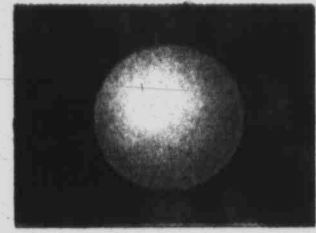


TUESDAY

December 14, 2004

WEATHER

Tonight:



TONIGHT 24°-27° TOMORROW 51°-53°

BRIEFLY

City council to mull landfill fee tonight

Big Spring City Council members, meeting at 5:15 p.m. today, are expected to hear emergency readings concerning a landfill agreement between the city and county and implementation of a \$5 gate fee at the facility.

An emergency resolution authorizing an agreement to perform a feasibility study and project scope plan for construction of a conference center or hotel complex is also on the agenda.

Angels available for adoption now

The Salvation Army Angel Tree program is in place for the holiday season. Angels are ready for adoption at Wal-Mart, Scenic Mountain Medical Center and the Spring Mall. Ten angels are ready for adoption at Nannie's Attic and Senior Angels are available for adoption at the Big Spring Herald.

College group collecting toys

The Mexican-American Student Association at Howard College is collecting toys to give to homeless children around Howard County.

Toys should be brought to the college library, administration building, STEPS lab, student services office or the registrar's office. Off-campus collection points are the Big Spring Herald and KBYG.

Gifts for children of any age will be accepted. The drive will be held through Wednesday.

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Vol. 101, No. 16

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## Commissioners agree to landfill pact

But don't obligate the county to future facilities, on advice of attorney

By THOMAS JENKINS  
Staff Writer

Howard County commissioners approved a new contract with the city of Big Spring concerning the municipal landfill during their meeting Monday, but only after removing references to future landfill facilities from the document.

The removal of the contract language that



THOMAS JENKINS      THOMAS      DARDEN

The city agrees to own the landfill jointly with Howard County and "maintain and operate" the facility, in addition to maintaining a landfill closure and post-closure maintenance fund.

referred to "any successor landfills" was struck from the contract after County Attorney Mike Thomas expressed his con-

cerns over future obligation in the proceedings.

"My only suggestion at this point is to strike references to successor landfills," Thomas told the commissioners. "I think that needs to be addressed in a future contract. I wouldn't feel comfortable obligating the county until we knew more about it. As far as closing this landfill is concerned, we certainly have that obligation."

Thomas went on to say he was concerned the county was entering into an agreement

See LANDFILL, Page 3A

## Cost cutting

Lower interest rate to save county \$90,000

By THOMAS JENKINS  
Staff Writer

Howard County commissioners approved the refund and refinance of general obligation bonds from 1995 totaling \$1.2 million, saving the county nearly \$90,000, thanks to lower interest rates.

Commissioners approved the deal, which is being worked out by Lubbock-based First Southwest Company, at an interest rate almost 2 percent lower than established in 1995 when the bonds were issued to finance renovations to the county courthouse.

"The interest rate we were able to issue on these refunding bonds was 3.61 percent," said Vince Viaille, representative for First Southwest Company. "The average interest rate on the old 1995 bonds was at 5.5 percent. We were also able to get bond insurance on this issue."

County Auditor Jackie Olson said Monday's decision was simply a matter of taking advantage of lower interest rates.

"The total amount of the bonds were \$1.6 million, and we've paid the principal down to \$1.2 million," said Olson. "Now interest rates are around 3.5 percent, so we're hoping to take advantage of the drop and save the county some money."

"When we met, we talked about looking at refunding the 1995 general obligation bonds for the county to achieve some debt-service savings," Viaille told the court. "Issuing the bonds at a lower interest rate. Since that meeting, we've been in the market place and we've structured the refunding issue. I'm presenting you with the

See INTEREST, Page 3A

## FESTIVAL ORGANIZER HONORED



HERALD photo/Debbie L. Jensen

Pat Simmons, organizer of the Comanche Trail Festival of Lights, cuts a cake in her honor Monday at the historic spring. Volunteers stopped their work briefly to recognize Simmons' birthday, which was Saturday, before getting displays ready for Wednesday's opening.



Pool photo/Justin Sullivan

Howard Kutzly, Krystyna Wiener, left, and Kimberly Hovorta, second from left in white, react to the death penalty verdict in the Scott Peterson case outside the courthouse in Redwood City, Calif.

## Peterson sentence: Death

By BRIAN SKOLOFF  
Associated Press Writer

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. — Upon learning of his death sentence, Scott Peterson sat defiantly still and tight-jawed, the same vacant expression he wore

throughout a murder trial in which he never spoke. And to hear the jurors tell it, Peterson's apparent lack of emotion was the final piece that doomed him.

The jury had been told that

See PETERSON, Page 3A

## Area school districts bring home the gold

By DEBBIE L. JENSEN  
Special to the Herald

Area school districts brought home gold in an academic olympics awarded by the Texas Education Agency.

Superintendents from Forsan, Big Spring and Coahoma learned last week that they were eligible for Gold Performance Acknowledgments based on student performance in several different areas.

"The Texas Legislature in 2001 created the Gold Performance Acknowledgment to publicly recognize districts and campuses for high performance in areas that are in addition to those used to determine state accountability ratings," said Commissioner of Education Shirley J. Neeley.

Forsan ISD received three GPAs district-wide, recognizing student test scores in two areas,

"We've been working on writing skills for a long time and we've had these good scores for several years."



Dr. Bill Kingston

as well as high school students' completion of rigorous graduation requirements.

"Over 20 percent of our students scored high enough on the writing TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) test that they received commended status," said Superintendent Randy Johnson. Forsan High School students also

See GOLD, Page 3A

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LANDFILL

Continued from Page 1A

that was anything but the norm for West Texas cities and counties.

"We called Glasscock County, and they do run the survey there," said Thomas. "Martin County participates, but there's a 50/50 deal and they don't charge the county residents for dumping. In all of the other surrounding counties the landfills are all city owned."

"The city does a wonderful job with the landfill. I just don't want Howard County to be the unique county participating in a landfill and it's not the usual."

Director of Public Works for the city Todd Darden said the landfills in those counties were Type 4 landfills, which provided for much different restrictions than the municipal landfill, which is a Type 1 facility.

Darden told commissioners the space in the current landfill cell being used has approximately four years left before it reaches its capacity, and if a recent modification the city has asked for from the state is approved, a total of seven years left.

"After either 2015 or 2018, depending on whether or not the state approves the modification, we still have 30 years from that date to final-out that landfill," said Darden. "That's the complete site." Somewhere

around 2007 or 2008 we're going to have to start looking at a new site."

The new cell Darden said the city is looking at opening at the current location should provide approximately seven years of service, he said. And although it doesn't have to be permitted because of existing permits at the site, it will cost the city \$1.7 million to open, bringing the total cost to transition from the current cell to a new one to \$3.2 million over the next four to seven years.

City Secretary Peggy Walker said the revised version of the contract the commissioners signed Monday will have to be approved by the city council before it can go into effect.

In the contract, the city

agrees to own the landfill jointly with Howard County and "maintain and operate" the facility, in addition to maintaining a landfill closure and post-closure maintenance fund.

According to the document, the county agrees to pay the city \$44,753 in fiscal year 2004-2005 for its portion of the operation and maintenance costs. The amount will be adjusted annually, increasing or decreasing by 1 percent for each point increase or decrease in the Consumer Price Index.

The county also agrees to pay the city \$22,092 each fiscal year for its part of the landfill closure and post-closure maintenance fund.

While the new contract is very similar to past contracts

between the city and county concerning the landfill, one of the major differences is the lack of a clause disallowing a fee for county residents who use the facility. That is excepted to result in a \$5 gate fee to help finance the closure of the existing cell, and eventually the opening of a new one.

The city council is expected to consider the contract tonight during its regular meeting, which will get under way at 5:30 p.m. today in the City Council Chambers, located at 307 E. Fourth Street.

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

GOLD

Continued from Page 1A

scored high enough on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test before graduation that they were exempt from the entrance test that most college freshmen must take, the Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP), Johnson added.

Finally, high school students from Forsan were recognized for their

choice of graduation plans. At least half of the students there completed one of the two most rigorous plans — recommended or distinguished, rather than pursuing the basic plan.

Elbow Elementary students were also given GPAs for three areas based on their TAKS scores in reading, math and writing. More than 20 percent of students scored high enough in the three areas to receive "commended" designation.

Coahoma received a district-wide GPA for the number of high school students who chose the more rigorous graduation plans, while the elementary school also earned gold for its writing scores.

"We're very pleased with that," said Superintendent of Coahoma Independent School District Bill Kingston. "We've been working on writing skills for a long time and we've had these good scores for several years. We're very

pleased to get some recognition."

Big Spring received GPAs for three elementary campuses. Kentwood, Marcy and Washington earned gold for the reading scores of students, and Kentwood also got the nod for students' writing scores.

"These are above and beyond," said Michael Downes, superintendent of the Big Spring Independent School District. "We're always excited about receiving

performance acknowledgments."

While all five local elementary schools earned recognized status this year, the GPAs, which went to three campuses, are a different method of acknowledging student achievement, Downes said. "All of these are meant to be accolades."

Johnson said for Forsan, the Gold Performance Acknowledgments were a real boost. The school was notified earlier this year

that its ranking fell from "exemplary" to "academically acceptable," apparently due to the performance of a small group of students in science.

"We were quite upset when the accountability ratings came out," Johnson said. "We felt the performance of a small group brought the whole district down. Now we can point to these areas that show the excellent performance of our students."

PETERSON

Continued from Page 1A

Peterson did not wear his emotions on his sleeve. But juror Richelle Nice told ABC's "Good Morning America" on Tuesday that she noticed Peterson becoming emotional during the penalty phase of his trial.

"Is it just that he doesn't show emotion for Laci and Conner?" she asked.

She said her thoughts were with Laci Peterson and the fetus she carried. "They can rest in peace," she said. "Justice was done."

A cheer went up outside the courthouse Monday as the jury announced its decision after 11-1/2 hours of deliberations over three days. The same six men and six women who convicted Peterson of

murdering his pregnant wife recommended that he be sent to death row at San Quentin State Prison outside San Francisco, the infamous lockup overlooking the bay where Laci Peterson's body was discarded.

Inside, Laci Peterson's mother, Sharon Rocha, cried quietly — her lips quivering after the verdict was read. Scott Peterson's mother, Jackie, showed no apparent emotion.

Three jurors said at a press conference afterward that they couldn't let go of the fact that the bodies of Laci Peterson and her fetus had washed ashore a few miles from where Scott Peterson claimed he went fishing the day she disappeared.

Juror Greg Beratlis said the jury was convinced of Peterson's guilt by

"many, many things," but added: "Those bodies were found in the same place. That played in my mind, over and over."

Most unsettling, the jurors seemed to agree, was Peterson's "dispassionate demeanor."

"He has no remorse," juror Michael Belmessieri said Tuesday on CBS' "The Early Show."

"He lost his wife and his child — it didn't seem to faze him," said juror Steve Cardosi. "And while that was going on... he is romancing a girlfriend. That doesn't make sense to me. At all."

Peterson did not testify during the six-month trial.

"Anything — a plea for his life, or just his opinion on everything that went on in the last two years... I would have liked to have heard his

voice on that," Beratlis said.

Nice even took issue with Peterson's manner Monday in the moments before the sentence was read, chatting casually with his attorneys. "Today — the giggles at the table," she said. "Loud and clear."

Peterson was convicted Nov. 12 of one count of first-degree murder in the death of Laci, and one count of second-degree murder for the killing of her eight-month old fetus. The jury had two options in deciding the 32-year-old former fertilizer salesman's fate: life in prison without parole or death

by injection.

Judge Alfred A. Delucchi will formally sentence Peterson on Feb. 25. The judge will have the option of reducing the sentence to life, but such a move is highly unlikely.

Peterson still might not be executed for decades and it can take years for even the first phase of the appeals process to begin. Since California brought back capital punishment in 1978, only 10 executions have been carried

out. The state's clogged death row houses 641 prisoners.

In a brief news conference after the verdict, defense attorney Mark Geragos said he was "very disappointed."

INTEREST

Continued from Page 1A

final numbers this morning concerning how the final transaction comes out.

"The total debt-service savings to the county over the life of the refund issue is \$88,175. Which came out to about \$8,800 a year in savings by refunding those bonds at a lower interest rate."

Commissioner Jerry

Kilgore said he believes the savings will help the county.

"We've been looking at the bonds and watching the rates really closely for several years because the interest rates were so much lower," said Kilgore. "We did this at the first available chance. It's going to save us nearly \$9,000 a year, so it's certainly going to help."

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## WORLD BRIEFS

### Trials of former Iraqi regime

#### members to begin next week: Interim PM

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — War crimes trials against Iraq's former Baath Party leaders will begin next week, interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said Tuesday. He didn't say whether Saddam Hussein would be among them.

Many members of Iraq's former regime have been in jail for more than a year, and few have been able to meet with counsel. Saddam's Jordan-based lawyers say they have not seen the former dictator, who was arrested a year ago Monday.

Officials had given conflicting accounts about when the trials would begin. They have also said Saddam might not be the first to be tried.

"I can now tell you clearly and precisely that, God willing, next week the trials of the symbols of the former regime will start, one by one so that justice can take its path in Iraq," Allawi told Iraq's interim National Council, without saying who would be tried.

### Insurgents hit Baghdad's Green Zone

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — A suicide car bomber killed seven people when he struck a checkpoint at Baghdad's Green Zone early Tuesday, the second attack in two days at the district that houses Iraq's interim government and the U.S. Embassy, officials said.

In western Iraq, two U.S. Marines were killed in action, the military said Tuesday, bringing the number of Marines killed in the region over three days to 10.

A military statement said the two Marines were assigned to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force and died Monday "while conducting security and stabilization operations" in the vast Anbar province west of Baghdad, which includes the battleground cities of Fallujah and Ramadi.

Seven other Marines died in action Sunday in Anbar and a 10th was killed on Saturday. The U.S. military did not provide details of their death, but they brought to nearly 1,300 the number of American troops killed in Iraq since the invasion in March 2003.

As insurgents pressed forward with attacks ahead of next month's elections, the country's interim president Ghazi al-Yawer told British Broadcasting Corp. radio, that "as soon as we have efficient security forces ... we can see the beginning of the withdrawal of forces from our friends and partners and I think it doesn't take years, it will take months."

Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, Gen. Richard Myers, arrived Tuesday in Iraq for a morale boosting visit to the troops. U.S. celebrities, including actor Robin Williams, former Denver Broncos quarterback John Elway and sportscaster Leann Tweeden, accompanied him.

### Palestinian leader Abbas

calls for end of armed uprising

JERUSALEM (AP) — The armed uprising against Israel is a mistake and must end, interim Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas said in an interview published Tuesday, signaling his determination to change direction after Yasser Arafat's death.

Palestinian militants have enjoyed broad support among Palestinians during more than four years of conflict with Israel. Abbas' affirmation of a somewhat unpopular view comes at the height of his campaign for Palestinian Authority president.

Abbas is the front-runner in the Jan. 9 election to succeed Arafat as Palestinian Authority president. Abbas, a pragmatist, has the support of Israel and the international community.

While Arafat was still alive, Abbas told associates in closed-door meetings that he felt the uprising was a mistake, but rarely spoke out in public. When Abbas criticized the armed uprising during the launch of the U.S.-backed "road map" peace plan in 2003, he drew sharp condemnation at home.

In an interview with the London-based Arabic newspaper Asharq al-Awsat published Tuesday, Abbas said Palestinians should resist Israeli occupation without resorting to violence.

It is important to "keep the uprising away from arms because the uprising is a legitimate right of the people to express their rejection of the occupation by popular and social means," Abbas said.

"Using the weapons was harmful and has got to stop," Abbas said, referring to shootings and bombings by Palestinian militants that have killed hundreds of Israelis since September 2000.

## Report: Medicare payment errors totaled nearly \$20 billion last year

By MARK SHERMAN

Associated Press Writer  
WASHINGTON

Medicare-wants to cut the rate of questionable payments by more than half, to 4 percent, by 2008, administrator Mark McClellan says.

"The main objective here is to pay it right," McClellan said Monday, the day Medicare reported that private companies that process health claims from its beneficiaries made nearly \$20 billion in erroneous or questionable payments last year, an error rate of 9.3 percent.

That performance was a slight improvement over the previous year.

The error rate measures claims that were paid despite being medically unnecessary, inadequate-

ly documented or improperly coded. In some instances, Medicare asked health care providers for medical records to back up their claims and got no response.

The survey does not document instances of alleged fraud, McClellan said.

More extensive payment reviews and other quality controls will help the agency achieve the 4 percent goal, he said.

Medicare, the government health program for older and disabled Americans, contracts with private insurers to pay more than 1 billion claims each year.

Monday's report was based on a survey of 160,000 claims, Medicare

said.

Last year, Medicare reported the error rate as 5.8 percent, but that figure had been adjusted to factor out a high proportion of claims for which the health care provider did not respond to Medicare's request for documentation.

The unadjusted rate was 9.8 percent, using the same criteria that produced this year's 9.3 percent rate.

Medicare said it abandoned the adjustment because its analysis was larger and more detailed.

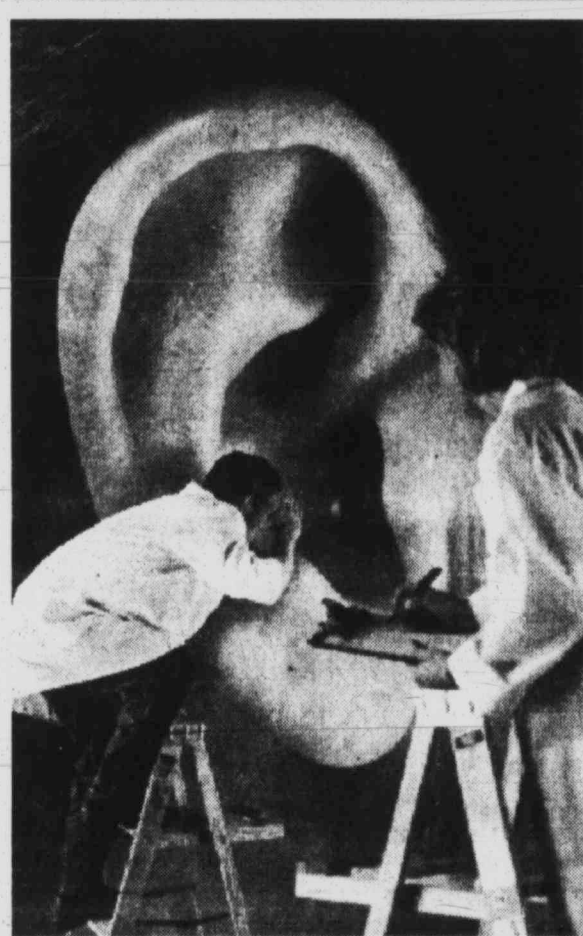
Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, who sharply criticized last year's adjustment, said Monday the public is getting a more complete picture in the new report.

Still, Grassley said, "With an improper payment amount of nearly \$20 billion and an error rate approaching double digits, there is clearly an unacceptable problem here."

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# Trying to make sense of something that makes no sense

**A**s I sit down to write my column this week, I'm finding it kind of hard to muster any humor or wit. It's the holiday season, and the hustle and bustle even seems kind of dim right now.



THOMAS JENKINS

One of my heroes died last week. Since I was a kid, with my Chuck Taylors hanging open and my jeans ripped just right — I bet if you try real hard, you can remember those days in spite of yourself — Darrell Abbott was one of my guitar heroes. Of course, if you had called him "Mr. Abbott" back then, I would have probably looked at you cross-eyed. To those of us who played the guitar, especially in the metal circles, he was "Dimebag Darrell," or just "Dime."

Before you jump up and down and point your finger at his nickname, understand one thing... I have no idea how he got it, and for the most part, I don't really care. His nickname wasn't what got my attention. It was his sound. It was the way he attacked the guitar from some left field angle, coaxing sounds out of it I had never heard before. It was magic, plain and simple. For those of us that live in caves and still beat our food to death with a big stick, here's the tall and skinny of what happened. While playing a gig at a small

club in Columbus, Ohio, Dime was shot five to six times at point blank range by a deranged man who climbed onto the stage. Five people died that night, including the shooter, who was finally shot down by a police officer.

There are plenty of other details, theories and rumors out there and it seems like the media is spitting them out faster than the public can eat them up. Fans of Damageplan, the band Dime was playing with when he was killed, are chomping at the bit to tell what they saw and heard and I suppose that's their right.

Taking a step back from the whole situation, I have to ask myself some pretty hard questions. The hardest, of course, is the most important.

Why is Dimebag Darrell dead?

Theories are already spawning left and right, ranging from his break up with Pantera and bitter fans to some sort of personal grudge between the shooter and Darrell. But we're just muddying the waters so we can try to make sense of something that simply won't make sense. It can't make sense and it never will.

Dime is dead because someone shot him. Why he was shot doesn't really matter in the end, although I find myself believing if I just knew why it happened it wouldn't hurt quite as bad. It's a fool's errand. Yet another of my musical heroes, who helped shape the music I enjoy today, is dead because someone who shouldn't have had a gun... well,

had a gun. My psychology professor once told me we, as a society, make mountains out of molehills because it's the only way we can maintain the illusion we're in control of life. We take the things we can shape and make them a lot bigger than they really are while the big issues slip right under our noses.

Guns are so easy to get in America. It's a step well beyond just frightening. Children are caught with guns in their backpacks and Scooby Doo lunch boxes. No place is immune to it. Not even Big Spring. A recent incident where a small child accidentally shot his infant sister with a shotgun proved that.

And while we carry the emotional scars of these tragedies, the people that carry the physical scars are left to suffer. And, just as my psychology professor said, the big thing just slips right under our noses.

Maybe — just maybe — we need stricter gun control in this country. There, I said it. I'm sure all of my NRA card-toting buddies are gonna love this.

We've done everything to tie guns to America, Old Glory, apple pies, God and mothers. The media, which is probably just as much to blame as the rest of the world, has gone right along with it. Can't have Billy Bob's Gunstore and Ammunition Dump pulling those ads, right? No one is untouched. No one is blameless.

Guns and mothers? If you put the decision of gun control into the hands of the mothers of

this country, they would be nothing more than a sad memory before you could say Smith & Wesson. No one wants to see their child shot, and if they do, then they need mental care in addition to gun control.

Guns and God? Last time I read the Bible, I don't remember reading about Jesus carrying a six-shooter. I don't remember reading about God giving Moses a 12-gauge and telling him to go spread the gospel. In fact, I took theology in college and I don't remember reading that in any religion. And don't tell me Jesus didn't carry a gun because they hadn't been invented yet. He was Jesus and I'm pretty sure he could have invented one if he wanted to.

Why do hunters need to have access to armor piercing bullets? Are deer investing in Kevlar these days? Are they trying to tell us something?

Why do hunters need access to AK-47s, the assault rifles that have claimed countless American lives in combat all over the world?

The answer is simple. They don't need those things. They never did and they never will.

I know there are a lot of hunters out there that will get angry when I mention gun control — I've seen several bumper stickers in and around Big Spring that say, "You can have my gun when you pry it from my cold, dead hands" — but let's be reasonable. Guns are killing people that shouldn't be killed. If guns were baby cribs, what in the world would we be doing? Think about it.

I understand the nation is divided over gun control and new gun laws, but my point of view is simple. If some whack-job wasn't able to buy a handgun on the street for around \$200 or didn't

already have one in his or his parents' closet, I believe Dime would still be alive. He would still be making music. He wouldn't be another name on a cold granite stone in a cemetery.

One of my favorite Pantera songs is titled "Cemetery Gates," and the lyrics seem like the best way to close this out. The world will miss him, but I'm pretty sure musicians all over the world will miss him even more.

"The reverend he turned to me, without a tear in his eyes. It's nothing new for him to see, I didn't ask him why. I will remember, the love our souls had sworn to make. Now I watch the falling rain, all my mind can see now is your face."

Contact Staff Writer  
Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail at [citydesk@bigspringherald.com](mailto:citydesk@bigspringherald.com)

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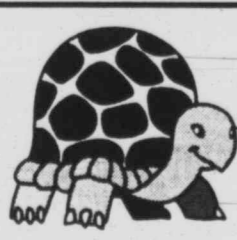
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# Bedtime Stories



## A SOFTBALL-LOVING TURTLE NAMED SNAPPER

**I**t was a pretty softball field. It had nice green grass. It had shade trees all around the outside edges.



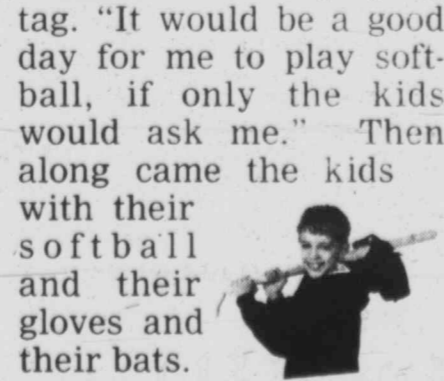
It had lots of space for people to park their cars. It had wonderful running water in a nearby stream. It had everything.

Snapper lived in that stream and he loved to watch the kids playing softball. He always wanted to play too, but he is a turtle, and turtles don't play softball, or do they? After all, they don't have hands to hold the bat. They can't run very fast.

They can't pitch the ball to the batter. What do you think Snapper could do if he played softball? Let's get on with the story and maybe we'll find out!

"What a beautiful day." Snapper thought as he woke up that morning. The sun was shining. It was nice and warm. The birds were chirping, the squirrels

were scampering about in the tree-tops as though they were playing tag. "It would be a good day for me to play softball, if only the kids would ask me." Then along came the kids with their softball and their gloves and their bats.



There were a lot of kids coming to play today. More than Snapper had ever seen before! They formed two teams and started their game. Snapper climbed up onto the bank of the stream to watch, wishing that he was down there playing, too. But, what could he do? Are you ready to find out what a turtle can do in a softball game? It even sounds funny, doesn't it?

The first little kid came up to bat. The pitcher hurled the ball to her and she whacked that thing really hard. But, it went the wrong way! That's right! It went straight towards the stream! Even the fastest little kid couldn't catch it before it went into the water. Splash! Now, what will the kids do? The softball sunk right down to the bottom of the pond. It was the only softball the little kids had. What will they

do? Ok, here is where Snapper makes a lot of friends. He saw that the little kids were upset about losing their softball. He didn't like it when the kids were sad! He just had to do something! What do you think he should do? Did you guess what he did? Where does Snapper live? Can he swim? Can he swim all the way to the bottom of the stream? After all, he is a turtle!

Snapper dove into the water and went straight down to the bottom and found the softball, grabbed it with his teeth and swam back to the top in no time at all. When he came crawling up the stream's bank with that softball in his mouth, all of the little kids started clapping their hands. They were so glad to have that ball back. All of the little kids loved Snapper

after that. Each and every time that ball went into the water, there was Snapper ready to get it. He did this for years and years. And he made new friends each year. He just loved it. And the kids just loved him!

Are you thinking that Snapper still wasn't playing softball? Well, that wasn't the end of this story. It went on and on. For you see, the first base pad was torn and gone and Snapper told the kids that he would be first base. And he did! Every time that a kid would come running towards him, all he had to do was pull his legs and his head inside his shell and he made a perfect first base. He even played second base once, and third.

Now, do you think Snapper was really playing softball? All of the kids in the neighborhood sure thought so!  
So did Snapper!

## How

**K**nowing now, this piece of advice parents — I brate the bir precious bal purchase of ture and car

Our daughter was born and subsequently, we bought new living room and dining room furnishings. We also had new carpet laid.

## Webb re

Keep Wel 2005 is the t Webb Air Reunion, se 2005 at the F Museum.

Plans are lated now f and all Wel Base alumni ed persons attend.

Contact F 264-1999 for mation or Box 2925, B more inform

Also, u schedules v on the www.hangar25.com.

Or hangar25@ write reuni ject line.

## Do you

Beginning and contin the 1970s, B a country jamboree Municipal on at least basis.

A feature these ja planned fo tion of th Herald in d

The edit individual ber the ja will share ence and whether th member or pant or a : enjoyed th

Also, any from the being soug Please cc editor at 236 or bigspringl you have tion abo borees.

## Life! pu

Wedding, and announce publishe Spring H end editio within th the event.

Birth a with or v are also j of charge.

All pho must be c for reprv poses.

Photogr meetings gathering accepted in the H informati in the pho tiified.

All arti for style and must nection 1 and How Articles Herald's each W weekend cation.

Call 263 articles bigspring

# How to avoid some of the mistakes made by new parents

Knowing what I do now, I can offer this valuable piece of advice to all new parents — Don't celebrate the birth of your precious baby with the purchase of new furniture and carpet.

Our daughter was born, and subsequently, we bought new living room and dining room furnishings. We also had new carpet laid.



CHRISTY ALTON

Mistake. Big mistake. Fast forward 10 years. I totally rue the day I picked out a damask sofa and expensive table and chairs.

If only someone had cautioned me, not that I would have listened.

I'm advising readers everywhere, now, based upon my experience, that

they should run, if not leap and gallop to the superstore and buy blow-up, plastic kiddie chairs and loveseats with which to grace their living rooms.

Just a barn wood dinette set, complete with mismatched chairs from yard sales is good enough for the dining room. Non-breakable

dishes are best and plastic throw away cups are a must.

Carpet is just plain scary. Mine, once a beautiful color, is now black or brown in spots and faded and flat in others.

Rugs harbor spillage and pillage and can be quite unforgiving.

On good days I want to

rip it up. On bad days, rip and burn it up.

New moms and dads, heed the voice of observation.

If the deed has already been done, have a laminator come in and coat everything with thick, unpenetrable plastic.

If not, wait.

Life's too short to have

to cover up your beautiful divan with a comforter and shampooing flooring causes backache pain.

— Christy Alton works full time, is a mother of two and married to her park ranger, Ron. She writes this column for the Big Spring Herald.

## Webb reunion set

Keep Webb Alive in 2005 is the theme for the Webb Air Force Base Reunion, set for October 2005 at the Hangar 25 Air Museum.

Plans are being formulated now for the event and all Webb Air Force Base alumni and interested persons are invited to attend.

Contact Hangar 25 at 264-1999 for more information or mail to P.O. Box 2925, Big Spring, for more information.

Also, updates and schedules will be posted on the Web site, www.hangar25airmuseum.com.

Or e-mail hangar25@crcom.net and write reunion in the subject line.

## Do you recall...

Beginning in the 1950s and continuing through the 1970s, Big Spring had a country and western jamboree in the Municipal Auditorium on at least a monthly basis.

A feature story about these jamborees is planned for the life! section of the Big Spring Herald in January.

The editor is seeking individuals who remember the jamborees and will share their experience and memories, whether they be a band member or other participant or a spectator who enjoyed the music.

Also, any photographs from these events are being sought.

Please contact the life! editor at 263-7331, ext. 236 or e-mail life@bigspringherald.com if you have any information about the jamborees.

## Life! publications

Wedding, anniversary and engagement announcements are published in the Big Spring Herald's weekend edition at no charge within three months of the event.

Birth announcements with or without photos are also published free of charge.

All photos submitted must be of good quality for reproduction purposes.

Photographs of events, meetings and other gatherings are also accepted and published in the Herald with the information and people in the photographs identified.

All articles are edited for style and content and must contain a connection to Big Spring and Howard County.

Articles are due in the Herald's office by noon each Wednesday for weekend edition publication.

Call 263-7331 or submit articles to life@bigspringherald.com

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# ★★ Shoppin' Robin ★★

Christmas is steadily approaching and the dynamic duo of the Big Spring Herald may be seen fluttering in and out of local stores like moths to a flame, taking advantage of holiday sales or at least taking advantage of the excuse to shop.

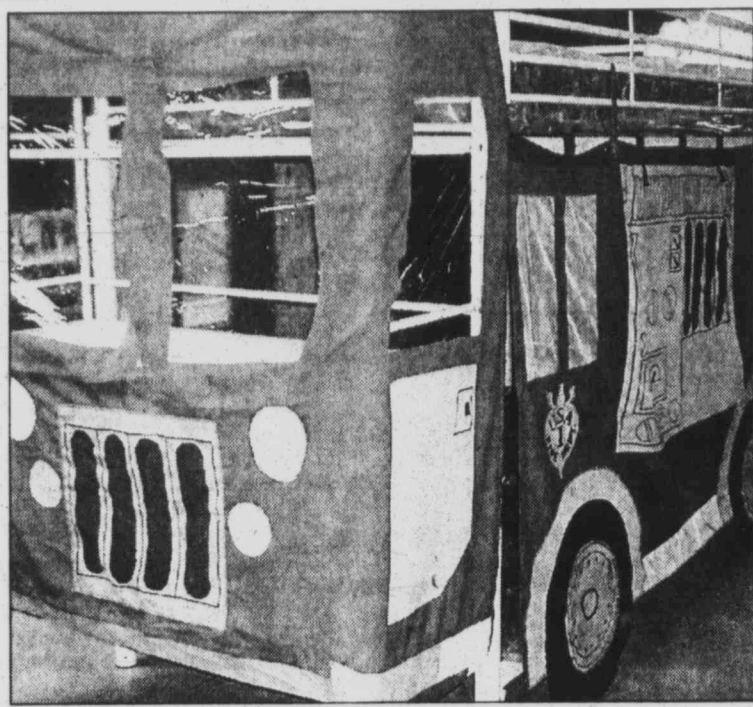
Topics for this week's column are collectibles, tents, hand-painted Santa Clauses, spas, hummingbird feeders, dishware, cookbooks and children's formal wear.

Susanne: When my children were small, I remember throwing blankets over their bunk beds to make tents. Can you believe they actually make bunk bed tents now?

Lyndel: That's a neat idea. Where can you find one?

Susanne: At Branham Furniture, 2004 W. Fourth St. The store has one that looks like a fire truck. It comes with two twin mattresses and even has bookshelves built into each end. Another version is fashioned after a playground with a slide. It also has a bookshelf. These beds are colorful and so cute.

Lyndel: I bet you wished you had something like



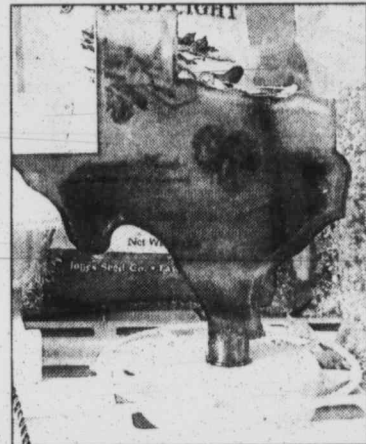
A bunk bed tent shaped like a firetruck is available at Branham Furniture, 2004 W. Fourth St.



Christmas wreaths and greenery available at Ponderosa Nursery, 2300 Goliad.



This salad serving set is available at Beall's Department Store in the Big Spring Mall.



A Texas-shaped hummingbird feeder is available at Ponderosa Nursery.

Susanne: Lyndel you sure missed out Saturday when some of the Herald employees volunteered to get a display ready for the annual Trail of Lights at Comanche Trail Park. My back is sure tired from hanging all those lights. I just wanted to take a long soak, which got me thinking, how would you like to own your own spa?

Lyndel: Why? You buying?

Susanne: Ah, not yet. But Ponderosa Nursery has Caldera Spas. The Kauai seats two, has 27 jets and holds 200 gallons. It comes with a cover, steps, an Eco-tech cabinet, circulation pump and heating system, Monarch CD ozone-ready, and foam insulation. Ahhh, wouldn't it be nice to have a long soak in one of those.

Enough relaxing.

If you still haven't decorated your home for the holidays, Ponderosa also has fresh wreaths and garland to decorate mantels and stairways. They smell wonderful... sure beats plastic.

Hey, Lyndel, don't your parents have hummingbird feeders?

Lyndel: Yea, why? Susanne: Well, while I was at Ponderosa, I noticed a cute Texas-shaped hummingbird feeder. Some people are just so creative.

On the way out, Donna reminded me that now is the right time of year to plant trees. Ponderosa Nursery is located at 2300 Goliad St.

Lyndel: Mmm, Christmas present.

Hey, Susanne, you know one thing I hate about not having kids is that I don't get to buy those cute little outfits. I popped into Jazzy's located inside the Big Spring Mall and just fell in love with the formal wear the shop has on display.

The store offers several lines, such as U.S. Angles and Gallery. Oooh, wouldn't that be so cute on a little boy or girl.

Susanne: I was at the mall the other day and didn't see those. I guess, I'll just need to take a trip back. Like I a need an excuse.

I did notice a gorgeous set of red Fleu Rouge dishware that Beall's had



A formal dress for a girl is available at Jazzy's in the Big Spring Mall.

in stock. It included a three-piece dip set, a four-section server, a five-piece salad server, plates and a pitcher.

Lyndel, are you think-

ing about buying me a Christmas present? (Hint, hint).

They also have a collection of cookbooks. "The Cake Doctor" by Anne Byrn helps you create more than 150 luscious desserts with honest-to-goodness from-scratch taste.

Another shopper was telling me it is great for those who are involved in a lot of bake sales. "The Dinner Doctor" by the same author looked like a good idea for family cooks. And they have the popular "Chicken on a Beer Can" and 74 other offbeat recipes for the grill by Steven Raichlen.

Beall's also has a selection of stocking stuffers by Totes in the men's department. The heated auto mug plugs into your cigarette lighter. There are also digital tire gauges, whistle key finders, coin sorters, air compressors and a fisherman tool set.

Lyndel: Don't you love Christmas, so many shops stay open way past 6 p.m. which gives us more time to do what we love — shop.

Well, let's get at it.



Wind chimes found at Cathy's Collectibles, 1107 11th Place.

that when your kids were still children.

Hey, Susanne, you've met Dixie McClellan, our news editor's wife? Did you know she has a very creative side to her?

I was walking through Cathy's Collectibles at 1107 11th Place the other day and came across her artwork. She does scrolling. Her wood picture of Jesus set against a blue background is absolutely gorgeous. You should check her work out.

In fact she is just one of many vendors who sell a

plethora of items at the store. You can find anything from specialty knives to glassware, flatware, autographed pictures, candles and even collectible cookie jars.

And speaking of creativity, did you know Ellen Barefoot of Nannie's Attic, 117 Main St., has a huge selection of hand-painted Santa Clauses?

These attractive figurines are molded from pecan shells and resin and Ms. Barefoot painstakingly paints each one, down to the very last detail. She has Santa Clauses for each month and some representing each state. Santa Claus riding a cow, big Santa Clauses and small Santa Clauses.

In fact, she custom paints all types of these unique wood figurines and sells them nationally.

Nannie's Attic also offers a ton of other collectibles and Ellen even gives scrapbooking lessons. In fact, the store's slogan is old, new, used, borrowed, not stolen — you can find it at Nannie's Attic.

Susanne: I've been meaning to take a trip down town because I heard Ellen has decorated her store front for Christmas.



A hand-painted Santa Claus available at Nannie's Attic, 117 Main St.

## Scenic Mountain Medical Center

invites you to join our...

### December 2004

<p><b>December 6 • Monday</b> • Games - 2:00 pm • Sit &amp; Be fit - 4:00 pm</p> <p><b>December 7 • Tuesday</b> • Mall Walking - 8:00 am • Coffee @ Parkplace - 10:00 am • America Heart Association -12 Noon Board Meeting - Brew Pub • Dinner &amp; A Movie "Furr's" - 5:30 am</p> <p><b>December 8 • Wednesday</b> • Stretch &amp; Tone - 11:00 am • Senior Appreciation Day - 11:30 am</p> <p><b>December 9 • Thursday</b> • Mall Walking - 8:00 am • Coffee @ Gale's - 10:00 am</p> <p><b>December 10 • Friday</b> Open</p> <p><b>December 11 • Saturday</b> Open</p> <p><b>December 12 • Sunday</b> • Joseph The Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat -1:00 pm - MCT (Midland Community Theatre)</p> <p><b>December 13 • Monday</b> • Sit &amp; Be fit - 4:00 pm</p> <p><b>December 14 • Tuesday</b> • Mall Walking - 8:00 am • Lunch Brunch &amp; Birthdays - 11:30 am - "Hunan's" • Gingerbread House @ Gale's - 6:00 pm</p> <p><b>December 15 • Wednesday</b> • Stretch &amp; Tone - 11:00 am • Senior Appreciation Day - 11:30 am</p> <p><b>December 16 • Thursday</b> • Mall Walking - 8:00 am • Coffee @ Gale's - 10:00 am • Lunch-N-Learn - 11:30 am - Guest Speaker Dr. Rutledge • "Realistic Goals For 2005"</p>	<p><b>December 17 • Friday</b> • Christmas Pot Luck Party &amp; "Presents" - 11:30 am - 2:00 pm</p> <p><b>December 18 • Saturday</b> Open</p> <p><b>December 19 • Sunday</b> Open</p> <p><b>December 20 • Monday</b> • Games - 2:00 pm • Sit &amp; Be Fit - 4:00 pm</p> <p><b>December 21 • Tuesday</b> • Mall Walking - 8:00 am • Supper Club "Cowboy's" - 5:30 pm • R.S.V.P. Christmas Council Party @ Gale's - 3:00 pm</p> <p><b>December 22 • Wednesday</b> • Stretch &amp; Tone - 11:00 am • Senior Appreciation Day - 11:30 am</p> <p><b>December 23 • Thursday</b> • Mall Walking - 8:00 am • Coffee @ Gale's - 10:00 am</p> <p><b>December 24 • Friday</b> Open</p> <p><b>December 25 • Saturday</b> Christmas Holiday - Merry Christmas!</p> <p><b>December 26 • Sunday</b> Open</p> <p><b>December 27 • Monday</b> • No Sit &amp; Be Fit Today! • Senior Circle Office Closed</p> <p><b>December 28 • Tuesday</b> • Mall Walking - 8:00 am • Senior Circle Office Closed</p> <p><b>December 29 • Wednesday</b> • No Stretch &amp; Tone Today! • Senior Appreciation Day - 11:30 am • Senior Circle Office Closed</p> <p><b>December 30 • Thursday</b> • Mall Walking - 8:00 am • Coffee @ Gale's - 10:00 am</p>
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## No Child Birth Classes In December

<p>Volunteer Sr. Circle Director <b>Anita Cline,</b> 268-4721</p> <p>Senior Circle Office Hours: Tues.-Thurs. 10:00 am - 4:00 pm</p>	<p>Free Pregnancy Testing Every Day 9:00 am - 6:00 pm OB Department, 2nd Floor Results In 4 Minutes</p> <p>Donna Mills, RN, Director Of Women's Services OB Dept., 268-4550</p>	<p>Road To Recovery (Transportation For Cancer Patients)</p> <p>LaWanda Ham, 263-7827</p>
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### YMCA annou

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## IN BRIEF

### Basketball referees needed for season

The Crossroads area is looking for basketball officials for the upcoming season.

For more information, contact Adam Rodriguez at 263-8731 or 517-0300.

The games will be played in local areas such as Big Spring, Forsan and Coahoma and will be for the JH and HS levels.

### Booster Club gets more Steer gear

The Lady Steers Booster Club has just received a new shipment of Lady Steer Gear.

The Booster Club carries jackets, sweat-shirts, long and short sleeve T-shirts, hats, visors, toboggans and ear warmers.

They are also now offering sweatshirts and T-shirts in youth sizes.

For more information, call Janet Abner at 264-0023 or 466-1711 or Kerry Rodriguez at 263-6100.

### YMCA announces gymnastics program

The YMCA will be hosting its Christmas gymnastics program Friday.

The program will consist of children of all ages and abilities and it will take place from 4:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. The entire community is welcome to attend.

The kidnastics program will last from 4:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m., while beginning gymnastics takes place from 5:20 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The tumbling and sidewinders team portions of the program will begin at 6:05 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., respectively.

### Martinez closing in on deal with Mets

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Pedro Martinez closed in on a four-year deal with the New York Mets, and the Boston Red Sox resigned themselves to losing the three-time Cy Young Award winner as baseball's annual winter meetings finished.

Also, the Chicago White Sox dealt Carlos Lee to Milwaukee for Scott Podsednik, Luis Vizcaino and a player to be named, and four free-agent agreements were announced. Catcher Mike Matheny reached a \$10.5 million, three-year agreement with San Francisco, right-hander Esteban Yan agreed to a \$2.25 million, two-year contract with Anaheim, right-hander Todd Jones finalized a \$1.1 million, one-year deal with Florida and outfielder Wil Cordero got a \$600,000 one-year contract from the Washington-bound Expos.

In an agreement awaiting a physical, second baseman Jose Hernandez agreed to a \$1.8 million, one-year contract with Cleveland.

Martinez helped pitch Boston to its first World Series title since 1918.

## Howard College welcomes Diddle into coaching family

### Special to the HERALD

Howard College officials have announced the hiring of Earl Diddle to head up the Hawk women's basketball program.

Coach Diddle replaces former-head coach Lorin Miller, who recently resigned.



Diddle, an East Liverpool, Ohio, native, comes to Howard from Butler County Community College in El Dorado, Kan., where he

served as the head women's coach of the BCCC Grizzlies. He brings a variety of experiences from various academic levels including high school, junior college, NAIA, NCAA Divisions I and II and preparation for the National Olympic Team for the United Arab Emirates.

His 30-plus years of coaching has captured him an accumulated lifetime record of 375-247.

Howard College Athletic Director Mark Adams describes Diddle as an effective teacher and coach of the game and as a great recruiter national-

ly and world-wide.

"I have known Coach Diddle for a good while and coached against him in the past. He is a high energy individual and is well respected by his colleagues throughout the coaching profession. Howard College is very fortunate to have Earl lead our women's program," said Adams.

The Hawk women's team heads into the holiday break with an 11-5 record.

They will resume play January 5-6, participating in the Northeastern Colorado Classic in Sterling, Colo.

## Bulldogs roll past former-rival

### Bulldogettes lose despite 19 points, 12 rebounds from Mendy Morgan

#### By TROY HYDE

SPORTS EDITOR COAHOMA — The Bulldogs started strong Monday and recorded their seventh win of the season, while the Bulldogettes suffered another loss on the hardwood Monday. The boys defeated Seagraves, 62-42, while the girls' team lost to its former-district rival, 69-41.

The Bulldogs jumped

out to a 19-9 lead after one quarter before holding a 31-16 halftime advantage. Coahoma (7-5) outscored Seagraves in the third quarter 20-5, which proved to be enough to capture the victory.

Tyler Fowler hit four 3-pointers and led the Bulldogs with 17 points, while Isaac Brewer and Adrian Abrego added 12 and nine points, respectively.

The Seagraves girls' team, which was led in scoring by Darchelle Griffin's 20 points, used a 23-8 second quarter

and 20-8 third quarter advantage to defeat the Bulldogettes.

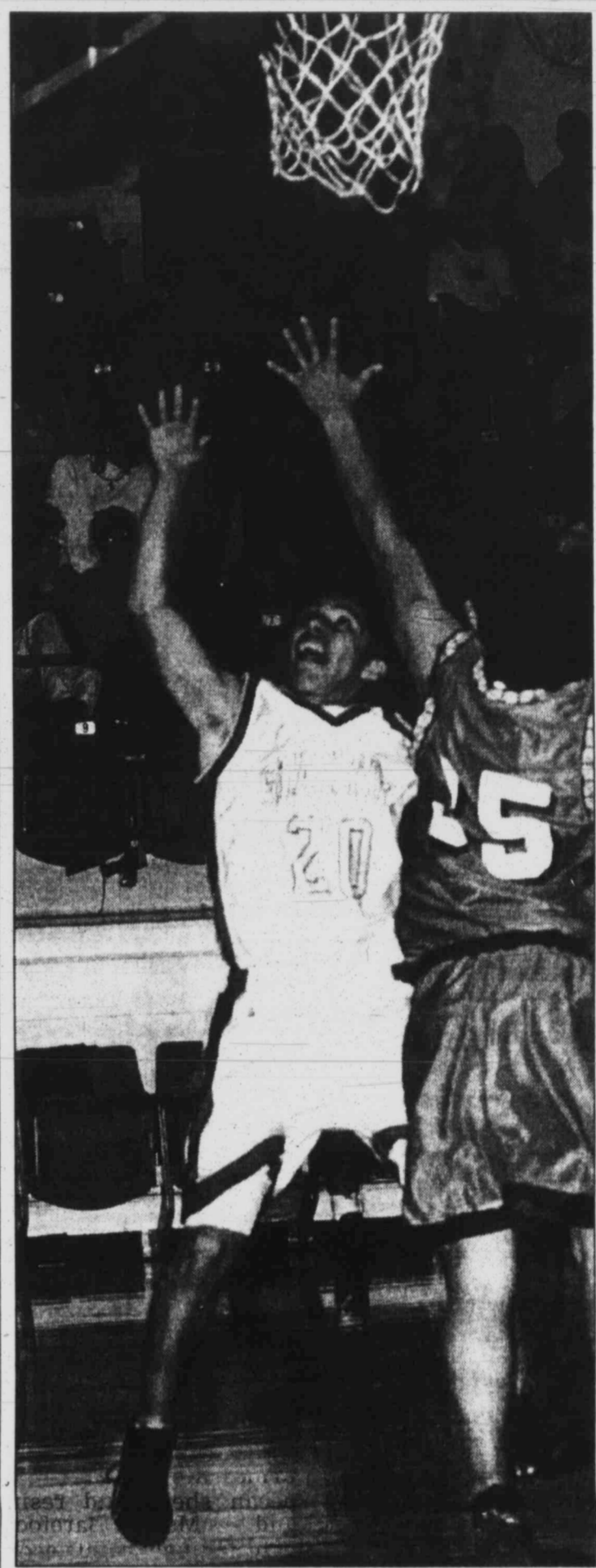
Mendy Morgan led Coahoma with 19 points and 12 rebounds and Lauren Yeater added seven points and six rebounds.

Callie Paige and Sarah Colloin pulled down five rebounds, while Sterling Gee added four rebounds and five assists.

Coahoma's next game will take place Friday in Gail against Borden County. The girls will begin at 6:30 p.m., while the boys tip-off around 8 p.m.



HERALD photos/Troy Hyde  
Right: Big Spring senior Curtis Osburn, middle, receives a handshake and gift from assistant coach Jay Kennedy during the Big Spring football banquet Monday night. Above: Head coach Dwight Butler, far right, speaks about each senior member of the football team. The banquet, which included a dinner, honored the football team, coaches, cheerleaders and booster members. Several awards and presentations were also announced. Regan Creswell won the Academic Award, while Ryan Yeats took home the Antoine Edwards Award.



HERALD photo/Bruce Schooler  
Stanton junior Matthew Ruiz goes up for a layup during the Hooptown Tournament last weekend. The Buffaloes cruised past Sterling City Monday.

## Stanton finds split with Sterling City

#### By TROY HYDE

SPORTS EDITOR STANTON — The Stanton basketball teams split in action against Sterling City Monday as the boys won, 55-35, and the girls lost, 62-37.

The Buffaloes used a strong first quarter to defeat Sterling City at home.

They outscored the Eagles 19-5 in the first period before coasting to the victory.

Stanton led 33-17 at halftime before outscoring Sterling City by four points in the second

half. Sophomore Michael Washington led Stanton (7-6) with 21 points, while Dex Shafer added 12.

The Stanton girls kept the game close through three quarters before Sterling City used a 21-7 fourth quarter advantage to claim the 25-point win.

The Lady Buffaloes trailed 26-19 at halftime.

Bonnie Kendall led Stanton (6-8) with 10 points, while Amy Jo Bryand and Malorie Cotton pitched in with nine and seven points, respectively.

Both teams will take part in a tournament in San Angelo starting Dec. 28.

The Buffaloes take on Wall in their first game.

## Finley's buzzer beaters help send Mavericks past Bulls

CHICAGO (AP) — The Dallas Mavericks had to make do without Michael Finley for a month as the veteran recovered from an injured ankle.

He's proving that it was worth the wait.

Finley capped his 27-point night with a 17-foot jumper with 3.2 seconds left to lead the Dallas Mavericks to a 94-93 victory over the Chicago Bulls on Monday night.

Dirk Nowitzki had 21 points for Dallas, despite a poor-shooting night.

He was 4-of-18 from the floor, but made 13 of 19

from the free throw line.

After missing a month with a sprained right ankle, Finley is averaging 24 points in his first three games back.

He hit 3-point buzzer-beaters at the end of the second and third quarters before sinking the game-winner to give the Mavericks their fourth straight road win.

"We needed him," Nowitzki said. "We needed another shooter back out there who can spread the defense, and make some big shots for us."

Chicago's Ben Gordon

hit a 3-pointer from the corner to give Chicago a 93-91 lead with 12 seconds left. Nowitzki was fouled by Tyson Chandler with 9 seconds remaining, hit the first free throw, but missed the second.

Dallas' Josh Howard sneaked around Chandler to get the rebound and Chandler knocked the ball out of bounds.

On the ensuing inbounds, Finley got free and knocked down the shot. Chicago's Kirk Hinrich missed a 15-foot jumper as time expired.

"They made some costly

turnovers. At the end, I just got a good look and let it go," Finley said.

Nowitzki was happy to escape with a win.

"That's definitely one we should've lost," said Nowitzki.

The Bulls thought that Howard was the last to touch the ball before it went out of bounds and Bulls head coach Scott Skiles was also critical of the officiating throughout the game.

"It probably went off Howard, but Bob Delaney felt it was a foul on Tyson, so rather call a

foul, he just gave them the ball," said Skiles.

Howard finished with 16 points and 10 rebounds for Dallas.

Eddy Curry scored 20 points and Luol Deng added 16 for Chicago, who lost to Dallas for the 13th straight time.

Gordon gave the Bulls a 90-84 lead on a 3 with 3:11 left, but Howard responded with a three-point play on the other end and Erick Dampier had a put-back basket with 2:21 left to cut the lead to 90-89 with 2:21 left.

D E C 1 4 2 0 0 4



KRT photo/Michael Perez, Philadelphia Inquirer  
Allen Iverson of the Philadelphia 76ers squeezes past Milwaukee Bucks Desmond Mason (right) and Mike James (left) on a drive to the hoop in the second quarter. The Sixers defeated the Bucks, 107-101, at Wachovia Center in Philadelphia, Pa. Sunday.

## Notre Dame finally finds its 'fourth' man in Pats' Weis

By TOM COYNE

AP Sports Writer  
SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Charlie Weis promises to give Notre Dame an arrogant attitude and turn the Fighting Irish into an intelligent, hard-working, nasty football team.

"I hate to include the 'nasty,' but that is part of being a winning football team," Weis said as he was introduced Monday as the new Irish coach.

Weis says his job is to raise expectations and win games.

Simple, but not easy. Notre Dame hasn't posted back-to-back winning seasons since 1997-98 under Bob Davie. Tough academic standards and a difficult schedule have been blamed for the demise of the nation's most storied football program.

Weis, who will remain as offensive coordinator for the New England Patriots through the end of the season, said he doesn't believe any of that.

"I think that the people who complain about those things are looking for excuses," Weis said.

He wants to instill in the players an arrogance that they can win anywhere against anyone.

"That's the way I have to get the kids thinking, because once they are thinking like that it does-

n't make any difference," he said. "You can call any play in the world, on offense or defense, but if the kids know the play is going to work, they are going to make it work. You'll look like a genius, but you have to sell the fact to them. Don't make excuses."

Weis replaces Tyrone Willingham, who was fired after going 21-15 in three seasons at Notre Dame. Just days after letting Willingham go, Notre Dame officials flew to Utah to meet with Utes coach Urban Meyer. They returned empty handed and Meyer decided to take an offer from Florida.

Athletic director Kevin White said he interviewed five candidates about the job opening, talked contract details with two, but only offered the job to Weis. He said Weis was the most impressive candidate.

"I like his demeanor. I like his passion. I like his body of knowledge," White said. "He's coached a lot of different positions. You put the whole package together, it says what we want to hear."

Weis returns to his alma mater in the midst of what former Irish football player Dave Duerson, now a member of the school's board of trustees, described as great dissension.

That comment came

several days after the Rev. Edward Malloy, who is retiring in June after 18 years as Notre Dame's president, said he was embarrassed that the school had fired Willingham. Malloy's assistant, Chandra Johnson, the school's highest-profile black administrator, shaved her head in protest.

Malloy and the Rev. John Jenkins, the incoming president, downplayed talk about dissension, saying the hiring of Weis would go a long way in settling things.

"Healing is too strong of a word," Jenkins said. "The board of trustees consists of 50 different people who all have very different opinions. That's not going to stop. You try to achieve the right balance. You're not going to please all the people all of the time."

Just hours after Weis was introduced at Notre Dame, Willingham officially became the new coach at Washington.

Weis said as a former student he understands the "idiosyncrasies" of being in South Bend.

New England coach Bill Belichick praised the job Weis has done for the Patriots.

"He's been a good friend," he said. "I'm happy for him personally, and we all at the Patriots wish him well."

## USC's Leinart leads all-Americans

By RALPH D. RUSSO

AP Sports Writer  
NEW YORK — Southern California is No. 1 in All-Americans, too.

Heisman Trophy winner Matt Leinart and three of his Southern California teammates made The Associated Press All-America team announced Monday.

Tailback Reggie Bush, defensive lineman Shaun Cody and linebacker Matt Grothe joined their quarterback on the first team. Bush, a Heisman finalist, was picked as the all-purpose player.

"It's really a tribute to the kind of season we've had," said Leinart, in New York on Monday for the Heisman banquet. "It just speaks volumes for our program."

The junior left-hander has passed for 2,990 yards and 28 touchdowns this season, leading the top-ranked Trojans (12-0) to a perfect regular season and becoming USC's sixth Heisman trophy winner.

Oklahoma tailback Adrian Peterson, the Heisman runner-up who has run for 1,843 yards and 15 TDs, is the first freshman AP All-American since North Carolina cornerback DeShaun Brown in 1996.

They'll line up against Leinart and USC in the Orange Bowl Jan. 4.

Oklahoma quarterback Jason White, a first-team All-American and the Heisman Trophy winner

last season, was a third-team selection Monday. Utah quarterback Alex Smith was the second-team QB.

USC also had a third-teamer in defensive tackle Mike Patterson for a total of five players on the three AP All-America teams, tying Oklahoma for the most.

The second-ranked Sooners (12-0) also put wide receiver Mark Clayton on the second team and defensive end Dan Cody on the third team.

Big Ten co-champ Michigan (9-2) matched USC for the most first-team All-Americans with four: wide receiver Braylon Edwards, center David Baas and defensive backs Marlin Jackson and Ernest Shazor.

Jackson and Edwards were among 20 seniors on the first team, and two of those who decided to delay an NFL career and return to college for their final seasons.

Texas linebacker Derrick Johnson and Florida State tackle Alex Barron both returned to school after being All-Americans last season and ended up repeating.

Georgia defensive end David Pollack, LSU defen-

sive end Marcus Spears, Miami cornerback Antrel Rolle and Auburn cornerback Carlos Rogers all considered bypassing their final years of eligibility and went on to become All-Americans.

California running back J.J. Arrington, second in the nation in rushing at 167.7 yards per game, and Purdue wide receiver Taylor Stubblefield, who caught 82 passes 1,014 yards and 15 touchdowns, made the AP first team.

Virginia and Ohio State joined Oklahoma as teams with two first-team All-Americans. Guard Elton Brown and tight end Heath Miller made it from the Cavaliers, and kicker Mike Nugent were picked from the Buckeyes.

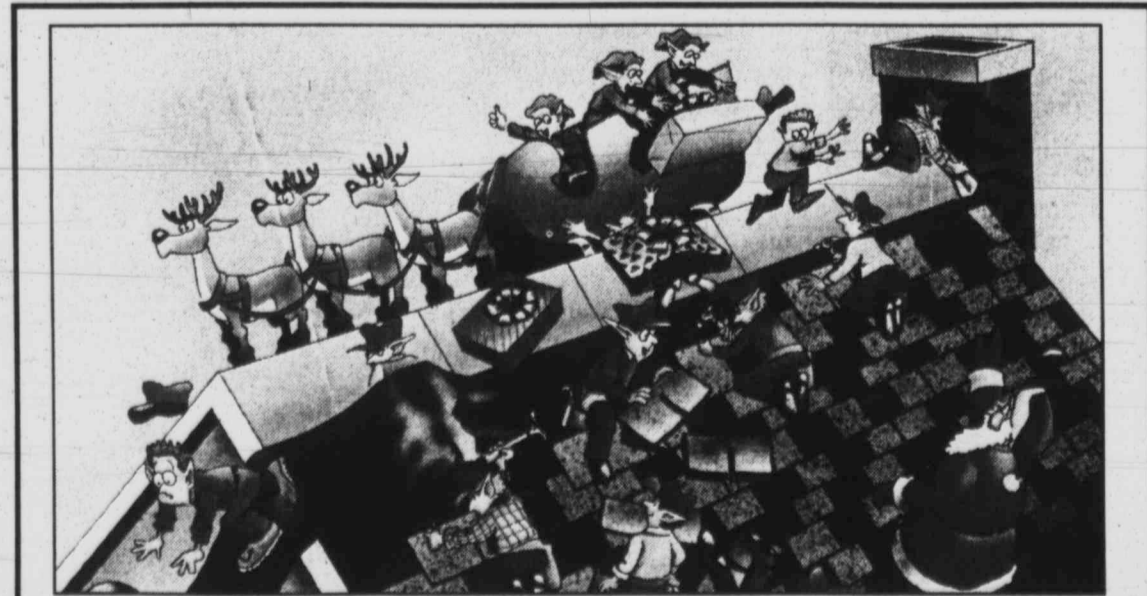
The Big Ten had the most first-teamers with nine. The Pac-10 had five, followed by the Southeastern Conference and Atlantic Coast Conference with four each. The Big 12 had three.

Cedric Benson of Texas and Auburn's Carnell Williams were the running backs on the second team.

Ball State's Dante Ridgeway also made the second team.

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Covenant Home Health Care of Big Spring is currently hiring for the following position:  
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**INTERIM HEALTH** Care Director of Nursing 2 yrs. management experience in homecare. Proficient with Medicare, Medicaid and insurance. For more information call: (432)550-7593 866-6040

**Help Wanted**

**THE CITY OF Big Spring** will be testing for the position of Certified and Non-Certified Police Officer at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday January 13, 2005 at the Police Training Center on 307 E. 4th. Applications are being accepted through Wednesday January 12, 2005. Preference will be given to Certified Officers. For further information contact City Hall Personnel at 310 Nolan, Big Spring, Tx 79720 or call (432)264-2346. The City of Big Spring is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Applications may also be obtained from website: [www.ci.big-spring.tx.us](http://www.ci.big-spring.tx.us)

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Especially for kids and their families  
**The Mini Page**

By BETTY DEBNAM



"A Visit From St. Nicholas" is better known as "The Night Before Christmas." Dr. Clement Moore is usually credited as being the author. He gave this poem to his children as a present on Christmas Eve in 1822.



'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house,  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.



The children were nestled all snug in their beds,  
While visions of sugarplums danced in their heads.  
And Mamma in her 'kerchief and I in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap—  
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.



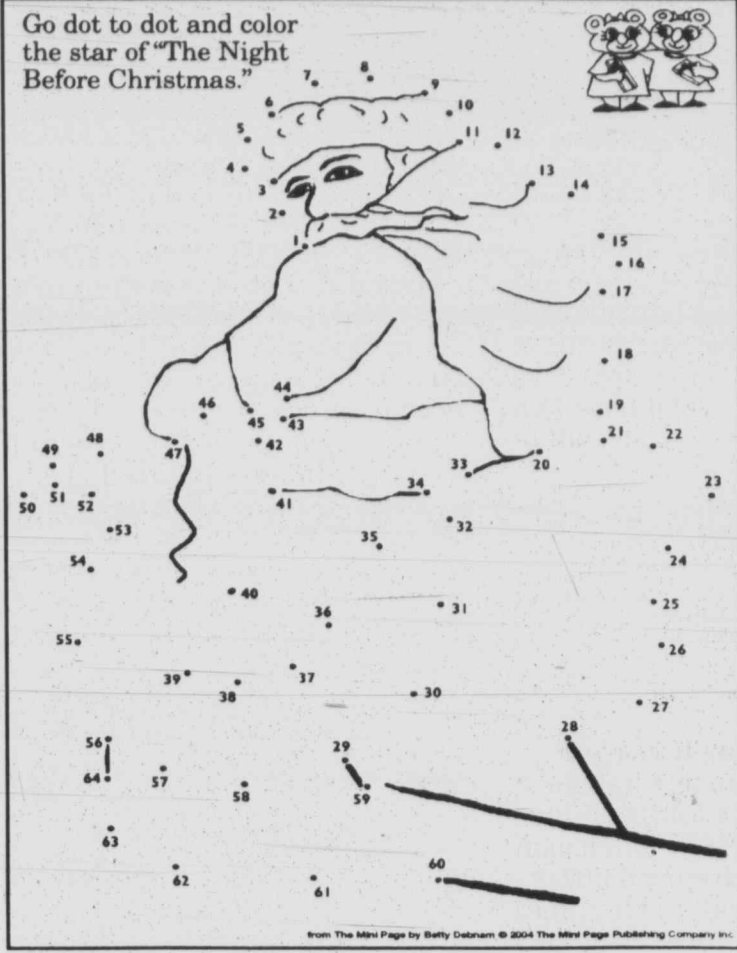
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.  
The moon, on the breast of the new-fallen snow,  
Gave the luster of midday to objects below.  
When what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer;



With a little old driver so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name—  
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!  
"On, Comet on, Cupid on, Donder and Blitzen!



"To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall,  
"Now, dash away, dash away, dash away all!"  
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,  
So, up to the housetop the coursers they flew,  
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too.



Go dot to dot and color the star of "The Night Before Christmas."

**Rookie Cookie's Recipe Plum Cake**

You'll be using an electric mixer for this recipe, so be sure to get an adult's help.

**You'll need:**

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups self-rising flour
- 2 (15-ounce) cans of plums, drained, pitted and chopped

**Glaze:**

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- juice from half a lemon

**What to do:**

1. In a large bowl, mix sugar, oil and spices.
2. Add the eggs one at a time and mix well.
3. Add the flour and plums and mix well.
4. In a small bowl, stir the powdered sugar and lemon juice. Set aside.
5. Beat plum mixture with an electric mixer on medium speed for 3 minutes.
6. Pour cake mixture into a bundt pan (a pan with a hole in the center).
7. Bake in a preheated 325-degree oven for 1 hour 15 minutes.
8. Let cool for 30 minutes, flip onto a plate, and pour on glaze. Serves 12.

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**Goldie Goodsport's Report Supersport: Maria Sharapova**

**Born:** 4-19-87 **Native of:** Russia  
Maria Sharapova is 17 years old and the teen queen of women's tennis. Attractive, talented and poised, Sharapova caught everybody's eye when she upset Serena Williams last summer to win the Wimbledon singles title. Born in Russia, Sharapova was discovered at age 8 by tennis legend Martina Navratilova. Maria moved to the United States, attended a tennis academy in Florida, and became a star with the looks of a model. Still a high school student, Sharapova is like many girls her age. She enjoys fashion, likes to talk on the phone and spend time on her computer—and enjoys blasting forehands and backhands.

**Meet Hayley Westenra**

Hayley Westenra, 17, is an international classical artist. After her performance in a school Christmas play when she was 6, her teacher said she had perfect pitch. She told Hayley that she should play an instrument, so her parents signed her up for violin lessons. This is when her love of music began. Hayley's first international album is called "Pure." She has performed before President Bush, Prime Minister Tony Blair and even Queen Elizabeth. Hayley was born in Christchurch, New Zealand. She and her younger sister, Sophie, both play the piano and violin. Her younger brother, Isaac, plays the flute. She enjoys swimming, netball, indoor rock-climbing and ballet. She also likes reading and listening to music.

**Mighty Funny's Mini Jokes**

All the following jokes have something in common. Can you guess the common theme or category?

**Sheldon:** What do you call a group of flying rabbits?  
**Tracy:** The hare force!

**Kobe:** What do you get if you cross a hippo with a bunny?  
**Frank:** A hop-opotamus!

**Pierre:** How do rabbits fix their hair?  
**Ginger:** With hare brushes!

**Night Before Christmas TRY 'N FIND**

Names and words that remind us of the poem "The Night Before Christmas" are hidden in the block below. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used more than once. See if you can find: MERRY, CHRISTMAS, SAINT, NICHOLAS, SNUG, CLEMENT, MOORE, SLEIGH, REINDEER, ELF, STOCKINGS, TOYS, CHIMNEY, TWINKLE, WINK, DIMPLE, PRANCING, SUGARPLUMS, CHILDREN, DASH, AWAY.

NDYSRCLEMNTSCG  
IHRRAEBKNIWPGHN  
CMGSRMISAINTNII  
HPTCAETNGNHTILC  
OLELFDMSDUIOKDN  
LELKNIWTIENYCR  
ABSMOOREIRESOER  
SMULPRAGUSHRTNP  
QKAWAYENUMIHCSBE

**Mini Spy ...**

Mini Spy and her friends are glad to see Santa coming down their chimney! See if you can find:

- word MINI
- mushroom
- bucket
- key
- fish
- comb
- lips
- whale
- bell
- book
- letter A
- funny face
- letter I
- muffin
- bird
- kite
- heart
- letter D
- letter W

**A Visit From St. Nicholas**

7. And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof,  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof;  
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

8. He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.  
His eyes, how they twinkled! His dimples, how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry;

9. His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.  
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath.  
He had a broad face and a little round belly,  
That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.

10. He was chubby and plump—a right jolly old elf;  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,

11. And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle,  
But I heard him exclaim 'ere he drove out of sight,  
"MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT!"

12. MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL  
AND TO ALL GOOD NIGHT

**Make this Mini Page poem into a book:**

1. Fold six 8-by-11-inch white pieces of paper in half.
2. Cut out each page in the issue along the dotted lines and paste each one in order.
3. Staple or punch holes in the fold and tie with red ribbon.

The Mini Page is created and edited by **Betty Debnam**

Associate Editors: Tali Denton, Lucy Lien  
Staff Artist: Wendy Daley

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Jane Armstrong

DECEMBER 14, 2004

TUESDAY

DEC. 14

	WFAA (2)	KMID (3)	UNI (4)	KPEJ (5)	KOSA (7)	KTLE (8)	KWES (9)	WTBS (11)	KMLM (12)	KOCY (13)	DISC (20)	AMC (21)	SPIKE (22)	TNT (23)	BET (26)	DISN (27)	ESPN2 (28)	ESPN (29)	TMC (30)
	Dallas	Midland	Spanish	Odesa	Odesa	Telemundo	Midland	Atlanta	Odesa	Odesa	Discovery	Classics	Spike TV	Atlanta	Black Ent.	Disney	Sports	Sports	Premium
6	PM News (CC)	News Wheel-Fortune	La Mujer de Madera	Malcolm-Mid Raymond	News Ent Tonight	Anita No Te Rajes	News Seinfeld (CC)	Raymond Raymond	Booker John Hagee	News-Lehrer	American Chopper		CSI: Crime Scene	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	Live BET Style	Sister, Sister That's-Raven	Women's College	College	(CC)
7	PM I Want a Dog	I Want a Dog	Rubi	Billionaire Quest for Best	NCIS (CC)	La Mujer en el Espejo	The Biggest Loser (CC)	The Real Gilligan's Island	Update/Israel Final Exodus	Nova (CC) (DVS)	Dr. G Medical Examiner	Movie: Flying Leathernecks	Investigation Game Awards	Movie: Call Me Claus (CC)	The Parkers Girlfriends	Movie: The Even Stevens	Basketball	Football: Wyndham New	Movie: Blown Away
8	PM Accordion-Jim	Accord-Jim	Amor Real	House (CC)	The Amazing Race 5 (CC)	Gitanas	Scrubs (CC)	The Real Gilligan's Island	Light of the Southwest	Frontline (CC)	Mummy Autopsy		Spike TV's Video Game Awards 2004		Source Awards 2004	Movie (CC)	College Basketball: Illinois-Chicago at Duke (CC)	Orleans Bowl -- North Texas	
9	PM NYPD Blue	NYPD Blue	Veremos Todo con Nurka	Malcolm-Mid 70s Show	Judging Amy (CC)	Te Voy a Ensenar a Quererte	Law & Order: SVU	Sex and-City		Independent Lens (CC)	Wing Nuts (CC)	15 Movie: Jet Pilot	Awards 2004	Movie: Call Me Claus (CC)		Lizzie McGure Sister, Sister			.05 Movie: Dirty Rotten
10	PM News (CC)	News Nightline	Primer Impacto Noticias Univ	70s Show Raymond	News Late Show	Noticias Laura	News The Tonight Show (CC)	The Real Gilligan's Island	The Hour of Healing	Charlie Rose (CC)	Dr. G Medical Examiner		Spike TV's Video Game Awards 2004		Nightly News BET Style	Even Stevens Boy World	The Season	SportsCenter (CC)	Scoundrels (CC)
11	PM Ent Tonight	Jimmy Kimmel	Extra (CC)	Estamos Unidos	Becker (CC)	The Late Late Show (CC)	Al Pojo Vivo	Show (CC) Late Night	The Real Gilligan's Island	Sign Off	Mummy Autopsy	Making-Aviator	Awards 2004	2004 Busch Awards Show	Source Awards 2004	Proud Family That's-Raven	NBA Fastbreak X-Games	Outside-Lines	Movie: Undercover
12	AM Live (CC)	Oprah Winfrey	Alma Rebelde	Spin City	Show (CC) The Insider	Mana Celeste Corte-Familia	Fraser (CC)	Movie: Summer	Update/Israel Booker		Wing Nuts (CC)	12 15 Movie: A Big Hand for	Blind Date	The X-Files (CC)		Kim Possible Lizzie McGure	Classix X-Games	SportsCenter (CC)	Movie: Black

DENNIS THE MENACE



"SO, WATCHA BEEN DOIN' SINCE LAST CHRISTMAS?"

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Boy! Are you ever gonna get coal in your stocking!"

HAGAR



BLONDIE



BC



WIZARD OF ID



AGNES



HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

By the Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Dec. 14, the 349th day of 2004. There are 17 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

- On Dec. 14, 1799, the first president of the United States, George Washington, died at his Mount Vernon home at age 67.
- In 1819, Alabama joined the Union as the 22nd state.
- In 1861, Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, died in London.
- In 1911, Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen became the first man to reach the South Pole, beating out an expedition led by Robert F. Scott.
- In 1939, the Soviet Union was dropped from the League of Nations.
- In 1946, the United Nations General Assembly

voted to establish U.N. headquarters in New York.

In 1962, the U.S. space probe Mariner II approached Venus, transmitting information about the planet.

In 1975, six South Moluccan extremists surrendered after holding 23 hostages for 12 days on a train near the Dutch town of Beilen.

In 1981, Israel annexed the Golan Heights, which it had seized from Syria in 1967.

In 1986, the experimental aircraft Voyager, piloted by Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager, took off from Edwards Air Force Base in California on the first non-stop, non-refueled flight around the world.

In 2000, the Federal Trade Commission unanimously approved the \$11 billion merger of America Online and Time Warner.

Ten years ago: A federal judge granted a preliminary injunction blocking almost all of Proposition 187's bans affecting illegal immigrants in California. Former

Arkansas Gov. Orval E. Faubus, whose refusal to let nine black students into Little Rock's Central High School in 1957 forced President Eisenhower to send in federal troops, died at age 84.

Today's Birthdays: Jazz musician Clark Terry is 84. "60 Minutes" executive producer Don Hewitt is 82. Actor-playwright George Furth is 72. Actor Hal Williams is 66. Actress Patty Duke is 58. Pop singer Joyce Vincent-Wilson (Tony Orlando and Dawn) is 58. Entertainment executive Michael Ovitz is 58. Actress Dee Wallace Stone is 56.

Answer to previous puzzle

ACTS	CHART	PLOW
AREA	AUDIO	REBA
HAMMER	LOCK	EVIL
SPED	ASHY	PEEL
STAIR	LOYAL	
STEAMY	ORBS	
AMP	ERA	SLEEPS
PAL	SKI	RACK
ERASES	CIA	TRY
SNIP	CORRAL	
EXTRA	FLASH	
PART	ENDS	TYPO
ODIE	NAIL	POLISH
TIDE	EPCOT	ONTO
SEEN	WEEPS	WEST

Newsday Crossword

AW, SHUCKS by Sally R. Stein  
Edited by Stanley Newman  
www.stanxwords.com

**ACROSS**

- Amount of medicine
- Recipe amts.
- Groups of delinquents
- Ancient Andes dweller
- Fencing blade
- Like a lot
- Sky twinkler
- Blue Jay or Oriole
- Arrested
- Placing in a tough spot
- Alter, as legislation
- Secret agent
- It may be under a dinner plate
- Henhouse product
- Devoured
- Combines chemically
- Suspect's story
- Junction point
- Infield cover
- Assembled roughly
- Nobelist Wiesel
- "Semper Fidelis" grp.
- Two-bit
- Not as cheerful
- Standard of conduct
- Home site
- Cereal ingredient
- That lady
- Rigatoni or ravioli

**DOWN**

- Suit material
- Carport kin
- Abel's dad
- Zilch
- Smile a little
- Ship off
- Paperless note
- Diver
- Louganis
- Receded
- Phrase of denial
- Storage room
- Song lyricist Sammy
- Star... The Next Generation
- Agile
- High cards
- Entertainer Falana
- Footnote abbr.
- Professor's degree, often
- Money in Spain
- Mrs. Archie Bunker
- Go by
- Occur
- Tries out
- Slow-moving one
- Reddish dye
- Opinion piece
- Orange-juice extra
- Where Nepal is
- Finds a total
- Leisurely run
- Spiny houseplant
- Makes a selection

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15				16				
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