

**WEDNESDAY**

May 28, 2002

**WEATHER**

Tonight:



PARTLY CLOUDY  
TONIGHT - TOMORROW  
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## Forsan band will perform Thursday night

The Forsan High School band will hold its final performance of the year at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at the high school auditorium, 411 W. Sixth.

The band earned a fifth consecutive sweepstakes award this year by receiving Division 1 ratings for both its marching band and sight reading and concert contests.

Admission to the concert is free. Following the concert, an awards assembly will be held to recognize the various accomplishments of the students during the year as well as announce scholarships to graduating seniors.

## WHAT'S UP...

### TODAY

□ Fraternal order of Eagles Aerie Ladies Auxiliary meets at 7 p.m. at the Eagles Lodge, 703 W. Third.

### THURSDAY

□ Gideons International, Big Spring Camp U42060 meets at Herman's Restaurant at 7 a.m.

□ Senior Citizens Center art classes; 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. for people 55 and over.

□ Coffee Club meets at 10 a.m. at Gale's Sweet Shoppe.

□ Kiwanis Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room.

□ Masonic Lodge 598 meets at 7:30 p.m., 219 Main.

### FRIDAY

□ Signal Mountain Quilting Guild meets from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at St. Mary's Episcopal Church. Call 267-7281 or 267-1037. Bring a lunch.

□ AMBUCS meets at noon at the Brandin' Iron.

□ ABC Club meets at noon at the Brandin' Iron.

□ The Greater Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon at the Howard College Cactus Room.

## INSIDE TODAY...

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## Cain, Ward are Big Spring High's top students

HERALD Staff Report

Bridget Nicole Cain has been named as valedictorian for the Big Spring High School 2002 graduating class.

Cain, the daughter of Tim and Mary Cain, has maintained a grade point average of 4.0 and plans to attend the Lowry Mays College of Business on the Texas A&M University campus. Following her undergradu-



**CAIN** **WARD**  
ate degree, Cain plans to enroll in law school. During her high school

career, Cain has served as a DARE role model, French Club secretary, student council parliamentarian, student council representative and sophomore class vice-president.

She has been recognized as Who's Who Among American High School Students, an All-American Scholar, 2001 all-district second baseman in softball and 2000 honorable mention for all-district second baseman.

Her awards include the Optimist Club youth appreciation award, the United States National Leadership Merit award and the Governors Award for Academic Excellence.

Cain is a member of the high school softball team, the National Honor Society, the National Forensic League and the Key Club.

April Lynn Ward, the daughter of Dr. David and Ann Ward, is the salutatori-

an. Ward graduates with a grade point average of 4.0 she has maintained over her four-year high school career.

An active member in journalism, Ward has served as a summer intern for the Big Spring Herald and she wrote a monthly column for the paper during her eighth-grade year at Rannels Junior High School.

See **BSHS**, Page 2A

## Spider-Man finds a new hangout

Comic novels hope to draw interest of young adults

By **LYNDEL MOODY**

Staff Writer

You'd better watch it if you have an overdue library book. Spider-Man has started hanging around the Howard County Library.

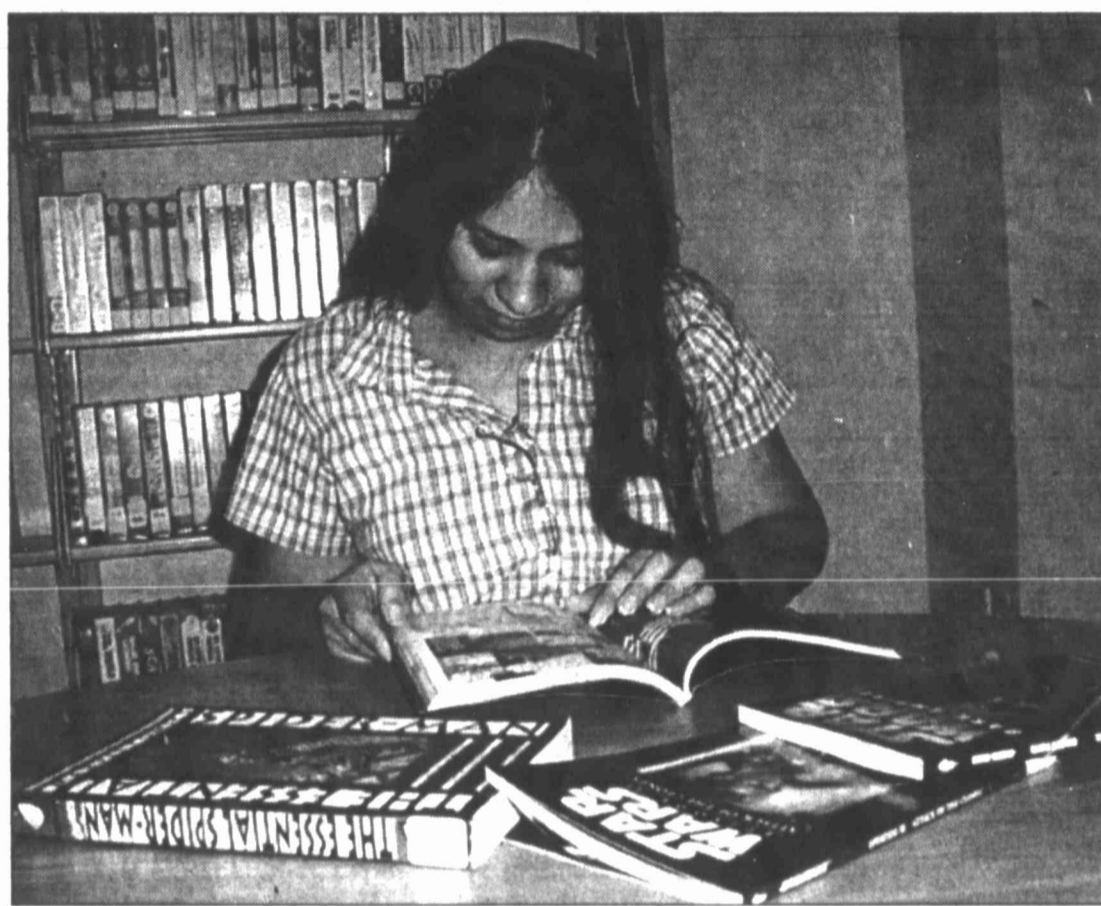
Patrons can now check out Spider-Man, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Akira, Dragon Ball Z and more in graphic or comic novels — works formatted in comic book style to tell a story.

"I'm hoping it will bring in young adults who don't come into the library anymore," Karen McIntyre, children's librarian said.

"I would like to add for parents of younger children that many of these books



**McINTYRE**



HERALD photo/Lyndel Moody  
**Eilda Martinez** browses through some of the comic novels or graphic novels now offered by the Howard County Library. The library plans to offer about 50 selections of the comic novels ranging from superhero and science fiction stories to the "Left Behind" series.

are for older readers," McIntyre warns.

The library now has a selection of more than 30 novels displayed in the

young adult section on shelf 33 and expects 20 or more graphic novels on the shelf by next week, McIntyre said.

Fans of the Star Wars saga can read "Star Wars: Episode II" or "Dark

See **NOVELS**, Page 2A

## Summer reading program expanded

By **LYNDEL MOODY**

Staff Writer

The Howard County Library's 2002 Summer Reading Program will be a little longer this year in hopes of accommodating children's active summer schedule.

"We're expanding the program," Karen McIntyre, children's librarian said. "We have a lot of people who go on vacation miss part of it."

Summer school and other summer time activities may also keep children from participating in many of the library's activities,

but youths can still take part in the program, McIntyre said.

"They don't have to come to the activities," she said. "They can just register, read their 10 books and qualify to come to the closing party."

The program is scheduled June 3 through Aug. 1. Registration is already under way and will continue through Friday, July 14.

In order to participate, parents must register their children before the cut-off date, McIntyre said.

"You don't have to come to the library to register," she said. "You can use the

phone."

McIntyre will take reservations at the library or by phone at 264-2260, Monday through Friday.

Read Across Texas is this year's theme.

Monday is movie day and children of all ages are invited. On Tuesday, Mighty Awesome Reading Kids class for children second grade and older will meet for crafts and to hear a guest speaker.

In Wednesdays, Sit Together and Read class, children going into the first grade and younger will have story time and crafts.

Thursday will be Topsy

Turvy Day. Children will have a number of activities from field trips to crafts. The class limit is 24 and parents must register their children by the Monday of each week.

All programs begin at 10 a.m. and end at 11 a.m. and are held in the downstairs room of the library. Parents are welcome to stay for all programs, McIntyre said.

A number of contests are slated during the program, including guessing the amount of chili fixings in a glass jar. In make a recycled Texas critter, children

See **SUMMER**, Page 2A

## Business fire wasn't arson, says investigator

By **ROGER CLINE**

Staff Writer

A fire at Lamesa Drive R.V. Center and City Radiator Service in the 800 block of

North Bell wasn't an act of arson, said Big Spring Fire Marshal Carl Condray.

The fire, which was first reported at 1 a.m. Monday, was most likely

caused accidentally by would-be burglars, he said.

"It is not arson, period," he said. "Arson involves that there is a mental culpability and intent to start the fire. This was criminal mischief. It was a fire that resulted from a criminal act. For it to be arson, they have to actually intend to set that fire to destroy property."

Condray said that the burglars apparently pushed a window-mounted air conditioner into the building to gain access to the R.V. shop.

"Whenever they did, the way that thing was mounted in there, it fell right across its cord," he said. "It was 220 (volts) that cord started arcing and shorting out. There was a sofa and a chair right there that caught fire, as well as possibly some other contents, and that's what actually carried the fire on through."

Most of the damage occurred in the R.V. shop, not the radiator and muffler shop adjoining it.

"The muffler shop really wasn't other than the electrical service," Condray said. "Whenever we killed the power and everything, it had to be upgraded and

See **FIRE**, Page 2A

## Pre-budget workshop

## Council ponders bond election to repave streets

By **ROGER CLINE**

Staff Writer

A city bond election in Big Spring?

Mayor Russ McEwen broached the possibility Tuesday night at the city council's annual pre-budget workshop after Councilman Greg Biddison said he'd like to see the city begin to rebuild and repave city streets in addition to the ongoing double-seal-coat project.

After Public Works Director Todd Darden told the council that street reconstruction could cost as much as \$500,000 per mile, McEwen agreed with Biddison's comments, but said that the cost might necessitate a bond election.

"I think he makes a valid point that we need to do some things like that," McEwen said. "But the cost of reconstruction is so high and we have so many

streets that are in such terrible shape that my thought was, 'Do we want to entertain the thought of a bond election?'"

The mayor said the council needs more information before it decides whether such an election will take place.

"Are we in favor of a bond election? Nobody knows, because we don't know what the cost is," he said. "We don't know what we could do."

If the council does decide to ask the voters to support issuing bonds, now would be an ideal time, McEwen added.

"Our bond rating is very high, and interest rates are as low as they've been in decades," he said. "So it's a very opportune time if we were going to do a bond election, because interest

See **COUNCIL**, Page 2A



HERALD photo/Lyndel Moody  
**Capt. Russ Keeney**, co-commander for the Salvation Army, left; **Sue Bagwell**, president of the United Way of Big Spring and Howard County; **Cynthia Scott**, incoming executive director for the United Way; **Pete Thiry**, executive director of the YMCA; and **Cindy Michaelis**, outgoing director for the United Way, visit during a reception held to welcome Scott and to bid farewell to Michaelis on Tuesday at the Big Spring Country Club.

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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.

**Ken Dulaney**  
Publisher  
**John A. Moseley**  
Managing Editor  
**Bill McClellan**  
News Editor

## OUR VIEWS

# Your support key to making 'Pops' the best

Members of the Big Spring Fourth of July Foundation are already hard at work making plans for this year's Pops in the Park concert and fireworks display at Comanche Trail Park.

This year's Pops in the Park event is little more than five weeks away and the foundation needs financial support to pull off the show.

Pops in the Park doesn't just materialize out of thin air. It carries a price tag of more than \$20,000 — money that comes from donations and sponsorships provided by local businesses and individuals.

Heading into its fifth year, Pops in the Park has become nothing short of a tradition — one the entire community anticipates.

Foundation members are in the process of contacting previous donors, as well as soliciting contributions from new sources. Those donations make it possible for the organizing committee to open the gates for all comers free of charge.

"It is the entire community's celebration," noted Tim Blackshear, who is again serving as the foundation's chairman for the event. "It's an evening to gather with friends and family at the park and join your neighbors in celebrating the fact that we live in the best nation on earth."

The Big Spring Herald will again be one of the sponsors for the show. We are proud to be a part of such a spectacular event and want to encourage others in the community to do the same. Help us make sure Big Spring can keep celebrating our nation's birthday in impressive fashion.

To make donations, contact the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce at 263-7641 or mail them to the chamber office at P.O. Box 1391, Big Spring 79721-1391.

## OTHER VIEWS

The U.S. Constitution was such an expertly drafted document that Americans have approved only 27 changes over more than 200 years. And the first 10 amendments are so ingrained that they're more a part of the original document than they are revisions.

The last amendment ratified was the 27th, added in 1992 to delay payment of any raise that Congress votes itself until after an election.

But despite the Constitution's enduring eloquence, someone's always trying to fix it up.

The latest attempt comes from Rep. Ronnie Shows, D-Miss., who wants to fend off a supposed onslaught of attacks from federal courts supposedly seeking to impose same-sex marriage on the states.

The proposed Federal Marriage Amendment

states: "Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this constitution or the constitution of any state, nor state or federal law, shall be construed to require that marital status, or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon unmarried couples or groups."

Put aside for a moment the fact that marriage is sacred not because the Constitution says so but because those who have pledged themselves to each other live by their solemn vows.

Even those who oppose gay marriage can appreciate that not every social agenda needs to be embodied in this nation's declaration of fundamental rights.

In brief: Leave the Constitution alone.

FORT WORTH  
STAR-TELEGRAM

# A guide to coping with visiting relatives

She always awoke from a midday nap with the imprint of a chenille bedspread on her kind face. Siestas were customary; the middle of a Mexican day had nothing on noonday in South Georgia.

Summer days at my grandmother's were hotter than the hinges of hell. After dinner I lay right beside her, lulled to a sweaty sleep by the rattle of the oscillating fan. I was as secure as a child not in her own bed can be. There, close to my grandmother, her mottled arm draped protectively across my middle, nothing bad could happen. Ever.

When we woke it was to a parade of endless chores, but chores at her house were less like work than the jobs back at home in suburbia. If she sewed, she gave me the colorful scraps to use for doll clothes. If she cooked, she made a separate, smaller pie especially for me. If she gardened, she

let me pick the petunias and zinnias and snapdragons and arrange them in a pretty vase for the table. If I broke the vase, she never made a fuss.

Adventure was as routine as the afternoon nap. My grandfather might holler from the yard: "You children, get on the porch." That meant he'd seen a snake, which he'd kill and then wave from a hoe to hear us squeal. He kept the rattlesnake rattlers in his desk drawer.

The smallest rituals seemed magical. Thumping the watermelon for ripeness before breakfast. Taking the trip to town to buy milk and bread. Even mopping the floor and watching the water disappear through a hole cut in the heart pine boards for that purpose.

Sometimes my grandfather took us fishing in Spring Creek, or for a picnic at a swimming hole called Williams' Mill.

But most of our fun was mined from the routine of their long days. Most of our entertainment was like the extra pie crust that Grannie trimmed from around the pan and rolled beneath a jelly glass; it was fun recycled from their labor, excitement at the

expense of their sweat. My grandparents didn't seem to change anything about their lives when we visited. They kept making the same steps as usual, only now with eager shadows.

I've been trying my best not to take personally the ambivalence of the niece and nephews. They used to look forward to visiting during the summertime, but that old enthusiasm seems light-years ago now. That was before they became teen-agers with rigid schedules.

Now they have better things to do than color on the floor while I type a column. They have engagements more pressing than sewing for minnows in the branch. They are half-grown. They are in demand.

Used to, for their visits, I left little to chance. I furnished rooms in their honor, painting them whatever hue they professed to love. I hung their artwork, but only after a custom frame shop framed it. I ordered toys from glossy catalogs, made ice cream from scratch and with a crank, curled up on a couch and watched their favorite Disney movies a dozen times.

Whenever I simply had to write — some job had to finance this fantastic summer camp, after all — I made sure there were available plenty of new crayons and coloring books thick as a Manhattan phone book. I could not risk encountering the "B" word: boredom.

I was, in short, at their service, my adult life on hold while I buried pirate treasure for Ben, or painted props for Chelsey's endless theater productions. If I lapsed into dull routine, they let me know.

Maybe all that production was a big mistake. Maybe they outgrew the feverish activities, then outgrew me. I might have been better off to let them see me plodding through my daily chores. It worked for my grandparents.

Nah. Children these days want more, expect more, get more. They have attention spans tailored by TV.

Which came first, spoiled kids or Toys "R" Us? It's one of those eternal questions.

So help me, if and when another child visits, we are going to cut grass, walk, make up a bed and feed the dog. If I can't make my normal life seem exotic and magical, at least I'll get the chores done.



RHETA GRIMSLEY JOHNSON



# COMMENC

## Recalling my bicycling days

I injured my leg early this year and the doctor suggested I ride a bicycle as part of my therapy. Our supply of bicycles was poor: a tiny sidewalk bicycle, a well used Mongoose trail bike and a girl's bike with a cock-eyed wheel.

I went down to my local Harley-Davidson dealer, which used to sell Schwinn. We bought some there when our boys were growing up.

"We don't sell bicycles anymore," says the sales lady. "We have a few parts. I don't think they make Schwinn bicycles any more."

So I went to Wal-Mart and looked over the supply there. They were all shiny and colorful. I consulted with my son in San Francisco who is into bicycles in a big way. He suggested I go to a bike dealer.

Have you priced bicycles lately? You don't just buy a bike. You invest in one. The young man at the bicycle store told me to straddle

the model I was considering.

"That's a 19 inch," he said. "You need a 17 inch. Your crotch should be two inches above the crossbar when you're standing with your feet on the ground."

He had to special order it. I was glad when it finally came in. I love it. The brand name is GIANT. It is silver. Beautiful. Nothing rattles when I ride it. It has shock absorbers on the front fork and on the seat.

Back in the days when you braked a bicycle with a pedal I was a bicycle riding whiz. Nothing like the bicycle daredevils you see on TV today, but pretty good for the time.

When I was a Cub Scout, growing up in Fort worth, my reputation as a bicycle rider was well known. One of the great events back then was a Scout Circus. All ages of scouts performed tricks and stunts at the Will Rogers Coliseum. They asked me to ride a bicycle through a hoop of fire. I was flattered. They darkened the coliseum for that. The applause was stimulating. I felt like the star of the show.

I used to ride my bike a lot. I had a speedometer on it and loved to go down hills to see if I could make the speedometer go past 50

miles an hour, which is all the speedometer would register. Once going down Burton Hill Road I went past 50. I'm sure had there been a 60 on there, the needle would have reached it. That was a crowning achievement in my bike riding career. I lost control of the bike at that speed and ended up crashing into a barbed wire fence. But heck, it was worth it. I had gone fast. I got up and pedaled off. A bit achy and bloody, but proud.

Back then we carried passengers on the handlebar or back fender or on the crossbar. It was known as pumping.

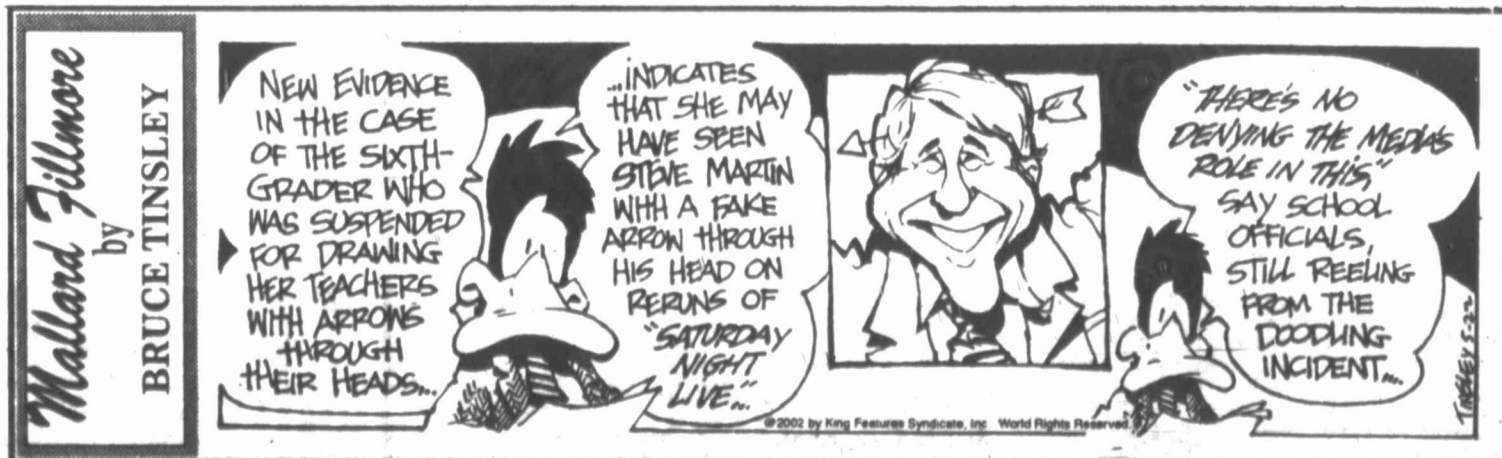
"Pump me," friends would say. And they would climb on.

We had a hill in front of our house. One day when my parents were gone, I decided to try something new. At the top of the hill I climbed on the handlebar and sat there the way a passenger would. I came down that hill lickety-split and had trouble steering the bike. I slammed into a fire hydrant at full speed. Ouch.

I'm much more conservative these days. Even though my new bike has no fenders and I brake with a lever, it's still fun to ride. I love to go down hills.



TUMBLEWEED SMITH



# Bush

WASHINGTON Seeking to Europeanize U.S.-led war on President Bush weeklong trip by warning allies could face attacking their continent for military action. "Even though some initial there's still dangers which endom, countries ours, or Germany Russia or Italy."

# Senate

WASHINGTON is within sight of legislation and the trade negotia has sought since office.

Senators were off debate and the trade bill, restores "fast track authority" to the eight-year lapse of efforts to workers because of import.

Supporters said of a strong final occur late today.

# Justice

WASHINGTON The Justice Dept says it is ready to sue in Florida and Tennessee alleging rights violations from the bitter 2000 presidential election.

However, Assistant Attorney General Robert M. Hirsch said the Justice Department is targeting settlements by the state to file the suits.

# Man says I

LILLIAN, Ala. Investigators find remains of a man, animals, including dogs of racing dogs, in a market he has been searching for more than 40 years. State officials search warrant search the 18-acre property and received a tip from investigators. Images showed bones strewn a property and used the photos to convince a judge the warrant. "It's almost a dogs," said Baldwin.

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# Bush seeks to build support for terror war with trip to Europe

WASHINGTON (AP) — Seeking to counter European doubts about the U.S.-led war on terrorism, President Bush opened his weeklong trip Wednesday by warning allies they too could face attacks and urging their continued support for military action.

"Even though we've had some initial successes, there's still danger for countries which embrace freedom, countries such as ours, or Germany, France, Russia or Italy," Bush said

as he departed the White House for a four-nation tour. "As an alliance, we must to continue to fight against global terror. We've got to be tough."

Bush flew to Berlin, where he was to use an address to the German Parliament on Thursday to underscore the need for continued cooperation against terrorism. "I know America can't win the war on terror alone," he told the German TV station ARD.

A stark reminder of

European skepticism awaited him: Some 100 protests were planned across Germany on Wednesday and Thursday to coincide with his visit, and a demonstration in Berlin on the eve of his arrival drew as many as 100,000 people, most opposing any expansion of the war.

The president has not fielded questions from White House reporters in a week, a period in which it was disclosed that he learned last August that

Osama bin Laden wanted to hijack U.S. airplanes, and did not answer queries after his brief statement Wednesday morning. Bush submitted to a series of interviews from European journalists on Tuesday, eager to win hearts and minds there in advance of his trip to Germany, France, Italy and Russia.

Looking across a table in the Roosevelt Room at reporters from all four countries, Bush told them he surveys a threat-assessment

report each morning, and added: "I am confident that I've read threats that were directed to the countries represented here."

"The best way to secure our homeland, the best way for Italy to be secure, and other countries, is to find these killers, is to hunt for them, is to chase them down," Bush later told Italy's RAI television.

Throughout the sessions with European journalists, Bush molded his answers to fit his message on terror-

ism.

Asked whether the U.S.-European relationship was healthy, Bush said fighting terror "is a common cause that is a powerful force that unites us."

Asked about the future of NATO, Bush said the war on terror requires just such a "collection of freedom-loving countries."

His view of Russia? "We want Russia, our partner now in fighting terrorism, to have the means to continue the fight."

## Senate moves toward final vote on trade package

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate is within sight of passing major trade legislation and giving President Bush the trade negotiating authority that he has sought since his first days in office.

Senators were voting today to shut off debate and move to a conclusion on the trade bill, a package that both restores "fast track" trade-negotiating authority to the president after an eight-year lapse and extends new benefits to workers who lose their jobs because of imports.

Supporters said they were confident of a strong final vote, which could occur late today or Thursday.

That confidence came after the Senate rejected three amendments Tuesday that could have undermined the delicate coalition between Republicans favoring free trade agreements and Democrats wanting assurances that labor would be protected from the fallout of those agreements.

Vice President Dick Cheney broke a 49-49 tie to defeat one of those proposals, a measure by Sen. George Allen, R-Va., that would have provided low-interest loans to help workers victimized by trade keep up with their mortgage payments for a year.

It was only the third time that Cheney, president of the Senate, has

voted and his first tiebreaker since Democrats took control of the Senate a year ago.

Earlier, Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., and other steel-state senators fell four votes short, in a 56-40, of the 60 needed to end a filibuster on their amendment.

It would have extended health care benefits to steelworkers forced into retirement when their import-hit plants go out of business.

The legislation already includes a refundable tax credit to cover 70 percent of health insurance for workers who lose their jobs because of trade.

## Justice Department to file voting rights lawsuits

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department says it is ready to file lawsuits in Florida, Missouri and Tennessee alleging voting rights violations resulting from the bitterly disputed 2000 presidential election.

However, Assistant Attorney General Ralph Boyd told the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday that he expects the cities and counties targeted by the Justice Department's civil rights division to negotiate settlements by the time he's ready to file the five suits.

"My hope, my aspiration and my expectation is that in each of those we'll reach an enforceable agreement prior to the filing of the lawsuit," Boyd said.

The suits, according to Boyd, will allege different treatment of minority voters, improper purging of voter rolls, "motor voter" registration violations and failure to provide access to disabled voters.

Other charges, he said, include failing to allow voters with limited proficiency in English to have assistance at the polls and failing

to provide bilingual assistance.

Florida's voting system endured intense scrutiny after the 2000 election, including a recount and protests that went all the way to the Supreme Court before George W. Bush was declared the winner of the state — and the presidency.

Several groups have alleged that black voters were kept from voting in Florida and other states on Election Day and that ballots of others were systematically discarded.

Some Hispanic voters in

Florida also alleged that they were required to produce two kinds of identification when only one was required and that they were confused by their ballots.

Boyd refused to name the cities or counties that will be sued, but he said the lawsuits would be filed within the next two months. "It will be well in advance of the primaries for the November 2002 elections," he said.

## Supporters of arming pilots turning to Congress for help

WASHINGTON (AP) — Supporters of arming commercial airline pilots are asking Congress to overturn the Bush administration's decision against allowing firearms in the cockpits.

The House Transportation aviation subcommittee is to consider legislation Thursday to allow trained pilots to carry guns, and a bipartisan group of senators is moving ahead with a separate bill.

"While I'm disappointed with the Department of Transportation's decision, I will redouble my efforts to pass this measure," said Sen. Conrad Burns, R-Mont. "It's imperative that we provide pilots with this crucial option."

The House Transportation Committee chairman, Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, said he plans to have his panel consider the bill next month.

But in the Senate, the Commerce Committee

chairman, Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., remains opposed to armed pilots.

"Pilots are supposed to fly," said Hollings, whose panel oversees the airline industry in the Senate. "They're not supposed to shoot."

Transportation Undersecretary John Magaw, who heads the new Transportation Security Administration, said Tuesday he would not allow pilots to carry guns. Reinforced cockpits and armed air marshals provide enough protection against terrorists who try to take over an airplane, Magaw said.

"The responsibility of the pilot is to control the aircraft," Magaw said. "The use of firearms aboard a U.S. aircraft must be limited to those thoroughly trained members of law enforcement. Our position is make that cockpit as safe as we can, control that plane and get it on the ground."

## Man says he killed thousands of aging greyhounds

LILLIAN, Ala. (AP) — Investigators found the remains of as many as 2,000 animals, including hundreds of racing dogs, on the property of a man who said he has been shooting and burying greyhounds at a charge of \$10 per animal for more than 40 years.

State officials obtained a search warrant Tuesday to search the 18 acres owned by Robert Rhodes after receiving a tip from Florida investigators. Satellite images showed animal bones strewn about the property and investigators used the photographs to convince a judge to issue the warrant.

"It's almost a Dachau for dogs," said Baldwin County

District Attorney David Whetstone, referring to the Nazi concentration camp where thousands of Jews were exterminated between 1933 and 1945.

Florida officials were investigating allegations that greyhounds from Pensacola Greyhound Park, a dog-racing track, have been improperly destroyed.

Rhodes, 68, told The Mobile Register that he has killed and buried as many as 2,000 animals humanely — with a gunshot — but did not say what tracks brought him the dogs.

"Wouldn't you assume a person doing this for 40 years would know how to put them down?" he said. "I would not condone any tor-

ture."

Whetstone said he is considering criminal charges against Rhodes under the state's "Gucci Law" if any of the animals underwent severe pain or were tortured. The offense is a felony punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

Other possible charges include animal cruelty, a misdemeanor punishable by a maximum of a year in jail.

Whetstone said a veterinarian autopsied four of the dogs and determined only one had been shot cleanly through the brain. The others received bullet wounds through the neck and elsewhere, indicating they would have suffered before dying, he said.

★ Memorial Day Weekend ★

# ★ Sidewalk Sale ★

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<p><b>Summer Beach Towels</b></p> <p><b>NOW \$5<sup>00</sup></b> <small>Orig. \$24</small></p> <p>Nice Selection <b>ONLY 201</b></p>	<p><b>Bar-B-Q In-A-Bag Utensil Sets</b></p> <p><b>NOW \$5<sup>00</sup></b> <small>Orig. \$24</small></p> <p><b>ONLY 101</b></p>	<p><b>Jersey Knit Sheets</b></p> <p><b>NOW \$19<sup>99</sup></b> <small>Orig. \$80</small></p> <p>•All Sizes •All Colors</p>
<p><b>Shower Curtain With Hooks</b></p> <p><b>NOW \$4<sup>00</sup></b> <small>Orig. \$12</small></p> <p><b>ONLY 131</b></p>	<p><b>Vinyl Table Mats •Tablecloths</b></p> <p><b>NOW \$3<sup>00</sup></b> <small>Orig. \$12</small></p> <p><b>ONLY 151</b></p>	<p><b>Great Selection Of Quilts And Comforters</b></p> <p><b>NOW \$19<sup>99</sup></b> <small>Orig. To \$60</small></p>
<p><b>Checkerboard Tablecloths •Napkins •Table Mats</b></p> <p><b>SALE \$1<sup>99</sup> to \$8<sup>99</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Quilted Pillow Shams</b></p> <p><b>NOW \$2<sup>00</sup></b> <small>Orig. \$20</small></p> <p><b>ONLY 301</b></p>	<p><b>Bathroom Lid Covers</b></p> <p><b>NOW \$5<sup>00</sup></b> <small>Orig. \$15</small></p> <p><b>ONLY 61</b></p>

Open Thursday 9 am to 6 pm  
Friday 10 am to 6 pm

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In Case Of Bad Weather, Sale Will Be Held Inside.

**AIR FAIR HANGAR 25 SINGING CONTEST REGISTRATION FORM**

Contestant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Song: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant providing Tape: \_\_\_\_\_ CD: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

The Air Fair is a fund raising event to assist with the upkeep of Hangar 25. Hangar 25 is a World War II museum restored to preserve the history and honor the memory of our Veterans.

---

**CONTEST RULES & INFORMATION**

DATE: June 15, 2002      TIME: 10:00am

PLACE: Hangar 25, 1911 Apron Dr.

SIGN UP DEADLINE: June 10, 2002  
Return registration forms and fee to P.O. Box 2925, Big Spring, TX 79721.

Song selections must be patriotic, honoring our country and military.

Registration fee \$100, recommend sponsorships which can be a tax deductible contribution.

In addition to talent, judging will include stage presentation ex. to dress in military attire.

Must provide accompaniment music ex. tape or CD.

For additional information call 264-1999.

**PRIZES AWARDED**

MAY 22 2002

Alaskan cruises and tours of food await readers at the Howard County Library

The Library will be closed Saturday and Monday for the Memorial Day Holiday. We will reopen on Tuesday, May 28 at 9 a.m.



HOLLIS MCCRIGHT

Roger Welsch has written a really neat book. You may have seen him on "Postcards from Nebraska," the biweekly reports that he does for CBS Sunday mornings. Those five-minute vignettes have made his name synonymous with small town people and pleasures. His new book, "Diggin' In & Piggin' Out: The Truth About Food and Men" is a richly funny tour of food, the men who eat it and the women who join him. It is a philosophical tour de force of why men must

cook over open flames, the perfect proportion for a gin and tonic and why home cured ham is the perfect food. You can find this book on the New Book Shelf. When Suze Orman was 13 she watched her father dive into the flames of his burning take-out chicken shack in order to rescue his cash register. In that moment Orman learned that money was more important than life itself. And so it became her quest to be rich. But years later, when Orman became a wealthy broker with a huge investment firm, she was profoundly unhappy. What went wrong? She had not yet achieved financial freedom. In her nine-step program, Orman covers the ingredients to financial success—confronting our beliefs and fears, learning the nuts and bolts (and insiders secrets!) of savvy management, and finding the spiritual trust that leads to abundance. Her book is titled "Suze

Orman's Financial Guidebook—Put the 9 Steps to Work." She also has a show on MSNBC that is very interesting to watch. Have you wanted to sail the Inner Passage or the Gulf of Alaska? If you have, now is the time.

**For Your Information**  
The Library will be closed Saturday and Monday for the Memorial Day Holiday. It will reopen on Tuesday at 9 a.m.

can find this book and other travel guides in the 917's. In a completely different direction, Richard Bangs' book "Adventure Without End" (910.4 BAN R) will make you extremely grateful to be on a civilized cruise ship! These 16 adventure stories include an encounter with a hippo in a river in Tanzania, a stormy trip by canoe on the remote Blackfeather River deep in the Mackenzie Mountains of Canada's Northwest Territories (100 miles south of the Arctic Circle), and a hike up Mount Adams in Washington State. Bangs' madcap experiences are a pleasure to read about; on the other hand, actually being there could prove a bit too risky. Did you know that the Texas' prison system does not allow inmates to have a copy of the Texas

Almanac? Why not? The rumor goes, because of the local county road maps. In case of a jailbreak, the inmates would use the road maps as an escape route. Whether or not that is true, the newest Almanac is chockfull of information on the state of Texas. Did you know that on an average day in Texas, there are 940 live births; 402 people died; 504 marriages were performed and 210 divorces were granted. There are 20.8 million people living in Texas according to the 2000 Census. This is an increase of 23 percent since 1990, when we had only 16.9 million. Teachers, when you ask your students to do their Texas history project, this book will be invaluable to them. The call number is 317.3764 TEX A and it is available for checkout. The Howard County Library is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Friday and from 10 a.m.

until 5 p.m. on Saturday. Children's Story Time has been discontinued until September. Please be on alert for the Summer Reading Program sign up times. Karen has visited each elementary school campus to kick off "Read Across Texas," our theme for the summer. If you would like to suggest a book, video, audio book, we are open for suggestions! Give us the name of the book and we will try to add it to the collection. If we cannot purchase it in a timely manner, check with Vera and perhaps it is available through inter-library loan. The Library is located at 500 Main St. Our phone number is 264-2260. Website is www.howardcounty.lib.tx.us; our email address is howardcounty@hotmail.com.

Hollis McCright writes a regular column for the Herald.

Marie Hall receives honorary degree for support of center

HERALD STAFF REPORT

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center presented an honorary degree during commencement ceremonies Saturday.



HALL

Marie Hall of Big Spring received an honorary doctor of humane letters for her support of the Health Sciences Center. She established the Marie Hall Chair in Rural Health at the Health Sciences Center to create and implement an interdisciplinary

curriculum that, in conjunction with telecommunication and distance learning technology will deliver health care to persons living in rural areas using the team approach. Hall also funded the creation of the F. Marie Hall synergistic Center at the Health Sciences Center. The center will provide an opportunity for students, staff and faculty of all disciplines to interact as part of their health care training. "Marie Hall is a leader in West Texas and has demonstrated the vision and compassion needed to inspire future healers," said David R. Smith, MD, chancellor of the Texas Tech University System.

ABC to set aside normal programming on Sept. 11

NEW YORK (AP) — ABC will set aside its normal programming for a full day and evening on Sept. 11 to commemorate the first anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. The coverage will begin with "Good Morning America" at 7 a.m., break for local news in the evening, then continue through "Nightline." "This is the major news event of our lives," ABC News President David Westin said. "This is a real opportunity go to back and comprehensively and systematically put together the facts as we now know them, and put them into some perspective." NBC and CBS executives are also discussing their Sept 11 plans, but have made no announcements. The 39 million people who watched CBS' "9-11" docu-

mentary on March 10 indicates there's interest in looking back at the tragedy, or at least at the insider camera view that special offered. CBS has the contractual right to show "9-11" once more, and it's widely assumed it will be in September. ABC News' tackling of major projects with extended programming has become something of a signature. The network drew high ratings for its marathon coverage for New Year's 2000. The network will broadcast memorials on Sept. 11, and will present a prime-time minute-by-minute reconstruction of what happened a year earlier. Peter Jennings is also scheduled to moderate a discussion with children, similar to what he did last September.

"...I was looking for a great local plan. I found it."

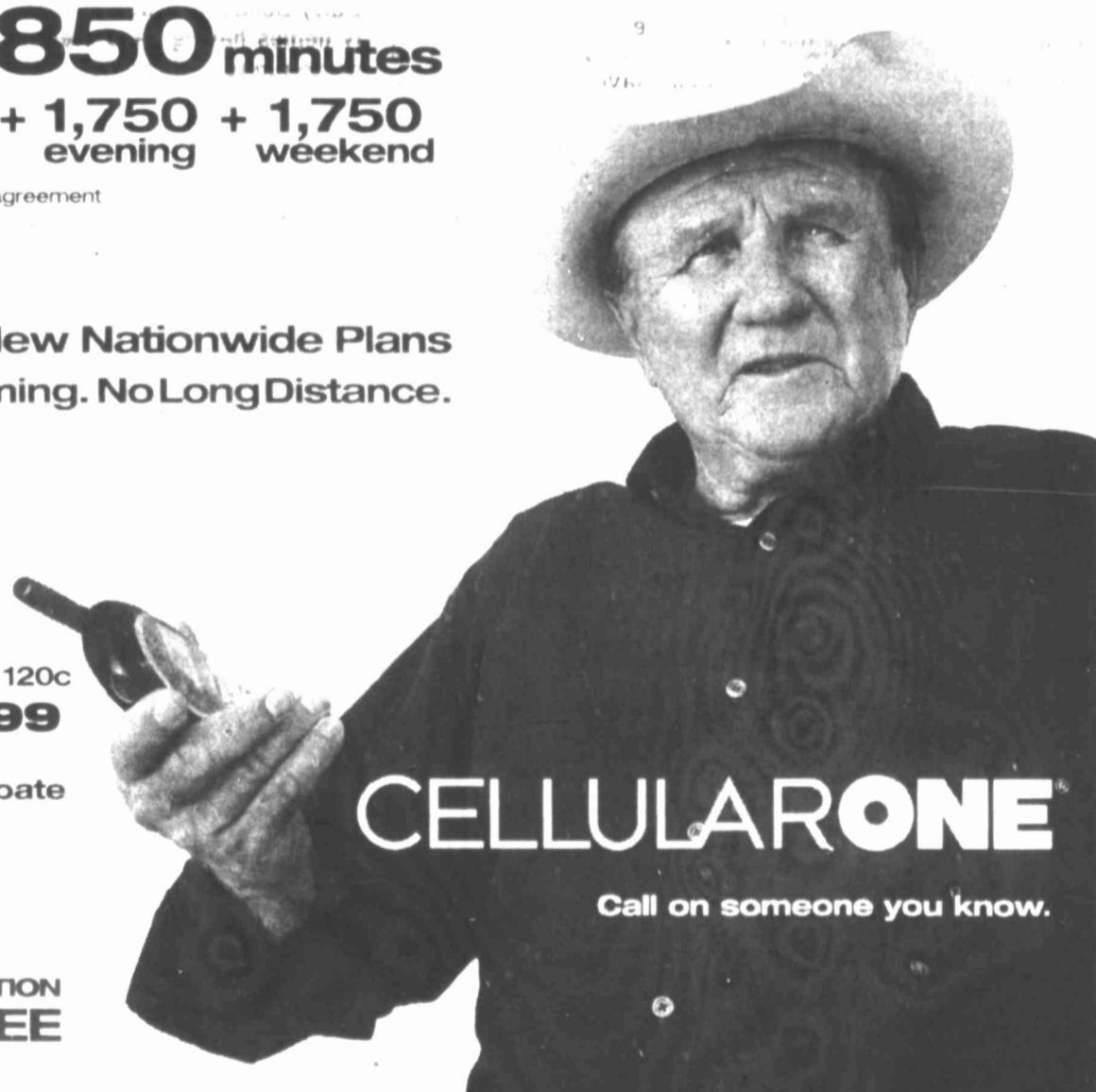
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Sat 10am-5pm

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May 29th Wednesday Super 8 Motel (Formerly Best Western) 700 West I-20 Big Spring, TX 79720 <small>(next to the Rip Griffin Truck Stop)</small>	May 30th & 31st Thursday & Friday Holiday Inn Hotel 7 Suites Midland, TX 79703 <small>(Corner of Midland &amp; Wall St.)</small>	June 1st & 2nd Saturday & Sunday MCM Elegante (Formerly Radisson) 5600 E. University Odessa, TX 79762 <small>(Across from UTPB)</small>

Call 1-800-314-4499 for an Appointment or for dates for Free Echocardiograms at these locations: Lubbock, TX, Amarillo, TX, San Angelo, TX, Abilene, TX & Clovis, NM and Hobbs, NM.

Walk-ins Welcome! 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

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**IN BRIEF**

**Bulldogettes Comanche or**  
Coahoma's Bulldogettes will seek a return to the Class 2A state tournament for one-year hiatus Friday when Comanche's Lady Bulldogs play in the Region 10 championship game at Christian University in Wells Field. The Bulldogettes reached the regional game with a 5-2 Eula's Lady Bulldogs while the Lady Bulldogs (19-8) advanced to a 0 win over City's Lady Bulldogs.

**Garden City's earns all-state**  
Garden City's Jansa has been named the Class 1A Texas Coaches Association State Track and Field Athlete of the Year. Jansa, a sophomore runner, recently recorded the 3,200 meters second in the state meet in Austin. She followed with sixth-place in both races at the track meet in Austin.

**Golfers record at Comanche**  
Two Big Spring golfers recently recorded in one while playing the Comanche Track and Field Course. Pete Petree had his first ace of his career on May 12 using a 7-iron for the course's No. 1 hole. The shot was witnessed by Rick Pollard, Fieseler, Thompson, McCullough, Smith and Alton. On May 20, Rile got the fourth ace in his career using a 4-iron for the No. 4 hole. That shot was witnessed by Richburg, Farmer and J.D. Jansa.

**Ragball tournament slated for week**  
A ragball tournament has been scheduled for Saturday and Sunday at the Roy Anderson Complex. Entry fees are \$10 per person. Teams must have a minimum of 10 players and no more than 15. Players must be 18 or older and play between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. on Saturday. For more information, call Jason Canale at 264-1193.

**CGA scholarship tournament slated**  
The Chicano Golf Association of Big Spring will hold its annual Scholarship Tournament Saturday and Sunday, June 8-9, at Comanche Trail Course. Entry fees for the person scramble are \$60 per player. Mulligans are \$10 per day. Fees do not include cart rental. Teams will be selected following Saturday round. For more information, call 264-2366 or 264-1193.

**Lady Steers horse camp scheduled**  
Big Spring Lady Steers head basketball coach Jimmy Avery will conduct the Lady Steers Fundamentals Basketball Camp from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. June 11-12 at the Big Spring High School gymnasium. The camp is the current first-through













WEDNESDAY

MAY 22

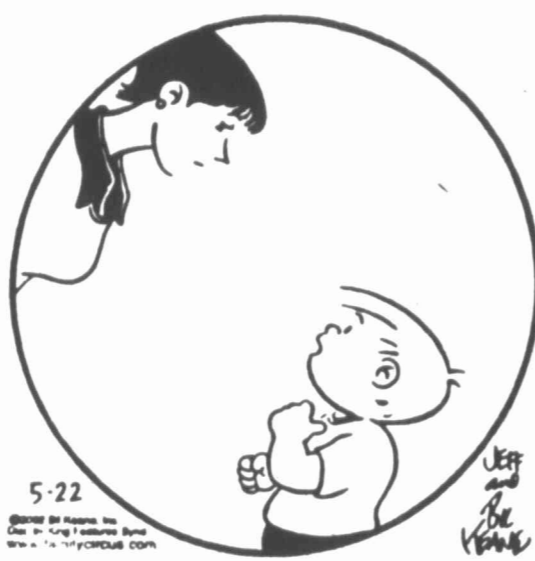
	KMID (2)	KPEJ (3)	KEBA (5)	FAM (6)	KOSA (7)	WFAA (8)	KWES (9)	WTBS (11)	UNI (13)	DISN (14)	NASH (15)	TMC (16)	SHOW (20)	HBO (22)	KMLM (24)	A&E (25)	DISC (26)	TNT (28)	TLC (41)
	Midland	Odessa	Dallas	Dallas	Odessa	Dallas	Midland	Atlanta	Spanish	Premium	Nashville	Premium	Premium	Premium	Odessa	New York	Discovery	Atlanta	Learning Ch.
6 PM	News Fortune	King of the Hill Raymond	Cyberchase Zobocon	Home Videos Home Videos	News Ent. Tonight	News Fortune	News Seinfeld (CC)	Friends (CC) Roseanne	Intrusa (SS)	Movie: Quints (CC)	Mad TV (CC)	Movie: Beverly Hills Cop (CC)	Movie: Finding Forrester (CC)	Update With John Hages	Update With John Hages	Law & Order (CC)	Mandrills: Painted	Pretender (CC)	Medical Medical
7 PM	My Wife and Kids (CC)	Simpsons Celebrity	American Family (CC)	Movie: Down Penscope	Academy of Country Music Awards (CC)	My Wife and Kids (CC)	Outrageous Game Show	Movie: Deep Blue Sea	El Privilegio de Amar	(35) Movie: Wish Upon a Star (CC)	Star Trek: Next Gener.	Supernova (CC)	Movie: Beverly Hills Cop (CC)	Forrester (CC)	Christie Dr. Massey	Biography (CC)	Demolition Day	Movie: Heartbreak Ridge	Cities on the Sea
8 PM	Drew Carey Drew Carey	Boxing 2 (CC)	Allies at War (CC)	Whose Line? Whose Line?	Whose Line? Whose Line?	David Blaine's Verigo (CC)	Law & Order (CC)	Movie: Deep Blue Sea	Don Francisco Presenta	(15) Movie: Parent Trap II	Star Trek: Next Gener.	Supernova (CC)	Movie: Beverly Hills Cop (CC)	Spirit: Stallion Six Feet Under (CC)	Light of the Southwest	American Justice (CC)	Demolition Day	Movie: Heartbreak Ridge	Junkyard Wars
9 PM	David Blaine's Verigo (CC)	Cops (CC)	Blind Date	Whose Line? Whose Line?	Whose Line? Whose Line?	David Blaine's Verigo (CC)	Law & Order (CC)	Movie: Deep Blue Sea	Don Francisco Presenta	(15) Movie: Parent Trap II	Star Trek: Next Gener.	Supernova (CC)	Movie: Beverly Hills Cop (CC)	Spirit: Stallion Six Feet Under (CC)	Light of the Southwest	American Justice (CC)	Demolition Day	Movie: Heartbreak Ridge	Junkyard Wars
10 PM	News Nightline	Jerry Springer (CC)	News-Lehrer	700 Club (CC)	News (35) Late	News (CC) Nightline	News (35) Tonight	Movie: Silent Predators	En las Mejores Familias	So Weird (CC)	Mad TV (CC)	Women of the Night (CC)	Land's End (CC)	The Young and the Dead	Hour of Healing	Law & Order (CC)	Demolition Day	Movie: Heartbreak Ridge	Cities on the Sea
11 PM	Politically Inc. Paid Program	Suddenly Spin City (CC)	Nature (CC) (DVS)	Who's Boss? Who's Boss?	Show (CC) (37) Late	Ent. Tonight Politically Inc.	Show (CC) (37) Late	Movie: Silent Predators	En las Mejores Familias	So Weird (CC)	Mad TV (CC)	Women of the Night (CC)	Land's End (CC)	The Young and the Dead	Hour of Healing	Law & Order (CC)	Demolition Day	Movie: Heartbreak Ridge	Cities on the Sea
12 AM	(12:05) Sally (CC)	Home Imp Paid Program	Nature (CC) (DVS)	Guthy-Renker Paid Program	Show (CC) Street Smarts	Show (CC) (12:06) Oprah Winfrey (CC)	Night (CC) Fraser	Movie: Silent Predators	En las Mejores Familias	So Weird (CC)	Mad TV (CC)	Women of the Night (CC)	Land's End (CC)	The Young and the Dead	Hour of Healing	Law & Order (CC)	Demolition Day	Movie: Heartbreak Ridge	Cities on the Sea

DENNIS THE MENACE



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"Tommy, on a scale of one to ten, how good a boy am I?"

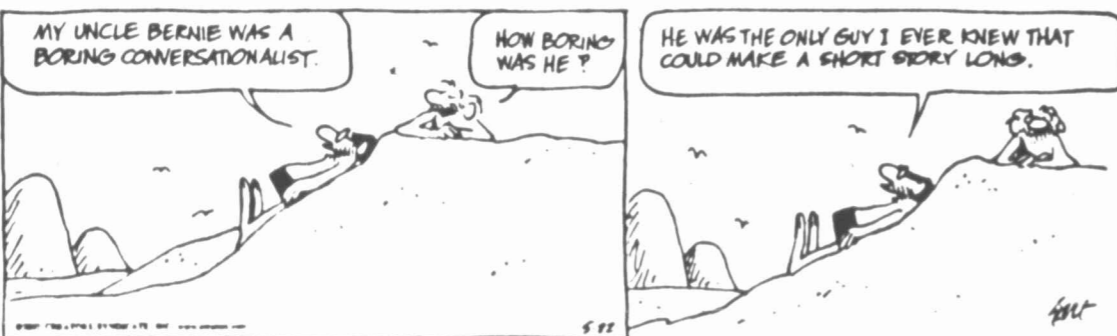
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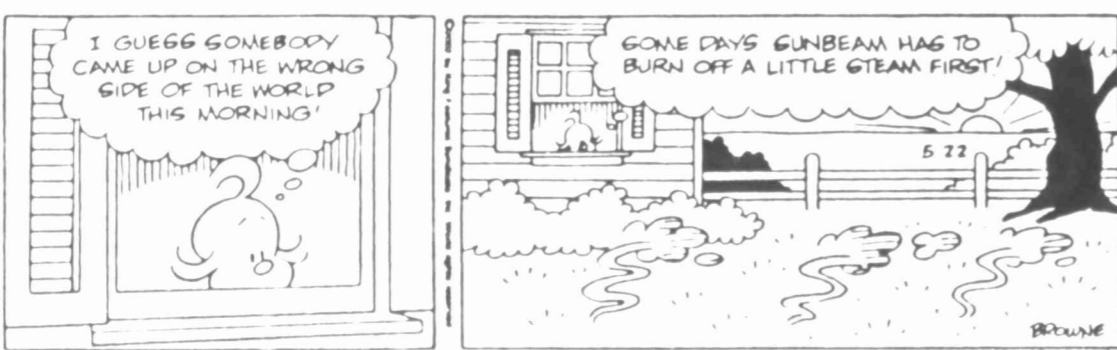
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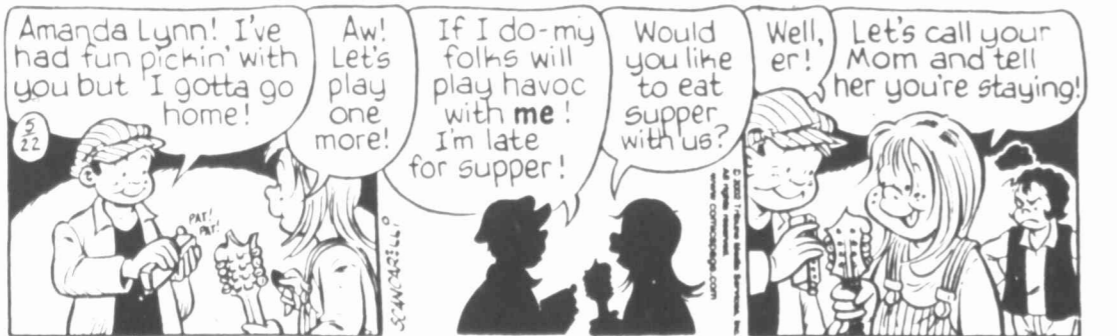
GEECH



HI AND LOIS



GASOLINE ALLEY



SNUFFY SMITH



BEETLE BAILEY



THIS DATE IN HISTORY

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

Today is Wednesday, May 22, the 142nd day of 2002. There are 223 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 22, 1972, President Nixon began a visit to the Soviet Union, during which he and Kremlin leaders signed the SALT I arms limitation treaty.

On this date:  
In 1761, the first life insurance policy in the United States was issued, in Philadelphia.

In 1813, composer Richard Wagner was born in Leipzig, Germany.

In 1868, the "Great Train Robbery" took place near Marshfield, Ind., as seven members of the Reno gang made off with \$96,000 in loot.

In 1900, The Associated Press (founded in 1848) was incorporated in New York

as a non-profit news cooperative.

In 1939, Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini signed a "Pact of Steel" committing Germany and Italy to a military alliance.

In 1947, the "Truman Doctrine" was enacted as Congress appropriated military and economic aid for Greece and Turkey.

In 1969, the lunar module of Apollo 10 flew to within nine miles of the moon's surface in a dress rehearsal for the first lunar landing.

In 1972, the island nation of Ceylon became the republic of Sri Lanka.

In 1990, after years of conflict, pro-Western North Yemen and pro-Soviet South Yemen merged to form a single nation, the Republic of Yemen.

In 1990, boxer Rocky Graziano died in New York at age 71.

Ten years ago: After a reign lasting nearly 30 years, Johnny Carson hosted NBC's "Tonight Show" for the last time, telling his audience, "I bid you a very

heartfelt good night." (Carson was succeeded by Jay Leno.)

Today's Birthdays: Movie reviewer Judith Crist is 80. Singer Charles Aznavour is 78. Actor Michael Constantine is 75. Conductor Peter Nero is 68. Actor-director Richard Benjamin is 64. Actor Frank Converse is 64. Actor Michael Sarrazin is 62. Former CNN anchor Bernard Shaw is 62. Actor Paul Winfield is 61. Actress Barbara Parkins is 60. Songwriter Bernie Taupin is 52. Actor Al Corley is 43.

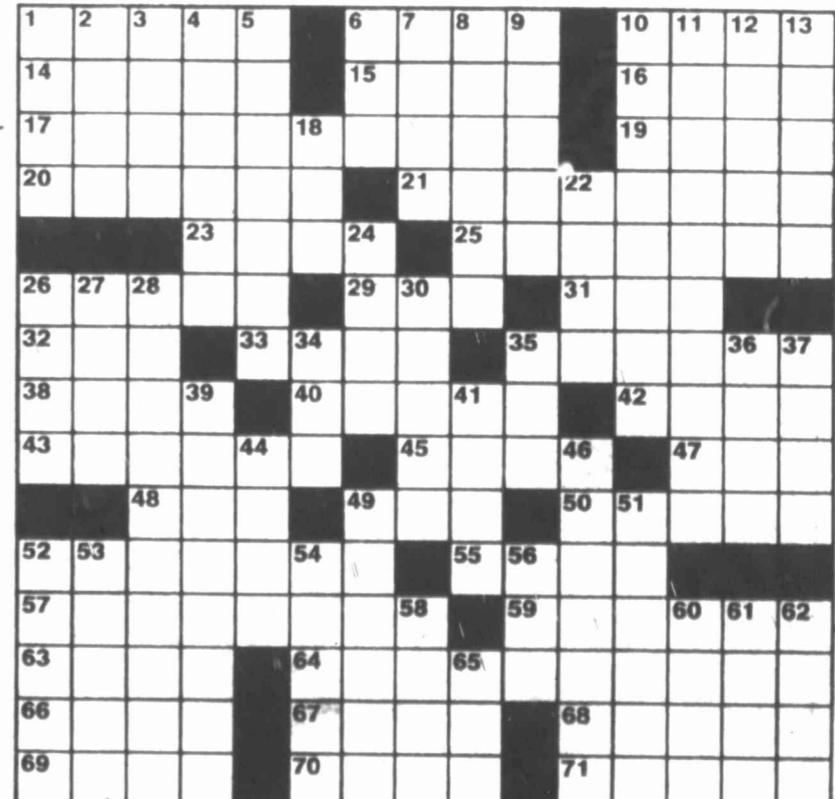
Answer to previous puzzle  
RELAY MAC YACHT  
OMEGA ERA OPRAH  
ESSEN DISKDRIVE  
EKED TEASERS  
ASA ELLERY DEE  
SUPREMECOURT  
NEHI ORO PLOVER  
EDITH SNIDE  
REDEAL MDS ADES  
SHIPPINGPLANE  
SHE BIGTOE LST  
OARSMEN HWYS  
FIREPLACE SUGAR  
AROMA TAR ELITE  
SYRIA ADS RUNES

Newsday Crossword

FOOTSIE by Fred Piscop  
Edited by Stanley Newman

- ACROSS  
1 Imprison  
6 Give a whupping to  
10 Anatomical pouches  
14 Tours' river  
15 More than scarce  
16 Nautical speed unit  
17 Dessert made from molasses  
19 Kill time  
20 Give one's word to  
21 Subatomic particle  
23 Big-top barker  
25 Varsity awards  
26 Basiliac parts  
29 Figure on a fiver  
31 Put in stitches  
32 "Well, --di-dah!"  
33 Mandlikova of tennis  
35 Analyzes grammatically  
38 Resting on  
40 Dustin, in *Midnight Cowboy*  
42 Bumbling sort  
43 Lusters  
45 Role for Ronny  
47 Actress Thurman  
48 -- Lanka  
49 Actress Joanne  
50 Shelties' charges  
52 A or an  
55 Vintners' valley  
57 Snorkel or York  
59 Main arteries

- 63 *Each Dawn* (Cagney film)  
64 Chinese entree  
66 Bit of force  
67 Spherical starter  
68 Medicinal plant  
69 Brain scans, for short  
70 Marsh growth  
71 Grain bane  
9 Skein formers  
10 Skips along  
11 *Melrose Place* actor  
12 Car registration datum  
13 British guns  
18 Place for 50 Across  
22 "Most Unusual Day"  
24 Lang of Smallville  
26 "Dear me!"  
27 Trodden track  
28 Tight budget, so to speak  
30 Ulan  
34 -- longa, vita brevis  
35 Luau dish  
36 Noted plus-size model  
37 Hotel freebie  
39 Orbital low points  
41 Acted as deejay  
44 "Good work!"  
46 Advocate  
49 Stand for  
51 She wrote about Atticus and Boo  
52 In reserve  
53 Color anew  
54 Truman's birthplace  
56 "Open wide" word  
58 "... bring back my Bonnie --"  
60 Chinese society  
61 Florence's river  
62 32-card game  
65 Yard squares



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5/22/02

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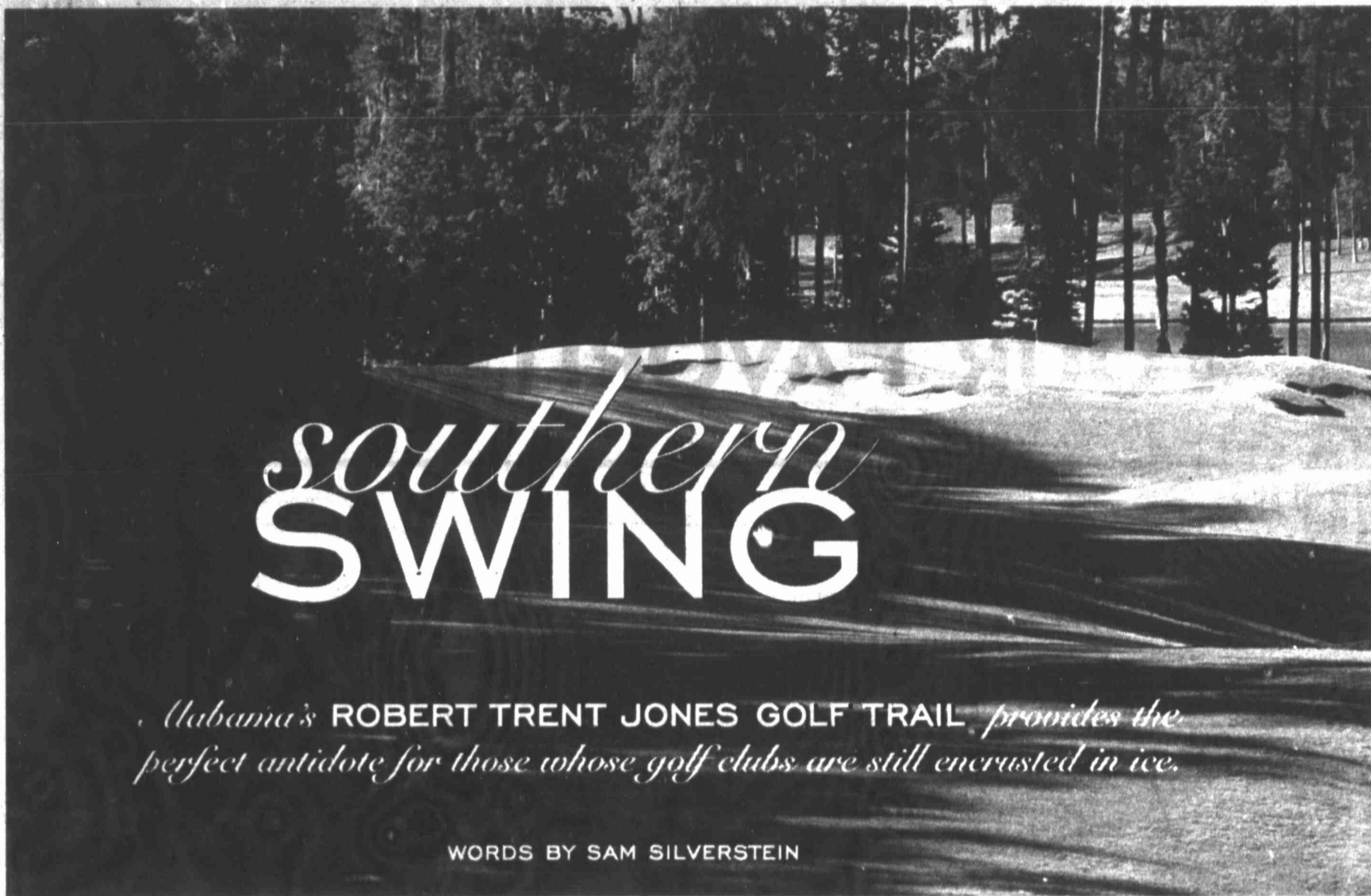
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Alabama's ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF TRAIL provides the perfect antidote for those whose golf clubs are still encrusted in ice.

WORDS BY SAM SILVERSTEIN

Since opening for business in the early '90s, the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail in Alabama has built a reputation as paradise on earth among a certain breed of person: those whose idea of light reading is *Golf Digest* instead of *Dave Pelz's Putting Bible*, who absorb their doses of national news via the Golf Channel, who view any reflective surface as an opportunity to examine their swings.

Of course, non-golfers and beginners are welcome along the Trail. A recently renovated Marriott Grand Hotel at Point Clear, on the Gulf of Mexico, has a tricked-up pool for the kiddos and a European-style spa for men and women not set on tackling the course. Every golf hole on the entire Trail was designed with forward tees to accommodate golfers of various abilities.

But at its essence, this is hardcore golf, featuring beefy, long layouts with lots of drama. Trail courses, 21 in all, are sited on sprawling tracts of land at eight facilities throughout the state. There's room enough at each facility for backless driving ranges, stately clubhouses and ambitious "short courses"—don't call them pitches and putts—ideal for settling wagers that run into overtime.

In Scotland, luxury motor coaches carrying CEOs from seaside links to luxury resorts are a common sight. Here it's four dudes in a SUV, clubs stacked to the ceiling. The competition flows thickest during the spring high season, when hardcore golfers whose home clubs still are encrusted in ice head South en masse for their first golf fix of the year. The crowd "is from out of town, and they're here to play golf" says an assistant pro at one Trail complex.

**IF YOU BUILD IT...**

Not surprisingly, the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail sprang from the imagination of a golfer, Dr. David Bronner, CEO of Retirement Systems of Alabama. Officially, Bronner is an appointed money manager for the state's teachers and other public employees. Unofficially, he's Alabama's self-appointed tourist minister, ambassador and one of the main players in the state's development scene.

The idea of building a network of world-class golf courses first occurred to Bronner in the late '80s. An inveterate Big Thinker, Bronner set his sights on enlisting a conspicuous architect, and letters were sent to several of the most prominent names in the business. Most couldn't comprehend what was being proposed.

"They'd try to correct us: 'Clearly you don't mean you're going to do seven sites at the same time, more than 18 holes at each site,'" Bronner recalls. "We were trying to do something that had never been done in the world ... it was a matter

of finding someone who thought we were credible."

The most outrageous name on Bronner's wish list got his gist. He found a kindred spirit in legendary architect Robert Trent Jones, Sr., who emerged from semi-retirement to take on the challenge of developing the Trail. By then, Jones' legacy as one of the great golf course architects of all time was secure. But the opportunity to develop all seven original sites (an eighth, Capitol Hill, came online in 2000) proved irresistible to the octogenarian Englishman, who designed or renovated an estimated 500 courses during a seven-decade-long career.

Jones' zeal for the project was obvious in his hands-on approach as well as the quality of the final product. He once was quoted in *Business Week* as considering the Trail project a once-in-

lifetime chance "to paint my Sistine Chapel."

Jones, who died in 2000 at age 93, designed the Trail to capitalize on Alabama's diverse topography while keeping his foot relentlessly heavy on the gas. "He told me a couple times, 'We're making 'em too hard,'" Bronner recalls of the early give and take between the architect and owner. "I kept telling him, 'No, we're not.' ... Everybody in the country complained about Pete Dye's course at PGA West when it first came online, that it was so difficult. And every time I went there, all I saw were people standing in line with \$200 in their hands. They want punishment."

All 18 original Trail courses were constructed in one frenzied push. The first, Oxmoor Valley in Birmingham, opened in the fall of '92, less than two years from when the idea for the Trail first had occurred to Bronner. The last of the original seven complexes came online within a year. Total price tag: approximately \$140 million.

Acclaim for Jones' handiwork began rolling in soon after the ceremonial first drives were struck. *Golf Digest* listed both regulation courses at the Grand National complex in Auburn/Opelika among the top four new public courses in the country in 1993. The Links course at Grand National regularly cracks the esteemed publication's annual public top-100 to this day.

The professional golf tours have the Trail on their radar as well. The LPGA tour visits Magnolia Grove, in Mobile, each year. The Buy.com tour held its season-ending Tour Championship at Capitol Hill in September 2001. Plans are in the works for both to return this fall.

**72 HOLES, 72 HOURS**  
My own taste of the Trail comprised 72 holes in three days at three facilities within easy driving distance of Montgomery, Alabama's capital and roughly the state's midpoint. Typical of the entire Trail, each course had qualities in common, yet was distinct from one another, despite their proximity.

The Judge, our first course, is one of three at Capitol Hill in Prattville, on the outskirts of Montgomery. The Judge's elevated first tee box affords views of Montgomery and the Alabama River in the distance, a skinny band of fairway below, glimpses of pleasures to come beyond the steeply sloped first green. It was a grand, and appropriately daunting, way to christen the trip. "When you enter The Judge, you enter The Judge," our starter told us. "We'll bring sandwiches out to you, but you won't see much of anyone else for the rest of your round." Down we plunged.

A relentless lattice of difficult golf holes ensued. The Judge is the most recent Trail course to come online and was designed to expand on the most popular features of its predecessors. Namely: their difficulty. The Alabama River's opaque backwaters provide much of the trouble; the number of water carries reached double-digits early on the back nine. Dry corners of the course were guarded by colonies of fire ants. The round was punishing but enjoyable, and blew past in the blink of an eye.

Our resting spot, Legends Hotel, is conveniently close to the local Wal-Mart, which is handy when re-loading a supply of golf balls.

The following morning we drove an hour and 25 minutes due east, through cotton fields, beneath a promising sunrise, to the Grand National golf complex at Auburn/Opelika. Here we received another warm greeting at the bag drop, and mounted the stairs of another stately clubhouse. A trend clearly was developing.

Grand National features two regulation courses, Links and Lake, and a short course. Trent Jones, Sr. is reported to have characterized the property as the best for golf he ever saw.

We played the Links course which, true to its name, was Scottish in character. Six-hundred-acre Lake Saughahatche, in play on 24 of Grand National's 36 regulation holes, is glimpsed for the first time behind the Links course's second hole and reappears intermittently throughout the track. No. 6, a twisty par 5 that plays to a remote corner of the property, was a particular favorite. And the water carry to 18 was as hard, and good, as it gets. Everyone in our group hit the green in regulation,

each other noisily across the dry forest floor were the only company.

The third and last stop on our Trail mini-tour was Cambrian Ridge, in Greenville, an hour south of Montgomery. Cambrian Ridge is a complex of three regulation nines. The property again has water everywhere, and Grand National's serpentine nature, but introduces a new element: hills. The Canyon nine is a roller coaster ride of elevated tees and landing areas in the elbow of doglegs, with several carries over catfish-ruled water. The Loblolly nine smoothes out a bit, with generous fairways and rock-hard greens. Loblolly's polished air is said to be the closest most mortals will come to playing Augusta National.

Jones' masterly touch with the blueprint and the surveyor's map was felt all weekend long. With amoeba-like bunkers and raised, multi-tiered greens, only a true wizard with the flat stick will play much golf here without putting off one of the greens.

But what self-respecting hardcore golfer would back down from that challenge?

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**THE CAUSE**

Retirement Systems of Alabama CEO Dr. David Bronner was born in Minnesota, and moved to Alabama in his early 20s to attend law school and pursue a PhD. He has been in charge of the state's pension fund for nearly 30 years.

Framed press clippings on the wall of his downtown Montgomery office describe Bronner as "iconoclast," "pugnacious" and "hard-driving"; his style has made enemies along the way. But the beneficiaries of his skill as a money manager, the state's public employees, are devoted. And Bronner's love for his adopted home, in turn, runs deep. To him the Trail is an investment, but it's also a cause.

The image of Alabama as an intolerant state was born during the Civil Rights struggles of the 1960s and perpetuated in 1990, when that year's PGA Championship was moved from the Shoal Creek Country Club in Birmingham after it was revealed that the club's membership policy barred the door to African-Americans.

But golf also could be the engine of Alabama's renaissance. Or so Bronner believes. "The straw I was grasping for was some mechanism to change the [state's] attitude and perception," Bronner says. The Trail is "an experiment to try to reintroduce Alabamians to the rest of the world, and introduce the rest of the world to Alabama."

True to its mission, the Trail

accomplishes an unlikely parlay: championship-quality golf shot through with an egalitarian vibe. The target demo is "people who love the game of golf who don't have the connections or the money to play championship golf," Bronner says. "Here's an opportunity to play championship golf that won't bankrupt you ... [The Trail] is as good or better as any top-quality public golf courses in the world, but at a reasonable price."

Green fees vary slightly from course to course on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, but all are good deals. The steepest green fee in the circuit is \$65 to play The Judge at Capitol Hill during the spring peak season, and the general range is \$35-60 year-round. With steep discounts on same-day replays, a customer would be hard pressed to spend \$100 a day to play 36 holes of stellar golf plus rent a cart at any facility on the Trail.

Has the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, as intended, turned tourist heads toward Alabama? It's hard to calculate a change in something as ephemeral as reputation. Hard numbers are easier to understand, especially in Bronner's world.

"We've had a positive return," Bronner says. "But the big impact has been on the state of Alabama. When the Trail started, tourism was less than a \$2 billion a year industry. Now it's a \$6.1 billion industry."

—S.S.

one of those "maybe we can play this game after all" moments that keep the golf economy humming.

Overall, Grand National seemed more forgiving, less overwhelmingly huge, than The Judge. The back nine features several crazy par fours that were downright cozy. Not that my score reflected any improvement. In the afternoon we played the short course, which featured all the regulation course's quality, sans the option to lay up. A father and son twosome on the horizon and several etiquette-indifferent squirrels chasing

gomery and Muscle Shoals. Northwest puts you in easy driving range of 21 fabulous courses on eight magnificent Trail sites.

Northwest Airlines, along with Northwest Airlink partners, Express Airlines and Measha Airlines, serves Birmingham daily from Detroit and Memphis, serves Birmingham, Huntsville, Mobile and Montgomery four times daily from Memphis, and serves Muscle Shoals twice daily from Memphis.

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Above: Grand National  
Inset: Cambrian Ridge

a-lifetime chance "to paint my Sistine Chapel."

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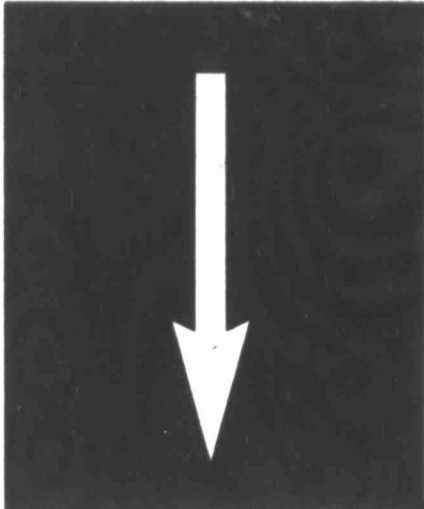


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