



Friday is first day for mail-out ballots

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

Friday is the first day area voters can request a mail-out ballot for the 2006 March primaries, as the Howard County Elections Administration prepares for a slew of election deadlines over the next two months.

According to Sandra Bloom, election administrator for the county, voters must meet a special criteria to be eligible to receive a mail-out ballot for the upcoming primaries.

"They must be over 65 years old, be disabled or anticipate being out of the county during early voting," said Bloom. "It's designed for college students and people like that. In that case, the ballot must be mailed out of

2006 Primary Election Dates

- **Jan. 6** — First day to apply for a mail-out ballot.
- **Feb. 6** — Last day to register to vote in the March primaries.
- **Feb. 21** — First day of early voting.
- **Feb. 28** — Applications for mail-out ballots must be received.
- **March 3** — Last day of early voting.
- **March 7** — Primary election day.

the county.

"The voter must provide information on the mail-out ballot application, including their name, their residence and the type and date of the election. They also need to specify whether they plan to vote in the Republican or Democratic primary. They can call and request an application, and we

can accept them by fax if all the criteria are met."

Bloom said applications must also include an explanation of why a mail-out ballot is being requested, as well as an address to mail the ballot if the voter will be out of the county.

"The application has to See ELECTIONS, Page 3A

SWEET!



KRT photo/Michael Goulding, Orange County Register
University of Texas coach Mack Brown celebrates at the end of the game as No. 2 Texas beat No. 1 USC 41-38 Wednesday in the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. See Page 1B.

Court: Government can move Padilla to Florida

His detention has been subject of multiple court rulings and criticism by civil rights groups

By GINA HOLLAND

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Bush administration won a temporary victory when the Supreme Court agreed that Jose Padilla, who was held for 3-1/2 years as an "enemy combatant," can be transferred to civilian authorities in Miami.

The justices' decision Wednesday overruled a lower

court, which had attempted to block the transfer in a rebuke of the White House.

Padilla, a former Chicago gang member who was arrested after the September 2001 terrorist attacks, will be released from military custody to face charges in a civilian criminal court.

The Supreme Court said it would decide later whether to consider a broader appeal by

Padilla challenging President Bush's authority to order the indefinite detention of suspected terrorists. The case has been set for review at a private meeting of the justices on Jan. 13.

"That's fine. It's great," said Donna Newman, one of Padilla's lawyers. "Both things are good. I don't think it's a bad day for us."

Padilla's detention as an enemy combatant has been the

subject of multiple court rulings and criticism by civil rights groups.

He was arrested at Chicago's O'Hare Airport and put in military custody, where he was held without charges for several months and denied traditional legal rights, such as access to an attorney.

The Supreme Court had been asked to use Padilla's case to define the scope of a president's

power over American citizens taken into custody on U.S. soil. The justices had been expected to agree to hear his appeal, but shortly before word was to come, the government brought criminal charges against him in Florida and then argued that the appeal was moot.

The criminal charges do not involve allegations that had

See PADILLA, Page 3A

Chili cookoff raises funds for children

By VALERIE ULLMAN AVERY

Special to the Herald

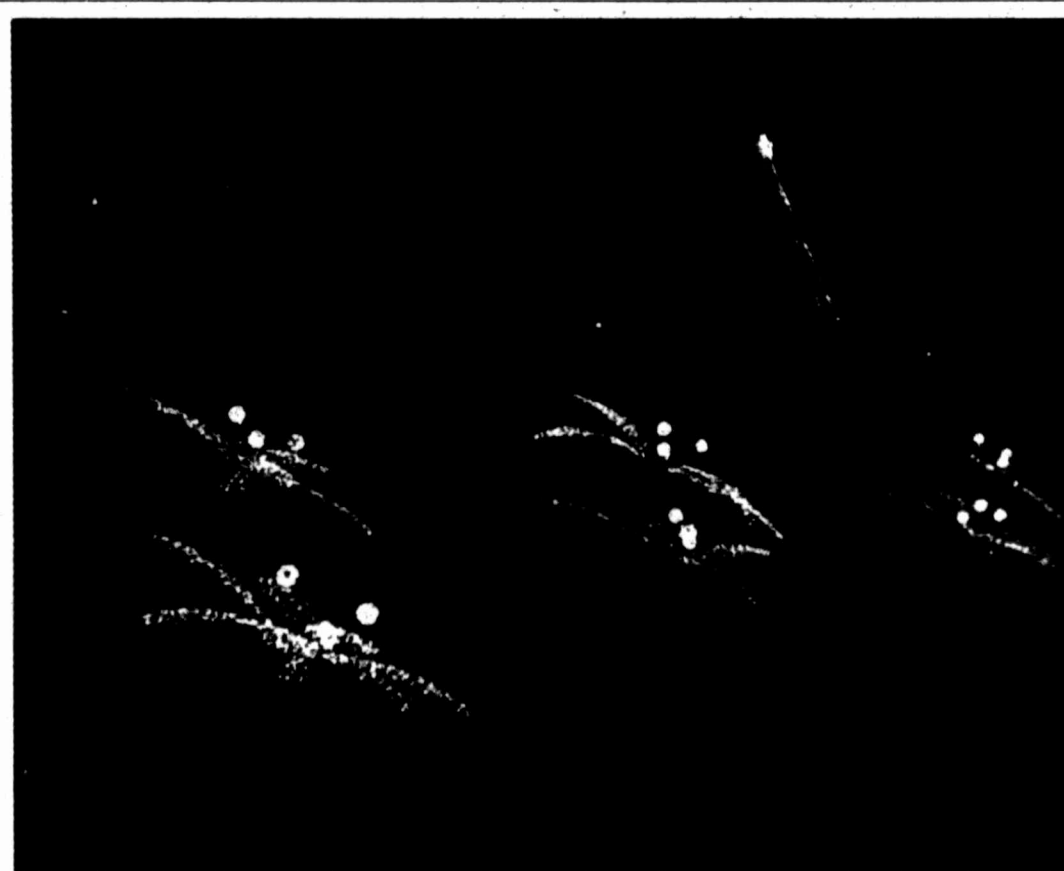
Michelle Pearson is confronted daily with the needs of the children in her care.

As a qualified mental health professional and a children's case manager for West Texas Centers for MHMR she spends each day working with children who have a mental illness and their families.

"They have the normal stresses that other kids have and they have the added stress of dealing with mental illness," she said "Their mental illness is the extra piece they have to tackle in their everyday lives."

West Texas Centers for MHMR serves more than 2,200 people each month with men-

See COOKOFF, Page 3A



Herald photo/Bruce Schooler
This year's Festival of Lights drew almost 20,000 visitors from 38 states and nine countries according to organizer Pat Simmons.

Thousands view Festival of Lights

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

The annual Festival of Lights has once again written itself in the history books, having drawn Christmas visitors from all over the United States — and the world.

The festival, which featured nearly one-million twinkling holiday lights, drew visitors from far and wide, according to Pat Simmons, coordinator for the annual holiday event.

"We had 19,307 visitors this year, which is up tremendously from last year," said Simmons, who along with an army of volunteers turned Comanche Trail Park and the historic spring into a winter wonderland once again this year.

See LIGHTS, Page 3A

"It's been a tremendous year, and we've gotten so much help from the volunteers."

—Pat Simmons

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TEXAS TO GET WHEATIES

AUSTIN (AP) — The national champion Texas Longhorns are going to get their Wheaties.

General Mills has announced that it will produce a commemorative Wheaties box to mark the Longhorns' 41-38 win over Southern California in Wednesday night's Rose Bowl. The cereal box will feature Texas coach Mack Brown and a Texas Longhorns helmet on the front. The Longhorns box is scheduled to appear on Texas grocery shelves in two weeks and nationwide starting next month. General Mills said Texas is the first national college football champion to be featured on a Wheaties box since Nebraska in 1997.

LEADERSHIP BIG SPRING

The Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce Leadership Big Spring program will get under way next month with the first class set to be held Thursday, Feb. 9, at 8:30 a.m. in the chamber board room.

Leadership Big Spring is a nine-month program, held every second Thursday of the month, February through December except for June and July. The program takes participants on tours which integrate them with all aspects of Howard County life: industry, government, medical, agriculture, education and more.

Cost is \$300. Deadline to sign up is Jan. 25. Call 263-7641 for more information.

JOBLESS CLAIMS FALL

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of newly laid-off workers filing claims for unemployment benefits fell to the lowest level in more than five years last week, providing strong evidence that the labor market is shaking off the effects of a string of devastating hurricanes.

The Labor Department reported today that applications for unemployment benefits dropped by 35,000 to 291,000, the smallest number since Sept. 23, 2000, when the economy was in the concluding months of the longest economic expansion in history. The decline of 35,000 claims was much better than Wall Street had been expecting.

'06 Expedition is agile for its size and thirst

By JIM MATEJA
KRT

Might as well start off the new year with a vehicle that represents what went wrong with last year: a big sport-utility. This one is the 2006 Ford Expedition.

In case your memory has faltered only five days into the new year, big SUVs are the villains. They consume more than their share of petroleum, though when last we looked, not a single gallon of gas sold in this world carried anyone's name on it.

They make it difficult to pull out of a parking space because you can't see around them. Even some owners are upset because they ride and handle like trucks, which is understandable considering they are trucks.

No one warned consumers that SUVs were a tad unruly before those owners jumped the mid-size sedan ship in the name of four-wheel-drive fashion.

When gas prices spiked last year to more than \$3 a gallon, consumers and environmentalists called for an end to these monsters until they could deliver at least 30 to 40 m.p.g. just like all the "normal" cars on the road — such as your "high mileage" Cadillac, Lincoln, Lexus, Infiniti and Jaguar.

To more fully appreciate the concerns over big SUVs, we tested one marking an anniversary. Ten years ago, Ford introduced Expedition because consumers demanded them.

Unfortunately, the Expedition that arrived for testing was delivered in a snowstorm, which delayed our resentment toward it as long as it could get through the snow with all four wheels planted firmly on the ground.

Funny how environmentalists in their high-mileage, front-wheel-drive small cars neglected to make any untoward gestures at the big SUV passing while they were slipping away.

And have to compliment Ford for its 4WD system. Turn the dial on the dash. There's also a 4WD automatic setting that allows you to run in 2WD until wheel slippage is detected and then it switches to 4WD. No need to use 4WD low because it didn't snow that much.

Expedition is equipped with a 5.4-liter, 300-horsepower V-8, the only engine choice. The big V-8 does a more than adequate job in getting you moving from the light and into the passing lane with some spirit. And thanks to its 365 foot-pounds of torque, it doesn't have to take a deep breath to tow

or haul heavy loads.

But, and here's where the energy-conscious have a point, it is rated at only 14 m.p.g. city and 17 m.p.g. highway. Have to admit that in foul weather, we never considered what the next gallon of fuel would cost.

When the roads were dry, on the other hand, the eyes tended to look at the huge numbers outside the refueling stations.

One common big SUV complaint, the one about trucklike ride, didn't prove true. Ford has adjusted the suspension so we enjoyed almost sedanlike ride without being bounced and brutalized in the cabin. Bumps and abrasions in the road weren't jarring and jostling.

However, this thing rides on a 119-inch wheelbase and is 205.8 inches long overall to hold three rows of seats as well as a massive amount of luggage. So you'll lean in that seat when making a turn or taking a corner. You won't need much prodding to back off the accelerator when having to direct the steering wheel to the left or right.

Yet Ford has taken pains to account for the vehicle's size. AdvanceTrac stability control with roll-stability control is an option at \$595. The system was borrowed from Volvo, which offered it first in the XC90 SUV. It uses gyroscopic sensors to detect possible tilt and employ the standard four-wheel anti-lock brakes and/or reduce engine power to keep the vehicle roof-rack side up.

But when the motorist disregards speed or hits a curb at the wrong angle to trip the machine, a safety canopy air-bag curtain with rollover sensors deploys and stays deployed to protect occupants. It runs another \$595.

What Ford couldn't do in a vehicle this size, however, is make it agile enough to slip into or out of parking stalls with ease. Whether at the mall or the grocery store, you have to look for a spot to park where you won't be hemmed in and unable to open your doors.

Expedition also comes in too many flavors: XLS, XLT, XLT Sport, Eddie Bauer, Limited and King Ranch, the version we tested. Hopefully, it will offer fewer when the new Expedition comes out for 2007. King Ranch adds such gingerbread as aluminum wheels with King Ranch logos; floor mats with those logos; step bars though some would call them running boards (regardless, they are a necessity unless you top 6 feet tall); power folding and heated mirrors with built-in turn signals so



No shortage of room for people or their possessions in the new 2006 Ford Expedition.

those behind can better see your intention to turn; leather seats; and power third-row seats (standard King Ranch and Limited).

Power control gives the third-row seats character. Push the buttons along the side wall in the cargo hold to lower either or both the left or right side of the bench seat. Push the buttons again to raise them. The large cargo hold becomes massive with the third-row seats folded flat.

Plan your loading carefully and you can press the buttons to angle up the seat backs and slide the packages toward you so you don't have to stretch so far inside.

But there still is stretching to do. The hatch lid has a handle on the outside for easy opening. But the lid rises high for loading and unloading and to close it you have to reach far inside to grab a pull cord.

Getting into the third-row seat was made easy by the optional pair of second-row captain's chairs (\$795) rather than a three-passenger bench seat. The captain's chairs provided a wide aisle to the third, which was a surprise, with ample head, leg and arm room for adults. It actually has more leg room than in the slightly cramped second row.

A most pleasant option for the second- and third-rows is a DVD system with a pull-down screen and headphones. Anyone who traveled to grandma's without such a sys-

tem over the Christmas holidays will never know the ability of DVD technology to keep the rug rats at peace unless they buy one — at a hefty \$1,500.

Other noteworthy features include power plugs in the dash and rear cargo wall, a huge center console storage compartment under the armrest that has not only coin, tissue box and pen holder, but also room for a laptop and a host of DVDs.

Large and small stowage compartments dot the cabin, though the glove box is so tiny a pair of gloves will barely fit.

Other nice touches are a reverse-sensing system (\$255) that beeps a warning when objects are behind; a power moonroof (\$860); power adjustable pedals (standard in King Ranch); and power rear quarter windows (\$125) that bring fresh air to third-row passengers. Unlike some minivans, however, both windows open or close together, not separately.

The '06 Expedition King Ranch 4x4 starts at \$45,240, and includes air conditioning; power windows, door locks and driver's seat; and AM/FM stereo radio with CD and cassette player.

The price tag is one reason some who want the security of four- or all-wheel-drive are switching to smaller SUVs or crossovers. Low mileage and so-so handling are others.

Expedition sales are down about 24 percent from a year ago.



2006 Ford Expedition King Ranch 4x4

PRICE AS TESTED: \$49,240
WHEELBASE: 119 inches
LENGTH: 205.8 inches
ENGINE: 5.4-liter, 300-h.p. V-8 TRANSMISSION: 4-speed automatic

MILEAGE: City: 14 m.p.g.; Hwy: 17 m.p.g.

THE STICKER:
\$45,240 — Base
\$255 — Reverse-sensing system
\$795 — Second-row captain's chairs
\$860 — Power moonroof
\$595 — AdvanceTrac with roll-stability control
\$595 — Safety canopy with rollover sensors
\$125 — Power rear quarter windows
\$1,500 — Rear-seat DVD entertainment system
Add \$820 for freight

PLUSES

— No shortage of room for people or their possessions and sit-up-high seating so you can see what's coming down the road.
— Four-wheel-drive for any season or any reason motoring.

— Available goodies such as power folding third-row seat, power adjustable pedals, roll-stability control and safety canopy.
— Good ride considering the size.

MINUSES

— Mileage.
— Effects of size on handling as well as on slipping into and out of a parking space.

Q & A

Q. Do you have a list of upcoming hybrid vehicles, specifically the Volvo XC90?

— M.V., Racine, Wis.

A. Volvo said plans to offer a hybrid version of the XC90 SUV are still a few years off because it has to decide whether the XC90 or a smaller vehicle would get the hybrid treatment.

Q. Read your column about the Buick Lucerne offering portholes. You referred to the portholes dating to '70s and 80s models, but portholes were introduced on the 1949 Buick Roadmaster and were functional to ventilate the engine compartment.

— R.K., Wilmette, Ill.

A. Yes, portholes were first offered in 1949, and yes, engine ventilation, not decoration, was the reason they appeared. But the review simply said Buick used portholes, known as Ventiports, in the '70s and '80s to help distinguish a Buick from an Oldsmobile in the days of lookalike cars.

Send questions about cars and trucks to Jim Mateja, Chicago Tribune, 616 Atrium Drive, Vernon Hills, IL 60061-1523, or send e-mail, including name and hometown, to jmateja@tribune.com.



Trinity Baptist Church is proud to welcome one of America's most popular gospel trios

The Greenes

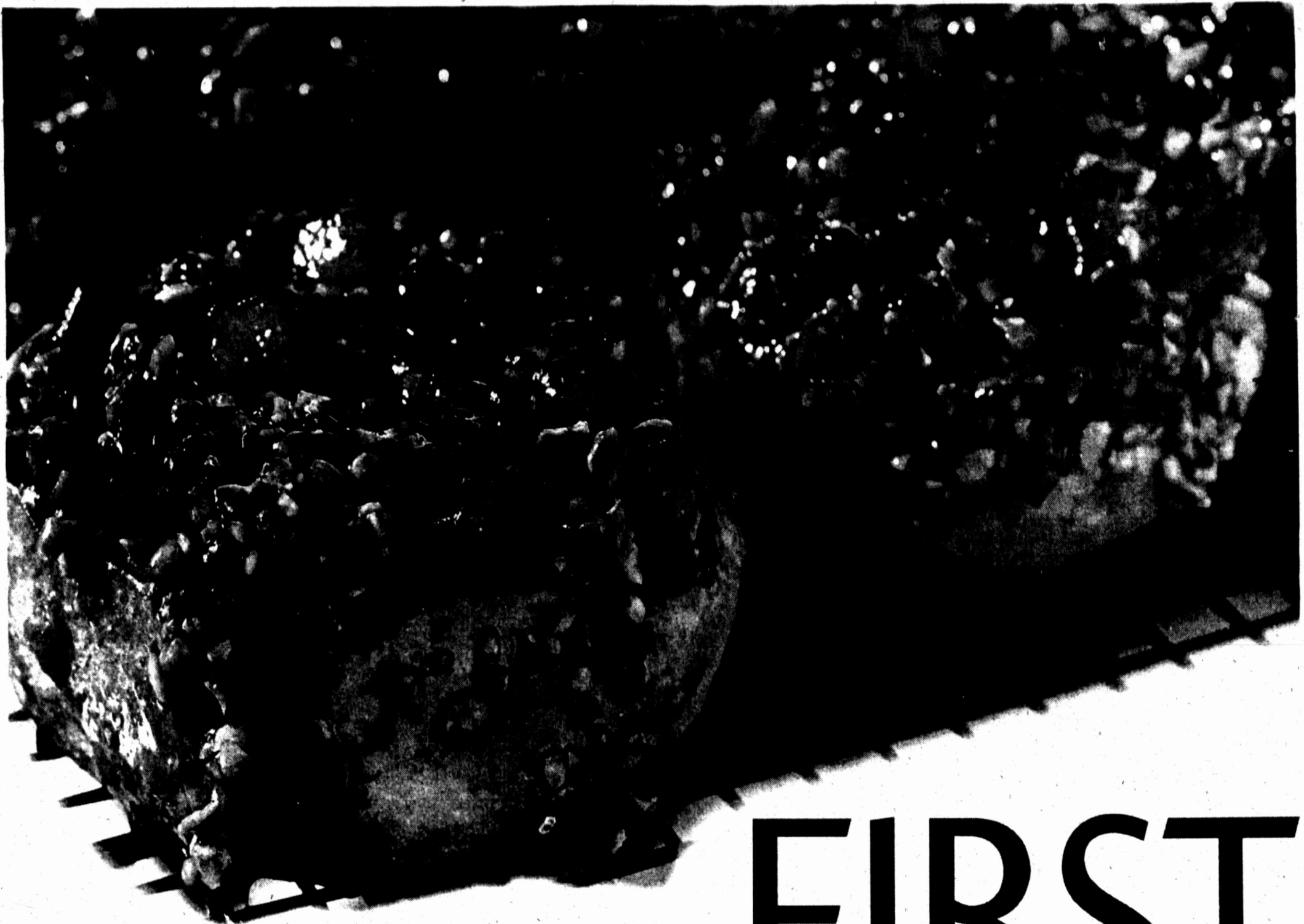
Sunday (January 8th)

6:00 PM

Trinity Baptist Church

810 Eleventh Place

(A nursery will be provided)



Enjoy the Best Things FIRST

A delicious, healthy breakfast puts a spin on your day — all day.

FAMILY FEATURES EDITORIAL SYNDICATE

Don't save the best 'til last — have it first, for breakfast! Why consider a knockout combo of pears, cranberries and hazelnuts just for dessert, when the same delicious trio can rev up your day with a healthy head start?

■ Nutrient-dense fresh pears are a great addition to breakfast because of their fiber/vitamin C/potassium content. They're low-calorie, plus they have no sodium, cholesterol or saturated fat.

■ Dried, fresh or frozen, or in juice form, cranberries are a true nutritional powerhouse to get your engine running. Cranberries provide antioxidants as well as a bacteria-blocking property that helps prevent urinary tract infections, some stomach ulcers and even gum disease.

■ Hazelnuts are a high quality source of protein, providing the energy needed to tackle a busy day, and there's more — they're a heart-healthy source of monounsaturated fat, vitamin E, magnesium and many other nutrients.

THE MORE, THE MERRIER

Pears, cranberries and hazelnuts can be "extras" as well as stars on the breakfast stage:

- Layer yogurt with cranberries and hazelnuts.
- Sprinkle dried cranberries or sliced pears on your breakfast cereal.
- Top your oatmeal with toasted hazelnuts and sliced pears.
- Blend cranberry juice and peeled, chopped pears into a smoothie.
- Bake fresh cranberries, pears and hazelnuts into muffins and quick breads.

For more ideas and recipes, visit www.hazelnutcouncil.org, www.usapears.org and www.uscranberries.com.

Cranberry Glazed Cinnamon Rolls

- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened, divided
- 1 1/2 cups hazelnuts, toasted, skin removed, chopped, divided
- 1 1/4 cups sugar, divided
- 1/2 cup cranberry juice cocktail
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon, divided
- 1 loaf frozen bread dough, thawed
- 2 pears, peeled, cored, diced
- 1 cup sweetened dried cranberries

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Heat 1/4 cup butter or margarine in 13- x 9- x 2-inch pan in oven until melted. Remove from oven. Stir in 1 cup hazelnuts, 1 cup sugar, cranberry juice and 1 teaspoon cinnamon until blended; set aside.

Mix remaining 1/4 cup sugar and 1 teaspoon cinnamon in small bowl; set aside.

Roll bread dough into 12- x 10-inch rectangle on lightly floured surface. Spread remaining 2 tablespoons butter or margarine over dough, leaving 1/2-inch edge. Arrange pears and cranberries on buttered dough. Sprinkle cinnamon-sugar mixture and remaining 1/2 cup hazelnuts over fruit.

Start at long edge of dough and roll into 12-inch long cylinder; pinch dough to seal. Cut into 12, 1-inch slices and place on mixture in pan. Cover with damp cloth and proof in warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

Bake 25 to 30 minutes until golden brown and roll sounds hollow when tapped. Immediately invert onto heat-proof plate.

Makes 12 cinnamon rolls

Nutritional Analysis per Serving: Calories 380 (37% Calories from Fat), 6g Protein, 57g Carbohydrate, 4g Fiber, 16g Fat, 4g Sat. Fat, 15mg Cholesterol, 270mg Sodium

Tangy Lemon Breakfast Fruit Strata

- 1 1/3 cups 1% milk
- 3 eggs
- 2/3 cup low-fat sour cream
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 1/2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 slices white bread, crust removed, torn into small pieces, divided
- 3/4 cup sweetened dried cranberries
- 1 pear, peeled, cored, cut into 1/4-inch-thin slices
- 3/4 cup hazelnuts, toasted, skin removed, chopped
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350°F. Whisk first 9 ingredients in medium bowl until smooth; set aside.

Place 3/4 of bread pieces in greased 8-inch square pan. Layer cranberries, remaining bread pieces and pears in pan. Pour milk-mixture over pears.

Mix hazelnuts, sugar and cinnamon in small bowl. Sprinkle over mixture in pan.

Bake 45 to 55 minutes until golden and knife inserted into center comes out clean. Let stand 5 minutes before cutting.

Makes 16 (2-inch) squares

Nutritional Analysis per Serving: Calories 120 (42% Calories from Fat), 3g Protein, 14g Carbohydrate, 1g Fiber, 6g Fat, 1.5g Sat. Fat, 40mg Cholesterol, 115mg Sodium

Hazelnut Harvest Waffle With Cranberry Pear Sauce

- 2 cups cranberries, fresh or frozen
- 1 cup orange juice
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 2 pears, peeled, cored, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 teaspoon bourbon or vanilla
- 1 cup low fat whipped topping
- 3/4 cup canned, solid-pack pumpkin
- 3/4 cup whole milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 2/3 cups pancake mix
- 1 cup hazelnuts, toasted, skin removed, chopped (plus additional to garnish, if desired)
- 1 1/4 teaspoons ground allspice
- Ground cinnamon, to garnish (if desired)

Bring cranberries, orange juice and sugar to slow boil over medium-high heat in medium saucepan. Cook 7 minutes. Add pears and continue to slow boil 6 to 8 minutes until berries burst, pears are softened and mixture is reduced to 2 cups. Remove from heat.

Stir bourbon or vanilla into whipped topping until blended; cover and refrigerate.

Whisk pumpkin, milk, eggs and oil in small bowl until blended. Stir in pancake mix, hazelnuts and allspice until blended. If mixture is too thick, add additional milk.

Spread 1 1/3 cups batter over preheated waffle iron. Cook as directed on mix package. Place 1/4 cup cranberry-pear sauce and dollop whipped topping over each waffle square. Garnish with ground cinnamon and chopped hazelnuts, if desired. Serve immediately.

Makes 4 (2-waffle squares each) servings

Nutritional Analysis Per Serving: Calories 750 (35% Calories from Fat), 16g Protein, 111g Carbohydrate, 11g Fiber, 30g Fat, 4.5g Sat. Fat, 120mg Cholesterol, 710mg Sodium



IN BRIEF

Big Spring sets date for football banquet

The Big Spring ISD football banquet will take place Jan. 12 in the high school cafeteria.

The public is invited to attend and tickets may be purchased in advance from Kay Cook at the ATC by calling 264-3862 or from Gene or Lana Piersfield at 816-1134. The cost is \$10.

Edwards close to becoming new head coach of K.C. Chiefs

NEW YORK (AP) — Herman Edwards is close to becoming the next Chiefs coach.

Kansas City and the Jets discussed a compensation package for Edwards, a person close to the situation said. Another person familiar with the negotiations said the talks were almost completed.

The Jets maintained the Chiefs haven't officially contacted them. Edwards' agent, Gary O'Hagan, said he hasn't spoken with either team.

Edwards, who guided the Jets to three playoff berths in five years, has two years left on his contract. He is one of the lowest-paid coaches in the league at \$2 million a year.

Cadillac, Merriman voted best rookies

NEW YORK (AP) — Carnell Williams won the The Associated Press NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year award.

The Tampa Bay running back nicknamed "Cadillac" rushed for 1,178 yards and six touchdowns, and was the catalyst in the Buccaneers' turnaround from also-ran to NFC South champion.

San Diego linebacker Shawne Merriman was the Defensive Rookie of the Year after recording a team-high 10 sacks.

Vikings plead not guilty in "boat party" incident

MINNETONKA, Minn. (AP) — Minnesota Vikings Daunte Culpepper, Bryant McKinnie and Fred Smoot have pleaded not guilty to charges related to the team's bawdy boating party.

Culpepper, McKinnie, Smoot and teammate Moe Williams face three misdemeanor charges each related to the party Oct. 6 on Lake Minnetonka. They were charged with indecent conduct, disorderly conduct and lewd or lascivious conduct.

Rangers finalize trade to get Eaton

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — The Texas Rangers completed their six-player trade with the San Diego Padres to acquire right-hander Adam Eaton and reliever Akinori Ogasawara.

In 'Vince' able

• Young snaps USC's 34-game winning streak with late TD run at Rose Bowl

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP Sports Writer

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — All season long, Texas put its championship hopes in Vince Young's hands — and he never failed to deliver.

With the national title down to a final play — fourth down and 5 yards to go — it was up to Young again, and the Longhorns loved their chances.

Texas' dynamic quarterback scrambled untouched for an 8-yard touchdown with 19 seconds left and the No. 2 Longhorns stunned No. 1 Southern California 41-38 in the Rose Bowl on Wednesday night.

"We never, ever, really thought we'd lose the ballgame," Texas coach

Mack Brown said.

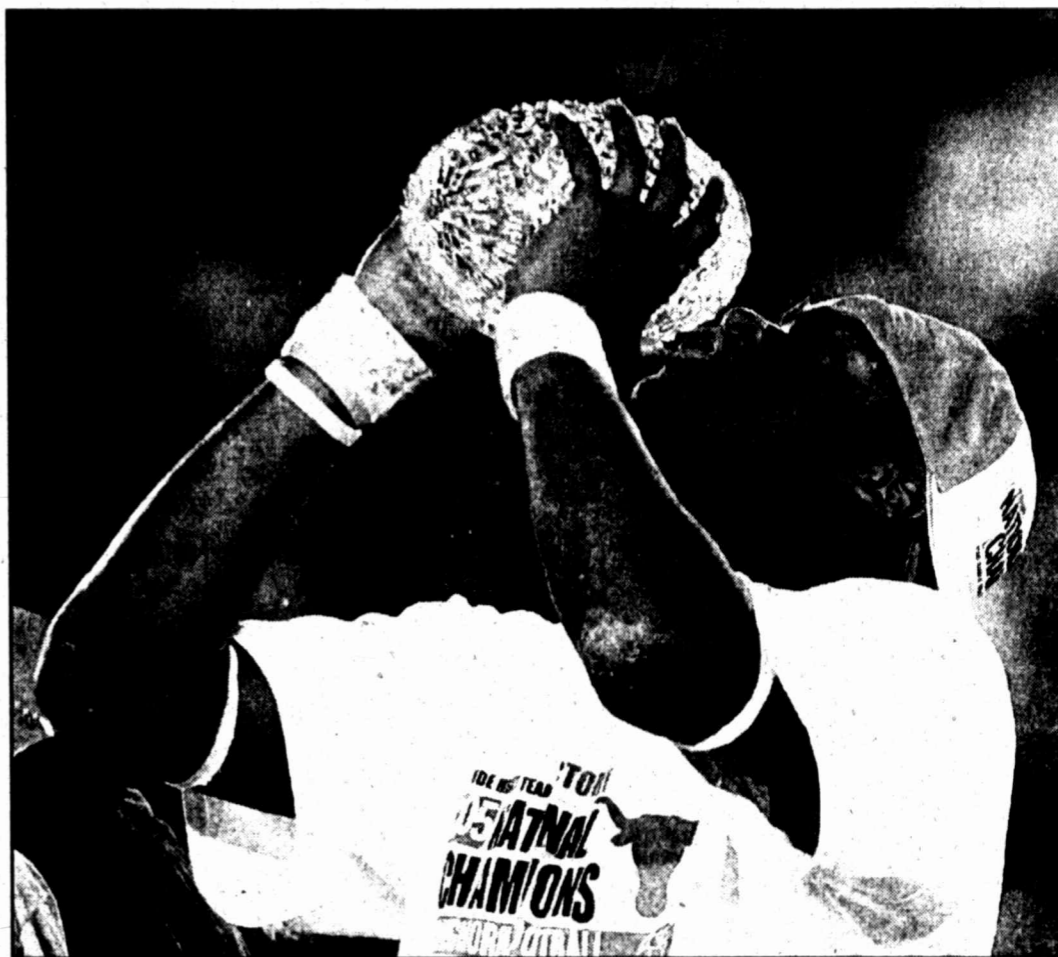
He did it all — and made sure Texas was second no more to USC and its Heisman Trophy twins, Reggie Bush and Matt Leinart.

"Do whatever it takes," Young said.

It was the ultimate revenge for Young, the bitterly disappointed runner-up to Bush for the Heisman last month.

At the Heisman presentation, Young had a blank stare and reluctantly clapped after he lost in a landslide to Bush. After winning the biggest team prize of all, he beamed with a satisfied smile, hugging anyone he could find.

Young ran for 200



KRT photo/Khempna Bouaphanh, Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Texas quarterback Vince Young kisses the trophy after their victory as No. 2 Texas beat No. 1 USC 41-38, Wednesday in the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif.

Brown gets win in 'big game' for Longhorns

By JIM VERTUNO
AP Sports Writer

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — For all the critics who poked fun at Mack Brown by calling him "Coach February," it's time to show a bit more respect.

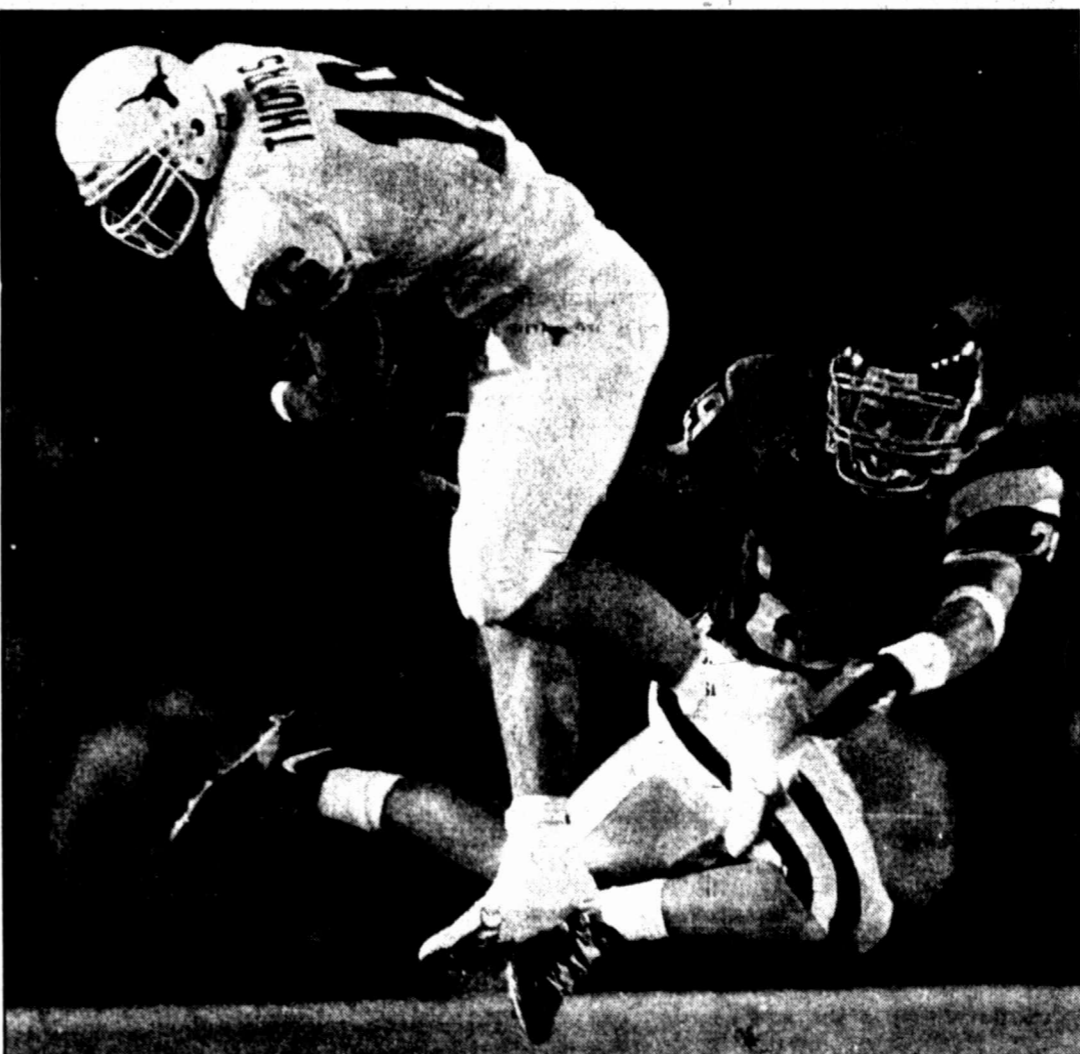
Calling him "National Champion" will do just fine.

After years of frustration and near-misses with teams from Tulane to North Carolina to Texas, the Longhorns coach finally shed the reputation of a coach who can't win the big one.

With a thrilling 41-38 Rose Bowl victory Wednesday night over No. 1 Southern California on the legs and right arm of quarterback Vince Young, the 54-year-old Brown won his first national championship and Texas' first outright title since 1969.

"It's not about me," Brown said. "That's why it didn't bother me then, and that's why I'm not mad at them now. They'll just be quiet for a while."

See BROWN, Page 2B



KRT photo/Ron Jenkins, Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Texas' David Thomas (16) eludes USC's Scott Ware (29) as No. 2 Texas beat No. 1 USC, 41-38, Wednesday in the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif.

Austin erupts in joy after Horns take down Trojans

By APRIL CASTRO
Associated Press Writer

AUSTIN — Euphoric Texas students and fans spilled onto the streets of Austin and made their way to a campus celebration to revel in the Longhorns' national title and come-from-behind

Rose Bowl victory late Wednesday night.

Seconds after Texas beat Southern California 41-38, the university lit the UT tower orange, the traditional signal of victory on the campus.

"This is the best thing that ever happened to Austin," said 21-year-old

junior Robert Schneider.

"This is the best that ever happened to me."

A fan dressed up as the Longhorn mascot Bevo ran down Guadalupe Street, the main drag along campus. Police closed the street to make

See FANS, Page 2B

Horns end season at top of AP final poll

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP Sports Writer

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — All season long, the No. 1 ranking belonged to Southern California — before Texas swiped it away at the end.

The Longhorns finished first, a unanimous choice, in The Associated Press Top 25 for the first time since 1969 after beating the Trojans 41-38 in the Rose Bowl on Wednesday night.

Not only did Texas end USC's 34-game winning streak, the Longhorns snapped USC's record string of 33 consecutive polls as No. 1.

Texas opened the season No. 2 behind USC and coach Mack Brown and his players never grumbled about being stuck behind the two-time defending national champions.

The Longhorns were fine with waiting for a chance to prove they were the best on the field — and they did.

Vince Young ran and

See POLL, Page 2B

Hawks keep hopes of No. 1 ranking intact after victory

• Howard takes down host in finale of Polk College Classic

By TROY HYDE
Sports Editor

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — Defense was the name of the game Wednesday night for the second-ranked Howard men's basketball team. And the Hawks passed another tough test and remained unbeaten after taking

down Polk Community College, 53-46, in the final game of the Polk College New Years Classic.

Freshman point guard Benny Valentine won his third straight tournament MVP award after leading the Hawks in the finale with 23 points and four steals.

Sophomore Dezmon Harris added 10 points, while sophomore Louis Rodgers and freshman Benson Akpan each

pulled down 11 rebounds.

Sophomore Charles Burgess, who was one rebound shy of a triple-double in the opener Monday, was also voted to the all-tournament team.

Howard improved to 16-0 with the win and will most likely be the top-ranked team in the nation after No. 1 Chipola College lost to Daytona Beach Community College, 96-91, in a tournament Dec. 16.



KRT photo/Steve Wustlich, Knight-Ridder Tribune
Maryland Terrapin forward James Grist (15) has the ball stolen by Texas A&M-Corpus Christi's Rashad Mintz (11) during first half action, Wednesday in College Park, Md. Mintz played at Howard College last year.

THURSDAY

	WFAA(2)	KMID(3)	UNI(4)	KPEJ(3)	KOSA(7)	KTLE(8)	KWES(9)	WTBS(11)	KMLM(12)	KOCV(13)	DISC(20)	SPIKE(22)	TNT(23)	BET(26)	DISN(27)	ESPN2(28)	ESPN(29)	USA(30)	SCIFI(32)
6	News (CC) Ent. Tonight	News West-Fortune	Spanish Piel de Otono	My Wife-Kids Raymond	News Ent. Tonight	La Tormando	News Be a Millionaire	Raymond Raymond	Joe McGee John Haggie	News-Laher	Discovery Diary of a Shark Man	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	Law & Order (CC) (DVS)	Live BET Style	Black Ent. That's Raven	College Basketball	PGA Golf Mercedes	Law & Order: SVU	Movie: Dragonheart
7	Dancing With the Stars	Dancing With the Stars	Contra Viento y Marea	Movie: The Hot	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	El Cuerpo del Deseo	Will & Grace Four Kings	Friends (CC)	Updates/Israel Biblical Israel	West Yax Jml TX Mindy Talk	Sharkbait Surviving	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	NBA Basketball	Movie: Air Bud	Villanova at Louisville	Championships - First Round	Movie: How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days	Movie: Dragon Storm (CC)	
8	Primetime (CC)	Primetime (CC)	Azul y Ahora	My Wife-Kids 70s Show	Without a Trace (CC)	Decisiones	ER (CC)	ER (CC)	To Be Announced	Great White Attack: True	Wildcat Police Videos	Sharkbait Surviving	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	Rockets at Cavaliers	The Ultimate Hunter	Buzz-Maggie Sister, Sister	Michigan State at Hirolo	SportsCenter (CC)	10 Days (CC)
9	News (CC) Nightline	News (CC) Nightline	Primer Impacto Noticiero Univ.	70s Show Raymond	News Late Show-	Noticias Tildadas y Mas	News Tonight Show	Movie: Set It Off	The Hour of Healing	American Shark (CC)	Wildcat Police Videos	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	at Golden State Warriors	NBA Basketball	In Living Color In Living Color	That's Raven That's Raven	College Basketball	BYU at Air Force (CC)	NFL Live Outside-Lines
10	Ent. Tonight Jimmy Kimmel	Ent. Tonight Jimmy Kimmel	La Hora Darbez	Backer (CC) Malcolm-Mid	Let'sman Late Late	Laura Al Rojo Vivo	Late Night: Conan O'Brien	Movie: Down in the Heart	Del Sanchez Jimmy Philips	Charles Rose (CC)	Sharkbait Surviving	CSI: Crime Scene Investg.	Inside the NBA (CC)	Game Head Blind Date	Phil of Future Kin Possible	BET After Dark That's Raven	ESPN Holy Oute Franky	NFL Live Outside-Lines	Law & Order: Criminal Intent
11	Live (CC) News (CC)	Extra (CC) Paid Program	Amigos y Risales (SS)	Backer (CC) King of the Hill	The Insider	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down	Movie: Down

DENNIS THE MENACE



"I MUST BE GETTING OLD, GINA. MY PARENTS GOT UP BEFORE I DID THIS MORNING."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Daddy, will you open up this radio to show PJ there aren't any little people inside?"

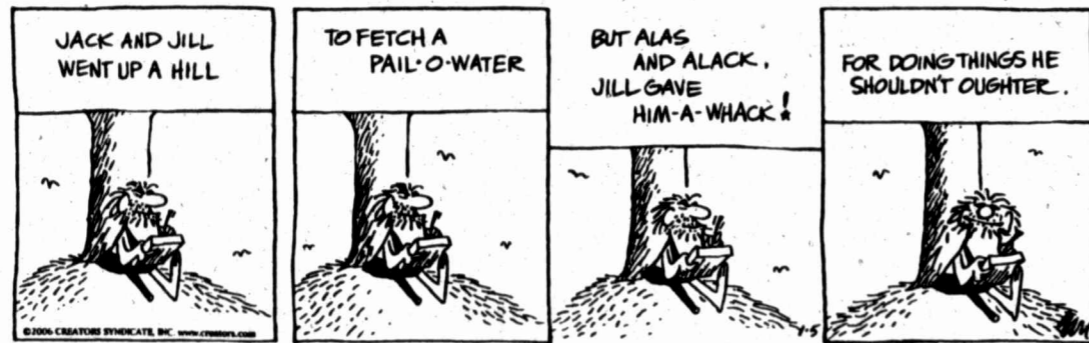
HAGAR



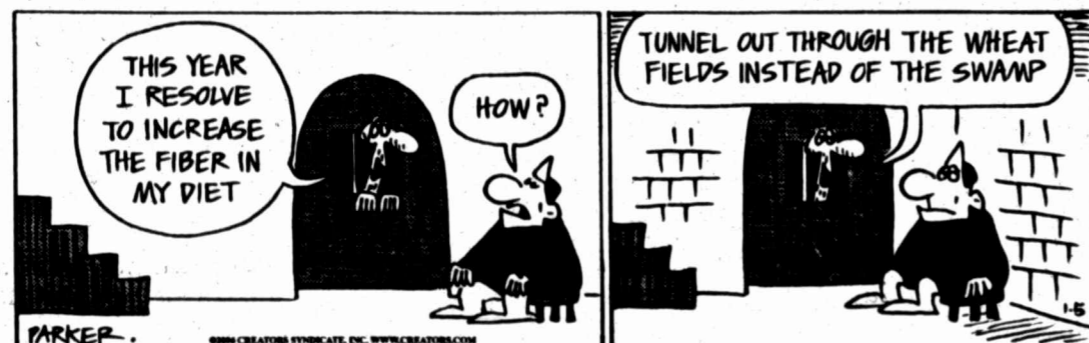
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BC



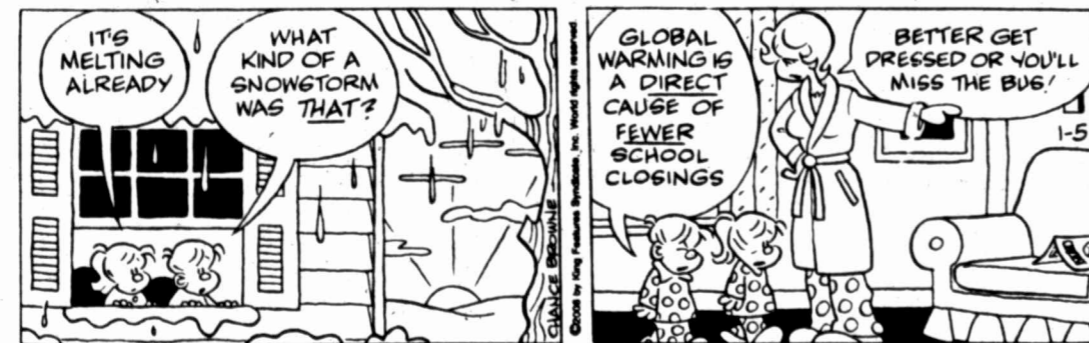
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AGNES



HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Thursday, Jan. 5, the fifth day of 2006. There are 360 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History:
On Jan. 5, 1896, the Austrian newspaper Wiener Presse reported the discovery by German physicist Wilhelm Roentgen of a type of radiation that came to be known as X-rays.
On this date:
In 1589, Catherine de Medici of France died at age 69.
In 1781, a British naval expedition led by Benedict Arnold burned Richmond, Va.
In 1895, French Capt. Alfred Dreyfus, convicted of treason, was publicly stripped of his rank. (He was ultimately vindicated.)
In 1925, Nellie T. Ross succeeded her late husband as governor of Wyoming, becoming the first female governor in U.S. history.
In 1933, the 30th president of the United States, Calvin

Coolidge, died in Northampton, Mass., at age 60.
In 1949, in his State of the Union address, President Truman labeled his administration the Fair Deal.
In 1970, Joseph A. Yablonski, an unsuccessful candidate for the presidency of the United Mine Workers of America, was found murdered with his wife and daughter at their Clarksville, Pa., home.
UMWA President Anthony Boyle and three others were convicted of the killings.
In 1981, British police caught truck driver Peter Sutcliffe with murder; he was later convicted of killing 13 women as the "Yorkshire Ripper."
Five years ago: In a blizzard of last-minute executive orders, President Clinton curtailed road building and logging on federal forest land.
One year ago: President Bush opened a new drive for caps on medical malpractice awards, contending the limits would lower health care costs.
Today's Birthdays: Former Vice President Walter F. Mondale is 78. Actor Robert Duvall is 75. Football Hall-of-Fame coach Chuck Noll is 74. King Juan Carlos of Spain is 68. Talk show host Charlie Rose is 64. Actress-director Diane Keaton is 60. Rhythm-and-blues musician George "Funky" Brown (Kool and the Gang) is 57. Rock musician Chris Stein (Blondie) is 56. Rock musician Kate Schellenbach (Luscious Jackson) is 40. Actress Heather Paige Kent is 37. Rock singer Marilyn Manson is 37. Actress January Jones is 28.
Thought for Today: "Wisdom is divided into two parts: (a) having a great deal to say, and (b) not saying it."
- Anonymous.

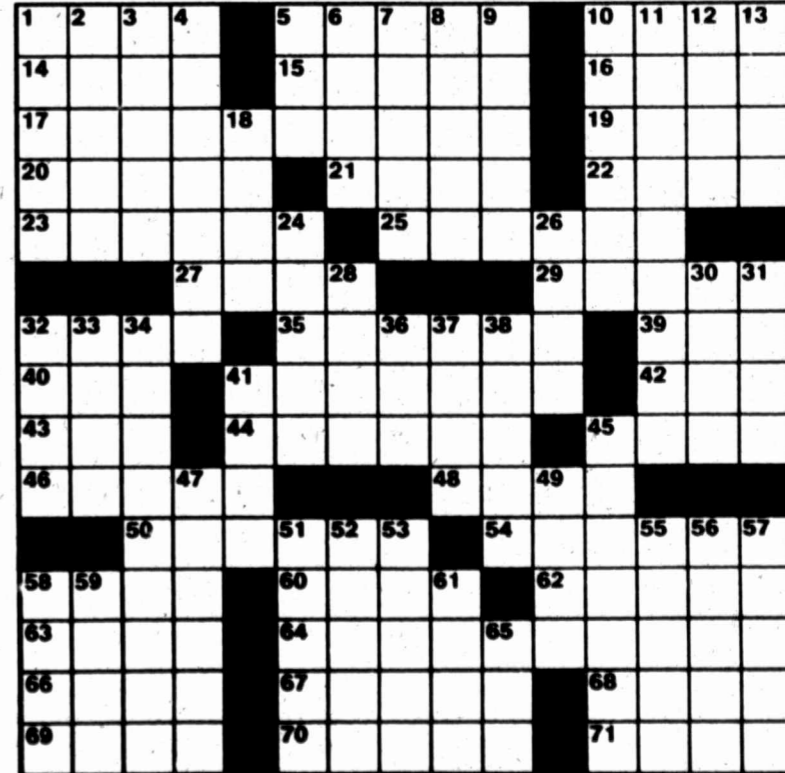
Answer to previous puzzle

SKIMS	ORALS	TAP
ANNIE	VISIT	RIO
FACT	CHECKER	ELM
EVA	TUNE	IPASS
RENOIR	BOUIS	PASS
WOLF	GANG	PUCK
RISEN	BRULE	AREA
ANT	MITTS	ELL
ATAS	ALTI	FOSSE
TORTILL	ACHIP	ELL
BOGEY	ATTILA	STOWE
ATIT	DAD	PIA
TRACK	RECORD	ERR
INTRO	SINGE	WED
TALES	TATER	

Newsday Crossword

SAY CHEESE by Patrick Jordan
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS**
- 1 Made broadcloth
 - 5 Capital in the Himalayas
 - 10 John Candy comedy series
 - 14 Ladd of film
 - 15 Pale hues
 - 16 "America" pronoun
 - 17 Spicy cookie
 - 19 Newsweek cover number
 - 20 "little bit helps"
 - 21 Tokyo serving
 - 22 Irish stew ingredient
 - 23 Dude ranch, e.g.
 - 25 Satirization
 - 27 Lord's servant
 - 29 Poise, e.g.
 - 32 Klutzy types
 - 35 Far from genteel
 - 39 That woman's
 - 40 61, to Cicero
 - 41 Items involved in this puzzle's theme
 - 42 Score on an aced hole
 - 43 Cub Scout group
 - 44 Dined at a diner
 - 45 Mythological river
 - 46 Perfect places
 - 48 Word form for "outer"
 - 50 Long-winged seabird
 - 54 Gave (to)
 - 58 Potpourri containers
 - 60 Cupid alias
 - 62 T-shirt size
 - 63 Did a dismount
 - 64 Overall perspective
 - 66 Area
- DOWN**
- 1 Reno transaction
 - 2 Pimiento surrounder
 - 3 Wind-direction signalers
 - 4 Occupy the attention of
 - 5 Env. enclosure
 - 6 Cat's "Back off!"
 - 7 Paquin and Moffo
 - 8 Vampire vanquisher
 - 9 Poplar tree
 - 10 Phonograph needle
 - 11 Mean-spirited remark
 - 12 Locker-room group
 - 13 Predicate part
 - 18 Brontë character
 - 24 10/31 option
 - 26 Fortnight's 14
 - 28 Starlet's goal
 - 30 Counting-rhyme starter
 - 31 Cretaceous predator, briefly
 - 32 Shoppe preceder on signs
 - 33 Hewn
 - 34 Contractual details
 - 36 '20s car
 - 37 "I can't deny that"
 - 38 Concoct, as a plot
 - 41 Assign roles
 - 45 Some Mozart music
 - 47 Lipton alternative
 - 49 Soft mineral
 - 51 Up one's offer at an auction
 - 52 All My Children role
 - 53 Get online via password
 - 55 Pharmacy inventory
 - 56 Marsh bird
 - 57 Actions
 - 58 Mardi Gras music
 - 59 Baby-wipes additive
 - 61 Blueprint detail
 - 65 Indignation



That's Racin'

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Precious commodity

By JIM UTTER
Knight Ridder Newspapers

In recent years, testing has played a more prominent role in the success of teams in NASCAR.

Several NASCAR teams — particularly the large multi-car organizations — have sent their teams to series and non-series tracks around the country gathering vital data to help all of their teams perform better.

With NASCAR's decision to restrict testing at tracks used in the Nextel Cup and Busch series to just a handful of dates in 2006, track time will become a precious commodity.

For instance, when the first batch of Cup teams that report to Daytona International Speedway on Monday complete their three-day test, they will be unable to test at the track at any other point during the season.

The Cup series has six tests scheduled this season — at Daytona, Fla.; Las Vegas; Charlotte, N.C.; Richmond, Va., and Homestead, Fla. The Busch Series has four — Daytona, Las Vegas, Charlotte and Richmond.

In 2005, teams were limited to five two-day tests and four one-day tests, with rookies getting seven two-day tests and five one-day tests. Any tests at tracks not used in the series did not count against the limit, a policy that will remain unchanged.

The biggest impact could land on the shoulders of the series' rookies.

Drivers, owners and crew chiefs have lauded additional testing as an important part of a new driver's development. The added track time now will have to come at tracks not used in the Cup or Busch series, or from participation in other series.

"I think (the new policy) is definitely a disadvantage to a rookie. Any of the guys that are running for rookie of the year that haven't run more than seven races I feel should get more opportunities to test," said Hendrick Motorsports owner Rick Hendrick.

"You want to bring fresh blood in and sponsors want to do well. It's not really fair to see a young guy whose first year in the Cup series be limited to those six tests."

Hendrick has had his share of rookie drivers recently in the Nextel Cup series.

New restrictions limit the amount of time drivers get to test at tracks on the Nextel Cup circuit



RUSTY JARRETT FOR NASCAR
Dale Earnhardt Inc.'s Steve Hmiel, Tony Eury Jr., Martin Truex Jr. and Tony Eury Sr. look on as Dale Earnhardt Jr. runs a test lap at Atlanta Motor Speedway in October 2005. This season, NASCAR will limit the dates teams will have to test at tracks on the Nextel Cup circuit.

Testing schedule

Daytona International Speedway

Dates	Event
Jan. 9-11	Nextel Cup Series testing — odd numbers in car owner points
Jan. 13-15	NASCAR Truck Series — all teams
Jan. 16-18	Nextel Cup Series testing — even owners' points
Jan. 20-22	Busch Series testing — all teams

Las Vegas Motor Speedway

Dates	Event
Jan. 30-Feb. 1	Nextel Cup Series testing — all teams
Feb. 6-8	Busch Series testing — all teams

All other test dates will be announced at a later time. SOURCE: NASCAR

Kyle Busch, who drives Hendrick's No. 5 Chevrolets, won rookie of the year honors in 2005. Brian Vickers, who drives Hendrick's No. 25 Chevys, was a rookie in 2004 and Jimmie Johnson, driver of Hendrick's No. 48, debuted his first full season in 2002.

"It's definitely going to make a difference but at the same time when you see a guy with the talent that Kyle Busch has or Carl Edwards, your gut will tell you (if he'll succeed)," Hendrick said.

"After you've been doing this as long as Jack (Roush) and I have been doing it, it doesn't take long to see that (a) guy has really got it."

Additional testing could come in handy, particularly with several members of the 2006 Cup rookie class.

Reed Sorenson has just two Cup starts, Brent Sherman none, David Stremme four and Clint Bowyer one.

Two-time Busch Series champion Martin Truex Jr. has the most Cup experience of the group with nine starts over the past two seasons. Joe Gibbs Racing newcomers Denny Hamlin and J.J. Yeley have seven and six starts, respectively.

"The thing that I've encouraged NASCAR to do — and the thing I hope they do — is provide adequate testing for rookies so that (the driver) doesn't create a problem that was avoidable through just a little more experience," said team owner Jack Roush.

Roush added a rookie must be "able to realize his potential for his sponsor, (because) lacking that, rookies won't be able to get a ride."

Detractors of the new testing policy are not limited to rookies, however. Some track officials have problems with the plan to pre-select all the testing venues.

"NASCAR's new testing policy for the Cup series may be beneficial for teams, but for the speedways it is a lost promotional opportunity," said Texas Motor Speedway president Eddie Gossage.

"Since they are not allowed to test here now, we've lost a critical opportunity for vital pre-race media coverage in a major media market that could very likely hurt our ticket sales and NASCAR's TV ratings."

POLL POSITION

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION
Chevrolet won the 2005 NASCAR Nextel Cup manufacturer title. What brand will lead the way in the coming season?
Cast your vote at: www.thatsracin.com

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION
Which Cup team has made the best moves in gearing up for the 2006 season?
Number of votes: 10,112

Team	No. of votes	Percent
Petty Enterprises	5,550	55%
Dale Earnhardt Inc.	1,663	16%
Another team	892	9%
Penske Racing South	580	6%
Bill Davis Racing	520	5%
Joe Gibbs Racing	430	4%
Richard Childress Racing	376	4%
Chip Ganassi Racing	101	1%

STOP 'N GO

KHI names new crew chief to No. 33 team

Kevin Harvick Inc. has named Chris Rice crew chief of its No. 33 NASCAR Truck Series team and two-time Truck Series champion Ron Hornaday for the 2006 season.

Rice previously worked as crew chief for Busch Series driver Stacy Compton at ST Motorsports.

Before 2005, Rice was crew chief at Bill Davis Racing and worked with Elliott Sadler on a Late Model team from 1993 to 1996. Winning at his hometown track, Rice led Sadler and the team to the 1995 South Boston Speedway Truck Championship.

Hornaday finished fourth in points in 2005 with the KHI team and earned his second career Truck Series most popular driver award.

"I've known Chris for a number of years," said Hornaday. "He is the last piece to the puzzle to make this race team complete. We are going to go out and run this 2006 season like we did last year, racing as hard as we can for every spot week after week. Chris has the knowledge to lead this team to a championship run."

— ThatsRacin.com

New Truck series team looks forward to 2006

Rick and Cathy Woodard, along with Eddie Sharp, announced the formation of a new partnership, Woodard & Sharp Racing, with plans to compete full time in the NASCAR Truck Series next season.

The partners have purchased a 25,000-square-foot shop in Denver, N.C., from which the team will field Dodge Ram trucks for Rookie of the Year candidate Boston Reid in all 25 Truck Series events in 2006. Patrick Donahue, a 14-year NASCAR veteran, will fill the role of crew chief.

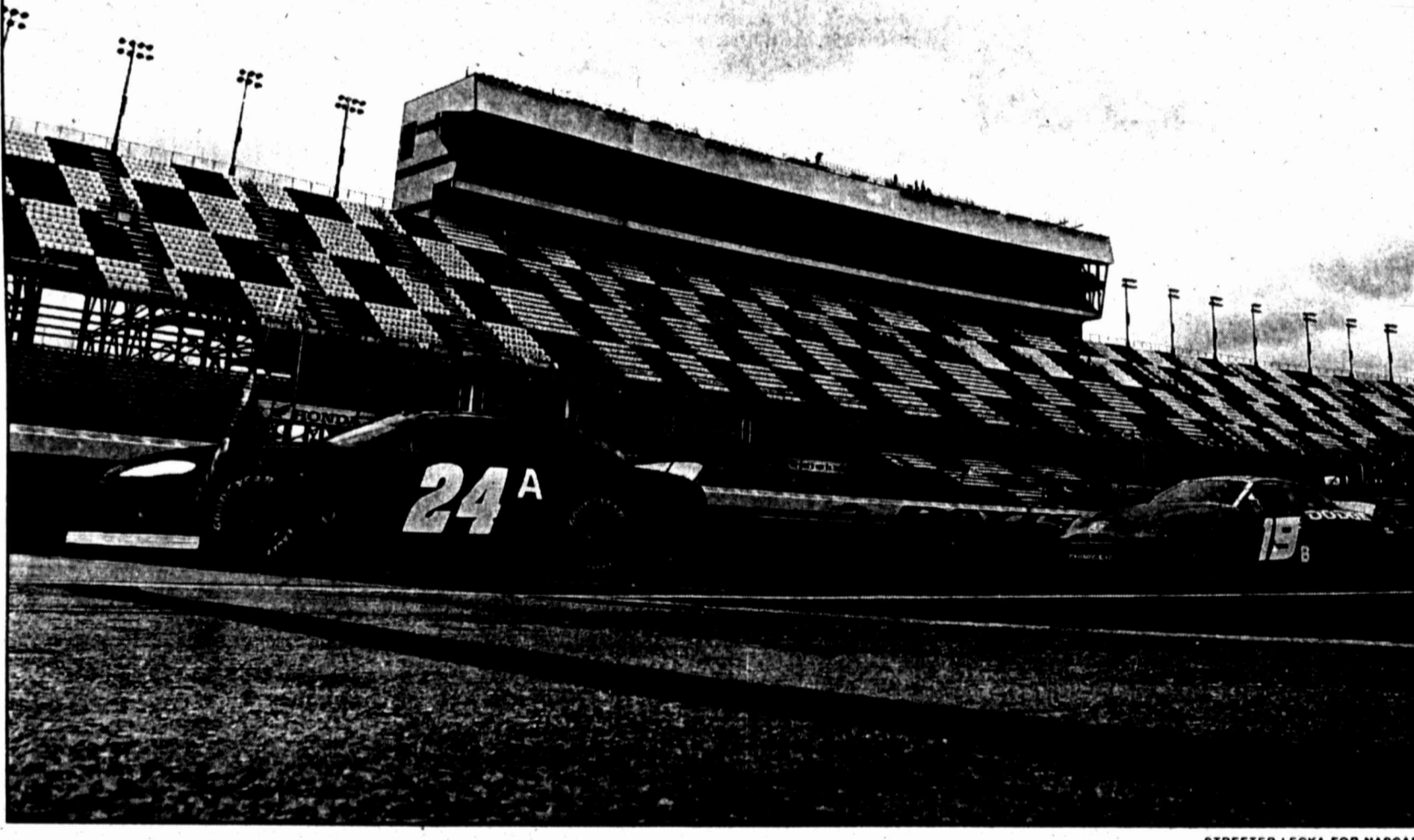
The Woodards and Sharp met last year when both were involved in the Automobile Racing Club of America series. Rick and Cathy Woodard were co-owners of the No. 13 Boca Bay Racing entry in 2005. Sharp, a 20-year racing veteran, heads up Dodge's ARCA driver development program.

"I'm excited about the opportunity," said Sharp, who will also serve as the team's general manager. "The Woodards and I are taking our time and doing this the right way. We're building a solid team of quality people, and people will see we're in this for the long haul."

While Woodard & Sharp Racing is a new entity, the team is further demonstrating its commitment by surrounding itself with NASCAR veterans. In addition to the experience Sharp brings, the organization has entered into a technological partnership with Ray Evernham and Evernham Motorsports, who will serve as the team's engine supplier.

Donahue was part of Hendrick Motorsports' championship seasons with Evernham and driver Jeff Gordon in 1995, 1997 and 1998. He later worked with the Gordon/Evernham NASCAR Busch Series team and at Evernham Motorsports. Most recently, Donahue was the crew chief at Robby Gordon Motorsports.

— ThatsRacin.com



STREETER LECKA FOR NASCAR

Making a resolution to toast great achievements in 2006

Year-end stories can be clichés, but when you reach this point on the calendar it really is hard not to stop for a minute and take stock.

Next week, I'll arrive in Daytona Beach, Fla., for NASCAR testing. A couple of weeks there, and then a week of the Lowe's Motor Speedway media tour in Charlotte, N.C., will barely leave time to get the laundry done and the car packed to return for Daytona Speedweeks.

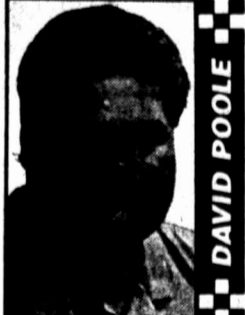
This will be my 10th season covering NASCAR for the Charlotte Observer, and for some reason that's had me thinking, too.

While every season takes on its own characteristics, it's easy to fall into a routine and mistake it for rhythm. Every week at the track, I see what happens when good teams let that happen. Good teams don't mean to lose that tiny edge

that makes them better than most, but they do. And it's unbelievably hard to get it back.

So I've been trying to decide if there's anything besides a few new wind shirts and a bunch of empty notebooks needed to start off a new year. What I keep coming back to is the Allstate 400 that Tony Stewart won at Indianapolis Motor Speedway on his way to the 2005 Nextel Cup championship.

After Stewart had celebrated with pretty much everybody in Indiana that Sunday afternoon, he got to the media center and it was only a matter of time before somebody asked whether he still wanted to win the Indianapolis 500 now that he'd won a stock-car race at the track he'd always dreamed of racing and winning on.



DAVID POOLE

As it turns out, Stewart said his father, Nelson, had already brought up the topic.

Maybe it had been 20 minutes since he made a lifelong dream come true. Perhaps it was 30.

However long, it wasn't long enough.

Why do we feel compelled to look for the holes in the resumes of people in sports?

It's not just the media, or parents like Nelson Stewart who have shared their child's dreams of winning at some ultimate level. It's all of us, fans of all sports who seem determined to dwell on what a person hasn't done rather than celebrate what has been accomplished.

Dan Marino never won a championship. Until April, Roy Williams hadn't either. Mark Martin still hasn't, not in NASCAR's top series. But my heavens, look at what they have done.

Duke has a marvelous men's basketball team this season. But if the Blue

Devils run into a team in the NCAA tournament that hits 20 3-pointers and beats them, does that make Mike Krzyzewski and his team failures?

I am not saying I plan to be all sunshine and daffodils in writing about NASCAR in 2006. The truth is the truth, and that's what you write. People fall short of expectations and that's news.

Jeff Gordon won four races, including the Daytona 500, in 2005, but it was a bigger deal in the grand scheme of things that he missed the Chase for the Nextel Cup. Dale Earnhardt Jr. and his team had an awful year, and they don't need anyone to tell them that. Their ability to bounce back and improve will be among this year's big stories.

But I'm resolved to take a new perspective to the track this year, an acknowledgement of just what a remarkable thing it is for anybody to experience the joy of winning a Nextel Cup race — or a World Series game or a PGA tournament.

I keep a chart of birth dates of all who have won Cup races, and have divided that into birth years. Eight men born in 1926 went on to win at least one race in NASCAR's top series. Since 1932, that number has never been higher than five, and since 1941 it has been no higher than four.

Here's the perspective part. In recent years about 2 million male children have been born in this country annually. If it's a good year, maybe four of them wind up winning a race in the Cup series. Those are the incredible odds Carl Edwards, Kasey Kahne and Kyle Busch beat in 2005.

Going back to Indianapolis in August, I asked Stewart if winning at the Brickyard was everything he'd dreamed it would be.

"When you have something like this so big happen in your life, you really just don't want that day to end," he said.

Here's to more days like that for all of us in 2006.

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