

BIG SPRING HERALD

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"Reflecting a Proud Community"

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

WEDNESDAY

December 20, 2000

WEATHER

Tonight:



TONIGHT THURSDAY
22°-25° 42°-45°

HELPING OTHERS:

Each day through the holiday season, the *Herald* will publish locations where you might help others less fortunate. If your organization has an established program to help others and would like to be included in this list, call Lyndel Moody at 263-7331, ext. 234.



Salvation Army Kettles:

- Big Spring Post Office
- Wal-Mart
- Big Spring Mall

Giving Tree

- Wells Fargo

Coats For Kids

- Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce
- *Big Spring Herald*
- Comet Cleaners on FM 700
- Klassic Kleaners on Gregg Street

American Cancer Society Memorial Tree:

- Merte Norman, Big Spring Mall

For more information, call (915) 683-6374.

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5 shopping days 'til Christmas

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Find us online at: www.bigspringherald.com

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.

Too much to drink? Mitchem & Sons offer holiday help again

By CARL GRAHAM
Staff Writer

David Mitchem has been doing some public service work on Christmas Eve and New Years eve for 16 years now.

Mitchem, the owner of Mitchem & Son's Inc., provides a free ride home and a free tow for your automobile if you are out drinking on either of those two holidays. There is one stipulation involved however.

"If they wait until they

have been pulled over by a police officer for drinking while driving, they have waited too long," said Mitchem. "I will still tow their automobile if it is our turn to go out on the run but it will cost them. We need them to call us before they get behind the wheel and say 'I have had too much to drink, can I get a ride home?'"

Mitchem said if would-be motorists abide by that stipulation, there won't be any problem. Citizens needing help should call, give their

location and the driver will come and drop them off at their house.

"Our drivers will not take you from one bar to another," said Mitchem. "The only place they will take you is where you plan on spending the night, whether it be your house, motel, friend or whatever."

According to Mitchem, the drivers do this on a volunteer basis.

"None of the volunteer drivers for this program

See **MITCHEM**, Page 2

Big Spring police to be out in force on New Year's Eve

By CARL GRAHAM
Staff Writer

New Year's Eve is typically a time for celebrating the end of one year and the beginning of a brand new one but unfortunately it also means drinking while driving for some revelers.

According to Lt. Terry

Chamness, safety officer for the Big Spring Police Department, extra police officers will be out in force looking for those who wish to drink while driving.

"Because we believe Christmas is a time to be with family we don't put on extra officers during

See **POLICE**, Page 2

HOG, Scenic Mountain adopt last angels

By LYNDEL MOODY
Staff Writer

Medical personal and some HOGs wearing leather swarmed a local retailer Monday night on a mission to find toys and clothes so some area families will have Christmas.

The Harley Owners Group (HOGs) and Scenic Mountain Medical Center adopted the last Salvation Army angels and went on a shopping spree.

"Loren Chandler, the CEO, called the Salvation Army and asked how many were left," said Sheila Chandler of Scenic Mountain Medical Center. "He adopted 25 of them and a group of us went shopping on Monday."

The HOGs adopted the remaining 35 angels.

"We do this as a HOG event every year, adopting the remaining angels to make sure everybody has a good Christmas," said Ruel Metcalf, director of the Harley Owners Group.

Both groups enjoyed their shopping spree and turned a few heads as their group searched for bargains and the right gifts for their angels.

"We were there Monday night wearing leather jackets and some were wearing chaps. We had a fun time doing it," Metcalf said. "We would be looking for bar-



HERALD photo/Lyndel Moody
Amy Sanchez, left, Frances Lafler and Yvonne Qualls, all of the Salvation Army, help sort and package thousands of toys to be given to needy children for Christmas.

gains. One of us found sweaters on sale."

"We had five full carts lined up in a row," Chandler said. "We had a few people make comments like you are going to do a lot of wrapping."

"It was fun," Chandler continued. "It felt very rewarding knowing kids would have something for Christmas Day."

The gifts bought by both Scenic Mountain Medical Center and the HOGs added to the food, clothing and toys Salvation Army officials gave to more than 300 families today.

"We are serving 302 families with gifts of clothing, toys and food," said Maj. Jo Alexander. "We expect to serve more than 1,000 kids this year."

Salvation Army workers spent much of Tuesday helping to sort through donated items and place them in family units.

According to Alexander, the response from the community for the Angel Tree project was "wonderful" with all kinds of toys donated, from dolls to skateboards and bikes.

Blood drive planned Thursday at Wal-Mart

By LYNDEL MOODY
Staff Writer

The United Blood Services blood mobile will be in Big Spring Thursday for a community blood drive being held for a Coahoma resident.

The bloodmobile will be located in the Wal-Mart parking lot from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. The drive will aid Chase Bennett, who is currently a patient at Covenant

Hospital In Lubbock.

Donors must be at least 17 years old, weigh more than 110 pounds, be in good health, carry proof of identification and know the names of any medication they have taken in the past 30 days.

Those wishing to make an appointment to give blood can contact Wilda Langford at 267-3363.

In order to supply the 12 area hospitals, United Blood Services must collect more

than 300 units of blood each week. Blood products have a shelf life of five to 42 days.

Blood donations are short from last year by close to 1,300 pints, said Kyle Carter UBS community relations representative.

"Basically right now we have enough blood to meet the need for our area hospitals," he said.

Although they have enough blood to meet hospital needs if a disaster does occur they may need

request blood from outside the service area, Carter said.

Carter said the holiday season is an difficult time for blood donations due to the busy schedules of the public and the potential need for blood.

"People are very busy so they can not donate blood yet the opportunity for an emergency situation arises with the holiday because of the heavy traffic," Carter said.

Charitable project collects more than 700 coats so far

By LYNDEL MOODY
Staff Writer

Officials from the Coats for Kids project announced they have collected more than 700 coats this season to give to area children.

"What is especially gratifying about this last group is the fact that most of the coats were donated by school-age youths in Big Spring," said Mel Prather, this year's project organizer. "By stopping to think of others less fortunate, it also gives them a better appreciation of their own situations."

The project began in November. Its purpose is to acquire coats from those who no longer need them and distribute them to those that do.

Last week, more than 200

coats were donated to the project. They were cleaned by local cleaners at half price and delivered to Isaiah 58 for distribution, Prather said.

"I have seen kids going down the street without coats," he said. "There are people who have coats they don't use. I wanted to bring the two together."

The project's goal is to deliver more than 1,000 coats to the Isaiah 58 for distribution to those in need. Prather expects to match up close to 700 coats to new owners.

He said they set a goal of 1,000 because the donated coats come in various sizes and some people may not be able to find one that fits them.

According to Prather, the project will continue collecting coats through the winter months.

"No one should have to go through a winter without a coat when there are so many of us with unwanted coats in our closets," he said. "By bringing the two



HERALD photo/Lyndel Moody
Mel Prather, Coat for Kids project organizer, gives Isaiah 58 volunteers Erma Dunne and Barbara Ervin, right, close to 200 coats for them to distribute to the community. The project has collected more than 700 coats since November.

together, we not only create a little more room in our own closets, but also help someone else along the

way." Coats can be brought to the *Big Spring Herald*, Big Spring Area Chamber of

Commerce, Comet Cleaners, Klassic Kleaners, Malone and Hogan Clinic or StarTek.

Crime

Don't allow thieves to have the Christmas you planned, police caution

By CARL GRAHAM
Staff Writer

It's just a few days until Christmas and every place seems to be packed with last minute shoppers. One of the things shoppers must keep in mind though, is be aware of their surroundings



According to Big Spring Police Sgt. Roger Sweatt, this is the type atmosphere that thieves prey on.

"Let's face it, thieves plan on having a Christmas too," said Sweatt. "And we harp on it each year, trying to warn shoppers to not place packages or other valuable items in plain view of passers-by. I don't know if they just don't listen or what, because we still are having these problems."

Sweatt said that it's best to put packages and other items in the trunk of the car. If that's not possible, shoppers should try to put them under a seat or cover them up with something.

"Like I have said before, thieves are going to be out in full force this time of the year," said Sweatt. "What we need to do to protect ourselves is make it hard as possible for them to get at what is ours. The majority of reports we get at the police station of burglary to a vehicle, we find out that the car was unlocked. That

See **CRIME**, Page 2

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OBITUARIES

Florence Vivian Seay

Funeral service for Florence Vivian Seay, 89, of Big Spring was 11 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 20, 2000, at Sunset Memorial Chapel, with the Rev. Johnny Dickerson officiating. Burial was at Sunset Memorial Gardens.

Mrs. Seay died Monday, Dec. 18, at her residence. She was born Nov. 2, 1911 in Sweetwater and had been a driver's education teacher in Odessa.

Survivors include: her husband, Roscoe Seay of Big Spring; one daughter, Loraine Redman of Big Spring; one brother Marvin Smith of San Angelo; one sister, Leona McClellan of Odessa; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Onita Bernell Ward Pigott

Onita Bernell Ward Pigott, 59, of Colorado City, went home Monday, Dec. 18, 2000, to be with her Lord.

Funeral services will be 2 p.m. Wednesday at College Park Church of God, followed by graveside services at Colorado City Cemetery in Colorado City, conducted by Brother F.M. Small and Brother Jeff Eason.

Onita "Bernell" Pigott was born on May 17, 1941, in Menard, to James and Mary Ward. She was a lifelong resident of Howard County, until moving to Colorado City in August. She had been employed at Cowboy's Steakhouse until her illness a year ago, and had also worked at the Warehouse Cafe.

Bernell is survived by one son, Larry Don Towery of the home; her mother, Mary Ward; three sisters, Debbie Harbuck of Coahoma, Della Riffe of Andrews, Mary Smother of Colorado City; three brothers, James Ward of Big Spring, Joe Ward of Colorado City, and Freddy Ward of Safford, Ariz.; two grandchildren, Emily of Big Spring, and Justin of Colorado City; numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews; and a loving mother-in-law, Bea Newsome.

She was preceded in death by her father, James Ward and one brother, Donald Ward.

Pallbearers are Stevie Ward, Robert Riffe, Shannon Feaster, Marvin Ward, Allen Ward and

NALLEY-PICKLE & WELCH Funeral Home
Trinity Memorial Park and Crematory
906 Gregg St.
(915) 267-6331
Lucille Long, 85, died Tuesday. Services are pending.

MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL
24th & Johnson 267-8288
Onita Bernell Ward Pigott, 59, died Monday. Services will be 2:00 PM Wednesday at College Park Church of God, with burial at Colorado City Cemetery.
Elder Hosea Banks, 86, died Sunday. Funeral services will be 2:00 PM, Saturday at Mount Bethel Baptist Church, with burial at Trinity Memorial Park.

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Delmas Ward. Honorary pallbearers are Larry Joe Ward, Christopher Ward and Michael Feaster.

The family will be at 2001 S. Monticello.

Arrangements are under the direction of Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Paid obituary

Hosea Banks

Funeral service for Hosea Banks, 86, Big Spring, will be 2 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 23, 2000, at Mount Bethel Baptist Church with Bishop W.H. Watson officiating. Burial will be in Trinity Memorial Park.



Mr. Banks died on Sunday, Dec. 17, in University Medical Center in Lubbock following a long illness.

He was born on Dec. 26, 1913. He married Pauline Clemons on Feb. 13, 1936, in San Antonio. He had lived in Big Spring for 58 years. He had worked as a barrel hauler for 35 years and had been a pastor for 62 years, preaching at Shiloh Church of God in Christ. He was also in C.C.A. and the chairman board of the Church of God in Christ.

He is survived by: his wife, Pauline of the home; two sons, Joe Lewis Banks of Dallas and Holston Banks of Big Spring; one daughter, Christine Banks Bolden of San Diego, Calif.; one sister, Thelma Money of Big Spring; two brothers, John A. Banks of Tucson, Ariz., and David Banks of Corpus Christi; 25 grandchildren; and 60 great-grandchildren; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Arrangements are under the direction of Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Lucille Long

Funeral service for Lucille Long, 85, Garland, formerly of Big Spring, is pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home. Ms. Long died on Tuesday, Dec. 19, in Garland.

MITCHEM

Continued from Page 1

will be getting paid," said Mitchem. "They can however accept tips if the party so inclines to do so but of course it is not required." Mitchem said the program is much more involved than the Tippy Taxi Service alone was.

"The Tippy Taxi service was just a taxi ride home," said Mitchem. "With this program, you can not only get a ride home but you are able to get the car towed home as well and not have to leave it parked somewhere and risk having it vandalized."

To call for a ride on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, call 267-3747 anytime between 8 p.m. and 2 a.m.

POLICE

Continued from Page 2

Christmas," said Chamness. "However, you can bet we will be out in full force with extra officers assigned on New Year's Eve looking for those who will be putting the safety of others in jeopardy."

Chamness said the extra officers would be specifically looking for individuals who are drinking and driving but during any routine stop, seatbelt usage will be checked for compliance.

CRIME

Continued from Page 1

just makes it too easy for someone to take things." Sweatt also would like to warn women shoppers in particular about leaving

their purse unattended while shopping.

"It only takes a few seconds for someone passing by an unattended shopping cart with a purse in it to grab it and be gone," said Sweatt. "We have been getting a lot of reports of this happening lately. If the need arises to leave the cart in another aisle, take the purse with you. Or, if you are with someone, let them hold it until you return. This time of the year, the stores are full of people and most are not paying a lot of attention to what is going on around them. Their mind is on what to get for Aunt Jane or the person at the office," Sweatt said.

"Like I keep saying, thieves will have a Christmas, don't let it be at your expense."

HELPING

Continued from Page 1

Prison Fellowship Angel Tree

Providing Christmas presents for children of inmates

• Cookie Elliot, 263-3326

Police investigate vandalism at Vietnam Memorial

HERALD Staff Report

Vandals have once again struck at the Vietnam Memorial, according to Big Spring Police Sgt. Roger Sweatt.

"We had some lights broken out on one of the tanks at the site of the Vietnam Memorial," said Sweatt. "It apparently happened sometime between late Saturday night through the early hours of Monday morning but was reported to us on Monday."

Sweatt said though surveillance cameras are in place there, it is difficult to get good photographs because of the darkness at night.

"We feel like it was kids out having a good time," said Sweatt. "I would like to believe that older adults have more respect for the Vietnam Memorial but that's just an assumption on my part."

Sweatt said that with school letting out for the holidays, patrols will probably be stepped up in an effort to cut down on potential vandalism.

The incident is still under investigation, he said.

UPS copes with year's busiest day

HODGKINS, III. (AP) — Not counting Santa's workshop, or maybe Macy's on Christmas Eve, it would be tough to find a busier place during the holidays than UPS's mammoth package-processing plant outside Chicago.

If the slowing economy has put a chill or holiday shopping, no such evidence was visible at the frenzied facility Tuesday on "Peak Day," the busiest shipping day of the year.

Nearly 11,000 workers scrambled against next Monday's unmissable deadline, processing more than 1.7 million packages and documents. Worldwide, United Parcel Service estimated it would ship 19 million packages Tuesday as momentum from the online shopping boom carries it and its competitors to another record-breaking holiday season.

"It's really intense. Everything is on the go, on the go," said Brandon Ashana, 20, a "jam-breaker"

BIG SPRING AROUND THE TOWN

assigned to help prevent parcels from getting mashed as they speed through the dizzying 65-mile network of conveyor belts.

A fleet of 3,800 trucks ferried parcels in and out of the plant, while next to snowy railway tracks 200 yards away, workers loaded one of a dozen trains full of UPS goods that were due to depart by day's end.

One in every 10 of the 325 million packages that UPS anticipates delivering worldwide between Thanksgiving and Christmas will come through this little suburb, which Atlanta-based UPS chose as its main shipping point because of Chicago's transportation hub and large labor pool.

The facility — the world's biggest and busiest package distribution facility, according to UPS — is as long as three aircraft carriers and twice as wide.

Nearly 45 million Americans are expected to do holiday shopping online this year. As a result, shippers are having a banner year.

A FedEx spokeswoman said the overnight delivery company shipped 6.5 million packages on Monday, its busiest day, up 5 percent from last year's holiday peak. The Postal Service estimates it will handle 191 million packages during the and the fate of some e-retailers may ride on whether the company delivers their Christmas orders on time.

With six days to go and overtime pay opportunities flowing, employees were in a holiday mood Tuesday despite the din of conveyor belt rollers, clanging warning bells and motorized carts.

"It can get hectic because we have so much volume," Ashana said. "But being part of an important process and helping to make sure everybody gets their presents on time and in one piece, that makes me feel good."

holidays, also a 5 percent increase from 1999.

Education supplants crime as top concern for Texans

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — Education has overtaken crime as the most pressing concern facing Texans, an annual crime survey taken by Sam Houston State University has found.

This year's survey, the 23rd annual conducted by the Huntsville school's Criminal Justice Center, also shows a continued strong but somewhat softened support for the death penalty in Texas, where the 40 executions this year set a record and where high-profile capital punishment cases focused national and international attention on the state as the nation's busiest for executions.

The survey results focused on comparisons and shift in attitudes since a similar survey six years ago when Republican George W. Bush ousted Democratic incumbent Ann Richards as governor.

Overall, only 8 percent of the respondents in the 2000 Texas Crime Poll cited crime as the most important problem facing the state. Education, one of the chief topics cited by Bush in his successful White House campaign, was the single most prevalent issue mentioned by 23 percent of those questioned in the most recent survey.

TEXAS LOTTERY Pick 3:1,7,3
Cash 5: 2,15,19,31,34
Lottery numbers are unofficial until confirmed by the state lottery commission.

BRIEFS

AT&T	19 3/4
Archer-Daniels	13 1/2
Atmos Energy	23 1/2
BP AMOCO	46 1/2
Chevron Corp	78 1/2
Compaq	15.96 - 1.05
Cornell	3 1/2
Dell	16 1/2
Du Pont	44 1/2
Exxon Mobil	85 1/2
Halliburton	37 1/2
IFCO Systems	3 1/2
IBM	85 1/2
Intel Corp	33 1/2
NUV	8 1/2
Patterson Ener	33 1/2
Pepsico Inc	48 1/2
Phillips Petro	52 1/2
SBC Comms	45 1/2
Sears Roebuck	31.70 - 1.67
Texaco Inc	57 1/2
Texas Instrument	45 - 3
TXU	41 1/2
Total Fina	67 1/2
Unocal Corp	36 1/2
Wal-Mart	48 1/2
Wal-Mart/Mexico	21 - 2 1/2
AMCAP	17.32 - 0.15
Europacific	31.29 - 0.07
Prime Rate	9.50
Gold	269.60-271.60
Silver	4.56-4.62

SUPPORT GROUPS

TODAY
TOPS Club (take off pounds sensibly), weigh-in 5 p.m. and meeting at 6 p.m., College Heights Christian Church, 21st and Goliad.
Project Freedom, Christian support group for survivors of physical/emotional/sexual and/or spiritual abuse. Call 263-5140 or 263-2241 for dates/times of upcoming groups.
Encourager's support group (for widows and widowers) will meet Monday, Dec. 18, at 6 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, Seventh and Runnels (enter through the north door). We will have a Christmas party. The meat will be furnished. If you wish to bring a covered dish, bring cranberries, salads, vegetables, sweet potatoes, rolls, desserts, etc. Bring a wrapped gift (not to exceed \$10) for a fun gift exchange. For more information call 398-5522.

TUESDAY
•Gamblers Anonymous, 7 p.m., St. Stephen's Catholic Church, room 1, 4601 Neeley, Midland. Call 263-8920.
•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon open meeting and 8 p.m. 12 and 12 study.
•HOME HOSPICE and Canterbury are sponsoring a new grief support group. It will meet the second Wednesday of each month at 3 p.m. in the community room at Canterbury South, 1700, Lancaster. Call Home Hospice at 264-7599 or come by 600 South Gregg for further details.

RECORDS

Tuesday's high 57
Tuesday's low 21
Average high 56
Average low 28
Record high 78 in 1981
Record low 8 in 1973
Precip. Tuesday **
Month to date 2.11
Month Normal 0.92
Year to date 17.71
Normal for the year 18.02
Sunrise Thursday 7:43 a.m.
Sunset Thursday 5:45 p.m.

POLICE

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activities between 8 a.m. Tuesday through 8 a.m. today:

- **LUIS RAMOS**, 36, of 2911 W. Hwy 80, was arrested on a local warrant.
- **MISTY BRYAN**, 20, of 604 E. 23rd, was arrested on a charge of display of fictitious inspection sticker.
- **RICHARD CHAMBERS**, 47, of Snyder, was arrested on a charge of disorderly conduct/language.
- **BRANDON JONES**, 17, of 1109 Ridge Road, was arrested on a charge of minor in consumption.
- **CRIMINAL MISCHIEF** was reported in the 400 block of Lancaster.
- **CRIMINAL MISCHIEF TO A VEHICLE** was reported in the 1300 block of Mobile and in the 1500 block of Sycamore.
- **THEFT** was reported in the 1800 block of Gregg, in the 1100 block of Settles, in the 300 block of Owens and in the 1400 block of Johnson.

MARKETS

March cotton 64.88 down 88 points; January crude 27.08, down 88 points; cash hogs \$1 lower 88 even; slaughter steers \$1 higher at 76 even; February lean hog futures 56.10, up 60 points; February live cattle futures 77.02 up 40 points.
courtesy: Delta Corporation.
Noon quotes provided by Edward Jones & Co.

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Reflecting a Proud Texas Community

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Dem

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Both face cl more conserv ers in their o

Texas

WASHINGTON U.S. Agricult Dan Glickn Texas a d Tuesday, m gency farm l to growers losses from other problem Texas Commission Combs called ment a nice C sent for hard- "Texas has hammered, ye Combs said. sort of toppe rare thing to l be that beater But some t tioned wheth tion can do state's devast Rick Clem, cotton fai

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Look Our In In Tod Pap

Democrats say Wentworth, Brown strong contenders for Perry's post

AUSTIN (AP) — A key Senate Democrat said Tuesday his party will likely throw its support behind a moderate Republican candidate to replace Lt. Gov. Rick Perry and that Jeff Wentworth of San Antonio and Buster Brown of Lake Jackson are strong candidates.

Both are considered candidates that can get along with lawmakers from the two parties in a chamber that is nearly evenly divided.

Both face challenges from more conservative lawmakers in their own party.

The GOP holds a 16-15 Senate majority and most of the candidates to replace Perry are Republicans.

"There's general agreement that not many of the 'R's' would vote for a Democrat, so it appears that Wentworth or Brown are strong contenders," said Gonzalo Barrientos of Austin, chairman of the Senate Democratic Caucus.

Asked why Brown and Wentworth could get Democratic support, Barrientos said: "I think the members are discussing issues that have to do with fairness, committee assign-

ments, committee chairmanships, a bipartisan approach to redistricting."

Besides Wentworth and Brown, other Republican frontrunners in the lieutenant governor's race include Teel Bivins of Amarillo, Bill Ratliff of Mount Pleasant and David Sibley of Waco.

Ken Armbrister of Victoria was the only Democrat mentioned as a leading contender for the post. Armbrister was a Bush ally during the presidential campaign.

Perry will become governor once President-elect

Bush resigns his state job. The Senate will then choose one of its own to perform the duties of lieutenant governor.

The Senate Democratic Caucus met privately for almost two hours to discuss strategy and rules they want to see used in the selection process.

The entire Senate was to meet in a closed-door session Wednesday to decide on the rules that will be used. The Senate Democrats were to meet again afterward to interview candidates.

Perry and state officials

have been waiting for Bush's resignation, which could happen any day.

Bush has not yet publicly indicated when he will resign. Perry's swearing in will take place "within a matter of hours of that resignation," his spokeswoman, Kathy Walt, said Tuesday.

"As of this time there is no firm time for Lieutenant Governor Perry's swearing in ceremony," she said. "It is President-elect Bush's prerogative to announce when he will resign."

Once Perry is sworn in, the Senate has 30 days to

choose his replacement. The legislative session begins Jan. 9 some senators say they are concerned about the time crunch.

"I think it needs to happen soon," Barrientos said. "Let's get down to business."

Barrientos also said Democrats support electing Perry's replacement in a private vote "for the reason of getting along." That rule is set to be worked out during Wednesday's meeting.

The Republican Caucus had not scheduled such a meeting by Tuesday afternoon.

Texas drought prompts disaster declaration

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman declared Texas a disaster area Tuesday, making emergency farm loans available to growers who suffered losses from drought and other problems this year.

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Susan Combs called the announcement a nice Christmas present for hard-hit producers.

"Texas has been really hammered, year after year," Combs said. "And this year sort of topped it off... It's a rare thing to have this state be that beaten up."

But some growers questioned whether the declaration can do much for the state's devastated farmers.

Rick Clem, a New Home cotton farmer, said

Glickman's action was good, but it's far from enough to keep struggling cotton farmers afloat without better conditions and a higher price for cotton.

"If there's nobody here to farm it, what good is it," Clem said. "We've got all the loans we need and we can't pay back the ones we already have. You don't understand how bad this thing is."

Lorenzo cotton farmer Tommy Fondren echoed Clem.

"We need a way to make some money," he said. "It's not working. The scary part of it is that there is no way the lenders are going to be able to loan this money for the 2001 crop."

"The excessive heat and drought made a devastating

year for farmers in Texas and all over the South," Glickman said in a statement. "USDA is working to help farmers in Texas and other states during these difficult times."

Several contiguous counties in nearby states also are eligible for the assistance.

This year's drought was the third in four years and is believed to have wrought \$1.1 billion damage on the state's economy, with West Texas cotton being hit especially hard. Only 54 percent of the Texas summer cotton crop and 48 percent of the summer peanut crop survived, the Texas Agriculture Department reported.

Zane Reese, a cotton and peanut farmer in Lubbock County, said West Texas farmers need the help.

"Sounds good to me," he said Tuesday. "I'm glad he acknowledged what we already knew. It will help everybody we owe. We've had two pretty bad years in a row. Everything has just stacked up against us."

Some areas of the state received as much as 15 inches of precipitation at the beginning of November, but by that time the state's reservoirs had dipped to 66 percent of full capacity — the lowest recorded reading in 23 years and the fifth-lowest of all time.

The disaster declaration makes family-sized farm operators in Texas and the contiguous counties eligible for low-interest emergency loans. Such operators have eight months to apply for the loans.

Juge pens poetic response

AUSTIN (AP) — Dismissing a Texas Panhandle prison inmate's lawsuit against Penthouse magazine, a federal judge used a holiday theme in his poetic response.

The \$500,000 lawsuit by Amarillo inmate David Joyner, who identified himself in court papers as "minister of law" with the Mandingo Warriors prison gang, was dismissed by U.S. District Judge Sam Sparks with a 12-line poem and a \$250 fine.

Joyner had contended he had been mentally scarred by false and deceptive advertising in the men's magazine relating to what he described as a disappointing December issue. So he sued in Austin's federal courthouse — naming

publisher Bob Guccione and President Clinton's foe Paula Jones as defendants.

"Life has its disappointments. Some come out of the blue, but that doesn't mean a prisoner should sue," Sparks wrote.

"Twas the night before Christmas and all through the prison, inmates were planning their new porno mission. While the December issue of Penthouse was hitting the stands, the Minister of the Mandingo Warriors was warming his hands.

"For you see, the publishers had promised a pleasurable view of the woman who sued the President, too," the judge wrote.

Sparks has penned other legal poetry.

State agency releases information on hospital treatment in Texas

DALLAS (AP) — A state agency on Tuesday released information about the treatment of 1.2 million hospital patients in what is probably the first step toward a widespread statistical comparison of quality among hospitals.

The eventual implications of the data could be huge, influencing employer decisions on health insurance and state policy on health programs, officials said.

But Tuesday's release of information for the first half of 1999 was, by design, more modest.

The Legislature barred the Texas Health Care Information Council from issuing hospital-by-hospital reports until it has at least one year's worth of information — sometime next year.

Among highlights from Tuesday's findings: For girls through age 17, childbirth was the second-most

common reason for hospitalization. More girls — about 9,100 — went to the hospital to have babies than to be treated for asthma and bronchitis.

For all patients, the most common reasons for hospitalization were neonatal problems, regular childbirth, pneumonia, Caesarean delivery and heart failure.

Although the information council's public report did

not compare hospitals, about 30 hospitals and other groups have bought computer discs containing the raw data, which could be manipulated to compare patient outcomes at individual hospitals, council officials said.

"In the short term, this will increase the ability of (hospitals) to compare themselves to each other," said Dr. Lewis Foxhall, associate vice president of Houston's M.D. Anderson Cancer

Center and chairman of the health information council.

"If one group is doing better, you can find out why, and they'll try to improve care," Foxhall said.

Foxhall said the council wants to refine the data to consider the illness of patients before it begins issuing hospital-by-hospital reports to the public.

Jim Loyd, executive director of the health information council, said the infor-

mation could be used to pinpoint health problems in specific age or geographic groups. That, he said, could help legislators better target public-health programs.

For example, Loyd said he was struck that the leading causes of hospitalization for children under 18, not including newborns and obstetrics visits, were asthma and bronchitis, pneumonia, electrolyte disorders and abdominal pain.

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EDITORIAL

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

FIRST AMENDMENT

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

John H. Walker
Publisher

Debbie Jensen
Features Editor

John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

Bill McClellan
News Editor

OUR VIEWS

Churches fill the air with song

"Here we go a caroling..." Many of us can remember bundling up during the Christmas season and going door to door to nursing homes, hospitals and the like and singing carols. Most often it was as a church group. It was a great time of fun and fellowship for both the carolers and those who were entertained. Afterward, we'd all gather at the fellowship hall for hot chocolate and cookies. While not as prevalent as it once was, some churches continue to go out among the public and spread the joy of the season in song.

This year, Baker's Chapel AME has decided to take that age-old tradition back to the streets. Joined by members from Mount Bethel Baptist and Northside Baptist, they will be caroling at locations in Big Spring on Friday night. To add to the gaiety of the occasion, they plan to climb aboard a decorated flatbed trailer which will take them from place to place.

By 6 p.m., the group expects to be arriving at Marcy House. Over the next two hours, the carolers will visit Comanche Trail Nursing Center, Big Spring Care Center and Mountain View Lodge. From there, they will make their way to the HEB parking lot about 8, to Wal-Mart at 8:30 and conclude the activity at 9 at the Big Spring Mall.

The group will meet at 5:15 tonight at Baker's Chapel to decorate the flatbed. On Thursday, same time and place, they'll gather to practice. The Rev. Michael King, pastor of Baker's Chapel, is inviting all other church groups and individual citizens to participate if they'd like.

Rev. King hopes it will be an annual event. We share his enthusiasm.

We can think of no better tradition than to spread joy and cheer, the message of peace and sharing — and the story of the birth of Jesus — at this most wonderful time of the year.

OTHER VIEWS

Forensic technology has changed the criminal justice system, but access to the wonders of science remains a major problem for some.

Take the case of Anthony Todd Robinson, 39, convicted in 1986 of the sexual assault of a University of Houston student.

After serving 10 years of a 27-year sentence, he was paroled. Then, only after he saved \$1,800 to pay for a DNA test, was Robinson able finally to prove his innocence.

Last week, Robinson received a pardon from Gov. George W. Bush.

He has filed for the \$25,000 the state offers those wrongfully imprisoned. That is pitiful compensation for the loss of 10 years of freedom.

Unfortunately, Robinson's case is not unique.

Many criminal defendants have ended up in prison without the benefit of DNA testing that might have proved their innocence because it would have cost too much or the wait for the evidence was too long.

Crime laboratories in some states are so woefully underfunded and understaffed that it is

taking them up to two years to complete DNA and other forensic testing.

Two measures approved by Congress last week should help reduce some of the backlog in crime labs across the nation. They will provide \$512 million in funding during the next six years.

Bexar County residents are more fortunate. The wait for forensic testing here has gone from 18 months to two months during the last four years, thanks to increased lab funding by Bexar County Commissioners Court, according to Tim Fallon, crime lab manager.

Test conducted at the various Texas Department of Public Safety crime labs generally are done in about a month, but the DPS occasionally experiences a two- to four-month backlog, DPS officials said.

Conducting forensic tests in a timely manner is important. Making sure everyone has access to the labs is vital to the integrity of the legal system.

SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS

Trying to make those gift-giving decisions

It's not that I've ever been one of those people who finished their Christmas shopping months early, but this year I'll be lucky if I'm done by New Year's — 2002. First, it was the election mess that kept me a prisoner in my home, unable to tear myself away from the television set long enough to shop for groceries, much less presents. Then I had to contend with a series of other holidays, celebrations and scheduling conflicts in the week leading up to Christmas: my granddaughter's first birthday, my youngest son's college graduation, my middle son's birthday, several nights of Hanukkah — which happens to overlap with Christmas this year for my mixed-faith family. And if this weren't enough, my mother is making her annual visit, arriving from Albuquerque, N.M., at pre-



LINDA CHAVEZ

cisely the same moment I land on a return flight from a business trip to San Francisco.

Now when, exactly, am I supposed to pick out charming gifts for the dozens of people in my life who expect individual attention?

I've done the best I could with catalogues and TV infomercials, ordering delectable treats and gadgets that are overpriced and always look better in two dimensions than three. I hope my friend Andy, who lives alone and rarely entertains, will find some use for 32 ounces of duck and goose liver pate.

And I can't imagine when Aunt Elsie will ever eat 24 individual slices of multi-flavored cheesecake. As for my husband, Chris, he's always complaining that his feet are cold, so now we'll find out if battery-operated, heated socks really work.

The kids are much harder. When they were little, they always had specific requests, which they made months in advance. One year it was He-Man action figures, another year it was a Hot Wheels car set or a Nintendo video game. I remember spending

hours driving from one toy mega-store to another, racing up and down the aisles in search of exactly the right model, knowing, if I failed in my quest, substitutes would bring crestfallen faces on Christmas morning.

But it's even more difficult to buy for my grown children. Do I buy a family gift for my married sons, which usually means something for the house? Or do I buy both sons and wives separate gifts, tools for the boys, jewelry for the wives? And do I buy identical gifts for each couple, or do I try to guess their individual tastes? My youngest son is the most difficult to buy for, so he usually ends up with cash or gift certificates.

But somehow, it never feels quite right, so this year, he'll get a gift — like it or not.

And then there are the grandchildren. Kids have so many toys these days, it takes some of the fun out of giving. I remember as a child that I would get one or two gifts on holidays, a game, a doll, a special outfit. My own mother recalls that she would usually get something useful, an apron,

some new socks, a pair of gloves. But kids today get tons of toys, so many they can barely remember who gave them what. I've rebelled, insisting on buying modest presents for most occasions and making contributions to a college fund instead. Anyway, at their age, they don't notice the difference between a \$10-dollar toy and one that costs many times more.

Like many people, I wish there were a way to stop this ever-escalating gift-giving. Most of us have everything we really need in life. Yet, Madison Avenue will spend millions of dollars trying to convince us that we need more stuff — diamonds for our fingers, ears and wrists; home entertainment centers to amuse us; mini-computers to organize our lives; communications devices to connect us with our friends, family and stockbrokers. And because we have to work harder every year to buy all these things, we have less time to enjoy what we already own.

I, for one, would welcome a respite. Maybe by Valentine's Day, I'll have figured out what to buy everyone. But by that time my choices will probably already be obsolete.



He knows when you are sleeping, knows when you're awake, knows when you've been bad or good...

Comments on the Fourth Estate

We have a new president, George W. Bush won. In the days after the election, the national news media devoted more coverage to the loser than to the winner.

The news media seem to be more democratic than republican. That really worries me. Not because I'm a strong party man. I'm not. I think blind party loyalty is dangerous.

I'm worried because I grew up thinking the news media was supposed to report things fairly, without bias. I don't think that happened in the election coverage, especially during the post election process.

I wasn't worried about the fact that there was a recount of the vote and protests on both sides and lawyers trudging back and forth to the court room. That is America.

The three national network anchor people and several of the political analysts practically were in tears after Al Gore's concession speech. There was no question about who they wanted to win the election. It certainly wasn't the man who won. They hardly mentioned his name.

CNN and its offshoots were also guilty of touting Gore over Bush.

Our country has just had a test of our true strength. In other countries, this delay in naming a president would probably have led to civil war and anarchy. As far as we know, not one life was lost because of disagreements and demonstrations about who would be the leader of our country.

And besides all that, we got to hear first-hand justices of the Supreme Court debating the issue with attorneys and representatives from both parties. That was a rare occurrence.

Now that we are headed toward George W. Bush's inauguration we can concentrate on increasing our country's strength.

Differences and strong opinions will not disappear. They are facts of life, things that come with being alive. But the media needs to be fair and impartial.

In the past, when our country has been threatened from outside, the differences are put aside and we all fight together. We have this time been threatened from inside and we need to once again put aside those differences and work together to build a greater nation.

It should be a significant moment in American history when the man who escorted George Bush from the White House will now escort George Bush's son into the same edifice. The love of country is strong. I felt extremely patriotic when I was a soldier in Europe and felt that I had the best look at America by being away from it. When I returned I entered the most American field of endeavors: journalism.

Shame on you, anchors...for letting your opinions show.

America passed the test. But journalism failed.



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Bush

WASHINGTON President-elect nominating business executive Ford as treasury secretary. The Associated Press learned.

Cabinet positions filled by day. His transition by the 36-day off, Bush announced to nominate Don Evans as secretary.

refugee Mel Houston as California agricultural secretary.

Two GOP ing on anonymity, s ed to name C two-day visit that ended T

He was announced rate news co University (events were between mee ers of charities to dis encourage groups to pro vices for the

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Exxon

MONTGOM (AP) — A ju \$3.5 billion Exxon Mot Tuesday, find ny defrauded royalties from wells in state

The verdict court jury Alabama's p of \$581 mill damages case

The jury's ed Alabama \$ compensatory \$3.42 billion damages.

The jury a punitive c tripling. Ex annual produ natural gas v Alabama co

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Bush to nominate Pa. exec O'Neill for treasury, sources say

WASHINGTON (AP) — President-elect Bush was nominating Pennsylvania business executive and former Ford administration budget expert Paul O'Neill as treasury secretary today. The Associated Press learned. Three other Cabinet positions were to be filled by day's end.

His transition truncated by the 36-day election stand-off, Bush also planned to nominate longtime friend Don Evans as commerce secretary, former Cuban refugee Mel Martinez as housing secretary and Californian Ann Veneman as agriculture secretary.

Two GOP sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Bush decided to name O'Neill during a two-day visit to Washington that ended Tuesday night.

He was making the announcements in two separate news conferences at the University of Texas. The events were sandwiched between meeting with leaders of charitable organizations to discuss ways to encourage faith-based groups to provide social services for the poor.

O'Neill, 65, has been chairman of Alcoa Inc. since 1987. He was deputy budget director under President Ford when Vice

President-elect Dick Cheney was President Ford's chief of staff. O'Neill and Cheney now serve as directors of American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank in Washington.

Cheney is head of Bush's transition team, and has left his fingerprints on several Cabinet selections, including the yet-to-be-determined defense secretary.

The Senate, divided 50-50 between Republicans and Democrats, must confirm Bush's nominees.

Evans, 54, is chief executive of Tom Brown Inc., a Denver-based oil and gas company with an office in Midland. He was instrumental in helping Bush raise a record \$100 million for his presidential race, then helped guide the campaign to a narrow victory over Vice President Al Gore.

Martinez, chairman of Orange County, Fla. — which encompasses Orlando — co-chaired Bush's campaign in Florida and is a close ally of his brother Jeb, the state's Republican governor. Martinez, 54, fled Cuba to the United States in 1962 when he was 15 years old and played a starring role in the Elian Gonzalez saga earlier this year.

Veneman, 51, served as director of the California

Food and Agriculture Department from 1996 to 1998. Appointed by former Republican Gov. Pete Wilson, she was the first woman to head the agency. She was also the highest-ranking woman in the U.S. Department of Agriculture from 1989 to 1991, when she served as deputy secretary for international affairs and commodities programs when Bush's father was president.

Martinez and Veneman made the three-hour flight from Washington to Austin on Bush's plane Tuesday. Also aboard was Stephen Goldsmith, former Indianapolis mayor, who has been considered a potential housing secretary. Goldsmith worked with Bush during his campaign on the faith-based initiative and was traveling to Texas to participate in Wednesday's forum.

Montana Gov. Marc Racicot, a longtime Bush ally, was flying to Texas Tuesday night for a meeting with Bush. He is the top candidate for attorney general, as well as a prospect for interior secretary. Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating, a favorite of conservatives, some of whom oppose Racicot for attorney general, left Tuesday for a

Don Evans said Bush's best friend

AUSTIN (AP) — Don Evans was a West Texas roughneck who rose through the ranks to run an oil and gas company.

It was his friendship and loyalty to a future president, however, that has put him on a national stage.

President-elect Bush will nominate Evans today as his secretary of commerce, putting his campaign manager and former drinking buddy in position to promote U.S. business interests abroad and at home.

"I view him as somebody who knows me well, is not afraid to give me his opinion, has my best interest at heart," Bush said of Evans early this year.

Like Bush, Evans was born in July 1946. A native of Houston, he received a mechanical engineering degree from the University of Texas in 1969 and a master's in business administration from the school in 1973.

four-day trip to Bosnia.

Other top candidates include:

— Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson, the front-runner for secretary of Health and

Evans' move to dusty Midland, where he worked on a drilling rig for Tom Brown Inc., the company he leads today, introduced him to Bush and eventually became his path to Washington.

Bush too moved to Midland in the early 1970s, and he and Evans quickly became friends. In those days, bachelor Bush used to hang out with Evans while Evans' wife, Susan, washed Bush's clothes.

That relationship blossomed into one of Bush's closest friendships.

Like Bush, Evans is a Methodist. It was Evans who counseled Bush to read the Bible, at one point giving him a Bible divided into 365 readings, one for each day of the year.

Evans partied with Bush the night the president-elect says he swore off drinking. It was 1986 and both men were celebrating their 40th birthdays. The

lingering hangover from that night prompted Bush to abandon the bottle altogether, he says.

Evans' rise in Denver-based Tom Brown Inc. was quick.

His father worked for Shell Oil Co., and Evans went to work for Tom Brown in Midland as a roughneck, determined to learn the industry from the ground up.

Within five years he was company president, and he became chief executive in 1985.

According to the company's annual filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Tom Brown Inc. had an interest in 1,351 oil and gas wells as of Dec. 31, 1999.

Its largest operations are in Wyoming, Texas and Colorado.

The company had a revenue of \$214.9 million in 1999 with profits of \$5 million.

Human Services. Bush met with Thompson, 59, on Tuesday, and GOP sources said his nomination could come this week, though Bush had not finalized his

decision.

Former Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind., the leading defense secretary candidate, Bush huddled with Coats on Monday.

Exxon Mobil ordered to pay \$3.5 billion to Alabama in offshore gas case

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — A jury returned a \$3.5 billion verdict against Exxon Mobil Corp. on Tuesday, finding the company defrauded Alabama on royalties from natural gas wells in state waters.

The verdict by the circuit court jury was six times Alabama's previous record of \$581 million in a civil damages case.

The jury's verdict awarded Alabama \$87.7 million in compensatory damages and \$3.42 billion in punitive damages.

The jury arrived at the punitive damages by tripling Exxon Mobil's annual production from 13 natural gas wells along the Alabama coast. The jury

deliberated two hours before returning the verdict.

Exxon Mobil spokesman Tom Cirigliano said the Irving, Texas-based company would appeal the verdict, adding, "We have always endeavored to comply with the requirements of our leases."

State attorney Bob Cunningham told jurors internal company documents showed the oil company labeled Alabama officials "inexperienced" in the natural gas business and deliberately decided to underpay the state.

Under the verdict, jury foreman Steve Fillingim of Montgomery said those documents were the deciding factor, adding that the com-

pany "pretty much knew they were doing something wrong."

But Exxon Mobil's lawyers argued that the company has tried to follow the state's contradictory leases for natural gas wells in coastal waters and the simple contract dispute with the state didn't warrant a huge punitive damage verdict.

"The numbers of Exxon are right. They make it something it's not," defense attorney Joe Espy said in closing arguments Monday.

Exxon and state officials have been arguing since 1995 over how much the company owes Alabama in royalties from natural gas well drilled in state waters

along the coast. Alabama consultants put the disputed royalties and unpaid interest at \$87.7 million. The company — now Exxon Mobil as the result of a merger deal reached two years ago — contends it is much less, if anything at all. Wells that Mobil developed along the coast before the merger were not involved in the dispute.

The state's attorneys contended Alabama's leases with Exxon Mobil require it to pay the state royalties on the gross proceeds from its natural gas wells along the coast.

Exxon Mobil contended the leases allow it to deduct its processing costs before paying royalties.

OTHER RECENT LARGE VERDICTS

— July 14, 2000: A Miami jury awards \$145 billion in punitive damages to some 500,000 smokers and relatives of people who died of smoking-related illnesses against Brown & Williamson and four other tobacco companies. The award is separate from the \$246 billion settlement between cigarette companies and state attorneys general.

— July 9, 1999: Jurors award \$4.9 billion in punitive damages against General Motors Corp. over the explosion of a Chevrolet Malibu gas tank. A judge later cuts more than \$3 billion from the judgment to six people severely burned in the crash.

— Sept. 8, 1997: A jury awards nearly \$3.5 billion to thousands injured in a 1987 Louisiana railway fire, finding against the CSX Corp. and other transportation companies.

— Sept. 16, 1994: A federal jury awards \$5 billion in punitive damages to 34,000 fishermen and other Alaskans who said they had been harmed by the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska's Prince William Sound in 1989. Exxon continues to appeal.

— Nov. 19, 1985: A jury awards \$10.5 billion to Pennzoil in a contract dispute against Texaco Corp. The case is later settled for \$3 billion.

Source: The Associated Press

Ohio to require new teachers to get professional license

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Ohio education officials say the state has become the first to require all new teachers to pass a classroom performance test to get their professional licenses.

Beginning in 2002, new teachers in kindergarten through 12th grade must pass the Praxis III test. It will be given during a

teacher's first two years on the job, when instructors work under a provisional license.

Teachers will participate in a mentoring program to prepare them for the test. Evaluators will observe teachers in classrooms, interview them and analyze lesson plans.

Teachers must get 38 out of 57 possible points to pass

the test. Those who fail may be required to take additional college courses.

Currently, Ohio teachers must complete development courses or seminars to become certified. The test was evaluated in a six-year pilot program, and the state Board of Education approved the required score last week.

Most colleges require education majors to pass Praxis I, a written exam covering basic subjects, before they can enroll in education courses.

And most states require students to pass Praxis II to get a provisional license.

Several other states have pilot Praxis III programs but have not implemented them because of the costs

Man may have fed child to his neighbors

GREAT FALLS, Mont. (AP) — Prosecutors charged a man Tuesday with killing a 10-year-old boy in 1996 and said evidence suggests he butchered the child and fed the remains to his neighbors.

Nathaniel Bar-Jonah, 43, was charged in the death of Zachary Ramsay, who disappeared while walking to school. His body has not been found.

Bar-Jonah is already in jail, awaiting trial on separate charges that he sexually assaulted children and dangled a 9-year-old from a kitchen ceiling with a rope.

According to an affidavit, encrypted writings believed to be the work of Bar-Jonah include a list of

"dishes" made from the body of a small child. Acquaintances of Bar-Jonah also said he gave

them prepared dishes which tasted peculiar, the affidavit said. A doctor who performed a

psychiatric evaluation of Bar-Jonah said that he had fantasies about "dissection and cannibalism."

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Don't be tempted to spend too much

Four more shopping days 'til Christmas. As we count down, it becomes more difficult for some of us to avoid the temptation of overspending on gifts or food items, especially as we begin to become desperate to find those last few items.

It's a festive time of year, so who wants to worry about how much something costs? But when the bills start rolling in, the fun we had is replaced with worries about how to pay them.

Our goal should be to enjoy the time with family and friends without wrecking the family budget, according to Sue Lynn Sasser, extension family economics specialist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

"Advertisers, children and others can be very persuasive this time of year," Sasser said. "So, we need to know what triggers our temptation to overspend."

Sasser provides the following tips to help combat these temptations:

- Find things to do that don't involve shopping or spending a lot of money.
- Take a walk with your children or spouse or visit a local park with family and friends.
- Make a list before you go shopping. Buy only those things on that list or less expensive substitutes.
- Avoid grocery shopping when you are hungry.
- Replace "recreational shopping" with other forms of exercise or games at home.
- Visit your local library where books and videos can be checked out free of charge.
- Read to your children instead of buying them expensive toys.
- Shop for toys, clothing and other items at garage sales.
- Use cash instead of credit cards when shopping.
- Avoid shopping when you are rushed or stressed.
- Be firm with children or other family members when they want toys or other budget-busters.
- Take time for yourself. A relaxing bath, a quiet walk or a good book will reenergize your spirits and help you resist those temptations.

Most of all remember to take time to enjoy the holidays with family and friends. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Dana Tarter is Howard County Extension agent - family and consumer science.



DANA TARTER

READERS' CORNER

CHRISTMAS TO ME

by De'le Pittman

Christmas to me is a special time to pause and reflect of the goodness of His Love!

Christmas to me is a simple reminder of His gift so freely given to me!

Christmas to me is a time with family and friends God has blessed me with!

Wishing you and yours a glorious and beautiful Holiday Season!

CHRISTMAS TIME

by Martha Anderson

Peugh

He was a man of sorrows When He looked upon mankind. He gave up all His Glory and

Left Heaven far behind. To be Clothed upon with flesh

Like any other man. He chose to come to earth To fulfill His Father's Plan.

An infant in a manger Lay the King of Kings. He was shown no favor Nor given kingly things. All the years He walked on earth

With no place to lay His head. He rested in God's bosom Though He never owned a bed.

He took our place and paid our debt For now and all Eternity. That Baby in a manger Was our Savior on the tree.

He's the reason we celebrate. He's both yours and mine. When we set our hearts on Jesus

Everyday is Christmas Time.

ONLY THE WISE SEEK

by J. Theda Kyle

Still were Judean Hills on that sweet night

When lowly shepherds kept their flocks, all unaware

That angel's voice would soon announce tremendous news

And all around them would be heavenly light. And then a host of heaven's angels would the wonders share

Until such great glad tidings they could never lose.

Low was their station, yet to them it came

The announcement of the prophesied event

And they with joy received, believed the words the angels said.

How many there would be in coming years who'd do the same!

Glad were their hearts as to Jerusalem they went

So light their hearts it seemed their footsteps sped.

And noble ones came also seeking Him

By faith pressed on because they'd seen His star

Came from the East and asked where He might be.

And now faith lives in hearts where hope was dim;

Nor poverty, nor wealth, nor anything can bar

From Him who said, "All you who labor, heavy-laden, come to me."

Wise are the hearts who seek Him yet today

Quiet are the hearts that ever trust in Him.

Beautiful the feet of those who spread His word

Wayfaring ones can know a sure, safe way

Filled now with sight the eyes that once were dim

FOR 'E N TODAY WISE ONES STILL SEEK AND FIND THE LORD!

THE BEST

CHRISTMAS GIFT

by Lana F. Anguiano

One year right before Christmas a dear little boy gave me one of the best gifts that I have or will ever receive.

I watched as his little hands drew a picture of what I thought was an angel. I asked him if the picture he had drawn for me

was a picture of an angel. No, he shook his little head and said "It's a picture of you."

I guess I must have looked puzzled for he said "I gave you angel wings so you don't have to walk anymore."

My eyes filled with tears for this little boy knew that I had a bad foot that caused me much pain when I walked, and in his own loving way he "fixed" my problem by giving me angel wings so I wouldn't have to walk.

I kept those wings until I met a dear lady who needed the angel wings more than I did.

Written in honor of Ryan for he was the little boy who gave me a gift that was priceless yet it did not cost a cent. The gift he gave me was the gift of kindness and caring...

Merry Christmas to all and Happy Birthday Jesus and Thank You for the best gift I ever got.

No more flops!

A 'Dear Santa' list for TV execs

NEW YORK (AP)

"Dear Santa: Please bring me a hit show. My old shows are broken. I need a new one fast. I promise I've been good."

"Love, (network programming executive)

"P.S.: I hope you like the milk and cookies and production deal."

Well, that's one way to fight back from a fall season boasting few successes, lots of flops and mostly unhappy surprises (maybe you recall that before its premiere a few short weeks ago, CBS' sputtering "The Fugitive" was widely pegged as a can't-miss proposition).

After three months, a familiar question takes on new urgency: Who let these dogs out?

Why did the Fox high finance soap "The Street" go bust? What was the big idea with NBC's crass comedy "Tucker" and dead-on-arrival drama "Deadline"? How could anyone squander a huge star like John Goodman, who Fox squandered in a big way on its just-canceled "Normal, Ohio"?

Despite the networks' wish list, they got a lot of coal and switches on the schedule. But even if there's no Santa for TV execs, all is not lost. Here are a few breakthrough tricks of the trade for avoiding flops, identifying hits and assembling a winning lineup.

What Does Alan Greenspan Think?

Sure, his wife is NBC News correspondent Andrea Mitchell. But that's no guarantee the busy Federal Reserve chief watches a lot of TV or that, even if he does, he would have much to say about market corrections for "Girlfriends" or "Nikki".

But what if his insight into the financial world, and his vast impact on it,

could be harnessed by TV programmers? What if Greenspan could rescue "Freakylinks"?

Recently he signaled that the Fed stands ready to cut interest rates if the economy seems headed into a recession. Hmmmm.

Buried in that message, for those who can decrypt it, might be sound advice on raising the viewer interest rate for "Gideon's Crossing" or "Bette".

When Alan Greenspan clears his throat, Wall Street quakes. His imagination lifts off on a struggling sitcom if he laughed!

What Would David Blaine Do?

It would have been beyond even the powers of Blaine, an illusionist famous for his sleight of hand and levitations, to trick the TV audience into watching a fiasco like ABC's "The Trouble With Normal," or to levitate that sitcom's ratings out of the hole.

But Blaine's latest stunt, aired last month on an ABC special, found him spending 62 hours encased in a 6-ton block of ice. TV bosses might well follow his lead.

The benefits are obvious: a cooling-off period from e-mail, phones and screenings; a chance to chill before you do something stupid like put "DAG" on your schedule.

Just ask Garth Ancier, dismissed this week as entertainment president of NBC. Getting frozen would have sure beat getting iced.

How About Feng Shui?

You've heard of feng shui, the ancient Chinese system of managing good fortune by putting the man-made world in alignment with nature. From a building's front door, where the "chi," or life force, enters, to the toilet, where "chi" drains away, feng shui

See FLOPS, Page 7A

Decking the halls...with Marines

Woman's photo ornaments feature leathernecks

PALESTINE (AP) — From the halls of Okinawa to the shores of Palestine, Charlotte Floyd has trimmed her Christmas tree with United States Marines.

Sing those lines to the tune of the Marine Corps Hymn, and you have some idea of the patriotic spirit that led Charlotte Floyd to create a remarkable tribute to 209 (and still counting) leathernecks stationed around the globe.

"My son, James Matthew Floyd, is in Okinawa, Japan, and cannot come home for Christmas, so I wanted to do something that would honor him and others who are serving our country and can't be with their families for the holidays," said Floyd, who is married to a former Marine.

So she turned to the Marine Moms Online Club and put the word out that she wanted photos of their sons and daughters for her special Marine Christmas tree.

In return, she would make a copy of the photo and an additional ornament and mail it back to them for their tree.

'My son, James Matthew Floyd, is in Okinawa, Japan, and cannot come home for Christmas, so I wanted to do something that would honor him and others who are serving our country and can't be with their families for the holidays.'

Charlotte Floyd

While waiting for responses, she readied a 6-foot blue spruce by stringing red, white, and blue lights throughout its branches, adding silver tinsel and enlisting the aid of her godson, 2-year-old Jake Neil, to help hang other ornaments and the few Marine photos she'd already turned into ornaments, including one of her own son.

"Matt's photo ornament is hanging near the top of the

tree, just under the words Semper Paratus (the Marine Corps motto, meaning 'Always Faithful'). And the photos of the other 208 Marines almost fill up the rest of the tree," Floyd said.

"He's amazed I have gone to so much trouble, and jokes that I have more contacts in the Marines than he does."

Floyd even had a surprise birthday cake delivered to her son Sept. 23 by a Marine mom who lives on the island of Okinawa and whom she contacted online.

"I have received hundreds of photos from other Marines' moms, both in digital and regular form, and am thrilled that this caught on, because we all want to support both those who are serving and each other during this time of year when family means so much," Floyd said.

Floyd hopes to hear from as many mothers as possible before Christmas. She can be reached online at caf1225-texyaho.com, snail mail at Rt. 1, Box 1862, Palestine, TX 75801, or by phone at 903-729-2746.

American waistline still growing

ATLANTA (AP) — The American waistline continues to expand, with 61 percent of adults now considered overweight, the government reported Thursday.

And a growing number of Americans are not just overweight, but obese, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said.

More than a third of adults, 35 percent, are slightly or moderately overweight, up from 33 percent in the last survey, which covered 1988-94.

More than a quarter of Americans, 26 percent, are considered obese, or grossly overweight, compared with 23 percent in the last survey.

The findings are part of the 1999 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, which measured the height and weight of 1,615 people over age 20. Those figures are used to calculate body mass index, a formula involving a person's weight divided by his or her height squared.

A body-mass index of 25 to 29.9 is considered overweight, while obesity is 30 or higher.

People are getting heavier from a combination of too many calories and too little exercise, said Jeff Lancashire, a spokesman for the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics. He said an estimated 40 percent of Americans are physically inactive.

"Over the last few years, we've seen that people's fat intake was dropping, but they're eating more calories," Lancashire said. "So while people are turning to the diet foods, they're eating twice as much."

The first such survey, which covered 1960 to 1962, found that only 43 percent of the population was overweight. Beginning in the 1980s, the survey and others like it began showing that Americans were gaining weight.

The government hopes to cut the obesity rate to 15 percent by 2010.

SLICE of life

COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Mary's Episcopal Church will continue its annual Advent Offerings concert series Thursday beginning at 12:05 p.m.

Special guest artists for the concert will be the Lone Star Brass Quintet and the Midland-Odessa Symphony. There is no admission charge for the concert, which is played in the sanctuary at 10th and Goliad. Everyone is invited to bring a sack lunch for a time of fellowship in the Parish Hall immediately following. St. Mary's will provide tea, coffee and cookies.

The program performed by the Lone Star Brass will be based on both early brass concertos and modern music, made up of bright and festive arrangements for brass instruments. There will be both variations of traditional music and contemporary, an eclectic mix.

LETTERS FROM HOME

EDITOR'S NOTE: Each week, the Herald will print the addresses of service men and women or college students from the Crossroads area so that they can receive 'letters from home.' Send the address of any local man or woman attending an out-of-area college or university or serving in the military to: Letters From Home, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring; or bring them to the office, 710 Scurry; or e-mail to: bsherald@xroadstx.com. Addresses should be submitted in writing.

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Newport, R.I. 02841-1519

EM2 Evalita B. Perez
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FLOPS

Continued from Page 6A

says that nothing should be left to chance.

So why not put feng shui to work in TV decision-making?

For instance, before NBC moved "Titans" to Monday, where the steamy soap faltered just like it did in its Wednesday slot, the network could have tried to align this enterprise with the natural flow of the Universal Life Force.

A feng shui practitioner might have discouraged shifting the show, yet urged shifting a vase in Yasmine Bleeth's boudoir as a way to let the energy resonate with NBC's highest ideals (the ratings).

On the other hand, ABC's "Madigan Men" was probably a lost cause from the beginning. Listless and unfunny, that sitcom, like its life force, started, not just ended, in the lull.

— The Mir, The Merrier? NBC had high hopes for an out-of-this-world reality series, with contestants vying for a chance to blast off for the Russian space station Mir. But Russia's Cabinet decided to send the deteriorating Mir hurtling into the Pacific Ocean in February.

Still, NBC is exploring ways to salvage the project, dubbed "Destination Mir."

Here's how, and at the same time triumphantly dispose of one of NBC's biggest, costliest duds: Launch the entire cast of "The Michael Richards Show" into space, headed for Mir or its general vicinity (and don't forget the writers).

Then, when they get there, let the chips, along with everything else, fall where they may. And pray it all happens on camera, during February sweeps.

Road preservation can make for a bumpy ride

AMARILLO (AP) — It's a bumpy ride along more than 16 miles of red brick roads in this Panhandle city, where complaints have led to a Public Works Department report on how to smooth things over.

While the thought of paving over the 70-year old brick roads has preservationists peeved, fixing the roads brick-by-brick could cost more than \$24 million.

Paving over the bricks would cost about \$4 million.

"There's no question, red bricks make a very strong, long lasting pavement," Public Works Director Mike Kennedy said. "The issue is by today's standards, you can't build a brick street for the cost you could back in the 30s. It's an issue of how much money do you want to spend, and what do you want to spend it on."

Red brick roads have been a prominent feature in downtowns

throughout West Texas and the Panhandle. The downtown districts of Lubbock, Abilene, San Angelo, Pampa and Dalhart are among the West Texas cities set apart by the distinct red brick.

"The first thing tourists ask us is where is the red brick from and how long have they been there," curator of the White Deer Land Co. Museum in Pampa, Anne Davidson, said. "They are quaint. They call for a lot of conversation."

The bricks also invoke a great deal of emotion from Davidson and others in the region.

"If our city fathers ever decided to cover over them, I am going to have to go lay out there over them and they are going to have to blacktop over me," Davidson said.

Pampa, about 45 minutes northeast of Amarillo, has become intent on protecting its red brick roads.

When the nearby city of

Clarendon did some highway work and found red bricks underneath, Pampa city officials bought the red bricks to replace bricks destroyed during construction projects.

"We love them," Davidson said. "We never have a weed come through them and they are really some of the smoother streets we have in town."

Amarillo's brick roads have become worn out as the city's population and traffic increased over the years, said Wes Reeves, the president of Center City, a group of Amarillo businesses who want to revitalize the downtown.

"We'd like to help the city, rather than fight them, to come up with solutions to repave with brick," Reeves said. "Brick streets really don't need that much maintenance. It would be unwise to pave over them when in fact we could just patch over them that way you don't

have to go back in every ten years and do maintenance.

"Preservation is not always the most expensive alternative."

But it's too expensive for the likes of Amarillo resident Edmund Johnston, who has lived on a partially brick street for more than 25 years.

"There is a \$20 million difference between having paved streets and bricked streets," he said. "That's just too much of a difference for taxpayers to have to foot the bill. It's not fair to tax the whole community when we don't have that many brick streets to begin with."

Johnston said one possible compromise would be for the city to pay for the cost of paving. Those interested in maintaining the brick streets would pay the difference.

"Those who are going to benefit the most should foot the bill," he said.

Santa in stars, stripes: Historic suits for Saint Nick

FREDERICK, Md. (AP) — This Santa Claus wears stars and stripes, that one a Confederate uniform. It's the Civil War, Christmas-style, in a border state where the North-South conflict seems as eternal as Old Saint Nick.

Robert W. Parker, proud descendant of a Confederate veteran, created his rebel Santa suit after seeing another Civil War history buff, Kevin Rawlings, in a costume with a distinctively Union cut several years ago. Parker stitched together a bright red version of a Confederate lieutenant general's coat and started spreading a Southern version of the Santa Claus legend.

"We were brothers separated at birth. He was taken north and I was taken south and that's how we can do the whole world in one night," Parker, of Brandywine, Md., tells curious children. His outfit hardly needs

explaining, though, in an area where battle re-enactments are as routine as county fairs and passions still simmer over Maryland's deep wartime division.

A slave state situated below the Mason-Dixon line, Maryland stayed in the Union with some reluctance as federal troops occupied Annapolis, the state capital. Had Maryland seceded, Washington would have been surrounded by Confederate territory.

Given that history, splitting up Santa Claus seems only natural to some.

"It's kind of appropriate for this area. You couldn't get much closer to an area where the division actually took place," Michael Graves said as his daughters Michelle, 11, and Megan, 5, visited with Parker at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine.

Rawlings has played the museum in some of his 11 years as a Civil War Santa.

"Santa is Santa, and Santa loves children, so that part is not political, per se. But the way he was drawn by Thomas Nast, giving toys and food to the Union troops there were two different Santas."

Robert W. Parker, Confederate descendant

He and Parker, who both sport chest-length beards, occasionally bump into each other during the Christmas season.

"We're friendly. We haven't decided to go into the cage of death and duel," said Rawlings, 44, a Sharpsburg resident and author of a Civil War history book. "We Were

Marching on Christmas Day."

He quibbles with Parker's costume, though. Rawlings modeled his own star-spangled blue coat and red-and-white striped pants after a Santa Claus drawn by Thomas Nast for the Christmas 1862 issue of Harper's Weekly magazine. He contends Parker's outfit lacks authenticity.

"I have done my homework and there is no documentation for a Confederate Santa Claus," he said.

The Nast illustration shows Santa dangling a strangled puppet of Confederate President Jefferson Davis before Union troops. It is a clearly partisan image, Parker said Rawlings' outfit is, too.

"In Richmond in 1860, he would not have been very popular," said Parker, 54, a safety inspector.

He bases his schtick in part on a Louise Clack children's story, "General Lee and Santa Claus," published

in 1867, two years after the war. The story, aimed at appeasing deprived Southern children, has Lee ordering Santa to sell Christmas toys and buy medical supplies and food for wounded Confederate soldiers.

"Santa is Santa, and Santa loves children, so that part is not political, per se," Parker said, "but the way he was drawn by Thomas Nast, giving toys and food to the Union troops, there were two different Santas."

Rawlings, who has worn both blue and gray in battle re-enactments, said he is only interested in historical accuracy.

Ultimately, though, he said the costume is less important than the generous spirit of Santa Claus, whose image has been evolving for centuries.

"When kids ask me how old I am, I say, 'I'm 1,500 years old, and this is what I happened to pull out of my closet today,'" Rawlings said.

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DECEMBER 2000

IN BRIEF

Bulldogettes stumble in loss to Sweetwater

Coahoma's Bulldogettes simply never recovered from a slow start in the first quarter Tuesday and suffered a 48-43 loss to Sweetwater's Lady Mustangs in a non-district game.

Kortney Kemper led the way for the Bulldogettes with 14 points, while Brandi Hart added 11.

Wolves roll to 60-40 victory over Crane

Colorado City's Wolves improved their record to 9-3 on the season Tuesday night with a 60-40 win over Crane in non-district basketball action.

Marquise Lenard led the way for the Wolves, scoring a game-high 19 points, while Chase Pharris added 14 and Adam Spear contributed 11 more.

Sign-ups continuing for YMCA basketball

Registration is now under way for the youth basketball program at the Big Spring Family YMCA.

Boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 12 are eligible to play. Fees are \$20 for non-members and \$15 for members.

The deadline to register is Friday.

Practices begin the week of Jan. 2 and games will be on Saturdays beginning Jan. 20.

For more information, call the YMCA at 267-8234.

Area coaches asked to transmit schedules

The Herald is asking all Crossroads area basketball coaches who have not provided copies of their varsity schedules and rosters for the 2000-2001 season to do so as quickly as possible.

Rosters and schedules can be faxed to the attention of John A. Moseley at 264-7205.

ACS now offering Texas Golf Pass

The American Cancer Society is again offering the Texas Golf Pass that entitles holders to more than 680 rounds of golf at 289 courses throughout the state.

The passes are \$35 each and proceeds from the program benefit the Cancer Society's research, education programs and patient services efforts.

Both the Big Spring Country Club and Comanche Trail Golf Course are participating in the program and order forms are available at the two courses.

For more information, call 1-800-ACS-2345 or check the society's web site at www.acs-tx.org

Fastpitch softball umpires needed

Umpires are needed to work high school softball games throughout West Texas, according to Permian Basin Softball Umpires Association officials.

Those interested will be working games in a number of West Texas communities.

ON THE AIR

Television COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Men
9:30 p.m. — LSU at Arizona, FXS, Ch. 29.

NBA
7 p.m. — Utah Jazz at Philadelphia 76ers, TNT, Ch. 28.

7 p.m. — Portland Trail Blazers at Dallas Mavericks, FXS, Ch. 29.

9:30 p.m. — Minnesota Timberwolves at Los Angeles Clippers, TNT, Ch. 29.

HOCKEY
7 p.m. — Dallas Stars at New Jersey Devils, ESPN, Ch. 30.

Cowboys, Aikman facing major decisions in postseason

IRVING (AP) Sometime next week, Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones and quarterback Troy Aikman will meet to discuss the topic they've been avoiding all season: The future.

The first thing on the agenda will be whether Aikman can safely continue his career after suffering two concussions this season, four in his past 20 starts and 10 in his career.

If he thinks he can, and doctors agree, then Jones will have to decide whether he wants to keep the quarterback who brought him three Super Bowl titles and at what price. Aikman is due \$7 million if

he's on the roster March 8.

The money might put the decision back on Aikman. How much is it worth to keep risking his health? And, if Dallas won't meet that price, would he consider going to another team that would?

With so many things to think through, neither side will be in a hurry to come to any conclusions.

"I don't want to speculate on when a final decision will be made," Jones said. "My chief concern is his well-being."

Aikman's 12th season officially ended Tuesday when it was announced he won't play in the season finale Monday night against Tennessee.

"We as an organization and our trainers, in conjunction with doctors, felt the risks of playing the last game outweighed the rewards," coach Dave Campo said. "Troy agreed with that."

The 34-year-old Aikman suffered his first concussion of the season in the opener and missed two games. He played four more then missed a game with a back problem.

With Dallas (5-10) realistically out of the playoffs at the time, Aikman could've been shut down for the season to play it safe. However, the

quarterback wanted to play and the team needed to see how his body held up because of the pending \$7 million decision.

Aikman was hurt again in his fifth game back on a flying jolt from Washington's LaVar Arrington. Although Aikman was crunched, he suffered the concussion without being hit directly on his head.

"The last concussion concerned me because one of the things I wanted to see in the later part of the season was whether our offense could protect him," Jones said.

See **AIKMAN**, page 9

Snyder chalks up sweep over Steers, Lady Steers

By VALERIE AVERY
Herald Correspondent

Big Spring's inability to find the hole and handle the ball led to the Lady Steers' first District 4-4A loss Tuesday at Steer Gym, a 49-37 setback at the hands of Snyder's Lady Tigers.

The Tigers capped the girls win by rolling to a 78-63 win over Big Spring in the district opener for both boys' teams.

The Lady Steers suffered from their worst shooting performance of the season, hitting just 24 percent from the field and turning the ball over 20 times.

Big Spring led throughout three quarters, but Snyder's big presence inside Ashley Delce hit one of her seven field goals of the evening to knot the score at 28 with 1:38 remaining in the third.

Delce finished out the quarter hitting two free throws and another bucket off of a Big Spring turnover to end the period ahead 32-28.

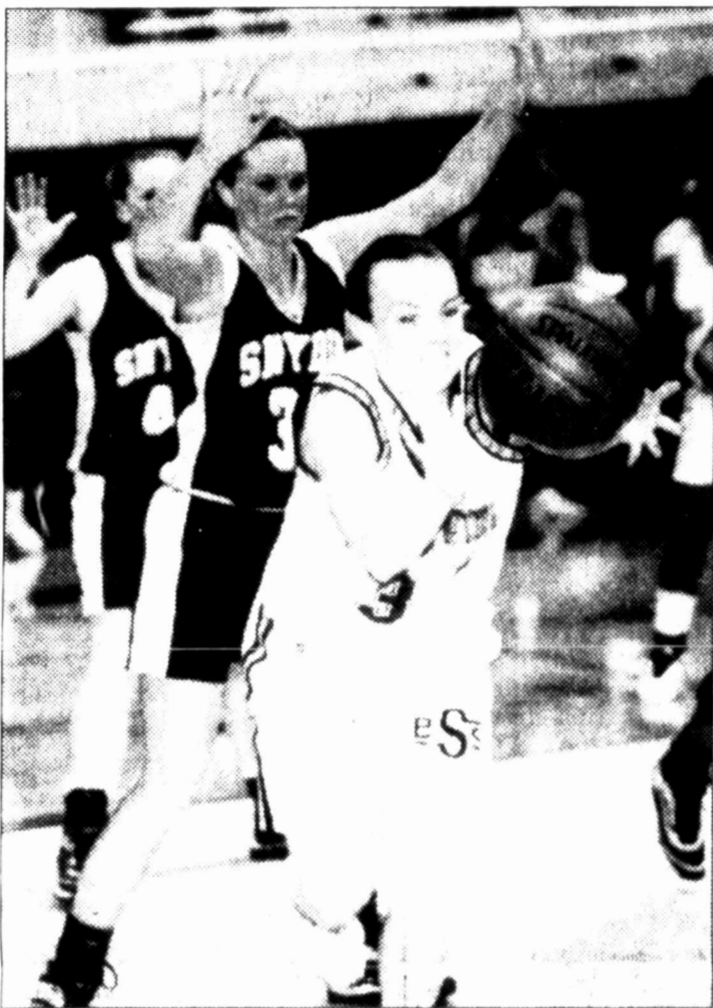
While Snyder was making its surge, the Lady Steers went 5-00 without scoring before senior Melissa Forth fed Leina Braxton with 6:31 left in the contest to trail 34-30. But that was the closest Big Spring would get.

Snyder's Leah Eicke was 6-for-6 from the charity stripe during that 1:00 period, and later would hit four more free throws to close out the contest a perfect 10-for-10 in the fourth.

The Lady Steers' shots would not fall, and they turned the ball over during multiple trips down the floor. Snyder went to the charity stripe 20 times in the final period and connected on 15 of those attempts.

Big Spring made a surge at 3:27 when Melissa Fleniken took control making a basket and Forth hit two free throws to trim the score to 42-34. Fleniken, who lead the Lady Steers with seven rebounds, drained two free throws to cut the lead to 42-36. But Snyder made six free throws and Forth made one for the final score.

"Snyder did a better job at passing, dribbling and shooting the ball," Lady Steers head coach Jimmy Avery said following the loss. "Another big difference in the game was the free throw shooting. They were 25-for-40 and we were 13-for-18. But I was pleased that our defense kept us in



HERALD photo/Jim Fierro
Big Spring's LaTrisha Rollins (34) runs down a loose ball during the second quarter of Tuesday night's Lady Steers loss to Snyder.

the game. If it wasn't for that, it could have been a lot worse. We didn't let them get that many field goals."

The Lady Steers made 23 steals — seven by freshman Kim Wrightsil — but turned the ball over 20 times.

"That third quarter just about killed us," Avery noted. "We made one field goal in the third period, and they made five. We just made too many bad passes and bad decisions. But it will get better."

"We were very intense on defense, and I like that. We'll take this break and rest up and be ready to play the rest of our district schedule."

Forth paced the Lady Steers with nine points. Christina Gwyn had seven, and LaTrisha Rollins made six points in the losing effort.

Big Spring takes the Christmas holidays off before heading to the Austin Westlake Invitational Dec. 28-30.

In the late game, the Steers gave Snyder a 27-8 advantage in the first period and never could cut the lead to less than 12. Brandon Greathouse made a short jumper with 3:01 remaining to trail 72-60.

Snyder answered with

four more points before Arthur Belvin hit a bucket and Mic Fleming with 28 left. Jamal Wofford, who had 18 points finished out the scoring with another field goal before time ran out.

"You just can't give a team 20 points in the first quarter," Steers head coach Brian Ellington said. "We battled the rest of the game."

Snyder came out roaring in the first quarter, scoring at will and piling up 27 points. The best Big Spring could muster was four points from Clarence Wilkins and a trey by Mic Fleming. Mike Smith hit a free throw to give the Steers eight points at the end of one period.

But Big Spring matched Snyder's 17 points in the second quarter after making a defensive adjustment.

"That helped," Ellington said. "They had a rhythm going early, and we threw them out of it a little bit."

"We tied them or outscored them the rest of the game. I knew the kids would play hard and they did. Those last three quarters were one of the better quarters of the year."

Fleming led all scorers with 16 points. Wilkins had

See **STEERS**, page 9

Bufs' White named APSE honor squad's top defensive player

From staff and wire reports

Stanton linebacker Clay White, a senior who was credited with 197 stops, shared the highest honors available with Mart quarterback Quan Cosby when the Class 2A Texas all-state team chosen by Associated Press Sports Editors was released Tuesday.

White was one of three Stanton players who earned first-team accolades, but surprisingly, Jeremy Hull — the Bufs' 2,500-yard rusher who score 28 touchdowns — was not one of them.

Joining White on the first-team were senior offensive lineman Ace Keele and senior defensive tackle Jon Cotton.

Hull was selected to the second-team on both offense and defense.

Cosby was the only player named first-team offense and first-team defense on the Class 2A Texas all-state team chosen by Associated Press Sports Editors.

Cosby, the 2A first-team quarterback for the second year in a row, also was selected as the 2A offensive player of the year. A first-team defensive back, the senior finished just one point behind White for the defensive player of the year award.

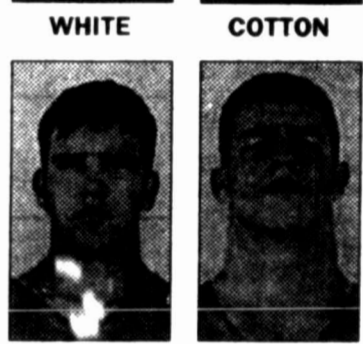
Cosby has passed for 1,325 yards and 13 touchdowns, rushed for 1,350 yards and 27 touchdowns. He has also returned five punts and one kickoff for touchdowns. He has scored 227 total points, the latest on a game-winning 2-point conversion with just over two minutes left in last weekend's state semifinal playoff game against Refugio, which Mart won 21-20 after trailing 20-0.

On defense, Cosby has 151 tackles, five interceptions and five sacks. He returned an interception for a touchdown and also had a fumble recovery for a TD.

Also earning first-team honors was Quan Cosby's twin brother, junior running back Quincy Cosby. Quincy has rushed for 1,764 yards and 26 touchdowns.

The Cosby twins, who turn 18 on Saturday and would like to celebrate with another state title, have combined to score 428 of Mart's 622 points this season.

Adrian Blasingame, a 6-foot-4, 230-pound, senior, was a first-team pick on the offensive line, along with Brazos junior Russell



Bohacek, Refugio senior Trace Claybrook, Henrietta junior Francisco Mesa and Hemphill senior Ben Wilkerson.

Sonora junior James Elliott and Olney senior Chase Pratt were the all-state receivers. Lockney junior Mo Collins (1,608 yards and 20 TDs) and Corrigan-Camden senior Gerald Lacy (1,899 yards and 25 TDs) joined the Cosby twins in the offensive backfield.

Coleman senior Wes Jones was the all-state kicker.

White, the defensive player of the year, had 135 tackles, five sacks, five interceptions and five fumble recoveries.

The other first-teamers on defense were lineman Brian Cook of Lone Oak, Brian Tiemann of Goldthwaite and Alex Williams of Arp; linebackers Capp Culver of Canadian, Clay Evans of Celina and Matt McKinney of Refugio; and defensive backs Alex Boyd of Refugio, Quan Cosby, Darrell Gander of East Bernard and Jared May of Hamlin.

Hutto junior Jared Scruggs, the only non-senior on the all-state defense, is the all-state punter.

Stanton lineman Matthew Tollison, Coahoma running back Cory Hill and Coahoma linebacker Travis McMillian earned honorable mention.

The Class 2A All-State high school football team, released Tuesday, was voted on by the Associated Press Sports Editors based on regular-season performance. Players are listed in alphabetical order at each position.

See **ALL-STATE**, page 9

TCU putting top-ranked defense's reputation on line tonight

MOBILE, Ala. (AP) — It's No. 1 versus No. 2, winner take all.

Only it's not the national title at stake in Wednesday's Mobile Alabama Bowl, but defensive bragging rights.

No. 13 Texas Christian (10-1) leads the nation in scoring and total defense while Southern Mississippi (7-4) has the second stingiest unit in yards allowed. The defenders from both teams are well aware of the neck-and-neck standing.

"They didn't just give us No. 1 in the country, we earned it," TCU linebacker Shannon Brazzell said. "We showed people we could play. And we've got one more game left to play, and we plan to be the No. 1

defense in the country after that.

"It's a pride thing."

The game also pits TCU tailback LaDorian Tomlinson, the nation's leading rusher the past two seasons, against a defense that has allowed only two 100-yard rushers this year.

Tomlinson rushed for 2,158 yards and 22 TDs, the fourth highest season total in I-A history, and won the Doak Walker Award as the nation's top running back.

Southern Miss safety Leo Barnes said you could make an argument either way on which is the best defense. Barnes figures that how Tomlinson fares on Wednesday could answer that question.

"They're the No. 1 defense in the nation," said Barnes, an All-Conference USA performer. "We had a tougher schedule. If we can stop him from getting 100 yards, people will know who the better defense is."

Tomlinson, for one, is reserving judgment on whether this the Southern Miss defense is the best his team has faced.

"You're going to have to ask me after the game," said Tomlinson, who nearly doubled the Golden Eagles' 1,129 rushing yards. "I think they will be good."

Combined, the two teams are giving up 513 yards and a hair over 26 points a game, a middling afternoon for, say, Florida State.

Yet new TCU head coach Gary Patterson, elevated from defensive coordinator earlier this month, doesn't necessarily expect a defensive standoff. He thinks the extra preparation time gives the offenses an advantage.

"You should always be careful any time you give somebody three or four weeks to prepare," said Patterson, who got the job after Dennis Franchione went to Alabama. "Usually it gets a little bit wilder."

Southern Mississippi coach Jeff Bowers also wants his players to beware of quarterback Casey

See **TCU**, page 9

SPORTS

TOP 25 - FOOT

The Top Twenty Five is The Associated Press college football poll, with first-place votes in parentheses and records through Dec. 17.

- Oklahoma (67)
- Miami (3)
- Florida St. (1)
- Washington
- Oregon St.
- Virginia Tech
- Florida
- Oregon
- Nebraska
- Notre Dame
- Kansas St.
- Texas
- TCU
- Purdue
- Georgia Tech
- Clemson
- Michigan
- Northwestern
- Ohio St.
- Auburn
- Tennessee
- Louisville
- Colorado St.
- Georgia
- Toledo

TOP 25 - MEN

The top 25 teams Associated Press' men's basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses and records through Dec. 17.

- Duke (83)
- Michigan St. (8)
- Stanford
- Tennessee
- Illinois
- Wake Forest
- Florida
- Seton Hall
- Kansas
- Arizona
- Connecticut
- Syracuse
- Southern Cal
- Virginia
- North Carolina
- Wisconsin
- Alabama
- Oklahoma
- Iowa
- Maryland
- Notre Dame
- Cincinnati
- Georgetown
- Mississippi
- Arkansas

TOP 25 - WOMEN

The top 25 teams Associated Press' women's basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses and records through Dec. 17.

- Connecticut (40)
- Tennessee
- Notre Dame
- Georgia
- Iowa St.
- Duke
- Rutgers
- Purdue
- Auburn
- Louisiana Tech
- Texas Tech
- LSU
- Penn St.
- Stanford
- Texas
- Florida
- N.C. State
- SM Missouri St.
- Mississippi St.
- Oklahoma
- Iowa
- Vanderbilt
- Oregon
- Washington
- Utah

BOWL SCHEDULE

- Wednesday, Dec. 20
Mobile Alabama Bowl
Payoff: \$780,000
Texas Christian (10-1) vs. Southern Mississippi (7-4) (ESPN2) ***
- Thursday, Dec. 21
Las Vegas Bowl
At Las Vegas
Payoff: \$800,000
UNLV (7-5) vs. Arkansas (6-5) (ESPN2) ***
- Sunday, Dec. 24
Duke Bowl
At Honolulu
Payoff: \$750,000
Virginia (6-5) vs. Georgia (7-5) (ESPN) ***
- Monday, Dec. 25
Blue-Gray Classic
At Montgomery, Ala.
Blue vs. Gray, 11 a.m. (A) (ESPN2) ***
- Alaska Bowl
At Honolulu
Payoff: \$750,000
Boston College (6-5) vs. State (6-5), 2:30 p.m. (ABC) ***
- Wednesday, Dec. 27
Motor City Bowl
At Pontiac, Mich.
Payoff: \$750,000
Marshall (7-5) vs. Cincinnati (7-5) (ESPN) ***
- GatewayFuture.com Bowl
At Houston
Payoff: \$750,000
Texas Tech (7-5) vs. Carolina (7-4), 7 p.m. (ESPN) ***
- Thursday, Dec. 28
Humanitarian Bowl

TCU

Continued from page 8

Printers and an line that has straight games to Printers has 1,584 yards and 260, accounting for downs.

"We know the playing a team don't see any Bowers said. "The outstanding foot

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SPORTS EXTRA

TOP 25 - FOOTBALL

Table listing top 25 football teams with columns for rank, team name, and record.

TOP 25 - MEN

Table listing top 25 men's basketball teams with columns for rank, team name, and record.

TOP 25 - WOMEN

Table listing top 25 women's basketball teams with columns for rank, team name, and record.

BOWL SCHEDULE

Table listing various bowl games, dates, and participating teams.

NFL STANDINGS

Table showing NFL standings for American Conference, National Football League, and National Conference.

PLAYOFF PAIRINGS

Table detailing playoff pairings for various divisions and conferences.

TRANSACTIONS

Text listing various NFL transactions, including trades, signings, and releases.

AIKMAN

Continued from page 8. "The fact he got another concussion gives rise to concern." Aikman has barely spoken with reporters since his latest injury.

STEERS

Continued from page 8. The Steers will resume play after the holidays with a tournament in Lamesa. Courtney Brock paced the Lady Steers' junior varsity squad with 12 points.

NBA

Tuesday's Games: Toronto 103, Utah 95; Atlanta 87, New York 77; L.A. Lakers 81, Miami 79; Indiana 90, Chicago 85.

NHL

Tuesday's Games: Philadelphia 4, Boston 4; N.Y. Islanders 2, Carolina 1; Calgary 2, Colorado 1.

COLLEGE SCORES

MEN'S GAMES: EAST: Dartmouth 69, Quinnipiac 47; Harvard 89, Vermont 71; Michigan St. 72, Seton Hall 57.

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TCU

Continued from page 8. The players know that and see that. "You look at them on the tape and they know they better be prepared for this game."

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WEDNESDAY

DEC. 20

Table with 26 columns (KMID, KPEJ, KERA, FAM, KOSA, WFAA, KWES, WTBS, UNI, DISH, NASH, TMC, SHOW, HBO, KMLM, A&E, DISC, TNT, TLC) and 6 rows of program listings.

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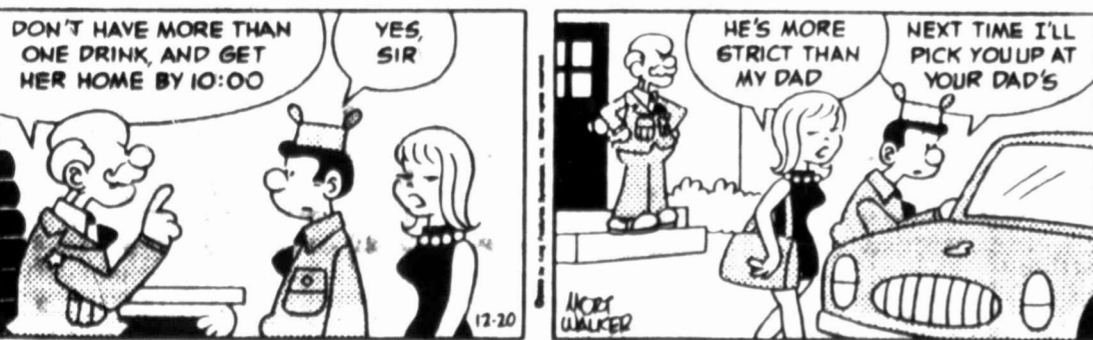
GASOLINE ALLEY



SNUFFY SMITH



BETLE BAILY



THIS DATE IN HISTORY

The ASSOCIATED PRESS Today is Wednesday, Dec. 20, the 355th day of 2000. There are 11 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On Dec. 20, 1860, South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union. On this date: In 1790, the first successful cotton mill in the United States began operating at Pawtucket, R.I. In 1803, the Louisiana Purchase was completed as ownership of the territory was formally transferred from France to the United States during ceremonies in New Orleans. In 1864, Confederate forces evacuated Savannah, Ga., as Union Gen. William T. Sherman continued his "March to the Sea." In 1879, Thomas A. Edison privately demonstrated his incandescent light at Menlo Park, N.J. In 1945, the Office of Price Administration announced the end of tire rationing, effective Jan. 1, 1946. In 1968, author John Steinbeck died in New York at age 66. In 1976, Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley died at age 74. In 1980, the government of the Soviet Union confirmed that former Premier Alexei N. Kosygin had died two days earlier at the age of 76. In 1987, more than 3,000 people were killed when the Dona Paz, a Philippine passenger ship, collided with the tanker Vector off Mindoro island.

In 1989, the United States launched Operation Just Cause, sending troops into Panama to topple the government of Gen. Manuel Noriega. Today's Birthdays: Movie director George Roy Hill is 78. Rock musician Peter Criss (Kiss) is 55. Actor John Spencer is 54. Actress Jenny Agutter is 48. Actor Michael Badalucco is 46. Actress Blanche Baker is 44. Rock singer Billy Bragg is 43. Country singer Kris Tyler is 36. Thought for Today: "There are two days in the week about which and upon which I never worry. Two carefree days, kept sacredly free from fear and apprehension. One of these days is Yesterday. And the other... is Tomorrow." — Robert Jones Burdette, American clergyman and author (1844-1914).

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved with the completed crossword grid and answers.

Vertical sidebar containing various advertisements including 'DENT', 'APPLIA REPA', 'A-2-2 Service', 'BOOKKEEP', 'HONEY I SERVICE', 'CHIMNEY CLEANING', and 'Safety Inspe'.

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By BETTY DEBNAM

La Navidad en Mexico

Christmas in Mexico



Doce de los niños llevan figuritas de María y José.
Two of the children carry figures of Mary and Joseph.

We have told the story in English. However, some of the words are in Spanish. If you need help, check the dictionary.

La Navidad in Mexico starts on Dec. 16, when the **posada** celebration begins. The word **posada** means "inn" in Spanish.

Las familias get together during the **nueve noches** before **la Navidad**. They meet in a different **casa** each **noche**.

La primera part of the **posada** is religious.

Las familias parade around **la casa**. They are called **peregrinos**.

They pretend they are Mary and Joseph looking for a room in the **posada**. They sing a special prayer and carry **velas**.

After singing, all enter **a la casa**.

La Fiesta

La segunda part of the celebration is **la fiesta**.

Las familias and their **invitados** go

to the patio to break the **piñata**. Piñatas are often made of **papel**. Piñatas are filled with **frutas**, **regalos** and **dulces**. Each **niño** is blindfolded before taking a turn. Each **niño** has **tres** swings to try to hit the piñata with a **palo**.

This is not easy. Someone pulls the **soga**, making the piñata move **arriba** and **abajo**.

When the piñata is broken, all scramble for **los regalos**.

Afterward, **los invitados** come for **cena**. Every **familia** brings food to share.

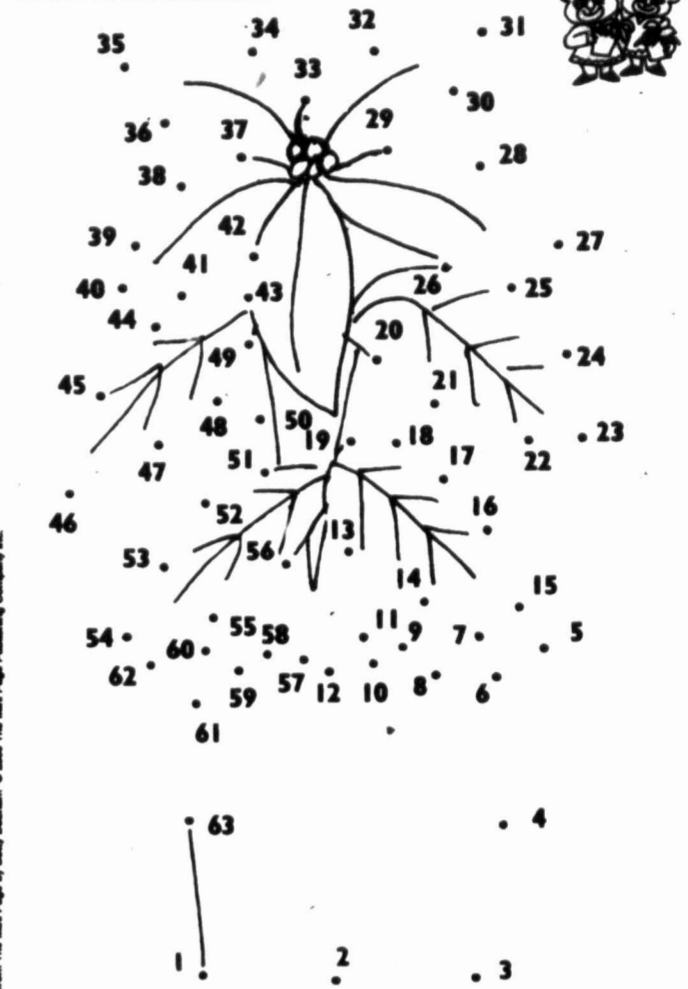


Los niños salen al patio a romper la piñata.
The children go out on the patio to break the piñata.

Diccionario-Dictionary

abajo (ah-BAH-khoh) down	arriba (ah-RREE-bhah) up	casa (KAH-sah) house
cena (SAY-nah) dinner	dulces (DOOL-sehs) sweets	familias (fah-MEE-lyahs) families
fiesta (fee-ESS-tah) party	frutas (FROO-tahs) fruit	invitados (een-be TAH-dohs) guests
the la, las, los (lah, lah, loh) the	Mexico (MEH-hee-koh) Mexico	Navidad (nah-bhee-DHADH) Christmas
niños (NEE-nyohs) children	noches (NOH-chays) nights	9 (NWAY-vay) nine
palo (PAH-loh) stick	papel (pah-PEHL) paper	peregrinos (pay-reh-GREE-nohs) holy travelers
1st primera (pre-MAY-rah) first	regalos (ray-GAH-lohs) gifts	2nd segunda (say-GOON-dah) second
soga (SOH-gah) rope	3 tres (TRAYSS) three	velas (BEH-lahs) candles

Go dot to dot and color.



MIGHTY FUNNY'S FUNNY PHONICS

It's fun to learn phonics, or the way letters sound. This week's target sound is the one made by the AR blend, as in the word **art**.

Q: Why did Betsy Ross go to the doctor?
A: She kept seeing **stars** and **stripes!**

Q: What is bought by the yard but worn by the foot?
A: A rug!

Molly: You've broken your **arm** in three different places!
John: That's impossible! I've been home all day!

Go on an AR word hunt. What other words can you find that use the AR blend? What sound do you hear?

Rookie Cookies Recipe 'Tis the Season Cookies

You'll need:

- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 banana, mashed
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

What to do:

- In a large bowl, combine first five ingredients. Mix well.
- In a medium bowl, combine remaining ingredients. Mix well.
- Stir dry mixture into mixture in large bowl. Mix well.
- Place by teaspoonfuls several inches apart on a greased cookie sheet.
- Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for 10 to 12 minutes. Makes about 4 dozen.

CHRISTMAS TRY 'N IN MEXICO FIND

Words that remind us of Christmas in Mexico are hidden in the block below. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally. See if you can find: CHRISTMAS, NAVIDAD, MEXICO, INN, SPANISH, POSADA, CELEBRATION, CASA, NOCHE, FOOD, RELIGIOUS, MARY, JOSEPH, SINGING, FIESTA, PATIO, FRUTA, NIÑO.

¡FELIZ NAVIDAD!

A P H S I N A P S P A T I O A
B H P E S O J P O S A D A Q B
R C H D A D I V A N D O O F
M C H R I S T M A S F R U T A
E N N O I T A R B E L E C E
X I I O C D S N U O I G I L E R
I N J U C N S U I E C A S A I O
C O M V F H J L S I N G I N G
O M A R Y X E G A T S E I F K

Mini Spy ...

Mini Spy and her friends are enjoying a Mexican Christmas. See if you can find:

- pencil
- word MINI
- letter A
- sailboat
- lips
- letter V
- lima bean
- bell
- bird
- heart
- exclamation mark
- banana
- canoe
- pumpkin

• mushroom • safety pin • pig

Merry Christmas From Mexico

Christmas in Mexico

On the last night of the posada celebrations, December 24, Mexicans go to a special church service at midnight called "Misa de Gallo" where the birth of Jesus is celebrated. Then they come back home to continue the celebration, which lasts all night.

On January 5, many kids from the country as well as from the cities write letters asking the three Wise Men for toys. They put the letters inside one of their shoes and place it inside or outside the door. In another variation of this tradition, some country kids put a shoebox filled with straw outside their doors or in their balconies. The straw is for the camels of the Three Wise Men who brought gifts to Baby Jesus. Although Mexican children get their gifts from their parents on Christmas Day, on January 6 they receive additional presents from the Three Wise Men.

Nacimiento

(nah-see-MYEN-toh)
A **nacimiento** is a group of figures that make up a manger scene. It can be very simple, with just Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Or it can include wise men, shepherds, farmers and town people. These are placed on a very decorated altar in most homes. In some towns the figures are large so as to be placed outside the homes.

Pastorela

(pahs-toh-REH-LAH)
Many neighborhoods put on a Christmas play called a **pastorela**. Pastorelas are about the Christmas shepherds.

In a play, the Devil and his helpers try to keep the shepherds from getting to Bethlehem. Angels and a hermit help the shepherds finally reach the Christ child. Most **pastorelas** have different lines and songs because they are not written down. The costumes and scenery are homemade. Audiences get involved by cheering.

Next week The Mini Page features a 2001 calendar.

Look through your newspaper for signs of Christmas.

For translations, The Mini Page thanks the Graduate School, USDA, and Robert Miranda-Acevedo.

Las Navidades en México



En la última noche de la celebración de las posadas, el 24 de diciembre, los mexicanos van a una misa especial que se llama "La Misa de Gallo" en donde el nacimiento de Jesús es celebrado. Luego ellos regresan a sus casas y continúan con la celebración, que dura toda la noche.

El 5 de enero, muchos niños del interior y de las ciudades escriben cartas pidiendo juguetes a los Tres Reyes Magos. Las cartas las ponen dentro de sus zapatos los que colocan adentro o afuera de la puerta. En otra variante de esta tradición, algunos niños del interior ponen paja en una caja de zapatos y la dejan fuera de la puerta de sus casas o en los balcones. La paja es para los camellos de los Reyes Magos que llevaron regalos al Niño Jesús. Aunque los niños mexicanos reciben regalos de sus padres el día de Navidad, el día 6 de enero ellos reciben más regalos, pero esta vez son de los Tres Reyes Magos.

Nacimiento

Un nacimiento es un conjunto de figuras que forman un pesebre. El nacimiento puede ser muy sencillo, solo con el Niño Jesús, La Virgen María, y San José. Pero también puede incluir los Tres Reyes Magos, pastores, agricultores, y gente del pueblo.

Estos nacimientos se ponen en altares muy decorados dentro de las casas. En algunos pueblos las figuras son de tamaño grande que se colocan afuera de las casas.

Pastorela

En muchos vecindarios se presenta una obra de Navidad que se llama pastorela. Las pastorelas tratan sobre los pastores en la Navidad. En la obra, el Diablo y sus ayudantes tratan de impedir que los pastores lleguen a Belén. Los ángeles y un hermitaño ayudan a los pastores a que lleguen hacia el Niño Jesús.

La mayoría de las pastorelas tienen diferentes tramas y cantos, ya que no están escritas. El vestuario y la escenografía se hacen en las casas. El público participa con aplausos.

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