



Ryan: Settles to serve as legacy



\$75,000 tab for historic hotel paid by developer

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

They had questions, and he had answers.

Area residents with questions regarding the planned renovations to the historic Settles Hotel had their questions answered face to face Monday night, as former Big Spring resident and project mastermind Brint Ryan met with citizens during a special meeting of the board of Directors for Moore Development.

"I appreciate the overwhelming amount of support we've received," said Ryan, who serves as manager of the Settles Hotel Development Company. "I've received dozens of e-mails and letters from citizens throughout the city who support this very complex, difficult and ambitious project.

"I was born and raised here, just north of town in the Luther community. This is my home and I have fond memories of Big Spring. I had spent about 20 years being

"So, why am I doing it? I've been very fortunate in my career — some would say I've had some financial success — and I can't think of a better way to invest it in a legacy I feel will be tremendous for this community."

—Brint Ryan



HERALD photos/Thomas Jenkins
Brint Ryan speaks to those attending Monday's Moore Development meeting about his devotion to the Settles Hotel project.

away from this community when I received a call from Troy Tompkins about the heritage square project... It was initially thought that I might assist individuals investing in the project with tax abatement agreements and things like that. When I got here, I asked Troy if the Settles was going to be included in the project, and he told me it wasn't because it was just too expensive. Not being of

sane mind, I suggested this might be something I would want to undertake."

And while financiers might scoff at the monetary gain from such a project, Bryan said renovating the Settles Hotel isn't about the money.

"I can promise you, at that time I

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Jail progress moving along, officials state

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

Progress.

That was the report received by Howard County commissioners regarding the two-fold effort surrounding the county jail — to bring the current jail into state compliance and the design and construction of a new facility — during the court's Monday morning meeting.

According to county officials, contractors have been hard at work in the existing jail, located in the county courthouse, in hopes of bringing the facility into compliance with state regulations.

"There's been progress made, at least by some of the contractors," said Sheriff Dale Walker. "Anthony Mechanical has



Walker

been working very diligently with the smoke evacuation system, although I understand the alarm company (Lubbock Sound) has held them up somewhat. There was also a problem at one point with the electrical contractor, who shut down power to the jail. But I feel like we're getting those things out of the way and making progress."

The jail was shut down by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards in November, after the facility's smoke evacuation system failed to meet requirements during a

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HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins
Ashley Piercy, assistant coordinator for the Colon Cancer Task Force out of Lubbock, discusses the importance of regular exams and testing with Howard County Commissioners Monday morning. Commissioners voted unanimously to designate 2007 Colon Cancer Prevention and Awareness Year.

Constable's future falls to TCLOSE

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

The future of Howard County Constable Mark Winn remains uncertain following Monday morning's meeting of county commissioners, as the court struggles with funding questions surrounding his state-mandated peace officer certification.

Winn met with commissioners for the second time in two weeks, asking the court to fund the remaining three college courses he must complete to meet requirements set forth by the state for county constables.

"I'm asking for \$800 to finish the courses," Winn told the court. "I still have three courses I need for my peace officer certi-

fication. Two of those I should be able to pass with a departmental exam since I taught them several years ago in Odessa. I'm still waiting to find out if the instructor for the third course will allow me to take a departmental exam for the course. If he doesn't, then I'm still at least one semester away from completion of the course."

Commissioner Jerry Kilgore and County Judge Mark Barr both said they have a problem with the funding because it sets a bad precedent for the county.

"We don't pay for certification classes for any of the deputies we hire," said Kilgore. "They have

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College anticipates funding cuts

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

Plan for the worst and hope for the best.

Those are the words Howard College President Dr. Cheri Sparks uses to describe ongoing preparations for the coming year's budget, as the board of trustees eagerly awaits funding totals from the Texas Legislature.

Sparks reported on the mat-

ter to the college's board Monday afternoon, as preliminary figures from the legislature show that the junior college district may receive between \$120,000 and \$170,000 less in state revenue next fiscal year.

"We're only half way through the legislature's budget process, so it's really still too early to tell," said Sparks. "However, as we begin working on the college budget

we'll certainly keep this in mind and be very conservative about our numbers. You have to plan for the worst and hope for the best."

Also during Monday's meeting, the board of trustees approved a contract with Parkhill, Smith and Cooper in their Midland office. So we have contracted with the firm, and Phil will act as the lead architect on the project."

"We had originally planned to contract with local architect Phil Furqueron on this," said Sparks. "However, Phil contacted us Friday to let us know he was taking a position with Parkhill, Smith and Cooper in their Midland office. So we have contracted with the firm, and Phil will act as the lead architect on the project."

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Obituaries

Elaine Cox Armstrong

Elaine Cox Armstrong, 83, of Big Spring died Friday, March 23, 2007, at her residence. Private funeral services will be held at a later date.

She was born on Oct. 10, 1923, to Jesse Melvin and Pearl Perry Cox in Murchison. She came to Howard County in 2005. She was a Baptist. She had worked as a registered nurse at the former Methodist Hospital in Lubbock for many years. She retired in 1987.

She is survived by three daughters, Barbara Armstrong of Indianapolis, Ind., Sharon Armstrong of Campbellsville, Ky., and Garlanda, "Stanli" Pearson of Big Spring; one son, Billy Pearson of Big Spring; four grandchildren, DeeAnn Schmidt Amaro of Alabama, Lyndi Rene Price Duke of Germany, James Garland Nearn of Dallas and Jeremy Paul Delgado and his wife, Carla, of Tulsa, Okla.

She is also survived by 15 great-grandchildren, three cousins, one niece, one nephew and "Jesse Melvin," her dog who was her longtime companion.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by five sisters, Lela Petre, Ouida Vandersoll, Ethel Beheler, Melva Lee Stovall and Billie Jean Smallwood; one granddaughter, Pamela Schmidt Becker; one great-grandson, Daniel John Becker; and the father of her children, Garland Brooks Armstrong.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at www.myersandsmith.com.

Paid obituary

D.L. Newton

D.L. Newton, 51, of Big Spring died Monday, March 26, 2007, in a local hospital. Funeral services will be held at 10 a.m., Wednesday, March 28, 2007, at the Trinity Baptist Church with the Rev. Dr. Randy Cotton, pastor, officiating. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park Peace Chapel.

The family will receive friends from 6:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel.

He was born on Aug. 25, 1955, in Big Spring and married Marcia Jerpe on Oct. 2, 1982, in Big Spring.

D.L. was a lifelong resident of Big Spring and graduated from Big Spring High School in 1973. He was a fourth generation farmer in Howard County. D.L. was currently serving on the board of directors for the Howard County Farm Bureau, Big Spring Co-op Gin and the Permain Basin Water District. He was a member of Trinity Baptist Church.

Survivors include his wife, Marcia Newton of Big Spring; two sons, Keith Newton of Big Spring and Kyle Newton of College Station; his mother, Jean Newton of Big Spring; one sister and brother-in-law, Carol and David Callaway of Big Spring; one brother and sister-in-law, Tim and Debbie Newton of Big Spring; two nephews, Austen and Andrew Newton, both of Big Spring; and two nieces, Katie Newton of Big Spring and Melissa Harris of Raeford, N.C.

He was preceded in death by his father, David Newton on Jan. 1, 2005.

The family suggests memorials be made to Trinity Baptist Church, 810 East 11th, Big Spring 79720 or a favorite charity.

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

Paid obituary

Juan Bonilla Flores

Juan Bonilla Flores, 101, died Sunday, March 25, 2007 at his home in Odessa. A prayer service will be at 7 p.m. today, Tuesday, March 27, 2007, in the Odessa Funeral Home Chapel. Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Wednesday, March 28, 2007, at the Sunset Heights Baptist Church in Odessa. Burial will be at 2 p.m. at Mt. Olive Cemetery in Big Spring.

Survivors include two sons, Longino Flores of Odessa and Juan Flores Jr. of Midland; four daughters, Paula Flores Smith of Arlington, Erlinda Flores Burgess of Roanoke, Ala., Benita Flores Albarado of Uvalde and Vicki Belen of Odessa; five generations of grandchildren; and numerous nieces, nephews and friends.

Services under the direction of Odessa Funeral Home.

Ronnie Freeman

Ronnie Freeman, 49, of Big Spring died Friday, March 23, 2007, at Carlsbad Medical Center in Carlsbad, N.M. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Betty Mae Olivas

Betty Mae Olivas died Saturday, March 24, 2007, at Sienna Nursing Home in Odessa. Memorial services are scheduled for 10 a.m. Thursday, March 29, 2007, at Acres West Funeral Chapel.

She was born on July 12, 1928, in San Antonio. She was a housekeeper.

Survivors include one son, Roy L. Landrum II of San Antonio; two daughters, Sherry Keck of Odessa and Susan Musick of San Antonio; eight grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

Lael Melburne Roberts

Lael M. Roberts, 75, recently of Toledo, Ohio, died Friday, March 23, 2007.

Lael was born on May 31, 1931, to Lael Wade and Ila Mae Roberts in Big Spring. He resided in various parts of Texas throughout his life. Lael earned a degree in geology from Sul Ross State University in Alpine and went on to become a math and science teacher with the Texas Public School System, retiring in 1986. He was a U.S. Navy veteran, serving his country in Korea and was honored with several awards, including the National Defense Service Ribbon, the United Nations Service Ribbon, the Korean Service Ribbon along with two stars and a Good Conduct Medal.

Lael is survived by his son, Randy (Connie) Roberts, and two granddaughters, Elizabeth and Mary Roberts. Private graveside services were held Monday morning at historic Woodlawn Cemetery with the Rev. Larry Brown, pastor of Grace Family Fellowship, officiating.

The family would like to thank Odyssey HealthCare for the wonderful care and support they provided for Lael and his family.

Arrangements were handled by Newcomer Funeral Home.

Expressions of sympathy may be made at www.NewcomerFamily.com

Paid obituary

Fred Jesse Cole Sr.

Fred Jesse Cole Sr., 63 of Big Spring died Saturday, March 24, 2007, at Medical Center Hospital in Odessa following a brief illness. Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Thursday, March 29, 2007, at Mt. Bethel Baptist Church with the Rev. William Vaughn, pastor, officiating. Burial will be at Trinity Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. Wednesday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

He was born on Jan. 25, 1944 to Robert and Lula Mae Cole in LaFeria. He was raised in Harlingen.

Fred moved to Big Spring in 1968 where he worked at various locations before moving to Dallas in 1988.

Fred returned to Big Spring in 2000 and worked at Scenic Mountain Medical Center in dietary services and operated his catering business "Chef Fred and Grandson Catering Service" until his health began to fail.

He is survived by his wife, Donna Cole of Big Spring; five sons, Fred Cole Jr., Billy Cole and Jeffery Cole and his wife, Sonia, all of Houston, Chris Cole and his wife, Maria, of Midland and Colby Cole of Dallas; four daughters, Sondra Cole of Houston, Nadia Cole of El Paso and Christal Cole and Chasity Cole, both of Dallas; three brothers, George Cole of Raymondville, Robert Cole of Harlingen and Roy Cole and his wife, Wyetta, of Fort Worth; four sisters, Clarice Robinson and Nora Sims, both of Harlingen, and Treaver L. Brooks and Ann Gilmore, both of Fairfield, Calif.; nine grandchildren; and a host of nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two brothers, Joe Bernard and Ellis Cole, and one sister, La June Cain.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at www.myersandsmith.com

Weather

Tonight...Partly cloudy. Lows around 60. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.
 Wednesday...Mostly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs in the lower 80s. South winds 15 to 25 mph.
 Wednesday night...Partly cloudy. A 50 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Lows in the lower 50s. South winds 15 to 20 mph shifting to the west around 10 mph after midnight.
 Thursday...Partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms in the morning. Cooler. Highs in the upper 60s. Northwest winds around 10 mph.
 Thursday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 40s.
 Friday...Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 60s.
 Friday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 40s.

Lottery

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Monday night:
 Winning numbers drawn: 8-10-25-28-33.
 Number matching five of five: none.
 Next Cash 5 drawing: Tuesday night.

Results of the Texas Two Step drawing Monday night:
 Winning numbers drawn: 15-20-26-31. Bonus Ball: 14.
 Number matching four of four, plus Bonus Ball: none.
 Estimated jackpot for Thursday night drawing: \$900,000.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Monday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 8-7-2

WINN

Continued from Page 1A

it already. And if we pay for the remainder of your classes so you can get your certification, then I think we're setting a bad precedent for the future."

The possible precedents Kilgore spoke of found its way into the meeting only minutes later, as fellow constable Bill Holden remarked on the subject.

"If you're going to fund this, then I think you should be fair about it," said Holden, referring to possible compensation from the court for his own out-of-pocket costs for his certification.

"We're talking about two different things here," Barr told Holden. "This is something totally different."

And while the court continues to struggle with the idea of funding for the classes, County Attorney Mike Thomas said the issue may already be out of the court's hands.

"This is the second time we've gotten heat from TCLOSE (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards) on this," Thomas told the court. "Constables are required to have their peace officer certification completed within 270 days of being elected. Even if we agree to fund the classes, there's no guarantee TCLOSE won't go ahead and ask the state attorney general to petition to have him (Winn)

removed from office." Barr told the court he would talk with officials from TCLOSE to see if an agreement can be reached between the two entities.

"I'll contact them and see what we can do," said Barr. "I'll explain to them that Mark has told us he can have the courses completed by the end of the summer and complete his certification and we'll see if they will be lenient."

As commissioners await a reaction from TCLOSE, Department of Public Safety Sgt. Jason Hester brought up a relevant point during the meeting.

"Even if he gets the three classes he needs, he still has to take the state peace officer exam," Hester told the court. "There's no guarantee he will pass it."

Winn has served as a Howard County constable for more than four years.

While the court made no motion to approve or deny the \$800 request from Winn — up approximately \$200 from the \$600 estimate provided to commissioners two weeks ago — the local constable said lack of funding is the entire reason for his failure to meet the state's 270-day deadline.

"It all comes down to funding," said Winn firmly. "That's the reason I'm still not certified."

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

HC

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Trustees also gave a nod to Howard College's newest course of study, a computer forensics investigation program.

"It's a very exciting course," said Sparks.

Sparks said the new course wasn't the only one to get a nod Monday.

"The Adult Basic Education programs received an award for best performance in English as a second language in small programs for 2005-2006," said Sparks. "Our San Angelo campus also won a similar award."

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

Police blotter

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

- MARGARITO CRUCES, 24, of 2418 N. Birdwell Lane, was arrested Monday on a local warrant and a charge of public intoxication.
- KRISTIE CHRISTIANSEN, 35, of 1901 Scurry, was arrested Monday on two local warrants.
- GRADY HAWKINS, 23, of 810 Cherry, was arrested Monday on two local warrants.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported in the 500 block of Douglas.
- ASSAULT/CLASS C was reported in the 700 block of 11th place.

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RYAN

Continued

was not a cult or this project. "But at the end of the day, I think it provides a lot of value to the community. It gives us a chance to reconnect with the people. For that reason, it's important." "I want to see it through. I have had advisors who told me it will eventually be a waste of money. I understand that, but you all know what this project is for. We've had a lot of people in the community, promises have been made, those cases are being brought to court. Some of them have not been making a difference on this.

JAIL

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pair of... The jail meet staff that call in the jail to fireproof that staff director pair of since leaving ation s obstacle commiss way.

Accor officials, have 75 the world commiss have t opened thereafte Since inmates housed includin Glassco counties Accor Commiss Crooker site sui new jail some pi court's old Kn Birdwel — was chase b "Comi Simer a with 13 the cc tion," "We're list to t this m haven't look at hope i this list row it sites, at there."

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Amy D. 432

RYAN

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was not aware of the difficulty or complexity of this project," said Ryan. "But at the same time, I think it probably the single most important legacy that I could personally provide to the community. It gives me an excuse to come here, and it's given me an excuse to reconnect with many of the people I grew up with. For that reason, it is very important to me."

"I want to tell you there is no possible way — and I have hired the very best advisors on this project — it will ever achieve a market rate of return. That's important for everyone to understand because, as you all know, the legacy of this project isn't good. We've had a number of people come to the community, made a lot of promises, fell flat on their faces, then left. In all of those cases, the underlying premise of the project was to achieve a market rate of return. We're going to figure out how to bring this online and someone is going to make some money. Folks, I have no aspirations of making a bunch of money on this project. I would

like to limit the amount of money I lose on this project, but it's clear to everyone that's looked at this that it will never achieve a market rate of return.

"So, why am I doing it? I've been very fortunate in my career — some would say I've had some financial success — and I can't think of a better way to invest it in a legacy I feel will be tremendous for this community," he said with a grin. "And I think it will be a lot of fun. Although it's complex and challenging, we're looking forward to it."

Ryan said he has been frustrated with the lack of visible progress on the project since it was announced several months ago, and understands the community's frustration as well.

"I'm as frustrated as anyone, but when I got into this and looked at all the aspects of it, there are a couple of key things you should understand," said Ryan. "We're going to do this with the understanding the building will be eligible for inclusion in the National Registry of Historic Places. This is critical for two reasons. First, I'm doing this to get into the real estate build-

ing and rent spaces. I want to make sure the project is a trophy property in the end. That it will be something that's a destination, something people in the community will be proud of. Just putting another building online has no interest to me at all.

"Second, by putting this in the National Register, we can let Uncle Sam help pay for part of it. That's through the smart use of what are called new market credits, and historical restoration credits. That's a 20 percent federal tax credit that we can use and monetize and let outside investors defray the costs of this. Because of that, we have had to take steps to assess what it will take to get it into the National Register."

The absence of payment for the building — \$75,000 to the city of Big Spring, which was placed in escrow by SHDC Monday afternoon — was just one of many details Ryan said required a slow, careful approach.

"We've been told by our advisors we can not immediately take title of the building," said Ryan. "Even though we've escrowed the funds today, we probably won't take title of the building for a

few months. The reason for that is we're going to ask the city — at no cost to the city — to deliver the building at a certain point so that becomes our measurement point for the National Registry."

"Right now, if we had those folks come in and evaluate it the way it is today, our costs would go up significantly, and it might not be economically feasible to do it. So the delays have been there because we want to do it right. We want to use every possible means to fund it, because the funding opportunities and avenues we have, the better chance we have for a full completion and bringing the building online in about 24 to 36 months. It may look like we're slow to move, but there have been a lot of things going on behind the scenes to ensure we do the project, and we do it correctly."

While the project will never attain the level of prosperity most investors would require to even give the project a second look, Ryan said it can work, and there are plenty of success stories to support his theory.

"For those that doubt, visit the Wooten in Abilene. Visit the Cactus in San Angelo," said

Ryan. "This has been done before, and it's been done well. These are magnificent restorations that make those communities proud... I feel like this is our best, last hope. If we don't do something today, if this building continues to deteriorate and be exposed to the elements, in not too many years you're going to be forced to take it down."

"I have an appraisal from a well-known appraiser here in town that the building is worth a negative \$250,000. So if anyone thinks I got a deal on this building, I want you to talk to my accountant. Why did I pay \$75,000 for a building that's worth negative \$250,000? Because the project is that important to me. I wanted to make sure that when the bid went out, I won the bid. Am I crazy? Perhaps. But the point is, if we don't do something now, we're going to be in a situation where we have to take this building down, and you are going to have to pay for that. The cost of taking it down is more than \$250,000, and the taxpayers will be forced at some point to pay for that."

So, is the renovation of

the Settles Hotel a sure thing at this point? Maybe.

"I believe it's a sure thing," said Ryan. "We have met with all of the constituencies that play a potential deal-killer role in this, and I believe subject to working out some finer details and legal issues, we're all committed to the project. Everyone that could create a situation that would stop this from going forward I think is onboard. Is anything ever a sure thing? Probably not. But I believe and I'm confident that we're very close to being in a situation where we can break ground."

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Fred Cole, 63, died Saturday. Funeral services will be at 2:00 PM Thursday at Mt. Bethel Baptist Church with burial at Trinity Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 6:00 until 7:00 PM Wednesday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Elaine Cox Armstrong, 83, died Friday. Memorial Services will be held at a later date.

Ronnie Freeman, 49, died Friday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

JAIL

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pair of tests in 2006.

The jail also failed to meet state requirements that call for a standpipe in the jail to deliver water to firefighters and a door that swung in the wrong direction. However, these pair of problems have since been corrected, leaving the smoke evacuation system the lone obstacle standing in the commissioners court's way.

According to county officials, the contractors have 75 days to complete the work in the jail, with commissioners hoping to have the facility re-opened by the state soon thereafter.

Since the jail's closure, inmates have been housed in other counties, including Dickens, Glasscock and Lamb counties.

According to Commissioner Bill Crooker, efforts to find a site suitable to build a new jail have also seen some progress since the court's first choice — the old Kmart building at Birdwell Lane and FM 700 — was optioned for purchase by a local church.

"Commissioner (Gary) Simer and I have come up with 13 different sites for the court's consideration," said Crooker. "We're just getting the list to the commissioners this morning, so they haven't had a chance to look at them yet. The hope is that we'll take this list and begin to narrow it down to several sites, and then work from there."

A re-opening of the county jail can't come fast enough, according to Walker, who presented commissioners with a report on the toll the expense of housing inmates out of county has had on the department's budget and the county's coffers overall.

"We still haven't received inmate housing bills from Glasscock, Bailey and Lamb counties, so next month's bill is going to be extremely high," Walker told the

court. "With those bills excluded from February, we've gone \$62,527 above our budget for the jail."

"That translates into more than 12,000 miles we've driven to transport inmates, \$1,200 in fuel and more than \$54,000 in housing costs. There are also medical costs to consider, as well as the overtime for the jail staff, which was more than \$5,000."

Walker requested the court allow his office to go out for bids on two new vehicles, citing his office currently has approximately a half-dozen vehicles with more than 100,000 miles.

The request did not meet a positive reaction from commissioners.

"I think we need to hold

off on this until we at least get the jail re-opened," said County Judge Mark Barr. "We're going to have to stay away from any major purchases until then, because we may not have the money we need."

Walker said he disagreed with the judge's appraisal of the situation.

"Do you want to put the citizens of Howard County at risk?" Walker asked Barr. "What happens when we don't have an emergency vehicle and a citizen calls us and is in need? I suggest you don't play with emergency vehicle funding."

Barr said it was simply a matter of seeing the issue from "both sides."

"I see what your saying, but I have to look at this

from both sides," said Barr. "Let's see what's left in the budget once the jail is re-opened."

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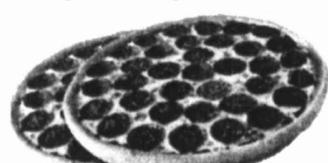
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Bird Poop:

Tailless roadrunner proves to be a real survivor

Nearing the hill with its 45 mph speed limit sign, I knew exactly what the business owner meant when he described east Fourth Street as a raceway. Cars and trucks whizzed by me as I parked in front of his store. The sooner we captured the bird the better its chances were at having survived this neighborhood.

Earlier, the man had described the bird as having a large growth on the end of its bill. Having watched it drag the tip of its beak back and forth across the gravel and dirt in the parking area, he could imagine the discomfort the bulge caused. Also of concern was its ability to eat.

Catching the bird would require patience and several strategies on the part of the store owner. After we discussed his options, I supplied him with a trap and pole net. The man knew he and the bird were running out of time.

Especially attractive to the bird was the area in back of the store. The dumpster received more than just the discards of the business. The owner had often seen broken bags of food waste and dead animals carelessly thrown in with his garbage. When trash fell short of the gaping receptacle, it was left for the owner to gather. This constant abuse had enticed rodents to an old wooden structure adjacent to the dumpster. The possibility of food and shelter offered a

"critter haven" no owner would want.

A day passed. Then another. Fearing the worse, I called the shop. No answer. Deciding to call later in the day, I worried that our plans had failed. "I got him!" said the excited voice when I answered the phone several hours later. "Gum. Dried gum on his bill," cried the store owner as he started to tell me how he had managed to catch the roadrunner.

Since he knew the bird would be hunting for rodents and small birds, the man had trapped mice and a sparrow to use as bait. Lured into the wooden building by the chirping of the little bird inside the trap, the roadrunner also saw the dead mice enclosed with the sparrow. Nearing the caged bait, the hunter was startled by the closing of a door and the presence of the man. With only so much room to run, leap, and hide, the bird outmaneuvered the net for the better part of an hour. Determined to catch it, the man was breathing harder than the roadrunner. "She told me it would be hard," he thought. He had not anticipated anything quite this strenuous.

Finally, luck and a well-timed stretch of his arm and net caught the elusive bird. Holding the webbing against the dirt floor, he watched as the roadrunner bounced against the net. Dust was flung into his face as he knelt beside the bird. Calmly placing one hand on top of the wiggling captive, he slid his other hand under the net. It only took a second for the bird to use this opportunity.

The roadrunner squirted out from under the net as the man grabbed for its tail. Flying to the top of some boxes, it left



The tailless roadrunner stands atop a crosstie fence. Frolicking among yuccas, agrito and native wild flowers, it found numerous grasshoppers to its liking.

the man with a fist full of tail feathers. While catching his breath, the store owner realized that the tail was as long as the bird's body. He had never noticed the iridescent sheen, or the white tips of the outer feathers. "These birds are just too fast," he sighed.

Although warned that this could happen, the man had to laugh at his predicament. Tired, but determined, he willed himself to make a second effort in capturing the tailless wonder.

As he gave us the bird, the businessman told of seeing two roadrunners for several years. In the last month, he had found what he thought to be this one's mate lying in the street. Not wanting a repeat of such a waste of wildlife, he hoped this

bird would have a chance somewhere else.

Our attempts at gum removal proved better than the bird's abrasive dirt-grit approach. Knowing that it had neared starvation due to human carelessness, we kept the roadrunner on a diet of mice, grasshoppers and crickets. When the time came for its release, we introduced it to our side yard. Immediately, the chaparral darted among the native growth.

For days, the bird enjoyed hunting summer's bounty of insects and lizards. Without its tail, the roadrunner continued to run, leap, fly and cavort. Although a tail would have assisted in its balance, the bird compensated with adept wing movements and

strong, gripping feet. In adopting the area as its own, it chased feeding songbirds and prowled for sparrows. Each morning, the bird enjoyed sunbathing. Spreading its wings to expose the featherless areas of its back, it relished the warmth of early morning rays.

Observing the roadrunner's altered appearance, we couldn't help but laugh. It could be described as resembling part chicken, part quail,

especially when its notable crest was not erect. Yet our visitor was a survivor.

The pale blue, orange-red bare skin back of its eyes, and streaked plumage were typical markings of a species so beneficial for control in nature. Its prowess and strength in capturing insects and rodents was unequalled. Watching it hammer and whack its prey until limp, we came

See BIRD, Page 6A



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Bedtime Stories

SNOWBALL DECIDES TO RUN AWAY

Snowball is a pretty little dog. He lives with his owner, Traci. Traci loves all dogs, but she loves Snowball the best because he is so small and cute. His fur is as white as snow.

Traci and Snowball loved to play ball. They loved to play catch. They loved to play hide and seek. They loved just hugging each other, too. Everything was fine until one day when something bad happened.

It had been raining and Traci was inside working on cleaning her house. Snowball was outside playing in the rain and mud. After he finished playing in the mud, he ran into Traci's nice, clean house without wiping his four feet. Four feet can track in lots more mud than two feet can. How many feet do you have? Traci's nice, clean house was now a nice, dirty house and Traci was not happy! After all, she had

spent the whole morning cleaning up her house and she was already tired. She had been working so hard! And now her house was so dirty.

"What are you doing?" Traci screamed. Traci did not mean to scream at Snowball but she did that day. Poor Snowball. Traci had never screamed at him before. Snowball became very angry at Traci for screaming at him. He was so hurt!

He decided that he would run away that night after Traci had gone to sleep. He did not want to even tell her, "Goodbye." Traci did finally go to sleep that night, and Snowball was ready. He had his bags packed. He had his toothbrush packed, too. Do dogs have, toothbrushes? In this story they do! Snowball likes clean, sparkly teeth and he wants to keep them healthy, so he always brushes his teeth after eating. Snowball slowly,

quietly crept out the door, and he was never come back! Or, would he?

It was a cold, dark night. Snowball ran down the



street, not knowing where he would go. He found a big oak tree that looked like would be a very nice place to spend the night. He curled up under that tree and tried to go to sleep. He couldn't go to sleep. He was too cold. He missed his warm bed and nice warm blankets that Traci had always kept

clean for him. He stayed awake all night, shivering in the cold. It was a miserable night.

Finally the sun came up as it always does each morning. The warm sunshine felt good to poor little Snowball. It was breakfast time now. What would he eat? Traci had always given him a wonderful warm breakfast, and she always did it with a big smile and a hug. He missed his warm bed. He missed his warm breakfast. He missed the warm smile and hugs from Traci. He missed Traci!

"I know," thought Snowball, "I will go back home and tell Traci I am sorry and I will never track mud into our nice, clean home again. Ever!" Off he went, running just as fast as his little short legs would go. As he came around the corner, he saw his beautiful home and it sure looked good to him. He ran up to the door, then stopped. He

made sure that there was no mud on his four feet. They were clean. Into the house he went. Traci was still asleep. She had been up very late the night before, wishing she had not screamed at Snowball. She felt so bad. Snowball got into his nice, warm bed and pulled the covers over his head went to sleep. It was a very nice, peaceful sleep. He felt so loved and safe there.

Soon Traci was awake. She came over to Snowball and said, "When you wake up, my little friend, I have something I must tell you." Then Snowball woke up, and could feel the love coming from Traci as she smiled at him and handed him his wonderful breakfast. "Now that you are awake," she said, "I want to tell you something. First of all, I love you. I am sorry I screamed at you yesterday. I will never do it again. Please forgive me. I am so

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happy that you did not run away last night. I was afraid that you would."

Snowball never did let Traci know that he had run away the night before, but had decided to come back. He loved Traci too. He never wanted to make her angry again, either. He always made sure his four feet were clean when he went into their home, especially just after Traci had cleaned all day. This is what friends are supposed to do. Take care of each other, smile at them, and give them hugs!

It is almost bedtime again for Traci and Snowball. Both of them said to tell you, "Good Night."

★★★
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★★★

Look at where the electronic world meets the Sopranos

A few years back I made an ominous statement. I was talking to fellow Internet security follower and said something to the effect that if the identity-theft community ever managed to hook up with the botnet community, the Web's underground could turn into something resembling a Soprano's family reunion.



THOMAS JENKINS

But that couldn't happen, right? Wrong. The underground economy where criminals sell stolen personal and financial data appears to be relying heavily on network infrastructure supplied by the kingpins of the botnet world, according to Symantec's biannual Internet Threat Report published last week. Symantec tracked 6 million separate bots — compromised computers used to send spam or steal personal data — controlled by roughly 4,700 separate servers through so-called "bot herders" who could be anywhere in the world. During the same six-month period, from last July through December, Symantec also watched 332 of what it calls "underground economy servers," where stolen personal data, such as credit card and bank account information, is routinely bartered and

sold. That's right. The criminals running the botnet systems are also the ones that are providing the space to buy and sell the information. According to Alfred Huger, Symantec's vice president of engineering, it's not unusual for these underground economy servers to be the same as those maintained by the bot herders. "We think the bot herders are people maintaining the infrastructure for this criminal activity," Huger says. Symantec came to this conclusion through both its global sensor network and researchers who spent time lurking in the online criminal world where buying and selling of stolen personal information takes place. Yup. Symantec can easily infiltrate the seedy underworld, but our nation's newly-appointed cyber-cops still aren't sure it even exists. Go figure.

At these "underground economy servers," Symantec watched 5,000 criminal transactions over a five-month period. As to where these servers are situated, Symantec says 51 percent are in the United States, 15 percent in Sweden, 7 percent in Canada and 6 percent in Germany, with the remainder elsewhere. Often, these servers are stolen, too, used remotely right under the noses of their rightful owners, particularly small businesses and consumers. And it's a bustling marketplace for identity theft. "You can buy a U.S.

identity — a credit card, bank account, Social Security, date of birth — for \$20," says Huger. "A single U.S.-based credit card ranges from \$1 to \$6, with U.K.-based cards a little higher, \$2 to \$12." Access to an online bank account with \$9,900 in it would go for about \$300. That's a pretty healthy profit margin. And the main language is typically — you guessed it — English. According to Symantec, there's often a direct relationship in shared infrastructure between those running botnets and those maintaining these underground economy servers. "Whoever is running one of these underground servers is almost always running a botnet, too," Huger says. Symantec also observed a second trend: The various bot herders seem to be in competition with

each other, driving an online consolidation as they fight with mafia-like intensity. Yeah, but these guys aren't goodfellas. The vast majority are computer geeks, complete with pocket protectors. Remember when you made fun of that guy in class? Well, he's driving a Ferrari now, and he's paying for it with your credit card. That's straight Darwinism. Over the past year, there has been a decrease in the command-and-control servers to about 4,700 controlling servers now, compared with about 6,000 during the first six months of 2006, according to Symantec. The company says it believes vicious competition is leading to botnet power grabs. "They're pushing out other competitors, both by strong-arming and

stealing their bots. They steal access to the computer someone else already had stolen, pushing them out. It's territorial," says Huger. Distributed denial-of-service attacks will erupt as one botnet master shoots at a competitor's network, he adds. That's the equivalent of a drive-by in reality. "Cept nobody gets killed. On the question of where the 6 million bot-infected computers may reside around the world, Symantec identifies China as having the greatest number of infected computers, at 26 percent. The U.S./ is second, at 14 percent; France, at 6 percent; and Germany. At least we didn't lead in this category. Close one, huh? Huger says Symantec

does share information it gleans about suspected criminal activity with both law enforcement and ISPs around the world. He says ISPs often quietly go about pulling the plug on botnet-related networks when they learn about them without law-enforcement involvement. Huger adds that this process would probably benefit from more public disclosure. What Huger didn't add is the fact our state and national cyber-cops can't seem to tear themselves away from You-tube and a box of Krispy Kremes to do anything about it. That's assuming they can. Contact Staff Writer Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail at citydesk@bigspringherald.com

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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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Contract Bridge

Life Is But an Empty Dream

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

The bidding:
North East South West
1 NT Pass 3♥ Pass
4♥

Dear Mr. Becker: It has been a long time since I last wrote you, but you may recall that on several past occasions I sent you hands to support my contention that I am the greatest bridge player in the world. It is true that my name is not inscribed on any trophies emblematic of national or world supremacy, but it is nonetheless a fact that no player on Earth can equal or exceed my extraordinary feats at the bridge table. The only trouble is that all my wonderful bids and plays occur while I am asleep, the plain, unvarnished truth being that when I am awake I am a very ordinary player. As proof of my prowess while I am in the Land of Nod, I cite this hand, which I played last night. I was West and had to lead against four hearts. It might seem impossible to defeat the contract, but I accomplished the feat without even batting an eyelash. I did not fall into the trap of leading the jack of spades, which most players would have done. Instead, I led the queen of clubs! Now imagine, if you will, being in declarer's shoes at this moment. He naturally thought I had the jack of clubs as well as the queen, so he made the normal play of ducking in dummy. When I next led the deuce, he ducked again, reasoning that with the ten in his own hand, East would be forced to win with the ace. But my partner won the trick with the jack and returned a club to my ace. I then administered the coup de grace by leading the five of clubs. South discarded a diamond from dummy and my partner, bless him, trumped with the jack. As a result, declarer had to lose a trump trick to my ten and went down one. Cordially yours, Ford E. Winx.

Tomorrow: Insurance to the nth degree.
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BIRD

Continued from Page 5A

to appreciate even more its voracious appetite. As it discovered more of our neighborhood, we realized it would eventually call and find other roadrunners. Hunting throughout adjacent open land and parks, the roadrunner would leave an area where it had depleted the food sources. Months later it might return. We looked for-

ward to a morning when the familiar purring sound, perrp, perrp, perrp meant that the roadrunner, and possibly a mate, had returned to our side yard.

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IN BRIEF

Big Spring High sports schedule

The Big Spring boy's baseball team will travel to Plainview for a district game today at 7 p.m.

The Big Spring Lady Steers softball team will host Frenship at the Big Spring Softball Complex today at 6 p.m.

Dallas Cowboys to start season

The New York Giants will open the season with a Sunday night game at Dallas.

The NFL announced Monday that the Giants will play the Cowboys in Dallas on Sept. 9 in a nationally televised game on NBC.

The season opener will mark the regular-season debut of Wade Phillips as Dallas' new head coach. He replaced Bill Parcells, who retired after last season.

The Giants and Cowboys made the playoffs as wild card teams last season, losing in the first round.

Dallas and New York split their games last season, each winning on the road.

Last year's season opener was the well-hyped game of the Manning brothers, Peyton and the Indianapolis Colts posted a 26-21 win in the first NFL game where brothers faced each other as starting quarterbacks.

3-person scramble at Big Spring CC

There will be a scramble golf tournament March 31 and April 1 that includes a practice round Friday and a barbecue lunch Saturday for all players.

The field will be flighted by first round score and the number of flights will be determined by the number of participants.

There will also be optional cash players pools for each day.

Entry fee is \$60, plus a cart fee.

For additional information, contact Larry Bryan at the Pro Shop at 267-5354.

W. Texas Disc Golf Tournament slated

The West Texas Disc Golf Champions Tournament has been scheduled for April 21-22 at Comanche Trail Park.

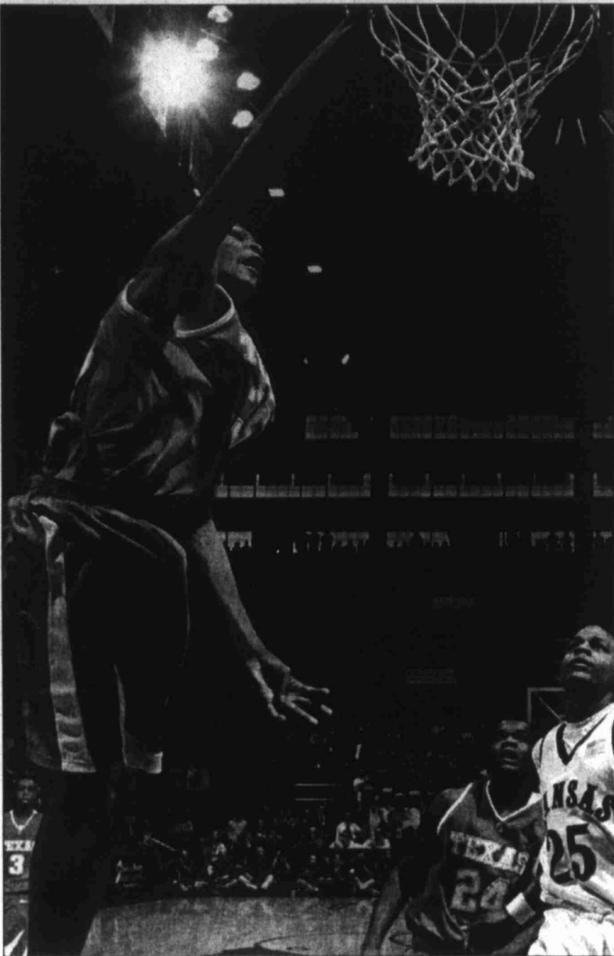
The tournament will be three rounds of 27 holes.

Entry fees are \$50 for the open division, \$45 for the open master division, \$35 for the amateur master division, \$30 for the women's division, \$40 for the advanced division, \$30 for the amateur division, \$20 for novices and \$10 or juniors (under 16).

On Friday, a random draw doubles event is scheduled, as is a Lake and par 9s event. Entry fees are \$10 per person.

For more information, contact Greg Brooks at 432-58-5076.

A&M lands first All-American in hoops



MCT photo/Rich Suggs/Kansas City Star
Texas' Kevin Durant dunks during the first half against Kansas, Saturday, March 3, 2007. Durant was named a first team All-American by the AP.

Acie Law joins Texas' Kevin Durant as first team selections

By JIM O'CONNELL

AP Basketball Writer

If Kevin Durant and Greg Oden play only one season of college basketball, it will have been as All-Americans.

The freshmen were voted to The Associated Press' All-America team Monday, the first members of their class so honored since 1990.

The 6-foot-9 Durant, who led Texas to the Big 12 title game, was the only unanimous choice of the 72-member national media panel that selects the weekly Top 25.

Oden, the 7-footer who helped Ohio State to its first No. 1 ranking in 45 years, was joined on the team by seniors Alando Tucker of Wisconsin and Acie Law IV of Texas A&M and junior Arron Afflalo of UCLA. The voting was conducted before the NCAA tournament.

Since freshmen became eligible to play in 1972, the only ones selected to the first team had been Wayman Tisdale of Oklahoma in 1983 and Chris Jackson of LSU in 1989.

Durant, the first Texas All-American since T.J. Ford in 2003, averaged 25.6 points and 11.3 rebounds, but it was his all-around game and penchant for big shots in the clutch that had people ranking him as one of the best freshmen ever.

"There's no question Kevin deserves every individual accolade that he will receive," Texas

coach Rick Barnes said, "but the one thing I respect most about Kevin is that he is the ultimate team player. He really doesn't care about the individual numbers and awards. All he cares about is the success of his team. When you're around a guy like that, it makes coaching him a joy."

Durant, the Big 12 player of the year, backed up his coach's sentiments.

"I am not very big on individual honors, but I am very humbled to be included on the Associated Press All-America team," he said. "When you look at the other four guys who are on the team, I am honored to be mentioned with them. I have so much respect for how each one of them has led their respective teams and handled themselves, both on and off the court. I look up to each one of them."

Oden, the first Ohio State All-American since Jim Jackson in 1992, missed the first seven games as he recovered from off-season surgery on his right wrist. As he rehabilitated from the injury he learned to shoot free throws left-handed and didn't miss a beat when he returned to the Buckeyes, averaging 15.5 points, 9.7 rebounds and 3.5 blocks while shooting 61.4 percent from the field.

"I'm very surprised," Oden said of being selected. "Just with how

See NCAA, page 2B

McGrady fuels Rockets to victory and playoff birth

By CHRIS DUNCAN

AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON — For a team that had just clinched a playoff spot with its sixth straight home victory, the Houston Rockets didn't seem very happy.

Tracy McGrady scored 22 points and had nine assists in Houston's 106-87 rout on the Milwaukee Bucks on Monday night — then the All-Star left the arena before speaking to reporters.

Yao Ming scored 22, but shook his head as he talked about his performance.

"I was just not so good in this game," said Yao, who missed 13 of 22 shots and coughed up five turnovers.

And Houston coach Jeff Van Gundy? He still seemed to be fuming about Sunday night's loss in Oklahoma City and didn't see much improvement one game later.

"We're just not playing well these last two games," Van Gundy said.

Juwan Howard added 12 points and 10 rebounds for the Rockets, who are 9-3 since Yao returned from a broken leg. Houston got away with a so-so game from its

All-Star big man in this one.

"Yao grabbed only seven rebounds, two below his average, and was out of position several times on defense when the Bucks ran pick-and-roll plays.

"I do not feel good about this," he said. "I am not at the playoff level yet."

The Rockets are 6-0 at the Toyota Center since Yao returned from the leg injury that sidelined him for 32 games. He averaged 27 points in his first five, but his shooting struggles carried over from the previous night in Oklahoma City — he missed 15 of his last 18 shots against the Hornets, then started 0-for-5 against Milwaukee.

The rest of Yao's game worries Van Gundy more than his recent shooting.

"I'm concerned with the rebounding, or the lack thereof," Van Gundy said. "The pick-and-roll defense, I thought we were doing better with that. Now, these last two games, it's not been very good."

"I'm not concerned with him making or missing," Van Gundy said. "I'm concerned with what precedes the making and the missing."



MCT photo/Harry E. Walker/MCT
Rockets Tracy McGrady slam dunks his team back into the playoffs this year after missing the post season in 2006.

Even when their offense isn't clicking, the Rockets can usually rely on their defense and that's what they did against Milwaukee.

The Rockets lead the league in field-goal percentage defense and shut down the Bucks in the third

See ROCKETS, page 2B



HERALD file photo
Roughneck's mascot Digger the Prarie Dog is coming to the Dorothy Garrett Coliseum, Saturday March 31st.

Roughnecks arrive Wednesday; team loaded with skilled players

MIKE GRIMES

Sports Editor

What does the University of Alabama, Texas Tech, Arizona, Oklahoma State and Auburn all have in common? They all have former football players coming to Big Spring to try and make the Odessa Roughnecks indoor football team.

Players reported to the Roughnecks training camp this week with plans to defend their IFL title from last season. They will spend this week going through medical evaluations and other team procedures before starting actual workouts Wednesday. After a meet-and-greet with team sponsors and season ticket holders tonight, the team will travel to Big Spring where they will stay until they play the San Angelo Stampede, Saturday, March 31 at Dorothy Garrett Coliseum. The game will be the first professional

football game ever played in Howard County.

The Roughnecks, who have officially changed their name to the Big Spring Roughnecks for this game, will be staying and practicing here all week. Practices, which will be held in the Big Spring High School Athletic Training Center, are open to the public and players will be available for autographs throughout the week.

Practices open to the public are Wednesday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to noon and a second practice scheduled to start at 5:30 p.m. All practices are to be held at the ATC.

"We have 35 top notch players that are reporting with a possibility of a few more players being brought in as cuts are made," Tommy Benizio, the Roughnecks owner

See BIG SPRING, page 2B

Las Vegas police to seek charges against 'Pacman' Jones

By KEN RITTER

Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS — Tennessee Titans star Adam "Pacman" Jones could face felony and misdemeanor charges stemming from a triple shooting at a strip club in February.

Police are seeking a felony charge of coercion and misdemeanor threat and battery charges against the cornerback in the 5 a.m. shooting at Minxx, Lt. George Castro said Monday.

Castro said detectives haven't determined who fired the shots that wounded three people, one critically, outside the Las Vegas club during the NBA All-Star game weekend.

Castro said the request for charges will be submitted to Clark County district attorney David Roger no later than the end of the week. Roger will be asked to consider charges against 23-year-old Jones; Robert Reid, 37, of Carson, Calif.; and Sadia Morrison, 24, of New York. Castro described Reid and Morrison as friends of Jones. "These three people were involved in the altercation inside the club. We're still working on the shooting outside the club," Castro said.

No arrest warrants have been issued, and an investigation will continue into whether another person

might have been involved and fired the shots.

Police recommended Reid face felony coercion and misdemeanor battery charges, Castro said. Morrison, arrested the morning of the shooting and charged with battery with a deadly weapon, a bottle, would face an additional felony coercion charge, Castro added.

Castro said the coercion charge stemmed from allegations that Jones, Reid and Morrison used force "to prevent security officers from protecting the public, employees and property" inside the club.

Roger said he has reviewed some of the police investigation but it was "premature to comment on the merits of the case until I read all their reports."

The Titans said in a statement it would be inappropriate to comment on a continuing investigation and pending charges.

Castro characterized Jones as an instigator of a scuffle inside the club that led to the shooting outside.

"Was he an inciter? Yes, he was," Castro said.

Lawyers for Jones have denied Minxx club co-owner Robert Susnar's account that Jones arrived and left the club with the shooter. After 500 hours of reviewing video-

tapes and interviewing witnesses from the club, Castro said police were unable to establish a relationship between Jones and the shooter.

Jones was questioned by Las Vegas police and released.

One of Jones' attorneys, Manny Arora of Atlanta, told ESPN News that Jones was most concerned about the NFL's reaction to charges that have not yet been filed.

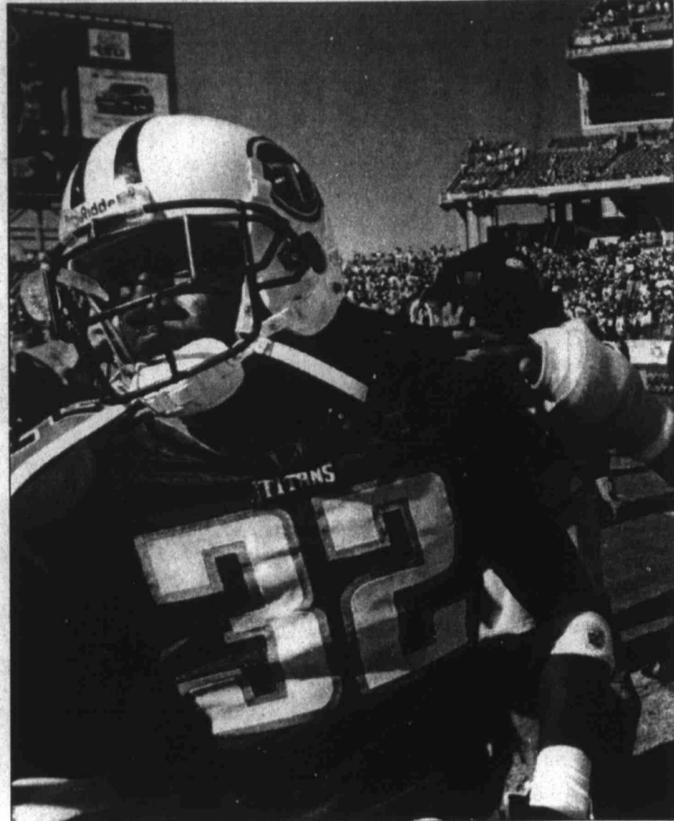
"He's reacting like anybody would, he's obviously very upset about it," Arora said. "He's got enough issues with the NFL threatening to take disciplinary action, then you throw this on top of it."

He said he was most concerned that a new player conduct policy being discussed by NFL owners would retroactively punish Jones.

"Our biggest concern is what the NFL is going to do, then we'll deal with an arrest if there is one in the future," Arora said.

Robert Langford, a Las Vegas-based lawyer for Morrison, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Police said they did not know if Reid had an attorney.

Two club security guards and an unidentified woman were wounded in the shooting.



Tennessee Titans' Pacman Jones is shown after a Cowboys game — on the field he has performed well, but off the field problems have caused him to be dismissed from the team.

NCAA

Continued from page 1B

things went, I didn't really play a whole season, and I know there are a lot of other guys with better numbers than me. I'm just surprised, but I'm honored and the best I can do is keep on playing."

His Buckeyes face Georgetown on Saturday in the Final Four.

Oden had a quick answer when asked about the success of himself and Durant in their first seasons in college.

"It's just younger guys coming in and just playing basketball, not worried about age or anything," he said.

Both played in college in large part because of the new rule that prohibits the NBA from drafting players until they turn 19 and are out of high school for one year.

"I'm not sold that the rule is right or wrong, but I think it shows you the impact and the influx of how many great players are out there," said Ohio State coach Thad Matta. "I think that's why there's so much parity nowadays in college basketball."

Tucker and Law were Wisconsin's and Texas A&M's first All-America selections, while Afflalo was UCLA's first since Ed O'Bannon in 1995.

The 6-6 Tucker, the Big Ten player of the year who helped the Badgers to their first No. 1 ranking, aver-

aged 19.9 points and 5.4 rebounds.

Law led the Aggies' resurgence from an 0-16 Big 12 record in 2003-04 to this season, when they ranked as high as sixth in the country. The 6-3 guard averaged 17.9 points and 5.3 assists while shooting 51 percent from the field.

"It doesn't get any bigger than that as far as individual accolades," he said. "Your team can do more, but first-team AP All-American? That's unbelievable. I'm very excited and happy."

Afflalo submitted his name to the NBA draft last season after leading the Bruins to the national championship game, but returned and averaged 16.7 points and was selected Pac-10 player of the year.

"First and foremost team goals are always most important, but when it comes to the All-America team it's a positive thing," Afflalo said. "It shows that other people who know the game of basketball understand my contributions and importance to my team."

Durant's 72 first-team votes gave him 360 points. Tucker received 64 first-team votes and 344 points, followed by Law (59, 320 points), Afflalo (52, 304), and Oden (34, 263).

The second team consists of seniors Nick Fazekas of Nevada and Jared Dudley of Boston College, juniors Chris Lofton of Tennessee and Joakim Noah of Florida and sophomore Tyler Hansbrough of North Carolina.

The third team has seniors Aaron Brooks of Oregon, Al Thornton of Florida State and Aaron Gray of Pittsburgh and juniors Jeff Green of Georgetown and

Al Horford of Florida.

The preseason All-America team was Hansbrough, Noah, Ronald Steele of Alabama, Glen Davis of LSU and Brandon Rush from the University of Kansas.

ROCKETS

Continued from page 1B

quarter to build a 23-point lead. Milwaukee trailed by eight points at half-time, then missed 15 of its first 19 shots after the break.

"Defense is key in the playoffs and Houston is an outstanding defensive team," Milwaukee coach Larry Krystkowiak said.

Michael Redd scored 26 and Charlie Bell added 20 for the Bucks, who haven't won in Houston since 1999, a seven-game losing streak.

Milwaukee lost for the seventh time in 10 games, shooting 40.5 percent (32 of 79) against Houston's second-ranked scoring defense. The Bucks made five 3-pointers in the first half and only one in the second.

BIG SPRING

Continued from page 1B

said. "The roster will be comprised of a few familiar faces and plenty of up and coming talent. We're very excited about playing our first game of the season in Big Spring and I'm looking forward to seeing a large crowd come out to watch us play.

"It's very entertaining and I'm sure everyone will get behind the Roughnecks and help us beat the Stampede."

"There were shots I took that I thought weren't going in and they went in and there were others I shot that were going in and they came out," said Bell, who hit five of the Bucks' six 3-pointers. "That's just the way that shooting goes."

McGrady sank a 3-pointer to trigger a 12-3 Houston run that ended the first quarter. Yao finished the spurt with a quick turnaround from the baseline to put the Rockets up 33-20.

The Rockets stayed safe-

ly ahead until missing eight of their last 10 shots of the second quarter. Houston led 53-45 at the break.

Houston took control again by holding the Bucks to one field goal during a 9-minute span of the third quarter. Bell scored on a reverse layup with 6.2 seconds left in the quarter to end the drought, but it only cut Houston's lead to 81-60.

Luther Head swished a 3-pointer from the corner with 4:17 left to put the Rockets up 100-80.

Houston improved to 18-1 when it reaches 100 points at home this season.

"It was a solid game. It wasn't spectacular," Houston forward Shane Battier said. "We didn't make the plays we had to, but hey, this is the NBA. Any time you win, you take it."

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City of Big Spring, Texas
Phone: (432)264-2346
Fax: (432)264-2387
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EOE

Help Wanted

THE MARTIN County Hospital District of Stanton is seeking a full time Insurance Biller. Hospital and Physician Billing preferred. Please contact Alison Isreal, CFO or Gwen Hawkins, Business Office Supervisor at 610 N. Saint Peter, Stanton, Texas or call 432-756-3345 ext. 226.

THE MARTIN County Hospital District is seeking Registered Nurses, for full-time day positions. Please contact Rance Ramsey, DON at 610 N. Saint Peter, Stanton, Texas or (432)756-3345 ext. 228.

TRANSIT MIX CONCRETE MATERIALS COMPANY is now hiring MIXER TRUCK DRIVER. Starting pay \$12.50 hour, after 6 months, \$12.50 hour. CDL license is required. We offer competitive wages along with an excellent benefit package including medical, dental, 401(k) profit sharing and a pension plan. EOE/AA
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Big Spring, TX 79720

UNITED WAY of Big Spring & Howard County seeks energetic professional for Executive Director position. Candidate must possess strong computer (Word, Access, Quickbooks), public relations, financial, and management skills. College degree in business administration, management, or marketing preferred or equivalent work experience. Send cover letter with resume and salary history to P.O. Box 24, Big Spring, TX 79720.

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Wanted for local Rental Store. Benefits include paid vacation, retirement & health insurance. Requirements are back ground check, drug screening, good driving record and be at least 21 years old. Starting pay \$8.50 per hour. Apply in person, Credit World, 1611 Gregg.

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622 STATE 2 Bedroom, 1 bath, CA/CH with garage. \$450.00 month, \$250.00. Call (432)270-3848.

Real Estate for Rent

304 EAST 20th. 2 Bedroom, 1 bath, A/C Window Units, Newly remodeled, \$380.00 month, \$295.00 deposit. Call (432)263-8005 or 816-1330.

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THE OFFICE Building, 710 Gregg Street, for lease, excellent space for a medical doctor or lab available, also have individual offices starting @ \$250. per month with bills paid. Call (432)770-5656 or (432)517-0038. Broker/ Owner.

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2710 CAROL Drive - 4 Bedroom, 3 bath, 2 car garage. Open floor plan. Call 432-816-1213.

A SPACIOUS Foreclosure! \$49,487! 3 Bedroom, 2 bath! For listing Call 800-544-6258 ext F906.

BY OWNER: 2307 Brent Drive, 4 Bedroom, 2 bath, sunroom, inground pool, 3 car detached garage with shop. 2181 sq. ft. Asking \$159,000.00. Call (432)268-9436.

DARLING STARTER home. 1108 Mulberry. \$39,900. 1804 Main, \$49,900. 1211 Lloyd, \$44,900. 1102 Mulberry, \$49,900. Call Kim @ Heart of the City Realtor, (432) 213-2842. Owner finance available.

LAND for Sale: 32.41 Beautiful acres near Country Club. Good water well. \$95,000.00 Call (432)816-3927.

Need a House? OWNER FINANCE Open House NOON-5:00 p.m. Saturday, March 24th. Tough Credit OK

Only 1% Down, \$300 Off Closing Cost Before 4/1/07. Homes from \$49,900. For a list call (432)687-2696 or pick up on Saturday, March 24th - After Noon at 905 East 14th, Big Spring.

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BY HOLIDAY MATHS

The conjunction of Mars and Neptune is a study in opposites. When closely examined, what we see as a polarity isn't so different after a little. Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, who directed the film "Babel," said, "I started making a film to show what comes between humans, and ended up making one that showed what brings us together."



HOLIDAY MATHS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your intuition is nudging you. But if your inner voice doesn't speak loudly enough, you brush it off as minor. It's the way you work. No worries — if a hunch is crucial, it'll return.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The harmony you seek is less important than the harmony you

Real Estate for Sale

SOLITAIRE OF Big Spring has now opened a factory direct retail sales center located at 3408 East 11th Place. Come by and look at our model homes on display at factory direct prices. Phone 432-263-8605. Open Monday thru Saturday 9-6. RBI 34612 Factory Tours Available by Appointment

MOBILE HOME, 2 year old doublewide, great area, carpet. Excellent condition! Owner transferring, priced for quick sale! Serious inquires only! Assumable Loan. (432)213-3235, (432)213-0917.

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2000 SATURN SL w/only 24k miles. Great fuel economy \$5995+ TT&L. Call Gene 432-634-8665.

2000 SR5 Toyota 4 Runner SUV. \$8,800. Black with gray leather. One Owner, 72,000 miles. Very Nice Condition. Call (432)213-1642.

2002 SATURN SL1 81k miles, auto, all power equip. \$4950+TT&L. Call Matt 432-557-4474.

EXCELLENT CONDITION Toyota Sequoia Limited 2003. Loaded, black w/tan leather. 77,000 miles. \$17,995. Call (432)267-8143.

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ANSWERS

6	4	1	3	9	8	5	7	2
5	2	3	6	1	7	4	8	9
8	7	9	2	5	4	3	1	6
2	9	4	7	6	5	8	3	1
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3	5	8	9	2	1	7	6	4
4	8	6	1	3	9	2	5	7
9	3	2	5	7	6	1	4	8
7	1	5	4	8	2	6	9	3

Tomorrow's Horoscope

bring. Remember this especially around your family — they may act like they're born royals. Your goodwill and grace keep them on their best behavior.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're a natural actor, mournful one moment, gleeful the next. You'll be making lots of faces and gestures while sharing your stories. How you say it is more telling than what you say.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). "The flow" is the place where creativity and inspired action meet. "The flow" isn't always easy to find. People even write books about finding it. But you don't need a book now, because you're in it, baby!

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). No matter how scattered you feel, no one could accuse you of being uncaring. Maybe you confide more than you think you should, but rest easy — your kind of sharing opens a two-way path between hearts.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Why look for a guru? You know that spirituality is a living, breathing presence. The trees move with the wind just like your thoughts. Look deeply into the natural world to glimpse your own essence.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). True friends mutually reinforce each other's bright sides. Even when they call you up for support, it's an honor to be there. Out of everyone in the world to spend time with, they chose you!

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You've been focused

on doing what you do well. Finally the higher-ups are recognizing your star qualities. Don't ask for a raise yet. It's the beginning of a period of honing your skills and perfecting your game.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Your favorite hobby makes you different. If you want to be a rodeo queen, an accordion aficionado or a professional ice-cream taster, don't bully yourself! This is your day to take one step in that direction.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Want to conspire with forces beyond your imagining? Focus on the best possible outcome for all involved. When you align with an intention, you can go anywhere.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). There's music and motion in your ideas. Pitch at least one of them today. You paint the most convincing picture when you're not even trying. A Scorpio person is especially receptive to you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Most people would never guess that you're a closet utilitarian. You need more functional things in your life. Today, look at your life through your untidy office desk. If you don't need it, what's it still doing there?

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "I'm a 33-year-old Virgo woman. I'm often told that I'm very attractive, and people can't seem to figure out why I'm still single. It seems like I make bad decisions in choosing partners, and consequent-

ly, my life is always filled with drama and unfortunate experiences. Although I have a good career as an architect and fabulous friends and family, my love life is in constant turmoil, partly because I have been involved with an abusive Taurus on-and-off for seven years. Although I love him, I can never remember being happy. Both of us have addictions; however, I'm seeking treatment for mine, and his addiction to gambling seems to be worsening. Will I ever get over him and find a soul mate, or am I doomed to be alone?"

You're very young really — and Virgo tends to stay sexy and youthful into old age — but still too old to be messing around with the same person you know is bad for you. My advice is similar to one of the AA suggestions: Don't date anyone until the sun returns to the position it was in on the day you became clean and sober — in other words, one year.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Aries is the sign of "one," and Sir Elton John is certainly one of a kind, with a musical talent and a glitzy style that's out of this world. This year, John continues his journey of artistic expression in such a manner that he simultaneously heals the world, as he takes his philanthropic work to a new level. Playing to raise money for charitable causes unleashes new wells of originality.

Annie's Mailbox

Dear Annie: I am a 13-year-old girl and a good student. I love my life except for one thing. I still suck my fingers.

When I was a baby, I never used a pacifier. I used my fingers. I have tried everything to quit. I did manage to give it up for about a year when my grandmother and I had a contest (if I stopped sucking my fingers, she would quit smoking). But when she died of breast cancer, I took it really hard and started sucking my fingers more than ever.

I realize that I put them in my mouth unconsciously, and when I do, I feel better. All my problems go away. Now I can't sleep unless two fingers are in my mouth. I know it's unhealthy and I want to stop, but I don't know how. Please give me some tips. — Sick of Sucking

Dear Sick: You'd be surprised how many adults still suck their thumbs or fingers in private because it relieves stress. It's a carryover from childhood that has become an ingrained habit. Most experts say children should stop doing this because of the potential damage to their teeth, so if you are having orthodontic problems, you really should stop. Common cures include covering your fingers with something unpleasant, such as vinegar or bandages. You also can try substituting something else when you are under stress, like painting, playing a videogame, drinking a cup of hot tea, or calling a friend (text-messaging is ideal, since it would occupy your fingers). If you truly want to stop, we are confident you can find a way.

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Nameless Wife," whose husband wanted separate bedrooms. Wow! Now you're talking! My husband (of 38 years) and I decided many years ago to sleep in separate bedrooms. It actually saved our mar-



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

riage. We have completely different sleeping patterns — he needs eight hours, I need five. He wants complete quiet. I put the TV on a 15-minute sleep timer. He snores like a train locomotive and spreads out all over the king bed and routinely pushes me into a corner. I'm up each day at 4 a.m., and he sleeps until 7 a.m. There was a fight every single night. I said, "That's it! Separate bedrooms or separate lives."

We remodeled, and he has his own bedroom and bath and I've got mine — each decorated to our own style. We greet each other in the morning with "Hey, Doll" and "Morning, Sweetie" instead of grumbling and blaming each other for the lousy sleep we had. And when we sneak into each other's room — WOW! and WOW! What fun!

"Nameless" should take heart. Separate bedrooms have nothing to do with love and everything to do with self-confidence and security. Who gives a rip what anybody else thinks? The two of you are all that matters. — Nightee Night

Dear Nightee Night: Your letter is enough to make everyone get separate bedrooms. Thanks for giving us the positive side.

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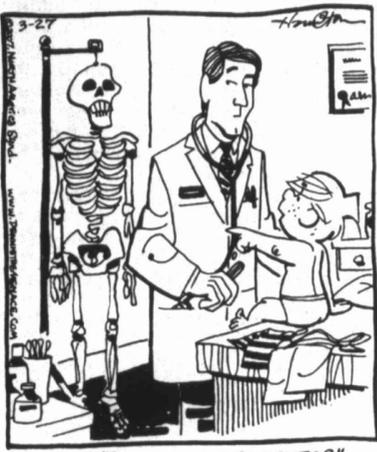
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TUESDAY

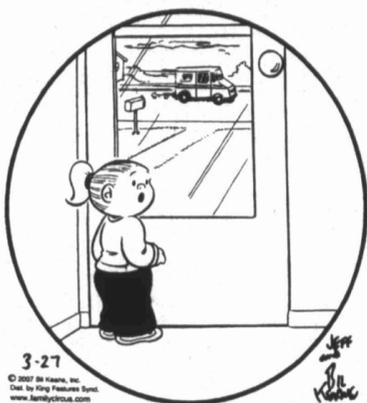
Table with 24 columns (WFAA, KMD, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLT, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KPBT, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN, SCIFI) and 12 rows (6-12 PM) listing various TV programs and their channels.

DENNIS THE MENACE



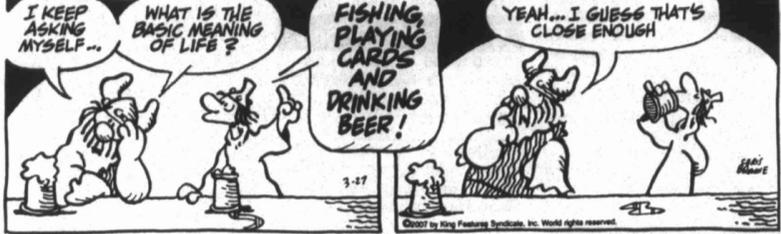
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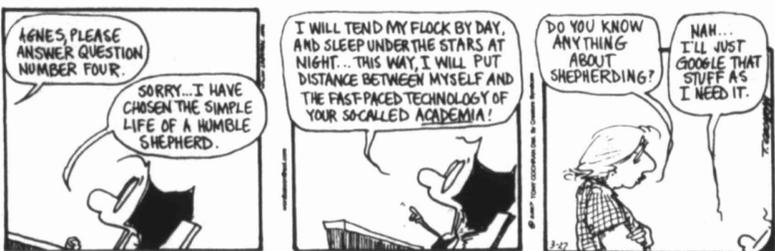
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WIZARD OF ID



AGNES



HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, March 27, the 86th day of 2007. There are 279 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On March 27, 1977, 583 people were killed when a KLM Boeing 747, attempting to take off, crashed into a Pan Am 747 on the Canary Island of Tenerife.

On this date: In 1513, Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon sighted Florida.

In 1625, Charles I ascended the English throne upon the death of James I.

In 1794, Congress approved "An Act to provide a Naval Armament" of six armed ships.

In 1836, the first Mormon temple was dedicated, in Kirtland, Ohio.

In 1958, Nikita Khrushchev became Soviet premier in addition to first secretary of the communist party.

In 1964, Alaska was rocked by a powerful earthquake that killed 131 people.

In 1968, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, the first man to orbit the earth, died in a plane crash.

In 1980, 123 workers died when a North Sea floating oil field platform, the Alexander Keilland, capsized during a storm.

In 1996, an Israeli court convicted Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's confessed assassin of murder, then sentenced former law student Yigal Amir to life in prison.

One year ago: Al-Qaida conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui testified at his federal trial that he was supposed to hijack a fifth airplane on Sept. 11, 2001, and fly it into the White House.

Today's Birthdays: Former newspaper columnist Anthony Lewis is 80. Dance company director Arthur Mitchell is 73. Actor Julian Glover is 72. Actor Jerry Lacy is 71. Actor Austin Pendleton is 67. Actor Michael York is 65. Rock musician Tony Banks

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(Genesis) is 57. Actress Maria Schneider is 55. Movie director Quentin Tarantino is 44. Rock musician Derrick McKenzie (Jamiroquai) is 43. Actress Talisa Soto is 40. Rock musician Brendan Hill (Blues Traveler) is 37. Actress Elizabeth Mitchell is 37. Hip-hop singer Fergie (Black Eyed Peas) is 32. Actress Emily Ann Lloyd is 24. Actress Taylor Atelian is 12.

Thought for Today: "Panaticism consists in redoubling your effort when you have forgotten your aim." - George Santayana, American philosopher (1863-1952).

By The Associated Press

Answer to previous puzzle

Word search grid with words like FETA, VITAL, STIR, ALAS, INUSE, NASA, RIGHT, ONTHEMONEY, RESEAL, URGES, CAL RATE, RAMBO, ELECT, CAB, IDIOM, IOWA, OLEO, DOLLAR, STODONUTS, ORAL, TUTU, PEENS, FEN, HERON, ESSAY, CASE, DAN, STEAL, PERUSE, HASSOME, CURRENCY, APT, ALAMO, ATTIE, MENS, TITAN, LOSS.

Newsday Crossword

PUT OUT THE WORD by Gail Grabowski

Edited by Stanley Newman

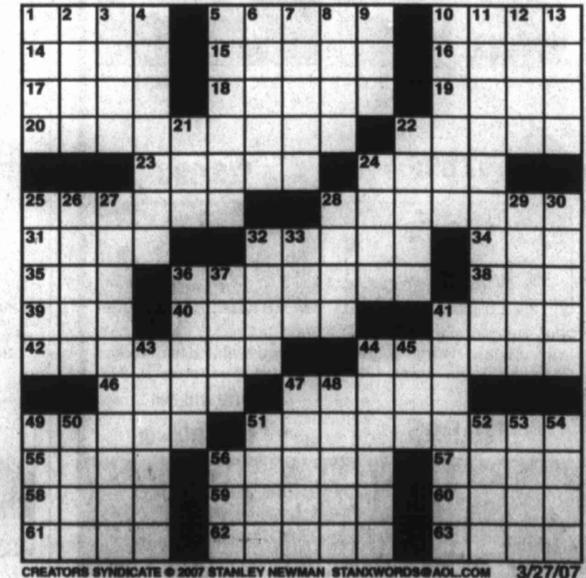
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

- 1 Unexciting
5 Immigrants' island
10 Female relative
14 Singer McEntire
15 End of a river
16 Cowboy-boot attachment
17 Above
18 Beverage in a big bowl
19 Location
20 Catcher's uncatchable ball
22 Remove the soapsuds from
23 Severe
24 More than half
25 Burger-bun seed source
28 Garments
31 Horse's gait
32 Aspirations
34 Munch on
35 Clumsy sort
36 Ozzie Nelson's wife
38 Era
39 Seattle hours: Abbr.
40 Sci-fi character
41 Kitchen-flooding piece
42 Legislative meeting
44 Crude-oil unit
46 Peel, as potatoes
47 Composer John Philip
49 Birthday mailings
51 Auto tune-up item

DOWN

- 1 Forehead
2 Strauss of jeans
3 Adam's second son
4 Construction-site headgear
5 Wide domain
6 Oafs
7 Midday meal
8 Poison-ivy symptom
9 "No talking!"
10 Lend a hand
11 Not yet decided
12 Cashews, e.g.
13 Birch or beech
21 Shriver of tennis
22 Pigeon perch
24 French miss: Abbr.
25 Halts
26 Wipe the chalk from
27 Margarine in a tub
28 Adam's first son
29 National bird
30 Sword metal
32 Broad smile
33 Mine product
36 Wig components
37 Healing plant
41 Shaired
43 Cowboy's seat
44 Pops, as a balloon
45 Pose a question
47 Digging tool
48 Desert haven
49 Cornfield bird
50 Mystical glow
51 Speak unclearly
52 Old Italian coin
53 Condo division
54 Actor Hackman
56 Bottle topper



BIG SPRING VOLUME 11 C F By TH Staff V The put se board Devel follow Counc Staulc "I b the cc more By TH Staff V Fait' tains, and c from : to ma Sceni Maste Run/V Slatu State said t challe Micha direct Spring Center Lynch, er with care t at the a U.S. flown Ameri in Afg flag w servic ture o banne VAMC lift the flag w in the exten treatm IN Clasi Featu Obitu Opin Spor To Plea a.m. If yo 263- noon Th ad int