

TUESDAY
October 5, 1999

WEATHER

Tonight:



PARTLY CLOUDY

TONIGHT 50°-53° **WEDNESDAY** 85°-87°

Bids being taken for state hospital surplus auction

Bids for the Big Spring State Hospital surplus and consignment auction are being taken through Wednesday. A recliner, Christmas decorations, computers and more are among the items for sale.

Viewing times are from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday at Big Spring State Hospital Recycling Center, 1407 U.S. Highway 87. Sealed bids for the items can be left at the recycling center.

Highest bids will be announced at 3 p.m. Wednesday. People who bid on items must pick up and pay for them by 6 p.m.

Proceeds from the sale are used to purchase equipment and supplies for the patients. For more information, call Joshua Leib or Darrell Cooper at 263-0618.

Incentive pact for StarTek, Inc. to be considered

Moore Development for Big Spring, Inc. will meet at 7:30 a.m. Wednesday to consider an incentive agreement with StarTek, Inc.

Also on the agenda is an executive session to deliberate property at 501 Birdwell Lane, Suite 30, for StarTek.

Wednesday's meeting will be held in the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce board room, 215 W. Third Street.

WHAT'S UP...

- TODAY**
- Quarterback Club, 7 p.m., Big Spring High School Athletic Training Center.
 - VFW Post No. 2013, VFW Hall, 7 p.m.
 - Big Spring Chapter No. 67, Order of the Eastern Star, 7:30 p.m., Masonic Lodge, 219 Main.

- WEDNESDAY**
- Senior Circle Big Spring Mall Walkers meet 9:15 a.m. in front of movie theater box office.
 - Line dancing, 10:30 a.m., Senior Citizen Center, Industrial Park.
 - Big Spring Downtown Lions Club, noon, Howard College Cactus Room.
 - Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie, 7 p.m., Eagles Lodge, 704 W. Third.

THURSDAY

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To reach us, please call 263-7331. Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you miss your paper, please call 263-7335 before 7 p.m. on weekdays and 11 a.m. on Sunday.

Big Spring State Park to host annual Harvest Saturday program

By **DEBBIE L. JENSEN**
Features Editor

"Tis the season of pumpkins, and Big Spring State Park is going orange on Saturday.

It's time for the annual Harvest Saturday event, which promises a pumpkin for every child visitor, and hayrides around the bluff for everyone.

"We've got 400 pumpkins, that's about 1,000 worth, donated by H-E-B," said Ron Alton, state park superintendent. He

said the plentiful pumpkins are a big draw for the event. They are available starting at 2:15 p.m.

"They make this very popular," he said. But another attraction is the beautiful view from the 200-foot bluff, which hayride participants will circle at 3 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.

"Lots of people really enjoy the hayrides, and I am educating them at the same time," said Alton. He discusses park history, flora and fauna during the rides.

Flyers advertising the event have been

sent to all local elementary schools. Alton said elementary age kids are the main target of the pumpkin "hunt," but the other activities are appropriate for the whole family.

Weather can occasionally put a damper on attendance. Alton said even if the temperature is expected to rise Saturday, it is a good idea to wear pants since hay can scratch bare skin. Close-toed shoes are also a good idea.

But for those who prefer a ride without hay, or suffer from allergies, one of the ride vehicles is an open tour bus that

will be kept hay-free.

"I'd also recommend carpooling if you can," Alton said. Although parking is expected to be plentiful, visitors can save on entrance fees since they are charged by the car.

The highest entrance fee charged is \$4 per carload, but cars with one adult and several children are only charged \$2. Harvest Saturday will add \$1 to the fee for every child who wants a pumpkin.

"Harvest Saturday has been very popular," Alton said, "and we are looking for another good crowd this year."

Jesus video project success joyously celebrated

By **RICK McLAUGHLIN**
Staff Writer

"Satan is not a happy camper tonight," exclaimed the Rev. Eddie Tubbs Monday during the fall festival celebrating the Jesus Video Project. He was referring to the impact of the August distribution of 10,000 videos about the life of Jesus Christ, as well as Monday's celebration.

Church leaders of all denominations and community members gathered for a multifaceted event of music, speeches and testimony at First United Methodist in honor of the effort by more than 60 Howard county churches.

Tubbs praised the unity created among the approximately 1,000 Christian missionaries as they took to the streets of Big Spring and Howard County in late August to distribute the videocassettes. The mission of the project was to see that a copy of the video went to every household in Howard County.

"Our goal was to present the gospel and it alone without any denominational trappings," Tubbs said after the festival.

Tubbs told the celebrants that it was important to maintain that spirit of unity gained from the video project because "he (Satan) will try to raise the old issue of sectarianism."

R.T. Havener, of the First Assembly of God, said he "was amazed at the tremendous unity I have seen in this effort. I've never seen a more unified group of ministers. But prayer is the real reason all this came together," he added. "May we continue this spirit of unity now that the Jesus videos are



A fall festival and celebration of the Jesus Video Project broke up into small prayer groups at First United Methodist Church last night. Church leaders and community members came together for prayer, praise, music, testimonies and speeches.

out." In fact, it was announced by Tubbs the group is looking at another county-wide campaign for sometime in the year 2000 — distributing paperback Bibles with the title of "Here's Hope."

Special honors went to ministers in the community who were instrumental in the success of the project and mem-

bers of a group in Midland that donated the videos.

A special gift and praise went to organizer Everett Bender and his wife, Evelyn. Bender is a businessman and leader of the Christian Training Center.

Speakers included Midland Mayor Bobby Burns, who lauded Big Spring for taking on such a project and completing it.

Big Spring Mayor Tim Blackshear also spoke, saying there were people outside of this project who said it couldn't be done "but they forgot to tell God."

Tubbs lauded Blackshear's support saying "The mood of Tim throughout this project had been more than just support... he has been an enabler."

Wanted: Photos of four former county sheriffs

By **RICK McLAUGHLIN**
Staff Writer

Four men most wanted by Sheriff Bill Jennings aren't criminals. They aren't even suspects. But they are wanted for questioning and question is — where are their pictures?

Jennings takes a keen interest in the history of the Howard County Sheriff's Office and has a picture gallery at the front of the sheriff's office honoring the county's past top lawmen.

However, pictures of four of



JENNINGS

the county's early sheriffs are missing. Jennings wants them and is appealing to the public for help in locating them.

The missing sheriffs and their years in office are R.W. Morrow, 1882-1886; William Derling, 1886; H.G. Dearing, 1892-1894; and Ed. M. Mobley, 1906-1910.

Morrow was elected as the first sheriff of Howard County on June 15, 1882. He was re-elected Nov. 7, 1882 and Nov. 4, 1884 and served until July, 1886, when he resigned.

William Derling was appointed to the sheriff's job July 19, 1886, and served until Nov. 2.

Derling was replaced by John Birdwell, whose picture is not missing. Birdwell was elected Nov. 2, 1886 and was re-elected twice and served until Nov. 8, 1892.

The next sheriff whose picture is missing is Birdwell's successor, H.G. Dearing, who was elected Nov. 8, 1892, and served until Nov. 6, 1894.

Dearing was succeeded by W. G. Birdwell and J.A. Baggett, whose pictures are also not missing. They served, respectively, from 1894-1896, and 1896-1906.

The most recent sheriff whose picture is missing is Ed. M. Mobley, who was elected in Nov. 8, 1906. He was re-elected Nov. 3, 1908, and served until Nov. 8, 1910.

"There have been 17 men and one lady who have served as sheriff during the history of the county with two of the men serving twice," said Jennings.

The only woman sheriff of Howard County was Mrs. Lucille Merrick, who was

appointed Feb. 7, 1944 and served until Jan. 1, 1945. She was appointed to complete her late husband's term. Her husband, Andrew Merrick served from 1940 to 1944.

Sheriff A.N. Standard served 24 years, the longest in the history of the county. He was first elected Nov. 3, 1964 and was re-elected in 1968, 1972, 1976, 1980, 1984 and 1988.

One of the more colorful sheriffs in the county's history must have been John D. Birdwell, who, before coming to Big Spring, had spent many years on the frontier of West Texas as a Texas Ranger, buffalo hunter and Indian fighter.

Jennings said Birdwell had a tent saloon near the spring long before the coming of the rail-

See **PHOTOS**, Page 2

'Shakespeare (abridged)' exciting challenge for Howard College trio

By **MARSHA STURDIVANT**
Staff Writer

Theater lovers may get a "hoot and a holler" from Howard College's production of "The Complete Works of Shakespeare (abridged)" when it opens Friday at the Big Spring Mall.

"In two hours we will do all the plays and sonnets of William Shakespeare, with only three actors," said Clay Grizzle, theater instructor for the college.

The play, a fast-paced synopsis of Shakespeare's works mixed with modern commentary on politics, television, lifestyles and morality, features the talents of three Howard

College students — John McDiffitt III, Jonathan Hull and Ray Stech.

Actors said one of the delights of the production is the ability each has to put his own personality into the characters.

"The script is hilarious, and the reason I enrolled at Howard College was to do this play," said McDiffitt, 19. "I like Shakespeare, the real stuff, and this play is so fun, it's more fun actually, because I get to put so much of me into the role."

And while Hull, 18, agreed that he enjoys performing in the production, he finds the fast-paced, quick movement of the scenes a challenge.

"I've never had so many lines by myself before and sometimes

I leave rehearsal frustrated and exhausted. There are several sword fights, and in the second act I have a big part, and it's hard to tone it down. I've always played the bad guy before," Hull said.

The play includes portions of such familiar theatrical productions as Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet and Othello, with a modern twist that might include a football game, a commercial and even gourmet cooking.

"The play features all 36 of Shakespeare's works," Grizzle said.

Stech, 18, who came to Howard College from Colum-

See **PLAY**, Page 2

Layoffs

Signal Homes, Walls lay off 60-70 workers between them

By **MARSHA STURDIVANT**
Staff Writer

Layoffs in Big Spring resulted in a loss of about 70 more jobs this week, as Signal Homes and Walls Industries Inc. each announced plans to lay off 30-35 people.

This is the second week of employment decline in Howard County, following the Big Spring State Hospital announcement last week that 30 positions had been eliminated at the hospital, with 19 persons laid off.

Signal Homes, a manufacturer of mobile homes, laid off 30 individuals Monday, as a result of industry declines, according to Bud Ledingham, one of the owners of the business.

"This industry is going through some bad times right now. In fact, four factories closed down in Texas in the past two weeks," Ledingham said.

Signal Homes, a corporation with limited partners, opened its plant in Big Spring in February 1997, he said. The company employed 106 persons in the plant until the layoff.

"Now we're down to 74 or 75 employees," he said. No specific department was targeted to absorb the layoffs, he said. The 30 individuals were selected based on longevity with the company, absenteeism and job performance.

"And there were several other factors that helped us determine this as well," Ledingham said.

The layoffs are immediate, and no severance pay or other compensation was offered the former employees, he said.

"The majority had not been here that long. We have a turn over, and many of these people had not been with us much over six months," he said.

Signal Homes came to Big Spring through the efforts of Moore Development of Big Spring after a contract was signed in January 1997.

At that time a \$750,000 loan was administered to the manufacturing company, with the promise of about 100 jobs for local residents within the first year.

See **LAYOFFS**, Page 2



From left, John McDiffitt III, Ray Stech and Jonathan Hull all lib a musical scene for the upcoming Howard College production of "The Complete Works of Shakespeare (abridged)" which opens Friday in the Big Spring Mall.

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Escaped murderer captured after being involved in fatal smashup

VARNER, Ark. (AP) — Arkansas authorities hope to get escaped killer Kenneth D. Williams back soon from Missouri, where his 24 hours of freedom ended after a traffic smashup fatal to another driver.

Police say Williams, 20, is also a suspect in the shooting death of the Arkansas man who owned the pickup truck Williams was driving.

Arkansas State Police sent two investigators to Buffalo, Mo., on Monday, where Williams was being held in the

Dallas County Jail, according to state police spokesman Bill Sadler. The two will begin extradition proceedings to return Williams to Arkansas.

Meanwhile, officials at the Cummins Unit of the state prison system, from which Williams fled on Sunday, were trying to discover how he escaped and why his absence wasn't noticed for several hours.

Williams' escapade added to the notoriety he gained when he taunted his victim's family after

being spared the death penalty at the conclusion of his trial last month in Pine Bluff. Convicted of capital murder for killing a college cheerleader, Williams gloated when the jury recommended that he be sentenced to life without parole, instead of execution.

"You thought I was going to die, didn't you?" he asked the family of Dominique Hurd, 19, of Fort Worth, Texas.

The cheerleader's father remembered Williams' behavior on Monday.

"He was cold, he had no remorse, he had no feelings for anything," Rick Hurd said. "He turned around and he cursed at us several times. Then one time he just totally turned around and smiled as if, 'I'm going to get away,' and that's exactly what he did, he got away."

In Missouri, Williams was arrested at the end of a chase in which he traveled the wrong way on Interstate 44 and tried to hit other vehicles.

"He didn't care what he was doing. He was going to do what

ever it took to try to get away," Missouri State Highway Patrol Sgt. Terry Moore said.

Missouri police spotted the stolen truck Monday morning in Lebanon, Mo., about 140 miles southeast of Kansas City and more than 300 miles northwest of the prison from which Williams had fled. During the ensuing chase, the truck briefly went west in the eastbound lanes of I-44 and then topped 100 mph on two-lane blacktops.

Police said Williams rammed a water delivery truck at the

end of the chase, in Urbana, Mo., killing the truck's driver, Michael J. Greenwood, 24, of Springfield, Mo. Williams then fled on foot from the pickup truck toward a house, but was arrested in a field.

After his Sept. 14 sentencing, Williams was assigned to the same maximum-security prison, the Cummins Unit, where Arkansas executes death-row prisoners. He escaped at midday Sunday, Correction Department spokeswoman Dina Tyler said.

Federal Reserve expected to stand pat on interest rates for now

WASHINGTON (AP) — As the nation's economy purrs smoothly with no immediate inflation dangers at hand, the Federal Reserve is expected, for now, to forgo a third interest rate increase, private economists believe.

They aren't ruling out the possibility of higher rates before year's end.

Many analysts are taking this view because inflation has remained well-behaved despite strong economic growth and an unemployment rate remaining

at a 29-year low.

A rate increase is "a no-go — primarily because there's not a sufficient amount of data suggesting continued inflationary pressures," said Richard Yamarone, senior economist with Argus Research Corp.

The Federal Open Market Committee, which comprises Fed board members in Washington and the presidents of the Fed's 12 regional banks, planned to meet privately today to review interest rate policy. Financial markets eagerly

awaited a midafternoon announcement of their decision.

There's another reason economists believe the central bank won't raise interest rates today.

Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan usually gives investors a solid sign of an impending interest rate increase. But he and other Fed officials haven't done that, striking instead a more dovish tone. That indicates they've seen few signs of inflation even with rapid economic growth, economists said.

"What we've heard from people on the Fed, including Chairman Greenspan, doesn't point to an interest rate increase," said Tim O'Neill, chief economist for the Bank of Montreal and Harris Bank.

Wall Street appeared to take the view Monday that the Fed will hold the line for the time being. The Dow Jones industrial average closed up 128.23 points at 10,401.23. But even with the rebound, stocks are down almost 1,000 points from their record close of 11,299.76 on

Aug. 23, just before the last Fed rate increase.

Although the economy slowed in the second quarter to an anemic 1.6 percent annual rate, many economists said that was just a temporary lull. They are looking for the economy to grow at around a 4 percent rate in both the third and fourth quarters, far above the 3 percent rate many Fed policy-makers believe is prudent with today's tight labor market.

Given that, many economists believe the Fed may raise rates

this year by a quarter of a point when it meets on Nov. 16, depending on what a fresh round of economic data released between now and then — including two employment reports and several inflation reports — says about the economy.

"The Fed still thinks rates need to go up a notch," said Cynthia Latta, senior economist at Standard & Poor's DRI.

"But they won't do it Tuesday. They will wait until November."

MCI WorldCom agrees to pay \$115 billion for Sprint

NEW YORK (AP) — In what would be the largest corporate takeover to date, MCI WorldCom Inc. has agreed to pay \$115 billion for Sprint Corp., the nation's No. 3 long distance carrier, the companies announced today.

The combined company, to be called WorldCom, will control 30 percent of the U.S. long-distance market and offer wireless phone and paging services and an Internet network. WorldCom also will be a stronger competitor to AT&T Corp., the largest long-distance and cable TV company.

MCI WorldCom late Monday sweetened its offer to \$76 per share in stock, up from \$63, rather than risk losing Sprint to rival BellSouth Corp., which had offered \$72 per share in cash and stock, or \$100 billion.

Both companies' boards voted

to approve the deal Monday evening.

A successful deal would produce the largest merger ever, eclipsing the pending \$82 billion deal between Exxon Corp. and Mobil Corp.

There was no immediate word from BellSouth or from Deutsche Telekom, which owns 10 percent of Sprint, on the MCI-Sprint pact.

MCI WorldCom is the nation's second biggest long-distance company and one of the world's biggest operators of the networks that make up the Internet, but has no wireless calling business. Sprint PCS would fill that hole nicely.

BellSouth wants Sprint's long-distance business to complement its local telephone business in nine Southeastern states. Like the other Baby Bells, the Atlanta-based compa-

ny hopes that federal regulators will soon allow it to offer long-distance service in its home region.

Consumers might not see any immediate benefit from a Sprint buyout because long-distance and wireless calling rates are at historic lows.

But with competition driving telecommunications companies into new markets such as cable television, consumers are expected to enjoy increasingly attractive bundles of telephone, TV and Internet services.

Even the mightiest telecom companies are racing to grab an edge in technology and geographic reach so they can compete in a market where distinctions between telephones, television, radio and computers are disappearing.

Sprint, a leading player in long distance, wireless and

Internet services, was a plum target.

"Sprint has got some pretty premium assets," said Catherine Jackson, a managing director for Trainer Wortham Co., which owns 500,000 shares of MCI WorldCom.

Regulators are expected to scrutinize any deal Sprint makes.

Congress passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to spur competition, but mergers have greatly reduced the number of major players in the industry.

Not counting Sprint-MCI WorldCom, there have been 233 telecom deals this year totaling \$195 billion, according to Thomson Securities Data Co. With today's announcement, this year's total would far surpass the \$220 billion in telecom deals last year.

Health officials are preparing for early flu season

BOSTON (AP) — The flu season appears to have arrived early this year, courtesy of an influenza strain that reached the continental United States by hopping a ride on Alaskan cruise ships.

Public health officials from Colorado to Massachusetts have kicked off campaigns encouraging people to get vaccinated against the disease, the sixth-leading cause of death in the United States.

"Remember when you get

your shots, just think to yourself afterwards, it's just one shot for man, one giant leap for public health," Massachusetts Public Health Commissioner Howard Koh said Monday.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta estimates that as much as 20 percent of the population gets the flu every season. Approximately 20,000 Americans die from flu complications each year.

Flu viruses follow well-worn

paths, starting in Asia and heading east, officials say.

Alaska is usually the first place in the United States to be affected, with the viruses eventually making their way south to the western United States and eventually the East Coast, said Dr. Steven Mostow, associate dean of the University of Colorado Medical School and an influenza expert.

"They (flu viruses) follow a very prescribed pattern," Mostow said. "This is early.

You can predict by the week over a 30-year period."

Colorado moved up its flu vaccine campaigns by two weeks this year, Mostow said. He expects the flu will show up four weeks early, hitting Colorado this month and reaching the East Coast by Thanksgiving.

Several cases have been reported in the continental United States, including four in Colorado linked to Alaska cruise ship outbreaks, he said.

Top court rejects teachers' challenge of drug tests

WASHINGTON (AP) — Everyone offered a public school teaching job in one Tennessee county can be required to take a drug test, following the Supreme Court's rejection of a challenge by teachers who say the tests violate their rights.

The justices' action Monday set no legal precedent but likely will add fuel to the national debate over school drug testing and could encourage other districts to enact similar policies. The teachers' appeal was one of hundreds turned down by the

court as it opened its 1999-2000 term.

"If our children are not important enough and their safety and educational progress are not important enough to justify this limited drug testing, I don't know what would be," said Richard T. Beeler, attorney for the Knox County Board of Education, which adopted the drug-testing program in 1994.

The teachers contended the tests amount to an unreasonable search under the Constitution's Fourth Amendment if officials do not

suspect the tested individual of using drugs.

Their lawyer, Robert H. Chanin, noted the court's rejection of the teachers' appeal was not a ruling but added, "I expect there will be some school districts who misconstrue what the action of the court is and take this as a green light to go forward."

Julie Underwood, the National School Boards Association's general counsel, said she did not know of other school districts with a similar teacher drug testing policy,

although she said most districts require testing of bus drivers.

The Knox County policy requires everyone offered a job considered "safety sensitive" to undergo urinalysis drug testing. Jobs considered safety sensitive include teachers, principals and assistant principals, teacher aides, school secretaries and bus drivers.

The policy was challenged in federal court by the Knox County Education Association, an organization of teachers, principals and other professional school employees.

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OCTOBER 5 1999

EDITORIAL

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

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

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OUR VIEWS

Need to adapt a trait farmers know too well

It's difficult to talk optimistically about this year's Crossroads Area cotton crop, perhaps in particular because our hopes were high at the start of the season. What at one time looked like a very favorable year succumbed once again to the drought. As a result, quality and quantity won't bring enough for most farmers to make ends meet.

The end result is generally reflected at businesses throughout the area. No crops mean no money for purchases other than necessary items. And no purchases means businesses suffer as well.

Still, we have to keep telling ourselves that the drought will break, that if we can hang in long enough, the rewards will be great. Most farmers have been around long enough to have been through lean times before.

The crop was better this year than last year, and while that may not show up strongly in the overall economy, it will make a difference in some areas. One which is apparent is with boll weevil eradication. The fact that most fields were planted — even if all were not taken to harvest — will help in that effort. For that, we can remain optimistic.

Yes, some producers will be severely hurt by the poor season. Some will probably go out of business. But for others, the challenge continues to diversify, to cut costs, to learn new ways to cope. To that regard, farm tours are being held today and Thursday in the Crossroads Area.

On Saturday, Ag Commissioner Susan Combs will be in the Student Union Building at Howard College at 3:30 p.m. to hear from producers in our area. We don't expect the commissioner can bring what we need most — rain — but we are optimistic that the interchanges between her and local farmers will be beneficial to both.

We are forever in change, and to adapt is a trait we in West Texas must maintain. Our farmers know that, all too well.

OTHER VIEWS

Preacher Bill Clinton had stirring words for representatives of the world's nations, gathered last week at the United Nations in New York.

For the new millennium, Clinton implored, let the people of Earth embrace three resolutions: to "wage an unrelenting war against poverty;" to prevent "mass killings and displacement," and to "protect our children" from the threat from weapons of mass destruction.

Amen. But Preacher Bill needs to have a good heart-to-heart with President Bill, for the president's actions don't square well with the preacher's words.

Even as Clinton spoke to the United Nations, two important initiatives aimed at the better world he envisioned were languishing in Congress. Both have failed

to receive effective, persistent presidential support.

One is the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which would bring a permanent global halt to nuclear explosions.

On the second issue, Clinton and (Sen. Jesse) Helms are now allies. Both want Congress to approve funding that would settle most of the U.S. debt to the United Nations.

... As Clinton nears the end of his presidency, he should spend the political capital required to square the reality of his foreign-policy record with the lofty thoughts of his foreign-policy rhetoric.

There's no better way to start than by pushing hard for ratification of the test ban treaty and paying the U.S. debt to the United Nations.

STAR TRIBUNE OF MINNEAPOLIS

The Writer's Art: Ungoodly writewise

William Safire, word maven at The New York Times, recently took a vacation from his weekly column on language. This was an ungood idea, for it opened the way for his substitutes to market their subversive ideas in a high-rent district. I am thinking of a column on Sept. 12 by Margalit Fox, an editor of the Times Book Review.



JAMES J. KILPATRICK

One hesitates to speak unkindly of any editor at the good gray Times, but her column consisted in large part of hogwash. I will give you an example: "Judged on purely linguistic grounds, all languages — and all dialects — have equal merit. All spring from the same human cognitive faculties; all have the same expressive potential and operate according to the same kind of logical rule systems."

Before she wrote that column, I surmise, Ms. Fox had been to a wine sampling party for linguists and had come home quite intoxicated by the fumes. To judge language "on purely linguistic grounds" is a waste of intellectual effort. It is no way to judge the capacity of a written or spoken tongue. And to assert that all languages and all dialects "have the same expressive potential" is to assert that the ukulele ranks with the cello.

I was writing the other day about a dull evening at the theater, but "dull" wasn't the word I wanted. Rodale's Synonym Finder gave me, among many others, vacuous, dense, obtuse, thick, slow, indifferent, sluggish, lethargic, torpid, lifeless, listless, apathetic, drowsy, tedious, tiresome, boring, wearisome, uninteresting, bland, insipid, jejune, vapid, prosaic, lackluster, anodyne, innocuous, soporific, oscillant and blah. Does anyone want to try that in Choctaw? Or in Spanish, Swahili or Norse?

Ms. Fox dwelled at some length on what she termed the "myth of standard English and its corollary, the myth of substandard English." Making her superficial case, she set up a straw man and fearlessly battered it to earth: "Many Americans believe that there exists a single standard dialect — the one broadcasters use — kept free of regional and vernacular encroachments. But in reality, no one such creature exists."

I have been writing about the English language for the past 18 years. Readers send me 5,000 clippings a year. I have yet to meet anyone who believes there exists a "single standard dialect." On the contrary, readers constantly bring me lovely examples of colloquial and regional English. These "vernacular encroachments" are part of the glorious fabric of our native tongue.

Is the concept of "standard English" a myth? What bosh! I am reminded of Boswell's anecdote about Dr. Johnson and the theory of the nonexistence of matter. Boswell was sure the theory was untrue, but he was

unable to refute it. Johnson struck his foot "against a large stone, till he rebounded from it, saying 'I refute it thus.'"

Ms. Fox's theory of the nonexistence of standard English is a very large stone. Reality rises like Gibraltar. Every society has its levels, its codes of what is socially acceptable and what is not. Language is a code, dependent for understanding upon evolving rules of grammar and syntax. The lexicographer's job is to distill the grapes of usage at the different levels. Thus, "he doesn't go there anymore" conveys the same information that is transmitted by "he don't go there no more," but the one is standard English and the other is not.

Is the one "inferior" to the other? Of course. Who says so? This is the silent, common judgment of writers, editors, teachers and prescriptive lexicographers. The setting of standards in language is a contentious business, but somebody has to do it. Without standards, without definitions, without structural law, we lapse into linguistic anarchy. In such a barren land, there is no difference between "may" and "might," between "may" and "can," between "we have gone" and "we had gone." No one flinches at "he gave the luncheon for John and I." Subjects become strangers to verbs. If all words are socially acceptable, then no words are vulgar, tasteless or obscene. In such a society, communication is ruled by the one great lexicographer of them all, the Hon. H. Dumpty of Wonderland fame.

By coincidence, on the Sunday of Ms. Fox's essay in

William Safire's space, I happened to be rereading George Orwell's "1984." In this classic work, Orwell posited the bleak society of Oceania, where Big Brother was always Watching You. The rulers had contrived an official language called Newspeak. They estimated that by 2050 it would supersede Oldspeak (or Standard English as we define it). Heretical or rebellious thoughts could not be communicated, because there would be no common language in which to communicate them.

Under Big Brother's despotic command, inhabitants would speak in three vocabularies. The C vocabulary was for scientific and technical use. The B vocabulary was constructed deliberately for political purposes. The A vocabulary was for everyday use. Suffixes such as "ful" and "wise" performed yeoman duties. "Speedful" meant "rapid." The word "well" was replaced by "good-wise." There was no longer any use for "bad," because "ungood" said it all. A forced-labor compound was a joy-camp. The Ministry of Peace waged war.

"The special function of certain Newspeak words," said Orwell, "was not so much to express meanings as to destroy them."

We fortunate speakers of English are not doomed to an Orwellian fate. The principles of standard usage so eloquently defended by writers and editors are alive and well. They will survive the levelers who wrongly suppose an equality of tongues. To the ramparts!

And one more thing: Bill Safire, won't you please come home?

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A greater reminder of what is important

How much you care about a house is never clearer than when you are waiting for a Category 4 hurricane to smash it to pieces.

It's easy to sympathize with the loss of human life, and indeed life is more valuable than property, but people's homes and stuff also mean a great deal, too. If some young men realized how much stuff can mean to people, they might be less inclined to steal it.



CHARLEY REESE

We Floridians just got lucky as Hurricane Floyd, which smashed up the Bahamas and the Carolinas, missed us. Its outer bands of squalls did only minimal damage, and most of that on the coast. But before we all knew it was

going to turn away, I looked around after lashing down the lawn furniture to a tree and thought, "I'll miss this place if I lose it." It's not that either the place or the stuff in it is all that valuable. The money loss would be handled by insurance. But buildings enclose more than space and stuff. They enclose memories. Each inanimate thing has been given life by the people who touched it, so that a home that has been lived in awhile becomes a sort of personal museum. You can look at one corner and see all the Christmas trees that have stood there. It's as if the auras of the people associated with places and objects linger around them.

You probably have to put on some mileage to get to this point. When I was young, I was a one-suitcase renter with more shirts than memories. Hurricanes and other natural disasters were just adventures, and, like most youth, I had more curiosity than sympathy. I hadn't, at that point, ever lost anything or anybody I really cared about except for dogs

when I was a child.

Maybe you have to know loss to appreciate what's still with you — at least if you are a hardhead. I've accumulated enough knocks now to appreciate those people you find in every hurricane warning area who defy evacuation orders. I don't mean the brash ones who want to hang around for the thrill of it. It's usually older people, and they say things like, "I can't leave my home," or "I'm not leaving my house." Often they are so obviously of modest circumstance that you know it's not because they fear any financial loss. Their homes have instead become so much a part of them that they fear separation more than they fear the storm.

There's nothing more impersonal than a hurricane. It's just spinning air and piled-up water. It's not even conscious of what gets smashed or who gets drowned or who loses so much that can't be replaced. Like a giant boulder of wind and waves, it rolls down the lane created by the air currents and its own momentum.

Thanks to satellites and technology that tell us where hurricanes are and where they are likely to go, it's fairly easy for people to get out of their way. Nearly 2 million people got out of the way of Floyd. But property isn't as mobile. It can't run away, so the major damage hurricanes do today is to property — places and things.

But putting dollar amounts on these places and things doesn't begin to describe their value to the people who lost them. In nearly every case, what's been lost is a part of their lives and a lot of memories. Insurance doesn't cover that.

Moreover, despite all the yuppie hype about the stock market, for most Americans their possessions represent the hard labor necessary to acquire them. Most Americans, after all, still get up in the morning and go to work, where they trade labor for a paycheck.

The harder something is to obtain, the more keen its loss. Like most things these days, hurricanes hurt the poor more than the rich.

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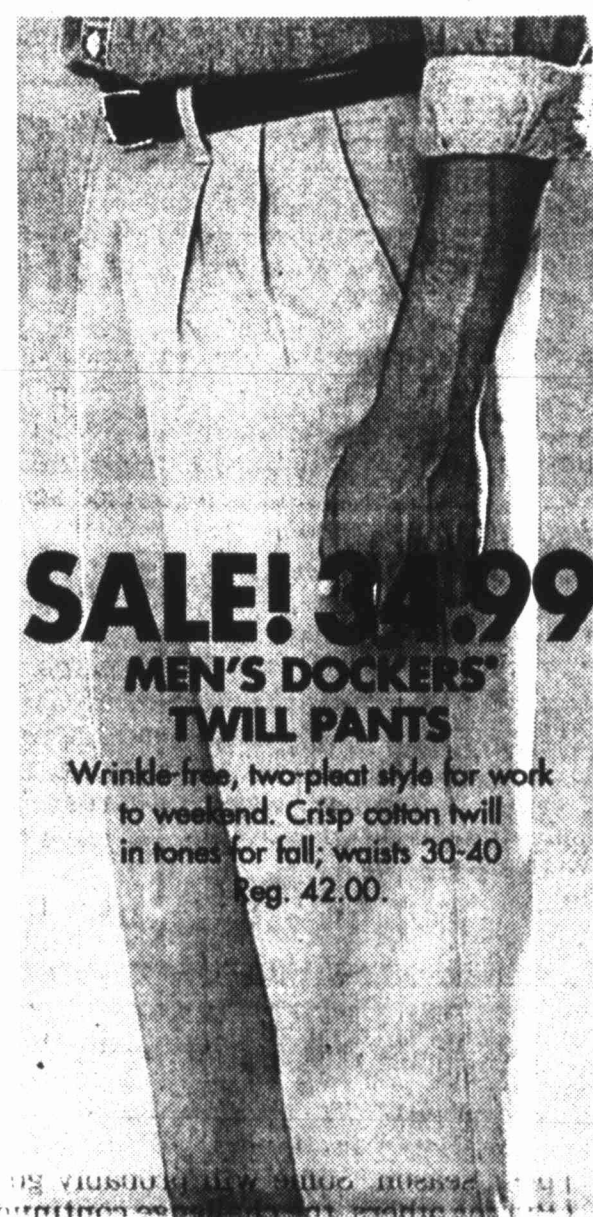
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OCT 5 1999

For Yankees, Braves and Indians, now the 'real' season begins

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

There's still a chance of a Subway Series.

The New York Mets made that possible Monday night, beating Cincinnati 5-0 in a one-game playoff for the NL wild card. The victory put them in the postseason together with the Yankees for the first time.

"I am drained. I am excited. I am elated. I am thankful," Mets manager Bobby Valentine said.

The final spot filled, baseball was set to begin the most important season. A quick note about this year's remaining teams: For the second straight year, the eight playoff clubs all are among the majors' 12 biggest payrolls.

The Yankees will be trying to duplicate last October's success.

"Well, we're the world champs," manager Joe Torre said Monday. "I think that's the way people look at us. We've done well over the last few years. Again, that doesn't mean that we assume we're going to win."

The Texas Rangers will try to stop them, starting tonight when the best-of-5 AL playoffs

RANGERS PLAYOFFS

Rangers Postseason History
The postseason history of the Texas Rangers:
World Series
None.
League Championship Series
None.
Divisional Playoff Series (Won 0, Lost 2)
1996 — Lost to New York Yankees 3-1
1998 — Lost to New York Yankees 3-0
Record — 1-6

ASTROS PLAYOFFS

Astros Postseason History
The postseason history of the Houston Astros:
World Series
None.
League Championship Series (Won 0, Lost 2)
1980 — Lost to Philadelphia, 3-2
1986 — Lost to New York Mets, 4-2
Record — Won 4, Lost 7
Divisional Playoff Series (Won 0, Lost 3)
1981 — Lost to Los Angeles, 3-2
Record — Won 2, Lost 3
Divisional Playoff Series (Won 0, Lost 2)
1997 — Lost to Atlanta, 3-0
1998 — Lost to San Diego, 3-1
Record — Won 1, Lost 6

open at Yankee Stadium.

"The Yankees had a sense of invincibility last year," Texas' Todd Zeile said. "They were the best team in the history of the game. They are still a good club, but we are confident playing against them."

At Turner Field, the Atlanta

Braves begin the quest for a second World Series championship in the '90s. Greg Maddux was to throw the first pitch of this year's playoffs this afternoon against Houston.

"When you talk about going to the playoffs, you talk about having the hot hand at the right time," Braves pitcher Tom Glavine said. "And I think this team definitely has that right now."

The Astros wound up headed to Atlanta when the Mets won at Cincinnati. Houston was just 1-6 against the Braves this season and was swept by Atlanta in the first round in 1997.

"We all know how we've fared against the Braves," closer Billy Wagner said. "Their reputation seems to beat us before we get out there. We seem to try to do too much against them. This season, we didn't get the job done against them."

At Jacobs Field, Cleveland will renew its bid for its first Series title since 1948. The Indians face a rough start, drawing ace Pedro Martinez and the Boston Red Sox in Game 1 Wednesday night.

"We have to beat Pedro,"

Indians shortstop Omar Vizquel said. "We have to show we can beat him. We beat him before and we have to do that again. The No. 1 game is always important to win. It doesn't mean anything if we go the full five games or seven games. It is just the first step. You want the first step, but it is more important to take the last step."

The Arizona Diamondbacks also are in the playoffs, making it in just their second season. Randy Johnson will start Game 1 tonight at Bank One Ballpark against the Mets.

"They're as talented a club as there is in our league," Arizona manager Buck Showalter said of the Mets. "They've got great depth. It's a well put-together club."

Johnson is 2-5 lifetime with a 3.10 ERA in the playoffs and has lost five straight decisions, tying the postseason record shared by Doyle Alexander and Joe Bush.

"If you look at the postseason, I've pitched pretty well," Johnson said. "It's not like I've been a total flop. People just look at the numbers and they want wins, and that's all I

want."

The Mets are making their first playoff appearance since 1988. Valentine and Mets reliever John Franco are going for the first time ever.

"Last week we were at the bottom of the barrel, the bottom of the hill," Franco said. "Now we have a second life."

For many of the teams, these divisional matchups are all-too-familiar.

The Indians eliminated

Boston in the first round in 1995 and again in 1998.

"We've been in the postseason, and we know what they can do," Red Sox shortstop Nomar Garciaparra said.

"They definitely have a lot of veterans, and they've been in the postseason before," he continued. "They know how to win. We played them last year and they knocked us out. Hopefully, we can turn it around this year."

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METS

Continued from page 6

the Reds also dreamed of reaching.

It was clear quite early that this would be the end of the line for the Reds, who were trying to crash the big-market clubs' postseason get-together with a meager \$35 million payroll.

Steve Parris (11-4) gave up a two-run homer to Edgardo Alfonzo on his sixth pitch of the game, setting the tone. Manager Jack McKeon uncharacteristically replaced Parris in the third inning with Denny Neagle, who was working on two days' rest.

Neagle walked Robin Ventura, the first batter he faced, with the bases loaded to make it 3-0. Rickey Henderson's leadoff homer off the left-field foul screen made it 4-0 in the fifth, and Alfonzo doubled home another run in the sixth off Danny Graves.

Once they fell behind, the usually carefree Reds looked tight.

"Leiter shut us down," shortstop Barry Larkin said. "You'd go up there looking for his (fastball) and you'd get it, and you still couldn't hit it square. He was on top of his game."

He had a lot of help from a team that won 96 games, but might have tried a little too hard for No. 97.

"The other team starts to press when they're down a few runs," Leiter said.

BILLS

Continued from page 6

including a 6-yard touchdown pass to Eric Moulds. He lost a fumble when he dropped a snap, but that was the Bills' only giveaway.

"The key to the game was not turning it over," Flutie said. "I wanted to protect the ball."

"The offense didn't play its best, but the defense played their tails off."

The Dolphins drove 74 yards in the final 1:41 of the first half, but settled for a 26-yard field goal by Olindo Mare. They marched 65 yards in the third quarter, but after McDuffie dropped a potential touchdown pass, Mare kicked another 26-yarder.

Mare also scored from 44 and 30 yards, but the Bills were happy to force field-goal attempts. By bending without breaking, Buffalo broke a five-game losing streak at Pro Player Stadium.

"Championship teams," Holeczek said, "have to win on the road."

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Games of Oct 9 - 11

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HOW TO PLAY
Select a winner from each of the week's games, listed below. Select in descending order of your CONFIDENCE in your choices. Win points at left for each correct selection toward possible total of 136 points. See complete rules below. You must be at least 8 (eight) years old to enter. To enter, clip along dotted line, then place game entry in POWER POINTS container at co-sponsor's retail outlet(s). Entrants must list name, address and phone number below.

LIMIT: You may enter only once weekly.

DEADLINE: 2 P.M. FRIDAY

TIEBREAKER 1 Total points scored (both teams) in COWBOYS game

TIEBREAKER 2 Total offensive yards (both teams) in this game

THIS WEEK'S GAMES

Atlanta at New Orleans	NY Giants at Arizona
Baltimore at Tennessee	Pittsburgh at Buffalo
Chicago at Minnesota	San Diego at Detroit
Cincinnati at Cleveland	San Francisco at St. Louis
Dallas at Philadelphia	Tampa Bay at Green Bay
Denver at Oakland	Jacksonville at NY Jets
Miami at Indianapolis	Oklahoma at Texas
New England at Kansas City	Baylor at Texas A&M

136 TOTAL POINTS

Name _____
Address _____
City, State(zip) _____
Day Phone() _____
Night Phone() _____

POWER POINTS OFFICIAL RULES

- Object of the game is to amass as many of the 136 possible points as you can. Simply review the week's schedule of games, listed on entry form, and decide which game you are SUREST of picking a winner in. Write the name of your projected winner on the 16-point line. If that team wins its game that week, you win 16 points. Write the name of your second-surest winner on the 15-point line, and so on down to the 1-point line, which game you figure to be a long shot. Next, fill in Tiebreaker 1, the total points scored by both teams in the week's designated game. If the step fails to produce a winner, the judges will apply Tiebreaker 2, total offensive yardage from scrimmage in this game. If a winner still doesn't emerge, a drawing will be held among those contestants still tied. Decisions of the judges are final. The weekly statewide winner of the contest will receive \$1,000.
- Any entry form that does not contain a legible name, address, etc., will be disqualified.
- Entries that fail to forecast a winner from each and every game will be disqualified, as will entries that fail to distinguish between the Jets and Giants of New York and other similar teams.
- No points are awarded on tie games or in case any game is not played for any reason during its scheduled week.
- Entering POWER POINTS constitutes permission by contestant for his or her name and photograph to be used for news and reasonable promotional purposes at no charge.
- Employees of this newspaper and their immediate families are ineligible to participate.
- Any inquiry about or protest of weekly results must be made by noon on the Friday following the announcement of winners.
- No purchase necessary. Facsimile game entry forms will be accepted. Enter contest by dropping entry form into POWER POINTS container at participating co-sponsors.
- Weekly deadline for entry will be 2 p.m. Fridays except when noted otherwise on weekly entry form.
- Neither this newspaper nor any co-sponsor will be responsible for legible entry forms or those lost, stolen or damaged in any way.
- Limit one entry per person per week. Each entry must represent the original work of one entrant, "group" entries, "systems" or other attempts to enter multiple entries will be disqualified. Filing out extra forms and putting your friends' and relatives' names on them violates this rule. Any such entries are destroyed prior to grading.
- Contestants must have reached the age of eight (8) years by the Sunday of any week's play.

OCTOBER 5 1999

TUESDAY

OCT. 5

Table with 24 columns (KMD, KPEJ, KERA, FAM, KOSA, WFAA, KWES, WTBS, UNI, DISN, NASH, TMC, SHOW, HBO, KIML, A&E, DISC, TNT, USA, SCIFI, LIFE, TLC) and 7 rows (6-12 AM) listing TV programs and channels.

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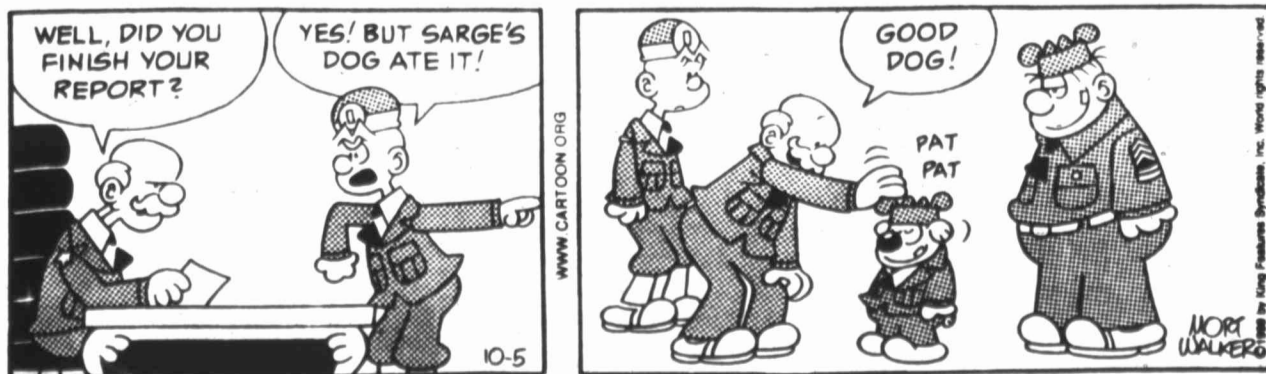
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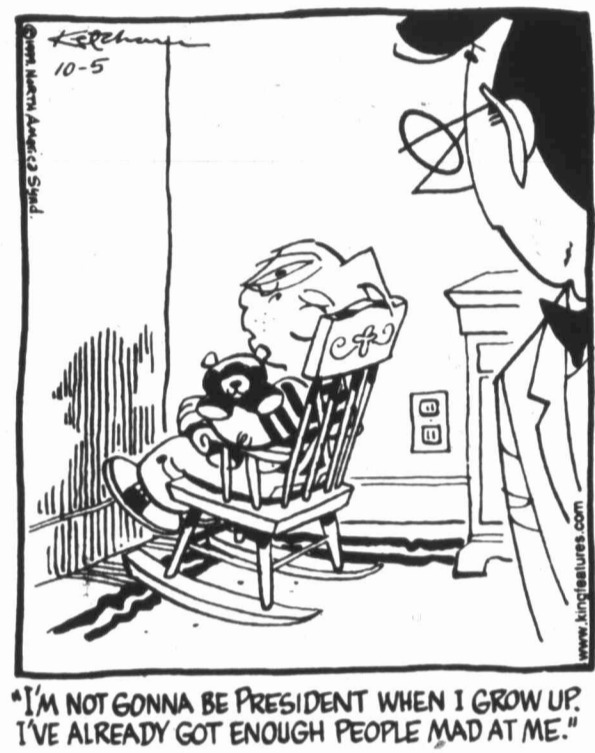
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DENNIS THE MENACE



THIS DATE IN HISTORY

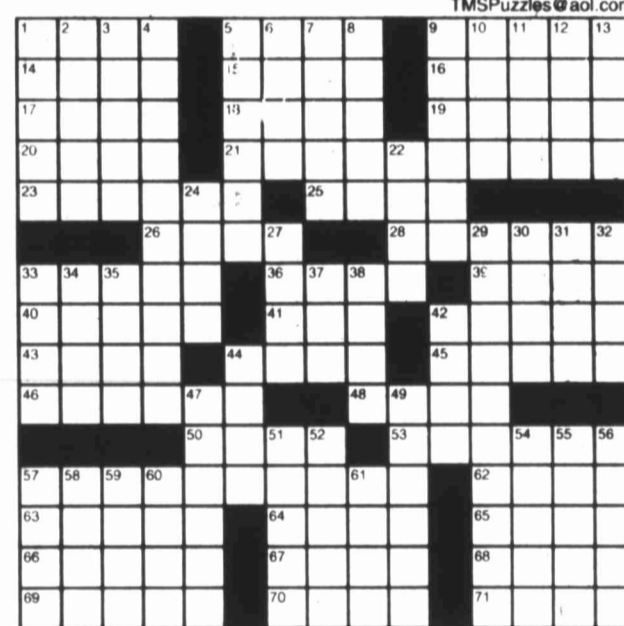
The ASSOCIATED PRESS Today is Tuesday, Oct. 5, the 278th day of 1999. There are 87 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Oct. 5, 1892, the Dalton Gang, notorious for its train robberies, lost several of its members in an attempt to rob two banks in Coffeyville, Kan. On this date: In 1830, Chester Arthur, 21st president of the United States,

was born in Fairfield, Vt. In 1921, the World Series was broadcast on radio for the first time. In 1937, President Roosevelt called for a "quarantine" of aggressor nations. In 1941, former Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, the first Jewish member of the nation's highest court, died in Washington at age 84.

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

- ACROSS 1 Bath and Ems 5 Stronghold 9 Expel a tenant 14 Foot structure 15 Garfield's buddy 16 Picayune 17 Used to be 18 Guns the engine 19 Bologna bowling 20 Twix 12 and 20 21 National Park in Oregon 23 Going for a song 25 Noblewoman 26 Monster's loch 28 Cop a colic 33 Beach tracts 36 Singer Anita 39 Part in a play 40 Sandwich cookies 41 Broadcast 42 Grade-B Western 43 Gilbert or Teasdale 44 Alternative to a saber 45 Style of sweater 46 Behind the times 48 Mirrored 50 Scruff 53 Capers 57 National Park in Florida 62 Composer Satie 63 Eagle's nest 64 Lupino and Tarbell 65 Hatcher or Garr 66 Moonshiner's apparatus 67 Upslope 68 In the past 69 Shadings 70 Gets the point 71 Approach



By Eugene R. Puffenberger Reston, VA 10/5/99

Monday's Puzzle Solved



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In 1947, President Truman delivered the first televised address from the White House. In 1953, Earl Warren was sworn in as the 14th chief justice of the United States, succeeding Fred M. Vinson. In 1962, the Beatles' first hit, "Love Me Do," was released in the United Kingdom. In 1969, "Monty Python's Flying Circus" made its debut on BBC-TV. In 1986, American Eugene Hasenflug was captured by Sandinista soldiers after the weapons plane he was riding in was shot down over southern Nicaragua. In 1988, Democrat Lloyd Bentsen lambasted Republican Dan Quayle during their vice-presidential debate, telling Quayle, "Senator, you're no Jack Kennedy."

Ten years ago: A jury in Charlotte, N.C., convicted former PTL evangelist Jim Bakker of using his television show to defraud followers. The Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal leader of Tibet, was named winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Five years ago: 48 members of a secret religious doomsday cult were found dead in apparent murder-suicides carried out simultaneously in two Swiss villages; five other bodies were found in a secret apartment in Montreal, Canada.

One year ago: The House Judiciary Committee voted along hardened partisan lines to investigate whether President Clinton should be removed from office. Michael Carneal pleaded guilty but mentally ill to shooting to death three fellow students and wounding five other people at Heath High School in West Paducah, Ky. (Carneal was later sentenced to life in prison without the chance of parole for 25 years.)

Today's Birthdays: "Family Circus" cartoonist Bill Keane is 77. Actress Glynis Johns is 76. Comedian Bill Dana is 75. Actress Diane Cilento is 66. Vaclav Havel, president of the Czech Republic, is 63. Country singer Johnny Duncan is 61. Rhythm-and-blues singer Arlene Smith (The Chantels) is 58. Singer Richard Street is 57. Singer-musician Steve Miller is 56. Actor Jeff Conaway is 49. Actress Karen Allen is 48.

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