we were OK."

"It's really nice to get some of our points back from the Daytona deal," added Kenseth, referring to the 50 points he and the team were docked in the



Matt Kenseth drives the (17) DeWalt Ford car during qualifying for the Daytona 500 at Daytona International Speedway. Kenseth followed up his Daytona crash with a win at Fontana.

cheating incident.

"It's a shame," Harvick said about the flat tire. "I don't know if we could have won it, but running with the leader and having a chance to win is what it's all about."

Three-time California winner Gordon, the only other multiple Cup race winner here, jumped past Jeff Burton into second on the restart with four laps to go, but couldn't get close enough to challenge Kenseth the rest of the way. Kenseth won by about six car-lengths.

Defending Cup champion Johnson, who finished 39th at Daytona, also bounced back with a third-place finish Sunday, followed by Burton, Mark Martin, Clint Bowyer, Kurt Busch, Tony Stewart and Kyle Busch.

Johnson's Chevrolet was in the lead, with Kenseth's Ford close behind, when debris on the backstretch brought out a caution flag on lap 226 — the first yellow flag since the track went green on lap 126.

All the leaders pitted on the

next lap and Johnson agonized through a slow stop, falling all the way to fifth.

"That's all I had," Johnson said. "We had a bad pit stop and we just ran out of time."

Gordon said he was just lucky to finish second.

"If Kevin hadn't had that flat tire, we would have probably finished third or fourth," he said. "It's crazy the way things happen. Last week, he wins the Daytona 500 and, this week, he has that flat tire. It's too bad."

McGrady burns former team

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Tracy McGrady gave Orlando Magic fans trip down memory lane they would probably rather forget.

McGrady scored 34 points with six assists Sunday and just about single-handedly carried the Houston Rockets to a 97-93 victory over the Magic.

It was vintage McGrady, who did pretty much the same thing for Orlando during the four seasons he played for the Magic before being traded to Houston in 2004. Though he hit only eight of 20 shots from the field, he got to the free throw line 18 times and made three of six 3-pointers as Magic defenders chased him all over the court.

"He's so good that teams have to put two or three guys on him and when they go help, it gives guys like me, Rafer (Alston)

and Shane (Battier) free looks behind the 3-point line," Luther Head said. "He's been doing it for us all season and tonight we were making those open shots."

The Rockets went 14-for-27 from 3-point range for the game. Head, Alston and Battier were a combined 11-for-20 from behind the arc. Alston finished with 20 points and Head had 15, including a 3-pointer off an assist from McGrady that gave Houston a 93-88 lead with 1:36 left in the game. Houston had not scored a field goal in nearly 5 minutes before Head hit the clutch shot.

"That's pretty much who we are," McGrady said. "When teams double me, my job is to make the right play for our team. We did a great job of spacing the floor and getting open behind the 3-point line. It's even sweeter

when we're knocking the shots down."

The Magic, meanwhile, were not knocking many shots down. They were just 5-for-20 from the field in the fourth quarter and shot 39.2 percent for the game. Orlando was 27-for-41 from the foul line.

"It's discouraging to miss 14 free throws in a close game," Magic coach Brian Hill said. "We played hard, we played well defensively, we've just got to find a way to break through and obviously we have to make some free throws."

Grant Hill led Orlando with 21 points. Dwight Howard added 18 points and 16 rebounds, but the Magic struggled with their shooting in their fourth straight loss.

The Rockets led 87-79 with 6:16 to go, but gave Orlando a chance to rally by not hitting from the field for 5 minutes.

HAWKS

Continued from 1B

Howard plays at South Plains College tonight at 7:50 p.m. in their final regular season game. Currently, South Plains holds a one-game lead over Midland College and they are up by 3 games over Howard.

Saturday, February 24th Games

- 61 Clarendon College @ Howard College 73
- 69 Western Texas College @ New Mexico Junior College 70
- 66 Midland College @ Odessa College 65
- 90 Frank Phillips College @ New Mexico

HOWARD

Continued from 1B

(Lubbock) and Candace Lambert (Omaha, Neb.) with 13 points apiece. Freshman forward Monica Jones (Rankin, Pa.) scored eight points,

while point guard Ronnie Wilson (Pittsburgh, Pa.) scored six points and dished out five assists for the team lead.

Freshman post Cherylle Leffall (Omaha, Neb.) added two points in the victory. Howard (13-16, 3-10 in

WJCAC) finishes the season on the road tonight at Levelland, versus the No.1 team in the nation, South Plains College (27-1,11-1) at 5:50 p.m.

In the previous meeting Howard lost a hard fought ball game 50-46.

CATS

Continued from 1 B

the big difference, as he pulled down 9 offensive rebounds and 14 total to clean the glass for the Wildcats. He also managed to score a game-high 23 points.

Mitchell added 17 points

and his teammates Jonathan Tunnel (8 pts.), Josh Pugh (7 pts.) and Brody Pinkerton (7 pts.) combined for another 22.

The Wildcats made 10-of-18 as a team from the free throw line and never allowed Valley the chance to get back into the game.

Grady made five 3-pointers on night — led by

Tunnel and Mitchell — who each had two.

Leighton Fields got into the act and connected on a 3-pointer as well, scoring his only points of the night from long distance.

Lorenzo High, the next opponent for Grady, boasts a record of 25-2, after defeating Sands over the weekend.

Diversity gives Big 12 an NCAA edge

By DOUG TUCKER

AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — In science class, it's called "biodiversity" — an environment teeming with different species and varying forms of life.

Big 12 fans in the mood to coin a new term might talk about their universities' hoops diversity.

Half the league's coaching staffs turned over this year, infusing the conference with a profusion of fresh styles and creative thinking.

It's made for an interesting season. And now it may give the league an important NCAA tournament edge.

There has been the rough-and-tumble defense of Bob Huggins' resurgent Kansas State team, the hurried, high-pressure offense and defense Mike Anderson brought to Missouri, the time-honored motion offense that Bob Knight has been using at Texas Tech to become the winningest college coach of all time.

There's hardly any style of offense or defense a Big 12 tournament team will encounter in March that it didn't already have to deal with in January and

February.

"We've got a true Missouri Valley guy that had great success in the Valley beating high majors in (Iowa State's Greg) McDermott," said Kansas coach Bill Self. "We've got a guy down the road (Missouri's Anderson) that certainly has brought a fast-paced pressing game that can get you out of rhythm and is difficult for teams to deal with."

Wait. Self isn't finished. "Coach Huggins has obviously done a great job on pressure, in-your-face, man-to-man," he said. "Oklahoma will play a style that's comparable to teams that you'll play in the (NCAA) tournament. I think our league is as well-versed as any league in America as far as having multiple styles to go against. If somebody runs motion in the NCAA tournament, they're not going to run it better than Texas Tech."

Encountering different styles in a one-and-done postseason fracas has been a problem, especially for Kansas. Although highly favored, the Jayhawks were shocking first-round NCAA victims each of the past two years

when they ran into unfamiliar mid-major underdogs and were unable to adjust.

But a trip through the Big 12 during the 2006-07 season has produced just about every imaginable challenge.

"You're going to play tough man-to-man, you're going to play against soft man-to-man," Self said. "You're going to play against triangle-and-two, you're going to play against box-and-one, you're going to play against mini zones."

"You're going to play against teams that control the shot clock, against teams that play motion. You're going to play tough teams that are very physical and some teams that rely solely on speed and quick hands. I think it's pretty diverse, more so than last year."

Headed into the final regular-season week, no team in the Big 12, perhaps no team in the country, seems hotter than Self's No. 6 Jayhawks. Shrugging off the absence of point guard Russell Robinson, they belted Iowa State Saturday night 89-52 and remained tied with No. 8 Texas A&M at 12-2 in the league.

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MONDAY

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	Dallas	Midland	Spanish	Odessa	Odessa	Telemundo	Midland	Atlanta	Odessa	Odessa	Discovery	Classics	Spike TV	Atlanta	Black Ent.	Danay	Sports	Sports	Science Fic.
6	News (CC)	News Wheel Fortune	Dueto de Pasiones	King of the Hill The Simpsons	News Entertainment	Vida de Blanco	News Be a Millionaire	Raymond	Van Impe Pres John Hagee	News-Lehrer	Mega Builders (CC)	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	Charmed (CC)	Live (CC) Hollywood	Phi of Future Zack & Cody	Women's College Basketball	College Basketball: Georgetown at Syracuse	Star Trek: Enterprise
7	Wife Swap (CC)	Wife Swap (CC)	La Foa Mas Belli	Prison Break (CC)	How I Met The Class	Marina	Deal of No Deal (CC)	Friends (CC)	Updates/Israel Charles Scott	Antiques Roadshow	Dirty Jobs (CC)	Movie: Hidalgo	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	Charmed (CC)	Movie: Gang of	Movie: The Emperor's New	Basketball	Star Trek: Enterprise	
8	Supernanny (CC)	Supernanny (CC)	Mundo de Fieras	24 (CC)	Two-Half Men Engagement	Zorro - La Espada y la Rosa	Heroes (CC)	Friends (CC)	Light of the Southwest	American Experience	Futurweapons	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	Soul Food (CC)	Groove (CC) Emperor New	U.S. Poker Championship	College Basketball: Kansas at Oklahoma	Star Trek: Enterprise
9	Building a Dream: Oprah	Building a Dream: Oprah	Cristina	Becker (CC) Friends (CC)	CSI: Miami (CC)	Decisions	The Black Donnellys	Family Guy	Great Performances	Stunt Junkies	Stunt Junkies	CSI: Crime Scene	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	Life Derek Phil of Future	Life Derek Phil of Future	U.S. Poker Championship	Kansas at Oklahoma	Star Trek: Enterprise
10	News (CC) Nightline	News (CC) Nightline	Primer Impacto Noticias Univ.	70s Show Raymond	News Late Show	Noticias 12 Corazones	News Tonight Show	Sarfield (CC) Sarfield (CC)	The Hour of Healing	Charlie Rose (CC)	Mythbusters (CC)	Movie: Romancing the Stone (CC)	Investigation Whacked Out	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	Jamie Foxx Jamie Foxx	Zack & Cody That's-Raven	U.S. Poker Championship	Gamernight NFL Live	The Dresden Files (CC)
11	The Insider Jimmy Kimmel	The Insider Jimmy Kimmel	La Hora de la Risa	King of the Hill Malcolm-Mid.	Latterman Late Late	AI Rojo Vivo!	Late Night	Movie: Stuck on You (CC)	N. McBride Sommer	Sign Off	Dirty Jobs (CC)	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	In Living Color In Living Color	Phi of Future Kim Possible	College Basketball: NFL Live	The Outer Limits (CC)	
12	AM Live (CC) News (CC)	AM Live (CC) News (CC)	El Privilegio de Amar	Malcolm-Mid. My Wife-Kids	Show The Insider	Pagado	Conan O'Brien Apex	Updates/Israel John Hagee	Updates/Israel John Hagee	Futureweapons	Movie: High Plains Drifter	Star Trek: Voyager	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	Comicview (CC)	Proud Family Sister, Sister	Long Beach State at Pacific	SportsCenter (CC)	The Twilight Zone (CC)	

DENNIS THE MENACE



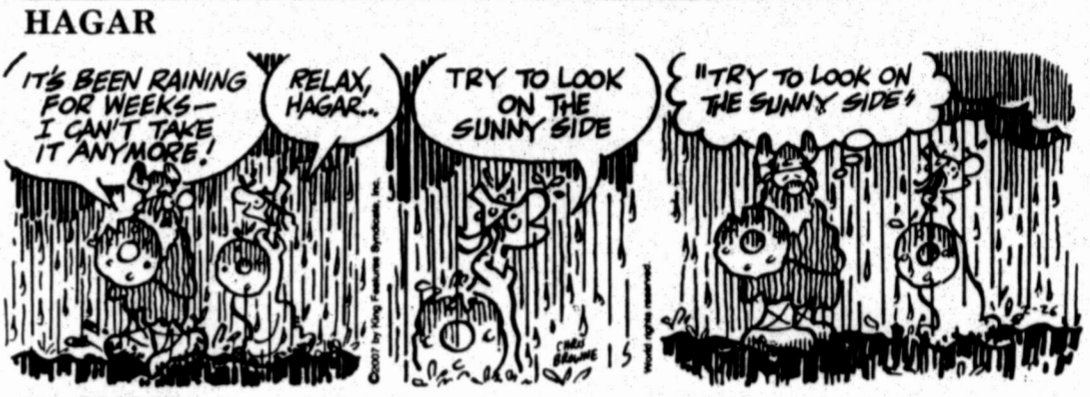
"WE'RE JUST MAKIN' ROOM FOR A PUDDLE IN CASE IT RAINS."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Grandma has some plants that grow SILK leaves."

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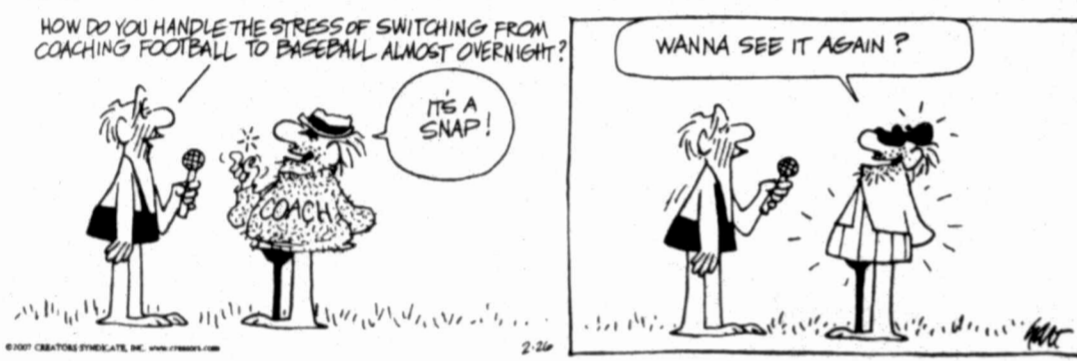


This Date In History

Today is Monday, Feb. 26, the 57th day of 2007. There are 308 days left in the year.
Today's Highlight in History:
One hundred years ago, on Feb. 26, 1907, concerns about a growing influx of foreigners, mostly Europeans, prompted Congress to create what became known as the Dillingham Commission, which examined the impact of immigrants on America. (The panel later recommended curtailing immigration from southern and eastern Europe through use of quotas, higher entry fees, literacy tests and other restrictions.)
On this date:
In 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte escaped from exile on the Island of Elba to begin his second conquest of France.
In 1870, an experimental air-driven subway, the Beach Pneumatic Transit, opened in New York City. (The tunnel was only a block long, and the line had only one car.)
In 1929, President Coolidge signed a measure establishing Grand Teton National Park.
In 1940, the United States Air Defense Command was created.
In 1945, a midnight curfew on nightclubs, bars and other places of entertainment was set to go into effect across the nation.
In 1952, Prime Minister Winston Churchill announced that Britain had developed its own atomic bomb.
In 1979, a total solar eclipse cast a moving shadow 175 miles wide from Oregon to North Dakota before moving into Canada.
In 1987, the Tower Commission, which probed the Iran-Contra affair, issued its report, which rebuked President Reagan for failing to control his national security staff.
Today's Birthdays: Actress Betty Hutton is 86. Singer Fats Domino is 79. Political columnist Robert Novak is 76.

Answer to previous puzzle
HEAVENO EGOTISM
ANGELOU URGENCY
STARLEY CURATOR
SWIGS WOLFE ROI
LINE MOTIF PUPA
ENS LURID JADED
SETBACKS RILED
IRKS DOVE
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ETAGERE ACREAGE
DELETED YEARNED

BC



WIZARD OF ID



AGNES



HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BEETLE BAILEY



Newsday Crossword

I DREAM OF GENIE by Sally R. Stein

Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Angelic topper
5 Living-room seating
9 No longer fresh
14 Sandwich-cookie name
15 Finishes even with
16 Propelled a canoe
17 Unrealistic expectation
20 Unsuccessful '50s Ford
21 Shoe fillers
22 Uncomplicated
23 Painter Salvador
25 Loch monster
27 Lawyer: Abbr.
30 Boston cream and coconut custard
32 Grassy field
36 Installed, as carpet
38 Hole in a vending machine
40 Sort of steak
41 Las Vegas site of the 2006 Miss America pageant
44 Major blood vessel
45 identical
46 one's way (proceed)
47 Stated again
49 Fruit pit, for one
51 Dentist's deg.
52 Blow one's own horn
54 Lobster relative
56 On the ocean

DOWN
1 Sewing-machine inventor Elias
2 Bone-dry
3 Not as much (interminably)
4 and aahed
5 Alphabetic trio
6 Petroleum sources
7 Celebration
8 Very pale
9 Bart, to Homer
10 Acknowledges applause
11 Diva's solo
12 Microscope part
13 Nervous
18 Envelope part
19 Agenda listing
24 Mona
26 Abel's younger brother
27 Church platform
28 Western resort lake
29 Theater levels
31 Bottled drinks
33 Was overfond
34 For hours (interminably)
35 Fuses metal
37 Computerized address files
39 What some workers punch
42 Hideout
43 do-well
48 Short race
50 Repair, as a sock
53 Davis of Beetlejuice
55 Took the first step
56 Jordanian, for one
57 Japanese wrestling
58 Recedes
60 the night before Christmas...
62 Not at home
63 Garage fillers
64 Overpublicize
66 Take a stab at
67 Fiber-filled grain

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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