



## BSHS' Thangam wins state Lincoln-Douglas debate

By STEVE REAGAN

Staff Writer

Big Spring High School senior Manoj Thangam talked his way to a pair of medals Saturday at the University Interscholastic League state academic meet at the University of Texas in Austin.

Thangam, a key member of the BSHS Speech and Debate team, placed first in the Class

4A Lincoln-Douglas debate competition, and followed that with a third-place finish in persuasive speaking.

He bested Ross Ahya of Houston Jones High School to earn top honors in the Lincoln-Douglas competition. Michael McMaster of Paris North Lamar High School and Stanley Call of Conroe Caney Creek shared third place.

Frisco High School's Zack Hall took top honors in persuasive speaking, followed by Valerie Johnson of Bay City High School.

Thangam racked up 25 points at the state meet, accounting for more than half of Big Spring's total.

Also for Big Spring, Tony Emerson placed third in feature writing. Tapley Holguin fin-

ished sixth in poetry interpretation and the drama department's one-act play entry finished fourth.

Other area high school students fared well at the state meet.

Leading the way for Garden City High School in Class 1A competition were the accounting, calculator application, mathematics and number sense

teams, who finished second in their respective categories.

Individually, Garden City was paced by Amanda Hirt, who finished third in accounting, and Taylor Niehues, who had fifth-place finishes in calculator application, mathematics and number sense. Also placing fifth for Garden City was Tracy Eggemeyer, in informative

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## Staulcup wins re-election to council seat

By STEVE REAGAN

Staff Writer

Jo Ann Staulcup easily won re-election to the Big Spring City Council in Saturday's municipal election, while both incumbents in the Sands school board race won new terms as well.



STAUCUP

Staulcup, the District 3 City Council incumbent, netted 80 percent of the vote to defeat challenger Bob Kincheloe Jr. in extremely light voting.

Fewer than 7 percent of the registered voters in District 3 cast ballots in the race, city officials disclosed. Final totals

showed Staulcup besting Kincheloe by a 108-27 margin.

Staulcup won the early vote by a 69-8 margin, and received 39 of the 58 total ballots cast Saturday at the high school cafeteria.

"I'm glad it's all over, and I'm very thankful to all the people who voted for me," Staulcup said from her home Saturday night. "I'm disappointed that there wasn't a better turnout, but I appreciate the support I received, and I'm looking forward to another three years on the city council."

Though disappointed by his defeat, Kincheloe promised that this was not his last try at the city council seat.

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## ROCKIN' THE CELEBRATION



Hundreds of people attended the Cinco de Mayo Celebration at Heart of the City Park on Saturday, which featured games, food and a free concert featuring several area bands, including Fourstones, shown in the photo at above.

Herald photos/Steve Reagan

## FLYIN' CLOSE TO THE GROUND



HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins

Alexandria Escalera, 5, a student at Lakeview Headstart, makes the final turn before parking her bike during the Trike-A-Thon. Alexandria was among more than 100 children that rode bicycles and tricycles Thursday morning to raise money for St. Jude Children's Hospital.

## Hammering out details

Officials set Tuesday meeting as joint law enforcement center plans begin to take shape

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

As the new joint law enforcement center begins to take shape on paper, county commissioners and officials involved in the design of the new facility will meet Tuesday to continue "hammering out details."

"I expect this design to

change at least four or five times before the final decision is made," Ed Spooner, justice director for the HOK Group and project consultant, recently told commissioners. "The sheriff and police chief will have to sit down and see what needs to be moved now that we've got a rough design to look at."

Sheriff Dale Walker said he's excited to see the process moving forward.

"We've been working together for several weeks — working on looking at different square footage for our respective departments," said Walker. "Trying to work out where we need certain

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## Meeting on VAMC slated May 18

Herald Staff Report

A Veterans Administration Cares Local Advisory Panel public meeting is slated for 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Wednesday, May 18 at the Dorothy Garrett Coliseum, located at 1001 Birdwell Lane.

The first of four such meetings, the LAP is part of VA's Capital Asset Realignment

Enhanced Services (CARES) process. This meeting will provide veterans, caregivers, and citizens with an overview of the CARES process. This is the first of four such meetings that will be held this year.

According to meeting coordinators, this first meeting is not designed to make or share decisions, but rather to share the CARES and LAP process and gather feedback via

public comment

If you would like to provide a comment for the LAP, you can mail information to: VA Cares Studies - Big Spring, PO Box 1427, Washington Grove, MD 20880-1427. The deadline is May 18th. You can also e-mail your comments to Capital Asset Realignment for

Enhanced Services (CARES) Web site at [www.va.gov/CARES](http://www.va.gov/CARES)

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## GET WELL PARTY

A "Get Well, Jody" party has been scheduled from 9 p.m. to midnight Saturday at the Stampede. The party will give fans a chance to convey their best wishes to Jody Nix, well-known country music performer, who is recovering from heart surgery. Nix, who has been released from the hospital, will be in attendance, but will not be performing. DJ Vince Allen will provide the music. Admission will be \$10 per person. The funds raised will help defray medical costs.



## WATCHFUL 'EYES'

Virginia Murley lives alone in Mesquite, and likes it that way, but her family worried that she would fall and hurt herself because of her poor eyesight. When Theresa Teel called to check on her 81-year-old mother every morning, she never knew what to expect. Now she knows... See Page 6A



## BLOOD DRIVES

Tuesday: TravelCenters (formerly Rip Griffin), U.S. Highway 87 and I-20, UBS Bloodmobile, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, call Sonya at 264-4444, ext. 602.

Saturday, May 14: Leonard's Prescription Pharmacy, 701 Scurry, UBS Bloodmobile, 10 a.m.-2p.m. To sign up, call Terri at 267-2711.

Monday, May 16: Forsan High School, 411 W. 6th, Forsan, Auditorium, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. To sign up, call Ms. Sims at 457-2223



Obituaries

Donald Ray Barber



Donald Ray Barber passed away Thursday, May 5, 2005, in Cleveland, Texas after an extended illness, at the age of 73.

Donald was born in Big Spring Jan. 3, 1932, to J.H. (Bill) and Zula Barber. He was raised in Big Spring, attended schools here and played football at Big Spring High School.

Donald married his high school sweetheart, Patsy Cross, in 1949 in Stanton. They had four children. She preceded him in death March 25, 1972.

He married Irene Bedell in 1974 in Clovis, N.M. She preceded him in death Nov. 6, 1995. He was also preceded in death by his parents, brother, Billy Barber and sister, Ramona McCullough.

Donald is survived by his children, Keith and wife, Debbie of Houston, Danny of Midland, Kenny and wife, Kathy of Big Spring, and Donna Barber and Grover Bass of Cleveland, Texas; two stepdaughters, Marilyn Burgess and husband, Ronnie of Midland, and Carolyn Manning and husband, Melvin of Midland; 15 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; sister, Janie Stroud and husband, Larry of Midland; numerous nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws, dear friends and loved ones.

In Donald's early years, he worked for the Coca-Cola Bottling Co. in Big Spring and served on the Big Spring Fire Department for many years.

Most of his working life, he was an auto body repairman/shop foreman for various body shops, including Permian Pontiac in Midland. He worked as an auto appraiser for ADA of Midland for years and retired from that position, moving back to Big Spring at that time.

Donald proudly served in the National Guard and then in the Army as a sergeant during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. He was a member of the Moose Lodge, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars and National Rifle Association.

He was of the Pentecostal faith. Donald had a great love for his family, his country and life. Some of his most endearing qualities were his loyalty, wit and great sense of humor. He was a great storyteller and had a wonderful talent as a cartoonist. He left us many drawings to cherish.

Donald loved the outdoors, especially rattlesnake hunting, fishing and deer hunting. He loved to explore the backroads of Texas. He enjoyed crossword puzzles, Patsy Cline music, playing bingo and "going to boats."

Donald was a very special and much-loved man. He will be missed always. In the past few years, his health was bad, but he was always able to find joy and share happiness with those around him. He never lost his will or gave up the fight.

Till we meet again — we love you. Graveside services are 2 p.m. Wednesday, May 11, 2005, at Trinity Memorial Park, officiated by the Rev. Donnie Stroud of Los Angeles, Calif. Body will lie in state at the funeral home from 11 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. the day of service.

Arrangements are under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home.

Pallbearers will be grandsons and family members, Tommy Burgess, Clay McIntire, Larry James, Gary Daniels, Glen Daniels and Kyle Neighbors.

*Paid obituary*

J.L. Perry

J.L. Perry, 72, of Buffalo died Saturday, May 7, 2005, at College Station Medical Center in College Station.

Funeral Services are 10 a.m. Wednesday, May 11, 2005, at McNett Funeral Home Chapel in Andrews. The Rev. Dean Williamson of Andrews will officiate. Burial will be in Andrews North Cemetery.

The family will receive friends Tuesday from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. at McNett Funeral Home.

J.L. was born Feb. 2, 1933, in Rusk. He married Lou Ann Scoggins May 27, 1961, in Tioga. They lived in Andrews for more than 38 years. They moved to Buffalo in 2001.

He is survived by his wife, Lou Ann Perry of Buffalo; three sons, Jay and wife, Linda Perry of Andrews; Jeff Perry of Rankin and Joel Perry of Leona; daughter, Jennifer Perry-Darrow and husband, Billy Paul of Big Spring; five brothers, Troy Perry of Center, Charlie Perry of Palestine, Blue Perry of Corsicana, Pop Perry of Madisonville and Jim Perry of Ackerly; three sisters, Eloise Roberts of Pointer, Ann Perry of Palestine and Dorothy Henderson of Palestine; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Arrangements are under the direction of McNett Funeral Home. Send condolences to www.mcnettfuneralhome.com.

Evette Emerson

Evette Emerson, 43, of Big Spring died at 7:12 a.m. Monday, May 9, 2005, at her residence. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Linda White Money

Linda White Money, 50, of Big Spring died at 7:21 a.m. Monday, May 9, 2005, at her residence. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Maria Salazar

Maria "Inez" Salazar, 74, of Big Spring, died Monday, May 9, 2005, in a San Angelo hospital. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

B.C. Swindell



B.C. Swindell, 71, of Big Spring died Sunday, May 8, 2005, at his residence. Funeral services will be held at 4 p.m. Tuesday, May 10, 2005, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel with the Rev. Dr. Randy Cotton, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, officiating. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park.

The family will receive friends from 7 p.m. until 8 p.m. today at the funeral home.

He was born Jan. 5, 1934, in Olden and married Sonya Jean Washington Oct. 10, 1952, in Big Spring.

B.C. moved to Big Spring in 1942 from Monahans. He graduated from Big Spring High School in 1951 and attended Howard College. He was the first projectionist at the Jet Drive-In Theatre and then worked for Cosden Oil and Chemical Refinery from May of 1952 until his retirement in January of 1996.

An avid golfer, B.C. played since high school and had played in numerous tournaments. He was a member of Trinity Baptist Church for more than 50 years and a member of the Cosden Union of Operating Engineers.

Survivors include his wife, Sonya Swindell of Big Spring; two daughters and sons-in-law, Donna and Jim Thurman and Patti and Ricky Adams, all of Big Spring; a brother and sister-in-law, Johnny and Darla Swindell of Big Spring; five grandchildren, Christi Jones and husband, Brant of Grapevine, Colby Thurman of Big Spring, Austin Adams of Lubbock and Kendal Adams and Haley Adams, both of Big Spring; and two great-grandchildren, Brooks and Ellorie Jones of Grapevine.

Arrangements are under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring. Online condolences can be made at www.npwelch.com.

*Paid obituary*

Clifford O. Bridges

Clifford O. Bridges, 87, of San Angelo, formerly of Tulare, Calif., died Saturday, May 7, 2005, in a Big Spring hospital. A memorial service will be planned by the family at a later date.

He was born March 11, 1918, in Whitefield, Okla., and married Neata Burgess in 1950 in Las Vegas, Nev.

He was an owner/operator truck driver for 35 years, retiring in 1980. He served in the Army from 1945 to 1946, including serving in Belgium at the end of World War II. He was a Baptist.

Survivors include his wife, Neata Bridges of San Angelo; one son, Michael C. Bridges of Henderson, Nev.; one daughter, Jerrie Wilson of Tulare, Calif.; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, one sister and four brothers.

The family suggests memorials to the American Heart Association, P.O. Box 15186, Austin 78761.

Arrangements under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring. Online condolences can be made at www.npwelch.com.

Joni Lu Jones Hazlewood

Joni Lu Jones Hazlewood, 75, of Stanton died Sunday, May 8, 2005, at her residence. Her services are pending with Gilbreath Funeral Home of Stanton.

Weather

Today — Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 90s. Southwest winds around 10 mph.

Tonight — Partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 60s. South winds around 10 mph.

Tuesday — Partly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the lower 90s. South winds 10 to 20 mph.

Tuesday night — Partly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Lows in the mid 60s. South winds 15 to 20 mph.

Wednesday — Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 80s. South winds 15 to 25 mph.

Wednesday night — Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Lows around 60.

Lottery

Results of the Lotto Texas drawing Saturday night: Winning numbers drawn: 17-24-25-26-33. Bonus Ball: 33.

Number matching five of five, plus Bonus Ball: 0. Estimated jackpot for Wednesday night drawing: \$59 million.

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Saturday night: Winning numbers drawn: 9-11-14-34-36.

Number matching five of five: 1. Prize per winner: \$37,094. Winning tickets sold in: El Paso. Next Cash 5 drawing: Tonight.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Saturday night: 3-9-6

Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity between 10 a.m. Saturday and 8 a.m. today:

- JOSE MELENDEZ, 22, of 711 Aylesford, was arrested Saturday on a charge of theft.
- RICARDO CASTILLO, 26, of 2505 March Circle, was arrested Saturday on a charge of theft.
- DARLENE SHELDON, 46, of 1202 E. Third Street, was arrested Saturday on a charge of public intoxication.
- CATHERINE BRYANT, 34, of 1202 10th Street, was arrested Saturday and held for the HCSO.
- LUIS VILLA, 39, of 709 16th Street, was arrested Sunday on a charge of public intoxication.
- UNAUTHORIZED USE OF A MOTOR VEHICLE was reported in the 200 block of Fourth Street.
- THEFT was reported:
  - in the 300 block of Owens.
  - in the 1200 block of 11th Place.
- CRIMINAL TRESPASS was reported in the 1700 block of Austin.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported:
  - in the 800 block of Owens.
  - in the 1400 block of Highway 87.
  - in the 200 block of Fourth Street.
- BURGLARY OF A VEHICLE was reported in the 200 block of Fourth Street.
- BURGLARY OF A HABITATION was reported in the 3300 block of Interstate Highway 20.
- ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE was reported in the 1200 block of Barnes.

Sheriff's report

The Howard County Sheriff's Office reported the following activity:

- SPENCER LEE COKER, 34, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a judgment for driving while intoxicated - open container.
- SANTOS MENDOZA JR., 42, was arrested Friday by the HCSO on a charge of driving while license invalid.

Fire/EMS

The Big Spring Fire Department reported the following activity:

- MEDICAL was reported in the 1300 block of Dixie Drive at 11:28 p.m. Friday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 1600 block of Lancaster at 5:17 p.m. Friday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2000 block of S. Gregg Street at 6:35 p.m. Friday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1800 block of N. Highway 87 at 2:51 p.m. Friday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 500 block of W. 17th Street at 4:10 p.m. Friday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1900 block of W. Highway 87 at 6:45 p.m. Friday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2300 block of Gateville Road at 7:29 p.m. Friday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1600 block of Cardinal at 11:22 p.m. Friday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 2000 block of Virginia at 4:56 a.m. Friday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2300 block of Marshal at 9:01 a.m. Saturday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1500 block of Hilltop Road at 3:57 p.m. Saturday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 100 block of Salem Road at 3:45 p.m. Saturday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAFFIC ACCIDENT was reported in the 400 block of W. Fourth Street at 5:25 p.m. Saturday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAFFIC ACCIDENT was reported near mile marker 184 of Interstate Highway 20 at 3:03 a.m. Saturday. Service was refused.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1500 block of Nolan at 11:15 a.m. Sunday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1900 block of N. Highway 87 at 8:24 a.m. Sunday. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAFFIC ACCIDENT was reported near the 180 mile marker of Interstate Highway 20 at 1:22 p.m. Sunday. Service was refused.

TEXA

Girls' film of

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JAIL

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VOTE

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## TEXAS NEWS BRIEFS

### Girls' film on teen pregnancy airing nationally

MISSION (AP) — With at least six classmates pregnant, including the valedictorian with her second child, it was clear to a handful of girls that Mission High School needed more information on safe sex.

So the four students at this school deep in South Texas along the Mexican border — where the teen pregnancy rate is among the highest in the nation — decided they could help send the message by making their own movie.

Two years later, the 16-minute educational film promoting condom use is available to public schools around the state. The movie, named "Toothpaste" in reference to a teen code word for condoms, has been ordered by schools around the country. It will also be shown at film festivals and on Showtime, according to the organization that helped produce the film.

"Hopefully, people will get something out of it," said Amanda Ramirez, one of the teens.

The script by Kristal Villarreal, Laura Coria, Gladys Sanchez and Ramirez won an annual contest by Scenarios USA, a national organization that works to educate teens about pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Professional directors, producers and camera operators helped polish the film.

### Man accused in death of child set for trial

BEAUMONT (AP) — Two psychiatrists plan to testify that Kenneth Pierott was insane when he smothered his girlfriend's 6-year-old son and tried to cremate the body in an oven at the behest of voices in his head, according to court documents.

If the jury to be selected beginning Monday in San Antonio agrees with their arguments and acquits Pierott because they find him insane, Pierott could spend a short time in a mental hospital for his second killing before he is released again.

The murder trial — moved from Beaumont to San Antonio because of intense media scrutiny in southeast Texas — comes as Texas legislators consider reforms to the state's insanity standard.

State law sets out little guidance on how courts should deal with those acquitted based on insanity.

Pierott was charged with murder in April 2004 after 6-year-old Tre-Devin Odoms' body was found in the oven at his mother's Beaumont house.

### Student killed in post-prom shooting

FORT WORTH (AP) — Police were investigating a shooting that killed a high school senior and wounded another teen as several students gathered in a neigh-

borhood after the prom.

Victor Barragan Jr., 18, was shot in the head and chest while standing near a sport-utility vehicle early Sunday, Fort Worth police Lt. Dean Sullivan said.

A 17-year-old girl shot in the hand and leg was treated at a hospital and released, Sullivan said Monday.

Relatives described Barragan as a well-mannered boy who wanted to attend college to be an architect.

Barragan, who was to graduate in two weeks, played football at Trimble Tech High for four years and last season was named an all-district offensive tackle, coach Gerry Magin said.

"That's kind of the question everybody's asking," Magin said. "Why him?"

Magin said Barragan steered clear of school fights. Detectives were talking to students Monday to see if a school fight last month and Sunday's shootings were connected, Sullivan said.

### Runoff for San Antonio mayor pits generations

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A 30-year-old San Antonio city councilman says his lead in Saturday's mayoral election should erase any doubts that he's too young for the job. But his 70-year-old opponent in a June runoff isn't so sure.

Councilman Julian Castro will face retired Texas appeals court judge Phil Hardberger in a June runoff for mayor of the nation's eighth-largest city despite making national headlines when his twin brother, a state lawmaker, took his place on a parade float last month.

"This completely erases any issues about age," said Castro, who heard wisecracks during his campaign about his age and youthful appearance. "The lion's share of voters in San Antonio believe I can effectively lead San Antonio."

Hardberger said his opponent is a hard worker, but no more energetic despite the four-decade age difference.

"He does have a lot of energy, but I'm happy to say, so do I and I have a lot more life experiences behind me that I can utilize," he said.

Castro remained the front-runner, having secured 47,893 votes, or about 42 percent, with all precincts counted. Hardberger received 30 percent of the vote, or 34,280 votes.

### Convicted child molester was castrated

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A convicted child molester who asked to be castrated had the procedure done within the last year, before his release from prison.

Larry Don McQuay, 41, confirmed in a letter he was castrated between six months and a year ago, said his attorney Paul Looney.

In letters to his attorney, McQuay also said he underwent therapy while incarcerated and that his sexual fantasies have significantly decreased.

"There's a lot of good in this man; he doesn't want to hurt more children," Looney said. "Anybody with his history has to be looked at with special concern. But he's worked so hard, I think he's the least likely to offend of any other sex offenders that have been released in the last decade."

Texas prison officials have said three prisoners have been castrated but refused to confirm if McQuay was one of them, citing confidentiality reasons.

McQuay made national headlines in the 1990s when he campaigned to be castrated because he believed it would make him less likely to commit future offenses. His demand spurred the Legislature to authorize the procedure.

He was released from prison Tuesday after serving eight years of a 20-year sentence and will remain under mandatory supervision for 11 years. McQuay was taken to San Antonio, where he will be in a work-release facility. He will wear a global positioning system ankle bracelet.

### Texas hopes for gains from base closures

CORPUS CHRISTI (AP) — Texas officials have known for years that Naval Station Ingleside near Corpus Christi could be a potential target for closure by the Pentagon.

Ingleside is hardly alone. Across Texas, communities are bracing for the possibility of losing jobs, economic benefits and the people that come with being home to a military base.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld could announce his base realignment and closure recommendations as soon as this week.

But at Ingleside and elsewhere, officials have been busy trying stay off the closure list.

Texas has 18 major military installations that employ about 230,000 uniformed personnel and civilians. The economic benefit is pegged by state officials at about \$43 billion a year. Since 1988, 17 Texas military bases have been closed and several others realigned in other base closure rounds.

In some cases, the state's political leaders have gotten involved.

Officials including Gov. Rick Perry have promoted Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo as a location for training military personnel in Arabic.

Perry told Pentagon officials that he would work with the Legislature to create graduate and undergraduate Arabic language degree programs at nearby Angelo State University, if the military expands Goodfellow's language institute.

## Two Big Spring men wounded in Thursday shooting

### Herald Staff Report

A "traveling argument" of sorts led to the shooting of two Big Spring men late Thursday night, police officials said.

Big Spring Police Chief Lonnie Smith said Saturday that Jerry Mann and Tony Bingham, both

of Big Spring, were transported to a local hospital after being hit by pellets from a single shotgun blast in the 2100 block of Alamesa Drive late Thursday night.

According to Smith, the two men, along with Jamie Billingsley — also of Big Spring — had gotten into an argument with

the shooting suspect earlier in the evening at another location, and the argument just shifted location to the shooting site.

"This was a case where everybody knew everybody," Smith said.

Bingham was transported to Scenic Mountain Medical Center, while

Mann was taken to a Lubbock-area hospital because of possible eye injuries sustained in the shooting. None of the injuries were considered life-threatening, Smith said.

Billingsley received only minor injuries in the incident, and did not require medical attention,

officials said.

No arrests had been made in connection with the incident as of Saturday night.

Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-7331, ext. 234 or by e-mail at reporter@bigspringherald.com.

## JAIL

Continued from Page 1A

areas. We've put all of that together and tried to refine that. I think we've kind of agreed on the space that we need. It's very exciting to see the drawings today. It's another step in the process, and we're very glad to see it."

The meeting is expected to get under way at 10 a.m. in the commissioner's court, located on the second floor of the

Howard County Courthouse.

While the decision to build a joint law enforcement facility, which will not only house the county jail and sheriff's office, but also the Big Spring Police Department, has been a bumpy one for the commissioners, Walker said the collaboration has gone well.

"I'm real happy to see that a large portion of this facility is shared space," said Walker. "The police department and the sheriff's office have worked very closely together in

this whole process, and we have agreed on a number of areas that we can share that will cut down on the overall size of the facility as well as the expense. It's gone very smooth.

"Dispatch, records, the training rooms and some interview rooms will all be shared. We've even cut out some reception areas that we started with, and combined them into one area for both departments. That cut down quite a bit on the square footage."

As the effort to design

the facility continues, architect Phil Furqueron said the decision of where to put the center is ongoing, concentrating on a more than 10 acres of land at the intersection of Martin Luther King Boulevard and FM 700.

"We've ordered a survey," said Furqueron. "It's a pretty rough site and they are going to use GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) to do the survey. The site has a lot of brush on it, so it's hard to set up a line-of-sight type survey."

"I think this site is out-

standing. The location is great and access to it is great. There's plenty of land. To come up with the same amount of land downtown, you would probably have to buy nine square blocks. To me, it's a great site. There's a little (rough) terrain, but we can actually work that to our advantage. Of all the sites we looked at, it's by far the best."

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

## VOTE

Continued from Page 1A

"I'd like to congratulate Ms. Staulcup on her victory," Kincheloe said. "And I want to make her aware that the next time her seat comes up for election, I'll be out there (running again)."

"I want to thank everyone who voted for me," he added. "I wish there had been more ... but I'm appreciative of those who did."

Kincheloe was unsure as to how big a factor the light turnout was in his defeat, blaming the low turnout in part to the fact there were no divisive issues in front of the voters.

"Usually, when there's some type of controversy, people turn out to vote," he said. "I really wasn't

expecting a large turnout (Saturday)."

Staulcup blamed voter apathy.

"I think part of the reason is we've had so many elections the last two or three years ... It's seems like we've had two or three elections a year recently," she said. "I think people might have been a little board with another election."

The Big Spring vote will be canvassed at the May 17 city council meeting, officials said.

In contrast, voter turnout was heavy in Ackerly, where Sands Consolidated Independent School District board incumbents Robin Barraza and Martin Nichols won re-election to their at-large seats.

Barraza received 111 votes, while Nichols tallied 109. Challengers Rick

Timmins and Wes Hughes received 67 and 55 votes, respectively.

Barraza and Nichols' wins gives them another three years on the Sands school board.

Amy Parker, running unopposed for a one-year slot on the board, received 88 votes Saturday.

Superintendent Wayne Blount said 180 total ballots were cast Saturday in Ackerly, almost doubling the turnout from the last school board election there.

"That's a really big turnout for us," he said.

Blount said the vote totals will likely be canvassed on May 15.

Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-7331, ext. 234 or by e-mail at reporter@bigspringherald.com.

## UIL

Continued from Page 1A

speaking.

Forsan's Levi Johnson placed third in Class 1A number sense competition.

### MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL

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John Fort, 72, died Friday. Funeral Services were at 2:00 P.M. Monday at Myers & Smith Chapel. Burial will be in Trinity Memorial Park.

Polly Ann Rowan, 51, died Wednesday. Graveside services were at 10 AM Monday at Mt. Olive Memorial Park.

Evette Emerson, 43, died Monday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Linda White Money, 50, died Monday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Family Pac Pork Sirloin Bone-In Chops.....	\$ 1 <sup>39</sup> LB.
Select Beef Chuck Roast.....	\$ 2 <sup>59</sup> LB.
Pilgrim Pride Chicken Legs & Thighs.....	99¢ LB.
Hormel Pork Chops Heat 'N Serve.....	\$ 4 <sup>99</sup>
Market Sliced Canadian Bacon.....	\$ 4 <sup>69</sup> LB.
Cold Red Meat Watermelon.....	\$ 3 <sup>99</sup>
Plains Sour Cream and Fat Free Sour Cream.....	\$ 1 <sup>69</sup> 16-OZ.
Kelloggs Corn Flakes.....	2/ <sup>5</sup> 00 18-OZ.
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Shur Saving Lemon Dish Detergent.....	99¢ 40-OZ.
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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.

Susanne Reed  
Publisher

John A. Moseley  
Managing Editor

Bill McClellan  
News Editor

OUR VIEWS

More pressure needed to bring N. Korea to talks

While the rest of the world tries to decide what to do, the North Koreans continue to work on their nuclear-weapons capability.

In a startling and troubling statement, Vice Adm. Lowell Jacoby, chief of the Defense Intelligence Agency, told a Senate panel that North Korea can now cap a missile with a nuclear warhead. He didn't say whether that feat had been accomplished or what kind of missile was being talked about.

This confused an already confused situation. Pressed for more details, his parent agency said Jacoby was only restating something he had told the panel back in March. Then Lawrence Di Rita, the Defense secretary's chief spokesman, said the U.S. isn't certain that the North Koreans have a nuclear warhead small enough to be placed on a missile that could reach this country.

Then, some intelligence analysts have said North Korea is some years away from being able to toss a nuke into the United States.

All this confusion, and possible nuclear progress by the North, is taking place amid more confusion about six-party disarmament talks with North Korea, which have been stalled since June. The Bush administration, along with Russia, China, South Korea and Japan, need to exert greater pressure to bring the North Koreans back to the table.

An unstable dictatorship such as North Korea is dangerous enough, but if it has a nuclear capability, or is about to get one, that poses a very real danger to countries in that whole area and, yes, the United States.

It also seems that U.S. intelligence on North Korea's nuclear capability is a bit sparse. Possibly as the intelligence community is reorganized, that intelligence will become better.

It has to, because North Korea with a nuclear capability is a deadly serious matter.

THE TIMES  
EL PASO

How To Contact Us

The Herald is always interested in our readers' opinions.

In order that we might better serve your needs, we offer several ways in which you may contact us:

- In person at 710 Scurry St.
- By telephone at 263-7331
- By fax at 264-7205
- By e-mail Managing Editor John A. Moseley at editor@bigspringherald.com or News Editor Bill McClellan at newsdesk@crcom.net.
- By mail at P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721

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- We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per 30-day period per author.
- Letters that are unsigned or do not include a telephone number or address will not be considered.
- Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

We've become a runaway country

When the feds quickly announce they won't press charges against runaway-bride

Jennifer Wilbanks, 32, when the Albuquerque police chief discusses the "stress that she's been through" and law enforcement in Georgia is still noodling over whether to prosecute her for staging a kidnapping that didn't happen, you know you live in a country where actions mean nothing.



DEBRA SAUNDERS

Don't get me wrong: There have been serious consequences to Wilbanks' apparently premeditated hoax — she bought her bus ticket a week before running off, and left behind her keys, wallet and ring, which made her disappearance look like a kidnapping, or worse. Many suspected that Wilbanks' fiancé, John Mason, had killed her. Cable TV news reporters were happy to inform viewers that Mason had not agreed to a police polygraph. In such an atmosphere, some vigilante could have hurt Mason. Then there was the nightmare endured by terrified family members and friends.

The mayor of Duluth, Ga., estimates that Wilbanks' faux kidnapping and solo honeymoon in Vegas cost taxpayers some \$60,000 for personnel. Now, if there is a real kidnapping, concerned neighbors may be less likely to join the search.

Worst of all, her phony alibi was unconscionable. Wilbanks' tall tale — that she was kidnapped by an armed "Hispanic man" and white woman in a blue van — smeared and brought suspicion to Latinos, Latino-white couples and even blue van owners.

The outrage isn't that Wilbanks

skipped out of her 600-guest, 14-bridesmaid and eight-bridal-show wedding. (I should care? I didn't pay for it.)

The outrage is her apparent effort to report a false abduction. Backing out of a wedding — that's between two people. Staging a kidnapping — where government agents and citizens join the search — is America's business.

Jilted fiancé Mason told Fox News' Sean Hannity that Wilbanks' guilt "has got to be consequence enough for me." Mason also said Wilbanks is "a victim here, as well." And, "Haven't we all made mistakes?"

After the hoax came to light the minister who was to have presided over the wedding, the Rev. Alan Jones, told CNN: "John said 'everybody has a right to make a mistake.' He said, 'The Bible calls that sin.' He said: 'The Bible also says every time we sin, we crucify Christ anew. And Christ forgives us, and that's what grace is all about.'"

Maybe Mason is in shock and doesn't really know what he is saying. But when other people, who aren't in his sorry shoes, are saying the same thing, his excuses warrant a response.

I don't know why, but this nonsensical understanding of forgiveness — as if it should be given instantly, regardless of circumstances — seems to be popular among a growing faction of Americans, on the left and the right, who are caught up in a mania for forgiving.

They don't get it. Forgive and forget are not synonyms. Forgiveness is not something that should be granted automatically. You forgive people after they've admitted to what they did wrong and apologized.

Georgia Bureau of Investigation agent Carter Brank told The Associated Press that Wilbanks "was somewhat remorseful," but she "didn't come right out and

apologize."

Or you forgive after time has elapsed and you choose to set aside your anger. You can forgive without making excuses. Note to Mason: You can forgive your fiancé, but that doesn't mean you still have to marry her. Besides, the wannabe groom's comments don't speak of forgiveness. They suggest a clear unwillingness to confront the fact that an adult woman who would plan and carry out such a hoax, and subject her parents and fiancé to such terror and suspicion, is utterly devoid of character.

(It's odd how the left sees the devout as being harsh and inflexible, yet here Mason and his spiritual mentors are dismissing this cruel act as a simple mistake, almost as if it were beyond the hapless Wilbanks' control. People I talk to in San Francisco are appalled at Wilbanks' stunt, while Duluth's good Christian gentlemen shrug that Wilbanks needs "treatment," as Mason told Hannity, "for lack of a better word.")

There is one other explanation: Wilbanks is mentally ill. Although her friends and family say she is not. If she is not mentally ill, she should face greater consequences than her dubious sense of guilt.

The runaway bride's father, Harris Wilbanks, told Hannity that his daughter needs "some space and some time." I agree. In fact, I would like to see Wilbanks get that space and time — as long as the space is a cot in a jail cell and the time is spent reflecting behind bars.

E-mail Debra J. Saunders at [dsaunders@sfcronicle.com](mailto:dsaunders@sfcronicle.com). To find out more about Debra J. Saunders, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).

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YOUR VIEWS

TO THE EDITOR:

Our family lived on a farm just north of Big Spring in the 1940s and 1950s. I attended the Center Point School from 1950 to 1956, at which time we moved to central California.

The Center Point School was closed and torn down many years ago. I am interested in writing to any former student from the school who also attended during those years.

I would appreciate your letting anyone who would like to correspond with me that I can be reached by writing to the following address: Phillip Glenn Hilliard, 1155 S. Fourth Street, Alhambra, Calif., 91801, or I can be e-mailed at [drpgh@sbcglobal.net](mailto:drpgh@sbcglobal.net).

PHILLIP GLENN HILLIARD  
ALHAMBRA, CALIF.

TO THE EDITOR:

Of course we all know that there are always a few rotten apples in every barrel, but in February, I underwent a close call with death and the VA hospital staff here worked wonders in keeping me from dying.

In addition, they were great in their work to get me back to as normal as possible. I can now pretty well take care of myself and need minimal assistance in doing what I need to do.

Everybody from the physical and occupational therapy departments and the nursing personnel on the medical floor and the extended care and transitional unit were by and large exceptionally helpful in my recovery and rehabilitation. The care I received in ICU was excellent.

In my opinion, the VAMC in Big Spring deserves a gold star placed above the door at the main

entrance to let everybody know that it is a top-notch facility.

JIMMY R. LINDSEY  
BIG SPRING

TO THE EDITOR:

The Putnam Homecoming has been scheduled for May 21 at the Putnam Schoolhouse.

Registration will begin at 9 a.m. and a hospitality room will be set up for refreshments and visitation.

The noon meeting will be barbecue sandwiches and trimmings. There will be no charge for the meal.

A business meeting will be held after lunch and that will be followed with more visiting.

The 1955 class will be honored as the 50-year class.

For additional information I can be reached at (325) 662-3334 or by e-mail at [hdonaway@aol.com](mailto:hdonaway@aol.com).

HUBERT DONAWAY  
PUTNAM

TO THE EDITOR:

Moore Development For Big Spring Inc. would like to thank the Big Spring citizens; Howard College Diplomats; and students from Big Spring Independent School District, Forsan Independent School District and Coahoma Independent School District that attended Big Spring Area Day at the State Capitol.

A special thanks to the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce for coordinating the buses and registration and to Howard College offering the use of their buses for the trip.

A big thanks goes out to our corporate sponsors, Alon USA and Colorado River Municipal Water District who helped make it possible for our students to attend.

The Diplomats did an outstand-

ing job of being the "lead engineers" working with the BSISD fifth-grade class in assembling the larger than life computer on the South steps of the Capitol.

Big Spring, Coahoma and Forsan students participated at Senate and House pages. Forsan students arrived early Wednesday morning along with Howard College Diplomats to help distribute invitations to the legislators, inviting them to "Let's Build a Computer" and the Coke and ice cream reception.

The reception went without a hitch due to the help of Big Spring citizens, Diplomats and Forsan and Coahoma students distributing more than 800 Cokes and ice cream bars to legislators and their staffs.

All of this would not be possible without the dedication of the committee that worked for the last four months to make this event a success.

The committee consisted of representatives from Sen. Kel Seliger's district office and Austin office, Rep. Pete Laney's Austin office, Howard College, BSISD, Forsan ISD, Coahoma ISD, Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce, city of Big Spring, Howard County, Alon USA, CRMWD, Cutting Edge Education LLC, Big Spring State Hospital, West Texas Centers for MHMR, KBST and the Big Spring Herald.

Our legislators have an extremely busy schedule during this part of the legislative session and we appreciate the time they and their staffs devoted to this event.

Thanks to everyone for another successful Big Spring Area Day at the State Capitol.

PAM WELCH  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
MOORE DEVELOPMENT  
FOR BIG SPRING



Mike Bates at annual National officials gathering to celebrate

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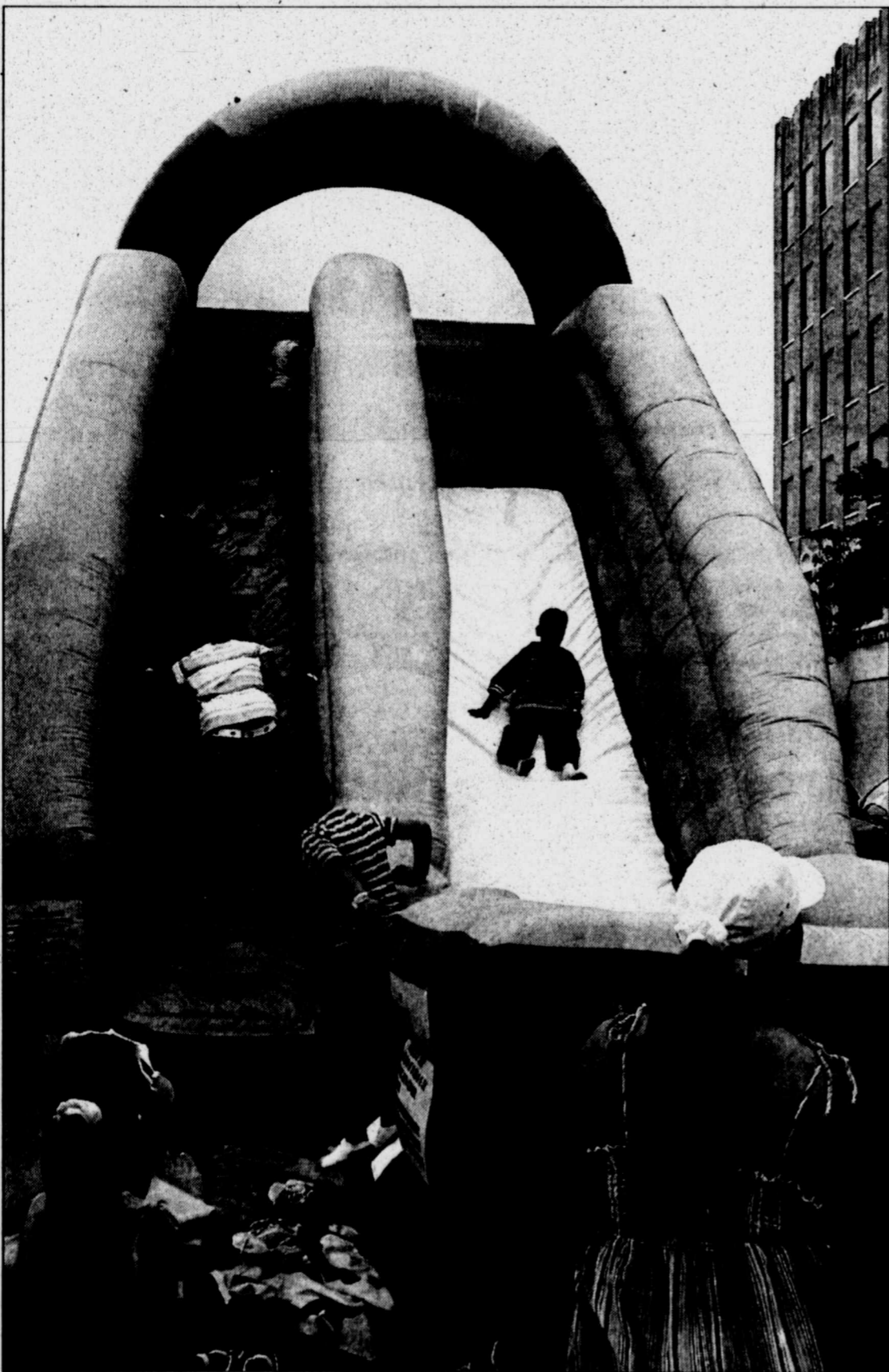
# Good news!



HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins  
Mike Bates and his wife, Virginia, bow their heads in prayer during the annual National Day of Prayer. More than 100 area residents and local officials gathered at the Dora Roberts Community Center Thursday afternoon to celebrate the day.



HERALD photos/Thomas Jenkins  
Above, more than 100 children took to a make-shift track in front of Lakeview Headstart, part of a pedal-powered Trike-A-Thon, a fund-raising event for St. Jude Children's Hospital. At right, Isabel Juarez, 4, races past.



Herald photo/Steve Reagan and Courtesy photo  
Above, Rustic Circle with rhythm guitarist Thomas Jenkins performed during Cinco de Mayo Saturday. Left, one family enjoys the inflated, pneumatic slide that was set up at Cinco de Mayo. The festival filled the Heart of the City Park and hundreds of people attended the event, which offered games, food and a free concert with several area bands, including These Wounds Will Heal, A Tragic Theory and Fourstones. The Cinco de Mayo Festival was sponsored by West Texas Producers and Farmer's Market and the League for United Latin American Citizens Council 4791.

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# Sensors marketed as answer to worries

Devices keep track of elderly, others who still want their independence

By BOB MOOS

The Dallas Morning News

DALLAS — Virginia Murley lives alone in Mesquite, and likes it that way, but her family worried that she would fall and hurt herself because of her poor eyesight. When Theresa Teel called to check on her 81-year-old mother every morning, she never knew what to expect.

"I'd take a deep breath and pray she answered," said Teel, of Sunnyvale, Texas.

Now she knows whether her mother has slept well, gotten out of bed, fixed breakfast and taken her medication. Teel's peace of mind comes from a new home-monitoring system that uses motion sensors to record an older adult's daily activities and, once it determines the person's habits, reports anything unusual.

The Quiet Care system, developed by Living Independently Group Inc. and sold to families by ADT Security Services Inc., is one of the first futuristic products being designed to help boomers care for frail parents.

"Seniors want to grow old at home, where their memories are," said Scott Gurley, group director for ADT's home health services. "Quiet Care prolongs their independence while giving caregivers confidence that things are under control."

Experts say the market for "gerontechnology" products is enormous — 11 million seniors who live by themselves and 22 million adult children who often feel overwhelmed by caregiving responsibilities.

Those numbers are prompting corporate heavyweights like General Electric Co., Hewlett-Packard Co., Honeywell International Inc. and Intel Corp. to work on other monitoring systems to help older adults remain at home.

"We're reinventing our care of older people," said Russell Bodoff, executive director of the Center for Aging Services Technologies, a consortium of technology companies, university labs and aging organizations.

The nation is in the midst of a longevity revolution. The 65-plus popu-



Virginia Murley of Mesquite stand by one of the wireless sensors that help monitor her actions.

lation will more than double in the next quarter century, growing to 71 million, and account for one in five Americans by 2030.

"We won't be able to build enough nursing homes," Bodoff said. "We have to find less-costly alternatives."

Quiet Care is the first home-monitoring system of its kind to hit the consumer market. Living Independently began selling the system to institutions a year ago, and ADT has just started marketing it to households.

Experts say the technology is more sophisticated than personal emergency call buttons that have been available for years.

"Many seniors don't wear their buttons or, if they do, don't use them in emergencies," said Robert Roush, director of the Texas Consortium of Geriatric Centers and an associate professor at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

ADT's system includes five small, wireless sensors located throughout a house or apartment — near a senior's bed, in a bathroom, by a stove or refrigerator, inside a medicine drawer and in the living room.

Each sensor sends data 24/7 to a book-sized base unit somewhere in the home — Teel's mother keeps hers in a TV cabinet.

That information is relayed by phone line to a monitoring center where it's analyzed.

The system costs \$299 to install and \$89.95 per

month to maintain.

Gurley of ADT says the price compares favorably with a visiting nurse, who may charge \$18 an hour, or a nursing home, which costs an average of \$156 a day.

Medicare may also reimburse seniors for part of the cost of home monitoring someday, predicts Thomas Fairchild, director of special projects on aging at the University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth.

"If this technology can be shown to save health care dollars over the long term, the government may be willing to help defray its expense," he said.

If the monitors detect a problem, ADT alerts Teel and other family members by e-mail or phone.

Caregivers can also log onto a password-protected Web site to find out such things as whether their parent got out of bed or took her medicine.

Teel woke up one morning to read a message that the temperature in her mother's apartment had dropped to 63, too cold for older adults. Her mother had tried to adjust the thermostat the night before.

Her mother says she doesn't notice the sensors and doesn't mind the monitoring.

"It gives me a sense of security, knowing my family is looking out for me," Murley said.

Roush, a paid consultant for Living Independently, says Quiet Care is better suited for

some seniors than others.

"Not everyone will want or need monitoring," he said. "But those who are prone to falling, or have a chronic medical problem, will benefit. In an emergency, someone found quickly will have a far better chance of survival."

Geriatric care managers, who help families arrange the care of older adults, are still learning about the home-monitoring systems.

Some predict that "high-tech" products will complement their "high-touch" services.

"I'll be able to take the data, interpret it for my clients and then respond to it," said Steven Barlam,

# To your health

a former president of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers.

Others are skeptical. "I suspect seniors will feel spied upon and resent it," said Kay Paggi, a geriatric care manager in Richardson, Texas.

Quiet Care's marketers say most seniors will agree to trade away some of their privacy if it allows them to stay in their homes.

ADT says it's making its sales pitch to caregiving boomers.

"That usually means the eldest daughter, who's between 45 and 60," Gurley said.

Home-monitoring systems will have particular appeal to long-distance caregivers who can't just drop by and check on their parents, says Gail Gibson Hunt, director of the National Alliance for Caregiving.

Experts expect elder-care products to get more sophisticated.

Living Independently is teaming up with iMetrikus Inc. to sell a home-monitoring system that also measures seniors' blood sugar, blood pressure and lung function.

Intel has been exploring

how to help people in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease prolong their independence — one idea is to install home video screens that prompt them to eat, drink and take their medicine as prescribed.

The Center for Aging Services Technologies has advocated creating public-private partnerships to figure out other ways to check on seniors, respond to emergencies and help caregivers avoid burnout.

"We want the government to name a high-level national commission that would look at how technology can move more senior care into the home," said Bodoff, the center's director. "This initiative could save society billions."

He says his consortium's proposal so far has fallen on deaf ears in Washington but will be presented again at the White House Conference on Aging this fall.

Meanwhile, families like the Teels don't know what they'd do without elder-care products.

"If it weren't for our home-monitoring system, my mother would be in an assisted-living center," Teel said. "It's a blessing."



KURT KISER

## GOOD NEWS FOR BIG SPRING

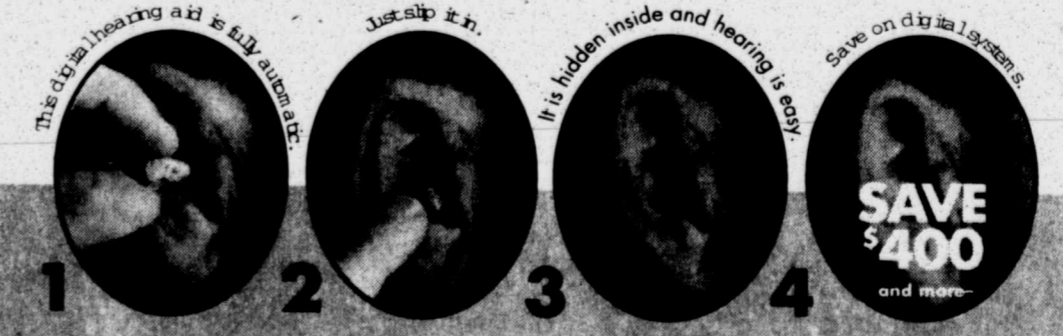
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**IN BI**  
**Big Spring Club announce couples tou**  
The Big Spring Country Club is hosting a two-day tournament for senior couples on Saturday and Sunday. The tournament cost \$130 per cart fee, but carts are well taken care of. A practice round will take place while registration begins at 10 a.m. on May 14 and starts on May 15. For more information, call 267-XXXX.

**BSISD has chance to g athletic phy**  
The Big Spring Independent School District is offering an athletic program for students in grades 10 through 12. Physical education classes will be given at the Auditorium on May 21 at 10 a.m. The seventh graders will start at 10:15 a.m. The eighth graders (current) and the ninth graders (current) will be presented again at the White House Conference on Aging this fall. Meanwhile, families like the Teels don't know what they'd do without elder-care products. "If it weren't for our home-monitoring system, my mother would be in an assisted-living center," Teel said. "It's a blessing."

**Coahoma all-sports ba**  
Coahoma announced the sports banquet will take place on May 17 at the school cafeteria. Tickets for letes and parents are \$5 and cashed that night. For more information or to purchase tickets, call Coahoma High School Office at 394-XXXX. Also, the Athletic Boosters would like to have a meeting with members for the year. The meeting will be at 8 p.m. at the school cafeteria.

**Lady Steers for sports ba**  
The Big Spring Steers sports banquet will be held on May 17 at the Spring Junior Cafeteria. General admission tickets can be purchased for \$10. Kay Cook at 267-XXXX or Spring Training Center Faye's Florist the Heritage Hotel. For more information, call Janet at 263-0023 or Rodriguez at 267-XXXX.

**Chicano Golf Association monthly tou**  
The Chicano Golf Association is hosting a monthly tournament on Sunday. The tournament will be a 12-player contest and it will start at 8 a.m. Register for the event in place before 5 p.m. on the day of the tournament. For more information, contact Mendoza at 267-XXXX.



### IN BRIEF

#### Big Spring Country Club announces couples tournament

The Big Spring Country Club has set up a two-day two-person couples scramble for Saturday and Sunday.

The tournament will cost \$130 per team plus cart fee, but private carts are welcome.

A practice round will take place May 13, while registration begins at 11:30 a.m. May 14 and a shotgun start begins at 1 p.m.

For more information, call 267-5354.

#### BSISD has set up chance to get athletic physicals

The BSISD athletic department is offering the opportunity to get an athletic physical for anyone in grades six through 11 (7-12 next year).

Physicals will be given at the BSHS Auditorium Saturday, May 21 at 10 a.m. for seventh graders (current sixth graders), 10:15 a.m. for ninth graders (current eighth graders) and 10:30 a.m. for current high school students through 11th grade. Physicals will end promptly at 11:30 a.m. for all.

#### Coahoma announces all-sports banquet

Coahoma has announced that its all-sports banquet will take place Tuesday, May 17, at the high school cafeteria.

Tickets for non-athletes and parents are \$7 and they can be purchased that night.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call the Coahoma High School Office at 394-4536.

Also, the Coahoma Athletic Booster Club would like to announce a meeting to elect members for next year.

The meeting will take place Wednesday at 8 p.m. at the high school cafeteria.

#### Lady Steers set date for sports banquet

The Big Spring Lady Steers sports banquet will be held Tuesday at 6 p.m. in the Big Spring Junior High Cafeteria.

General admission tickets can be purchased for \$10 through Kay Cook at the Big Spring Athletic Training Center or at Faye's Flowers, Dakota's Flowers or the Heritage Museum.

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

#### Chicano Golf Association sets up monthly tournament

The Chicano Golf Association has set its monthly tournament for Sunday.

The tournament will be a 12-player low-ball contest and it will have a shotgun start at 10 a.m. Registration for the event must take place before 9:45 a.m. on the day of the tournament.

For more information, contact Willie Mendoza at 267-7977.

## MVP Nash leads Suns against Mavericks

By BOB BAUM

AP Sports Writer

PHOENIX — Steve Nash won the NBA's most valuable player award as pilot of the rocket offense of the Phoenix Suns.

His journey enters an intriguing new phase Monday night when he goes against his former team, the Dallas Mavericks, in Game 1 of the Western Conference semifinals.

The mop-haired playmaker provides the best story line but might not be the player that Dallas has the hardest time containing. Amare Stoudemire is the

favorite receiver of Nash's myriad passes, and the Mavericks are going to have a hard time matching up with the amazingly quick, powerful Suns' power forward-turned-center.

"Obviously he had a great year," Dallas' Jerry Stackhouse said of Nash. "In my personal opinion, I think Amare Stoudemire is the MVP of that team."

Stoudemire, who averaged 26 points in the regular season, believes nobody on the Dallas roster can guard him one-on-one.

"They might try to bring a double-team or a triple-team, similar

to what Memphis did," Stoudemire said. "They don't want me to score 40 points or whatever."

Of course, that opens up one of Phoenix' s array of 3-point shooters.

"It's either, or," Stoudemire said.

Dallas will run with the Suns, at least up to a point.

While Phoenix led the NBA in scoring at 110.4 points per game, the highest of any team in a decade, the Mavericks were third at 102.5. That doesn't mean Dallas wants a full-bore, 48-minute sprint, though.

The Suns, after all, routinely get fast-break points after an opponent's made basket.

"If we don't run back with this team, they'll embarrass you," Mavs coach Avery Johnson said. "We can't have people thinking for 5 seconds, then moving after a made or missed shot, because they really move the ball up and down the court pretty fast."

Nash had a minor distraction from game preparation Sunday, accepting the MVP trophy after edging Shaquille O' Neal by 34 points, the fourth-closest ballot-

See MAVS, Page 2B



Rangers' starting pitcher Kenny Rogers delivers a pitch to a Cleveland batter in the sixth inning Sunday. Rogers gave his team seven innings of shutout baseball against the Cleveland Indians at Ameritrust Field in Arlington.

### AL roundup

## Brown gets long-awaited win

By The Associated Press

Kevin Brown was anything but the favorite to win when he took the mound for the New York Yankees against the Oakland Athletics.

It was only fitting that the struggling right-hander unexpectedly snapped his long losing streak Sunday with a 6-0 home victory. After all, Yankees manager Joe Torre and team owner George Steinbrenner got shut out

at the track when favored horses they own came up short at Churchill Downs on Kentucky Derby weekend.

The 40-year-old Brown (1-4) escaped two early bases-loaded jams.

"He was a different Kevin Brown," pitching coach Mel Stottlemyre said. "He seemed to be more sure of himself."

Brown, who lowered his ERA from 8.25 to 6.39, had lost a career-high seven straight starts since beat-

ing Toronto on Aug. 28. No Yankees pitcher had dropped that many starts in a row since Joe Page in 1944-45, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Also Sunday, Boston and Seattle split a doubleheader, with the Red Sox taking the first game 6-3 and the Mariners winning the second 6-4. In other AL games, it was: Chicago 5, Toronto 4; Kansas City 10, Baltimore 8; Texas 7, Cleveland 2; Minnesota 9, Tampa Bay

6; and Detroit 10, Los Angeles 1.

In New York, Brown allowed six runs to Tampa Bay in the first inning Tuesday and got into a bases-loaded, no-out situation Sunday against the A's.

He got Keith Ginter to line out to third, struck out Eric Byrnes, and threw a called third strike to Marco Scutaro to escape trouble.

See AL, Page 2B

## For some, the NBA has become too fan-tastic

The possibilities for the series between the Pacers and Pistons that begins Monday night in Detroit are so delicious, you might think somebody dreamed this stuff up.

Oops. My bad. Plenty of you already think the NBA does.

It's a shame to cover the same ground over and over, especially this late in an already eventful season. But way too many people are still wasting too much time arguing about referees, trying to decipher their calls and fantasizing about who is in whose pocket.

At every moment, it seems somebody in the NBA is getting preferential treatment. Shaq gets

away with murder. Yao can't get away with anything. Tim Duncan travels. Allen Iverson palms the ball.

The other night, Boston's Paul Pierce walked into a postgame news conference with an elastic bandage wrapped around his head. He was mocking the official who slapped him with a second technical foul (and an ejection) for throwing a retaliatory forearm at Jamaal Tinsley that dropped the Indiana guard, suspiciously, like a sack of french fries.

The names of the teams, coaches and players change, but everybody has their own pet conspiracy theory. According to most, the trail of evidence winds back to league headquarters, where commissioner David Stern is secreted behind a curtain wearing a cape and funny hat, pushing and pulling levers like some Fifth Avenue-version

of the Wizard of Oz. It's nonsense.

Not because the officiating isn't maddeningly inconsistent; it is. Stars get the calls in every sport and the NBA is the most star-driven sport going. But it might also be the toughest to officiate.

It's faster and it's the only one where the players have outgrown the playing surface. I don't know whether the guys in the NBA are, on average, taller than they've ever been, but I can guarantee they've never been bulkier. Between disgruntled veterans and an influx of youngsters, there's an abundance of bad attitude and a lack of fundamental skills. It adds up to confusion, but hardly dishonesty.

So in the interests of public sanity, we're going to provide the following disclaimer in capital letters to make it easy to

print out and tape to the wall above a TV set:

THERE IS NO CONSPIRACY IN THE NBA.

Stern is so tired of hearing the word that he whacked Houston coach Jeff Van Gundy with a \$100,000 fine — and that might just be his opening move — for breathing life into the issue.

And contrary to prevailing opinion, the commissioner does have a sense of humor. But you only had to hear him speak privately about such talk — "We'd be felons!" Stern has said with scorn more than once — to remember that he began his career a lawyer.

Besides, if Stern was half as powerful as some people think, Team USA would have brought back gold from the Olympics last summer. And even if his clout didn't extend beyond

See LITKE, Page 2B

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**COLLAPSE**

Continued from Page 1B

the final three holes in regulation, holing a 7-footer on the 18th to get into the playoff. But the third time he played the 18th was his downfall — he pulled his tee shot into the creek, took a penalty drop and laid up, then saw his fourth shot carom off the flag and into the rough.

"Just getting that close and not winning, sometimes it's a lot worse than finishing fifth," Furyk said.

Imagine how Garcia felt.

First, he squandered his six-shot lead in 12 holes. Then he got the lead back

with consecutive birdies, only to slip into a tie when he went for the pin on the peninsula-green at the par-3 17th, went into the water and made bogey.

He three-putting from 45 feet on the first extra hole, missing a 6-footer for par.

"Unfortunately, the putts just weren't too good," Garcia said. "The second putt, I just didn't commit to it."

Even Singh tried to give this one away.

After four straight birdies at the turn to take a two-shot lead, he flubbed a chip behind the par-5 15th, turning birdie into bogey, and needed more help from Garcia to get into a playoff. The 25-year-old Spaniard deliv-

ered with his bogey on the 17th by going at the flag with a 7-iron.

"It was the perfect club, I just didn't hit a good shot," Garcia said. "I couldn't get the job done."

Singh likely won't earn enough points to replace Tiger Woods at No. 1 in the world, although he'll get that chance next week in the Byron Nelson Championship.

Nothing went right for Woods all week, even when he was finished.

After an eagle on the 15th and closing with a birdie, PGA Tour rules officials determined that he should not have moved a fence out of his way on the 10th hole after he pushed his drive to the right. It was damaged when the gallery joined in

to help, and Woods received a two-shot penalty.

That turned his 69 into a 71 — leaving him in a tie for 11th — and he left the scoring trailer without comment.

Masters runner-up Chris DiMarco closed with a 66 to finish fourth, his third consecutive finish in the top five. Phil Mickelson was 9 under through 15 holes until dropping three shots over the final two holes for a 66 to tie for seventh.

No one expected the winner to be in doubt, with Garcia solidly in control of his game through three rounds. But after he missed a slippery 10-foot birdie putt on the first hole, he lipped out a 30-inch tap-in and made

bogey.

Garcia missed from 8 feet on the next hole, then 10-footers on the fourth and fifth holes.

"I played awesome the first eight holes, and it was tough to hit it to 10 feet every time and you can't make a putt," he said. "And it cost me."

The only thing holding him together was his swing, and it wasn't long before that fell apart.

He drove so far left into the trees on No. 9 he could only punch out to the rough, and then he was headed for more trees until his third shot struck a fan and landed short. But he chipped poorly to 40 feet and made double bogey.

His six-shot lead was down to two at the turn.

Garcia again pulled his tee shot into the trees on the par-5 10th and had to settle for par, and Singh caught him for the first time with a 4-foot birdie on the 11th.

"He didn't shoot a high number or anything," Singh said. "He didn't shoot 5 or 6 over to lose it. We won it. He's going to feel it a little bit, but not as bad as what Greg did losing the Masters."

When Garcia made bogey from the bunker on the par-3 13th, he was two shots behind — an eight-shot swing in 13 holes.

Even when momentum shifted back to Garcia, he let it get away. Tied for the lead, he hit his approach to 6 feet on the 15th for a great look at eagle, but missed the putt.

**MAVS**

Continued from Page 1A

ing since the media began determining the award winner in 1980-81.

Nash invited all of his Phoenix Suns teammates up to the podium when he accepted the award.

The gesture was befitting of a player who earned the trophy by getting everybody involved with an NBA-leading 11.5 assists, and making his team a 62-game winner — 33 more victories than the previous season.

"I really just want to share this with my teammates," Nash said. "This has been an incredible year for me and for our team. For me to come to a new situation and be accepted the way I've been by these guys, and for us to be able to form the bond that we have, it's been special."

At least a dozen representatives of Canadian newspapers and television stations converged on Phoenix for the remarkable story of the player who grew up in Victoria, British

Columbia, to become an NBA MVP, not by some kind of awesome athletic ability, but by his pure basketball skills of passing, ball-handling and shooting.

Phoenix made Nash its first-round draft pick, the No. 15 overall, in 1996. But the Suns already had two point guards — Kevin Johnson and Jason Kidd. So after two years, Nash asked for a trade, and was sent to Dallas. For six years, he directed the Mavericks and blossomed into a star.

But after last season,

Nash became a free agent, and the Suns sent an entourage of team officials, coaches and owners in a private jet to persuade him to return to Phoenix. He did, agreeing to a five-year, \$65 million contract, far more than Mavericks owner Mark Cuban was willing to pay.

Nash left two of his closest friends, Dirk Nowitzki and Michael Finley, behind in Dallas. Since then, Nash has had a dizzying few months that included the 62-win season, the MVP award and the birth six months ago

of twin daughters.

He wasn't sure how he'd feel about playing Dallas, but now he's glad the matchup materialized.

"Dirk and Mike are two of my best friends in the world," Nash said. "To play with them for six years, and now to face them in the playoffs — it's crazy that it happened so fast, but I think it's great."

This is a vastly different Dallas team than in previous years, adding depth, scoring and, yes, some defense. Jason Terry

scored 31 points in Dallas' Game 7 rout of Houston on Saturday night, and could take advantage of Nash defensively.

After winning Game 7, the Mavericks had only Sunday to prepare for the Suns. Phoenix hasn't played since wrapping up a four-game sweep of Memphis on May 1.

"We hope that we're ready to go full of energy and we hope they're a little tired," Suns coach Mike D'Antoni said, "but they hope we're rusty and they hope they carry their emotions over."

**AL**

Continued from Page 1B

Brown allowed five hits, struck out four and walked one, and wasn't all that impressed with his performance.

"The biggest difference is I got a jam shot to the third baseman instead of a groundball in the hole," he said.

Alex Rodriguez gave the Yankees the lead with a solo homer, and slumping Hideki Matsui had a run-scoring single off Rich Harden (2-2). Tino Martinez added a three-run homer in the eighth off Kiko Calero, and Jorge Posada followed with a solo shot into the upper deck — New York's first back-to-back homers this season.

The Yankees, who won their 900th game under Torre, took two of three from the A's, their first series win since a two-game sweep in Toronto on April 20-21 and the first at home since the opening series against Boston.

"The 900th should have come last month," Torre said.

New York improved to 13-19, two games better than last-place Tampa Bay in the AL East. The Yankees won consecutive games for the first time since April 24 against Texas and April 26 against Los Angeles.

**Red Sox 6, Mariners 3**

At Boston, Richie Sexson hit a wind-blown grand slam off Cla Meredith, who was making his major league debut, to end Seattle's seven-game losing streak.

Ryan Franklin (2-4) snapped his four-game losing streak, allowing two runs on six hits. Eddie Guardado pitched the ninth for his eighth save.

John Halama (1-1) was the loser.

In the opener, Jeremi Gonzalez (1-0) won for the first time since August 2003, pitching 5 2-3 strong innings. Joel Pineiro (2-3) took the loss.

**White Sox 5, Blue Jays 4**

At Toronto, Mark Buehrle (5-1) won his fourth straight decision, leading Chicago to its eighth straight victory.

The White Sox improved baseball's top record to 24-7, matching the 1919 club for the best start in franchise history. They have led in all 31 games this season, a major league record.

Gustavo Chacin (4-2) was the loser. The Blue Jays have lost four straight.

**Rangers 7, Indians 2**

At Arlington, Texas, Kenny Rogers extended his shutout streak to 21 innings with seven innings of six-hit ball for the Rangers.

Rogers (3-2) struck out four and walked four in winning his third straight start, stretching the longest shutout streak by a Rangers starter since Rogers' club-record 39 consecutive scoreless innings in 1995.

Michael Young hit a two-run homer in the first off Jake Westbrook (1-6).

**Royals 10, Orioles 8**

At Baltimore, Kansas City blew a seven-run lead, then scored the tiebreaking run on Steve Kline's eighth-inning balk.

Angel Berroa, Matt

Stairs and Mike Sweeney homered to help the Royals snap a five-game skid. Kansas City had lost 14 of 16 and 17 of 20.

Ambiorix Burgos (1-1) was the winner, and Todd Williams (3-2) took the loss.

**Twins 9, Devil Rays 6**

At St. Petersburg, Fla., Justin Morneau had his second career four-hit game and drove in three runs for Minnesota.

Morneau went 4-for-4 and came within a homer of the cycle. He is 23-for-

51 (.451) with six homers and 19 RBIs in 13 games since being activated from the disabled list.

Twins starter Joe Mays (2-1) gave up five runs and seven hits in 6 1-3 innings.

Doug Waechter (1-2) was the loser.

**Tigers 10, Angels 1**

At Anaheim, Calif., Mike Maroth pitched three-hit ball over eight innings, Ivan Rodriguez triggered a seven-run third with a three-run triple and Brandon Inge

homered, leading Detroit past Los Angeles.

Maroth (3-2) breezed to the victory after his teammates staked him to an 8-0 lead in the first three innings. The Tigers beat the defending AL West champs for the second straight time after losing 21 of the previous 25 meetings.

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**LITKE**

Continued from Page 1B

North America, the Pacers still never would have made it back to the scene of the crime for the playoffs.

Instead, that's the No. 1 story line as Detroit and Indiana square off at The Palace of Auburn Hills almost six months after a basketball and Stern's frontier justice was supposed to cost the Pacers any chance.

"I think it's in everyone's minds, with guys going into the stands and guys fighting on the floor," Antonio McDyess of the Pistons said.

"I just hope that the players and fans realize that's over, let's learn from it and move on," added Larry Brown, his coach. "But the way people are, I don't think that's going to be the case. People are going to show that ugly stuff on TV."

And therein lies Stern's genuine concern.

The debacle in Athens aside, several rule changes and stylistic improvements in recent

years have definitely made the product more appealing this season. There is more movement and less standing around. There are still plenty of highlight-reel dunks, but more and more, they're the exclamation point on incisive passes or clever steals. In that sense, the Pistons were already ahead of the curve.

Under Brown's tutelage, they've learned to share the ball, spread the floor, knock down mid-range jumpers and play tough, disciplined defense. Above all, they've learned to play together. They made that point against the Lakers in last year's finals and have only improved since.

The Pacers aren't quite there yet, in part because of the lengthy suspen-

sions handed to Jermaine O'Neal and Stephen Jackson and because Ron Artest remains in Stern's doghouse. But Indiana has regrouped admirably and rallied around Reggie Miller, trying to make his farewell tour half as memorable as the rest of his career.

The revenge factor is what will draw all the extra eyeballs into the best-of-seven series. But anybody who sticks around and remembers that the guys with whistles will be lucky just to control the game — let alone script it — might be rewarded with some very entertaining basketball.

Jim Litke is a national sports columnist for The Associated Press. Write to him at [jlitke@ap.org](mailto:jlitke@ap.org)

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**THE CITY** of Big Spring is accepting applications for Police Officer through Wednesday May 18, 2005. Testing will be at the Police Training Center on 307 E. 4th. Applications may be obtained at City Hall at 310 Nolan, Big Spring, TX 79720 (432)264-2346 or from website: [www.ci.big-spring.tx.us](http://www.ci.big-spring.tx.us) The City of Big Spring is EOE.

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**FOR RENT** large 1 bedroom, 1503 Settles. All bills paid. \$400. month, \$150. deposit. Call (432)264-6611.

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Real Estate for Sale



Beautiful Brick home like new. 3 Bedroom, 2 bath, large living, dining, kitchen area. Large bathrooms, walk-in closets, Vaulted ceilings, custom built cabinets throughout, 2 car garage. Beautiful Landscaping. Joining Golf Course. **4029 Vicky.** Call (432)263-2682.

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**FOR LEASE OR SALE:** Commercial Building, 7000 sq. ft. warehouse. Approx. 600 ft. office space. 4.81 acres located on North Lamesa Highway. Good for any type Oilfield Service, Trucking, Storage or other use. Will be available July 1st. Call (432)523-2730.

**I'M MAD... AT BANKS WHO DON'T GIVE HOUSE LOANS BECAUSE OF BAD CREDIT, PROBLEMS OR NEW EMPLOYMENT. I DO, CALL L.D. KIRK, HOMEMLAND MORTGAGES, (254)947-4475. www.homeland46.com**

**NO DOWN** Payment on 2 thru 6 Bedroom Brick Homes. Owner Financing. Bad Credit OK. We can adjust your monthly payments to fit your Budget. Call Maria (432)263-3461.

**OWNER-AGENT.** 4 Bedroom, 3 bath in Coronado Hills. Located on quiet cul-de-sac. 2 Living areas, auto sprinkler system. Call Coldwell Banker Ellen Phillips Realtors (432)267-3613.

Vehicles

'04 Nissan Xterra \$3000 OFF MSRP Bob Brock Ford 500 W. 4th 267-7424

**1989 OLDSMOBILE** Cutlass Supreme. \$900.00 OBO. Call (432)264-0688.

**1999 LINCOLN** Towncar, 78,000 miles. Call (432)267-5317 after 5:30 p.m.

**2001 JEEP** Grand Cherokee Laredo 4x4, 6 Cyl., Excellent Condition. Has trailer hitch. \$12,500.00. Call (432)267-1522.

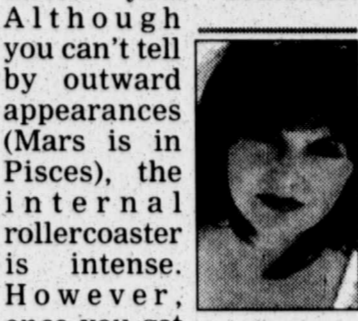
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Legals

**NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS OF PROPOSED TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (TxDOT) CONTRACTS** Sealed proposals for contracts listed below will be received by TXDOT until the date(s) shown below, and then publicly read. CONSTRUCTION/ MAINTENANCE/BUILDING FACILITIES CONTRACT(S) Dist/Div: Abilene Contract 6115-91-001 for MISCELLANEOUS CULVERT WORK in HOWARD County, etc will be opened on June 14, 2005 at 2:00 pm at the District Office for an estimate of \$282, 063.43.

Plans and specifications are available for inspection, along with bidding proposals, and applications for the TxDOT Prequalified Contractor's list, at the applicable State and/ or Dist/Div Offices listed below. If applicable, bidders must submit prequalification information to TxDOT at least 10 days prior to the bid date to be eligible to bid on a project. Prequalification materials may be requested from the State Office listed below. Plans for the above contract(s) are available from TxDOT's website at www.dot.state.tx.us and from reproduction companies at the expense of the contractor. NPO: 16480 State Office Constr./ Maint. Division 200 E. Riverside Dr. Austin, Texas 78704 Phone: 512-416-2540 Dist/ Div Office(s) Abilene District Engineer 4250 N. Clack Abilene, Texas 79604-0150 Phone: 325-676-6800

**BY HOLIDAY MATHIS** Mars makes a few jagged connections over the next three days, so fasten your seatbelts. Although you can't tell by outward appearances (Mars is in Pisces), the internal rollercoaster is intense. However, once you get control of your inner voice, the outside world falls right in line with what you believe.



HOLIDAY MATHIS

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19). A recent success in your professional life gives you the confidence to create the same dynamic in your personal life. Your family is behind you, so go forward knowing you have full support.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20). You're caught in the middle of two warring factions. One person is clearly right, and it will require considerable tact to smooth out the situation. By this evening, you'll want to be alone with your thoughts.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21). Your personal and professional lives appear to be sharing a teeter-totter with your love life on top at the moment. Embrace the dichotomy in your personality. That's what keeps your partner interested.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 22). You're an excellent artist. Somehow the abstract comes together coherently in your mind.

Tomorrow's Horoscope

Consider turning your side projects into a full-time occupation for creative and financial satisfaction.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22). Rise, shine and receive what is due to you. Although there are plenty of opportunities, there are absolutely no free lunches, so choose carefully. Teamwork is lucky, so long as you're with the right team.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll get carried away with grandiose dreams, and who is to say that they won't come true? Thinking big takes guts! Believe in your vision, even if it doesn't make any sense right now.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You'll get wind of some high drama — don't fall for the hype. You can use today's events as fodder for your art. Don't open the door for guidance or criticism — you don't need it.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Revisiting and reviving projects is your specialty. Brush off an old idea, polish it up and call it to the attention of someone who counts. Just be frank. Direct questions lead to direct answers.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Allow yourself to feel any way you do for an hour. After that, it's time to take control — you can feel differently if you change your thinking. No one expects you to be all powerful, but they do look to you for leadership.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). An attitude adjustment is in order.

Without it, not only your work, but also an important relationship may suffer. Simply changing the statement "I have to" into "I get to" is a major improvement.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The orchestration of people and resources comes together to help you create something truly marvelous — like a full life that runs smoothly. Singles: Low-key dates move a relationship along the fastest.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20). A relationship that started out riveting is now holding you back. Breaking ties with this person will free you to make a career advancement that is long overdue. Singles: This newfound freedom is intoxicating!

**ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS:** "I'm a female Virgo born Aug. 25, 1983. Within the last week, I have had four dreams containing ladders. In my dreams, I'm figuring out a way to either get up or get down them, and I'm even fixing them so they can be used. I'm often scared of the height and stability of the ladders. They always look wobbly and broken, or there is something wrong with them. Should I pay attention to this dream?"

If you pay attention to your dreams, they will tell you what your subconscious has been working on while you were consciously busy trying to control and understand the world. Often our subconscious picks up the pieces we missed or gives the proper importance to

things we may be taking too lightly or too seriously. As far as your ladders, Virgo, you are in a cycle of transition and you are associating with someone you perceive to be at a level you desire to attain, either socially or professionally. The relationship is somewhat dysfunctional, and you're wondering if this relationship can actually help you advance, or if it's too damaged. I believe you don't even need this person — or the rickety old ladder! Before you go to sleep, imagine yourself flying up!

**CELEBRITY PROFILES:** Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson identifies with his sign so much that one of his nicknames is "The Brahma Bull." His role in "Be Cool" showed audiences that he's not just the tough guy — he's got comic timing and range beyond the roles in which people have been accustomed to seeing him. The moon in Pisces is a favorable aspect for serious actors and Mars in Leo shows a desire and natural gift for being the entertainment.

If you would like to write to Holiday Mathis, please go to www.creators.com and click on "Write the Author" on the Holiday Mathis page, or you may send her a postcard in the mail. To find out more about Holiday Mathis and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com. © 2005 CREATORS SYNDICATE, INC.

Annie's Mailbox: Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: I am a 15-year-old teenager in Maine and, like everybody else who writes in, I have a problem. I am attracted to the same sex. This is not the problem. The problem is that nobody will accept it. I know most people would say I am too young to know what I want. But parents should know that in today's world, young teens are discovering what they want and becoming sexually active earlier.

Well, the thing is, I have a girlfriend, and we do have sex. Obviously, I like it, and so does she. "Elizabeth" is a year younger. I can't talk to



KATHY MITCHELL MARCY SUGAR

my parents about this. My father is one of those people who believes any relationship outside your own race is wrong, let alone with someone of the same gender. My stepmother thinks if she doesn't hear about it, it isn't happening. Elizabeth's mother is homophobic and shuts her daughter out.

How should we tell them? Should we not tell? This relationship has been going on for about a year. Please answer. Everyone else I ask just changes the subject. — Confused

Dear Confused: We don't doubt your sexual orientation, and you seem comfortable with it, but we do question your blithe acceptance of a sexual relationship at 15. We are quite aware that many teenagers are sexually active, but whether gay or straight, sex at that age can create dependence and foster emotional confusion. It is especially unfair to Elizabeth, who is younger than you.

Since it is difficult for you to discuss this with your parents, here are two resources that will help you sort things out: The National Youth Advocacy Coalition Youth Talkline at 1-800-96YOUTH (1-800-969-6884) (nyayouth.org), and the chat rooms at Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays at pflag.org.

Dear Annie: We are snowbirds in Florida, living in a large condo complex. We teamed up with another couple to give an expensive joint party. We socialize in different circles — they have their group of friends, and we have ours — but it allowed us to split the costs for the room.

The other couple had 40 guests, and we had 20. They put everything on their credit card, and then presented us with a bill for half the total cost. Our share came out to \$2,250. We were shocked. We thought our bill would be one-third of the cost, since we provided one-third of the guests.

To keep peace and goodwill, we paid the bill without comment. Should we have protested? — Party Pooped in Florida

Dear Florida: If your neighbors were under the impression that you were splitting all costs down the middle, then they were right to bill you for half. If you expected to pay only for the percentage of guests you invited, you needed to say so beforehand, and we're guessing that didn't happen. Since they are neighbors and you want to stay on good terms, it was best to pay up without comment. However, next time, agree on the particulars first.

Dear Annie: My 9-year-old daughter is very slender. She eats well and gets plenty of exercise. The problem is that my friends and family members will often make it a point to comment on how thin she is. Wouldn't this be the equivalent of me commenting on how chubby their kids are?

I am sure these people do not believe they are being rude, but I would like your advice on how best to respond to such thoughtless comments. — Annoyed Mom

Dear Mom: Give them a big smile and say, "Isn't it great that she's so healthy?"

Dear Annie: Our neighbors have a cat that is let out every morning to roam the neighborhood and relieve himself. Unfortunately, he has chosen our yard as his favorite toilet bowl. We have endured his visits, but with the weather warming, we are spending more time in our yard and have repeatedly stepped in these "gifts."

Not only is it nasty and aggravating, but it is against the rules of the neighborhood association to allow any pets, dogs or cats, to go unleashed. We asked these neighbors, as nicely as possible, if they could keep "Precious" out of our yard. They said they would try, but nothing changed. They say it's a cat's nature to roam.

We are not animal haters, but we believe people should be responsible for their pets and not let them infringe on the rights of others. Any suggestions? — Look What the Cat Dragged In

Dear Look: You've tried nice, now try something else. The neighbors are in violation of the association rules, and it's time to report this, assuming those rules are enforceable. People who let their cats roam are endangering them and creating ill will. Don't feel guilty for saying so.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, long-time editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to Annie's Mailbox, P.O. Box 118190, Chicago, IL 60611. To find out more about Annie's Mailbox, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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