



VA Hospital pays homage to stricken on World AIDS Day

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

AIDS is a disease that has killed millions of people across the globe, but behind those staggering statistics are names such as Nancy and Bobby, housewives, brothers, parents and other loved ones.

It was the faces behind the statistics that was the focus of West Texas VA Health Care System's World AIDS Day ceremony this morning.

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) will kill 25 million people this year in Africa alone, along with millions of others across the globe.

And to support efforts for a cure to the disease,

"It's said that God helps those who helps themselves ... but I also believe that God helps those who cannot help themselves."

—Dan Shadix,
ceremony speaker

officials organized World AIDS Day in the hopes of raising awareness across the globe.

"Why are we here? Simply stated, we're here to continue the fight against AIDS," said Dan Shadix, featured speaker

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Larry Moore, a recreational therapy assistant at the Big Spring VA Medical Center, places a flower on the AIDS Memorial Tree outside the hospital as part of its World AIDS Day ceremony this morning.

Herald photo/Steve Reagan

No bill

Grand jury decides not to indict in woman's death

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

A Howard County grand jury failed to return an indictment in the case of 73-year-old Norma Faye Morrow, who is believed to have died of morphine toxicity.

According to District Attorney Hardy Wilkerson, the grand jury reviewed the circumstances of the woman's May 20 death, and subsequent exhumation from its resting place in early June.

"The grand jury reviewed the administra-

See JURY, Page 3A

Carbon Black plant release messy but safe, manager says

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

A Tuesday morning release at the Sid Richardson Carbon Black plant located east of Big Spring is being attributed to a "process upset," leaving at least two area residents with a messy problem.

Local resident Jean Cooper said her dog, who stays outside

at her home on E. Midway Road, had a different "look" Tuesday morning.

"You couldn't tell what color he really was. He was just black," said Cooper, who along with at least one neighbor seemed to be on the receiving end of the release. "The grass was also black, and you can't walk across the yard without your shoes and pants leg

becoming a total mess."

Coopers said the mess — made up of carbon black material released from the local plant Tuesday morning — hasn't caused any damage at her residence, but has certainly been an annoyance.

"It's been more of an annoyance than anything else," said Cooper. "I went outside yesterday to pick up pecans from my

yard and you wouldn't believe the mess that stuff made. I've lived on this road for the past 45 years, constantly smelling Cosden (currently ALON USA Big Spring Refinery), but I've never seen anything like this."

According to Steve Honea, plant manager for Sid Richardson's Big Spring location, the reason Cooper has never seen this kind of release

before is simple.

"This is the first time the Big Spring plant has had a release," said Honea. "We've never had this problem before, so this is really all new to us."

Honea said the material released — which included hydrogen sulfide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen

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20th bazaar

Canterbury set for annual Christmas arts, crafts sale

By MARSHA STURDIVANT
Features Editor

The annual Canterbury Christmas Bazaar Saturday promises to have a large assortment of items for Christmas gifts, as well as Christmas goodies for shoppers.

"We've confirmed more than 30 vendors for the bazaar, which is great. And we have five Canterbury residents who will also have booths, which we've not had in the past few years," said Prissy Stanley, building manager and occupant specialist as well as coordinator of the bazaar.

The Canterbury Bazaar, which has been an annual holiday tradition for more than 20 years, originally started

AT A GLANCE

What: Canterbury Christmas Bazaar.

Where: 1700 Lancaster.

When: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday.

as way for the residents who knitted or crocheted to sell their items to other residents, Stanley said.

But eventually the event was opened to the public, and now most of the vendors offering items for sale are from the community.

"We've got one vendor who will be offering doggie harnesses and dog clothes, and another will be selling jewelry and another stoneware," she

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Prissy Stanley, building manager and occupant specialist for Canterbury, prepares the vendor's place names for booths at the Canterbury Bazaar, set for 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. Saturday in the public rooms of Canterbury, 1700 Lancaster. The event, featuring more than 30 vendors, is free and open to the public.

Herald photo/Marsha Sturdivant

Lawmaker seeks review of death penalty case

By ABE LEVY
Associated Press Writer

SAN ANTONIO — A Texas lawmaker is calling for a state body to review a 20-year-old death-penalty case with hopes that it will spark judicial reforms aimed at reducing wrongful executions.

Houston senator Rodney Ellis wants the nine-member Criminal Justice Advisory Council to study the capital murder trial of Ruben Cantu, a San Antonio man who was executed in 1993 for a fatal shooting during an attempted robbery nine years earlier.

The lone witness whose testimony implicated Cantu has recently recanted in a *Houston Chronicle* article. An incarcerated co-defendant also exonerated him, and

"The reality that Texas may have executed an innocent man should shock us all into action."

—Sen. Rodney Ellis

the *Chronicle* story cited other evidence casting doubt on the case.

"The reality that Texas may have executed an innocent man should shock us all into action," Ellis, a council member, said in a prepared statement Wednesday. "If the facts we now have are accurate, this was a catastrophic failure of the entire Texas criminal justice system and demands investigation."

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LUMINARIA CEREMONY

Howard College will present its Christmas gift to the community at 6 p.m. today.

That's when college officials will hold their annual luminaria lighting ceremony in the courtyard in front of the administration building located just off Birdwell Lane.

Santa Claus will be present for the occasion, a choral group will offer a selection of Christmas songs and refreshments will be served during the event, said Shirley Lee, a spokesperson for the college.

Howard College has lined the campus with luminarias each Christmas season for more than 25 years, Lee said.

RIBBON CUTTING

There will be a ribbon cutting and open house today at Brushworks, 2106 Scurry, beginning at 4:30 p.m. and extending to 6 p.m. The public is invited.

This is Brushworks' 10-year anniversary.

LIGHTING OF THE LIGHTS

Friday, the VA Medical Center in Big Spring will stage its annual Lighting of the Lights, beginning at 6 p.m.

Christmas carols will be led by hospital residents and Santa will visit with children from the community.

Refreshments will be served.

24 SHOPPING DAYS LEFT

I UNDERSTAND THE GOLD PART, BUT WHAT'S A BABY GOING TO DO WITH FRANKINCENSE AND MYRRH?



Obituaries

Carl E. Lovell

Carl E. Lovell, 91, of DeQueen Ark., died Tuesday, Nov. 29, 2005, at his home. Funeral services are 2 p.m., today, Dec. 1, 2005, in the DeQueen Church of Christ with the Rev. Tommy Mounts and Alonzo Pettigrew officiating. Burial will follow in the Millwee Cemetery in Horatio, Ark.

He was born July 29, 1914, in the Walnut Springs Community in Arkansas to Forrest Melvin and Hettie Lee Wilsford Lovell. He was a member of the DeQueen Church of Christ.

He was preceded in death by his parents, eight brothers, Andrew of San Antonio, Earnest, Forrest, Cecil, Dewitt and Calvin, all of DeQueen Ark., Melvin of Ashdown, Ark., and Oma of Atlanta, Ga.; one sister, Mae Dunham of Texarkana; a grandson, Jonathan Pettigrew of Murfreesboro, Ark.; and a daughter-in-law, Patricia Owens Lovell of Big Spring.

He is survived by his wife of 69 years, Ferrell Butler Lovell of DeQueen Ark.; two sons and a daughter-in-law, Dwayne Lovell of Big Spring and Leonard and Sharon Lovell of Ashdown, Ark.; three daughters and two sons-in-law, Edwinia and Don McCoy of DeQueen, Ark., Carletta and Robbie Pettigrew of Murfreesboro, Ark., and Judy Johnson of DeQueen, Ark.; one sister, Eunice Nix of Fort Worth; 13 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; a number of nieces and nephews; and a host of friends.

Arrangements are under the direction of Wilkerson Funeral Home. Register on-line at www.wilkersonfuneralhomes.com.

Support groups

FRIDAY

• AA open discussion meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at 605 Settles. Open Big Book study meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

SATURDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. Open podium/speakers meeting 615 Settles 8 p.m. until 9 p.m. Open birthday night, no smoking meeting the last Saturday of each month at 8 p.m.

SUNDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous meets from 11 a.m. to noon at 615 Settles. Open meeting 5 p.m. until 6 p.m.

MONDAY

• Encourager's Support Group meets the first and third Monday of each month. All widows and widowers are invited. For more information, call 398-5522.

TUESDAY

• The Multiple Sclerosis Support Group meets at 6 p.m. Dec. 13 in the College Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, 1005 Birdwell Lane. Call Tracey at 263-4948 for more information.

• **RIBBON CUTTING AND OPEN HOUSE AT BRUSHWORKS**, 2106 Scurry, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the business, from 4:30 p.m. until 6 p.m. today.

• **NOMINATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED FOR MAN AND WOMAN OF THE YEAR** for the Big Spring Area chamber of Commerce until Dec. 15. Contact the chamber at 263-7641 for an application.

• **SKATE AND CAKE FUND-RAISER TO BRING BRIANNA HOME** is set for 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Monday at Skateland, 2908 W. Eighth. Event is free and all donations will be used for fees associated with adoption of Brianna. For more information, call 268-9437.

• **FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS AND ADOPT A SPOT COMMITTEE MEETING** at 5:30 p.m. today in the Dora Roberts Community Center. Call 213-5444 for more information.

• **HOWARD COLLEGE LUMINARIA** at 6 p.m. today in the Administration Courtyard.

• **HOWARD COLLEGE JURIED STUDENT ART SHOW COMPETITION** today in the Howard College library.

• **LIVING CHRISTMAS TREE** dress rehearsal at 2 p.m. and performance at 8 p.m. Saturday and at 8 p.m. Sunday in the First United Methodist Church. Free tickets available at the church office, 400 Scurry.

• **GINGERBREAD HOUSE DECORATING PARTY** presented by Gale Pittman of Gale's Sweet Shoppe from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. Sunday in the Dora Roberts Community Center. Tickets are \$15 and are on sale now. Call 264-9283 for more information.

Police blotter

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

• **RUTHIE MARIE MURPHREE**, 36, of 6701 E. Midway Road, was arrested Wednesday and held for the HCSO.

• **DEVON LEE BUTLER**, 20, of 1429 E. Sixth Street, was arrested Thursday on a charge of driving while license suspended and driving under the influence by a minor.

• **THEFT** was reported in the 300 block of Owens.

• **RESISTING ARREST, SEARCH OR TRANSPORTATION** was reported in the 2200 block of Gregg Street.

• **CRIMINAL MISCHIEF** was reported in the 1200 block of Gregg Street.

Sheriff's report

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

• **PAUL MORENO JR.**, 23, was arrested Wednesday by the HCSO on a judgment for burglary of a vehicle.

• **CARLA MICHELLE PINEDA**, 20, was transferred to the county jail Wednesday by the BSPD on charges of no liability insurance and driving while license invalid.

• **RICKY LEE TATE**, 17, was transferred to the county jail Wednesday by the BSPD on charges of possession of marijuana - two ounces or less and unlawfully carrying a weapon.

• **CHARLIE JAKE TURNER**, 26, was arrested Wednesday by the HCSO on a motion to revoke probation for third-degree felony violation of a protective order.

• **THOMAS W. MURPHY**, 26, was arrested Wednesday by the HCSO on a charge of bondsman off bond for driving while intoxicated - second offense.

• **MARY HELEN ESCOVEDO**, 41, was arrested Wednesday by the HCSO on a charge of theft by check.

• **DAVID REY GONZALES JR.**, 17, was transferred to the county jail Wednesday by the BSPD on a charge of failure to identify - giving false information.

Fire/EMS

The Big Spring Fire Department/Emergency Medical Service reported the following activity:

• **MEDICAL** was reported in the 3600 block of Connally. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL** was reported in the 400 block of Goliad. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **GRASS FIRE** was reported in the 7000 block of 11th Place.

• **HANGAR 25 AIR MUSEUM IS COLLECTING RECIPES** to be included in a 2006 cookbook which will display memories of Big Spring over the years. Share your memories and your recipes. Contact the Hangar at 264-1999 for recipe forms.

• **BENEFIT FOR GARY DANIELS** is set for Dec. 10 beginning at noon at the Ice House, 1612 E. Third St. Daniels has been diagnosed with cancer and proceeds are to help with medical expenses. The benefit features barbecue plates for \$6, live music, a chance to win a 12-gauge pump shotgun, an auction and a 50/50 drawing. For more information, call Danya James at 816-6141 or Tom Cox at 393-5888.

• **NORTHSIDE COMMUNITY CENTER RIBBON CUTTING** at 2 p.m. Dec. 13 at 108 N.E. Eighth St. to celebrate the the new building project.

• **THE BIG SPRING SYMPHONY PRESENTS 'A SYMPHONIC CHRISTMAS'** at 8 p.m. Dec. 17 in the Municipal Auditorium. Tickets available at the *Big Spring Herald* or call 264-7223.

• **STAR TEK CANNED FOOD DRIVE** to benefit the Salvation Army from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m. Dec. 17. Bring two cans of food and get a free photo with Santa Claus. For more information, contact Anna Osborne at 264-2727.

• **FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE** needs a cow, sheep, goats and donkeys on loan for the Drive-Thru Nativity. Volunteers are needed. Call Vicki at 263-0203 or 816-9039.

• **HOME HOSPICE HAS COOKBOOKS** with nearly 500 recipes on sale for \$18 with proceeds to benefit Hospice House. Recipes submitted by volunteers, coordinators and owners of Home Hospice. Call Sherry Hodnett at 264-7599 for more information.

Bulletin board

If you have items for the Bulletin board, contact the Herald news room at 263-7331 or email editor@bigspringherald.com

TODAY

• West Texas Pachyderms meet at noon at the Big Spring Country Club in a combination November-December meeting. For more information, call 394-4251.

• Kiwanis Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane. Call 267-6479.

• Howard College 29th annual Luminaria at 6 p.m. in the Administration courtyard.

• Genealogy Society of Big Spring meets at 7 p.m. in the Howard County Library, 500 S. Main.

• Big Spring Masonic Lodge No. 1340 meets at 7:30 p.m. at 2101 Lancaster.

FRIDAY

• Signal Mountain Quilting Guild meets from 9 a.m. until about 3 p.m. at St. Mary's Episcopal Church. Call 267-1037 or 267-7281 for more information.

• AMBUCS meet at noon in La Posada Restaurant.

• Greater Big Spring Rotary meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.

• VA Medical Center Lighting of the Lights at 6 p.m., featuring carols, Santa Claus for the children and refreshments.

• Spring City Senior Citizens country and western dance from 7:30 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. featuring Monroe Casey and the Prowlers. All area seniors are invited.

SATURDAY

• Canterbury Christmas Bazaar from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

• Living Christmas Tree dress rehearsal at 2 p.m. and performance at 8 p.m. in the First United Methodist Church. Free tickets available at the church office, 400 Scurry.

• Big Spring Herald 20th annual Lighted Christmas Parade begins 5:30 p.m.

• Big Spring Cruisers cruise Gregg Street and at the Sonic Drive-In beginning at 6:30 p.m.

• Eagles Lodge Dance at 8:30 p.m. at 703 W. Third.

• Big Spring Squares. Call 263-6305 for more information.

SUNDAY

• Gingerbread House Decorating Party presented by Gale Pittman of Gale's Sweet Shoppe from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. in the Dora Roberts Community Center. Tickets are \$15 and are on sale now. Call 264-9283 for more information.

• Living Christmas Tree at 8 p.m. in the First United Methodist Church. Free tickets available at the church office, 400 Scurry.

MONDAY

• Keep Big Spring Beautiful meets at 11:30 at the Spanish Inn Restaurant.

Weather

Tonight—Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 30s. South winds around 10 mph.

Friday—Mostly sunny. Warmer. Highs in the upper 70s. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph.

Friday night—Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 40s. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph decreasing to 10 to 15 mph after midnight.

Saturday—Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 70s. Southwest winds 10 to 20 mph.

Saturday night—Partly cloudy. Colder. Lows in the mid 30s.

Sunday—Partly cloudy. Cooler. Highs in the lower 50s.

Sunday night—Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 30s.

Monday—Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 50s.

Monday night—Mostly clear. Lows around 30.

Tuesday—Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 50s.

Tuesday night—Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 20s.

Wednesday—Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s.

Lottery

Results of the Lotto Texas drawing Wednesday night: Winning numbers drawn: 12-14-16-19-27. Bonus Ball: 37.

Number matching five of five, plus Bonus Ball: 0. Estimated jackpot for Saturday night drawing: \$26 million.

The winning Cash Five numbers drawn Wednesday by the Texas Lottery: 8-17-19-32-33

Got Your Flu Shot?

If you are a child, a parent, a grandparent, a healthcare worker, a teacher, a student, a pregnant woman, a childcare provider, a Tinker, a soldier, a sailor...

...be sure to get your shot!

Flu Shots available at:
Leonard's RX Pharmacy
Weekdays From:
10:00 am - 12:00 pm
2:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Canterbury Arts & Crafts Bazaar



Saturday, December 3
9 am to 1 pm
1700 Lancaster

Home decor, collectibles, decorations, gift baskets, crosses, wreaths, jewelry, wood products, homemade craft items, baked goods and much more.

BIG SPRING HERALD

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REVIEW

Continued from Page 1A

The council was created in June by Gov. Rick Perry and charged with reviewing the state's court system and recommending reforms to the Legislature by year's end.

Kathy Walt, the governor's spokeswoman, said Perry won't comment until after seeing the results of an investigation into the case by Bexar County District Attorney Susan Reed. Phone calls to Reed's office were not immediately returned.

"It's too early to say whether those are valid

claims 20 years after the fact," Walt said.

She added that other private efforts are under way to review individual claims of wrongful execution like the Cantu case and that the council's charge is to improve public confidence in the overall judicial system, including the use of new forensic technologies.

The case's lone witness, Juan Moreno, appeared Wednesday with his wife at his attorney's office to denounce the death penalty and stress how police investigators made him so afraid he was forced to blame Cantu.

"I was under a lot of pres-

sure and I wanted to get out from under the whole court process," said Moreno, through a Spanish-language interpreter. "There are people who aren't responsible for crimes who are put to death."

Moreno met with Cantu's mother Tuesday and expressed sympathy for her son, who maintained his innocence and was 17 in 1984 when he was charged with capital murder.

It was a typical case of a homicide suspect not getting adequate defense because of his minority status and low-income background, said Moreno's pro-bono attorney, Gerry Goldstein.

AIDS

Continued from Page 1A

at today's ceremony. "We're here to continue the fight against this pandemic which has encompassed the globe ... It is one of the biggest medical, social and economic challenges we face today."

Shadix said estimates state that five people will die each minute from the disease, while between 35 million and 42 million people will become infected with HIV, the AIDS virus.

Seventy percent of those newly infected patients will come from developing countries in the Third World, most of them teenagers and young adults, Shadix added.

Those who become infected

become "social, physical and spiritual untouchables," Shadix said, which only increases the urgency of efforts against the disease.

"We live in a mighty, needy world," he said. "It's said that God helps those who help themselves ... but I also believe that God helps those who cannot help themselves."

After Shadix's address, participants in the ceremony were encouraged to share their memories of loved ones who had succumbed to the disease.

Afterward, red ribbons were tied to the branches of the AIDS memorial tree outside the VA Medical Center. The tree was planted several years ago in memory of VAMC patients who have died from AIDS.

JURY

Continued from Page 1A

tion of medications and ultimately decided not to go forward with it," said Wilkerson. "They were looking into the conduct of a particular person and that person's administration of the medication as to whether or not criminal conduct had occurred."

An autopsy performed by Sridhar Natarajan M.D., M.S., Lubbock County chief medical examiner, showed a lethal dose of morphine in Morrow's body. The Big Spring woman was under the care of a hospice provider at the time of her death.

While the grand jury chose to no-bill in regards to the woman's death, they did issue a true-bill indictment for a pair of teens accused of making

away from the Gregg Street Subway Sandwich Shop with more than \$1,500 in cash.

Jerry Don Duffer, 18, of 5511 Midway Road, and Cory Payne, 17, of 201 Hoover in Coahoma, were both indicted Wednesday. Duffer was indicted on theft (state jail felony) and burglary of a habitation (second degree felony), while Payne was true-billed for theft (state jail felony).

The supposedly staged robbery took place during the late-night hours of Aug. 7, while Payne, who was employed by the restaurant, was closing up for the night.

"According to the witness, he (Payne) was sitting on the back door steps with the back door open," said Sgt. Tony Everett, public information officer with the Big Spring Police Department. "He stated

that a black male approached him, pointed a handgun at him and forced him to go back in the business.

"Once inside, the victim claimed he was forced to open the safe and hand over an undetermined amount of cash to the suspect, who then fled the scene."

Everett said further investigation showed the crime was actually staged by Payne and Duffer, who made away with an undisclosed amount of money — most of which has been

recovered.

Also indicted were:

- Aguinaga Juan Cervantes, 48, of 11811 North County Road 15 in Knott, driving while intoxicated - third or more offense (third-degree felony).
- Christopher Lee Fuqua, 34, of 2604 Richmond, driving while intoxicated - third or more offense (third-degree felony).
- Jose Alfredo Gomez Jr., 22, of 1204 E. 15th Street, theft (state jail felony).

- Mark Hernandez, 20, of 2600 Hunter, theft (state jail felony).
- Curtis Harold Jeffrey Jr., 22, of 351 Somerset in Abilene, possession of marijuana (state jail felony).
- Christopher Jones, 25, of 10174 County Road 3235 at Lake Thomas, debit card abuse (state jail felony) and two counts of forgery (state jail felony).
- Bobby Joe Lopez, 19, of 2805 Hali Road, theft (state jail felony).
- Katherine M. Perez, 48, of 4908 Parkway,

fraudulent use of identifying information (state jail felony).

- Becky Jean Ramirez, 44, of 2100 E. 10th Street in Odessa, forgery (state jail felony).

MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL
24th & Johnson 267-8288

Oleta Clark, 86, died Monday. Graveside services will be at 2:00 PM Friday at the Dumas Cemetery.

BAZAAR

Continued from Page 1A

Stanley said the vendors have promised to offer something for every taste and idea for Christmas gifts, including nativity scenes, Christmas ornaments, crosses, candy suckers, gift baskets, quilts, pot holders, wood-crafted items and pot holders.

"One vendor is selling yarn worms, but I'm not sure I can imagine what those look like. This is

going to be so much fun," she said.

Canterbury Cookbooks will be on sale, as well as burritos and other food and baked goods.

"One woman is bringing Tupperware baskets, which are hard to find these days," she said.

The bazaar takes place in the public area of Canterbury, 1700 Lancaster, starting at 9 a.m. and will continue until 1 p.m. or a little after.

For more information, contact Stanley at 263-1238.

RELEASE

Continued from Page 1A

oxides, acetylene and carbon black — doesn't represent a hazard to residents affected by the "process upset."

"The black material people will find is just carbon black," said Honea.

"It's not harmful, just

extremely dirty.

"We will be happy to take calls from people that have been affected by the release. We'll go out and assess the situation and see what needs to be done to correct it. If the carbon black is just on the grass, a lot of the time it can just be watered into the ground."

For more information, contact Sid Richardson Carbon Black at 263-7389.

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Also, outerwear, sweaters. Reg./orig. 18.00-70.00. SALE 8.99-41.99.



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Free 6" Plush Pal with a \$75 Gift Card

Take Home an 18" Furry Friend for Just **\$6**

BEALLS HOURS
MONDAY THRU SATURDAY 10 AM - 9 PM SUNDAY 12 PM - 6 PM
INSIDE THE BIG SPRING MALL • 263-0273

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

Bring a thermos and enjoy the parade Saturday

For 19 years now, the Christmas season in Big Spring has gotten off to its official start with the Big Spring Herald's Community Christmas Parade. And another Yuletide will get under way Saturday afternoon as the parade's 20th edition begins at 5:30.

We here at the *Big Spring Herald* take great pride in sponsoring each year's Community Christmas Parade and strive to make every procession just a little better than that which came before.

That's obviously the case for most of those who enter the parade each year, because it seems that your entries continue to get better and better. That has most certainly been the case since the parade was changed to an evening start and lighted entries encouraged.

This year's procession, set to stroll down Gregg Street at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, will have 64 registered entries following the theme "Hark the Herald Angels Sing."

Max Webb, director of the Northside Community Center, will serve as grand marshal for the event.

For a second year, the parade's entrants will be vying for not only recognition several categories, but will be competing for cash awards.

The parade route will be as follows: The procession will start at the corner of East 24th and Gregg streets, moving northward on Gregg Street, take a right on Sixth Street, go all the way up to Main, take a left on Main Street and disperse around the courthouse area.

Chilly temperatures are a given on Saturday, because even on warmer December days it tends to be cold once the sun goes down.

So dress warmly, bring a thermos of coffee or hot chocolate and head downtown in plenty of time to get a good vantage point.

We say this every year, but it's true: you don't want to miss this parade.

In fact, we'll even admit to being a little biased in this matter, but we think Big Spring's Christmas parade is the best around.

We'll see you there.

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@bigspringherald.com.
- By mail at P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721

LETTER POLICIES

- The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.
- Limit your letters to no more than 300 words.
 - Sign your letter.
 - Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street address for verification purposes.
 - We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity.
 - 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

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

Our efforts in You, Lord, can draw beneficial results.

Amen

Bush should free Aaron and Taylor

On Sept. 28, President Bush issued 14 presidential pardons — raising the total of pardons he has issued to 58, plus two sentence commutations. White House spokesman Ken Lisaius noted, "The president has now granted more at this stage in his administration than President Clinton did at this point during his."

True. But the quality of the Bush pardons is lacking. High numbers of prisoners are serving time in federal penitentiaries — more than 150,000 — and sentences for first-time nonviolent offenders can exceed a decade. Yet Bush has failed to put his faith where it is needed most.

For years now, I've been writing about Clarence Aaron, a first-time nonviolent offender who, because he facilitated two large cocaine deals between two drug dealers, was sentenced to life without parole. At age 19, Chrissy Taylor was sentenced to 19 years in prison for buying legal drugs for her boyfriend's illegal drug operation.

Bush should commute the sentences of Aaron and Taylor so that they can become productive members of society. I believe in being tough on crime. I support the death penalty and long sentences for repeat offenders and violent criminals.

That said, I have to agree with those who argue that, barring extraordinary circumstances, no nonviolent offender should serve more than five years for a first

offense. (And the extraordinary circumstance should be more serious than the fact that the defendants didn't plead guilty or provide evidence against other parties.)

There is such a thing as being smart about crime, and that means giving people who screwed up a chance to turn their lives around before they reach middle age.

Look at the September pardons — all issued to individuals who completed their sentences a decade or decades ago. Adam Wade Graham served less than one year for conspiracy to deliver 10 or more grams of LSD — he was sentenced in 1992. Larry Paul Lenius had been sentenced to 36 months in 1989 for conspiracy to distribute cocaine. Larry Lee Lopez was sentenced to three years probation in 1985 for conspiracy to import marijuana.

Margaret Love, who was the pardon attorney for President George H.W. Bush, observed: "It seems to me that the list of people who were pardoned reflects a philosophy of punishment that the federal system seems to have abandoned. These people served reasonable sentences, which gave them an opportunity to turn their lives around."

While Love is heartened by the fact that Bush now issues pardons on a regular basis, she hasn't seen Bush redress federal sentencing outrages, or make any heroic decisions: "The ones who are making it are so uniformly unremarkable that it makes you wonder what principle of selection is at work here."

In fact, you get the feeling that the Bushies have read the criti-

cisms of Bush's stinginess with the pardon and responded by issuing more pardons, but for the least urgent cases. Critics noted Bush had commuted no sentences, so Bush commuted two sentences. Editorials compared the Bush record to that of his father and President Clinton — so Dubya squeaks past the Clinton record of 56 pardons and commutations in his first five years. It's as if the administration doesn't want to be criticized for meting out too little mercy — so it throws mercy where it is least needed.

Indeed, last year, Bush pardoned a man convicted of food stamp fraud in 1994 — who had died the year before. In his 2004 State of the Union speech, Bush proposed a program to help released inmates find jobs and establish lives that work within the law. Bush noted, "America is the land of the second chance — and when the gates of prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life."

Clarence Aaron has served more than a decade for a first-time nonviolent offense — and all he has to look forward to is spending the rest of his life behind bars.

Personally, I don't think Aaron would face a future without freedom if he were white, not black.

The only person who can give Aaron a second chance is President Bush. The good news is that Aaron's petition is still pending — it has not been rejected. The bad news is that Bush has the power to grant mercy and a second chance to Aaron and others like him — but he is afraid to use it.

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What does 'standing up' mean?

When U.S. Rep. John Murtha, D-Pa., called for a withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, the White House quickly denounced him.

But this week, U.S. military officials were leaking word of their plans to withdraw around 50,000 troops from Iraq next year.

A phased withdrawal of troops has been talked about for a long time, even though it is clear the United States is not winning the war in Iraq. As Murtha, the ranking member of the House Subcommittee on Defense, pointed out, insurgent incidents have increased as the fighting has continued.

"Instead of attacks going down over time and with the addition of more troops, attacks have grown dramatically," he said. "Since the revelations at Abu Ghraib, American casualties have doubled. An annual State Department report in 2004 indicated a sharp increase in global terrorism."

But that is not the reason we are planning to withdraw troops from Iraq next year. We are withdrawing them because every member of the House and one-third of the Senate is up for re-election next November, and Republicans have made clear to President Bush there has to be some kind of troop withdrawal or they may lose control of Congress.

President Bush denies that policy in Iraq is tied to politics in America, but in the modern White House, politics and policy are inextricably linked.

Officially, Bush's policy on troop withdrawal is very simple. It is less than 10 words long. And he likes to repeat it.

June 28, 2005: "Our strategy can

be summed up this way," President Bush said in a speech. "As the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down."

Aug. 11, 2005: "As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down," the president told reporters.

And just last week, the president said once again, "As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down."

Though the White House spin does fudge (are you shocked?) at what "standing up" really means.

According to the White House, "more than 160,000 Iraqi security forces are now trained and equipped." Some, President Bush has said, are capable of operating independently, and others need our support.

So how many of those 160,000 Iraqi troops are ready to stand up without our propping them up?

Some 750 soldiers. More than two and a half years after beginning this war, we have managed to train only a tiny number of Iraqis to fight on their own.

Which is why more than 150,000 Americans are in Iraq fighting for them.

It is easy to blame the Iraqis for not standing up and fighting for their own country, and I admit I have been guilty of this in the past.

But there was a story that caught my attention the other day. It was on the front page of *The New York Times*, but even so it did not make a big splash.

It was headlined, "Lack of Armor Proves Deadly for Iraqi Army," and it said: "Even as American forces are relying more on Iraqis to fight the insurgency, the Iraqi Army is facing some of the same procurement problems that American troops have experienced in getting adequate armor and other equipment, according to interviews in Iraq with American and Iraqi military officials. But if the Americans have faced an uphill battle in getting vital gear

— their shortfalls continue to this day — then their Iraqi counterparts are confronting a Herculean task."

We all know that American forces were rushed into this war without adequate equipment for the occupation of Iraq and many have died or been horribly wounded because of inadequate body armor and inadequate vehicle armor.

But while the situation is not good for American troops, the situation for Iraqi troops is horrendous.

"Unlike the Americans, the vast majority of Iraqis have neither armored nor unarmored Humvees, and are still having to navigate the booby-trapped roads of Iraq in pickup and flatbed trucks," the story said. "The makeshift armor operation started in the spring has managed to reinforce only about three dozen vehicles...."

Three dozen vehicles! To fight a war in which there are approximately 700 insurgent attacks each week.

Yes, we are training the Iraqis to fight. But as Kalev Sepp, a retired Army Special Forces colonel and a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School who has worked on counterinsurgency strategy in Iraq, said, "Even the best training won't stop an AK-47 bullet or deflect a blast from a grenade or mine."

Even though we are spending billions and billions on this war, we are still trying to fight it on the cheap, and we are still not getting the troops the equipment they need to survive.

President Bush says we will stand down when the Iraqis stand up.

But if, when the Iraqis stand up, they get blown up, what good does that do?

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IN REMEMBRANCE



Herald photo/Marsha Sturdivant

The annual Community Service of Remembrance is set for 2 p.m. Sunday in the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Chapel, 906 Gregg St. Anyone wishing to participate and receive a glass angel ornament, as displayed by Dana Brown, right, community liaison for the funeral home, that is inscribed with a departed loved one's name and dates of birth and death should call the funeral home at 267-6331. The individual's name will be written in the Book of Remembrance and will be read aloud after the service, at which time the angel ornaments will be presented to those family members present. This is an annual event sponsored by Nalley-Pickle & Welch and is available for anyone who has experienced a loss within the past year.

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Holiday cookie exchange scheduled

By **MARSHA STURDIVANT**
Features Editor

Gale's Sweet Shoppe is sponsoring an old fashioned cookie exchange at 2 p.m. Dec. 11 at the shop, 1200 E. Fourth.

"This is something new we are trying this year. We've always heard that cookie exchanges are fun, and we'll offer refreshments, hot chocolate and tea and coffee, depending on the weather, and lots of cookies," said Gale Pittman, owner of Gale's Sweet Shoppe.

To participate in the cookie exchange, bake four dozen cookies from one favorite recipe and place them a container.

Attend the cookie exchange and receive four dozen different cookies that will replace the cookies in the container.

All recipes will be

placed into a book that will be available at the shop after it is completed.

The only restriction to the cookie exchange is that no store-bought cookies are allowed.

There is no charge to participate although reservations are needed so an accurate attendance count may be determined before the exchange.

Pittman is also offering the gingerbread house decorating event at Dora Roberts Community Center at 2 p.m. Sunday.

Thus far, more than 60 tickets have been sold for and Pittman said the event looks to be a great success.

For more information, contact Gale's Sweet Shoppe at 263-2253.

Contact Marsha Sturdivant at 263-7331 or e-mail life@bigspringherald.com.



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Herald's features holiday deadlines set

December 19 is the deadline for all submission for the Dec. 24-25 weekend edition of the *Big Spring Herald*, as well as Church News and Club News that publishes Dec. 23.

For the New Year holiday, all articles to be published in the weekend edition of the *Herald* Dec. 31-Jan. 1 are due in the newspaper office by Dec. 26.

Only for the two weeks prior to the Christmas and New Year's holidays, the deadline for all submissions for the *life!* section is changed from noon Wednesday to 5 p.m. Monday to allow for an early press run.

For more information, call 263-7331 or e-mail life@bigspringherald.com



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R-Class

Mercedes' touring vehicle is a new category of car

By MATT NAUMAN

Knight Ridder Newspapers

Mercedes-Benz now sells a dozen models to U.S. buyers. They include sedans, coupes, wagons, convertibles, roadsters and sport utilities.

None, however, is quite as surprising as the new 2006 R-Class, which went on sale in late September.

Company executives at a media introduction took great pains not to call it a minivan — or a sport utility or wagon.

"We're saying it basically creates a brand-new segment," said Ron Mueller, manager of luxury sport utility and touring vehicles for Mercedes-Benz USA. "We're calling it the sports tourer segment."

Indeed, finding a vehicle that compares with this six-seats-in-three-rows, all-wheel-drive, four-door machine is difficult. Chrysler, which along with Mercedes is part of Germany's DaimlerChrysler, offers the Pacifica, but it's much smaller and much cheaper and less powerful.

Mazda has the new Mazda5, but it's even smaller, even cheaper and even less powerful.

Some suggest Cadillac's SRX, a wagon-SUV combo that seats either five or seven, is the nearest rival to the R-Class.

Perhaps it's best to look forward instead and see a time in the near future when Audi will sell the Q7, BMW will have the V5 and Lexus will have a production version of its LF-X concept (or Toyota's FSC concept). Then it'll be easier to decide if the R-Class is an anomaly or the start of something bigger.

Did we say bigger? That's one of the words Mueller used to describe the R-Class.

"This vehicle is much bigger than it appears," he said. It's 14 inches longer than the 2006 M-Class sport utility, which itself grew six inches over the 2005 version.

Otherwise, it's 10 inches longer than Cadillac's SRX and 4 inches longer than the massive Cadillac Escalade full-size sport utility.

Mueller notes the R-Class is 203 inches long, 76 inches wide and 65 inches high.

"As soon as people look at this vehicle, they say, 'It's nice looking.' They crawl inside this vehicle, they say, 'Holy cow! Where'd all this space come from?'" he said.

"That's the whole idea of what we're trying to get across with the R-Class. It is huge. For the first time, you don't have to compromise luxury for size. You can have both for the American taste."

And although it'll be sold elsewhere, it's obvious the R-Class is made for America. It comes out of the Mercedes plant in Vance, Ala., where workers also build the M-Class. Both vehicles share platforms and V-6 and V-8 engines.

Buyers are expected to be 45 to 55 years old, with household incomes of more than \$150,000 and driving perhaps their third or fourth sport utility,

Mueller said.

In Mercedes marketing-speak, they'll either be late-forming affluent families or socialite empty-nesters. The first will have two or three children. The second will be "well-educated, emotionally rational" trend-setters and early adopters.

Either way, they'll want what the R-Class offers.

All R-Class models have six leather-covered bucket seats, wood trim, all-wheel drive, a seven-speed automatic transmission and six cup holders.

The R350, with a starting price of \$48,775, has a 268-horsepower, 3.5-liter V-6 engine, 17-inch alloy wheels, a load-leveling rear air suspension, dual zone air conditioning, Rain Sensor wipers and window curtain air bags for all three rows of seats.

The R500, which starts at \$56,275, comes with a 302-horsepower, 5.0-liter V-8, 18-inch wheels, a six-disc CD changer, burl walnut trim and the



The 2006 Mercedes R-Class

TeleAid safety-concierge system.

Most buyers, Mueller said, will opt for the premium package that includes upgraded entertainment features, a panoramic roof that gives the vehicle an airy feel, a power rear lift gate and DVD navigation.

Fuel economy is "very good," Mueller said, "for

such a big vehicle."

According to the government's www.fueleconomy.gov site, the R350 gets 16 mpg in the city and 21 mpg on the highway, while the R500 gets 13/18.

Mercedes displayed several concept versions of the R-Class over the past several years, calling it the Vision Grand Sport Tourer. The production R-

Class emerged little changed, Mueller said.

The goal was to build something for buyers who needed versatility, but wanted luxury, too.

"These are the people

who jumped on the SUV trend in the early '90s and now they're looking for something different," he said.

Critics think they've met that goal.

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Bearkats run away with all-district honors

By TROY HYDE

Sports Editor
For the second straight year, Garden City junior Alex Halfmann was voted as District 8-six-man's best player as the quarterback won Player of the Year honors recently.

The Bearkats were chosen to three other superlative spots and also landed 10 players to the first team.

Senior Cory Multer was chosen as the district's defensive MVP, while junior Jared Bradford shared offensive MVP honors with Robert Lee freshman Josh Gallegos.

Garden City head coach



HALFMANN

Ken Hoskins won Coach of the Year and Veribest sophomore Brian Scott was named Newcomer of the Year.

Halfmann and Multer were both selected to the first-team offense and defense to lead the way for the Bearkats. Multer made the teams as a kicker, a tight end and a defensive lineman, while Halfmann was the first-team quarterback and safety.

Sophomore

Bo

Eggemeyer earned a spot on the first-team as running back after a more than 1,000 yard season. Senior Dusty Walker (center) and Bradford (wide receiver) also earned spots on the offensive first-team as did junior Jason Flores as a special teams member on offense and as a cornerback on defense.

Junior Blaine Walker was chosen to the first-team defense as a lineman and he was also joined by senior linebacker Cade Doss and junior utility Colton Schwartz.

Schwartz also earned a spot on the second team



MULTER

offensive team as a tight end and was joined by junior utility back Evan Jansa.

Player of the Year: Alex Halfmann, Garden City.
Offensive MVPs: Jared Bradford, Garden City; Josh Gallegos, Robert Lee.
Running Back: Big Eggemeyer, Garden City.
Running Back: Brandon Solz, Robert Lee.
Defensive MVP: Cory Multer, Garden City.
Newcomer of the Year: Brian Scott, Veribest.
Coach of the Year: Ken Hoskins, Garden City.

First Team — Offense
Quarterback: Halfmann, Garden City.
Spreadback: Gallegos, Robert Lee.
Running Back: Big Eggemeyer, Garden City.
Running Back: Brandon Solz, Robert Lee.
Tight End: Multer, Garden City.
Center: Dusty Walker, Garden City.
Wide Receiver: Bradford, Garden City.
Wide Receiver: Cameron Hodge, Robert Lee.
Utility Back: Jonathan Garcia, Water Valley.
Special Teams: Jason Flores, Garden City.
Kicker: Multer, Garden City.

Second Team — offense

Quarterback: Brody Dillard, Robert Lee.
Spreadback: Jake Wilkinson, Blackwell.
Running Back: Darrell Rose, Paint Rock.
Running Back: Scott Veribest.
Tight End: Michael Stevens, Water Valley.
Tight End: Colton Schwartz, Garden City.
Center: Eleasar Vera, Robert Lee.
Wide Receiver: Shulch Smith, Water Valley.
Wide Receiver: Taylor Percival, Robert Lee.
Utility Back: Evan Jansa, Garden City.
Special Teams: Joe David Ruz, Paint Rock.
Kicker: Brandon Solz, Robert Lee.

First Team — defense
Linebacker: Multer, Garden City.
Linebacker: Blaine Walker, Garden City.
Linebacker: Dillard, Robert Lee.
Linebacker: Cade Doss, Garden City.
Linebacker: Conner, Robert Lee.
Cornerback: Flores, Garden City.
Cornerback: Hodge, Robert Lee.
Safety: Halfmann, Garden City.
Safety: James Fernandez, Veribest.
Utility Player: Schwartz, Garden City.
Punter: Cody Morgan, Blackwell.

Second Team — defense
Linebacker: Rudy Ruz, Paint Rock.
Linebacker: Shylen Ascol, Water Valley.
Linebacker: Chase Roe, Robert Lee.
Linebacker: Wilkinson, Blackwell.
Linebacker: Ryan Bradley, Water Valley.
Cornerback: Solz, Robert Lee.
Cornerback: Tyler Tomerlin, Water Valley.
Cornerback: Scott Veribest.
Safety: Morgan, Blackwell.
Safety: Robert Ruz, Paint Rock.
Utility Player: Jacob Watts, Blackwell.

NCAA rankings

The Howard College men's basketball team moved up to No. 4 in the nation this week after winning the Ocala College basketball giving tournament.

The Hawks defeated Hill College in the first round, took down rival and then No. 10 ranked Midland in the semifinals and blew out Lee College in the championship game Saturday night.

Howard is 10-0 on the season and has taken first place in both tournaments its played in.

Chipola College remained No. 1 this week, while Mineral Area College move up to No. 2 after sitting at No. 6 last week. Cochise remained No. 3 and Howard moved up five spots from No. 9. Midland College dropped out of the top 20 but is still receiving votes on the outside looking in.

Lady Steers set to take part in parade

Members of the Big Spring Lady Steers basketball program will be selling coffee, hot chocolate and homemade baked goods in front of the Heritage Museum during the Christmas parade Dec. 3.

Sign-ups for YMCA basketball underway

Registration for the Big Spring YMCA youth basketball league is taking place now until Dec. 3.

The league is for boys and girls ages 5-12. Some 13-year-olds may play depending on their date of birth.

Practices are scheduled to begin Dec. 19. Kids who played last season may play on the same team from last year.

All games are scheduled to be played Saturdays beginning Jan. 7.

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

Big Spring sets volleyball clinic

A volleyball clinic for girls aged third through eighth grade has been set up for Dec. 10 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

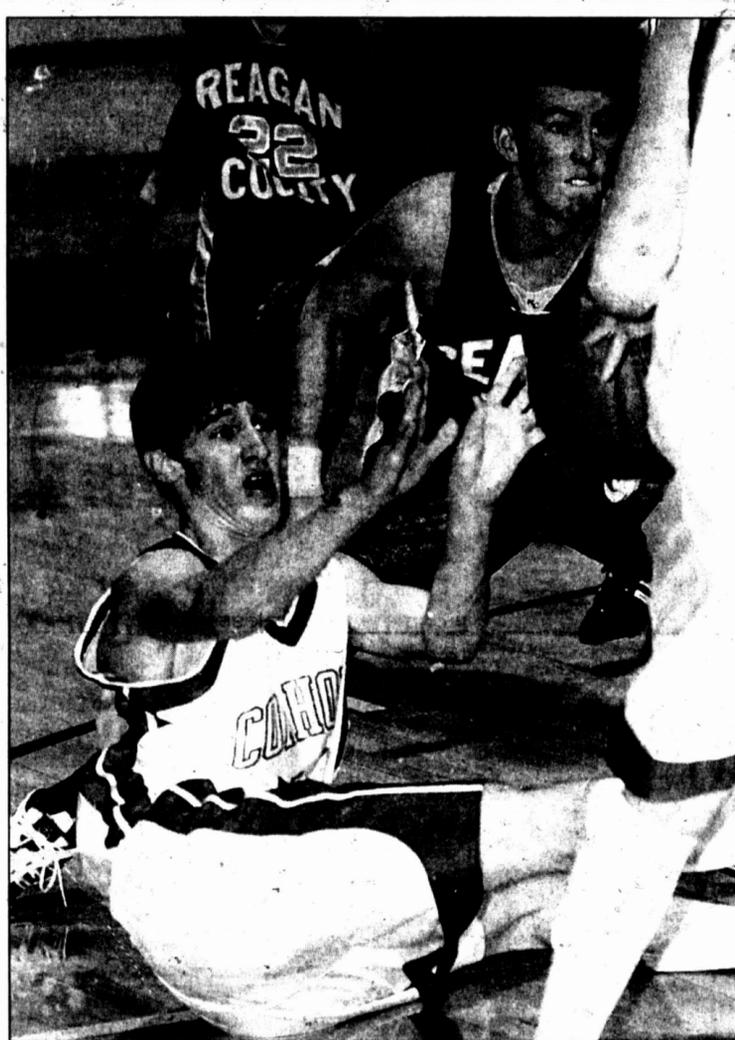
The clinic will take place at the B.S. Junior High and it will be instructed by J.E. Thomas, who is the Midland College assistant coach.

For more information, contact Della Partee at 267-4038.

Konerko decides to stay with champs

CHICAGO (AP) — Paul Konerko decided to stay with the World Series champion Chicago White Sox, agreeing to a \$60 million, five-year contract.

The first baseman led the White Sox with 40 homers and 100 RBIs last season, hitting .283. Konerko also was courted by Anaheim and Baltimore.



Coahoma's Kamrun Green wins a battle for a loose ball Tuesday during boy's basketball action against Reagan County. Coahoma and Garden City are both hosting tournaments this week, starting today. The Big Spring girls will also travel to San Angelo for a tourney, while the Steers will take part in the Andrews Tournament. Grady will be in the New Home Tournament, while Forsan will play in the Borden County Tournament. Stanton will take part in the Coahoma Invitational this week before hosting its own tournament next week.

Forsan JV teams split with Hornets

By JEFF LANE

Special to the Herald
FORSAN — The Forsan Buffalo JV boys and girls basketball teams were back in action Tuesday night after the Thanksgiving holidays.

Both Buffalo squads welcomed the Highland Hornets, with the girls losing 32-20 and the boys staying undefeated, winning 37-6.

The Lady Buffs were led by Alyx Pappajohn with six points. Shelby

McDonald, Sandy Golleher and Faith Belew each had four.

High point scorer for Highland was Je-sica Plemons with 12, while Koli Coe added 11 points.

In the boy's game, Blake Grantham led all scorers on the night with 10 points and Jeremy Robbins finished the contest with seven.

The Forsan JV teams will travel to Roscoe Dec. 6 with the girls playing at 4 p.m. and the boys at 5 p.m.



Lubbock Cooper gets four wins over BSJH

By TROY HYDE

Sports Editor
The Big Spring Junior High basketball teams struggled against Lubbock Cooper Monday, losing all four games by substantial margins.

The eighth-grade black team lost, 50-8, and was led by Linzee Yarbar's four points and Macy Graves' three rebounds. The eighth-grade gold team lost, 41-12, and was led by Katelyn Villanueva's four points and Marina Trevino's three rebounds.

The seventh graders

also struggled to put points on the board. The seventh-grade black team lost to Lubbock Cooper, 40-16. Leading the way for Big Spring were Jillian Valle and Alesha Yanez, who each finished with six points.

The seventh-grade gold team lost, 18-4. Desiree Anderson and Stormi Smith combined for the scoring.

The Lady Steers will be hosting a seventh- and eighth-grade 'B' team tournament starting today. The tournament will finish Saturday.

Jackson surpasses 1,000 points in Texas Tech win

• Redick shoots No. 1 Duke to victory at Big Ten/ACC Challenge

LUBBOCK (AP) — Jarrius Jackson scored 23 points to lead Texas Tech to an 81-54 win over TCU Wednesday night.

Terry Martin and Jon Plefka each scored 14 points for Tech (5-2). Martin Zeno had 12.

TCU (1-4) trailed by as many as 27 points, shooting 36 percent from the field and 32 percent from beyond the 3-point line, hitting just nine of 28.

Tech hit 17-of-35 from behind the arc with Jackson scoring on five of his six 3-pointers.

Nile Murry led all TCU scorers with 19 points and four assists while Clarence Masters scored 10 points.

Tech led TCU in rebounds, 46-24, holding the Horned Frogs to six offensive rebounds while Tech grabbed 32 defensive

rebounds.

The win gave Tech coach Bob Knight his 859th win in his 40-year career, moving him 20 wins closer to tying Dean Smith for all-time career wins in NCAA history.

Jackson surpassed 1,000 career points for the Red Raiders.

No. 1 Duke 75, No. 16 Indiana 67

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. (AP) — J.J. Redick scored 29 points and Shelden Williams added 13 before fouling out as No. 1 Duke held off No. 17 Indiana in the Big Ten-ACC Challenge, 75-67.

Duke (6-0) is now 7-0 in the showcase event, but had to withstand an outstanding performance by Marco Killingsworth — and a hostile Indiana crowd — to remain perfect.

Killingsworth was almost unstoppable for the Hoosiers (3-1). He scored a career-high 34

points in 34 minutes, was 15-of-20 from the field, had 10 rebounds and two blocks and single-handedly got the Blue Devils' two top interior players — Williams and Josh McRoberts — into foul trouble early in the second half. He even hit a 3-pointer during an 11-0 run that gave Indiana its first lead of the game at 59-58.

But it wasn't enough against Redick, who hit 10-of-17 shots including four 3-pointers and stabilized the Blue Devils when the game was slipping away in the final 10 minutes.

No. 14 Iowa 45, No. 24 NC State 42

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Adam Haluska scored 18 points and Iowa held on for a victory over North Carolina State in the final game of the Big Ten-ACC Challenge.

Haluska hit consecutive baskets with less than five minutes to go to put

Iowa (5-1) up 41-35. The Wolfpack came back and had a final chance to tie, but Ilian Evtimov's desperation 3-pointer bounced off the rim just before the buzzer.

The game was ugly, as both teams tallied season-low point totals and season-highs for turnovers. Iowa shot just 30 percent and turned the ball over 19 times.

North Carolina State (5-1) shot 34 percent — just 50 percent from the free-throw line — and had 24 turnovers, which led to 17 Iowa points.

No. 5 Oklahoma 62, Tulsa 53

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — Terrell Everett scored a career-high 26 points, including three late free throws, to help Oklahoma (4-0) stave off a late rally by Tulsa.

Everett scored six of Oklahoma's points during a 10-4 run that gave the Sooners a 47-28 lead with

11:32 left. But with Everett on the bench for a brief rest, Tulsa immediately charged back.

Deion James scored six straight points to bring the Golden Hurricane (1-3) within 47-34 and Chris Wallace followed with a three-point play after Everett had returned. Charles Rossdell dunked an alley-oop pass with two hands and Anthony Price brought the Golden Hurricane within 49-41 with a fast-break layup.

Nate Carter hit a 3-pointer from the left wing and a jumper from the right side on consecutive possessions to extend Oklahoma's lead to 54-42, and Tulsa never got closer.

No. 6 Gonzaga 89, Portland St. 80

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — Adam Morrison scored 34 points as Gonzaga used a dominant inside game

See HOOPS, Page 2B

Marshall's big shots lead Cavs past L.A.

By The Associated Press

CLEVELAND (AP) — Donyell Marshall made a key three-point play in regulation, then hit consecutive 3-pointers in overtime to help the Cleveland Cavaliers beat the Los Angeles Clippers 112-105 Wednesday night.

Zydrunas Ilgauskas had 29 points before fouling out in overtime and LeBron James added 28 for Cleveland, which broke a two-game losing streak and improved to 7-1 at home.

Elton Brand scored 33 points and Sam Cassell had 26 to lead Los Angeles.

Marshall was 1-for-7 before running down the baseline to put back a missed 3-pointer by Larry Hughes with 47 seconds left in the fourth quarter. He tacked on a free throw to tie it at 95.

Brand had a chance to win the game in regulation, as his driving jumper in the lane missed and James grabbed the rebound as time ran out.

Wizards 96, Trail Blazers 89

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gilbert Arenas had 28 points and five assists, leading the Wizards over the road-weary Trail Blazers.

Antawn Jamison had 20 points and 15 rebounds for his sixth straight double-double. The Wizards forward has totaled 88 rebounds in his last six games.

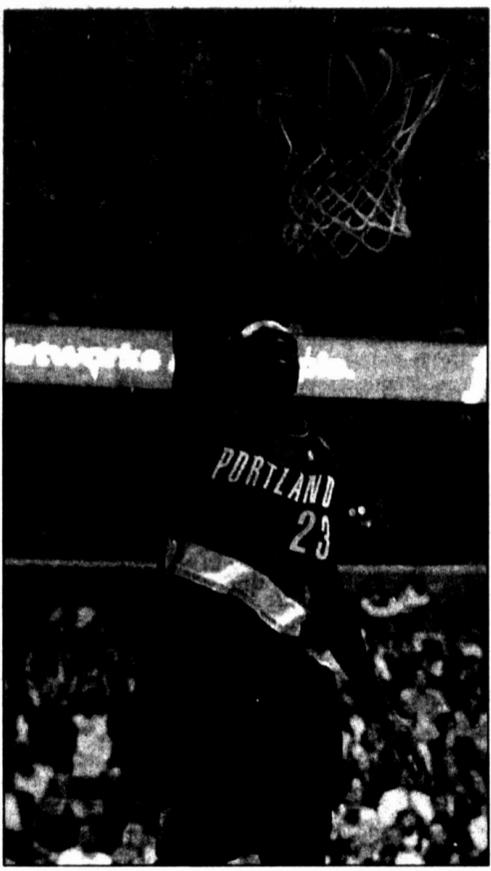
Darius Miles led Portland with 21 points before fouling out with 18 seconds remaining on the play that sealed Washington's victory. Jared Jeffries stole the ball from Zach Randolph and passed to Jarvis Hayes, who converted a three-point play over Randolph that gave the Wizards a 96-89 lead.

Joel Przybilla had season-highs of 17 points and 15 rebounds as the Trail Blazers concluded a 2-5 road trip.

Pistons 93, Nets-83

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — Richard Hamilton scored 30 points and Detroit tied a team season high with 10 3-pointers in a win over the Nets.

Hamilton's 3-pointer gave the Pistons an 87-78 lead, their biggest of the game at the time. It



KRT photo/George Bridges, Knight-Ridder Tribune
Portland's Darius Miles (23) dunks the ball against Washington in the second half of the Wizards' 96-89 victory Wednesday.

came after a missed shot by Tayshaun Prince that New Jersey's Jason Collins fumbled out of bounds.

Chauncy Billups sank another 3-pointer after a basket by the Nets' Vince Carter to extend the lead to 90-80. Billups scored 20 points for Detroit and Prince added 17. The Pistons' starters scored 87 of the team's 93 points.

Carter led the Nets with 27 points. Richard Jefferson added 20 for New Jersey.

Heat 96, Hawks 74

ATLANTA (AP) — Jason Williams scored 21 points to help Miami beat the Hawks for their first road victory of the season without Shaquille O'Neal.

The Heat, who began a five-game road trip, improved to 8-5 since losing O'Neal to a sprained ankle.

The win over the Hawks was especially important for the Southeast Division-leading Heat, who play nine of their next 11 games on the road.

The Hawks, in last place in the Southeast, set a new scoring low for the season.

Zaza Pachulia had 17 points and 11 rebounds to lead the Hawks.

Celtics 110, 76ers 103

BOSTON (AP) — Paul Pierce scored 32 points and grabbed 11 rebounds to lift Boston over

Philadelphia. Allen Iverson had 40 points for Philadelphia, but was hounded by Celtics guard Delonte West in the fourth quarter and only had two baskets in the period.

Kendrick Perkins, making only his third start of the season, had career highs with 12 points, 19 rebounds and four assists for the Celtics.

With the game tied at 87 and 6:25 remaining, the Celtics went on a 9-1 run capped off by a Raef LaFrentz 3-pointer to give them their biggest lead of the game at 96-88.

Knicks 109, Bulls 101

NEW YORK (AP) — Jamal Crawford scored a season-high 28 points, and the Knicks used a huge advantage at the free-throw line and some strong fourth-quarter defense to beat Chicago.

Channing Frye added 21 points and Stephon Marbury had 18 for the Knicks, who lost all four meetings last season. They seemed headed to another loss before shutting out Chicago for nearly 5 minutes to start the final quarter.

New York scored the first 13 points of the period, turning an eight-point deficit into an 87-82 lead on two free throws by Crawford with 7:28 remaining.

Ben Gordon scored 28 points for the Bulls, who had their four-game winning streak snapped.

HOOPS

Continued from Page 1B

to beat scrappy Portland State.

Gonzaga (4-1) came out flat in its first game since losing to No. 3 Connecticut in the championship game of the Maui Invitational.

The Bulldogs led by only three points early in the second half against the unheralded Vikings before Morrison scored 15 points in the first 12 minutes of the half to widen the margin.

Gonzaga has a 26-game winning streak at home, second in the nation, and has never lost in the new building.

No. 9 Memphis 97, Jackson St. 70

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Rodney Carney scored 25 points and matched his career-high with six 3-pointers, to lead Memphis past Jackson State.

Shawne Williams added 17 points for Memphis (5-1), which won its second straight after losing 70-67 to Duke in the finals of the NIT Season Tip-Off tournament.

Darius Washington and Joey Dorsey scored 10 points each, and Dorsey grabbed 11 rebounds for Memphis.

Clinton Johnson led Jackson State (1-4) with 24 points.

No. 13 Michigan St. 88, Georgia Tech 86

EAST LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Michigan State's

Paul Davis scored 22 points, and Georgia Tech's Zam Fredrick hit the rim on a shot from about 30 feet as time expired, giving the Spartans a victory in the Big Ten/ACC Challenge.

Michigan State (4-2) led the entire game, but the Yellow Jackets (2-2) never let the home team get comfortable.

Davis scored 19 of his 22 points in the second half for the Spartans, but his two missed free throws with 4.3 seconds left allowed Fredrick to get off a 3-pointer that would've given the young Yellow Jackets a huge win.

Michigan State led by nine with 1:18, but its lead began to disappear after Anthony Morrow and Ra'Sean Dickey made three 3-pointers while the Spartans failed to seal the victory with free throws.

No. 23 Maryland 83, Minnesota 66

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (AP) — Travis Garrison had 18 points and 10 rebounds, and Maryland overwhelmed injury-riddled Minnesota in the second half in the Big Ten/ACC Challenge.

Nik Caner-Medley scored 16 points, and Mike Jones and D.J. Strawberry had 14 apiece for the Terrapins (5-1), who trailed by 15 in the early going and by six at halftime.

Maryland outscored the Golden Gophers 47-24 in a second half that featured the ejection of Minnesota

coach Dan Monson. Dan Coleman led the Gophers (2-2) with 16 points, and Adam Boone and J'son Stamper each scored 13.

No. 19 George Washington 85, St. Francis, Pa. 68

WASHINGTON (AP) — J.R. Pinnock scored 20 points for George Washington, helping the Colonials overcome a poor first half.

Pinnock led four players in double figures for George Washington, which has won three straight to open the season. Now the Colonials get back star Pops Mensah-Bonsu, who served the final game of his three-game suspension for violations related to his early declaration for the NBA draft.

St. Francis freshman Grant Surprenant, who had scored 17 points all season coming into the game, scored 17 of his game-high 26 points in the first half as the Red Flash (2-4) played George Washington to a 35-35 tie.

No. 4 Villanova 86, Rider 57

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — Allan Ray scored 21 points and Kyle Lowry added a career-high 20 as No. 4 Villanova cruised to an 86-57 victory over Rider Wednesday night.

The Wildcats (3-0) had another big game from beyond the 3-point line, going 13-for-32.

Villanova hosts No. 5 Oklahoma Saturday.

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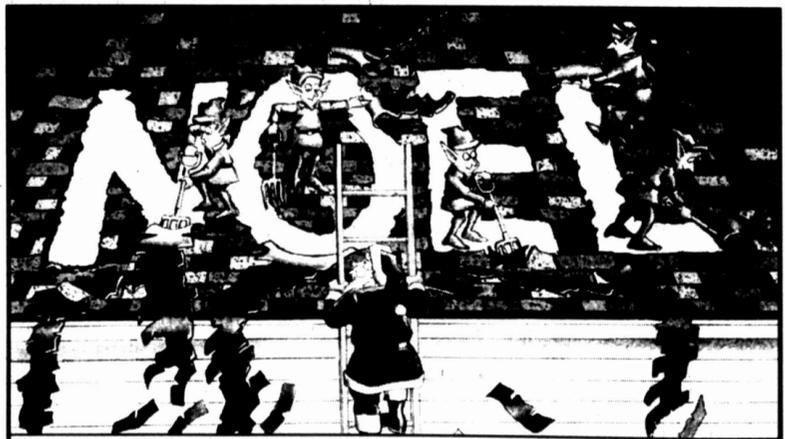
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Attn: Human Resources
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TRANSIT MIX Concrete has an opening for a Mixer Driver at our Big Spring location. Must have a Class A or B CDL license, good driving record and verifiable work history. Full benefit package and 35 hour guarantee offered with wages starting at \$9.75 or \$10.25 with 6 months mixer driving experience. Apply at Transit Mix Concrete: 605 N. Benton, Big Spring (432)267-6348. Transit Mix Concrete is an EOE/AA employer.

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ONE OF A kind 14x32 office, ready for delivery. Financing available (432)563-3108.

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1409 MT. VERNON. Newly remodeled. 3 bedroom, 1 bath, CH/A, fenced yard with washer & dryer connections. \$515. month, \$395. deposit. Call 432-263-8005, 816-1330.

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1610 STATE. Two bedroom, one bath, detached 2 car garage, fenced yard, washer/dryer connections. \$350. month, \$150. deposit. Call (432)263-1792, 816-9984.

2 Thru 6 Bedroom Homes. Pool, 24 hour maintenance, Central Heat and Air, stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, furnished. Washer/ dryer connections. (432)263-3461 -Tom.

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Tomorrow's Horoscope

BY HOLIDAY MATHS
The first day of the final month of the year starts with the new moon in Sagittarius.

The energy of travel pervades, both physically and spiritually. Isn't it odd that the places where some people vacation other people call home? Your "destination" is already inhabited by individuals with wisdom to impart to you if you dare to ask.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The ancient poet Rumi says to greet everything that comes to our door as if it were a guide from beyond. Lately, you have been meeting the same "guide" over and over. Change is hard but possible.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The planets test your confidence. Try this technique with new people

Real Estate for Rent

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Three Bedroom, \$400. month
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BY OWNER 1508 Sunset Ave., 2 bedroom, 2 bath, carport and storage shed. \$25,000.00. Call (432)816-9018.

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you meet: Shake hands with the intent of sending your joy through the other person's palm and straight into his or her heart.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). By reading this horoscope, you are getting matters off to a spirited start. Later, you can expect wacky, nutty, fall-on-the-ground-laughing, good fortune. Tell everyone you know.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). What you share with Scorpio and Capricorn people has meaning and far-reaching consequence. But be lighthearted about it. In general, you could use more fun in your life. Plan something.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Improving slightly every day is so much more valuable than running a marathon every so often. Reflection and self-care shouldn't be considered a treat. What would you be like if this were a regular part of your being?

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Friends help friends. So this drama in your circle that has one person tearing down the character of another is utter nonsense and has nothing to do with friendship. Distance yourself from negativity. Refuse to discuss it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Finding love tends to be an instinctual endeavor for you, but your personal life could improve if you used a more conscious approach. Write down what you are looking for in a relationship.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Your actions are the proof of what is important to you — period. Try to hold others to the same principal. You are probably letting someone very charming ignore your preferences and boundaries.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You receive information that you understand intellectually, but the meaning hasn't seeped into your bones, cells and imagination just yet. Real-life experience will bring the lesson home.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). At some time, all winners reach the point where you're at today. Put the call out to the universe: You need coaches, mentors, guides ... anyone who knows more than you do about the "game" you're playing.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Clarify your objectives before you step out of your front door. Home is where you can work everything out. On a romantic note, someone shy who has worshiped you from afar is now ready to worship you from anear.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Why stay home when the big attraction is miles away from the living room couch? The truly spontaneous will pack an overnight bag and get going on the journey to romance and adventure.

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THURSDAY

Table with 24 columns (WFAA, KIMD, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLT, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KOCV, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN, SCIFI) and 7 rows (6-12 PM) listing various TV programs and their channels.

DENNIS THE MENACE comic strip. Panel 1: Dennis points to a dog. Panel 2: Dennis says, "BUT HE WAS FREE, MOM, AN' I KNEW OL' RUFF WOULD LIKE A LITTLE BROTHER."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS comic strip. Panel 1: A large moon with a crater. Panel 2: Dennis says, "Good! I hope this one isn't full of craters."

HAGAR comic strip. Panel 1: Hagar says, "YOU'RE HAVING A PICK-UP DINNER TONIGHT". Panel 2: Hagar says, "I TRIPPED WHILE TRYING TO PUT THE FOOD ON THE TABLE... SO TAKE A PLATE AND HELP YOURSELF!"

BLONDIE comic strip. Panel 1: Blondie asks, "DO YOU THINK I'VE GOT TIME FOR A HAIRCUT?". Panel 2: Blondie asks, "I WONDER IF THIS PLACE IS ANY GOOD?". Panel 3: Blondie says, "PROBABLY AS GOOD AS ANY". Panel 4: Blondie says, "ON SECOND THOUGHT, MAYBE YOU SHOULD WAIT."

BC comic strip. Panel 1: "WHO CAN DEFINE THE TERM 'CONSUMER CONFIDENCE'?". Panel 2: "DON'T HURT YOURSELF, JOHN." Panel 3: "THAT'S WHEN YOU BUY SOMETHING AND DON'T TAKE OUT PRODUCT INSURANCE."

WIZARD OF ID comic strip. Panel 1: "I'M GOING TO GET MY HAIR DONE". Panel 2: "YOU JUST HAD IT DONE TWO DAYS AGO". Panel 3: "DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH NEW GOSSIP THERE IS IN TWO DAYS?"

This Date In History. Text: Today is Thursday, Dec. 1, the 335th day of 2005. There are 30 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: Fifty years ago, on Dec. 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a black seamstress, refused to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Ala., city bus. Mrs. Parks was arrested, sparking a year-long boycott of the buses by blacks.

AGNES comic strip. Panel 1: "WOW! LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT HOUSE! WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE THEY DO IN THERE?". Panel 2: "THEY WANDER AIMLESSLY FROM ROOM TO ROOM, MARVELING ABOUT ALL THEIR NICE THINGS, CHECKING THEIR LOCKS AND CONGRATULATING THEMSELVES ON THEIR GOOD FORTUNE." Panel 3: "MAN! THAT MUST TAKE UP MOST OF THE DAY!". Panel 4: "YES. THAT'S WHY THEY NEED MAIDS AND STUFF."

HI AND LOIS comic strip. Panel 1: "WHAT DID YOU BRING FOR SHOW-AND-TELL TODAY, DOT?". Panel 2: "A PICTURE OF A HOUSE MY MOM IS TRYING TO SELL". Panel 3: "ANY OF YOU COULD LIVE HERE IF YOU CAN CONVINCE YOUR PARENTS TO BUY IT!"

THE OTHER COAST comic strip. Panel 1: "SHOPPERS SHOULDNT BE ALLOWED TO COVER CHRISTMAS CAROLS."

Newsday Crossword. Includes a crossword grid and a list of clues: ACROSS: 1 Aerial maneuver, 5 Truckers, often, 10 Frame of mind, 14 Run smoothly, 15 Charge towards, 16 Beef-rating org., 17 Book by 23 Down, 20 Withdrawn, 21 Settles up in advance, 22 Signed, as a lease, 24 Hitler's stat, 25 Ala. neighbor, 28 Lacking liquid, 30 Sorority letters, 34 Geological periods, 37 Final Four game, 39 Cold-blooded crawler, 40 Book by 23 Down, 43 Phone-line abbr., 44 ___ cheese dressing, 45 Boxer's souvenir, 46 Keep an ___ (watch), 48 Payroll ID, 50 Sandberg of Cooperstown, 51 "Cool!", 53 Does a number, 56 Holiday Inn actor, 60 Competition, 64 Story by 23 Down, 66 Toledo's lake, 67 Green blades, 68 Finished, as a cake, 69 Hangs loosely, 70 Brief squabble, 71 Advanced degs., DOWN: 1 Org. for women drivers, 2 Family pronoun, 3 Sweet sandwich, 4 Voting sector, 5 Sound from a floorboard, 6 Sounded reveille, 7 H.S. subject, 8 Coarse tool, 9 One of the Beatles, 10 Tot's messy creation, 11 Dept. of Labor branch, 12 Jazz singer, 13 Stops up, 18 Palindromic diarist, 19 Milquetoast, 23 Notable author/illustrator, 25 Little laugh, 26 Strong adhesive, 27 Opposite of sur, 29 Nay opposite, 31 Brownish yellow, 32 Pallid, 33 Germ cell, 35 Heavy sole fastener, 36 NBC debut of '75, 38 Muir or Miniver, 41 Bucks and boars, 42 No-frills takeoff site, 47 Speaks at length, 49 Most gracious, 52 Least valuable part, 54 Untrue, 55 Veldt grazer, 56 Assents at sea, 57 Transfusion fluids, 58 Math course, 59 French 101 verb, 61 Mark permanently, 62 Winter toy, 63 Bill and ___ Excellent Adventure, 65 Monopoly token.

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SNUFFY SMITH comic strip. Panel 1: "JUGHAID'S PROGRESS REPORT SAYS THAR'S A LIL' MATURITY PROBLEM ?!". Panel 2: "THAR SHORE IS !!". Panel 3: "TH' STRESS FROM THAT WILD LIL' YOUNG-UN IS TURNIN' ME GRAY B'FORE MY TIME !!".

BEETLE BAILEY comic strip. Panel 1: "KEEP LOOKING UP AT THE FLAG!". Panel 2: "YOU'LL MAKE A BETTER IMPRESSION".

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That's Racin'

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Tony Stewart and crew kiss the bricks after winning the NASCAR Nextel Cup Allstate at The Brickyard 400 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

By DAVID POOLE
Knight Ridder Newspapers

**DRIVER OF THE YEAR:
CARL EDWARDS**

With no disrespect toward Nextel Cup champion Tony Stewart, Edwards won four Cups and five Busch races and finished third in the standings in both series. Edwards ran 70 races in the two series and finished in the top five 29 times and in the top 10 43 times.

**RACE OF THE YEAR:
ALLSTATE 400**

There were more dramatic finishes, but nothing beats the story of Tony Stewart finally slaying his personal dragons by winning at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Even though you knew what it would mean for Stewart and for fans in Indiana for him to win there, it was still very special to see it actually happen and witness the emotion it brought on.

**TRACK OF THE YEAR:
DARLINGTON RACEWAY**

In two years, Darlington has gone from having two dates, including one on its traditional Labor Day weekend, to having one date, in the Chase, to having one date on the night before Mother's Day. Instead of been taken away, though, the track's staff went to work on making new traditions. The first night race in May was sold out and successful on all fronts. Now, the track is getting some money for improvements instead of having its corporate parent, International Speedway Corp., try to bleed it dry.

**SPECIAL TIP OF THE HAT TO:
JACK ROUSH**

In a simply remarkable team effort, his cars finished second, third, fourth, seventh and eighth in the final owner's points standings. The five Roush-owned Fords started a combined 180 races and among them they rang up 97 top-10 finishes. Each team won at least once and, in all, "The Cat in the Hat's" cars won 15 points races plus the NASCAR Nextel All-Star Challenge.

BEST TREND

It hasn't started yet, but it should soon — copying the variable banking at Homestead-Miami Speedway to improve the racing at other intermediate tracks. Lowe's Motor Speedway will likely have some form of it after its repaving is done, and Las Vegas, Kansas and Chicagoland, for starters, ought to do the same.

WORST TREND

Writers reflect on the major stories of the 2005 season



Kurt Busch's antics dominated much of this year's NASCAR news.

The same one as it has been for the past 10 years — too much focus on points. Fans don't buy tickets to see people have good points days. They come to see people try to win. The Chase for the Nextel Cup format helps make the final 10 races relevant, but those races and all of the rest would be SO much better if winning races made as much difference as it ought to.

BIGGEST 2005 SURPRISE

Jeff Gordon's swoon that took him out of the Chase. He left Darlington second in the standings with three wins in the first 10 races. Three weeks later he was 11th and on his way down the tubes. In one 21-race stretch, he finished 30th or worse 10 times. Dale Earnhardt Jr.'s failure to make the Chase was much easier to foresee after the ill-advised team and car switch at Dale Earnhardt Inc. Gordon's came out of nowhere.



Carl Edwards chats with team owner Jack Roush. Both had winning seasons in 2005.

er to foresee after the ill-advised team and car switch at Dale Earnhardt Inc. Gordon's came out of nowhere.

By JIM UTTER *Knight Ridder Newspapers*

DRIVER OF THE YEAR: TONY STEWART

The media knocked Stewart for his attitude. He fixed it. He was criticized because he couldn't win the "big" races. He won at Indianapolis and Daytona. He won his previous championship under the old system. He dominated the new one as well. Start to finish, his was the best team and he the best driver of the season.

RACE OF THE YEAR: CHECKER AUTO PARTS 500

Earlier in the day, 2004 Nextel Cup champion Kurt Busch is suspended by Roush Racing for the final two races after Busch is charged with reckless driving. Then his younger brother, Kyle, proceeds to whoop the competition in the race, and in Victory Lane declares his unwavering support for his older brother and puts in a dig on the sponsors of Kurt's team.

TRACK OF THE YEAR: ATLANTA MOTOR SPEEDWAY

Just leave this track exactly as it is. No "levitating." No graduated banking. Don't improve on a product that is already as good as it gets. Atlanta has by far the best true actual racing — not contrived by artificial gimmicks — of any track on the circuit.

BEST QUOTE

"We're officially retiring as Kurt Busch's apologists, effective today."
— Roush Racing president Geoff Smith, announcing the suspension of Busch.

WORST QUOTE

"Do you know who I am?"
— Kurt Busch to a Maricopa County (Arizona) Sheriff's Department deputy after being pulled over.

MOST OVERBLOWN STORY: NEW NASCAR TV DEAL

Here's a question: Does this story really mean anything to a race fan other than at some point they have to push the channel control button up or down a few more times? The fervor over this deal is one thing: Media writing about media. And that can't be good.

PARTING THOUGHT

Isn't it interesting that all those who support the computer-generated system of determining the Nextel Cup champion still feel the need to defend it as legitimate even two years later? It's a wonderful system for motorsports writers. It's a terrible system for race fans.

Pettys opt out of Sprint Car league

NASCAR stars Richard and Kyle Petty and the Richard Petty Driving Experience have opted not to become involved in the formation of the new National Sprintcar League.

A news release issued Sunday from the NSL said league officials learned last week that the Pettys would no longer be part of the startup sprint car league.

There was no immediate comment from the Pettys late Monday.

"Sure, we regret that the Richard Petty Driving Experience has decided

to withdraw from the new series. They're good race people and we'll miss them, but that is the only thing that has changed," said Steve Kinser, who won his 20th World of Outlaws series title this past season and signed to drive in the NSL in 2006.

"We look forward to forming the kind of relationships between tracks, race teams, drivers, sponsors, and most importantly the fans to carry 410 winged sprint car racing into the next decade."

In a news release the NSL cited only the "overwhelming demands in

getting a start-up series off the ground" as the reason for the Pettys' departure.

During the September news conference announcing the formation of the NSL, current Nextel Cup champion and sprint car team owner Tony Stewart said this about the Pettys' involvement:

"We all feel comfortable that with Richard and Kyle involved this is in good hands. If you don't have that, you might as well not waste your time."

Stewart was in New York City

participating in activities leading up to the Cup series awards banquet Friday and unavailable for comment.

Many questions remain about the new league, including a TV package and agreements with tracks to host events.

"We are acutely aware that the fans want answers now," said NSL official Brian Healey. "The reality is that starting a major touring series takes a cooperative effort of many sprint car racing's major players, and sometimes that takes longer than we all want it to take."
— Jim Utter

Stewart kicks off busy, festive week

It has become difficult to forecast how much news might come from a Nextel Cup awards week in New York.

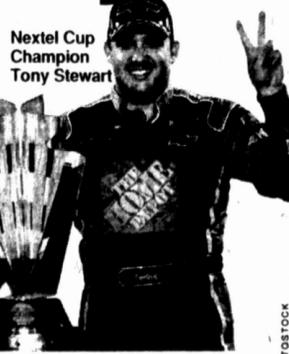
Two years ago, NASCAR officials sat around on the day of Matt Kenseth's banquet putting together details of the Chase for the Nextel Cup format as more than a

foot of snow fell on the city. Last year, neither the weather nor the news was nearly as dramatic.

There will be all of the usual ceremonial stuff. Champion Tony Stewart will have a photo shoot at Times Square and a small fleet of Cup cars will rumble through the city's streets.

There will be the annual news conference Thursday.

On Friday, the National Motorsports Press Association will present the Myers Brothers and Most Popular Driver awards at breakfast. Then that night, if the past is any indication, the Cup banquet will feature sev-



Nextel Cup Champion Tony Stewart

eral acts of tangentially appropriate entertainment followed by a series of mind-numbing speeches ruined by Teleprompters, leading to Stewart getting a very large check.

There might be some actual meat to chew on during championship week, however.

For starters, it will be stunning if the new television deal isn't officially announced. The latest scuttlebutt about negotiations had Fox getting the season's first 13 races, then TNT having six races before ABC/ESPN airs the final 17. One late-developing wrinkle was that the Nextel All-Star Challenge apparently will air on Speed Channel.

POLL POSITION

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

Before the Class of 2005 is dismissed, what's the final grade on the just-completed NASCAR Nextel Cup season?

Cast your vote at:
www.thatstracin.com

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

NASCAR's 2005 Chase had plenty of high and low points. What was the lowest?

Number of votes: 11,736

2005 low points	No. of votes	Percent
No Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Jeff Gordon in the playoffs.	4,209	36%
The track conditions and blown tires at Lowe's Motor Speedway.	4,103	35%
The non-penalties after post-race inspections at Dover.	2,191	19%
Something else.	547	5%
The Big One at Talladega.	421	4%
The demolition derby, wreck-'em-roudo or whatever that was at Loudon.	266	2%

STOP 'N' GO

Chase goes on for NASCAR hall

Now that NASCAR has a champion, racing leaders are ready to focus their attention on the race for the sport's hall of fame. And that competition still has a few laps to go.

NASCAR chief executive Brian France said recently that all five competing cities — Charlotte, N.C.; Atlanta, Kan.; Richmond, Va.; and Daytona Beach, Fla. — still have a shot at the shrine, and he dashed expectations that a choice could be announced in the next week.

France said he expects negotiations with a city or cities to begin after the holidays and a decision likely will be made in the first quarter of next year. In other words: Forget about a big revelation at NASCAR's postseason banquet Friday in New York, where Tony Stewart will be honored as this year's Nextel Cup champion and the sport will bask in the glow of its growing popularity.

Some Atlanta officials speculated this month that their city and Charlotte are the leading contenders for the hall, but they later backtracked and said they don't know where the competition stands. Charlotte leaders are also in the dark.

"NASCAR is playing their cards very close to their vest," said Luther Cochran, chairman of the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority.

Spokesman Kerry Tharp said NASCAR needs more time to compare proposals. And officials didn't want to be distracted by the flurry of activity that surrounds the end of racing season.

"You've got a decision that is quite complex and obviously important to the sport," Tharp said. "You want to get it right."

— Scott Dodd

BY THE NUMBERS

NEXTEL CUP

Final points standings:

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1. Tony Stewart	6533	21. Ricky Rudd	3667
2. Greg Biffle	6498	22. Casey Mears	3637
3. Carl Edwards	6498	23. Kasey Kahne	3611
4. Mark Martin	6428	24. Bobby Labonte	3488
5. Jimmie Johnson	6406	25. Michael Waltrip	3452
6. Ryan Newman	6359	26. Dave Blaney	3289
7. Matt Kenseth	6352	27. Kyle Petty	3288
8. Rusty Wallace	6140	28. Mike Bliss	3262
9. Jeremy Mayfield	6073	29. Jeff Green	3241
10. Kurt Busch	5974	30. Sterling Marlin	3183
11. Jeff Gordon	4174	31. Ken Schrader	3159
12. Jamie McMurray	4130	32. Scott Wimmer	3122
13. Elliott Sadler	4084	33. Travis Kvapil	3077
14. Kevin Harvick	4072	34. Scott Riggs	2965
15. Dale Jarrett	3960	35. Mike Wallace	2269
16. Joe Nemechek	3953	36. Bobby Hamilton Jr.	2183
17. Brian Vickers	3847	37. Robby Gordon	2117
18. Jeff Burton	3803	38. Jason Leffler	1538
19. Dale Earnhardt Jr.	3780	39. Kevin Lepage	1460
20. Kyle Busch	3753	40. Terry Labonte	1071

BUSCH SERIES

Final points standings:

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1. Martin Truex Jr.	4937	11. J.J. Yeley	3711
2. Clint Bowyer	4869	12. Johnny Sauter	3695
3. Carl Edwards	4601	13. David Stremme	3694
4. Reed Sorenson	4453	14. Ashton Lewis	3587
5. Denny Hamlin	4143	15. Jon Wood	3346
6. Paul Menard	4101	16. Stacy Compton	3345
7. Kenny Wallace	4068	17. Justin Labonte	3285
8. David Green	3908	18. Kevin Harvick	3259
9. Jason Keller	3866	19. Randy LaJoie	2880
10. Greg Biffle	3865	20. Tony Raines	2736

TRUCK SERIES

Final points standings:

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1. Ted Musgrave	3535	6. Bobby Hamilton	3164
2. Dennis Setzer	3480	7. David Starr	3148
3. Todd Bodine	3462	8. Jack Sprague	3137
4. Ron Hornaday Jr.	3369	9. Matt Crafton	3095
5. Mike Skinner	3273	10. Johnny Benson	3076

For a complete list of the final standings, go online and visit www.thatstracin.com.

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