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Page 7

VOLUME 102, NUMBER 237

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2006

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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 WEEKEND

Commissioners call for vote on contentious jail bond issue

□ Corrections to existing jail are going slowly. See Page 3.

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

Howard County commissioners voted unanimously Monday morning to place a \$10 million bond item on the

November election ballot in hopes of financing a new jail facility.

Although the court voted 5-0 in favor of the item, Commissioner Gary Simer expressed serious reservations.

"I want people to know I'm still not in favor of a 144-bed jail," said Simer. "However, I am in favor of putting it before the

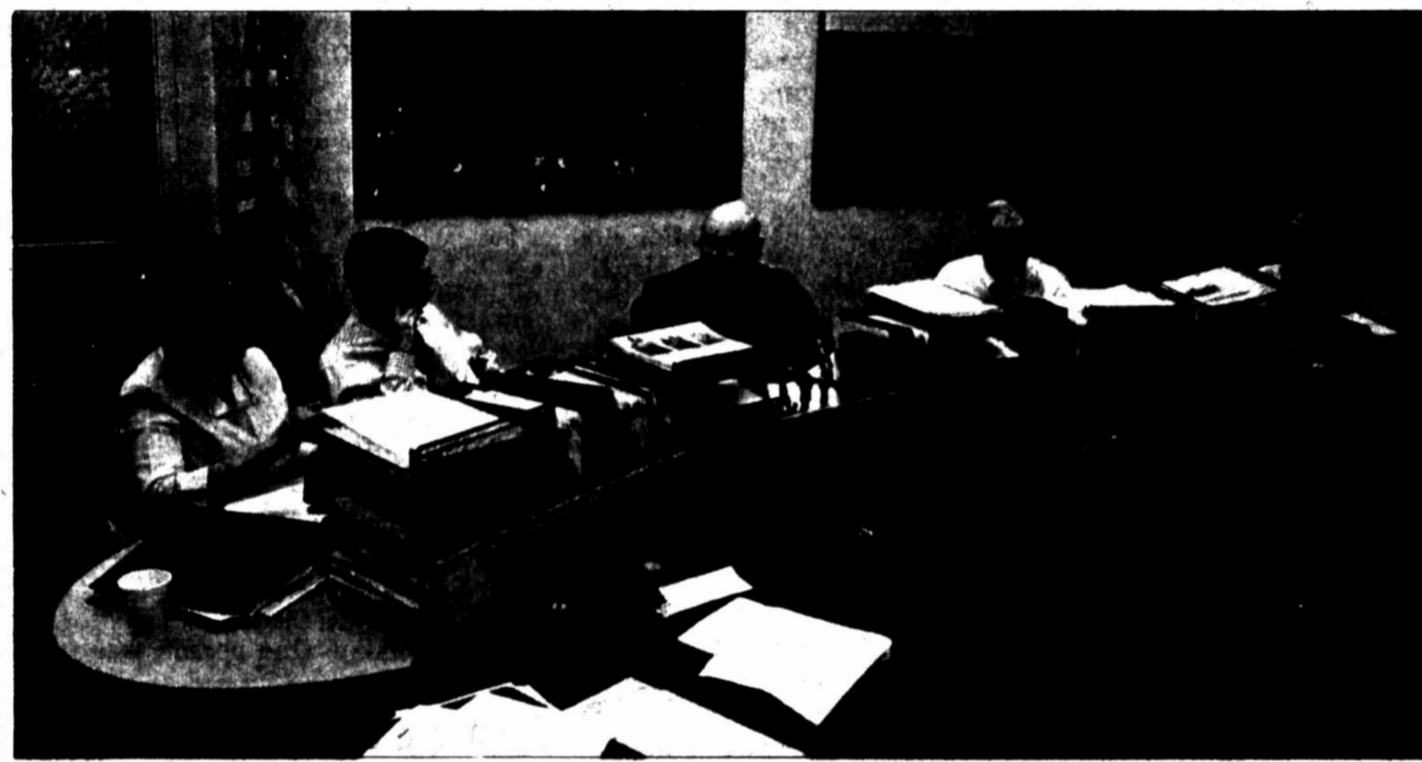
voters." Consideration of a new jail facility began more than two years ago when commissioners identified jail overcrowding and non-compliance with state jail laws as ongoing and

long-term problems.

Earlier this year, commissioners voted 4-1 in favor of building a new 144-bed jail, with Simer voting against the measure, citing size and location as reasons.

In a statement read by Commissioner Bill Crooker, commissioners

See **BOND**, Page 3



Howard County commissioners vote in favor of placing a \$10 million bond issue on the November ballot to finance a new jail facility during Monday's meeting of the court.

County to consider 48.787-cent tax rate; will move part-time jailer to full-time slot

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

Howard County commissioners agreed Monday to pursue a 48.787 cent tax rate for 2006, translating into a 5.7 cent drop compared to last year's numbers, thanks to higher valuations throughout the area.

Commissioners are expected to vote on the proposed rate — 48.787 cents per \$100 valuation — during

the court's next meeting, which is slated for Sept. 11.

A public hearing during Monday's meeting concerning the tax rate — the second and final hearing — drew no comments from local taxpayers or the commissioners.

Commissioners have until Sept. 25 to adopt a tax rate.

The court also held a short budget session Monday morning, hearing from Sheriff Dale Walker,

who requested the court change one of the jail positions from part-time to full-time.

"The jail employee that handles transporting the prisoners is currently part-time, and it looks like he may decide to retire at the end of the year," said Walker. "Just this morning I got to see how many hours he is working, and it really surprised me. As a part-

See **TAX RATE**, Page 3

Write-in

Coahoma man will seek county judge post as independent candidate

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

Local rancher Mark Barr won't go uncontested in the November race for Howard County judge after all, as Coahoma resident John Wayne Metcalf is expected to file as a write-in candidate today.

According to Margarita Durand-Hollis, chairman of the Howard County Republican Party, Metcalf will run as an independent candidate, but with the backing of the local GOP.

"Because of the ruling See **METCALF**, Page 3



Metcalf

from the Texas Secretary of State's Office, we can't make a new nomination," said Durand-Hollis. "However, what we can do is offer our support and endorsement of the candidate."

Metcalf, who is a member of the Coahoma School Board and director of public works for the city of Coahoma, said his decision to run the race didn't come lightly.

"I have a lot of interest in Howard County," said Metcalf. "I've lived here all my life and I have a serious interest in the future and safety of the county. That's what made me decide to run for coun-

Howard College district enrollment up: Officials; budget, tax rate OK'd

By **STEVE REAGAN**
Staff Writer

Summer enrollment at Howard College campuses increased slightly from the previous year, college trustees learned Monday.

Dr. Cheryl Sparks, HC president, said 1,370 students enrolled for summer courses at campuses in Big Spring, San Angelo, Lamesa and SouthWest Collegiate Institute of the Deaf. That figure represents an increase of 31 students from the same time last year, she added.

Contact hours — the number of hours students

are in class or labs — also increased from the previous year by just less than 12,000 hours.

Sparks said contact hours are important to the college because they largely determine how much state financing the district receives.

"When we have an increase or at least maintain our contact hours, that's important, because we're financed based on that," Sparks said.

Summer courses at the Howard campuses are mostly filled by "native" students who are continuing work toward their

See **COLLEGE**, Page 3

Ramsey investigation crashes once again

By **CHASE SQUIRES**

Associated Press Writer

BOULDER, Colo. (AP) — The lack of a DNA match between John Mark Karr and evidence from the killing of JonBenet Ramsey set prosecutors back nearly 10 years, but they promised to continue searching for the 6-year-old beauty queen's killer.

"This case is not closed," said District Attorney Mary Lacy, who planned to further explain her decision at a news conference Tuesday.

JonBenet's aunt, Pamela

Paugh, said Tuesday that she wasn't terribly shocked to learn that Karr's public confession to being with JonBenet when she died didn't hold up.

"I think one of two things is going on: Either he is quite disturbed, and in that respect needs a lot of help and care, or he has perpetrated quite the fraud on the American public and the victims' families, and he needs help and a lot of care," Paugh told CBS' "The Early Show."

"For us, this isn't a story that ebbs and flows — this is real life. So we have to maintain a

certain amount of calmness through anything that happens. Otherwise you can be on a rollercoaster every week of your life."

JonBenet's father found the little girl's body in the basement of their Boulder home on the day after Christmas 1996. For years, suspicion has focused on either an intruder or the girl's parents, John and Patsy Ramsey.

Karr, a 41-year-old schoolteacher fascinated with JonBenet and Polly Klaas, a murdered California girl, said after his arrest in Thailand ear-

lier this month that he was with JonBenet at the time of her slaying, which he called an accident.

But Lacy said DNA tests did not put Karr at the crime scene.

Prosecutors suggested in court papers that Karr was just a man with a twisted obsession who confessed to a crime he didn't commit. Karr had made graphic claims in a series of e-mails about JonBenet's killing, describing sexual acts with her, her death and writing at one point that he envisioned Johnny Depp playing him in a movie about how he killed

JonBenet. He wrote that the movie would make \$1 billion.

Karr was being held at the Boulder jail until he can be sent to Sonoma County, Calif., to face misdemeanor child pornography charges dating to 2001. An extradition hearing was scheduled for Tuesday afternoon.

Karr was never formally charged in the slaying. In court papers, Lacy defended the decision to arrest him and bring him back to the United States for further investigation, say

See **RAMSEY**, Page 3

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JEFFS ARRESTED

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A polygamist Mormon sect leader who was on the FBI's Most Wanted List has been arrested and faces sexual misconduct charges for allegedly arranging marriages between underage girls and older men, authorities said Tuesday.

Warren Steed Jeffs, 50, was taken into custody after he and two other people were pulled over late Monday by a Nevada Highway Patrol trooper on Interstate 15 just north of Las Vegas.

The leader of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was wanted in Utah and Arizona on suspicion of sexual misconduct.

HORNBUCKLE SENTENCED

FORT WORTH (AP) — A jury sentenced the Rev. Terry Hornbuckle to 15 years in prison Monday afternoon for sexually assaulting three women, including two who attended his Agape Christian Fellowship in Arlington.

Hornbuckle, the 44-year-old founder of the church, was also ordered to pay a \$10,000 fine for each assault conviction.

Hornbuckle did not show any reaction as he was sentenced to 14 years for one sexual assault, 10 years for another and 15 years for the third. Hornbuckle attorney Mike Heiskell said his client was "depressed and down" about the sentence.

BUT WAS HE BUCKED UP?

BEIJING (AP) — You can't teach an old dog new tricks — like driving.

A woman in Hohhot crashed her car while giving her dog a driving lesson, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

No injuries were reported, although the vehicles involved were slightly damaged.

The woman, identified only by her surname, Li, said her dog "was fond of crouching on the steering wheel and often watched her drive," according to Xinhua.

"She thought she would let the dog 'have a try' while she operated the accelerator and brake," the report said. "They did not make it far before crashing into an oncoming car."

Obituaries

John Frederic Forks



On Saturday, Aug. 26, Dr. John "Sock" Frederic Forks ascended to Heaven after losing a three-year battle with colon cancer.

A prominent OB/GYN for almost 30 years, John touched the lives of so many people. He will be sorely missed by all those fortunate enough to have known him.

John will be remembered most for being a devoted husband, a loving father, and a compassionate man. He is dearly loved.

He was preceded in death by his father, Louis, and his brother, Paul.

John is survived by his wife of 40 years, Karen; children, Jason Forks and wife Kara, Kris Forks and wife Jenny and Kacey Forks; grandchildren, Grayson, Avery, Maddox, Hallie and Tristan; mother, Rhoda Forks; sisters and brothers, Joan Esparza, Cathy Naylor, Tom Forks, David Forks and Joe Forks; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A rosary will be held today at 7 p.m. at Porter Loring Mortuary North in San Antonio. Mass will be Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2006, at 10:30 a.m. at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 4201 De Zavala with Rev. Msgr. James Henke officiating. Interment will follow in Holy Cross Cemetery.

Although the beauty and sentiment expressed in flowers is appreciated, it would mean more to the family if those wishing to send flowers would instead schedule routine physical examinations to avoid colon cancer.

You are invited to sign the guestbook at www.porterloring.com. Arrangements are under the direction of Porter Loring Mortuary North.

Paid obituary

Jim Bob Wright

Jim Bob Wright, 42, of Rogers, Ark., died Sunday, Aug. 27, 2006, near Anderson, Mo., as the result of an automobile accident. He was born May 18, 1964, in Big Spring to C. Roy Wright and Glenda Denton Wright.

Jim Bob graduated from Coahoma High School. He attended Howard College and the University of Arkansas. He was a veteran of the United States Navy, where he was a systems organizational maintenance technician on F-18 fighter jets. Jim Bob served in the Persian Gulf during various world crisis, and served on the USS Constellation, USS Independence and the USS Midway aircraft carriers.

He was the manager of Tire Central located in Lowell, Ark. Jim Bob loved the outdoors and drove his four wheel drive vehicle to many mountain vantage points to get great views of mountain scenes, valleys, lakes and rivers. He was an avid rock hound, enjoyed motorcycling, and would do everything he could to avoid the interstate. He wanted to travel on the back roads of America. Jim Bob's real passion was serving others and being with his family, especially his niece and nephews.

Survivors include his parents, C. Roy and Glenda Wright of Rogers, Ark.; two brothers, Joe Don Wright of Bella Vista, Ark., Jon Wright and his wife, Kathy of Rogers, Ark.; a niece, Payton Wright of Rogers, Ark.; three nephews, Zachary Wright and Joshua Wright, both of Bentonville, Ark., and Brantley Wright of Rogers, Ark.

He was preceded in death by maternal grandparents, C.A. and Mattie Denton of Big Spring, and paternal grandparents, Lee Roy and Helen Wright of Bentonville, Ark.

Graveside memorial services will be 1 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 30 at the Fayetteville National Cemetery with chaplain Mickey Merrick officiating.

A memorial visitation will be from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. today at Stockdale Funeral Services of Rogers.

Memorials may be made in honor of Jim Bob Wright to the Mercy Health System Building Fund, 1200 West Walnut, Rogers, Ark. 72758; or to the Benton County Sunshine School, 2309 Moberly Lane, Bentonville, Ark. 72712.

Online condolences may be made to stockdalefuneral.com

Paid obituary

Thomas Alonzo Guin



Thomas Alonzo Guin, 92, of Big Spring, died Monday, Aug. 28, 2006, at his residence. At Tom's request, there will be no funeral or memorial services.

He was born to Carl S. and Maude Guin Feb. 27, 1914, in Wingate and married Emma Jones Sept. 6, 1936, in Ballinger.

Mr. Guin was co-owner of Jones Motor Company and had a gas station on Gregg Street for many years until retiring in the early 1980s. He served on the Board of Trustees for the Big Spring Independent School District and on the board for the YMCA. He was a member of First Presbyterian Church where he had served as an elder.

Survivors include his wife, Emma Guin of Big Spring; a son and daughter-in-law, Tom Henry and Beatrix Guin of Midland; a sister, Ada Leary of Houston; a son-in-law, Jackie Thomas of Big Spring; five grandchildren, Duane Thomas and wife, Brenda of Big Spring, Mark Guin and wife, Carol of Ypsilanti, Mich., Matthew Guin of College Station, Dana Thomas of Tampa, Fla., and Ginny Guin of Minneapolis, Minn.; two great-grandchildren, Trey Thomas of Alpine and Lily Guin of Ypsilanti, Mich.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Carl S. and Maude Guin; a daughter, Jane Thomas; a sister, Dorothy Ham; and a brother, Walter Guin.

The family requests donations be made to the Jane Guin Thomas BSHS Memorial Fund, 5100 Chaparral Road, Big Spring 79720; the First Presbyterian Church, PO Box 2222, Big Spring 79721-2222; or Home Hospice, 111 E. 7th Street, Suite A, Big Spring 79720.

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

Paid obituary

Odessa Smith



Odessa Smith, 83, of Forsan died Monday, Aug. 28, 2006, at Scenic Mountain Medical Center. Funeral services will be 10 a.m. Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2006, at the Coahoma Church of Christ with Jim Alexander, officiating. Interment will follow at the Coahoma Cemetery. The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. today, Aug. 29, 2006, at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Odessa was born Sept. 17, 1922, to Claude Lee and Mattie Ethel Dodson in Dawson County. She came to Howard County as a small child. She married Frank P. Smith Dec. 15, 1945, in Ranger. He preceded her in death June 10, 1988. She was a member of the Coahoma Church of Christ. She was a homemaker.

She is survived by a daughter, Rita Powell and husband, Jeff of Forsan; three grandchildren, Justin White and wife, Ashley of San Angelo, Blake White of Abilene, and Lindsey Heckler of Forsan; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by a daughter, Shirley Day; two sisters, Mabel Goldman and Helen King; four brothers, Dan Dodson, Fred Dodson, Virgil Dodson, Edgar Dodson; and one grandson, Jody Day.

Pallbearers will be Earl King, Gerald King, Gerald King Jr., Manuel Martinez Jr., Jerod Flohr, and Bobby Dodson.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at www.myersandsmith.com

Paid obituary

Janie Holcombe

Janie Holcombe, 86, died Monday at Mt. View Lodge. Funeral services are pending with Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity between 7 a.m. Monday and 7 a.m. today:

• **MELANIE HENDERSON**, 23, of 207 N. Moss Lake Road, was arrested Sunday on a local citation and charges of possession of a controlled substance and possession of marijuana - two ounces or less.

• **ROSALYN YOUNG**, 36, of 1305 State, was arrested Sunday on charges of possession of a controlled substance and possession of marijuana - two ounces or less.

• **RANDY ULRICH**, 30, of 4000 W. Highway 80, was arrested Tuesday on a charge of possession of drug paraphernalia.

• **THEFT** was reported:
- in the 1800 block of FM 700.
- in the 2300 block of Wasson.
- in the 1700 block of Wasson.

• **POSSESSION/DELIVERY OF DRUG PARAPHERNALIA** was reported in the 800 block of Fourth Street.

• **FORGERY OF A FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT** was reported in the 400 block of Fourth.

• **ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE** was reported in the 1100 block of Bell Street.

Fire/EMS

The Big Spring Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services reported the following activity:

• **TRAFFIC ACCIDENT** was reported at the intersection of South Highway 87 and Craig at 7:36 a.m. Monday. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1100 block of Brian Road at 12:54 p.m. Monday. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1400 block of Robin at 4:28 p.m. Monday. Service was refused.

• **MEDICAL** was reported in the 400 block of Donley at 7:48 a.m. Monday. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1400 block of East Sixth Street at 10:59 a.m. Monday. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1800 block of North Highway 87 at 4:26 a.m. Monday. One person was transported to the VAMC.

• **TRAUMA** was reported in the 1800 block of North Highway 87 at 8:07 a.m. Monday. One person was transported to the VAMC.

• **TRAUMA** was reported in the 1000 block of Bell at 11:20 a.m. Monday. One person was transported to SMMC.

• **TRAUMA** was reported in the 2300 block of Gregg Street at 10:41 a.m. Monday. One person was transported to SMMC.

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Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9 with no repeats. That means no number is repeated in any row, column or box. Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

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Sheriff's report

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

• **STEVEN STRICKLAND**, 30, was arrested Monday by the HCSO on a charge of failure to appear.

• **DEBRA JANE MOLINA**, 41, was transferred to the county jail Monday by the BSPD on a motion to revoke probation for driving while intoxicated.

• **ROSALYN DENISE YOUNG**, 36, was transferred to the county jail Monday by the BSPD on charges of

possession of a controlled substance and possession of marijuana - two ounces or less.

• **DUSTY DAWN NALLEY**, 28, was arrested Tuesday by the HCSO on charges of bondsman off bond for criminal mischief and criminal trespass.

• **JOHN CORBETT WILLIFORD**, 32, was transferred to the county jail Monday by the BSPD on a Wise County warrant for driving while license suspended and driving while license invalid.

Jessica Paredes
Director of Marketing & Admissions

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The Big Spring Herald is a member of The Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce, Texas Press Association, West Texas Press Association, Texas Daily Newspaper Association, The Associated Press.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, TX 79721. Periodicals postage paid at Big Spring, Texas.
USPS 1431-48 USPS 0055-940 ISSN 0746-6811
BY THE MONTH HOME DELIVERY: \$8.65 monthly; \$93.42 yearly (includes 10% discount). MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$12.50 monthly Howard & Martin Counties; \$13.25 elsewhere.

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Compliance coming slowly for existing lockup

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

As Howard County commissioners struggle with the design and finance of a new jail facility, the effort to bring the existing jail into state compliance is moving slower than some officials would like.

Local architect Phil Furqueron, who is acting as project and construction coordinator for both the new jail and the existing facility, said efforts to correct several major problems with the jail have stalled since the court's Aug. 14 meeting.

"Things are moving a little slower than I'd like to see," said Furqueron. "For the most part, we're just waiting on the contractors to move on the problems so we can get a better idea how to fix them."

An ineffective smoke evacuation system and lack of a stand pipe to provide firefighters with water, along with a door that swung in the wrong direction, were identified during a fire evacuation drill at the existing jail facility, located in the Howard County Courthouse.

And while the problem with the door has already been corrected, the remain-

ing two problems are going to take more study, according to Furqueron.

"The way it (smoke evacuation system) is now, it's like a Coke bottle," said Furqueron. "When you put a fan on the end of the bottle, you're not going to get any relief. You have to drill a hole in the other end of the bottle, and when you turn the fan on it will pull clean air inside."

Furqueron said construction of the stand pipe is expected to be handled by Anthony Mechanical, which the county recently contracted with for maintenance of its mechanical systems.

Commissioner Bill Crooker said he is eager to see some progress in correcting the problem with the smoke evacuation system.

"The smoke evacuation system is the most important aspect of this whole effort," said Crooker. "TAC (Texas Association of Counties), which we have our insurance through, has told us they will void our liability coverage on the jail on Oct. 1 unless we've made concrete advancements in that area."

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

BOND

Continued from Page 1

Emma Brown, Jerry Kilgore and County Judge Ben Lockhart all expressed their support of the bond item.

"We sincerely believe we've done our best to look at Howard County's need for a new jail from every perspective," Crooker read. "We have

listened to the recommendations of the Texas Commission on Jail Standards and other professionals with proven experience in the field of corrections.

"We have researched data and made field trips to other county jails in West Texas and New Mexico. After looking at many options and evaluating the true, accurate numbers and associated costs, we believe construc-

tion of a new 144-bed jail is the best and most fiscally responsible option for our county. We believe the court has truly put the best option available on the ballot."

Crooker went on to say he and the rest of the court will do all they can to educate the public on the county's needs in the coming months before the election.

"The county judge and commissioners want to

share our reasoning with the citizens we serve," said Crooker. "Over the weeks between now and the Nov. 7 election, we're going to schedule public forums and distribute real and accurate information. We want the public to have the same information the commissioners had available to them when they made the decision to place the bond issue on the ballot."

Vince Viaille, senior

vice president of investment bankers First Southwest Company, said the matter is now in the hands of the commissioners, and ultimately, the voters.

"Right now we just have to wait and see what happens with the election," said Viaille. "If the bond passes, we'll go to work on selling these bonds sometime in December or January."

Viaille said commis-

sioners will have the option to pursue certificates of obligation in the event the November bond election fails.

"If the bond election fails, you have the option of calling for COs or calling for another bond election," said Viaille. "However, each time you try to use COs, you're subject to having a petition force it into another election."

TAX RATE

Cpmtomied from Page 1

time employee, he's working between 60 and 80 hours a week, and he's

accumulated all the comp time he can, so we're having to pay overtime for those hours.

"This is an absolutely vital position with our jail, and if he decides to

leave in December, I'm worried we won't be able to find anyone to fill it because it's part-time and doesn't have any benefits."

While the change from

part-time to full-time would also include a healthy increase in pay, Commissioner Jerry Kilgore said it's a simple matter of economics.

"We're already paying

him what it would cost to make him full-time," said Kilgore. "By the time you figure up the overtime, we're already paying more money."

Commissioners agreed

to make the position full-time for the 2006-2007 budget.

METCALF

Continued from Page 1

ty judge."

Metcalfe said he knows being a write-in candidate will make the race a strenuous one for him and his supporters, but he's prepared

to go the extra mile.

"We're not going after second place in this," said Metcalfe. "We aim to win this race. I know it's going to be harder as a write-in candidate, but we're going to give it all we've got."

One problem Metcalfe won't have to worry about is splitting

votes with Big Spring business owner and former county judge candidate Mark Morgan, who's name will not appear on the November ballot.

"Mr. Morgan came in and filed the proper forms to have his name removed from the ballot," said Howard County Election

Administrator Sandra Bloom. "The deadline to file those forms was 5 p.m. on Friday."

Morgan, who was the local Republican party's candidate in the race, announced he was pulling out more than a week ago, citing a new job opportunity as the reason.

Administrator Sandra Bloom.

"The deadline to file those forms was 5 p.m. on Friday."

RAMSEY

Continued from Page 1

ing he might have otherwise fled and may have been targeting children in Thailand.

Lacy said Karr emerged as a suspect in April after he spent several years exchanging e-mails and 11 telephone calls with a University of Colorado journalism professor who had produced documentaries on the case.

The District Attorney's office released explicit details of statements Karr had made in those exchanges with professor Michael Tracey, who had alerted authorities. Karr told the professor he accidentally killed JonBenet during sex and tasted her blood after he injured her,

prosecutors said.

"Are you asking me why I killed JonBenet? I don't see it that way," Karr wrote in a May 22 e-mail. "Her and I were engaging in a romantic and very sexual interaction. It went bad and it was my fault."

But the claims were lies, prosecutors said. The Denver crime lab conducted DNA tests Friday on a cheek swab taken from Karr and were unable to connect him to the crime.

"This information is

critical because ... if Mr. Karr's account of his sexual involvement with the victim were accurate, it would have been highly likely that his saliva would have been mixed with the blood in the underwear," Lacy said in court papers.

She also said authorities found no evidence Karr was in Boulder at the time of the slaying. She said Karr's family provided "strong circumstantial support" for their belief that he was with them in Georgia, celebrating the

holidays.

Defense attorney Seth Temin said Karr never should have been arrested.

When Karr was arrested in Thailand, Ramsey family attorney Lin Wood pronounced it a vindication for JonBenet's parents. Patsy Ramsey died of cancer in June.

Monday, the attorney said: "From day one, John Ramsey publicly stated that he did not want the public or the media to jump to judgment. He did not want the

public or the media to engage in speculation, that he wanted the justice system to take its course."

Nate Karr, John Karr's brother, said he was elated his brother would not be charged. "We're just going to be celebrating with family," he said.

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Odessa Smith, 83, died Monday. Services will be 10:00 A.M. Wednesday at the Coahoma Church of Christ with burial at the Coahoma Cemetery. Family will receive friends from 6:00-8:00 P.M. Tuesday at the Funeral Home. Janie Holcombe, 86, died Monday at Mt. View Lodge. Funeral Services are pending.

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COLLEGE

Continued from Page 1

associate degrees and students enrolled at other universities who take courses in Big Spring during their time back home, Sparks said.

Also Monday, trustees: • Approved the budget and tax rate for the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

Expenditures for the new fiscal year will increase about \$100,000 from the previous year. Sparks said that increase is accounted for in higher utility costs and in increases in personnel salary and benefit packages.

The district's tax rate was set at 24.12 cents per \$100 valuation, a decrease of more than 3 cents from the previous year. But, because of higher property valuations in the district, the college will still receive more tax money than last year, Sparks said.

Contact Steve Reagan at 263-7331, ext. 234.

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EDITORIAL

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

FIRST AMENDMENT

Opinions expressed on this page are those of the Editorial Board of the Big Spring Herald unless otherwise indicated.

Susanne Reed
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Managing Editor

Bill McClellan
News Editor

Have to wonder what Congress was thinking

Leave it to the federal government to find the most expensive solution to a problem. This fall, three private tax collection agencies will begin collecting delinquent taxes for the Internal Revenue Service.

IRS officials admit it will cost more to outsource the collection of federal tax debts than if they had done it themselves.

Sadly, Congress gave the agency little choice when it refused to allow the hiring of additional revenue agents to combat the growing delinquency problem in this country.

The companies include Austin-based Linchburg, Chicago-based W. Simpson, which also has offices in San Antonio, Iowa-based CBE Group Inc. and Pioneer Credit Recovery Inc. of New York.

The three firms hired to do the IRS' dirty work will have more than \$750 million in overdue tax bills to collect. Each of the firms will be allowed to keep 21 cents on each dollar they collect.

If the IRS had been allowed to hire more revenue officers, they would have spent about 3 cents on the debt for the work.

Over the next 18 months, the IRS plans to expand private tax collection to include 10 companies and recover \$1 billion.

This is not the first time the IRS has attempted to outsource tax collection.

In the late 1990s, a similar project was cut short after it cost more than it was collecting and spawned complaints about heavy-handed collection tactics.

One lesson that should have been learned, but apparently not.

The math on this plan still does not add up.

THE EXPRESS-NEWS
SAN ANTONIO

The Border Patrol inquisition

Be a Border Patrol agent, do your job, go to prison. That's how the job must look to agents Ignacio Ramos and Jose Alonso Compean.

In February 2005, the agents tried to stop a van driven by drug smuggler Osvaldo Aldrete-Davila near the Mexico border. After a scuffle with Compean, Aldrete-Davila fled on foot. Ramos says he believes that he saw a gun — which the smuggler denies. Both agents fired at Aldrete-Davila, who fell, then continued his escape across the border. After he got away, Ramos and Compean filed a report on the 743 pounds of marijuana they found in the van, but not on the gunfire. As it turns out, Ramos had shot Aldrete-Davila in the butt. A Homeland Security agent heard about the episode, went to Mexico and offered Aldrete-Davila immunity, if he testified against Ramos and Compean.

U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton, a Bush appointee, prosecuted the agents. In March, a jury found them guilty of assault with a dangerous weapon, discharge of a firearm during a violent crime, obstructing justice, lying about the incident and willfully violating Aldrete-Davila's Fourth Amendment right to be free from illegal seizure.

Because there was gunfire, the mandatory minimum prison sentence the agents will serve is 10 years. The U.S. Probation Office in El Paso has recommended 20 years — 20 years away from their wives and their children, and among the type of people they've put behind bars.

As for Aldrete-Davila, he faces no charges for the 743 pounds of

pot. That leaves him free to carry out his plan to sue the Border Patrol — that is, U.S. taxpayers — for \$5 million because his civil rights were violated. What a country.

Ramos, who was nominated Border Patrol Agent of the year in 2005, told the *San Bernardino County Sun*, "There's murderers and child rapists that are looking at less time than me."

At the heart of the prosecution is a vehicle-pursuit policy that makes absolutely no sense. As Assistant U.S. Attorney Debra Kanof explained to the *Sun*, "It is a violation of Border Patrol regulations to go after someone who is fleeing." It's like a no-arrest policy.

No surprise, Border Patrol agents routinely ignore the regs. As Ramos responded to Kanof: "How are we supposed to follow the Border Patrol strategy of apprehending terrorists or drug smugglers if we are not supposed to pursue fleeing people? Everybody who's breaking the law flees from us. What are we supposed to do? Do they want us to catch them or not?"

Maybe the answer is: not. T.J. Bonner, president of the agents' union, the National Border Patrol Council, believes this prosecution will discourage agents from doing their jobs. Worse, the agents go to jail, while the smuggler got immunity — and an incentive (\$5 million) to claim he was unarmed, which can't be verified, because he fled.

Last week, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., called for a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on the case, as she fears this prosecution may represent "a serious miscarriage of justice."

Sutton's office cannot comment on the case until sentencing, but referred me to a statement, that explains, "They were prosecuted

because they had fired their weapons at a man who had attempted to surrender, but, while his open hands were held in the air, Agent Compean attempted to hit the man with the butt of his shotgun." Later, the agents picked up shell casings and failed to file a gunfire report.

Sutton's best point: A jury found the two agents guilty of all charges except attempted murder. As Bonner sees it, the most punishment the agents deserve is a five-day suspension for not reporting the shooting. Say, for argument's sake, that the agents were wrong to shoot at Aldrete-Davila. They were wrong to not file a report. Discipline them. Fire them, even. But don't send them to prison for decades for a bad split-second decision and failure to file a report.

If they were crooks, they would serve shorter time. Last month, a Border Patrol agent, who admitted to smuggling 100 illegal immigrants while he served on the Border Patrol, got five years. (Prosecutors had recommended three years, but in San Diego, U.S. District Judge John Houston hiked the sentence, telling the man: "You violated the sacred trust of your comrades. As a link in the chain, they depended on you.")

Compean's attorney, Maria Ramirez, told me that her client, a first-generation American, served honorably in the U.S. Navy, then worked for the Border Patrol. He had a home, now sold, a wife and two children. Another child is on the way. But in the 15 minutes after the agents saw that van, after one split-second judgment call, his life melted away: "In 15 minutes it's gone, just gone."

E-mail Debra J. Saunders at dsaunders@sfnchronicle.com.
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DEBRA SAUNDERS

CONTACT US

- We feature a daily column of our readers' opinions.
- If you have a comment or suggestion, we offer several ways in which you may contact us.
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- By phone at 261-2700
- By fax at 261-2705
- By letter. Mail to: Editor, John A. Moseley at editorial department, News Editor Bill McClellan at newseditor@bigspring.com
- By e-mail: Editor, Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721

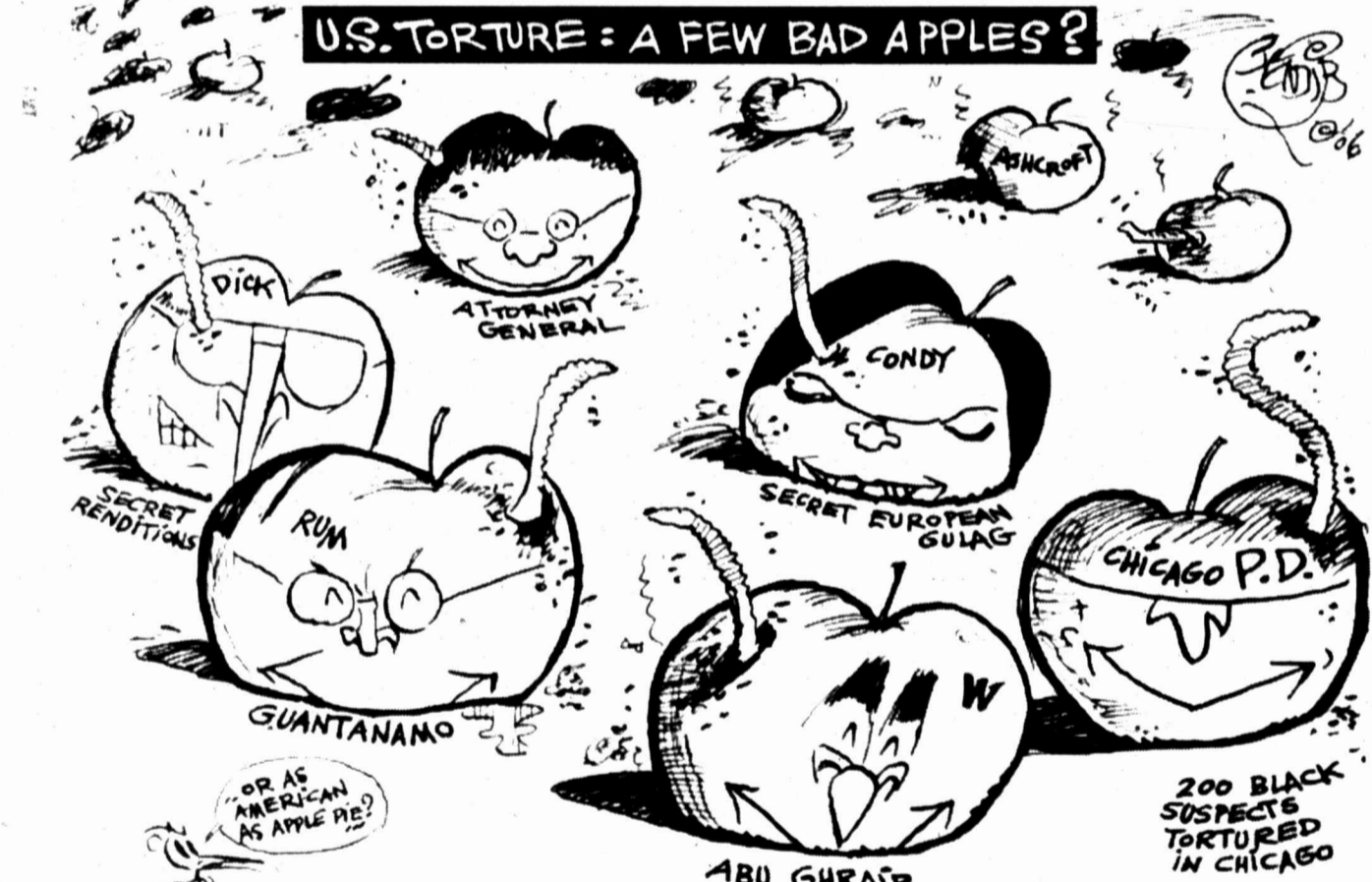
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- Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be e-mailed to editor@bigspring.com

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

May we revel in the simplicity of Your love, Lord.
Amen



Coming undone among the glue sticks

I'm not sure which is more depressing: passing the bathing suits on their rock-bottom sales racks, or the happy moms on their way to the 3-ring binder display. Am I the only one who regards school-supply shopping with the cheer usually reserved for pet burials?



LENORE SKENAZY

I know this should be a time of joy: The kids are growing up, they're starting a new grade, they're growing up — did I say that already? But when I realized that my fifth grader didn't even have crayons on his list anymore, I felt like I might as well go drop him off at college — or the office. How swiftly flow the years from paste to pens to PCs! Then I felt guilty for feeling good when I saw that his list included Band-Aids.

Still young enough for boo-boos. Hooray! "The school year starting is like a birthday," said Kit Yarrow, a psychologist attempting to explain why some parents feel so bummed cruising Office Depot on a summer's day. "But it's more. When a birthday happens, your kid is the

only one who's a year older that day. But in September, it's you and all the other moms saying, "Gosh! My kid is a fifth grader!" And by the way, she added darkly, "just wait till he's 13."

I'm waiting and in the meantime, I am in the school-supply aisle, trying to get the one zillion, god-are-these-teachers-anal-items-to-be-delivered-on-opening-day: Fifty pencils (50? Are there beavers in his class?)

One package, Expo brand low-odor, chisel-trip, dry-erase markers (could you be a bit more specific?)

One box of tissues (for me!)

"What I want to know," declared mom Katie Wilkinson, "is when they say, 'Crayola brand,' do I have to? 'Pack of wipes' — is that baby wipes or disinfectant wipes for the desk? Why can I find .21-ounce glue sticks, but no .28-ounce ones?" And — more to the point: Why does getting all this right matter so much to us?

My friend Jessica believes that when we shop for our kids, we revert to being kids ourselves. If you're an ex-goody-goody like me (and Jessica), you want to impress your teacher by being, as usual, perfect. Maybe the non-goody goodies are the ones who shop so cheerfully. Their self-worth does

not hang on wresting that last pink eraser — BACK OFF, WITCH! IT'S MINE! — from the other mom about to grab it.

I'm dancing around it, but the real focus of all my anxiety is clearly this: By the time you're buying erasers, you are facing the inevitable — school. And with school comes another year of dragging your kids out of bed, begging them to get dressed, juggling who will pick them up, goading them to do their homework, imploring them to eat their salad, inviting them to go to bed, ordering them to go to bed, threatening them: It's 9:30! Lights out! And then spending the next hour signing all the crumpled forms you find in their backpacks.

Their dear little backpacks, with the Reese's wrappers and origami footballs in them.

And the school supplies, of course, because you have a school-age kid. And deep down, you know you are very lucky.

Lenore Skenazy is a columnist at *The New York Daily News* (lskenazy@nydailynews.com).

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Bird Poop: A bird's gift to a grieving mother

Walking through the storage yard of SIVALLS Inc., the man headed toward the vessel that was to be shipped to Bakersfield, Calif., the next week. Fifteen feet tall, the four-foot-wide unit separated gas and liquids as a vital part of oil field equipment. As he approached the vessel, he noticed the black plastic was gone from the flange area near the top. Ultraviolet rays and windy weather had shredded the protection. Since the unit would be refurbished before shipment, he wasn't too concerned about the interior. Detecting movement at the base of the structure, he quickly sidestepped. As he turned to make sure it wasn't a rattlesnake, the pipe wrench he was carrying struck the vessel. The clang didn't surprise him nearly as much as it did the three adult barn owls that flew out of the opening.



Courtesy photo

At seven weeks, the barn owl, "Firecracker," had already captivated and changed the life of his volunteer parent.

"Never have I seen anything so beautiful," he said during a phone call. "Two of the owls were typical in color; the other one was white." Not wanting anything to harm the owls, he added, "They were too pretty to let something happen."

Two of the owls headed south, while the third landed on a telephone pole at the end of the yard. Suspecting there might be a nest inside, the man climbed to the opening and peered inside. Seven eggs lay on a thick layer of debris atop a metal plate. The odor of cast pellets, partially eaten mice and rats, plus waste, was ripe. To the owls it was home.

First, he contacted Odessa Animal Control. Referred to Parks & Wildlife, he learned that with all of the game wardens out of the office, we were the next to call. After informing him of the length of incubation and time in the nest before fledging, I told him I would be talking with a supervisor in Parks & Wildlife before any removal could occur.

Permission was granted to take the eggs to the Lubbock wildlife center. Construction deadlines could not be met if the owls were allowed the time needed to raise their young.

A cold front arrived during the early morning

hours of June 24, the day we were to collect the eggs. As we approached the vessel, I appreciated Art's telling me the opening would be about 11 feet above the ground and 14 inches in diameter. With a ladder in place, and two men to hold it, we were almost ready.

"Tap on the side of the vessel. I'd rather see any owls fly than to have to face them when I get up there," I said. The sound sent two owls, one of which was white, out of the opening.

We would have to work quickly due to the cold, 30 mile an hour winds. The eggs had to be placed in a makeshift incubator before they cooled. The only problem was reaching the eggs that lay at the opposite side of the vessel. Not able to crawl through the opening, I asked if the men had a hoe or something for me to roll the eggs toward the opening. A welder

produced a classic hoe, circa 1910. Using this vintage tool, I was able to get two to three eggs at a time across the floor. Climbing down the ladder, I handed them to Art, who hurried to the incubator in the car.

On the ride to Lubbock, we talked of how the mother owl had taken advantage of a unique nesting area. Once inside, she had a steel

floor, protection from the elements, and a nice warm place for her eggs. From the amount of guano and debris, she probably had nested there for at least two years. After the eggs were placed in the center's incubator, we returned home.

Early the morning of July 4, the phone rang. An egg had hatched. The appropriately named "Firecracker" had been given to a volunteer who would raise it. E-mails and pictures of its progress would follow. The remaining eggs never hatched.

The demands of the newborn were incredible. The volunteer kept the owl with her constantly, whether at home or at the center. Its every need was met, including tidbits of mice. Soon pictures were arriving. From a downy handful and early feathering, from nestling to fledgling, we were thrilled to see the results of our rescue effort. After learning to kill its food and its success in the flight cage, Firecracker was released in late September.

Only later would we learn of Firecracker's effect on the volunteer. Some 10 months before the owl hatched, the volunteer's daughter had died suddenly. Since the

July holiday had always been a family time, the volunteer dreaded this particular 4th. When she had received the call to nurture the newborn, she said she couldn't. Distraught with grief, she couldn't imagine taking on such an arduous task. The manager of the center insisted. Finally, the volunteer agreed. The new arrival would prove to be notable for far more than the holiday.

The responsibility of 24-hour care for the bird was almost overwhelming. It was also consoling. As the days pro-

gressed, the volunteer came to understand that she would always mourn the death of her daughter. At the same time, she realized there was a tremendous need for her work at the center. From this episode with a tiny creature that needed her attention and skills evolved a volunteer who specializes in barn owls. Gail Barnes, assistant manager of the center, has often told us, "That bird saved my life."

Bebe McCasland is federally and state licensed to rehabilitate wild birds.



BEBE MCCASLAND

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Choosing the Right Line of Play

West dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♦ K J 5
♥ Q 9 8 4
♠ A Q 10 3
♣ 9 4

WEST
♦ 7 6 4
♥ A K J 7 2
♠ 8 4
♣ A J 3

EAST
♦ 9 2
♥ 6 5 3
♠ 9 7 6
♣ Q 10 8 5 2

SOUTH
♦ A Q 10 8 3
♥ 10
♠ K J 5 2
♣ K 7 6

The bidding:
West North East South
1♥ Pass Pass 1♦
Pass 3♣ Pass 4♠

Opening lead — king of hearts.

Assume you become declarer at four spades after West opens the bidding with one heart. West leads the king of hearts and shifts to a trump. How would you play the hand?

Since West is virtually certain to hold the ace of clubs as part of his opening bid, his trump shift poses a real threat to your contract. Without the trump lead, you could have negotiated a club ruff in dummy after losing two clubs, thereby limiting yourself to three losers.

But the trump shift has put a seri-

ous crimp in that plan, since there is now a danger that persistent trump leads by the defenders will exhaust dummy's trumps before you can ruff your third club. A substitute plan is therefore needed.

When the deal occurred, South found the answer. He won the spade at trick two, drew trumps, cashed the K-J of diamonds and led a diamond to the queen. The queen of hearts was then led and a club discarded.

West took the queen with the ace, but found himself in a most uncomfortable position. If he returned the jack of hearts, declarer would ruff, cross to the ace of diamonds and discard another club on the established heart nine; if he returned a low heart instead, South would obtain the club discard immediately. And if he led a club, declarer would score a trick with the king of clubs. All roads thus led to 10 tricks.

South's play was noteworthy on two counts. First, he recognized the potential of dummy's Q-9-8 of hearts and took full advantage of it.

Secondly, he handled the diamonds perfectly, cashing three rounds of the suit to make sure West couldn't exit with a diamond when he was thrown on lead. At the same time, South retained a diamond entry to dummy so that West couldn't exit safely with the heart jack.

Tomorrow: Battle for survival.
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NEWS

Airport official says 7 dead in one family

JACKSON, Ky. (AP) — A Texas couple, their four children and another relative were identified as those killed in a small plane crash in a wooded, mountainous area of Kentucky, an airport official said Tuesday.

No one survived the wreck Monday in an area so remote that rescue workers on all-terrain vehicles needed help from a helicopter to find it, said Buddy Rogers, a spokesman for the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management.

"At this time, no survivors have been located," said Kentucky State Police Trooper Jody Sims.

Kathleen Bergen, spokeswoman for the Federal Aviation Administration in Atlanta, said seven people were aboard the twin-engine Cessna that departed from Kickapoo Downtown Airport in Wichita Falls, Texas.

She said she didn't know the destination because the pilot did not file a flight plan, but the administrator at the Wichita Falls airport said the pilot told him he was headed to Kentucky then Virginia.

Monica Morris, administrator of the Wichita Falls airport, identified the pilot as Jason Christie and his wife as Sherri Christie. The Wichita Falls Times Record News, reported in its Tuesday editions that their four children ranged in age from 2 months to 15 years old.

Morris could not confirm the identity of the other relative, but the newspaper identified her as Sherri Christie's mother.

Wal-Mart settles lawsuit with parents of murdered clerk

TYLER (AP) — Wal-Mart Stores Inc. has settled a wrongful death lawsuit filed by the parents of a 19-year-old store clerk who was abducted, raped and killed following her night shift.

The parents of Megan LeAnn Holden said the terms of the settlement were confidential. The lawsuit filed by Sheri Kay Dunlap and James Vincent Holden had been set to go to trial Tuesday.

Dunlap and Holden sued Wal-Mart and the store's security company, The Wackenhut Corp., in 2005,

claiming their negligence resulted in their daughter's death. They claimed Wal-Mart didn't take reasonable security precautions in failing to remove Johnny Lee Williams Jr. from the property or come to their daughter's aid.

Holden was kidnapped Jan. 19, 2005, from the parking lot of a Wal-Mart Supercenter in Tyler. Her body was found on the side of a highway in West Texas, about 400 miles from her home. Williams was later arrested in Arizona.

Immigration ads problematic for political campaigns

WASHINGTON (AP) — Capturing the immigration debate in political ads is proving tricky for campaigns without offending Latinos by linking immigrants with terrorists.

Republican and Democratic Hispanics recently decried a Democratic Web ad that squeezed images of two people trying to cross a border fence between video of Osama bin Laden and North Korean President Kim Jong Il. The ad asked "Feel Secure?"

The ad, produced by the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, was removed from the Web without comment from Democrats.

A Republican ad criticizing Stephen Laffey, who is challenging Sen. Lincoln Chaffee, R-R.I., also set off some grumbling in the Latino community. The ad produced by the National Senatorial Campaign Committee criticized Laffey, mayor of Cranston, R.I., for allowing the city's police force to accept ID cards issued by the Mexican government as identification.

Latino politicians and activists said the ad portrays all Mexican immigrants, here legally or illegally, as potential terrorists.

Dive crews explore sunken ship on Texas coast

PORT ARANSAS (AP) — Divers investigating a newly discovered sunken ship in a channel near Port Aransas said an exploratory dive provided some answers but also raised lots of questions.

The team of divers made a reconnaissance dive

Monday to examine the ship, which a parasailer spotted this summer in about 20 feet of water near San Jose Island.

"It's a lot older than I thought it would be," said Steve Hoyt, a marine archaeologist with the Texas Historical Commission.

After eight dives on Monday, Hoyt said the vessel could date as far back as the late 1800s or early 1900s. The team determined the ship had a wooden hull and was steam-driven.

"We found the boiler, we found the fire bricks," Hoyt said. "If we had some more visibility ... we could get a lot more information."

The divers also found numerous metal components, including rods, turnbuckles and pins.

Craig Hlavinka, of Matagorda, drove about three hours to participate in the dive.

"Well, it's a big, rusty mess," said Hlavinka, a volunteer archaeological steward.



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Bedtime Stories

A TREETOP RIDDLE BEDTIME STORY

I sit in the treetop all year long. I listen to the birds as they sing their song. When the wind blows, it looks like I am dancing. When it is only a soft breeze, it looks as if I am prancing. I like the weather when it is hot. I also like the weather when it's not. I like the weather when it's cold, too. For unlike you, I never catch the cold or flu. I will tell you what I am at the end of this tale. But, if you guess what I am before the end, please don't tell.

I see the fox chasing the rabbit. He isn't mean, that is just his habit. The rabbit got away from the old fox. He did this by hiding in a cardboard box. From where I sit, which is very high. I

can almost reach the sky. I can see everything for miles around. The crows flying so high, the squirrels on the ground. The crows are searching for food, especially corn. They love this, and have since the day they were born. The squirrels love acorns, nuts, and sometimes a seed. This seems to be all they need. I don't even need that much to eat. Have you guessed what I am before you fall asleep?

I see the mountaintop so far away. I would like to visit it if I may. But I can't ever do that. I could if I were a cat. But I'm not a cat. I don't even look like that. I would rather look like a cat. Than a rat! Or a bat! Or,

even a muskrat! How about a gnat? I'm much prettier I think than any of these. And besides, things like me live in the tops of trees. So, to the mountaintop I'll never go. Sure would like to, though. If you ever go. Would you tell me so? And let me know. If there is snow. On that mountaintop where I cannot go.

I can see the ocean from way up here. It is so big that it looks near. Do you ever go

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to the beach? It's too far for me to reach. Do you ever play in the sand? I can never get sand in my hand. I don't

even have a hand, for carrying sand. Don't forget I live in a tree. And I don't have hands, or even a knee. I don't have

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a head, or any hair. But, I'm still pretty, just hanging there. That was a very good hint as to what I might be. Have you guessed this riddle, or will you wait until the end to see?

This bedtime story can't be too long, so I think we are reaching the middle. If you can tell me your favorite song, I'll give you another hint about this riddle. I hear your tune and I like it, too. It reminds me of good

times, but, I am blue. No, I really mean it, I am blue. But, my aunt is another color. Red, I think. In the fall of the year, she will be pink. My uncle was orange, for awhile. Now, he is in a compost pile.

That last hint should have helped you guess. Will you stop this story now and get your rest? I'll bet you want to get to the end real fast. And get this story over with, at last! Have you guessed what I might be? You already know I live in a tree. You already know that I just hang way up there. That keeps me away from a bear. You already know that my sister might be pink soon, even though now she is red. You

already know my uncle is somewhere in a compost bed. Don't be shy. Tell me, what am I?

Did you guess what I might be? Did you guess a leaf in a tree? Are you wondering what kind of leaf I might be? I never said that my color would change. Do you think that is strange? Each year, all the other leaves must leave their tree. But, not me! For you see. I am a leaf of an evergreen tree.

And, I can see that you are still awake, it seems. So, I'm going to say, "Sweet Dreams."

Please turn down the light.

"Good Night!"

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IN BRIEF

Quarterback Club to meet tonight

Big Spring High School's Quarterback Club will meet at 7 p.m. on Mondays at the BSHS Athletic Training Center.

Mark Tissue, the booster club's president, encourages all parents of BSHS football players and fans of the Steers to attend.

For more information, call Tissue at 816-3458.

Bomar has enrolled at Sam Houston State

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — Dismissed Oklahoma quarterback Rhett Bomar has enrolled at Division I-AA Sam Houston State, where he doesn't have to sit out a year but still must wait for eligibility clearance from the NCAA.

Bomar and a teammate were kicked off the team at Oklahoma earlier this month for violating NCAA work rules by accepting payment for more work than they performed at a car dealership.

Bomar could play for the Bearkats this season after a review by the NCAA reinstatement committee. Players transferring between Division I-A schools must sit out one year.

Texas Tech names Harrell starting QB

LUBBOCK (AP) — Sophomore Graham Harrell has been named the starting quarterback for No. 25 Texas Tech, and in Saturday's opener against SMU he'll become the first underclassman to lead the Red Raiders' wide-open offense since 2001.

Harrell, who owns the Texas high school career records for passing yards and touchdowns, had been favored to beat out redshirt freshman Chris Todd. Tech coach Mike Leach confirmed Harrell won the job Monday.

Now Harrell will get his chance to lead the nation in passing, as the past four starters at Tech have done as seniors. The past three have been redshirt seniors.

Harrell passed for 392 yards and three touchdowns in five games as a backup last year.

He went 41-3 as a starter in high school and racked up 12,532 yards and 167 touchdowns.

He threw 67 TDs his senior season.

McCoy is Longhorns' No. 1 quarterback

AUSTIN (AP) — Colt McCoy was named the starting quarterback for No. 3 Texas on Monday, ending a battle with fellow freshman Jevan Snead to replace Vince Young when the defending national champions open the season against North Texas.

McCoy, who redshirted last season behind Vince Young, earned the start with a strong preseason camp, coach Mack Brown said.

"He (McCoy) had a terrific camp and was at his best during our scrimmages," Brown said.

Brown said he still wants to play both quarterbacks against Texas.

Playoff chase is all but done, is Showalter?

By STEPHEN HAWKINS

AP Sports Writer

ARLINGTON — Texas Rangers owner Tom Hicks surely remembers what happened right after Buck Showalter left his other two managerial jobs.

The season after Showalter's four-year tenure ended in New York, the Yankees won three of the next four World Series. That dominating streak was finally snapped in 2001 by the Arizona Diamondbacks, the expansion team Showalter had built the

three previous seasons.

Mathematically, the Rangers remain in contention for the AL West title with five weeks left this season.

But Showalter's fourth season in Texas will end like the rest — without getting to the playoffs. And there won't even be the last-month excitement like 2004, when the Rangers weren't eliminated until an extra-inning loss in the 158th game.

So, what's the manager's future in Texas?

When asked a question that

perained to next spring, even Showalter smiled and responded, "That's assuming a lot."

Still, as desperate as Hicks is for a World Series trophy to go with the Stanley Cup his Dallas Stars won in 1999, he doesn't sound like he is ready to give up on Showalter — or even test the theory of letting somebody else have a shot at winning with what Buck's built.

"Buck doesn't swing the bat or throw the ball," Hicks said.

"Buck's a great manager. He was the manager of the year a couple

of years ago — and he's our manager."

Plus, Showalter has three seasons left on his contract, with a team option for 2010.

Texas (67-65) went into the weekend desperately needing to make up ground with a series against AL West-leading Oakland. The Rangers instead lost the first two games — without a hit until eighth inning of the opener against Barry Zito.

After salvaging the series

See RANGERS, Page 8

Teary-eyed Agassi extends career

Agassi's achievements

Andre Agassi, 36, will retire from competitive tennis after this year's U.S. Open, his 21st.



Personal profile

Born: April 29, 1970, Las Vegas

■ Married Steffi Graf, 2001; has a son, Jaden Gil, and daughter, Jaz Elle

■ Married to Brooke Shields, 1997-1999

Career profile

Turned pro: 1986

Prize money: \$31 million

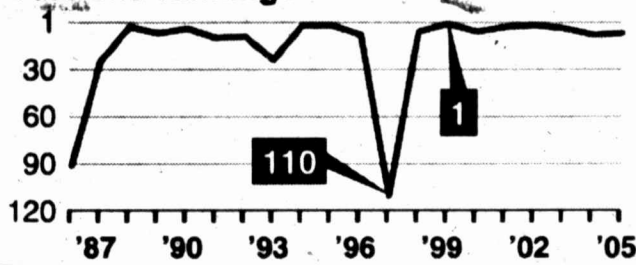
	Singles	Doubles
Record	868-273	40-42
Titles	60	1

Grand Slam titles: 8;

4 Australian Open ('95, '00, '01, '03); 2 U.S. Open ('94, '99); 1 French Open ('99); 1 Wimbledon ('92)

Won Olympic gold in 1996

Year end rankings



Georgia youngsters take Little League Series win

By GENARO C. ARMAS

Associated Press Writer

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. — With his team clinging to a one-run lead and pitcher Kyle Carter in a jam, Columbus, Ga. manager Randy Morris visited the mound to give his ace a pep talk.

A Little League World Series championship hung in the balance. Carter didn't disappoint.

After walking one batter to lead off the inning and hitting another with two outs, Carter got Ryooya Sato to bounce weakly to second to end the game and secure Columbus' 2-1 win over Kawaguchi City,

Japan to win the Little League crown.

The chants of "USA! USA!" spread through the crowd after the kids from Columbus threw their gloves toward the sky and celebrated the second straight Little League title for an American team.

"I just had a shot of adrenaline on the mound," Carter said about the decisive sixth. "I just had to throw the ball how I usually do and we'd win the world championship."

Carter struck out 11 and Cody Walker hit a two-run homer off Japan ace Go Matsumoto for

Columbus. Their victory came a year after Ewa Beach, Hawaii beat a squad from Willemstad, Curacao for the championship.

A U.S. team hadn't won back-to-back Little League titles with different teams since 1982-83 when Kirkland, Wash., and Marietta, Ga., celebrated titles. That Marietta team was the only other club from Georgia to make it to the tournament.

"That is pretty awesome," Morris said. "We've been here twice and won it twice, so maybe we should try this more."

T.O. star of a soap opera that's just beginning

By TIM DAHLBERG

AP Sports Columnist

Cue the music and make sure Jerry Jones gets to makeup. While you're at it, check wardrobe and see if they have a spare bicycle racing suit for Terrell Owens.

This just in from Dallas, where the old TV show by the same name has nothing on the drama this soap opera figures to generate by the time it's over:

Owens knows his body better than anyone. He's been saying that for weeks when anyone questions why he doesn't practice.

T.O. just hasn't figured a way to get that body out of bed on time.

Not to worry, says our star, because these kind of things happen. Besides, don't they play

most NFL games in the afternoon and at night?

"I think everybody has overslept, you know, once or twice in their life before," Owens said Monday. "Nothing intentional, something that happened. There's nothing I can do about it."

Actually, T.O., there is.

You might try what most working stiffs who have to get up in the morning to pay bills do — buy a couple of alarm clocks and make sure you set them before you go to bed.

Heck, take part of that \$5 million bonus the Cowboys paid you and hire a personal wake-up attendant. If you still can't get up, he could toss a glass of cold water on you.

Who knows, you might even stretch out that hammy while chasing him out of the house.

That would make your boss happy because he's been wondering lately why you've been riding your exercise bike while your co-workers are out doing their jobs.

You do know the boss, don't you? He's the big guy in shorts who spent 10 minutes the other day answering questions about you while barely mentioning your name once.

Maybe he's not sure what it is. He didn't come to the welcoming party Jones gave, and the two of you apparently haven't had time to get together for a good chat since you joined the company.

That's not good because communication is everything. Just look how effectively you were able to communicate in Philadelphia when you let the world know that one quarterback was a quitter and another one

might be gay.

Oh yeah, the coaches were pond scum, too.

And it's not like the big guy doesn't like to talk. He spent some time chatting with his injured kicker, so why wouldn't he spend some time chatting with his star receiver?

With good reason, apparently. "I had something to talk to (Mike) Vanderjagt about," Bill Parcells said. "I didn't have anything to talk to Terrell about right this moment."

OK, let's see. You're the coach of one of the premier teams in the NFL and the guy brought in to be your franchise player has missed 20 practices and three preseason games with a hamstring injury that doesn't show up on MRI's.

See OWENS, Page 8

OWENS

Continued from Page 7

The same player has a history of disrupting every team he's been on and he shows up late for practice only to say it's no big deal because everyone oversleeps occasionally. The same player also suggests you don't need to see him practice because you can watch 10 years of highlight tapes.

And you have nothing to talk to him about?

Parcells should have been talking to Owens the minute he saw the receiver sitting next to Jones and agent Drew Rosenhaus that day in March with a Dallas hat on his head. Better yet, he should have been talking to Jones and telling the owner he was crazy to sign Owens.

Maybe Parcells was taken in by the new, more humble T.O., an act that

lasted the better part of, say, one day.

"I'll be a better teammate, better person, better man in life," Owens said that day.

Jones bought into it enough that it didn't seem to bother him that he was signing a player Cowboy fans hated for defiling their beloved midfield star during a touchdown while playing for the 49ers in 2000.

He was clearly smitten with both Owens and the

idea of making a big splash by signing football's bad boy.

"These guys have fallen in love already," Rosenhaus gushed at the time. "On the jet here the bond they established was moving ... moving."

That bond is still apparently intact because Jones on Monday defended Owens, calling him a genuine person and saying some of the finest players in Cowboy history have been fined for one thing

or another. He went on to suggest that all the attention given Owens may be a good thing for his team.

"One of the great things about sports, about the NFL, about the Cowboys, is it can be very entertaining," Jones said.

Jones is certainly getting bang for his buck. Owens has cost him only \$5 million so far, and he could dump him tomorrow without spending another cent.

Which, come to think of

it, might not be such a bad idea.

Do it before Owens starts arguing with Parcells over playing time. Do it before Owens picks his first fight with Drew Bledsoe. Do it before he and Jones fall out of love.

Do it now because the drama in Dallas is only just beginning.

Tim Dahlberg is a national sports columnist for The AP. Write to him at tdahlberg@ap.org

RANGERS

Continued from Page 7

finale, Texas was eight games back with 30 left.

"We understand the position this puts us in. It's a tough spot to be in," Showalter said.

No team has ever overcome that much of a deficit in that span of time, though the Rangers aren't ready to concede — or predict when they will. "I don't think there's a specific date in September. We have to win," All-Star shortstop Michael Young said. "Obviously, things are much more difficult for us. This is not the posi-

tion we wanted to see ourselves in."

If Oakland wins only half of its last 32 games, the Rangers would have to go 23-7 just to force a one-game division play-off.

That scenario also makes a big assumption: that Texas can also get past the second-place Los

Angeles Angels.

The Angels have a 2 1/2-game edge over Texas, and have won seven of 11 games in a season series marred by beanballs and a bench-clearing brawl. Both managers and five players were suspended after their last game. Seven games are left between the teams.

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Pigskin Picks Entry Form

• Team

1. _____ Name: _____

2. _____ Address: _____

3. _____ Phone Number: _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____ Tie Breaker - Circle the winner and note total points scored

7. _____

8. _____ **Penn St. at Ohio St.**

9. _____

10. _____ Total Points

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Rules: Find this week's games in the merchants' ads on this page. Choose the teams you think will win. Clip and fill in the official entry blank on this page with your team choice. The entry with the most correct picks will win \$75. You must be 18 to enter. Only official entry forms accepted. In the event of a tie, the tie breaker will determine the winner. Guess the winner and the combined scores for the total points. Decisions of the judges are final. Employees and families of employees of The Big Spring Herald are ineligible. All entries must be received at one of the participating merchants by 1 p.m. Friday of the week played. Winners will be announced in the Big Spring Herald the Tuesday following the games.

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Wacky Facts

■ If a Roman emperor wanted to read a book, he had to unroll it. Books were written on long scrolls that you unrolled as you went along.
■ In the Middle Ages, books were made by monks who copied them by hand onto prepared animal skins called parchment. — *World Almanac for Kids*

KID NEWS

Chatter Box

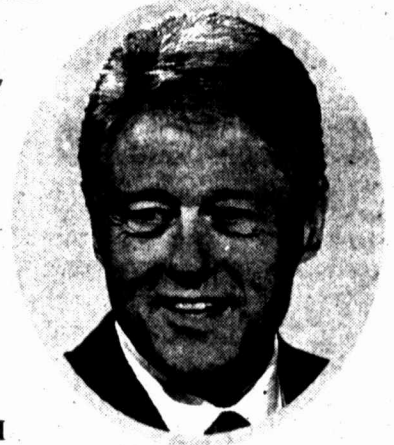
"I definitely went through my geeky phase. Bad skin, long hair, bad clothes. I wasn't the popular guy."
— Jesse Metcalfe ("*Desperate Housewives*," "*John Tucker Must Die*"), in *People*.

In The News

Former president pushes kids to get healthier

How do we help kids live healthier lives? Go to their schools, where they spend most of their days, says former U.S. President Bill Clinton. This summer, Clinton spoke to representatives of 170 schools about the new Healthy Schools Program.

The program helps schools set standards that encourage healthy eating and more physical activity. The program is sponsored by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, which is a joint project of the American Heart Association and the Clinton Foundation. "I believe these standards can be a great step forward in shaping the health, education, and well-being of the next generation," Clinton said.



HEALTHY SCHOOLS. HEALTHY KIDS

The Healthy Schools program follows a recent decision made by the nation's largest beverage distributors to replace sugar-filled sodas in school vending machines with healthier choices. As part of the program, standards are being set for schools to include healthy food choices in cafeterias, health education and physical activity during and after school. Bronze, silver, gold and platinum awards will be given to schools based on their performance.

"School is where our children spend their days and where they learn habits that stay with them for life," said Dr. Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, president of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which supports the program. "The schools that are taking part in the first year of the program will help us write the lesson plan to improve health for millions of children."

More than 200 schools in 12 states have already been chosen for the program. During its first year, the program will focus on schools where students are most at risk for obesity.

"We aren't just expecting schools to reach those goals on their own," said Dr. Raymond Gibbons, president of the American Heart Association. "We are giving them support along the way."

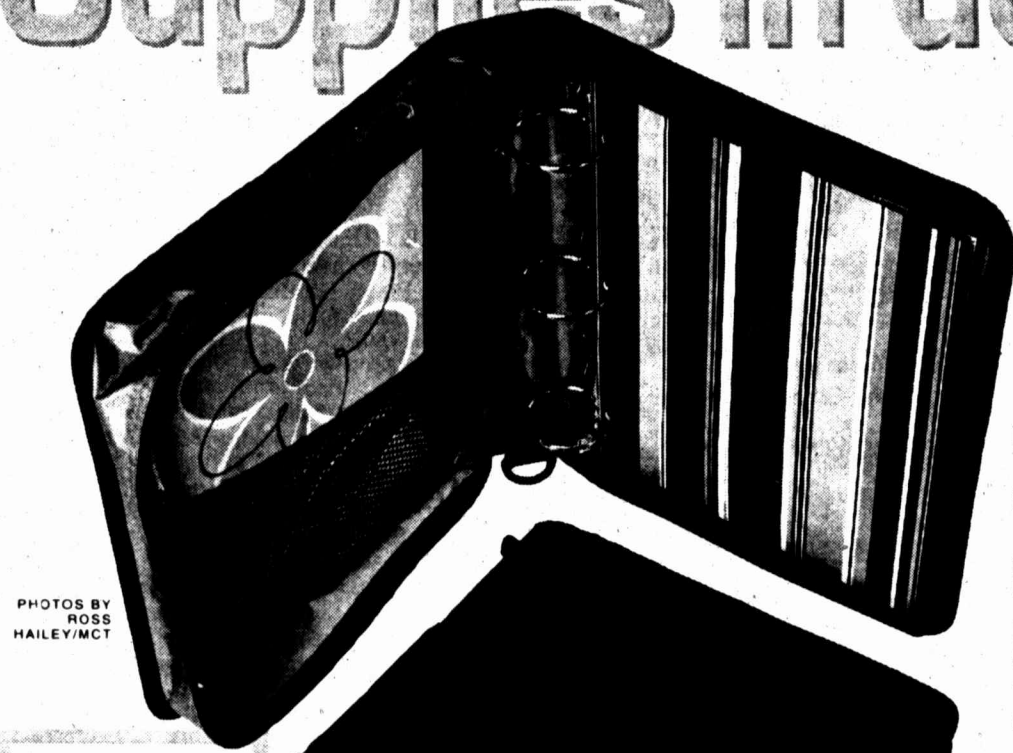
HEALTHY HABITS OUTSIDE SCHOOL

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation realizes that kids may not always be interested in what their schools offer. That's why it has partnered with kids' cable channel Nickelodeon. The Let's Just Play Go Healthy Challenge is a television and online effort to encourage students to adopt a healthier lifestyle. To date, more than 100,000 kids have already signed up to Go Healthy.

— Pavan Shandasanani

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Supplies in demand



PHOTOS BY ROSS HAILEY/MCT

CALCULATE WITH EASE:



Two shoulders plus a stuffed backpack equals not a lot of extra room. Lucky for you, you still can compute with this hook-on calculator, which easily latches onto your backpack or inside a binder. The neon shade makes it hard to miss, \$1.99 from Staples.

By KARALEE MILLER
McClatchy Newspapers

It's time once again to hit the hallways, bust open some books and tackle tests.

Yes, summer's over, and school is back in session.

On the plus side, back-to-school shopping has never been more fun. What once was an experience dominated by No. 2 pencils and glue sticks now offers students a chance to have some creative freedom with their school supplies and show some subtle sass in class.

From robust binders to latch-on accessories, your backpack will be stuffed with stylish essentials that make organizing a way of life — not a daily chore.

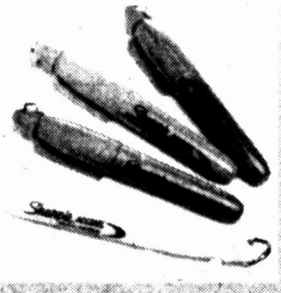
GET ORGANIZED: Busy students on the go will want to check out organizational binders, which feature mesh and zippered pockets and function as a three-ring binder. Better still, you can carry them in your arms, over your shoulder or like a briefcase. The Case It 2-in-1 binder (blue), \$15.99, from Target; Case It 3-ring binder (green), \$9.99, from Staples.

ACCESSORIZE YOUR LOCKER: Add style and utility to your locker with the Small Add-A-Pocket. The lightweight pockets easily latch onto one another, save space and keep your locker from being boring and barren (right), \$12.99 for a set of two, from the Container Store. And to keep your mini home-away-from-home tidy use magnetic locker bins (left), \$2.99 each from Target.

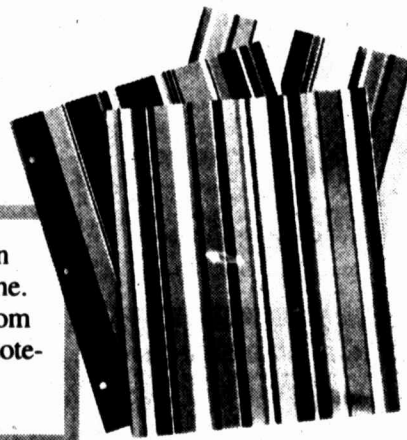


ERASE AWAY: Don't worry about making mistakes. Not when you've got the fun Foohy Foz Erasers. Choose from a rainbow of four colored erasers, pop one in the lava-flow holster, and rub your blunder away. About \$3, where school supplies are sold.

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Laugh Lines

Why didn't the pie crust get a job?
It was too flaky!

What are a plumber's favorite vegetables?
Leeks!

Why did the butcher get fired?
He was caught chop-lifting!

What game show do butchers like?
"Veal of Fortune"!

— "GREAT BOOK OF SCHOOL JOKES"

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CARPENTERS NEEDED, with framing experience. Call (325)207-6634, (432)213-1488.

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MIDLAND, TX 79711

Help Wanted

Key is now hiring oilfield pump, hot oil, and vacuum truck operators in the Sweetwater and Big Spring area. Vacation, Insurance, 401K, Call Mon.-Fri. 325-236-6613 or 432-267-4615

ALL POSITIONS, full or part time, all shifts available. Apply at 3315 E. FM 700, Neighbors Convenience Store.

Assistant Manager/Collector Security Finance is now taking applications. We offer benefits, competitive pay, and advancement opportunities. Apply in person at 501 E. 3rd.

Help Wanted

COAHOMA ISD is accepting applications for two positions for maintenance/ground-keeper/custodian. Applications are available at the Administration Office, 600 North Main. Applications accepted until the position filled. Full benefits package included. Coahoma ISD is an equal opportunity employer.

D.H. BLATTNER is seeking the following individuals for our Wind Turbine Project near Snyder, TX:

- Experienced Receptionist
- Laborers
- Water Truck Drivers
- Tele-Handlers/Forklift
- Mechanic (CDL & HazMat Endorsements)
- Dozer, Excavator, & Blade Operators

Qualified applicants are encouraged to apply at the Snyder Workforce Center at 1912 37th St.; apply on-line at www.dhblattner.com call 1-888-356-2307 to request an application.

EOE

Help Wanted

DOWN HOLE Pump Repair/Delivery Person. Experience Preferred, but will train. Salary D.O.E. Full Benefits Package. Background and drug test required. Send Resume to P.O. Box 2234 or come by 2903 North Birdwell for application.

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Help Wanted

HELP WANTED for all positions and shifts at our Midland Manufacturing Facility. Must be punctual and willing to work weekends as needed. Must have reliable transportation. Must be able to lift and carry a minimum of 40 lbs. Will train the right people. Apply in person at 1921 Alta Vista, Bldg. 4, Midland, TX 79702. Positions available on location in Pecos, TX as well. Se habla Espanol.

HILLCREST CDC is looking for Full Time Caregivers. Mon-Fri. If you are energetic and love kids please come apply. Must have high school diploma or GED. Hillcrest CDC, 2000 West FM 700. No Phone Calls Please.

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TUESDAY

Table with 24 columns representing different TV channels and their programming schedules for Tuesday, August 29, 2006. Columns include WFAA, KMID, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLT, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KPBT, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN, and SCIFI.

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THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"My shoes have laces, and PJ's have Velcro."

HAGAR



BLONDIE



BC



WIZARD OF ID



AGNES



HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 29, the 241st day of 2006. There are 124 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: One year ago, on Aug. 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast near Buras, La., the resulting floods devastated the city of New Orleans. More than 1,300 people died in Louisiana while an estimated 300 Louisiana residents died out of state; some 230 people perished in Mississippi. Property damage estimates were in the hundreds of billions of dollars. On this date: In 1533, the last Incan King of Peru, Atahualpa, was murdered on orders of Spanish conqueror Francisco Pizarro. In 1943, responding to a clampdown by Nazi occupiers, Denmark managed to scuttle most of its naval ships. In 1944, 15,000 American troops marched down the

Champs Elysees in Paris as the French capital continued to celebrate its liberation from the Nazis. In 1957, South Carolina Sen. Strom Thurmond (then a Democrat) ended a filibuster against a civil rights bill after talking for more than 24 hours. In 1965, Gemini 5, carrying astronauts Gordon Cooper and Charles ("Pete") Conrad, splashed down in the Atlantic after eight days in space. In 1966, the Beatles concluded their fourth American tour with their last public concert, at Candlestick Park in San Francisco. Today's Birthdays: Actor-director Lord Richard Attenborough is 83. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., is 70. Actor Elliott Gould is 68. Movie director William Friedkin is 67. Movie director Joel Schumacher is 67. TV personality Robin Leach is 65. Actress Deborah Van Valkenburgh is 54. Dancer-choreographer Mark Morris is 50. Country musician Dan Truman (Diamond Rio) is 50. Singer Michael Jackson is 48. Actress Rebecca DeMornay is 44. Singer

Me'Shell NdegeOcello is 37. Rhythm-and-blues singer Carl Martin (Shai) is 36. Actress Carla Gugino is 35. Rock musician Kyle Cook (Matchbox Twenty) is 31. Actor John Hensley is 29. Rock musician David Desrosiers (Simple Plan) is 26. Rapper A+ is 24. Actress Jennifer Landon is 23. Actor Jeffrey Licon is 21. Thought for Today: "In spite of the honestest efforts to annihilate my 'i-ity,' or merge it in what the world doubtless considers my better half (historian Thomas Carlyle), I still find myself a self-subsisting and almost self-seeking ME." - Jane Welsh Carlyle, English writer (1801-1866).

Answer to previous puzzle

A crossword puzzle grid with the following words filled in: SHOP, BASSY, APED, HULL, ABATE, TORE, AREA, LOFAT, TWIN, GLOSSOVER, TIDES, TIME, PURE, ADMITS, FILTERED, TRACE, SILOS, BRA, WOKS, THROW, FLAT, AVE, CRUEY, PAUSE, REUNIONS, PUREES, PEAT, ROSE, PATIO, BLUSHWINE, OLEG, PEONS, EDDY, POSH, EERIE, LEAR, SETS, WRENS, LAKE.

Newsday Crossword

BY THE POUND by Sally R. Stein Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

Across and Down crossword puzzle clues and a grid. Clues include: 1 Swimsuit tops, 5 Tennis pro Kournikova, 9 Trench, 14 Walked away, 15 Make a rip in, 16 Montana neighbor, 17 Opera solo, 18 Tiny branch, 19 In the neighborhood, 20 As of now, 22 Run off to wed, 23 Prepare to propose, 24 Urban-renewal target, 26 NASCAR sponsor, 29 As a large group, 34 Comic poem, 39 Placed in order, 40 Regarding, 41 Teheran resident, 43 Made, as a knot, 44 Fifth part of Act I, 46 Punch and Judy show skill, 48 Entered, as computer data, 50 Hot drink, 51 Walking pace, 53 Scoundrel, 58 Robot-novel genre, 62 Grumbling under one's breath, 65 Nostalgic song, 66 Become indistinct, 67 Ship's jail, 68 Room dividers, 69 Place to stand and wait, 70 "Suffice say...", 71 Sugary, 72 Fencing sword, 73 At that time, 10 Admired one, 11 Mexican food, 12 British fellow, 13 Golfer's objective, 21 Otherwise, 25 Not ready to harvest, 27 Entertaining facts, 28 _capita, 30 Poker payment, 31 Satirical segment, 32 Fortune-teller, 33 Whirlpool, 34 Flat, circular object, 35 Long ago, 36 Western author Zane, 37 Heredity unit, 38 Track circuit, 42 Cashew or filbert, 45 Most tense, 47 Remove, as rind, 49 Agile, 52 Flower associated with Holland, 54 Circle the Earth, 55 Circumference, 56 Band together, 57 Incite, 58 Piglets' mamas, 59 Talon, 60 Not doing anything, 61 Smoothing tool, 63 Singer's selection, 64 Ancestry diagram.

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