

For the first time, a murder charge filed in rail slayings case

HOUSTON (AP) — The rail-hopping fugitive who triggered one of the largest manhunts in recent history abandoned his alias and appeared anxious to acknowledge guilt — even before prosecutors accused him of a ninth slaying.

Police say Angel Maturino Resendez has not confessed to any killings. But the 39-year-old Mexican drifter seemed resigned Wednesday after Harris County prosecutors described a bloody killing during a bail hearing on a burglary charge.

"Can all this be done very quickly so I can say I'm guilty?" Maturino Resendez asked District Judge William Harmon, who told him no plea could be taken yet and denied bond.

It was unclear whether

Maturino Resendez was specifically addressing the burglary charge or the more serious allegations against him.

Until Wednesday, the man who said his alias Rafael Resendez-Ramirez was the name of his uncle, had been charged with two slayings in Illinois and one in Kentucky. He was suspected of five Texas killings.

Shortly after the hearing, however, the total reached nine when Cass County prosecutors charged him with the Oct. 2 robbery-slaying of 87-year-old Leafie Mason, bludgeoned in her Hughes Springs home.

Until that charge was filed, the only count against him in Texas was burglary at the scene where Dr. Claudia Benton, 39, was killed Dec. 17 in the

Houston enclave of West University Place.

The decision of whether to charge Maturino Resendez with capital murder in Ms. Benton's death rests with Harris County District Attorney Johnny Holmes, whose county has notched the most death-penalty convictions in Texas. Prosecutors said DNA evidence might link him to her slaying.

Ms. Mason, who lived most of her life within 50 yards of a Kansas City-Southern rail line that bisects the town of 2,000, was beaten to death with her antique iron by someone who entered her home through a window.

Like several other victims Maturino Resendez is suspected of killing, her body and that of Ms. Benton were covered by

blankets. A police crime lab said a palm print found on Ms. Mason's window matched that of the suspect.

Maturino Resendez surrendered to the Texas Rangers after crossing the border from Mexico into El Paso on Tuesday. The surrender followed a six-week manhunt that made him one of the most wanted fugitives in America, one of the FBI's 10 Most Wanted.

Most of the agencies investigating Maturino Resendez seem eager to prosecute the man who inspired fear nationwide in people who live near railroad tracks — the location of most victims.

"I don't care if he gets the death penalty seven times," said Lexington, Ky., police Sgt. Mark Barnard. "I want him in

Kentucky."

Texas has executed more people — 180 — than any other state since the death penalty was declared constitutional in 1976.

It makes it all the more unclear why the elusive Maturino Resendez chose to cross the border and give up. Mexico, which has no capital punishment, has refused to return suspects to countries where they may face execution.

Authorities have speculated that the suspect feared bounty hunters on his trail.

A \$125,000 reward had been offered for his capture, which family members who negotiated his surrender might try to claim.

His family in Ciudad Juarez, El Paso's neighbor in Mexico,

appeared to have huddled inside the home of the suspect's mother. His uncle, from whom he borrowed the alias, spoke briefly to reporters.

"Jesus Christ is going to be in charge of him," said Rafael Resendez-Ramirez. "We have faith in God and we are praying that God saves him."

Investigators have said they have no idea what motivated the killings, which began with the Aug. 29, 1997, slaying of a 21-year-old college student in Kentucky who was attacked while walking with his girlfriend along railroad tracks.

The rest of the killings have come since September. The most recent were those of a 79-year-old man and his 51-year-old daughter, found dead June 15 in Gorham, Ill.

INS chief pledges to halt border backups in Texas

WASHINGTON (AP) — Summoned to Capitol Hill to explain why traffic and trade have been snarled at ports of entry along the Texas-Mexico border in recent days, the head of the immigration service pledged to Texas lawmakers Wednesday that the problem will be rectified within a few days.

During a contentious closed-door meeting with Immigration and Naturalization Service Commissioner Doris Meissner, Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, and four border-district House members complained about short-term INS staffing reductions that have hit some

border crossings hard.

The lawmakers said they secured a commitment from Meissner that the inspection lanes closed last weekend to deal with an INS regional budget deficit will be reopened.

The House members, who received an earful about the crossing congestion while in their districts, said they want quick results. "We're going to be right on top of it," said Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Corpus Christi, who hosted the meeting.

Rep. Henry Bonilla said Meissner "asked us to be patient with her for just a couple more days."

"She fully acknowledged that it was a mistake made within INS and that this was just being corrected as quickly as possible," added Bonilla, R-San Antonio.

The border backups are the latest black eye for the agency, which has been on the defensive in recent weeks for letting suspected serial killer Angel Maturino Resendez slip through its fingers despite being wanted by the FBI and other law enforcement.

The wave of bad publicity came as a trio of influential House lawmakers prepared Thursday to introduce legislation that would abolish the INS,

creating in its place separate agencies to dole out immigration benefits and enforce the nation's immigration laws. The Clinton administration is offering a far less radical proposal that would set up separate chains of command and staffing for service and enforcement — but would retain both parts under the control of one administrator.

Meissner "frankly didn't need this kind of issue surfacing at this point," said Rep. Silvestre Reyes, D-El Paso, a former Border Patrol sector chief who is an author of the bipartisan restructuring plan being unveiled today.

Firm guilty of selling pesticides for use as toothbrush disinfectant

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A federal jury ruled Wednesday that a Texas corporation illegally sold pesticides for disinfecting children's toothbrushes at the Rosebud Sioux Tribe's Head Start centers.

Friendly Systems Inc., of Irving, Texas, was found guilty on three counts of selling pesticides with claims the products could be used for purposes substantially different from those stated on its EPA-approved labels.

The maximum penalty is \$200,000 on each count. U.S. District Judge Charles Kornmann said sentencing won't happen until at least Oct. 4.

Asked about an appeal, Mark Werbner, a lawyer for Friendly Systems, said, "We'll have to discuss that. I'm not sure."

The jury deliberated less than four hours before reaching the unanimous verdict Wednesday afternoon.

The federal government said the sales occurred in November 1995, October 1996 and March 1997.

The pesticides, Tisan and DDS-164, were being used to sanitize children's toothbrushes at the Head Start centers. The products are approved for sani-

tizing floors, walls, tables and kitchen items such as glasses and silverware, but they are not registered for killing germs on toothbrushes.

Parents have said 100 or more children were exposed to the chemicals and many have developed medical problems such as nosebleeds, excessive fatigue, chest and joint pains, headaches, tooth decay and blisters around the mouth. The parents said they intend to sue the federal government for civil damages.

A sale involving similar claims occurred in late February and March 1997 to the Badlands Head Start program in Vale, northeast of Sturgis. That program bought the pesticides for cleaning countertops and other surfaces, a staffer there said.

But that program is involved in the case because a Friendly Systems saleswoman volunteered that it was being used by other Head Starts to sanitize toothbrushes.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Randy Seiler, of Pierre, characterized the company and its saleswoman as too intent on making a sale to worry about the safety of children.

Trial for Texan extradited from Mexico likely next year

SARASOTA, Fla. (AP) — Prosecutors who waited more than 11 years for a U.S. citizen to be extradited from Mexico on a first-degree murder charge likely will wait several more months for his trial to start.

Jose Luis Del Toro, who is accused of shooting Sheila Bellush and slitting her throat while she was home with her 2-year-old quadruplets, likely will not stand trial until 2000, a defense attorney said.

"My guess is it will not be tried this year," said Elliott

Metcalfe, head public defender for the 12th Judicial Circuit. His office was appointed to handle Del Toro's case.

Del Toro, a U.S. citizen who lived in Texas before he became a fugitive, waived his initial court appearance on Wednesday, submitted a written plea and was ordered held without bond.

"The bond will remain at zero. The public defender will be appointed. Nothing further," Sarasota County Judge Judy Goldman said in the brief hear-

ing.

Assistant State Attorney Charlie Roberts declined to say whether he would seek a plea agreement with Del Toro or ask for his assistance in implicating Mrs. Bellush's ex-husband.

"Our goal right now is to prosecute him for first-degree murder," Roberts told reporters Wednesday.

Daniel Rocha, already convicted of first-degree murder in the case, has said the ex-husband, San Antonio businessman Allen Blackthorne, arranged the

crime. Blackthorne has denied any involvement.

Mrs. Bellush's teen-age daughter discovered her 35-year-old mother's body and the four toddlers covered in her blood.

A grand jury in Texas is investigating Blackthorne's role, and widower James Bellush has filed a wrongful-death suit accusing Blackthorne of arranging to have Mrs. Bellush killed after a bitter divorce.



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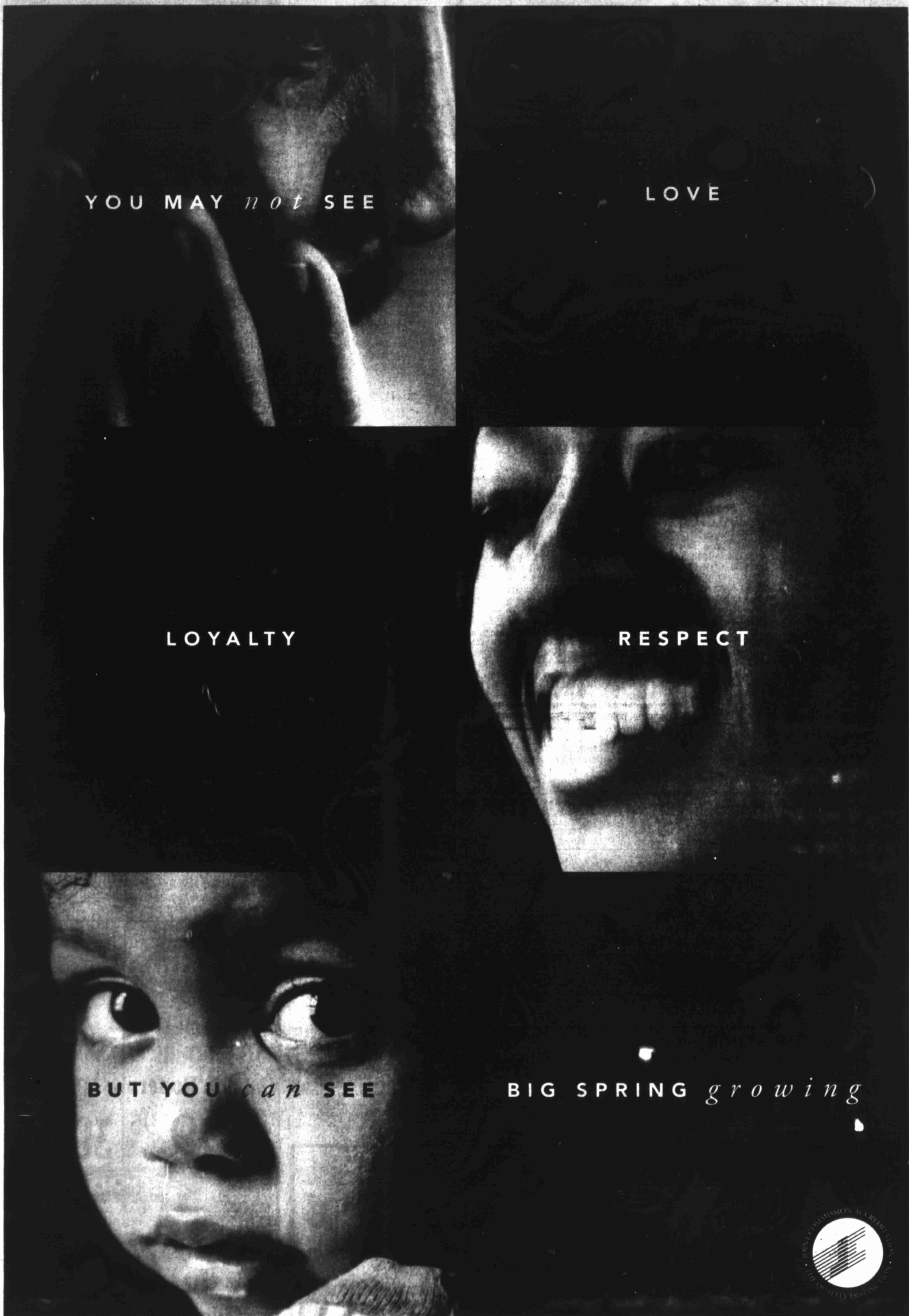
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JULY 15 1999



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IN B

Stephanie S going into s

Stephanie S today's second petition at the Gymnastics third overall division follow sive opening Wednesday.

However, S only member Spring Sidew managed to ad round.

Mikelle F hopes fade wh a hyperextend first attempt d opening event

Teammates and Crystal V fered falls on d to advance round.

Stewart ear around spot the top score parallel bars, on the vault a the balance be

Midland Mi District 3 c

A three-run ed by J. W. Wi the fifth Midland's Mi 3-2 come from over Midland championship Little League Wednesday n

Tower, whi the tourna bracket, took Mid-City's ra last inning.

Mid-City's Kevin Newton to set the st game-winning

Mid-City n sectional acti Wednesday in

CRMWD no hunting per

Application hunting perm Ivie Reservo agement aree being acce through Aug.

A public d mits is slat Wednesday, reservoir's fl at the north e

Hunting pe ited and requ tion should be the CRMWD

Texas Tech dinner, fres

The Big Sp Tech Exes scheduled its Freshman S p.m. Thursda Cactus Room College S Building.

Red Raider coach Jason join Dr. Dav dent of the T Science Cen Dean, execut of the Texas Association, the program. Tickets ar each.

For more Roxie McDar Pat Porter at

Dora Robe scheduled

The Dora Golf Tourna scheduled fo Big Spring C For more Larry Bryan

ON T

Radio MAJOR LEAG
7:10 p.m. - Diamondback KBST-AM 149

Television MAJOR LEAG
6:30 p.m. - New York Yan Ch. 11 and C
7:30 p.m. - Diamondback TCA Ch. 97.
BASKETBALL
7 p.m. - C tournament, U TNT, Ch. 28.

SPORTS EXTRA

TRANSACTIONS

BASEBALL American League CHICAGO WHITE SOX—Rescued OF Brian Simmons from Charlotte of the International League. Captained Jeff Liefer to Charlotte. DENVER TIGERS—Activated CF Jay Casanova from the 60-day disabled list and assigned him to Toledo of the International League. KANSAS CITY ROYALS—Consolidated the contract of Tony Mauer, manager, through the 2000 season. SEATTLE MARINERS—Placed OF Steve Hunter and OF-1B Charles Gibson on the 15-day disabled list, retroactive to July 11. Recalled OF Duke Timmons from Tacoma of the Pacific Coast League. Activated OF Jay Bulver from the 15-day disabled list. NATIONAL LEAGUE ATLANTA BRUINS—Promoted Dick Sherman to director of player development. Announced Dick Labadie, director of minor league operations, will work as a major league scout. NATIONAL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION ATLANTA BRAVES—Signed G Jason Terry and P/C Cal Bowder. PITTSBURGH PIRATES—Signed QB Matt Stinchcomb. WASH. DOLPHINS—Signed DT Walter Scott. WASH. WR Shaq Barrett. DE Eric Davis and S Jackie Mitchell. HOCKEY NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE ATLANTA THUNDERBOLTS—Named Curt Fraser coach. NEW YORK RANGERS—Signed LW Jim Hlavac. PHILADELPHIA FLYERS—Signed C Chris Albert to a one-year contract. ST. LOUIS BLUES—Re-signed C Pierre Turgeon to a two-year contract. TAMPA BAY LIGHTNING—Fired Jacques Demers, coach, and Don Murdoch, director of player development. Named Steve Laddie coach. Announced Rick Dudley will handle the general manager duties. TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS—Announced Pat Quinn, coach, will assume the duties of the general manager. WNBA Wednesday's Game West All-Stars 79, East All-Stars 62 Thursday's Game No games scheduled Friday's Game Detroit at Washington, 8 p.m. Charlotte at Orlando, 8:30 p.m. Sacramento at Cleveland, 7 p.m. Houston at Utah, 8 p.m. SOCCER Saturday's Game All-Star game at San Diego, 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 22 Tampa Bay at Kansas City, 7 p.m. ARENA FOOTBALL Friday's Game San Jose at Nashville, 7:30 p.m. Suffolk at Portland, 9 p.m. Saturday's Game New Jersey at Tampa Bay, 6:30 p.m. Milwaukee at Grand Rapids, 6:30 p.m. Sunday's Game Orlando at Florida, 3 p.m. JACKSON AT MIDLAND Wichita at Tulsa Friday's Game San Antonio at Arkansas Shreveport at El Paso Jackson at Midland Wichita at Tulsa TEN-LEAGUE Wednesday's Game Seattle at Salt Lake City National 3, American 0 Today's Game San Antonio at Arkansas Shreveport at El Paso Wednesday's Game Anaheim 13, Rio Grande Valley 4

MAJOR LEAGUE STANDINGS

Table with columns for American League and National League, listing teams, wins, losses, and percentages. Includes sub-sections for 'TOUR DE FRANCE' and 'TODAY'S GAMES'.

Major League Baseball: Now that break is past, here comes hard part

BOSTON (AP) — Larry Dierker is back with the Houston Astros, and the Seattle Mariners are in Safeco Field. Los Angeles, Baltimore and Anaheim are looking to make up for dismal first halves. Still, with the second half of the season starting tonight, many are focusing on the New York Yankees, the defending World Series champions. "I think everyone knows the Yankees can be beat," the Rangers' Rafael Palmeiro said, "but everyone still knows they're the team to beat." Heading into tonight's games, the AL looks the same as it did at the end of last season, with the Yankees, Cleveland and Texas leading the divisions, and Boston heading the wild-card race. Surprises, however, abound in the National League. While Atlanta has a five-game lead in the East and seems on track to its eighth straight division title, surprising Cincinnati is one percentage point ahead of Houston in the Central, San Francisco is 2 1/2 games up on Arizona in the West, and the Astros and New York Mets are bunched up in the wild-card race. Cleveland had baseball's best record in the first half, going 56-31, and no other team in the AL Central is over .500. The Yankees (52-34), while not the invincible machine that won an AL record 114 games last year, hold a four-game lead in the East over Boston (49-39), with Toronto (47-43) three games behind the Red Sox, who sputtered when Nomar Garciaparra missed the final nine games of the first half with a groin injury. In the West, Texas (49-39) is five games ahead of Oakland (43-44), six in front of Seattle (42-45) and six in front of Anaheim (41-45). Baseball's focus will be on Seattle on tonight when the Mariners move into Safeco Field, at \$517 million the most expensive ballpark ever. "It's an awesome place," said Jamie Moyer, scheduled to start tonight's game against San Diego. "What an amazing place to be a part of. It's phenomenal." After that, attention in the AL West shifts to the Angels, who have gone 11-7 since the return of shortstop Gary DiSarcina and will try to make up for a dismal start, caused partly by injuries. "You can say we miss this guy or that guy, that doesn't go on here," manager Terry Collins said. "There is more being made of our first half because expectations going into spring training were high." Baseball's biggest under-achievers are the Los Angeles Dodgers. With a \$79.2 million opening-day payroll, big things were expected of them. But Kevin Brown, baseball's first \$100 million man, is just 9-6, and Los Angeles is last in the NL West at 39-47, 10 games behind the Giants. "I want to completely forget about the first half, to tell you the truth," catcher Todd Hundley said. At least the Dodgers have hopes they can make a run. Not so for Baltimore (36-51), 16 games out despite the third-highest payroll on opening day (\$78.5 million). A dozen of baseball's low-payroll franchise also have little hope. "Once the game starts, payrolls are out the window," Minnesota All-Star Ron Coomer said. "If the ball's over the plate, if you put good wood on it, it doesn't matter if you're making the minimum or \$50 million." At \$33.2 million, Cincinnati has the smallest opening-day payroll among the contenders. "Winning teams are teams that work together," Scott Williamson said. "You don't have to have the big money to win." In Houston, Dierker returns to the Astros for tonight's game against Detroit. The manager collapsed in the dugout on June 13 from a seizure, then had surgery to repair abnormal blood vessels in his brain. "I'll be delighted, but I haven't been antsy to get back," Dierker said. "I don't feel anything but normal. I'd say at no point did I worry about my recovery. I had confidence that I would recover." Milwaukee's game against Kansas City was postponed after a crane being used to build Miller Park, the Brewers' new home, collapsed Wednesday, killing three people. Robert Trunzo, chairman of the board overseeing construction of the \$400 million stadium, said contractors were cooperating with the police and sheriff's investigation into the accident. "Any time we have a death or serious injury, we treat it as a criminal investigation," Police Chief Arthur Jones said. "It may not result in that, but that is how we treat it."

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Union says most ump's to resign by Sept. 2

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Major league umpires voted to resign Sept. 2, and baseball seems happy with their decision. Umpires have been at odds with owners and players since Roberto Alomar spat at an ump three years ago, claiming they don't get enough respect. Owners, tired of repeated bickering and convinced the umpires are replaceable, sounded almost pleased. "This is either a threat to be ignored, or an offer to be accepted," said Sandy Alderson, executive vice president of baseball operations, speaking for commissioner Bud Selig. There are 68 major league umpires, and 57 of them attended the meeting in Philadelphia, saying they wouldn't work the last 4 weeks of the season. The other 11 were expected to announce their resignations in the next few days. What set the umpires off this time was NL president Len Coleman's three-day suspension of umpire Tom Hallion on July 2 for bumping a player. It was the first such action that baseball officials could remember. "The purpose of this meeting was to address quarrels with baseball," umpires' union head Richie Phillips said. "The tension is much greater than it's ever been. Baseball is in a state of chaos." He said umpires will form a new corporation on Sept. 3 and the AL and NL would have to contract for services with the new body. Umpires would supervise themselves and make their own schedules, he said. Owners, however, could hire umpires from minor leagues, high schools and colleges, as they have during previous work stoppages. None of the umpires would comment following the four-hour meeting, the day after the All-Star game at Boston's Fenway Park. Games resume tonight. The umpires have a contract that runs through this season and pays them \$75,000-to-\$225,000 annually, depending on seniority. The deal bars strikes, so the resignations are an attempt to get around that, Phillips said. Phillips said the contract calls for resigning umpires to collect a total of \$15 million in severance pay. Most senior umpires would get \$400,000 severance, and baseball would have until early January to pay. "It might be our cheapest solution," Alderson said, meaning that it would be preferable to costly litigation or a work stoppage. "Unless I'm mistaken, I don't think these tactics have convinced a single person to be supportive. That would include the fans, the media and baseball itself." Phillips said umpires originally voted to strike immediately, then changed their votes and decided to resign. In 1995, umpires were locked out and missed the first 86 games of the regular season. They also struck and missed the first seven weeks of the 1979 season and the first seven games of the 1984 playoffs. Tension has been high since September 1996, when Alomar was suspended for five games for spitting in umpire John Hirschbeck's face — a penalty deemed too lenient by the umpires. When they attempted to strike during the postseason, owners obtained a court injunction in federal court. Alderson said the umpires' actions made him wonder if this would "escalate this situation to the point where it might be irretrievable." Several management officials said fans don't pay to see umpires, and players have never hesitated to play with replacement umpires. "It's a shame that it's gotten to this point," Kansas City manager Tony Muser said.

Advertisement for Sherwin-Williams 'ALL-STAR SALE' featuring a house image, '25-60% Off' starburst, 'FREE DUGOUTS' offer, and 'Low Price Guarantee' text. Includes contact information for Big Spring, TX.

Advertisement for WES-TEX CELLULAR (756-3826) and Scenic Mountain Medical Center (263-1211).

Advertisement for Sherwin-Williams paint store in Big Spring, TX, with phone number 915-263-7377.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'BIG SPRING HERALD Thursday, July 15, 1999' and various small notices.

THURSDAY JULY 15. TV schedule table with columns for network (KMBD, KPEJ, KERA, etc.) and program (6:30 PM, 7:30 PM, etc.).

HAGAR



B.C.



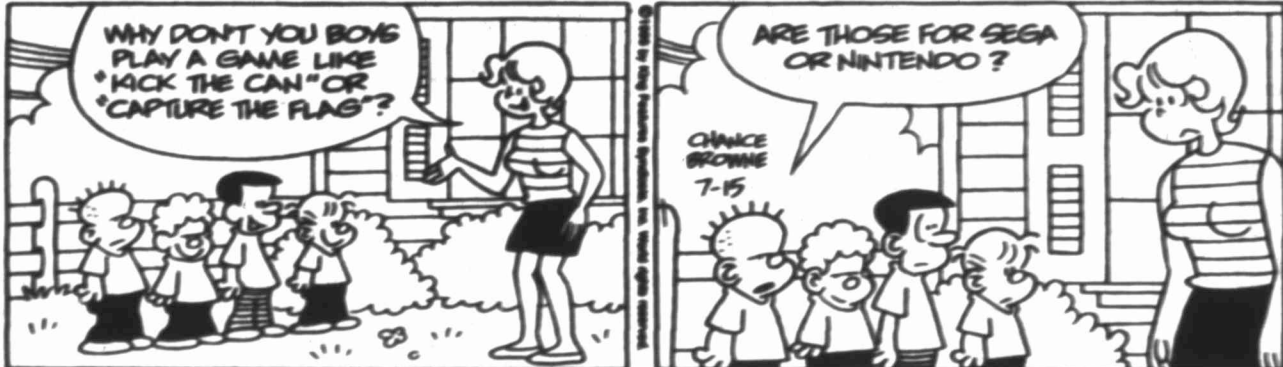
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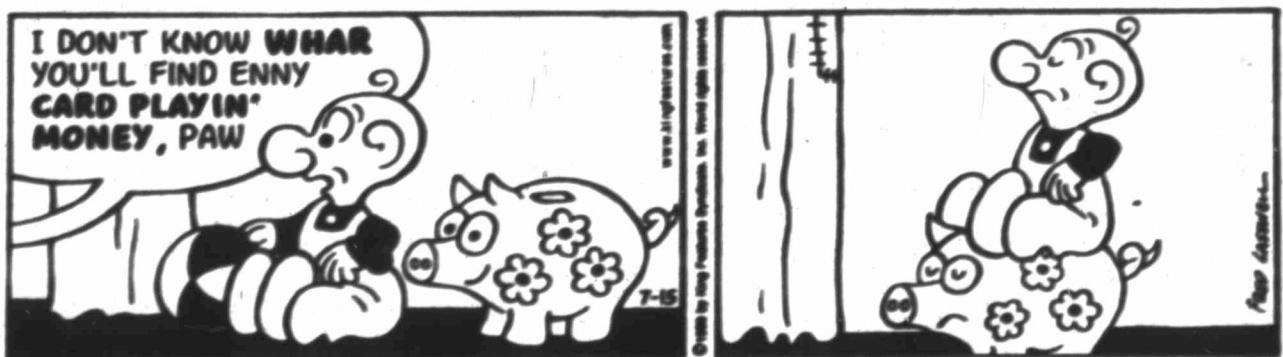
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THIS DATE IN HISTORY

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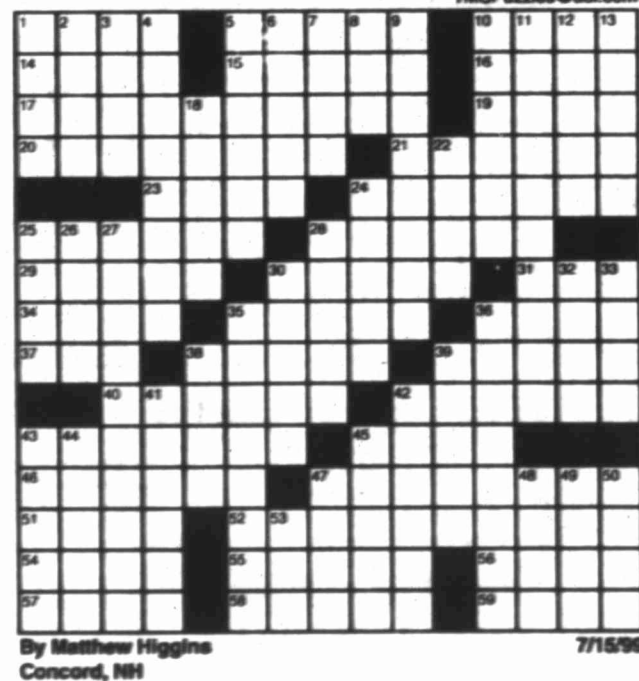
Today is Thursday, July 15, the 196th day of 1999. There are

169 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On July 15, 1971, President Nixon announced he would visit the People's Republic of China to seek a normalization of relations. On this date: In 1606, the Dutch painter

Rembrandt was born in Leiden, Netherlands. In 1870, Georgia became the last of the Confederate states to be readmitted to the Union. In 1916, the Boeing Co., originally known as Pacific Aero Products, was founded in Seattle. In 1918, the Second Battle of the Marne began during World War I. In 1948, President Truman was nominated for another term of office at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. In 1964, Senator Barry M. Goldwater of Arizona was nominated for president at the Republican National Convention in San Francisco. In 1979, President Carter delivered his "malaise" speech in which he lamented what he called a "crisis of confidence" in America. In 1985, a gaunt-looking Rock Hudson appeared at a news conference with actress Doris Day to promote her cable television program. It was later revealed Hudson was suffering from AIDS. In 1992, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton claimed the Democratic presidential nomination at the party's convention in New York. In 1997, fashion designer Gianni Versace was shot dead outside his Miami home; the suspected gunman, alleged serial killer Andrew Phillip Cunanan was found dead eight days later. Ten years ago: Leaders of the seven major industrial democracies, meeting in Paris, voiced support for democracy behind the Iron Curtain and condemned repression in China. Five years ago: Microsoft Corp. reached a settlement with the Justice Department, promising to end practices it used to corner the market for personal computer software programs. One year ago: Three days of ceremonies to bury Russia's last czar and his family, who were killed by the Bolsheviks, began in the city of Yekaterinburg. The Congressional Budget Office estimated federal surpluses of \$1.55 trillion over the next decade.

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
1 Singer Fitzgerald
5 Box of silent films
10 Light greenish blue
14 Earth
15 Brother of Moses
16 Make untidy
17 Philadelphia
19 Constructors
20 Hard up
21 Nose-dive
23 Wine sediment
24 Consecrates
25 Made neat
28 Abhor
29 Dark shades, in poetry
30 Fine-grained minerals
31 Musical syllable
34 Collect ore
35 Pulped vegetables
36 Pork cut
37 Immediately, for short
38 Riverside
39 Former nit
40 Combines
42 Levy on booze, butts, etc.
43 Certain electron tubes
45 Cats and dogs, e.g.
46 More candlelike
47 Mindless folk
51 Follower of Joel
52 California prison
54 Dark time in ads
55 Intense contempt
56 Matador's challenger
57 Launch forces
58 Sniffers
59 Pour out



By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH

- DOWN
1 Atty. names' followers
2 Boor
3 Balmey manufacturer?
4 Tigers Hall of Famer
5 Found fault
6 Adds some spirits
7 Parched
8 Nonsense
9 No particular spot
10 Waylay
11 Prefabricated portable building
12 Customary practice
13 Beasts of burden
18 Fencing swords
22 Permits
24 Tree trunks
25 Office fill-in
26 Word in footnotes
27 Cervantes' knight
28 Carefree adventures
30 Ais
32 Bonheur or Parks
33 Point of culmination
35 New Jersey city
36 Agree
38 Tarry
39 Supple
41 Clamor
42 Watery fluids
43 Nasal tone
44 Source of best fiber
45 Umbrage
47 Colonial cuckoo
48 Resting on
49 Dreadful
50 Winter forecast
53 Fuss

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved
W E G S I E V E U T A H
I C E T A D M I T R A B E
T H E U N T O U C H A B L E S
H O N D A E N A C T S
I N C A A R O N
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Today's Birthdays: Actor Philip Carey is 74. Actor Alex Karris is 64. Actor Ken Kercheval is 64. Sen. George V. Voinovich (R-Ohio) is 63. Actor Patrick Wayne is 60. Actor Jan-Michael Vincent is 55. Rhythm-and-blues singer Millie Jackson is 55. Rock singer-musician Peter Lewis (Moby Grape) is 54. Singer Linda Ronstadt is 53. Actor Terry O'Quinn is 47. Rock musician Joe Satriani is 43. Model Kim Alexis is 39.