



Chase ends with capture

Midland man charged with attempting to run over trooper

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

A Midland man remains in the Big Spring Police Department jail this morning awaiting arraignment after leading local law enforcement on a 30-minute chase Wednesday afternoon.

Jeremy Miller, 27, was arrested Wednesday at approximately 4:16 p.m. after a police officer attempted to pull him over in the 1600 block of N. Goliad.

"The officer attempted to stop a

Pontiac, Grand Am for a traffic violation," said Sgt. Tony Everett, public information officer for the BSPD. "The driver of the vehicle refused to stop and a pursuit ensued."

After pursuing the vehicle through the west side of Big Spring, a sergeant with the BSPD told the pursuing police units to terminate the chase, at which time police officers lost sight of

See **CHASE**, Page 3A



HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins
Law enforcement officials search this Pontiac Grand Am, which was involved in a high-speed chase after an officer with the Big Spring Police Department attempted to pull over the driver, 27-year-old Jeremy Miller of Midland, for an expired inspection sticker. Miller was later charged with evading arrest or detention with a vehicle and aggravated assault on a peace officer with a motor vehicle.

House OKs budget

By **APRIL CASTRO**

Associated Press Writer

AUSTIN (AP) — The Texas House approved a \$137.5 billion state budget early Thursday that increases spending on public education and health and human services while making cuts to other government agencies.

The bill, approved by a 105-41 vote, proposes \$42 billion for education, including \$3 billion in new spending for schools. Another large chunk of money, \$19 billion, would go to health and human services.

Discussions stretched into the wee hours of the night as weary lawmakers labored through a stack of amendments.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Jim Pitts, R-Waxahachie, called the spending plan strong, sound and respon-

See **BUDGET**, Page 3A



HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins
Rafael Gon, a Brazilian exchange student from Big Spring High School, shows area residents you don't have to be "from" the United States to take pride in your community, as he helps pick up bags of trash during the annual Don't Mess With Texas Trash-Off.

Trash-Off counts complete; organizer pleased with results

By **THOMAS JENKINS**

Staff Writer

Could the amount of litter hitting Big Spring streets be on the decline?

That's the hope of Pat Simmons, coordinator for the annual Don't Mess with Texas Trash-Off, as the final tally for Saturday's clean-up effort are in.

"We managed to collect 5,755 pounds of trash this year," said Simmons. "And that's with 500 volunteers participating. Last year, we collected 6,660 pounds of trash with 434 volunteers."



Simmons

"At first glance it may seem like we're just not picking up as much trash. What you have to understand, however, is if this program is working like it should and people are beginning to develop pride in their community, it's not a decrease in effort — it's a decrease in the amount of trash."

While the results were nearly

See **TRASH**, Page 3A

Mass for Christian Burial planned this evening

By **THOMAS JENKINS**

Staff Writer

As the world continues to mourn the loss of Pope John Paul II, area residents will have the chance to say good-bye to the holy man during a vigil planned this evening.

A special Mass for Christian Burial has been slated for 7 p.m.

at Sacred Heart and St. Thomas Catholic churches.

"The Mass of Christian Burial is the same ceremony that will be celebrated in Rome," said Father James Plagens, pastor of Sacred Heart and St. Thomas Catholic churches. "It's the same ceremony that we offer for anyone that dies."

Plagens said the pope's legacy

reached far beyond the boundaries of the Catholic community, making the loss hard to bear all over the world.

"He belonged to all of us," said Plagens. "He belonged to everyone in the world, so it's a very sad event for everyone. He touched so many lives. I spoke with a priest from India one time, and he told me that

although the majority of the population there wasn't Christian, they still held the Pope in very high regard as a holy man. His passing touches us all."

Plagens said the pope will be buried Friday, following a funeral service.

"His body will be taken to the

See **MASS**, Page 3A

Writers' roundup to be held in Stanton this weekend

Proceeds will go toward renovation of building into 'new' county library

By **BILL MCCLELLAN**

News Editor

Read any good books lately?

More than 20 area authors will be gathering in Stanton for the Spring Author Roundup this weekend.

The roundup's dates, Saturday and Sunday, coincide with the popular Old Sorehead Trade Days, a Stanton tradition

for more than 10 years.

"I'm really looking forward to this," said A.L. "Bud" Lindsey, an author and organizer of the event. "I think this is a great chance to meet other writers and the public."

The authors will have their books available in the "new" Martin County Library building near the post office in downtown Stanton.

"This is the first time we've done this in the building which is the proposed new library," explained Lindsey. "And we're having a used book sale in the same building. Funds from the book sale will go toward renovating this 6,000-square-foot building into a library."

The used book sale will feature more than 2,300 paperbacks and about 1,000 hardback

books, said Lindsey.

Of course, the authors have been invited to offer their own books for sale at the roundup. They include Wayne Barton, Coni Aldridge, Charlene Chandler, Candis C. Coffee, Harriett Dublin, Ernestine Hammock, Ellen Hopkins, Bill Meador, Mary Lou Midkiff, Richard Regnier, Eric Setzler, Jean Starns and Bill Womack,

all of Midland. Others are Dr. Rina Torufo, Robert Hollmann and Tom White of Odessa; Mary Evelyn Jones of Andrews; Bob Lewis (Tumbleweed Smith) of Big Spring; Harry Marlin of Brownwood; Ross McSwain of San Angelo; and Stanton's Lindsey.

In addition to the books, sev-

See **WRITERS**, Page 3A

INDEX

Classified 6-8C

Features 4A

Obituaries 2A

Opinion 4A

Sports 1-2B



TONIGHT
40°-42°

TOMORROW
65°-68°

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THIS WEEKEND

Cover Story:
Flying a kite in a stiff breeze on a sunny day is a simple pleasure that can evoke pleasant childhood memories for adults and create new ones for children.

Kay Buesing, curator of the World Kite Museum and Hall of Fame in Long Beach, Wash., (pop. 1,283) has fond memories of her own.



HOLLYWOOD EVENT

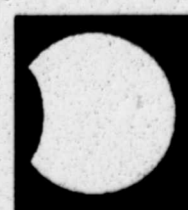
American Heart Association.



The American Heart Association will present "Hollywood for Heart," a western style gala, from 9 p.m. until midnight Saturday at the Big Spring Country Club.

The evening will feature dancing, food and silent and live auctions. Tickets are \$15 per person or \$25 per couple. For more information, call 270-1383.

PARTIAL ECLIPSE



Howard College will be sponsoring a "Patrial Solar Eclipse Event" from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday in front of the college library. The event, hosted by

physics/astronomy instructor Abel Diaz, is free for students, families and astronomy fans of all ages. There will be safe viewing of the partial solar eclipse. It will be the last partial eclipse of the sun visible from the continental U.S. until May 20, 2012. For more information, contact Diaz at 264-5150.

TRASH

Continued from Page 1A

5,000 pounds off-target from Simmons' Saturday morning projection, the Big Spring woman said many of the heavier items picked up during last year's Trash-Off were absent from the landscape.

Simmons said Trash-Off volunteers weren't the only people chipping in Friday, as many area residents chose to act a little more "locally" by cleaning up their own properties.

"I've seen many people out with their lawn mowers and picking up trash around their own property, and it's exciting," said Simmons. "I've seen them out cleaning up because they know about the Trash-Off, and they want to make a difference. And I think the whole city wants to make a difference, and I'm really pleased with

that."

While the annual Trash-Off is now officially a memory for 2005, Simmons said it's important to realize taking pride in the community is a year-round job.

"A lot of people think that just because the Trash-Off is over, it's time to just kick back and relax," said Simmons. "That's simply not the case. The Great American Clean Up started on March 1 and continues through May 31, so this isn't the time to slack off."

"It doesn't have to be a coordinated effort like the Trash-Off. For a lot of people, doing their part simply means getting out their lawn mowers or planting some flowers. We can accomplish a lot if we really take pride in the way our community looks."

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

NEWS BRIEFS

U.S. military helicopter crashes in Afghan desert, killing at least 16

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — A U.S. military helicopter returning from a mission smashed into the southern Afghan desert Wednesday, killing 13 American military personnel and three U.S. government contractors in the deadliest military crash since the fall of the Taliban in late 2001, the military said.

Two other U.S. service members were unaccounted for.

FDA asks Pfizer to take painkiller Bextra off market

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government said today it has asked Pfizer Inc. to withdraw the painkiller Bextra from the market because it increases the risk of heart attack and stroke. Regulators also want all other anti-inflammatory drugs in the same class to

carry the strongest safety warning possible.

The Food and Drug Administration has been studying the safety of the so-called Cox-2 inhibitors since Merck & Co. voluntarily pulled Vioxx from the market Sept. 30 after heart problems were reported in some users.

Shiite expected to be named Iraq's new prime minister

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Iraqi newspapers on Thursday announced the expected rise of a Shiite Muslim who spent years in exile to Iraq's most powerful political job as prime minister of the country's first democratically elected government in 50 years.

Ibrahim al-Jaafari, a Shiite who fought Saddam Hussein's regime from Iran, was to be named to the government's top post Thursday by the country's presidential council.

Al-Jaafari's rise further consolidated the power shift in Iraq, where both the Shiite Arab majority and the Kurdish minority enjoy newfound power after decades of brutal oppression under Saddam's Sunni-dominated regime.

CHASE

Continued from Page 1A

the Grand Am.

By that time, however, Everett said units with the Howard County Sheriff's Office and Department of Public Safety troopers were involved, and continued to trail the suspect.

"After several breaks in the pursuit, the suspect vehicle was traveling west on Interstate 20," said Everett. "Two troopers

with DPS attempted to put out spike strips to disable the vehicle. The suspect then purposely steered his vehicle at the troopers, placing their lives in danger.

"Both troopers were able to get out of the way. One of the troopers was able to fire a round at the vehicle's right rear tire."

Despite several radio reports that "shots" had been fired during the chase, Everett said Miller was not armed during the pursuit.

"The suspect didn't have a gun," said Everett. "The only weapon he had was a 3,800 pound bullet he drove straight at the troopers."

Everett said Miller ditched the car several minutes after trying to run over the troopers.

"The vehicle was found abandoned on the Interstate 20 S. Service Road near exit 176," said Everett. "At that point, the suspect had fled on foot."

After a lengthy chase through the salt flats south of Interstate 20, Miller was arrested near the

intersection of Highway 80 and Willia, behind a 7-Eleven convenience store.

"Miller was booked into the city jail and charged with evading arrest or detention with a vehicle, and DPS later filed a charge of aggravated assault on a peace officer with a motor vehicle against him," said Everett. "He's currently being held in the city jail pending arraignment."

What could possibly drive someone to take such extreme actions to avoid being pulled

over?

"The driver thought he was being pulled over for a gas drive-off at the 7-Eleven at the corner of Birdwell and FM 700," said Everett.

"Apparently, that's why he chose to run — because of a gas theft. In reality, however, the officer was pulling him over for an expired inspection sticker and speeding."

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

BUDGET

Continued from Page 1A

sible. Pitts, who was lauded for his bipartisan work, touted the budget for increasing spending on the state's top priorities. He said, that, at the same time, the spending document "eliminates state agencies and reduces or eliminates unnecessary or duplicitous spending."

Debate was devoid of the rancor and acrimony of two years ago, when the Legislature faced a \$10 billion revenue shortfall and lawmakers adjusted with sweeping cuts to state agencies and social services.

The House plan restores many cuts to health care programs made by the cash-strapped Legislature two years ago. Still some Democrats who opposed the bill argue that the budget does not go far enough to ensure basic services are met.

"There's so much left to

do, and none of it is done," said Democratic Rep. Pete Gallego of Alpine.

Dental, vision, and hospice benefits would be restored to the Children's Health Insurance Program.

The bill maintains the eligibility period of six months, rather than the previous enrollment period of a year for the low cost health plan. Critics have argued that cutting the enrollment period results in thousands of kids going without health care coverage.

The budget "meets basic needs and spends billions to improve our public schools, our health care and public safety," Pitts said.

An additional \$100 million was earmarked to pay for projected growth in the state's prison population.

A separate supplemental bill would use about \$2 billion from the state's Rainy Day Fund to plug holes in the current budget.

Of that money, \$300 mil-

lion would be used for reform of the troubled Child and Adult Protective Services. Restructuring the agencies was deemed an emergency issue following recent high-profile cases of child homicides after caseworkers who investigated possible neglect or abuse decided the children were safe in their homes.

Textbooks for Spanish-speaking students, which had been delayed two years ago, also will be purchased with that money.

One amendment that was approved would use money from the advertising budget of the Texas Lottery Commission to increase a monthly allowance of \$75 a month for nursing home residents on Medicaid. The allowance was cut to \$45 two years ago.

Another proposal, by Rep. Garnet Coleman, D-Houston, would have used money from the Texas Enterprise Fund to restore children's slots to CHIP. The proposal was

rejected.

Some of the amendments filed by Democrats seemed aimed at forcing Republicans, the party in power, to take votes against GOP priority issues. For instance, an amendment by Rep. Trey Martinez-Fischer, D-San Antonio, would have required 20 percent of the governor's pro-business

Texas Enterprise Fund to be used as grants for small businesses in Texas to provide health insurance to their employees.

"If you value small businesses in Texas, like I do, this is an amendment you can vote for," he said. But, the business-friendly GOP rejected adding the measure to the budget legislation.

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MASS

Continued from Page 1A

tomb in the crypt of St. Peter's Church and sealed inside," said Plagens. "Most of the ceremony will be televised, but inside the crypt it may not because of the limited space."

"Then time will be taken to gather all of the church's cardinals — about 117 of them — to Rome. Then, the cardinals will go through the process of electing a new pope among them. The new pope will be chosen from the current group of cardinals by the cardinals."

By Vatican law, a cardi-

nal conclave must begin no earlier than 15 days and no later than 20 days after the pope's death, which was April 2. The 117 cardinals who are under 80 years of age are to gather at the Sistine Chapel, where they will cast secret ballots to choose a new pope.

According to information released by the Vatican, after each vote — there are to be two per day — the ballots will be burned, with the smoke rising into a Vatican chimney. Chemicals will be added to the fire to change the color of the smoke. Black smoke means no decision was reached, while white smoke signals a new pope

has been chosen.

During his time, John Paul II changed the rules to require that the basilica's bells also ring to announce a new pope. According to reports in the past, there has been confusion because the white smoke can appear gray.

A two-thirds vote is required; after 30 ballots, however, a simple majority will suffice. Shortly after the white smoke signal is given, the new pontiff will be presented to the people in St. Peter's Square.

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

WRITERS

Continued from Page 1A

eral local artists will be displaying paintings in the building those two days.

More than 600 vendors are expected for Old Sorehead Days this

spring, offering food, collectibles, handcrafted items, toys, clothing, antiques and more.

Activities run from 8 a.m. Saturday until dark and from noon until 5 p.m. Sunday.

For more information about the Spring Author Roundup, call Lindsey at (432) 756-2306.

Contact News Editor Bill McClellan at 263-7331 ext. 235 or by e-mail at newsdesk@crcom.net

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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.

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News Editor

OUR VIEWS

AHA gala should be a good time for a good cause

It's time for a little "Tinseltown" entertainment, as the American Heart Association gets ready to present its "Hollywood for Heart" western-style gala Saturday.

Set for 8 p.m. until midnight at the Big Spring Country Club, the gala will feature dinner, dancing and both silent and live auctions. The night "in Hollywood" will also feature a very special procession of paddles in honor of those that have already been lost to heart disease and stroke.

Tickets can be purchased in advance or at the door and prices are \$25 per couple or \$15 per person.

Items up for auction during the gala include three nights at the Fairfield Las Vegas Desert Resort; three days and two nights at a condo in Ruidoso, N.M., including golf; a guitar autographed by country music star Pat Green; a football autographed by the Green Bay Packers; four tickets to a Texas Rangers baseball game; and a ladies' 14k gold diamond pendant.

According to information released by the AHA, coronary heart disease is the number one killer of all Americans. And many Big Spring and Howard County residents come from families where heart disease or stroke have taken a loved one.

Therefore this annual event which brings the community together in order to raise funds in the fight against heart disease and stroke is of paramount importance.

So, block off Saturday night on your calendar and get out to the country club for dinner, dancing and a lot of fun.

The way we see it, you'll be doing yourself and lots of other people a lot of good.

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

We score a life goal when we know You, Lord, through prayer.

Amen

Democracy's fragile seeds taking root

What a difference a year can make. Last spring, the White House was weathering a firestorm of controversy, buffeted by mounting casualties in Iraq and growing domestic opposition to the war.

Now, however, officials in the Bush administration appear to have a lot to smile about.

The success of Iraq's January elections — and the considerable strides toward mature nation-statehood since taken by Baghdad — have proven critics of the idea of post-totalitarian transformation profoundly wrong. What's more, Washington is discovering that its policies in the war on terror have catalyzed a wave of pro-democratic stirrings in one of the world's most turbulent regions.

By now, the groundswell of popular opposition to Syria's nearly 3-decade-long occupation of Lebanon generated by the mid-February assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri has become old news. Yet Lebanon's "Cedar Revolution" is just the most visible in a series of similar transformations that are now under way in the Middle East.

In Egypt, ailing President Hosni Mubarak, bowing to both U.S. urgings and domestic demands, has altered the rules of the national political game.

In late February, the Egyptian leader announced plans for major electoral reforms ahead of the country's looming presidential election in September.

If implemented as promised, the outcome of the desired changes would, in Mubarak's own words, provide "the chance for political parties to run for the presidential elections and guarantees that allow more than one candidate for the people to choose among them with their own will."

The countries of the Persian Gulf also are in transition. In Kuwait, mounting calls for women's suffrage have mobilized hundreds of protesters in recent weeks. In Bahrain, the arrest of three Internet bloggers in early March has sparked an escalating series of protests of the regime in Manama, and a new surge of pressure for constitutional reform within the gulf state.

Even Saudi Arabia's puritanical government, bowing to external pressures, has set in motion municipal elections designed to make the country's regional political bodies accountable to their constituents for the first time in history.

Signs of change are also visible in Syria, where the Assad regime's long-standing stranglehold on Syrian hearts and minds is being eroded by a new medium: the Internet.

Almost 500,000 Syrians out of a population of 18-million are currently estimated to be using the Internet on a regular basis, and the public's demand for information appears to be progressively outstripping the ability of the regime's instruments of power to control it.

As well, a number of Syrian opposition figures, emboldened by the political transformation taking place in neighboring Lebanon, are finally finding the courage to speak out against Damascus.

Moreover, technology has made such civic opposition more possible — and sustainable — than ever before.

"Thanks to satellite television channels and the Internet, the people are monitoring what is happening in the world and are beginning to be conscious of their natural rights and of freedom," former Lebanese Prime Minister Selim Hoss recently told one journalist.

To be sure, these democratic stirrings could still yield profoundly undemocratic results.

In Saudi Arabia's recent polls, conservative Islamist candidates reportedly made serious political gains. Radical groups like Hamas are expected to do the same when Palestinians go to the polls this month to pick legislative representatives in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. And in Egypt, the influential Muslim Brotherhood — the ideological progenitor of al-Qaeda and its affiliates — is marshalling a mounting challenge to the Mubarak regime under the guise of political participation.

Nevertheless, progress is increasingly becoming palpable. In his State of the Union Address on Feb. 2, President Bush emphasized America's desire for a "higher standard of freedom" in the Middle East.

If the events of recent weeks are any indication, the administration could end up getting its wish far sooner than expected. The region, and the world, will be the better for it.

Ilan Berman is a member of the Committee on the Present Danger.
Distributed by Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services



Are journalists heading the wrong way on religion?

Journalists may or may not be irreligious, but they do like ritual. Hence the refrain, which you hear each time news arises with strong religious resonance, that the media do a poor job covering the world of faith.

On Easter, as the Terry Schiavo story moved toward its sad end, panelists on CNN's "Reliable Sources," the weekly program hosted by Washington Post media reporter Howard Kurtz, were ruing the difficulty that the media had in reporting on her partisans. A radio talk-show personality and minister named Joe Watkins said: "The media seems to have a lot of difficulty talking to folks about religious faith. Religious faith is something that most media folks try to stay clear of."

Steven Roberts, a 25-year New York Times veteran, said, "I could probably count on one

hand in the Washington bureau of The New York Times people who would describe themselves as people of faith."

So the connection was drawn: The media neglect religion because journalists themselves are impious.

Roberts continued: "I think that one of the real built-in biases in the media is toward secularism. And I think that, when you talk about diversity, you want diversity in the newsroom because you have to have diversity to cover the story well and cover all aspects of a society. And you don't have religious people making the decisions about where coverage is focused."

Roberts may know what he means by secularism, but I sure don't. Would he like reporters to look heavenward to explain the news?

It was noted that neither Newsweek, U.S. News nor the three networks currently have full-time religion reporters. (Still, over on NBC's "Meet the Press" that morning was Jon Meacham, Newsweek's managing editor, who had just writ-

ten a cover story, How Jesus Became Christ. I wonder when we'll be seeing How Mohammed Became the Prophet.)

Host Kurtz then suggested religion coverage had been "ghettoized." But does that mean the right way to cover religion is to routinely explore the ways it permeates social and political life? That was Watkins' position: "I think that it ought to be something that journalists ask during the course of a regular interview with somebody who's an elected official."

Watkins apparently was envisioning an inspirational encounter in which the officeholder talks warmly about the comfort he derives from daily renewal of a personal relationship with the Almighty. And I started to wonder: Is that what reporters ought to be poking around in? Is this any of my business?

On more-familiar terrain, Roberts pointed out that the Washington Post reported the church-based voter registration drives. "And that was a perfect example of how the main-

stream press missed an enormously important subject. Because they were not familiar with those churches. They weren't members of them."

But failing to cover churches that play politically pivotal roles isn't a product of impiety; it's journalistic incompetence, like overlooking the clout of any major player.

That's the problem with this ritual shriving. It connects dots that ought to be separate. Journalists are supposed to be outsiders. That's the deal. They're trained to report fairly, respectfully and, one hopes, knowledgeably on realities that are not a part of. No responsible editor would assign a congregate to report on her pastor. How could an active church member recount doctrinal fights that she's expected, as a matter of conscience, to have opinions on?

Besides, religious people may say they want more coverage, but do they really? Have they forgotten what news is? Do they want stories about disgruntled parishioners and intrigue within the archdiocese, or reviews of the new

pastor's lame homilies?

No, like everybody else, whether devout or agnostic, they want favorable stories. They want testimonials, not news coverage. They want help spreading the Word.

The media, it is true, largely missed the huge doctrinal shifts within many U.S. churches and their willing enlistment into the conservative political movement. But was that because of impiety? No, in part it was a function of the overall rollback in news, the shuttering of foreign bureaus, the fade out of coverage of key agencies and institutions at all levels.

And in part it was the routine response of the media when faced with powerful movements staffed by fiercely committed people: Either deference or silence.

Edward Wasserman is Knight professor of journalism ethics at Washington and Lee University.

Distributed by Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services.

Mid

By STEVEN CO

The Orlando Se

The Q45 is the company's flagship, and the midsize sedan executives figured was room in the market for another model. The Infiniti M45 is a nice car introduced in 2003 that was largely ignored by the customers, worse.

Infiniti regrets 2006, we get a M45, and even the central being the engine has a 4.5-liter V6 has a 3.5-liter V6.

Beneath the skin — indeed be the Infiniti to date are some familiar pieces. Both the 4.5-liter engine in other vehicle basic platform with the small FX35 and FX45. For the M45, though, that modified corner and it works quite well.

The test vehicle M35 Sport. The model, also available the 335-horsepower adds big 19-inch wheels (18-inch standard), a stiffer suspension, headlights, controlled front seat and cooled something Infiniti.

"Rear Active When cornering, steer slightly a suspension gear help the car. Basically, when left, the rear wheel just slightly hardly noticeable.

Besides the M45 Sport, the in three additional: The base M35X, which is drive instead wheel drive; popular M45. If you wheel drive, have to get engine.

So how is the different from the Q models? shares the V-6 it's quite a bit with an overall



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Midluxury sedan boasts top-notch form

By STEVEN COLE SMITH

The Orlando Sentinel
The Q45 is Infiniti's flagship, and the G35 is the company's successful midsize sedan. Infiniti executives figured there was room in the middle for another model. Cue the Infiniti M45, a perfectly nice car introduced in 2003 that was immediately and subsequently ignored by the media, which was bad, and by customers, which was worse.

Infiniti regrouped. For 2006, we get an all-new M45, and even an M35, the central difference being the engine. The M45 has a 4.5-liter V-8; the M35 has a 3.5-liter V-6.

Beneath the handsome skin — indeed, this may be the best-looking Infiniti to date — there are some familiar bits and pieces. Both the 3.5- and 4.5-liter engines show up in other vehicles, and the basic platform is shared with the smaller G35 and FX35 and FX45 sport-utes. For the M models, though, that platform was modified considerably, and it works quite well.

The test vehicle was an M35 Sport. The Sport model, also available with the 335-horsepower V-8, adds big 19-inch tires and wheels (18-inchers are standard), a slightly stiffer suspension, xenon headlights, climate-controlled front seats — heated and cooled — and something Infiniti calls "Rear Active Steer." When cornering, the rear-steer slightly adjusts the suspension geometry to help the car turn. Basically, when you turn left, the rear wheels turn just slightly right. It's hardly noticeable.

Besides the M35 and M45 Sport, the car comes in three additional flavors: The base M35, an M35X, which is all-wheel drive instead of rear-wheel drive; plus the regular M45. If you want all-wheel drive, then you have to get the V-6 engine.

So how is the Infiniti M different from the G and the Q models? The G35 shares the V-6 engine, but it's quite a bit smaller, with an overall length of

Infiniti M35

Base price:

\$42,700.

Price as tested:

\$45,010.

EPA-rated fuel mileage: 18 mpg city, 25 mph highway.

Details: Front-engine, rear-wheel-drive sedan with a 3.5-liter, 280-horsepower V-6 with a 5-speed automatic.

186.5 inches, compared with 192.6 for the M. The M is also nearly 2 inches wider. The flagship Q45 is 200.8 inches long, and almost 2 inches wider than the M.

As you might suspect, pricing is also widely separated. The base 2005 G35 starts at \$30,850; the base 2006 M35 starts at \$39,900, and the 2005 Q45 starts at \$56,200. Those prices are all pretty competitive, when compared with the various Lexus, BMW and Mercedes-Benz models they target.

You might think the M35X all-wheel drive might be the most expensive V-6 model, but the M35 Sport tops it by \$300. The M45 starts at \$46,750, and the M45 Sport is \$49,550.

The bargain here may be the regular M35, which — at \$39,900, plus \$610 shipping — gets you pretty much everything you need, and then some. The V-6 engine's 280-horsepower is plenty, and the five-speed automatic transmission makes the most of it. Fuel mileage is EPA-rated at 18 mpg in the city, 25 mpg on the highway. Not bad, but scarcely class-leading. Infiniti recommends premium gasoline.

There's plenty of standard equipment, including an in-dash, six-disc CD changer with audio controls on the steering wheel; side and side-cur-




2005 Infiniti M35

tain air bags; stability control; anti-lock disc brakes; a voice-recognition system that operates several basic functions, including climate-and-audio control; leather upholstery; and a power sunroof. The base price is quite a bit more than, say, a 2005 BMW 330i, but once you load up the BMW with comparable equipment, the Infiniti's cheaper.

Although I prefer the BMW's handling, the M35 Sport is no slouch. Brakes are excellent, and the suspension gives a good ride on bad pavement. I'd actually be willing to trade a little of that ride quality for better cornering — the Sport model isn't quite as sporty as I was expecting. Still, handling is very good for a car that is such an effortless long-distance cruiser.

The interior is top-notch, though control-and-instrument design is a little trendy. Front seats are grippy and supportive. Rear seats are adequate for adults, especially if they're less than 6 feet tall.

This is really a nice-sized car — it makes the G35 seem a little small, the Q45 seem a little too big.

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ATMOS energy

NOTICE OF PROPOSED INCREASE IN ENVIRONS GAS RATES

On February 25, 2005, Atmos Energy Corporation ("Atmos" or the "Company") filed a Statement of Intent with the Railroad Commission of Texas (the "Commission") to increase its gas rates in the unincorporated area ("Environs") surrounding the Cities of West Texas Service Area (the "Cities"). This proposed increase in gas rates willing to apply to customers residing inside the city limits of the West Texas Service Area.

In its filing, the Company proposes to change its Environs base rates and service charge tariffs to the same level as those current rates previously approved by the Cities for customers inside the city limits. The service charge rates have been in effect inside the city limits since April 10, 2003 and the base rates have been in effect inside the city limits since May 1, 2004. The Company proposes to change the Environs rates effective April 1, 2005. The Commission may suspend the proposed effective date for up to 150 days.

The proposed changes will affect all classes of Environs tariff customers, including Residential, Commercial, Industrial, State Institution, and Public Authority customers. The Company's Air Conditioning Customers, who currently take service under a separate tariff, will instead be served under the Residential tariff. There are approximately 17,306 Atmos Environs tariff customers (15,071 Residential, 1,916 Commercial, 182 Small Industrial, 16 State Institution, and 121 Public Authority). The proposed changes in Environs base rates are expected to increase the Company's annual revenues by approximately \$440,274. The Company also proposes to implement and apply a new Weather Normalization Adjustment clause to the bills of customers in weather-sensitive classes (Residential, Commercial, State Institution, and Public Authority).

The typical monthly residential customer bill (assuming consumption of 6 Mcf) and the typical monthly commercial customer bill (assuming consumption of 30 Mcf) will be affected as follows by these changes:

	Current Bill (1)	Proposed Bill (1)	Difference
Residential Customer using 6 Mcf:	\$13.99	\$15.12	\$1.13
Commercial Customer using 30 Mcf:	\$43.05	\$43.10	\$0.05

(1) (a) Includes average PGA of \$4.96 per Mcf as of December 31, 2003.

Atmos estimates that the proposed changes to its nonrecurring charges will increase its Other Revenues in the Environs by approximately \$30,377 annually. The proposed changes are as follows:

Description	Current Charge	Proposed Charge	Increase
DURING BUSINESS HOURS:			
Turn on new service (with meter set)	\$23.50	\$32.00	\$8.50
Turn on service (shut-in test required)	\$19.00	\$23.50	\$4.50
Description			
DURING BUSINESS HOURS (cont'd):			
Turn on service (meter read only required)	\$10.50	\$15.00	\$4.50
Miscellaneous service calls	\$10.50	\$11.25	\$0.75
Reconnect delinquent service or Service temporarily off at customer's request	\$29.50	\$37.50	\$8.00
Dishonored Check Charge	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$0.00
AFTER BUSINESS HOURS:			
Turn on new service (with meter set)	\$35.25	\$48.00	\$12.75
Turn on service (shut-in test required)	\$28.50	\$35.25	\$6.75
Turn on service (meter read only required)	\$15.75	\$22.50	\$6.75
Miscellaneous service calls	\$15.75	\$16.88	\$1.13
Reconnect delinquent service or Service temporarily off at customer's request	\$39.00	\$56.25	\$17.25

The various changes in base rates and nonrecurring charges proposed by Atmos would increase the Company's total revenues in the Environs by approximately \$470,651 on an annual basis, or 9.7%. The proposed change in revenues is a "major change" under state law. The new Environs rates will not exceed 115% of the average of all rates for similar services in all municipalities served by Atmos Energy within the same county.

Affected individuals may review a copy of the proposed filing during normal business hours (9 am until 5 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays) at 1) the local offices of Atmos in its West Texas Division; 2) Atmos' Lubbock office, located at 5110 80th Street; or 3) the Railroad Commission.

Customers affected by the proposed Environs rate changes may file written comments or protests with:

Docket Services Section
Legal Division (Re: Docket No. 9573)
Railroad Commission of Texas
P.O. Box 12967
Austin, Texas 78711-2967

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Go online and check out www.thatstracin.com for the latest information and news on stock-car racing, updated daily.



Wayne Harron, second from right, and the No. 07 Richard Childress Racing team stand for the national anthem before the 2005 Golden Corral 500.

Living a dream

By DAVID POOLE
Knight Ridder Newspapers

When he was just a boy, Wayne Harron would walk about a mile down the railroad tracks behind his house in Welcome, N.C., over to the Richard Childress Racing shop.

"I'd sit there, listening to the cars on the chassis dynamometer and the motors running and trying to catch a glimpse of anybody and everybody," Harron said. "I guess I had it in my blood. I tried to get as close as I could get without getting into trouble."



HAROLD HINSON/KRT
When Harron was a child, he would often visit the RCR shop.

Once, when he was about 12, Harron's Boy Scout troop got the chance to sell snacks at an open house at the shop. That day, he met Dale Earnhardt and got an autograph.

Someday, Harron thought. Someday, he'd be part of that race team. Now, after several years and many turns on his path, that day has come.

On race days this season, Harron finds himself working along pit road for the No. 07 Chevrolets owned by Childress and driven by Dave Blaney.

He's part of the pit support team for Blaney and crew chief Philippe Lopez. He helps set up the pit stall, goes for the day's first run of gas and generally does whatever he can to help the team he grew up wanting to be part of.

The way he got there might not be typical among the hundreds of people who work on Nextel Cup pit crews, but Harron just kept trying. And he plans to keep on trying as long as he

For Wayne Harron, working for RCR is the fulfillment of a childhood fantasy

gets a shot to do something that he's always wanted to do.

A year after graduating from high school, Harron joined the U.S. Marines. He went to Camp LeJeune and various other places around the country while in the Corps, but after four years came back home and worked in various jobs.

"I did a little bit of everything," Harron said. "I just couldn't find a niche, what I liked doing. I kept trying to find a place that felt right and was something I enjoyed."

He wanted to work in racing, and he visited race shops hoping to find somebody who'd hire him. Even when he managed to talk his way past a receptionist's desk, though, the first question was about what experience he had, and Harron had none.

Eventually, he heard about a motorsports-related program at Forsyth Technical College in Winston-Salem, N.C. When he went to see about getting in, the class was already full. But Harron was determined. He was already 29 years old, as much as 10 years older than his potential classmates, but he convinced the program's director that he'd work as hard as anyone could and pleaded his way in.

Harron was working at an auto supply store while attending school, and one day the phone

rang at work. One of his instructors knew Bobby Hutchens at Richard Childress Racing, and the team was looking for someone to fill an entry-level job.

"I said, 'I don't care what it is, I'm interested,'" Harron said. He got an interview and, in July 2003, finally got a job in racing.

"I helped with all the pit crews. I drove the pit stop practice car," Harron said. "I used to tell my buddies that I knew all of those guys they saw doing pit stops on TV."

Harron kept working and, last summer, a mechanic's position opened up in the team's Nextel Cup shop. Again, Harron jumped at the chance. Then, when RCR was organizing the crew to go to the track with Blaney's team this season, Harron's work with the pit crew practice group paid off. He was offered the chance to go to the track, and he took it.

At Las Vegas earlier this year, the team fielding a Busch car for Blaney came up a front-tire carrier short on race day.

"They asked me if I'd ever done that, and I said that I'd practiced it a few times," Harron said. "We needed somebody, so I went over the wall for the first time and I fell in love with it."

At the RCR shop these days, Harron works on the oil lines and tanks in Blaney's cars. But he's also beginning to practice with the Busch team to be a tire carrier in addition to his Sunday duties with the Cup team.

"I got lucky in getting connected with somebody who had a connection," Harron said. "But I was 29 years old when I went back to school and I made it a point to graduate as high in that class as I could get. It has been a lot of hard work, too."

"People ask me all of the time if I can help them and get them a job, but it's not that easy."

But Harron's example suggests one way to get on track.

RANKINGS

THAT'S RACIN'S TOP PICKS

- 1. Jimmie Johnson (car No. 48):** Got on a few guys' nerves at Bristol, which is not good going to Martinsville. Last week: 1.
- 2. Greg Biffle (car No. 16):** Feels wins have gotten away from him in the past two races, but he's still getting good finishes. Last week: 2.
- 3. Tony Stewart (car No. 14):** Third in points and hasn't really had a great race yet. He's a strong threat at Martinsville. Last week: 7.
- 4. Carl Edwards (car No. 99):** Messed up with spin on Bristol qualifying lap, but early race wreck wasn't his fault. Last week: 3.
- 5. Jeff Gordon (car No. 24):** Came back from two laps down and then had another flat tire near the end at Bristol. Last week: 6.
- 6. Kurt Busch (car No. 97):** Fans cheered after his hard crash at Bristol. In a sick way, that's a sign of respect. Last week: 5.
- 7. Kevin Harvick (car No. 29):** Those who think NASCAR needs a villain might get him if Harvick keeps improving. Last week: 11.
- 8. Elliott Sadler (car No. 38):** Second at Bristol notches another solid finish in this team's belt. He's fifth in points. Last week: 9.
- 9. Mark Martin (car No. 6):** Missing a 15-car pileup in one turn at Bristol takes luck. Unfortunately, he had no luck. Last week: 4.
- 10. Dale Jarrett (car No. 88):** Jarrett, Martin and Rusty Wallace are all in the top 10 five races into the year. Last week: 13.

Win gives RCR confidence that it's turning the corner

When you hear people on struggling race teams talk about how they're close to turning things around, it's hard to know whether you're dealing with self-confidence or self-deception.

Last Friday afternoon at Bristol Motor Speedway, Jeff Burton said he felt sure that Richard Childress Racing was ready to win again. Too many good things were happening, too many things were coming together for a Nextel Cup victory drought to last much longer.

Little more than 48 hours later, team owner Richard Childress was in Victory Lane with driver Kevin Harvick and the No. 29 team after Harvick gave the team its first win since a Robby Gordon triumph at Watkins Glen in August 2003.

"This sport can humble you as quick as anything," Childress said. "You can be on top and win championships, but we've been through a couple of long stretches... without winning. It makes you strong."

"You've got to have it in your guts and you've got to have heart and a passion for winning. If you want to sit back and let it ride, you can, but we owe it to too many people not to go out and try our best to win. That's what pushes you to do it."

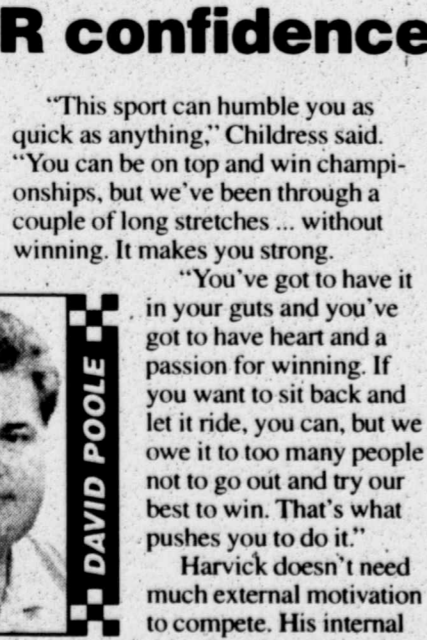
Harvick doesn't need much external motivation to compete. His internal drive has always been set wide open, to his own detriment at certain points in his career. Going through a winless Cup season in 2004 was not something he particularly enjoyed, and he was vocal with his opinions about how RCR had some real work to do to get good enough to win again.

"Losing stinks, it stinks bad," he said. "It wears on you in a lot of different ways. The sponsors start to look at you and say, 'Why aren't you winning?' You start to look at each other and say, 'What do we have to do?'"

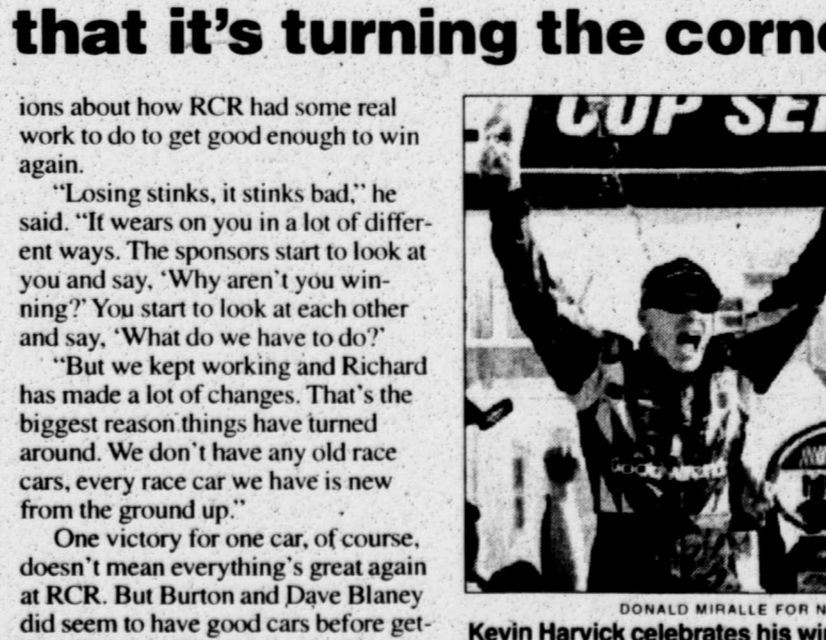
"But we kept working and Richard has made a lot of changes. That's the biggest reason things have turned around. We don't have any old race cars, every race car we have is new from the ground up."

One victory for one car, of course, doesn't mean everything's great again at RCR. But Burton and Dave Blaney did seem to have good cars before getting "Bristoled" in varying incidents, and Harvick's victory is a shot of confidence that could ripple through all three of RCR's Cup teams.

"We aren't where we want to be yet," Childress said. "But this is a sign



DAVID POOLE



Kevin Harvick celebrates his win in the 2005 Food City 500.

of accomplishment that we're on our way to being where we want to be. We know we've got a lot of work to do yet."

THIS WEEK'S RACE

ADVANCE AUTO PARTS 500
Where: Martinsville Speedway, a 0.526-mile oval concrete flat track located in Martinsville, Va.
When: Sunday at 1:20 p.m. (all times ET). Qualifying is 3:10 p.m. Friday.
TV: Fox.
Radio: Motor Racing Network.
Purse: \$4,761,101.
Last year's winner: Rusty Wallace.
Also this week: Reigning NASCAR Truck Series champion Bobby Hamilton is off to a strong start in his effort for a repeat, holding a 65-point advantage over Ted Musgrave entering Saturday's race at Martinsville.
Worth mentioning: Kevin Harvick, with a victory in the Truck race at Martinsville, would become the first driver to win on all three of NASCAR's national series in consecutive starts. Harvick won last weekend's Nextel Cup and Busch races at Bristol, Tenn.
Jeff Burton, Jeff Gordon and Dale Jarrett all have seven top-10s in the past 10 races at the track.

POLL POSITION

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION
What type of driver will prevail at Martinsville this weekend?
Cast your vote at: www.thatstracin.com

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION
A new breed of "Young Guns" is making waves on the NASCAR circuit. What do you think about all these young drivers getting the big-time rides?
Number of votes: 4,797

Driver	No. of votes	Percent
Who cares? These kids can drive!	2,346	49%
They're not paying their dues. Not sure.	2,020	42%
Something else.	391	8%
	40	1%

STOP 'N' GO

WHO'S HOT
Nobody's hotter right now than Kevin Harvick, who earned his first Nextel Cup and Busch series wins of the season with a sweep of both races last weekend at Bristol. Harvick is now in sixth place in the Cup points standings.
After struggling through his rookie season last year, Scott Riggs has made great strides in 2005. He has three top-10 finishes in five races thus far, including a career-best fourth at Daytona.

WHO'S NOT
After running surprisingly strong last year, Casey Mears has faltered considerably to start 2005. He has three finishes of 22nd or worse, including 43rd last weekend at Bristol.
Fives races into the 2005 season, the best Bobby Labonte has been in points is 31st.
— Jim Utter

BY THE NUMBERS

NEXTEL CUP POINTS LEADERS

The top-40 drivers as of April 3:

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1. Jimmie Johnson	835	21. Mike Bliss	452
2. Greg Biffle	741	22. Kyle Busch	499
3. Tony Stewart	679	23. Jeff Burton	472
4. Carl Edwards	678	24. Kasey Kahne	470
5. Elliott Sadler	657	25. Travis Kvapil	470
6. Kevin Harvick	654	26. Casey Mears	468
7. Kurt Busch	635	27. Michael Waltrip	463
8. Dale Jarrett	611	28. Matt Kenseth	459
9. Rusty Wallace	611	29. Jeff Green	456
10. Mark Martin	609	30. Scott Wimmer	451
11. Ryan Newman	588	31. Joe Nemechek	413
12. Jeff Gordon	587	32. Ken Schrader	407
13. Sterling Marlin	568	33. Bobby Hamilton Jr.	386
14. Scott Riggs	566	34. Bobby Labonte	347
15. Jamie McMurray	566	35. Jason Leffler	341
16. Dale Earnhardt Jr.	561	36. Mike Wallace	328
17. Dale Earnhardt Jr.	525	37. Ricky Rudd	310
18. Jeremy Mayfield	522	38. Kevin Lepage	281
19. Kyle Petty	521	39. John Andretti	225
20. Brian Vickers	516	40. Jimmy Spencer	176

BUSCH SERIES POINTS LEADERS

The top-20 drivers as of April 4:

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1. Carl Edwards	1106	11. David Stremme	707
2. Reed Sorenson	1025	12. David Green	689
3. Clint Bowyer	955	13. Jason Keller	688
4. Kevin Harvick	875	14. Johnny Sauter	677
5. Martin Truex Jr.	864	15. Randy LaJoie	664
6. Ashton Lewis	863	16. Greg Biffle	639
7. Kenny Wallace	835	17. Justin Labonte	631
8. Denny Hamlin	814	18. Tim Fedewa	631
9. Shane Hmiel	774	19. Stacy Compton	626
10. Jon Wood	726	20. Paul Menard	576

NEXT RACE: April 16, O'Reilly 300, Fort Worth, Tex.

TRUCK SERIES POINTS LEADERS

The top-10 drivers as of March 18:

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1. Bobby Hamilton	525	6. Dennis Setzer	414
2. Ted Musgrave	480	7. Matt Crafton	401
3. Ricky Craven	439	8. Johnny Benson	401
4. Jimmy Spencer	438	9. David Starr	389
5. Ron Hornaday	422	10. Robert Huffman	378

NEXT RACE: Saturday, Kroger 250, Martinsville, Va.

Do you have an interesting sports item or story idea? Call Troy Hyde at 263-7331. Ext. 237. Email results to: sports@bigspringherald.com

IN BRIEF

Cornell Corrections announces softball tournament at Mize

Cornell Corrections is sponsoring a co-ed softball tournament benefiting Relay For Life. The tournament will take place April 22 and 23 at Cotton Mize Field inside Comanche Trail Park. The cost is \$10 per player and the deadline to register is Friday, April 15. Concessions will also be available. For more information, call 267-1911 ext. 214 during the day and 267-2004 at night.

Howard rodeo team sets crawfish boil

The Howard College rodeo team will hold its annual crawfish boil April 16 at 2 p.m. at the H.C. Rodeo Bowl during Howard College's annual rodeo. The cost is \$15, which includes ticket into rodeo. For more information, contact Howard rodeo coach Greg Kernick at 816-9477.

Couples scramble set up at Comanche

A summer long couples scramble tournament has been set at Comanche Trail Golf Course. The tournament will start today and will take place every Thursday throughout the summer, ending sometime in October. The tournament consists of nine holes and the tee time each day is 5:30 p.m. For more information, contact Sue Russell at 398-5452.

Baltimore's Rolle agrees to probation after hitting his wife

FRANKLIN, Tenn. (AP) — Baltimore Ravens cornerback Samari Rolle agreed to probation and anger management and marriage counseling, settling a charge for allegedly hitting his wife in February. Rolle also will make a \$10,000 donation to help battered women or children under a pretrial diversion agreement reached in Williamson County General Sessions Court. If he completes the counseling and finishes his probation of 11 months, 29 days without incident, the charge will be expunged from his record.

Hmiel fined and docked points for obscene gesture

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Shane Hmiel was fined \$10,000 and docked 25 points in the standings by NASCAR for making an obscene gesture at Dale Jarrett during the Busch Series race at Bristol Motor Speedway earlier this week. Hmiel was caught on his in-car camera flipping his middle finger at Jarrett after Jarrett leaned inside his window to complain about an accident Hmiel had caused during Monday's race.

Pettitte returns, Houston gets first win of year

Pettitte feels fine, Lidge helps Astros to win over division rival

By JOEL ANDERSON

AP Sports Writer
HOUSTON (AP) — Andy Pettitte felt better than he had in a long time, going all the way back to his final game with the New York Yankees almost 18 months ago. He pitched like it, too. Pettitte allowed only a solo homer to Reggie Sanders in a strong six-inning season debut, and Mike Lamb's two-run

triple in the bottom of the eighth sent the Houston Astros to a 4-1 win over the St. Louis Cardinals on Wednesday. "It was great to go back out there and not pitch with a lot of pain," Pettitte said. "I can't tell you how happy I am to go out there and not hurt. It makes you appreciate your health." Chad Qualls pitched two perfect innings and Brad Lidge got three outs for a save to help Houston break a three-game losing streak against the Cardinals, dating to Game 6 of the NL championship series last October.

Coming off an elbow injury that ended his season last August, Pettitte proved that those painful days of 2004 might finally be behind him. The last time Pettitte looked this good, he was wearing pinstripes and pitching in Game 6 of the 2003 World Series. He showed little rust against the Cardinals despite the long layoff, retiring the first nine he faced before giving up a single to David Eckstein to lead off the fourth. "He kept us off-balance," Sanders said. "We didn't know what to expect because he's been

out so long." In the fifth, Sanders sent Pettitte's curveball off the wall in left field but Pettitte recovered, giving up only one more hit before Qualls replaced him to start the seventh. "He kicked it up a little when he had to do it," Astros manager Phil Garner said. "It was a marvelous job." Pettitte even made it safely through his two at-bats — both strikeouts — which were the start of all his troubles during his Houston debut last season. He tore a tendon in his elbow in that game, went

on the disabled list twice, missed eight starts with a sore arm and hardly resembled the guy known as one of baseball's best postseason pitchers. Pettitte finally decided to have season-ending surgery in August, forcing him to miss the playoffs for the first time since he was a promising 22-year-old in the Yankees' minor league system. Now 32, Pettitte is eager for a chance to make up for his absence during the Astros' run through the postseason last year.

See HOUSTON, Page 2B

Baylor returns to Waco, celebrates first national title

By STEPHEN HAWKINS

AP Sports Writer
WACO (AP) — The crowd was already in a frenzy, having been introduced to all but one of the Baylor players. Then senior Steffanie Blackmon emerged from behind a curtain hoisting the NCAA championship trophy. Flashbulbs lit up the arena Wednesday, and more than 7,000 fans screamed even louder in appreciation of the prize — a much-deserved shining moment for the university and the town. "This is a women's basketball championship," coach Kim Mulkey-Robertson said. "But it's bigger than that. It is a Baylor national championship." The celebration was just a day after the Lady Bears (33-3) won their first national title with an 84-62 win over Michigan State.

And less than two years after Baylor's athletic program was marred by the shooting death of men's basketball player Patrick Dennehy. Former teammate Carlton Dotson has been charged with murder in the death. Mulkey-Robertson was asked almost as often about that tragedy as the success of her own team throughout the NCAA tournament. "After about three days of it, I said no more. That's old news," she told the crowd, getting an enthusiastic response. "After the game I made it perfectly clear, there is a lot of good at Baylor and it starts with the student-athletes and coaches we have here." The coach asked student-athletes from other Baylor sports to stand. About 200 stood, including members of the football, men's basketball, volleyball and baseball teams.



Baylor's head coach Kim Mulkey-Robertson yells instructions to her team during their NCAA championship game with Michigan State Tuesday at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis. Baylor returned to Waco yesterday and celebrated the title with its fans.

There were more than twice as many people in the Ferrell Center than had been Tuesday night for a watching party. The Lady Bears won all 14 games there this season. "I don't think that light has ever shined as bright as it did last night in Indianapolis," athletic director Ian McCaw said, referring to the shining light Mulkey-Robertson challenged her team to be after the men's tragedy. "This is a great day to be a Baylor Bear." Once the team arrived, players were introduced

individually. NCAA Final Four MVP Sophia Young got some of the loudest cheers. "We're going to be celebrating all week, so look for us," junior Chameka Scott said. "Only one word describes this year — special," Blackmon said. "It's amazing to see Waco and Baylor acting like this." Thousands of students gathered to celebrate after Tuesday night's game. There were reports of streakers on the campus of the world's largest Baptist university and some couches were burned in the streets. "Baylor has arrived when you have streakers running across campus," Mulkey-Robertson said. Gold T-shirts reading "Got Mulk?" — a moniker for supporting the team and its coach — were a fashion staple Wednesday. Countless students wore them to class, where the main topic was easily the Lady Bears' title. "There's definitely been a high energy level around campus," said Brian Severski, a 21-year-old junior psychology major from Katy. "You can't get around talking about it." The streamers, pizza boxes and soda cans had been cleared away from the student union lawn, but not the excitement of the school's only NCAA championship other than the men's tennis team last spring. "I've never seen so many students at one time being crazy for one purpose, and it was a good purpose," said Adam Ekong, a 20-year-old sophomore psychology major from Dallas. "A lot of people were hugging and just singing." President Bush, whose Crawford ranch is only about 30 miles from the campus, congratulated Mulkey-Robertson and the team in a phone call Wednesday from Air Force One. The president watched the game and plans to have the Lady Bears visit the White House. Store marquees around town posted messages congratulating the Lady Bears and declaring "National Champions." "It's big for Baylor and it's big for Waco," said Sammy Citrano, owner of a popular gathering spot near campus. "We need positive things to happen. Baylor's had a tough time the last couple of years."

Start of Masters delayed due to showers

PGA Tour's biggest tournament suffers first day rain delay

By PAUL NEWBERRY

AP Sports Writer
AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Bad weather followed PGA Tour players right through the gates of Augusta National on Thursday when the first round of the Masters was delayed because of thunderstorms. It was the fourth consecutive week that players were kept off the course because of rain, dating to the Bay Hill Invitational. The Masters became the ninth out of 15 events on the PGA Tour schedule to be halted at some point because of weather — from rain to wind to fog and even a brief snow flurry last week in Atlanta. "This isn't part of the PGA Tour," Ted Purdy said Thursday morning as he heard rumbles of

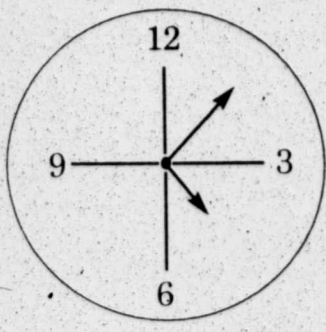
thunder on the horizon. "But we're bringing the weather with us." Then again, Augusta National has its own short history of bad weather. This is the fourth straight year the Masters has been suspended because of rain, including 2003, when it rained so much the tournament did not begin until Friday. The first starting time, originally set for 8:05 a.m.

EDT, was pushed back nearly 4 1/2 hours. The golfers were scheduled to start off both the first and 10th tees — a last-resort decision at tradition-rich Augusta National. With the first round unlikely to be completed Thursday, tournament officials announced a two-tee start on Friday as well, hoping to get the Masters back on schedule heading into the weekend.

Big Spring Tennis Junior Varsity District Tournament Tuesday

- Boys Singles
Robert Andrade, Third Place
 - Boys Doubles
Dusty Thomas and Matt Callison, Third Place
Shane Bowles and Braden Schnaffer, First Consolation
 - Girls Doubles
Connie Riddle and Michelle McMurtrey, Second Consolation
- Next varsity tournament: @San Antonio, Friday and Saturday

It's



to

Fish

ALAN HENRY: Water lightly stained; 57 degrees. Black bass are good on shad-colored spinnerbaits and live bait - spawn is ongoing. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. Note: The seventh ShareLunker from Alan Henry caught 3/30 in Grape Creek on waterdog.

ARROWHEAD: Water muddy in upper end; 59 degrees; 4-foot low. Black bass are fair around rocky areas and flooded brush on slow-rolled spinnerbaits. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs suspended 13-15 feet near the derricks. White bass are fair on mud flats on shad-imitation baits. Blue catfish are good on cut shad and prepared baits. All boat ramps are open.

BUFFALO SPRINGS: Water lightly stained; 60 degrees; 5-foot low. Black bass are good on minnows rigged with bobber and 3-foot leader in northeast areas. Crappie are fair on minnows near Crappie House. Hybrid strippers are good on crankbaits in northwest areas. Channel catfish are good near dam on hooks baited with minnows.

COLORADO CITY: Water clear; 58 degrees; 5-foot low. Black bass are slow. Crappie are slow. White bass are slow. Redfish are slow. Catfish are slow.

FT. PHANTOM HILL: Water clear; 57 degrees; 15-foot low. Black bass are slow. Crappie are fair on live bait. White bass are fair. Catfish are fair.

HUBBARD CREEK: Water lightly stained; 57 degrees; 11.25-foot low. Black bass are fair on shad-colored crankbaits and red crawfish crankbaits along points and main lake humps. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. White bass and hybrid striper are fair on minnows. Catfish are good on cut baits and shad.

NASWORTHY: Water lightly stained; 55 degrees. Black bass are slow. Crappie are fair on jigs and minnows. Redfish are fair. White bass and striped bass are fair on minnows. Catfish are good on chicken liver and shad.

OAK CREEK: Water lightly stained; 55 degrees; 23.85-foot low. Black bass are fair. Crappie are fair on jigs and minnows. Catfish are fair. No boat ramps open. 4x4 vehicles can unload on the dirt road near the dam.

O.H. IVIE: Water lightly stained; 57 degrees; 21.5-foot low. Black bass are fair on Carolina-rigged dark soft plastics along main lake points and creek channels or shad-colored spinnerbaits near flats in afternoons. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. White bass are good on live bait and crankbaits. Smallmouth bass are fair. Channel catfish are good on cut baits and shad.

POSSUM KINGDOM: Water clear; 59 degrees; 2.5-foot low. Black bass are fair. Crappie are slow. White bass are good near Carter Bend and Island. Striped bass are slow. Blue Catfish are fair upper part of reservoir.

SPENCE: Water lightly stained; 58 degrees; 48.2-foot low. Black bass are fair on green pumpkin plastics and jigs with red flake. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. White bass are fair. Striped bass and hybrid striper are fair. Catfish are fair on live bait.

STAMFORD: Water lightly stained; 56 degrees; 4-foot low. Black bass are slow. Crappie are fair on jigs and minnows. White and striped bass are fair on slabs tipped with minnows. Catfish are fair on minnows.

SWEETWATER: Water lightly stained; 58 degrees; 30.15-foot low. Black bass are slow. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. White bass are fair on live bait. Catfish are good on minnows and prepared baits.

THOMAS: 30.6 percent capacity; 69 degrees; ... bass minnows and jigs. Yellow cats on chubs and perch. Blue cats on perch and liver. Bass on minnows and artificial lures.

Newest Spur shoots S.A. to win over LAC

By T.A. BADGER
Associated Press Writer
SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Playing for the first time in more than a year, Glenn Robinson displayed the shooting touch of an everyday player.

Signed as a free agent to help fill the scoring void left by the injured Tim Duncan, hit three of four shots and scored seven points in his debut with the Spurs, helping San Antonio to a 91-82 win over the Los Angeles Clippers on Wednesday night.

"I'm really surprised he's got his rhythm," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said. "But he's a jump shooter ... You don't forget how to do that."

Manu Ginobili scored 12 of his 16 points in the second half and Brent Barry added four 3-pointers for the Spurs, who are two games behind Phoenix in the race for top seed in the Western Conference. San Antonio and the Suns each have eight games remaining.

The Clippers got within 49-45 on a three-point play by Chris Wilcox midway through the third, but San Antonio made 10 of its final 11 shots, including four 3-pointers, in the quarter to extend its lead to 72-57 heading into the fourth.

The Spurs pushed their lead to 22 points early in the fourth before the teams went to their reserves.

Barry finished with 12 points on 4-for-5 shooting from beyond the arc. Tony Parker had 11 points, and Bruce Bowen and Beno Udrih each added 10. Sean Marks had 10 rebounds in 17 minutes.

San Antonio went without Duncan (right ankle sprain) for an eighth consecutive game, while Bobby Simmons (left leg bruise) and Chris Kaman (lower back strain) sat out for Los Angeles.

Corey Maggette led the Clippers with 23 points on 6-for-16 shooting, with only two of his baskets coming in the second half. Elton Brand scored 13 and Wilcox 10 for Los Angeles, which shot 39 percent and committed 22 turnovers.

"We didn't make shots, which could be the byproduct of the last game of a long road trip," said Clippers coach Mike Dunleavy, whose team has played seven in a row away from home. "We just didn't play a very good game."

The Spurs had 10 steals, four by Robert Horry.

"They did the hustle plays that you have to make to win the game," Los Angeles rookie guard Shaun Livingston said. "They outworked us, they outshot us, they outbounded us."

Robinson, who has averaged 21 points over 10 NBA seasons, showed his rust on defense, picking up four fouls in 13 minutes.

"This is a championship atmosphere, so I came in with a lot of energy," said Robinson, who last played in March 2004 with Philadelphia. "I was so excited I almost fouled out in the first half."

Parker made his first three shots to account for seven of San Antonio's first 10 points, while Los Angeles missed eight of its first nine attempts.

A pair of free throws by Maggette and a layup by Rick Brunson late in the first gave the Clippers a 16-13 lead, but the Spurs followed with a 23-9 run, capped by a fast-break layup by Barry's second 3-pointer of the game.

Maggette scored 15 of the Clippers' 33 first-half points. The Clippers had just 10 baskets and 15 turnovers in the first two periods. Brand missed all seven of his shots in the half, which ended with San Antonio up by nine.

HOUSTON

Continued from Page 1B

"I wish I had been there to take some of the heat off Roger (Clemens) and Roy (Oswalt)," he said. "It's just a good situation, just disappointing I wasn't there to help those guys out."

His return was certainly worth the wait for Astros fans, though.

The crowd of 28,496 heartily cheered Pettitte

as he left the mound at the end of the fifth.

The Astros struggled to pull away until Lamb's triple off Julian Tavaraz in the eighth.

Rookie center fielder Willy Taveras, the 23-year-old replacement for Carlos Beltran, followed with an RBI single to give Houston a 4-1 lead.

Tavaraz took the loss, allowing three runs on four hits.

"It's a great thing," Garner said.



KRT photo/Gary Melendez, The State
Jack Nicklaus takes a batter's stance as Gary Player (not shown) hits shots from the bunker on the 18th hole during the Masters' Par 3 contest Wednesday at Augusta National. The start of the Masters Golf Tournament was delayed Thursday due to rain. The tournament will run through Sunday.

Mavericks' Nowitzki 'day-to-day' after fall

All-Star's knee just sore, MRI showed no damage Wednesday

DALLAS (AP) — Dallas Mavericks forward Dirk Nowitzki's right knee is only sore after a scary looking tumble.

An MRI taken Wednesday afternoon showed no damage.

Nowitzki, the only player in the league ranked in the top 10 in both scoring and rebounding, was hurt in the closing minutes of a Dallas victory Tuesday night when he was undercut by Orlando's Andre Barrett. He later said his knee "felt weird."

Nowitzki received treatment on his knee while teammates practiced Wednesday. He also had work done on his right ankle, which also took him off the court against

Dallas Mavericks	
Remaining Schedule	
Tonight	— vs. S.A.
Saturday	— vs. Utah
11th	— vs. Memphis
13th	— @ Seattle
14th	— @ Portland
17th	— @ L.A. Lakers
19th	— vs. Seattle
20th	— @ Memphis

the Magic. That's a recurring problem, though, and he receives frequent treatment on it.

"He's doing OK," coach Avery Johnson said after Wednesday's workout, before Nowitzki's MRI was taken. "We'll just have to see. He's day-to-day."

The Mavericks play Thursday night against division rival San Antonio.

SPRING CAR CARE DIRECTORY

April Is National Car Care Month
And These Area Businesses Are Here To
Take Care Of Your Car Care Needs.

Gillihan Body Shop
Glass Replacement • Free Estimates • Frame Repair
Quality Work • Reasonable Prices • Lifetime Warranty
Insurance Claims Welcome
821 W. 4th 264-8528

Jiffy Car Wash
RO Water • Hot Wax • Detail • Exterior & Interior
807 W. 4th 263-4545

BIG SPRING COLLISION CENTER
Foreign • Domestic • Window Replacement
Full Service Collision Center • Lifetime Warranty
"Quality Is A Way Of Life"
Phone: 432-263-7306 Fax: 432-263-4605
Email: bsc@crcom.net
207 Gollad Big Spring, Tx. ASE
John & Jenny Bryans-Owners

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Call Classified (432)263-...
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BIG SPRING H

THURSDAY

APR. 7

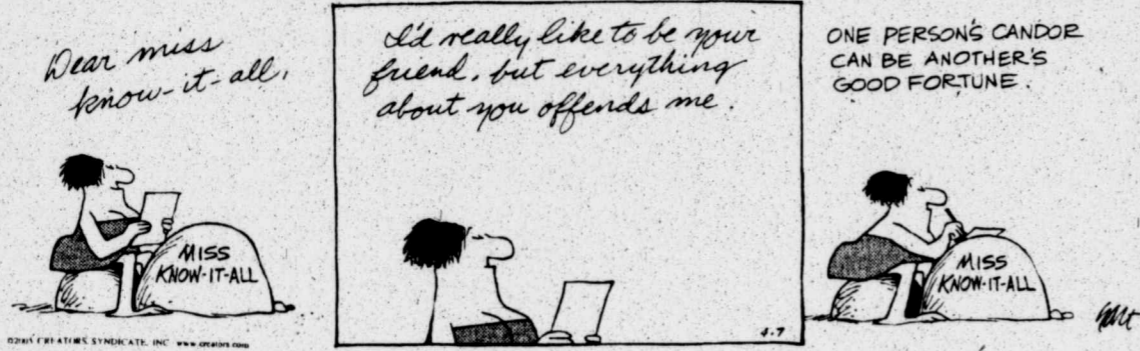
TV schedule table with columns for station (WFAA, KMID, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLT, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KOCV, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN, TMC) and time slots (6:30, 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10:30, 11:30, 12:30) listing various programs like News, Wheel-Fortune, Survivor, CSI, etc.

DENNIS THE MENACE



"COULD I HAVE MY ALLOWANCE NOW, BEFORE YOU TALK TO MOM?"

BC



WIZARD OF ID



AGNES



HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



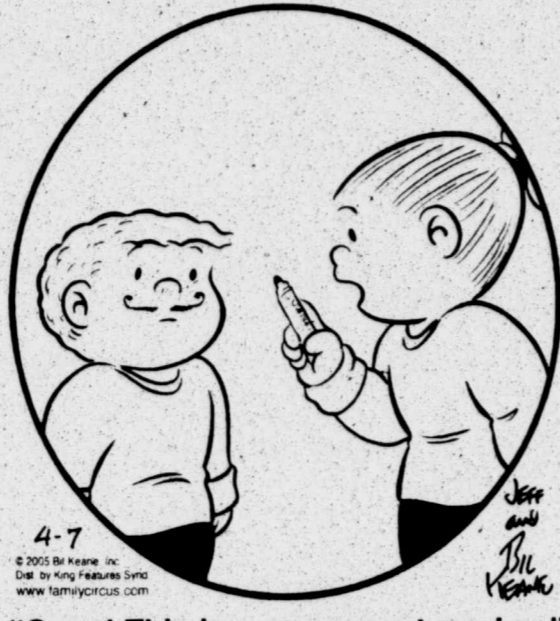
SNUFFY SMITH



BEEBLE BAILEY



THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Oops! This is a permanent marker."

HAGAR



BLONDIE



This Date In History

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, April 7, the 97th day of 2005. There are 268 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On April 7, 1862, Union forces led by Gen. Ulysses S. Grant defeated the Confederates at the Battle of Shiloh in Tennessee. On this date: In 1927, an audience in New York saw an image of Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover in the first successful long-distance demonstration of television. In 1939, Italy invaded Albania. (Less than a week later, Italy annexed Albania.) In 1945, during World War II, American planes intercepted a Japanese fleet that was headed for Okinawa on a suicide mission.

In 1947, auto pioneer Henry Ford died in Dearborn, Mich., at age 83. In 1948, the World Health Organization was founded. In 1953, the U.N. General Assembly elected Dag Hammarskjold of Sweden to be secretary-general. In 1955, movie actress Theda Bara died in Los Angeles at age 69. In 1966, the United States recovered a hydrogen bomb it had lost off the coast of Spain. In 1969, the Supreme Court unanimously struck down laws prohibiting private possession of obscene material. In 1994, civil war erupted in Rwanda, a day after a mysterious plane crash claimed the lives of the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi. In the months that followed, hundreds of thousands of minority Tutsi and Hutu intellectuals were slaughtered. Today's Birthdays: Actor R.G. Armstrong is 88. Sitar player Ravi Shankar is 85. Actor James Garner is 77. Country singer Cal Smith is 73. Actor Wayne Rogers is 72. Actor Ian Richardson is 71. Media commentator Hodding Carter III is 70. Country singer Bobby Bare is 70. R&B singer Charlie Thomas (The Drifters) is 68. Jazz musician Freddie Hubbard is 67. The mayor of Oakland, Calif., Jerry Brown, is 67. Movie director Francis Ford Coppola is 66. Television personality David Frost is 66. Singer Patricia Bennett (The Chiffons) is 58. Singer John Oates is 56. Singer Janis Ian is 54. Country musician John Dittrich is 54. Rock musician Bruce Gary is 53. Actor Jackie Chan is 51. Actor Russell Crowe is 41.

Answer to previous puzzle: MATZE, ODDS, SEEN, ELGIN, NEAT, UNDO, SPONGECAKE, BYES, HORN, XED, LITANY, TSP, SALVO, SOAPOPERASTAR, PIP, ISAAC, ADEE, UNEATEN, TRELIS, PENN, ADIOS, AGE, WATERMOCCASIN, SMEAR, KIT, CRUISE, OWE, AERO, Ooze, BATHUBGIN, TBIS, OCHO, SLATE, NEST, KEYS, CEDES

Newsday Crossword

FORE AND AFTER by Robert H. Wolfe Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS: 1 Siestas, 5 Prefix meaning "below", 10 Deep black, 14 Slender instrument, 15 Sorrow, 16 One to blame, 17 Leftover bit, 19 Invader of Rome, 20 Gazetteer abbr., 21 Butts into, 22 Reply to "How are you?", 24 Film workers, 26 Guide for lettering, 29 Base behind the pitcher, 30 Subsequently, 31 Card game, 32 More peevish, 34 Fortitude, 35 They may be in arms, 38 Thurman of Pulp Fiction, 39 Big brass, 40 Reunion attendee, 41 Drink mixer, 43 Columnist Smith, 44 Poker game, 45 Gets used to, 49 Miss Peach cartoonist, 51 Permission, 52 Spill the beans, 53 Crewperson, 54 RR stop, 55 Wrench orawl, 57 Horseradish, for one, 60 Red Muppet, 61 Garden cutter, 62 Scott Turow novel, 63 Something owed, 64 They act, 65 French notion, 8 CD follower, 9 Judge in a dispute, 10 Abet, 11 Readers' group, 12 Horse morsel, 13 High degree, 18 Stingless bees, 23 Gents, 25 Tribal pole, 26 Clip fleece from, 27 Little bit, 28 Setback, 30 Lacking confidence, 33 Dancewear, 34 Spiritual mentors, 35 Swell time, 36 Inter (among other things), 37 Small winged missile, 39 Two fins, 41 Hurt, as a toe, 42 Lawless group, 44 Mrs., to Martinez, 46 Transmit anew, 47 It's what's for dinner, 48 Horse holder, 50 Deal out, 51 Supply food for, 53 FNMA offering, 55 Koppel of ABC, 56 Flamenco cheer, 58 Wedding words, 59 polloi

Crossword puzzle grid with 13 columns and 13 rows, containing numbers for starting points of words.