



Family tradition

For Delmer Batla, playing polka music just comes naturally

By STEVE REAGAN

Staff Writer

In trying to explain why someone would spend a half-century playing and enjoying polka music, maybe genetics would be a good place to start.

It works in Delmer Batla's case, at least.

Batla and his friend Joe Havlak, the frontmen for the Havlak-Batla Polka Band, have performed that brand of music — sprinkling in some country standards along the way — since the early 1950s.

And to hear Batla explain it, he's just maintaining a family tradition.

"My grandmother and

grandfather came here from Czechoslovakia in 1882, and they brought the music with them," the St. Lawrence native said as the band wrapped up playing for Saturday's Germanfest at Heart of the City Park. "The music has just passed from one generation to the next."

"My parents were musical, and my brother and sister played piano and guitar," Batla added. "Joe's family was the same way."

Maybe family history sparked their interest, but love of the music is what has kept them playing all these years.

"Polka music is happy music," Batla said.



Siblings Francisco and Victoria Yanez dance to the music of Joe Havlak, right, and the Batla-Havlak Polka Time Band during the Germanfest-Labor Day Celebration at Heart of the City Park Saturday afternoon.

Herald photo/Steve Reagan

"That's kind of the theme to it."

Batla and Havlak took a long break from performing before bringing the band back together.

"We played pretty steady for a long time, then in the '60s and '70s,

we didn't play that much," Batla said.

"People were always asking us, 'When are you going get that old polka band back together ... so we got together again about 10 to 15 years ago.' The band plays about 15

dates a year in spots such as Austin, Fredricksburg, Dumas "and points in between," and the 72-year-old Batla said the group has no intention of disbanding anytime soon. "We're going to play as long as our health

allows," he said. "If something bad doesn't happen, we'll keep on playing."

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

Model plane enthusiasts set for Float and Fly

By THOMAS JENKINS

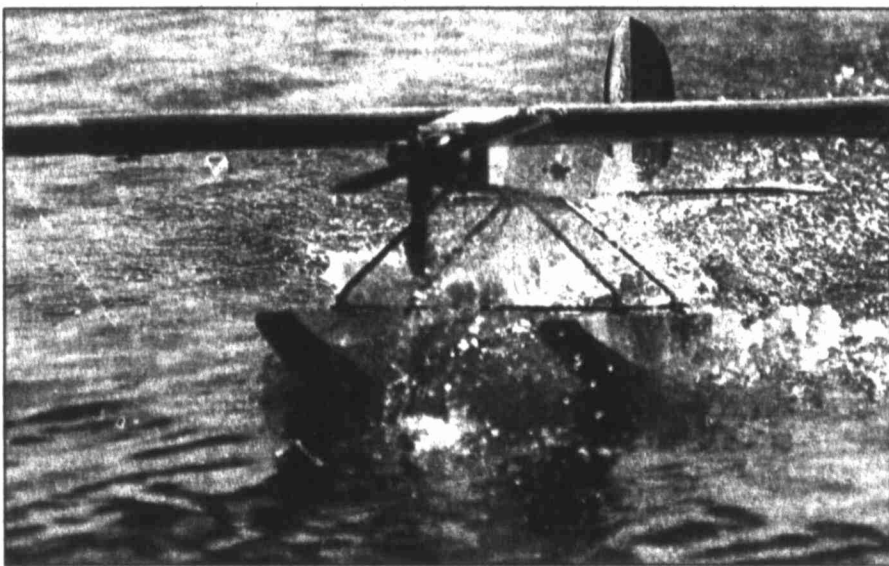
Staff Writer

Is it a boat? Is it a plane?

These are just a few of the questions you can expect to hear at Comanche Trail Lake this weekend, as the 14th Annual Don McKinney Float and Fly gets ready to go from water to air in a wide variety of model aircraft.

With take-offs from the waters of the lake expected from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Sunday, the Float and Fly is fun for the whole family, according to event spokesperson Don McKinney.

"The Float and Fly is a two-day event," said McKinney. "The Big Spring Model Aircraft Association is putting the event on. There will be exhibitions with all sorts of planes, including



flying off the water.

"At noon on both days we'll have a brisket lunch, which is being prepared by Robert

Walker, who just does an outstanding job with the brisket. He knows just what to put on them and how long to cook them.

Planes are \$5 and we want to invite the public to come out and have lunch with us."

McKinney said the funds raised help cover the operating costs of the model aircraft association, and offers area residents the chance to learn more about the hobby.

"This is one of our biggest fund raisers of the year and it helps us perpetuate things," said McKinney. "If someone is interested in flying, they will get the chance to talk to people who have been involved with model aircraft for sometime."

"We don't normally put people on trainer cords — also called buddy boxes — when we're flying out over the lake because

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QUICK LOOK

What: Big Spring Model Airplane Association Don McKinney Float and Fly.

Where: Comanche Trail Park Lake.

When: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday.

Admission: Free.

Extras: Brisket lunch each day, \$5 per plate.



McKinney

Spay-neuter program begins, extended to county

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

Get 'em fixed.

That's the message the Big Spring Police Department and Animal Control are taking to the streets once again this year, as the city's Animal Friendly Spay-Neuter Project gets underway armed with a \$30,000 grant.

"Apparently we're doing something right because the

Texas Department of State Health Services Zoonosis Division gave us a \$5,000 increase over last year's grant," said Big Spring Police Lt. Terry Chamness. "Last year, we went through the entire \$25,000 between October and January, so it's obviously a much-needed program."

Chamness said the program is based on vouchers provided by the state and allows pet owners

"... this year we want to extend the invitation not only to the people of Big Spring, but everyone in Howard County, including Coahoma and Forsan."

—Lt. Terry Chamness

to use the veterinarian of their choice to have their pets spayed or neutered.

"The vouchers will pay up to

\$80 for dogs and \$70 for cats," said Chamness. "The owner of the animal must provide proof of vaccination against rabies, a

state requirement, and a city license for the pet, a local requirement. They also need to provide the breed of the animal, and weight is very important with the dogs.

"Once all of the requirements are satisfied, they will be given a voucher to take to their vet. They can have the procedure done, after which the vet can

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Please call 263-7331. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you miss your paper, please call (432) 263-7335 before 7 p.m. weekdays and noon Sunday.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

A ribbon cutting will be held at 10:15 a.m. Wednesday at Papa Giorgio's Pizza, 2602 S. Gregg.

The event is sponsored by the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce and Ambassadors. Everyone is welcome.

Kaki Morton, physical therapist, will be honored with an open house at Dora Roberts Rehabilitation Center from 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Thursday. Tours will be given of the facility and refreshments will be served.

At 5:30 p.m., Drs. R.K. Reddy and P.K. Reddy will present a program on joint diseases.

CROCODILE HUNTER DIES

CAIRNS, Australia (AP) — Steve Irwin, the hugely popular Australian television personality and conservationist known as the "Crocodile Hunter," was killed Monday by a stingray while filming off the Great Barrier Reef. He was 44.

Irwin was at Batt Reef, off the remote coast of northeastern Queensland state, shooting a segment for a series called "Ocean's Deadliest" when he swam too close to one of the animals, which have a poisonous barb on their tails, his friend John Stainton said. "He came on top of the stingray and the stingray's barb went up and into his chest and put a hole into his heart," said Stainton.

'UGLY' CABBAGE WINS

PALMER, Alaska (AP) — It was admittedly rather ugly, but Brenna Dinkel's cabbage was big enough to win the Giant Cabbage Weigh-Off at the Alaska State Fair.

Just before the weighing began Friday in front of a packed grandstand, 11-year-old Brenna pointed out one particularly gooney leaf to her friends.

"Yuck," she said. Brenna named him Bruce.

How heavy was Bruce? Mike Campbell, the official from the state Division of Weights and Measures chosen to end all arguments, said it tipped the scales at 73.4 pounds.

Obituaries

Lottie Heckler Harris



Lottie Heckler Harris, 87, of Big Spring, died Sunday, Sept. 3, 2006, at her residence. Graveside services will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 6, 2006, at the Peace Chapel at Trinity Memorial Park with Carroll Kohl, retired minister, officiating.

The family will receive friends Tuesday from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the funeral home.

She was born Nov. 2, 1918, in Vernon and married George Heckler on April 17, 1948, in Big Spring. He preceded her in death July 29, 1987.

Lottie then married Denver Harris on April 15, 1990, in Las Vegas, Nev. He also preceded her in death June 16, 1998. She was a homemaker, a lifelong resident of Big Spring and was a member of the Lutheran Church.

Survivors include one daughter, Wanda Brock; and one granddaughter and her husband, Amanda and Jacob Cavazos; and one great grandson, Talon Cavazos, all of Big Spring; two sisters, Molly Thurmand of Monahans and Grace Hobson of Jal, N.M.; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was also preceded in death by her parents. Arrangements are under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring. Online condolences can be made at: www.npwelch.com

Paid obituary

Sadie Russell

Sadie Russell, 84, of Big Spring, died Sunday, Sept. 3, 2006, in a local hospital. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Support Groups

MONDAY

• Encourager's Support Group for all widows and widowers meets the first and third Monday of the month. For more information, call Nancy Hale at 398-5239.

TUESDAY

• The Multiple Sclerosis Support Group meets at 6 p.m. the last Tuesday of the month in the College Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, 1005 Birdwell Lane.

Weather

Tonight...Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers in the evening then isolated showers and thunderstorms after midnight. Areas of fog after midnight. Lows in the lower 60s. Light and variable winds. The chance of rain is 20 percent.

Tuesday...Partly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the lower 80s. Northeast winds around 10 mph. The chance of rain is 20 percent.

Tuesday night...Partly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Lows in the lower 60s. Light and variable winds.

Wednesday...Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 80s. Light and variable winds becoming southeast around 10 mph in the afternoon.

Wednesday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper

Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity between 10 a.m. Saturday and 7 a.m. Monday:

- TRAVIS ALLEN MELTON III, 26, of 509 E. 14th Street, was arrested Saturday on a charge of false report or statement to officer/agent.
- TINA WELTZ RIEGEL, 39, of 3305 Maple, was arrested Saturday on a Howard County warrant.
- THOMAS LEE WELCH, 35, of 1500 Harding, was arrested Saturday on a charge of disorderly conduct.
- KEITH DEWAYNE KELLY, 23, of 1010 E. 15th Street, was arrested Saturday on a charge of driving while license suspended/invalid.
- LUANNA KAY FRANCO, 38, of 1902 S. Johnson Apt. A, was arrested Saturday on a warrant.
- JESSE RODRIGUEZ LOPEZ, 38, of 114 Hoosier, was arrested Saturday on a warrant.
- TERESA LORENE LANG, 23, of Lubbock, was arrested Sunday on a charge of possession of drug paraphernalia.
- MONET JOHNSON, 18, of 1001 Birdwell Lane, was arrested Monday on a charge of credit card abuse.
- UNATTENDED DEATH was reported in the 3600 block of Parkway.
- THEFT was reported:
 - in the 1200 block of 11th Place.
 - in the 200 block of West Marcy.
- POSSESSION/DELIVERY OF DRUG PARAPHERNALIA was reported in the 600 block of Eighth Street.
- FAILURE TO IDENTIFY - GIVING FALSE INFORMATION was reported in the 600 block of Eighth Street.
- CRIMINAL MISCHIEF was reported in the 1100 block of Settles.
- BURGLARY OF A HABITATION was reported in the 1000 block of Birdwell Lane.
- AGGRAVATED ROBBERY was reported in the 400 block of Lancaster. The charge was later changed to filing a false report, resulting in an arrest.

Sheriff's report

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

- MAJOR TRAFFIC ACCIDENT was reported Saturday near the 186 mile marker of West Interstate Highway 20.

Take Note

• THE ACKERLY LUNCH BUNCH will meet at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 23, at Gale's Sweet Shoppe, 1200 E. Fourth. Lunch will be served at noon for \$6.25 per person. Lunch will be Mexican food, including dessert and drink

• CHRIST COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP IS COLLECTING INFANT CAR SEATS AND CARRIERS. These are given to new mothers who cannot afford them. To donate your old or new car seats and carriers, call Karen Allen at 263-3517 or leave a message at Christ Community Fellowship, 263-love. All donations are appreciated.

• ROAD TO RECOVERY, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, seeks volunteers to drive cancer patients to treatment in Midland. This requires just a few hours commitment each month. To volunteer, or to request a ride for treatment, call Nancy Koger at 267-7809.

• NEW LIFE MINISTRIES Church of God In Christ is holding a soup kitchen every second and fourth Tuesday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at 204 N.W. 10th. The meal is free. Call 264-0771 for more information

• THE PET PATROL helps locate lost pets and owners of found pets. To volunteer or for more information on becoming foster parents or adoptive families, call the Children's Protective Services office at 263-9669.

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

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

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Bulletin Board

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

TUESDAY

- Coahoma Senior Citizen luncheon is set for 11 a.m. in the Coahoma Community Center.
- Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- League of Latin American Citizens LULAC Chapter 4791 meets at 6 p.m. in the board room of the YMCA. For more information, contact Jennifer Patton at 714-4185 or 263-6351 or 816-6962.
- Texas Motorcycle Rights Association meets at 7 p.m. in the Spanish Inn. The public is invited. Call 268-6421 for more information.
- VFW Post 2013 meets at 7 p.m. in the VFW Hall, 500 Driver Road.
- Sheriff's Posse meets at 7 p.m. in the clubhouse on the Andrews Highway.
- Alzheimer's Association, the Greater West Texas Chapter meets at 2 p.m. in the Howard County Library conference room, 500 S. Main.
- Gospel Singing in the Kentwood Activity Center at 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome.
- Order of the Eastern Star No. 67 meets at 7:30 p.m. at 221 Main.

WEDNESDAY

- Optimist Club meets at 7 a.m. in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- Senior Circle meets at 10:30 a.m. at Scenic Mountain Medical Center for Sit and Be Fit Chair Aerobics. Those 50 years and older are invited to attend. Call 268-4721.
- Downtown Lions Club meets at noon at the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- Duplicate Bridge Club meets at 1 p.m. in the Big Spring Country Club.
- Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie meets at 7 p.m. in the Eagles Lodge at 703 W. Third.

THURSDAY

- Gideon International Big Spring Camp U42060 meets at 7 a.m. in Herman's Restaurant.
- Coffee Club meets at 10 a.m. in Gale's Sweet Shoppe.
- Kiwanis Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane. Call 267-6479.
- Genealogy Society of Big Spring meets at 7 p.m. in the Howard County Library, 500 S. Main.
- Big Spring Masonic Lodge No. 1340 meets at 7:30 p.m. at 2101 Lancaster.

FRIDAY

- Signal Mountain Quilting Guild meets from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. at 1019 Nolan St. Call 267-1037 or 267-7281.
- AMBUCS meet at noon in La Posada Restaurant.
- Greater Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Big Spring Country Club.
- Spring City Senior Citizen's Center country and western dance from 7:30 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. featuring Monroe Casey and the Prowlers. All area senior citizens are invited.

SATURDAY

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

MONDAY

- Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) No. 21 meets at 5 p.m. in the Dora Roberts Rehabilitation Center, 306 W. Third for weigh-in. The meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. Call 1-800-392-8677 or 263-0391 or 263-1758.
- Big Spring Band Boosters meet at 5:30 p.m. in the Big Spring High School band hall.
- Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) No. TX 1756 meets at 5:30 p.m. in the First Christian Church of Big Spring, 911 Goliad. A different program is offered every week. Enter through the south side door off 10th Street. Call 263-2786 for more information.

Lottery

Results of the Lotto Texas drawing Saturday night: Winning numbers drawn: 32-36-37-45-46-54. Number matching six of six: 0. Prize: Estimated jackpot for Wednesday night drawing: \$5 million.

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Saturday night: Winning numbers drawn: 1-7-14-22-37. Number matching five of five: 3. Prize per winner: \$9,933. Winning tickets sold in: Abernathy, Denton, Houston.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Saturday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 3-5-5

BIG SPRING HERALD
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Susanne Reed Publisher/Adv. Manager... Ext. 250
John A. Moseley Managing Editor... Ext. 230
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Iraqi officials say No. 2 in al-Qaida in Iraq arrested

By ELENA BECATOROS
Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Authorities on Sunday announced the capture of al-Qaida in Iraq's No. 2 leader, accusing him of "brutal and merciless" terror operations including the bombing of a Shiite shrine that touched off the sectarian bloodletting pushing Iraq toward civil war.

Iraq's national security adviser said Hamed Jumaa Farid al-Saeedi, known as Abu Humam or Abu Rana, was arrested a few days ago as he hid in a residential building southwest of Baqouba.

The arrest has left al-Qaida in Iraq suffering a "serious leadership crisis," national security adviser Mouwafak al-Rubaie said. "Our troops have dealt fatal and painful blows to this organization."

He accused the terror suspect of supervising the creation of death squads and ordering assassinations, bombings, kidnappings and attacks on Iraqi police and army checkpoints. "The operations were brutal and merciless," al-Rubaie said.

Not much is known about al-Saeedi, but al-Rubaie said he was the second most important al-Qaida in Iraq leader after Abu Ayyub al-Masri. Al-Masri is believed to have taken over the group after a U.S. air strike killed leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi north of Baghdad on June 7.

Al-Rubaie said al-Saeedi was "directly responsible" for Haitham Sabah Shaker Mohammed al-Badri, an Iraqi whom authorities have accused of leading the Feb. 22 bombing against the Shiite shrine in Samarra, 60 miles north of Baghdad.

The attack inflamed tensions between Shiite and Sunni Muslims and triggered reprisal attacks that have killed hundreds of Iraqis.

Al-Saeedi's capture "will affect al-Qaida in Iraq and its operations against our people, especially those aimed at inciting sectarian strife," al-Rubaie said.

The U.S.-led coalition and Iraqi authorities have announced numerous arrests after al-Zarqawi was killed that officials claim have thrown al-Qaida in Iraq into disarray.

But rampant sectarian violence and other attacks have continued, with at least 20 Iraqis killed in bomb attacks and shootings on Sunday.

The U.S. military command announced that four U.S. troops had been killed — two soldiers killed by a roadside bomb Sunday in Baghdad and two Marines in separate incidents Friday and Sunday in the volatile Anbar province, west of the capital.

The arrest of al-Saeedi came just over two months after Iraqi authorities announced that they had captured Yousri Fakhri Mohammed Ali, a Tunisian also known as Abu Qudama.

"This is a very important development," Deputy Prime Minister Barham Saleh said on CNN's "Late Edition."

"Deliberate intelligence work, both by Iraqi forces as well as the multinational forces, have dealt a very severe blow to al-Qaida organization in Iraq," Saleh said. "It is also significant because this man is believed to have been responsible for the attack on the shrines in Samarra, which led to the sectarian violence that we have seen."

A senior coalition official told The Associated Press that coalition forces were involved in al-Saeedi's arrest, but would not give details on what role they played.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said al-Saeedi had been arrested along with three other people.



Guitarist Delmer Batia, left, and accordionist Joe Haviak, right, and the rest of the Batia-Haviak Polka Time Band perform at the Germanfest-Labor Day Celebration at Heart of the City Park Saturday afternoon.

FLOAT

Continued from Page 1

there are so many people around. I've never had a plane crash in all of the years I've been instructing people, but you just never know. We want to keep things safe so everyone can enjoy it."

McKinney said the Float and Fly is also an excellent chance for people to learn more about the hobby.

"We welcome anyone who is interested in it to come visit with us," he said. "You can get a new

plane for about \$300 to \$350, or if you find a used one, even cheaper. It's a family-oriented club. The entire organization is set up for youngsters and adults. The rules that we use don't allow any alcohol or drugs, so it's a really good hobby for the entire family to enjoy."

Robert Walker, who has been a model aircraft enthusiast for many years, said the freedom of sailing his planes among the clouds is more than just a hobby.

"It's an addiction. I mean a big addiction," he said with a laugh. "I started out with one plane,

and then one ended up as two. Two ended up as 20 planes and now I have 32 planes in my hangar. It can get just as big as you want to take it."

According to local model aircraft enthusiast Jerry Rogers, these planes have been pushed aside by today's youth in favor of video game systems and other electronic marvels, but he still believes events like the Float and Fly have an important place in the fabric of today's families.

"It's good to get with the guys that are from all over," said Rogers. "And it's a lot of fun to fly. It's

a real clean, really nice hobby. You can take the family and the kids, and the pilots really take to the kids to teach them how to fly.

"I don't think we have as much interest in model aircraft now because there is so much electronic stuff out there for the kids. But it's still a very good hobby for kids."

For more information on the Float and Fly, contact McKinney at 399-4793.

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

NEUTER

Continued from Page 1A

turn the voucher in to us to be compensated."

Chamness said the program targeted city pet owners last year, with the scope expanding this season — thanks to the extra funds.

"Last year we only did a few vouchers for pet owners in the county," said Chamness. "However, this year we want to extend the invitation not only to the people of Big Spring, but everyone in Howard County, includ-

ing Coahoma and Forsan."

Stray animals are not eligible for the program, according to Chamness, unless someone in the community wants to take responsibility for the animal.

"If someone calls us and says they have a stray in their neighborhood and want to have it spayed or neutered, we can't do that," said Chamness. "However, if that person is willing to take responsibility for the animal, get its shots and city license, we can certainly provide them with a voucher."

"The grant comes

through the Texas Department of State Health Services Zoonosis Division," said Chamness.

"The funds come from the sale of the animal-theme license plates. They recently decided to take those funds and put them into the sterilization of pets."

"The state of Texas spends more than \$20 million each year for the euthanasia of animals. And while that number seems huge, we spend quite a bit on the same thing here in Big Spring."

In the end, it comes down to irresponsible pet owners, according to

Chamness.

"Overpopulation has gotten really bad in Big Spring," said Chamness. "We have the same problem a lot of other cities have. We just don't have responsible pet owners."

For more information, call 264-2550.

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

Candle may have caused fire that killed 6

By MICHAEL TARM
Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO — From her window, Kizzie Edwards often would see the Ramirez children playing on their back porch, some of them tapping out tunes on a miniature xylophone.

"I used to wave to one of the little girls every morning," Edwards said Sunday. "I can't believe I can't do that anymore."

A fire swept through the Ramirez family's third-floor apartment on the city's North Side early Sunday, leaving six children dead — five from the same family — and three other children and the family's mother

injured.

The fire, Chicago's deadliest in years, may have been caused by a candle used for light in an apartment without electricity, officials said.

"This is the largest multiple fire fatality we've had from a single fire in quite a few years. I mean it's children. It's difficult for everyone involved," said a visibly shaken Fire Commissioner Raymond Orozco.

The three-bedroom apartment in the Rogers Park neighborhood had no smoke detectors, he said. The apartment hadn't had electricity since May, said John Dewey, a spokesman for utility Commonwealth Edison. He

wouldn't say why it was turned off, citing confidentiality reasons.

The fire broke out just after midnight, authorities said.

"Then the mother came running out with one child in her arms, screaming to the neighbors that there were other children inside," said Cmdr. Will Knight. "They asked her how many and she said 'eight.'"

Derrell Dixon said two children appeared at a window and he and several other neighbors held up a blanket, trying unsuccessfully to get them to jump to safety.

"The kids were screaming and screaming 'Help! Help! We're burning, we're burning!'" said

Dixon, 22, who said he saw firefighters rescue one of the children with a ladder.

Neighbor Al Tillman raced up the stairs, crawled inside the smoke-filled home and pulled a small, crying boy to safety. Afterward, thoughts of the boy's dead siblings haunted him.

"I'm shaken up because the other children didn't make it," the 32-year-old Tillman said. "I only heard one child. I wish I could have saved the others."

Firefighters found most of the children huddled in the apartment's front room, not far from the spot where the fire probably started, said fire department spokesman Larry Langford.

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EDITORIAL

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

-FIRST AMENDMENT

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

Susanne Reed
Publisher

John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

Bill McClellan
News Editor

OUR VIEWS

Celebrating America's workforce

Today, we celebrate one of the most basic components of a successful society — the worker. Great decisions are made by politicians, generals command during wars and scientists explore the mysteries of the universe. But without the "common" working man and woman to drive the gears of society, all the equations and theories don't amount to much.

In recognition of the workforce that fuels this country, the U.S. Congress has set aside the first Monday in September for the observance of Labor Day.

So, what exactly should we be observing today?

George Sand once said, "Work is not man's punishment. It is his reward and his strength, his glory and his pleasure." While some would doubtless take issue with Sand's assessment, there is more than a little truth to it.

For many, what we are is defined to a great extent by what we do for a living. A great majority of U.S. workers take great pride in their occupations and strive to do the best job possible.

Given those facts, therefore, a day of celebration of our work makes a great deal of sense.

Very few good things come about as the result of random chance or good fortune, but from simple, hard work.

A cure for polio? Jonas Salk worked years on the problem before finding a cure.

Likewise, the Empire State Building and other great structures in this country just didn't appear out of the blue. They were the result of years of labor.

The examples could go on and on ...

But it is not great accomplishments we recognize today, but the simple realization that much that makes this nation great has been made possible by the work of our people.

HOW TO CONTACT US

The Herald is always interested in our readers' opinions. In order that we might better serve your needs, we offer several ways in which you may contact us:

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

LETTER POLICIES

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.

- Limit your letters to no more than 300 words.
- Sign your letter.
- Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street address for verification purposes.
- We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity.
- We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per 30-day period per author.
- Letters that are unsigned or do not include a telephone number or address will not be considered.
- Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

May we take a break from earthly problems, Lord, and concentrate on Your heavenly relief.

Amen

60 days of paid sick leave?

"There's a certain pride about being able to make it as an Oakland police officer," KTVU reporter Ken Wayne noted in a story last week about Oakland, Calif., police compensation. For the majority of those hard-working Oakland cops, there also must be a pride in not abusing a contract that invites abuse. Thanks to a cushy contract, Oakland police are entitled to 60 days of paid sick leave per year.

That's right: 60 days. The contract has expired, but remains in force as city solons and the police union are negotiating a new contract.

The Oakland Police Department's patrol division is chronically understaffed. A June grand jury report found, "As many as 20 percent of the officers assigned to work patrol on a given day are absent due to attendance at a school, injury, illness, vacation or other reason." Hence the department's heavy reliance on overtime.

(To make matters worse, the grand jury reported that its ability

to examine Oakland police overtime was "severely restricted by an alarming lack of records documenting how overtime was assigned and used.")

Which is why you would think city pols would not agree to a sick policy with no disincentive for abuse. Rich Gregson, executive director of the California Peace Officers' Association, was surprised at the policy. "Where's the incentive to not use your sick days?" Where's the incentive to not take what he calls "the hell with it" days?

According to KTVU, some 13 percent of Oakland police used more than 12 sick days last year. San Francisco, Richmond and San Jose police departments provide 12 days of paid sick leave. Oakland Police Chief Wayne Tucker told the television station that 60 days of sick leave is "unheard of in our profession."

Union head Bob Valladon told me that the force average of sick days taken is 2.8 days per employee per year. Valladon also argued that, because Oakland police do not accrue sick days — and he noted that some California municipalities compensate officers for unused sick time when they retire — Oakland taxpayers benefit from the policy.

Gil Duran, spokesman for

Oakland Mayor and state attorney general wannabe Jerry Brown, told me that 60 days "may sound to most people out of the ordinary, but most people don't strap on a flak jacket and a handgun before heading out the door." According to Duran, there are "no signs of abuse."

I'll agree with this: Oakland police have a difficult job and they deserve to be well paid for the dangers they assume — and they are. The annual salary range is \$69,162 to \$87,172. With shift differentials, pay increases for degrees and overtime, average officer pay exceeds \$100,000. God bless them, a large number take no sick days whatsoever.

This month, the Oakland homicide toll reached 89. Oakland's out-of-control crime problems mean Oakland police will be working overtime again.

"The reason we need so much overtime is the criminals outnumber the police," said Duran. "We need every officer we can get, every hour they can spare."

If so, why have 60 days of paid sick leave?

E-mail Debra J. Saunders at dsanders@sfnchronicle.com.

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DEBRA SAUNDERS



Trying to find a lesson from death

My mother died last Thursday, after a lifetime of worry. She was surrounded by her three children, about whom she had spent the last 50 years worrying would somehow be taken away from her. Instead, we held her hand and sang to her. If only she could have enjoyed life, knowing that it would turn out OK.

Which is not to say that there was nothing to worry about along the way. Even paranoids have real enemies. My mother, who lost her own mother as a teenager, knew that bad things do happen to good people. And each of us did have our brushes with death: My sister faced cancer; my brother, heart disease; I faced a man with an ice pick in a parking lot, decades ago.

But my mother's worries predated all of that. For her, worrying was as much a way of life as a reaction to events. It was the cross that she bore, the lesson that she could not help but teach.

When I was a little girl, a child from down the street was run over by a truck driver. My mother says she covered our eyes, but I'm not so sure. The blood on the pavement is one of my first memories — she wanted us to be careful. My mother was afraid of bike-riding on the streets and big dogs

and skiing. She was afraid of doctors and sickness, and especially heart disease (her father had a bad heart). She was afraid of being fat (her mother was overweight) and of being poor. She was afraid of being alone and of being rejected, of what other people thought and said.

And yet for all that, my mother taught me to be brave about what mattered most. To get the best education I could, no matter what. To strive to be my best, no matter how much I got teased for it. They're just jealous, she would say to me, when kids made fun of me for my straight A's, my exaggerated enunciation (I had a speech defect as a kid, and my mother insisted on lessons that overcorrected it), my unwashed determination.

They're not jealous, I would moan, they think I'm a jerk. Well, they will be someday, she would respond, when you go to college and make a success of yourself ...

And each of her children did. In many ways, it was easier for me to relate to my father. He didn't worry about what I ate or how I looked or whether boys liked me. He didn't set a fashion standard I couldn't meet, didn't have a better figure than I did. He died when I was in law school. My mother's worries came true.

I wanted my mother to be stronger than she could be. I wanted her to be able to take care of me, when worry and depression overcame her. I wanted her to be

able to take pleasure in her family, and in her life, when it sometimes seemed that she could find no joy in any of it. I wanted us to be a "normal" family, not understanding that there is no such thing.

I fight my mother's demons, as a mother myself. I worry too much, and rather than be paralyzed, I try to do too much, even knowing that what matters most is beyond the reach of even my gold-studded Rolodex and my long list of favors owed.

There is something utterly final about losing your second parent. When I lost my father, I was so young that I was beyond thoughts of my own mortality. Today, there is no shying away from it, no denying the harsh reality that I am the grown-up, no longer anyone's child.

So we took turns, my sister and brother and I, holding my mother's hand, singing the prayers that she so loved. She turned 80 last year. She leaves four beautiful grandchildren. Her skin was perfect.

There must be a lesson, if only this: Imagine she could have known that it would be thus. Could she have worried a little less and enjoyed life a little more? Could she have lived a fuller life without all the worry and anxiety that strangled her?

Can you? Can I?

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Living Well



By
Kori
Myers

Exercise motivation

If you need some extra motivation to start or continue an exercise program, you are not alone. Fortunately, there are so many benefits to living a physically active life, one of these reasons is likely to strike a cord with you!

Improve Your Quality of Life:

— Exercise will not only extend the length of your life; it will improve your quality of living. You will be less likely to develop osteoporosis, cancer, arthritis and chronic diseases associated with obesity.

— Exercise will make everyday physical activities easier! Things like carrying grocery bags, vacuuming, and walking up stairs will be much less of a challenge when exercise is part of your life.

— If weight loss is a goal, keep in mind that the more exercise you get, the more lean mass (muscle) you will have. So not only will you look more toned, you will also burn calories much more efficiently!

Here are some motivational tips for starting your exercise program:

— Start slowly, both with the number of different exercises you do and length of time you spend at each session

— Use visualization daily: visualize yourself completing a great work out

— Take responsibility for your emotional and physical health

— Schedule, prepare and plan your exercise: make a regular appoint-

ment with yourself

— Set realistic goals
— Make exercise a top priority

— Keep a daily exercise log

— Enjoy your workouts

— Don't feel guilty when you miss a session or two; negative feelings hinder motivation

— Believe in yourself: You can do it!

Here are some motivational tips for continuing your exercise routine:

— Exercise at a new time of day

— Break up your workout: aerobic workout in the morning then strength train and stretch at night

— Try new moves, exercises, or sports: take a new aerobics class, try Tai Chi, or try cross-country skiing—variety is the spice of life

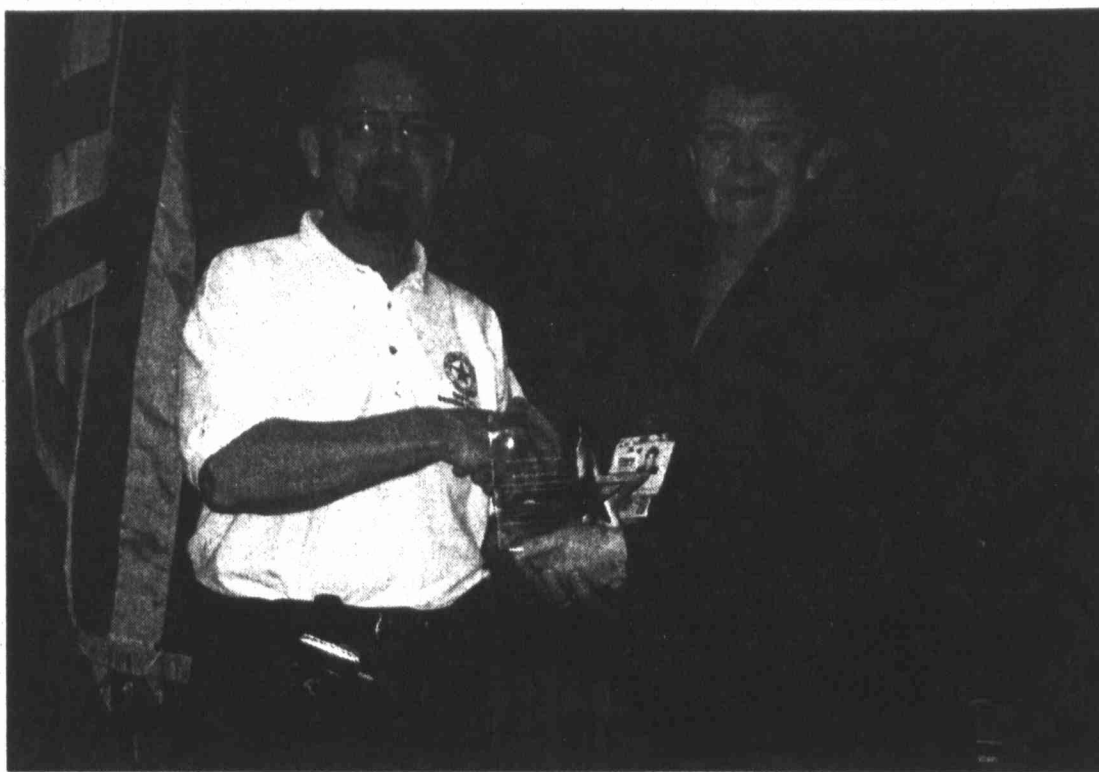
— Recruit a family member, work associate, or friend as an exercise partner

— Create distractions while you workout: exercise to your favorite music or television show

Finally, if you miss a week or two, or more — don't beat yourself up over it. It is never too late to get started again, and remember: this happens to the best of us.

Remember: "Raising kids, eating right, spending smart, living well."

Kori Myers, M.Ed., is the Cooperative Extension Service Family and Consumer Services agent for Howard County. She can be reached at kmyers@ag.tamu.edu or by phone at (432) 264-2236.



TPEA Region 1 President and TPEA State Secretary Gloria Feddersen presents Woody Jumper with this year's President's Award. Jumper serves as TPEA Chapter 52 President and President-elect.

Courtesy photo

BSSH employee earns wide recognition

Special to the Herald

Big Spring State Hospital Patient Rights Officer Woody Jumper recently was recognized by the Texas Public Employees Association with the President's Award and as the organization's top recruiter.

Jumper was honored during the organization's recent convention in

San Antonio.

Jumper also was recognized again Aug. 21 during Big Spring State Hospital Superintendent Ed Moughon's Brown Bag Luncheon. Jumper is the TPEA Chapter 52 president and president elect.

The monthly luncheons give Moughon the opportunity to update Big Spring State Hospital employees on recent hospital and statewide developments.

TPEA Region 1 President and TPEA State Secretary Gloria Feddersen presented Jumper with the awards in Big Spring. The President's Award is given at the President's discretion and given to a deserving TPEA member, Feddersen said.

TPEA is an advocacy group for state employees.

Jumper recruited 123 members to the local chapter.

Keep your cool and beat the summer heat

Most people look forward to summer weather and the many outdoor activities that accompany its warm temperatures. In many instances though, people forget to consider the detrimental effects that higher temperatures can have on their health.

Hundreds of people die every year from heat-related ailments such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. These are common medical conditions that summer sun and/or vigorous activity can initiate, especially in the elderly, young children and in pets. By knowing how to recognize and handle the symptoms of these conditions, you and your family can enjoy summer fun safely.

Likely symptoms of heat cramps, heat exhaustion or heat stroke include profuse sweating, weakness, dizziness and headache, muscle cramps, nausea, pale and/or clammy skin, dim or blurred vision and extreme fatigue. Although the symptoms for all three conditions are fairly similar, heat stroke is considered the most serious and requires immediate medical attention. Heat stroke can be identified by changes in consciousness, disorientation, a rapid weak pulse and shallow breathing. If this occurs, the body has likely reached a temperature in excess of 104 degrees and has lost the ability to cool itself. The person should be taken to an emergency room immediately.

If someone experiences the symptoms of a heat-related illness, perform the following first-aid procedures:

- Immediately take the victim out of the heat (preferably into an air-conditioned building);
- Lay the victim down with their feet elevated;
- Have the person slowly drink water or a sport's drink; and
- Pack ice around the victim's neck, armpits and groin.

If the victim does not feel better within thirty minutes, or is demonstrating any signs of disorientation, take him or her directly to an emergency room.

To prevent heat-related illnesses, try to avoid outdoor activities between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., when temperatures are at their highest. If you absolutely must be outside, be sure to drink lots of fluids and take frequent breaks. Intense physical activity can drain the body of up to a half-gallon of perspiration an hour.

When exercising, wear wicking fabrics or synthetics, not cotton. In extreme heat, these materials wick away moisture better than cotton, which,

SCENIC MOUNTAIN MEDICAL CENTER

when saturated with perspiration, can smother the skin. Also be sure to wear sunscreen. It deflects the sun's rays, and helps keep your body cooler.

Knowing how to prevent heat-induced medical conditions, as well as recognizing and being able to treat the symptoms, will help you and your family keep your cool this summer. If you have other questions regarding the heat, consult your physician.

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Contract Bridge

Famous Hand

North dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH

♦K 10 4
♥A 6
♠K 8 6 5 3
♣AK 7

WEST

♦AJ 8 6
♥5
♠AQ 9 2
♣J 8 5 3

EAST

♦9 7 5 3
♥8 7 4 3
♠J 10 4
♣10 2

SOUTH

♦Q 2
♥K Q J 10 9 2
♠7
♣Q 9 6 4

The bidding:

North East South West

1 NT Pass 4♥ Pass

4♠ Pass 6♥

Opening lead — ace of spades.

Back in the 1950s, when Terence Reese and Boris Schapiro went to Vienna, Austria, to represent Great Britain in the European championships, they agreed to play the then-new Texas Convention.

The convention applies when a player opens one notrump and his partner has a good hand containing a long major suit. Instead of bidding the suit, the responder jumps to four of the suit just below it in rank.

Thus, a jump to four diamonds indicates that the real suit is hearts, while a jump to four hearts indicates spades. The notrump bidder then

converts the "transfer" to the appropriate suit and so becomes the declarer. The principle underlying the convention is that it is usually advantageous for the stronger hand to be concealed during the play.

The convention has one big weakness. Players sometimes absently forget they are using it. In fact, when Reese and Schapiro decided to play the convention, they also agreed that the first one to forget it would pay the other a fine of 100 Austrian schillings.

Sure enough, when the present deal occurred, Schapiro forgot and jumped to four hearts instead of four diamonds. Reese did not forget and so dutifully bid four spades.

Panic-stricken, Schapiro now jumped to six hearts, hoping Reese would realize what had happened. Reese caught on and passed.

West led the spade ace and then, afraid Schapiro might be void of diamonds, mistakenly led another spade instead of the ace of diamonds. Declarer won with the queen and cashed all six of his trumps, discarding four diamonds from dummy. A low club to the king allowed Schapiro to discard his diamond on the spade king and also forced West to part with a club, so the end result was that the slam was made.

Commented Reese afterward: "So Britain got a lucky swing, and I got 100 schillings."

Tomorrow: Charting your course of play.

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The smallest details matter most to us. Labor, Delivery, Recovery, and Beautiful Beginnings in The BirthPlace at Midland Memorial Hospital West Campus.

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State briefs

One man killed, another injured at cockfight

NEEDVILLE (AP) — One man was killed and another was injured after a shooting stemming from a dispute at a cockfight, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Department said Sunday.

Jose Alfredo Morales, 32, of Los Fresnos, died after being shot in the back Saturday night. Jose Ramon Jauregue, 23, of Corpus Christi, was hospitalized with gunshot wounds to the leg and abdomen. He was reported in stable condition Sunday.

Authorities said an unidentified suspect shot the men over an argument about the winner of a cockfight which was attended by about 100 spectators. The suspect remained at large, sheriff's officials said.

Cockfighting is illegal in Texas. Several dead chickens were found at the scene.

Four birds injured with razors had to be euthanized and eight birds in cages were turned over to Fort Bend Animal Control.

Services set for former Texas first lady

AUSTIN (AP) — Funeral services have been scheduled for Wednesday in Austin for former Texas first lady Nellie Connally, who died Friday at the age of 87.

Nellie Connally was the widow of former Gov. John Connally and the last remaining survivor who was riding in President Kennedy's limousine when he was assassinated in Dallas in November 1963.

Services will be held at 10 a.m. at First United Methodist Church, where the Connallys were married in 1940. She is to be buried near her late husband in the Texas State Cemetery in Austin.

Democrats sure they can win in November

SUGAR LAND (AP) — Texas Democrats rallied Sunday behind the idea they can win in November in a state that in recent history has been dominated by the GOP.

"We can change Texas. But we're going to have to be willing to change ourselves. We have to learn to win again. That means getting past our defeatist attitude. We have to learn to win again because Texas needs us to lead again," gubernatorial candidate Chris Bell told a group of about 100 people who gathered at the Fort Bend County Democratic Party's Labor Day barbecue celebration.

In a state where the GOP holds every statewide office, Bell and other Democratic candidates on Sunday stressed that the Democratic Party can win.

Nick Lampson, the Democratic candidate who is vying for former House Majority Leader Tom DeLay's vacant seat, told the crowd he was confident candidates like himself and Bell had a legitimate chance to win on Nov. 7.

Service offers rides home for drinkers

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Hoping to keep potential drunken drivers off the road, a new designated driver service is offering rides home for its customers and their cars.

PointZero8, which started giving rides in San Antonio last week, sends two drivers when people call for rides, one to drive the client in the client's car and the other to follow in another car behind them.

"Right now, drinking and driving is a big thing,"

said 31-year-old Marc Groleau, a computer video game consultant who started the service. "A lot of people are getting DWIs, and a lot of people are getting killed on the roads. I just thought the demand is there."

Groleau, who said he used a similar service when he lived in Montreal, thought of starting PointZero8 when he looked around a bar and noticed lots of professionals who couldn't afford to be convicted of driving while intoxicated.

Users of the service, which is named for the .08 blood alcohol percentage that is the legal limit for driving, pay annual membership fees and charges for each ride.

Police: Homicide at Pizza Hut was a robbery

TERRELL (AP) — Two Pizza Hut workers fatally shot early Sunday appear to have been victims of a robbery, police said.

A passer-by came in about 12:30 a.m. and found assistant manager Patricia Oferosky, 40, of Wills Point dead behind the counter. Police said they later found the body of 47-year-old deliveryman Stephen Mitchelltree, of Terrell, in the back of the Pizza Hut.

An undisclosed amount of money was gone from the cash register, Detective S.W. Johns said.

Johns said police do not know when the killings occurred. The store was set to close at midnight and the victims were dead when officers arrived, he said.

Police have made no arrests in the city's first double homicide in at least 13 years, Johns said.

Terrell, with a population of about 15,000 people, is located about 30 miles east of Dallas.

Trooper dies after being shot in leg during search for escaped convict

FREDONIA, N.Y. (AP)

Troopers stood in salute as flags were lowered to half-staff. Hours earlier, one of their own had died, and state police said a fugitive hiding in western New York was to blame.

About 100 troopers bowed their heads in silence Sunday before one sang a slow, a cappella "Amazing Grace."

Then some went back to work, chasing Ralph "Bucky" Phillips in what has become a massive, five-month manhunt.

State police say Phillips is the prime suspect in the sniper-style shootings of two troopers during a stakeout Thursday night in Chautauqua County. Joseph Longobardo, who was shot in the leg, died Sunday. His colleague, Donald Baker Jr.'s condition was upgraded from critical to serious after a third surgery, state police

said. Before the evening ceremony, State Police Superintendent Wayne Bennett sent Phillips a threatening message: "You can run but you can't hide. Sooner or later, I don't care how good you are, we will find you."

Longobardo, 32, and Baker, 38, were ambushed in the woods outside the home of Phillips' former girlfriend. Baker was shot in the back.

One trooper managed to return fire, but state police did not say whether the sniper, who fired from less than 100 yards away, was hit.

Longobardo's leg had been amputated, and he never regained consciousness after being shot. He died at a Buffalo hospital with his wife and parents at his side.

"He was your advocate. He was our trooper. Don't

ever forget it, please," Bennett said.

Earlier in the day, troopers held a candlelight vigil for Longobardo and Baker and vowed to track down Phillips.

"We are not going to put up with it," police spokeswoman Rebecca Gibbons said. "He's angered a family, and we're going to be out here until he is in custody."

Hundreds of troopers — 140 per shift — were searching for Phillips.

State police were hoping a new \$225,000 reward for help in his capture would inspire residents to come forward. Six local people have been arrested in recent days and charged with harboring Phillips, including his daughter and former girlfriend.

Phillips, 44, has been on the run since April, when he used a can opener to cut an opening in the kitchen ceiling of an Erie

County jail and escaped through the roof.

Since then, he has been suspected in the June shooting of Trooper Sean Brown near Elmira in southern New York, and police said he has survived on the run by stealing about 15 vehicles and breaking into hunting camps and a gun shop.

Some in rural western New York had viewed the manhunt with amusement, but that changed after Thursday's shootings.

"There has been a marked difference in the

cooperation that we are receiving," Bennett said.

Authorities say Phillips' disdain for police was well known. He once allegedly left officials a note threatening "to splatter pig meat all over Chautauqua County."

But state police said the threat now extended to the public.

"Clearly now, there can be no discussion about the fact that he is a dangerous person," Bennett said, "and he's a risk to everybody, law enforcement and non-law enforcement alike."

At the state police barracks in Fredonia, Trooper Mark O'Donnell said Longobardo's death did not change the way they viewed their mission to catch Phillips.

"You can't be more determined," O'Donnell said. "We were determined from the day he shot Sean Brown."

Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Increase

The City of Big Spring will hold a public hearing on a proposal to increase total tax revenues from properties on the tax roll in the preceding tax year by 5.76 percent (percentage by which proposed tax rate exceeds lower of rollback tax rate or effective tax calculated under Chapter 26, Tax Code). Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property and the tax rate that is adopted.

The public hearing will be held on August 22, 2006 at 5:30 pm at the City Council Chambers at 307 E. 4th St.

The members of the governing body voted on the proposal to consider the tax increase as follows:

- FOR: Manuel Ramirez, Jr., Jo Ann Staulcup
Russ McEwen, Gloria McDonald
Joann Knox, Greg Biddison
- AGAINST: Stephanie Horton
PRESENT and voting: N/A
- ABSENT: N/A

Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget

The applicable percentage increase or decrease (or difference) in the amount budgeted in the preceding fiscal year and the amount budgeted for the fiscal year that begins during the current tax year is indicated for each of the following expenditures categories:

Maintenance and operations	5.02% (increase)	or	% (decrease)
Debt service	% (increase)	or	4.80% (decrease)
Total expenditures	4.82% (increase)	or	% (decrease)

Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value as calculated under section 26.04, Tax Code

	Preceding Tax Year	Current Tax Year
Total appraised value* of all property	\$469,674,211.00	\$609,143,028.00
Total appraised value* of new property**	\$1,613,098.00	\$5,618,247.00
Total taxable value*** of all property	\$416,702,369.00	\$444,521,405.00
Total taxable value*** of new property**	\$1,550,385.00	\$4,349,636.00

Bonded Indebtedness
Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness \$665,000.00

Tax Rates

Adopted tax rate for the preceding tax year	\$0.7163 per \$100 in value
Proposed tax rate for the current tax year	\$0.7163 per \$100 in value
Difference in the proposed tax rate and the adopted tax rate for the preceding tax year	\$(0.00) per \$100 in value
Percentage increase or decrease in the proposed tax rate and the adopted tax rate for the preceding tax year	0% Increase 0% Decrease

These tax rate figures are not adjusted for changes in the taxable value of property.

Comparison of Residence Homestead Values

Average appraised and taxable values on residence homesteads are compared from the preceding tax year and the current tax year.

	Preceding Tax Year	Current Tax Year
Average residence homestead appraised value	\$30,370.00	\$32,351.00
Homestead exemption amount for the taxing unit (excluding special exemptions for persons 65 years of age or older or disabled)	\$6,074.00	\$6,470.20
Average taxable value of a residence homestead (excluding special exemptions for persons 65 years of age or older or disabled)	\$24,296.00	\$25,880.80

Comparison of Residence Homestead Taxes

The taxes that would have been imposed in the preceding tax year on a residence homestead at the average appraised value (excluding special exemptions for persons 65 years of age or older or disabled) are estimated to be \$174.04. The taxes that would be imposed in the current tax year on a residence homestead appraised at the average appraised value in the current tax year (excluding special exemptions for persons 65 years of age or older or disabled), if the proposed tax rate is adopted, are estimated to be \$185.38. The difference between the amount of taxes on the average residence homestead in the current tax year, if the proposed tax rate is adopted, and the preceding tax year would be an increase of \$11.34 in taxes.

* Appraised value* is the amount shown on the appraisal roll and defined by Section 1.04(8), Tax Code.
** New property** is defined by Section 26.01B(17), Tax Code.
*** Taxable value*** is defined by Section 1.04(16), Tax Code.

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IN BRIEF

Dodgeball touney slated Saturday

A dodgeball tournament benefiting Relay for Life has been scheduled for 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 9, at the Goliad Intermediate School gymnasium. Teams will be composed of four male and four female members. Entry fees are \$5 per person to play. The tournament is being sponsored by The Yellow Dogs. For more information, contact Angel Sosa at 264-4108.

Quarterback Club meets Mondays

Big Spring High School's Quarterback Club will meet at 7 p.m. 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. Douglas in 1898.

Kahne wins at Fontana

FONTANA, Calif. (AP) — Casey Kahne knew exactly what he needed to do in Sunday night's NASCAR Nextel Cup race at California Speedway. "I came here telling myself, 'You've got to win. You've got to win. You have to go out there and lead laps,'" Kahne said.

The 26-year-old Cup star managed both in the Sony HD 500, earning his series-leading fifth win of the season and closing in on a spot in the Chase for the championship with one race remaining.

To do it, Kahne had to overcome a penalty, a series of challengers and a daring fuel gamble by rookie Reed Sorenson at the end.

"These guys fought back with great pit stops," Kahne said. "I just can't thank this team enough. They just worked their butts off to get us back in this Chase and at least now we have a chance going into Richmond next week."

Steelers' quarterback undergoes surgery

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger had an emergency appendectomy after becoming ill Sunday and will miss Thursday night's season opener against Miami.

Coach Bill Cowher is not certain how long Roethlisberger will be out following the quarterback's third operation in 10 months and second in 2 1/2 months. Roethlisberger began having pain and was vomiting Sunday morning, and was taken to UPMC Presbyterian.

"The surgery went well," Cowher said. "He is obviously going to be out this week and we will go week to week from there."

Charlie Batch, the former Lions starter who was 2-0 as a fill-in last season when Roethlisberger hurt his knee, will start against the Dolphins in the NFL's season-opening showcase game.

Reserve QB steers Frogs to win

WACO (AP) — With undefeated TCU starting quarterback Jeff Ballard woody on the sideline and unable to play, coach Gary Patterson only had one real option.

Freshman Marcus Jackson filled in nicely, and made sure the No. 22 Horned Frogs avoided being on the wrong side of a season-opening upset with a 17-7 victory at Baylor Sunday.

"He was the only person we had left," Patterson said.

"It was either going to be him or me throwing."

Jeff Ballard wasn't feeling right after taking some hard hits in the first meeting between the old Southwest Conference rivals in 11 years. Jackson found out just before the second half that he was replacing the senior starter, then threw for 148 yards and two touchdowns.

"It was crazy. I had a couple of warmup throws, maybe three or four," Jackson said. "I mainly snapped with the center."

Jackson finally put the Horned Frogs ahead with an 84-yard TD pass to tailback Aaron Brown after Baylor's second turnover in the third quarter. He threw a 4-yard score to Quinton Cunigan in the fourth quarter.

TCU, unranked when it beat No. 7 Oklahoma 17-10 in last year's season opener, stretched its winning



Texas Christian University's Brian Bonner sacks Baylor quarterback Shawn Bell on a third down play in the first quarter. TCU defeated Baylor, 17-7, in Waco Sunday.

TEXAS COLLEGE ROUNDUP

played TCU.

Ballard improved to 9-0 as TCU's starter, but never returned after completing 7-of-14 passes for 85 yards and an interception in the first half.

Patterson said Ballard should be ready to play the home opener Saturday against UC-Davis.

Texas Tech 35 SMU 3

LUBBOCK (AP) — After his first college start, Texas Tech quarterback

Graham Harrell received the highest of praise from his favorite receiver.

"Graham Harrell reminds me of Tom Brady," said Robert Johnson, who caught two of Harrell's five touchdown passes as the 25th-ranked Red Raiders defeated SMU 35-3 on Saturday night.

"He's a calm guy out there. He's just cool."

Harrell calmly picked apart the Mustangs in the season opener for both teams, throwing for 342 yards. Johnson set a

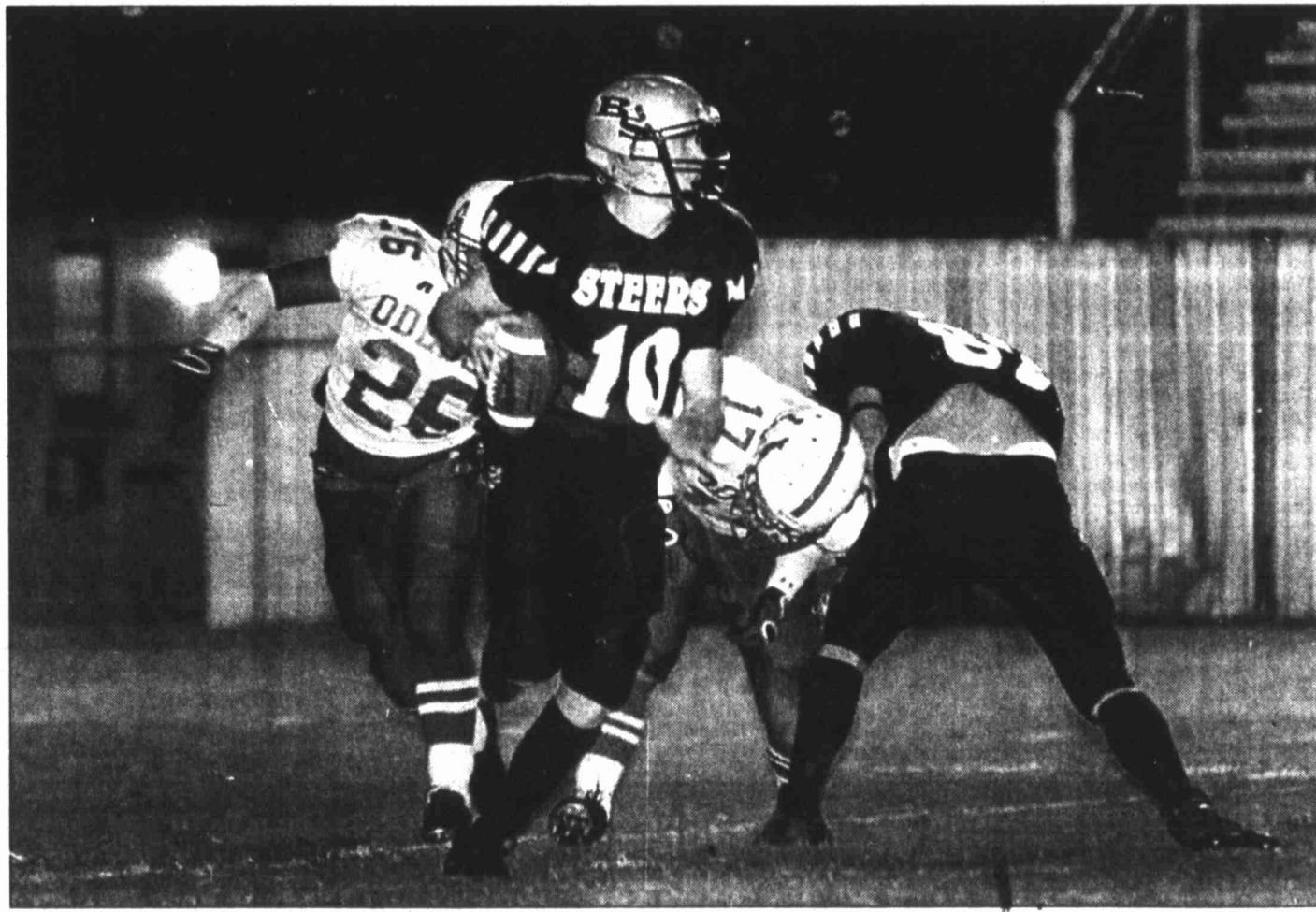
school record with 15 catches for 139 yards.

It was offense as usual for the Red Raiders, whose quarterbacks have led the nation in passing the past four years. Harrell threw TD passes of 8, 12, 14, 45 and 3 yards, two more scoring strikes than he threw all last season as the backup in Tech's high-octane aerial offense.

Texas Tech coach Mike Leach agreed that Harrell showed composure but

See TCU, page 8

LOOKING DOWNFIELD



Big Spring quarterback Ryan Tannehill (10) looks for a receiver while under heavy pressure from two Odessa High School defenders during the season opener for both teams Friday night in Memorial Stadium. The Steers, who fell 36-28 to Odessa, will try to earn their first victory of the season when they host San Angelo Central at 7:30 p.m. Friday.

Agassi's career ends with loss at U.S. Open

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK — Crouched alone in the silence of the locker room, a pro tennis player no more, a red-eyed Andre Agassi twisted his torso in an attempt to conquer the seemingly mundane task of pulling a white shirt over his head.

Never more than at that moment did Agassi seem so vulnerable, looking far older than his 36 years, wrestling not simply with his bad back but also with

two overwhelming and conflicting emotions.

There was the concrete sense of departure, of knowing his career came to an end Sunday with a 7-5, 6-7 (4), 6-4, 7-5 loss to 112th-ranked Benjamin Becker in the third round at the U.S. Open. And there was the liberating sense of excitement, of knowing he has more time to devote to his wife, Steffi Graf, and their two children; knowing there are no more flights to catch, no more practice sessions, no more injec-

tion to dull the searing pain of an irritated sciatic nerve.

That's why, for Agassi himself and the 20,000 or so fans who honored him with a raucous, four-minute standing ovation in Arthur Ashe Stadium after the match, it truly did not matter all that much what Sunday's outcome was. This day and this tournament were all about saying goodbye to an eight-time Grand Slam champion who grew up in front of the world, from cocky kid with the shoul-

der-length hair and denim shorts to the thoughtful guy with the shaved pate and proper tennis whites.

"The scoreboard said I lost today, but what the scoreboard doesn't say is what it is I've found," Agassi told the crowd, tears streaming down his cheeks, his voice cracking with emotion. "Over the last 21 years, I've found loyalty. You have pulled for me on the court and also in life. I have found inspiration. You

See AGASSI, page 8

Steers dominate at meet

By STEVE REAGAN

Staff Writer
ABILENE — The Big Spring High School cross country team couldn't have asked for a better season debut.

The BSHS boys absolutely dominated, taking six of the top seven individual places en route to overall team honors in the Class 3A-5A division at the Abilene Christian University Cross Country Meet in Abilene Saturday.

The Steers won their division by more than 60 points over runner-up Odessa Permian. Lubbock Monterey was third, followed by Abilene High School, Lubbock Coronado, Midland Lee, Midland High and Abilene Wylie.

Zack Dawson took home top individual honors, winning the meet with a time of 16 minutes, 12 seconds. Chris Salazar was third at 16:35, followed by Chris Martinez (16:44), Jessie Sanchez (16:54), Jordan Valle (16:55) and Michael Rodriguez (17:02).

Also for the Big Spring boys, Shane Allen placed 14th in a time of 17:49, while Dylan Yarbrough and Casey Speck placed 29th and 30th, respectively.

In the girls' division, BSHS did not enter enough runners to compete for team honors, but Catherine Leubner and Mistie Aguilar had impressive individual showings.

Leubner placed fourth with a time of 13:28, while Aguilar finished fifth with a time of 13:32.

Also for BSHS, Esther Tobar placed 21st (14:16), while Giovana Hernandez was 64th (17:22).

BSHS returns to action Saturday in Lubbock.

AGASSI

Continued from page 7

have willed me to succeed sometimes even in my lowest moments."

He could have been referring to his losses in his first three major finals, two at the French Open and one at the U.S. Open, setbacks that made him wonder if he'd ever reach the very top.

Agassi got a cortisone injection after beating Andre Pavel in 3 1/2 hours, then received three anti-inflammatory shots

in the days after beating eighth-seeded Marcos Baghdatis in an even longer encounter. The last injection came Sunday, before facing Becker, a German who won the 2004 NCAA singles title for Baylor University but is so unaccomplished he needed to go through qualifying just to make it into the Open.

Talk about matching bookends: Agassi played the very first of his record 61 Grand Slam tournaments at the U.S. Open in 1986, losing to Jeremy Bates, who was ranked outside the top 100 at the time. Since then, Agassi was 24-0 at the Open against men rated that low — until Sunday.

But Agassi couldn't conjure up any more magic in his 21st consecutive Open, an event he won in 1994 and 1999. His back — and Becker — wouldn't let him. Over and over, Agassi would pull up short, watching a ball fly by instead of chasing it.

He winced after serves, clutched his lower back after stretching to reach for shots.

"I wanted to run on the court and pull him off," said Agassi's trainer, Gil Reyes, "because it shouldn't hurt — it shouldn't hurt that bad."

There were times, as his limp grew more pronounced, when it seemed quite likely that Agassi wouldn't be able to complete the match; his father, who turned him into a tennis player as a tot, had said he hoped Agassi wouldn't try to play Sunday and wasn't in attendance.

"If I wanted to quit," Agassi said, "I would have done that a long time ago. I didn't come here to quit. ..."

"I just credit the doctors that I was able to get out there today. It's been such a day-by-day battle. Sure enough, it was real early where I wasn't feeling so good," he said, then

smiled and added: "That all doesn't matter anymore."

Not only is Benjamin Becker not related to Boris Becker, they've never even met. Yet the B. Becker that Agassi faced Sunday sure did serve like "Boom Boom," pounding 27 aces at up to 143 mph, the last on match point. He won 13 consecutive points on his serve during one stretch.

This is, remember, only the second major of Becker's career; he never even had won a tour-level match anywhere until June.

He was steady when he had to be, including saving four break points in the match's third game. When the biggest match of his career finished, Becker joined the crowd in standing and applauding for Agassi.

"It was a tough moment, an emotional moment for me, too," Becker said. "I was happy, obviously. At the same time, I

was sad."

His white ballcap turned backward, Becker swung away, aiming for the lines and finding them. He compiled 82 winners, 45 more than Agassi, and played craftily, winning at least a half-dozen points with drop shots that forced the ol' man to run in vain — and drew boos and whistles from the crowd.

The fans did all they could to will Agassi to one more win, rising with arms aloft to celebrate when he'd break serve or fight off a break point.

"You can't be that loud," said Becker, who's more accustomed to facing hostile crowds of about 200 during college matches.

Now he'll get another taste of partisan support: Becker's fourth-round opponent is 2003 U.S. Open champion Andy Roddick, who edged No. 22 Fernando Verdasco 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-4, 6-7 (4), 6-2.

TCU

Continued from page 7

for one exception.

"He threw one bonehead ball and there was about a series and a half where I called some bad plays and he couldn't overcome my coaching," Leach said. "I thought he was pretty good."

SMU coach Phil Bennett said he wasn't disappointed in his team's effort but for their offensive sputters.

"When we would get something going we would have penalties," he said.

"Obviously, the biggest part of the game that was disappointing was our third-down conversions. They were able to convert third and long, and we weren't."

SMU's secondary couldn't stop Tech's passing attack, even though the Red Raiders (1-0) were without Jarrett Hicks,

one of their leading receivers who is awaiting word from the NCAA on an appeal of his academic eligibility.

Texas A&M 35 The Citadel 3

COLLEGE STATION (AP) — Texas A&M coach Dennis Franchione got just what he wanted out of the Aggies' 35-3 win over The Citadel on Saturday night — a never-in-doubt win and video evidence of where his team needs to improve.

"The theory among coaches is you should make a dramatic improvement from Game 1 to Game 2," said Franchione. "This game will be very valuable for teaching and learning."

Stephen McGee threw for 200 yards and a touchdown and ran for another score in his second career start as Texas A&M won its 20th consecutive home opener.

Courtney Lewis had a

pair of 1-yard touchdown runs and Kerry Franks blocked a punt and returned the second-half kickoff 52 yards for the Aggies.

But the A&M defense, one of the nation's worst last season, still looks shaky under new coordinator Gary Darnell.

Duran Lawson completed 19 of 38 passes for 128 yards for the Division I-AA Bulldogs, who've lost 16 consecutive games against I-A opponents.

Though they didn't score a touchdown, the Bulldogs finished with 243 total yards, raising questions about the 4-2-5 defensive scheme Darnell implemented when he replaced Carl Torbush.

Texas 56 North Texas 7

AUSTIN (AP) — Colt McCoy and No. 3 Texas passed their first test without Vince Young. It only gets harder from

here. In his first start at quarterback for the defending national champions, McCoy hit Limas Sweed for a 60-yard touchdown on his second pass and Texas cruised to a 56-7 victory over North Texas on Saturday.

"I've been waiting for this my entire life," said McCoy, who was 12-of-19 for 178 yards and three touchdowns in a tuneup for next weekend's showdown with top-ranked Ohio State.

"I don't want to lie to you. It felt pretty good," he said. "It was a dream start."

McCoy's numbers would have been even better if not for a few dropped passes. While seldom pressured, he looked comfortable reading blitzes and checking through his receivers.

He even showed some of Young's pizzazz with his feet, scrambling 27 yards to set up a second-quarter touchdown.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL SCOREBOARD

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- Michigan St. 27, Idaho 17 Missouri 47, Murray St. 7 Nebraska 49, Louisiana Tech 10 Ohio 29, Tenn.-Martin 3 Ohio St. 35, N. Illinois 12 Purdue 60, Indiana St. 35 Valparaiso 54, Wis. Lutheran 0 Wisconsin 35, Bowling Green 14 SOUTHWEST Arkansas St. 14, Army 6 Houston 31, Rice 30 MVSU 10, Ark.-Pine Bluff 0 Oklahoma 24, UAB 17 Oklahoma St. 52, Missouri St. 10 Southern Cal 50, Arkansas 14 Texas 56, North Texas 7 Texas A&M 35, The Citadel 3 Texas Southern 17, Prairie View 14 Texas St. 27, Tarleton St. 23 Texas Tech 35, SMU 3 FAR WEST Arizona 16, BYU 13 Colorado St. 30, Weber St. 6 Montana St. 19, Colorado 10 Oregon 48, Stanford 10 Portland St. 17, New Mexico 6 UC Davis 38, N. Colorado 7 UCLA 31, Utah 10 UNLV 30, Idaho St. 6 Washington 35, San Jose St. 29 Wyoming 38, Utah St. 14

- 3 Texas, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 2 Notre Dame (1-0) beat Georgia Tech 14-10. Next: vs. No. 19 Penn State, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 3 Texas (1-0) beat North Texas 56-7. Next: vs. No. 1 Ohio State, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 4 Auburn (1-0) beat Washington State 40-14. Next: at Mississippi State, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 5 West Virginia (1-0) beat Marshall 42-10. Next: vs. Eastern Washington, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 6 Southern Cal (1-0) beat Arkansas 50-14. Next: vs. No. 20 Nebraska, Sept. 16. No. 7 Florida (1-0) beat Southern Miss 34-7. Next: vs. UCF, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 8 LSU (1-0) beat Louisiana-Lafayette 45-3. Next: vs. Arizona, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 9 California (0-1) lost to No. 23 Tennessee 35-18. Next: vs. Minnesota, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 10 Oklahoma (1-0) beat UAB 24-17. Next: vs. Washington, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 11 Florida State (0-0) at No. 12 Miami, Monday. Next: vs. Troy, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 12 Miami (0-0) vs. No. 11 Florida State, Monday. Next: vs. Florida A&M, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 13 Louisville (0-0) vs. Kentucky, Sunday. Next: at Temple, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 14 Michigan (1-0) beat Vanderbilt 27-7. Next: vs. Central Michigan, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 15 Georgia (1-0) beat Western Kentucky 48-12. Next: at South Carolina, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 16 Iowa (1-0) beat Montana 41-7. Next: at Syracuse, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 17 Virginia Tech (1-0) beat Northeastern 38-0. Next: at North Carolina, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 18 Clemson (1-0) beat Florida Atlantic 54-6. Next: at Boston College, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 19 Penn St. (1-0) def. Akron 34-16. Next: at No. 2 Notre Dame, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 20 Nebraska (1-0) beat Louisiana Tech 49-10. Next: vs. Nicholls State, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 21 Oregon (1-0) beat Stanford 48-10. Next: at Fresno State, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 22 TCU (0-0) at Baylor, Sunday. Next: vs. UC Davis, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 23 Tennessee (1-0) beat No. 9 California 35-18. Next: vs. Air Force, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 24 Arizona State (1-0) beat North Arizona 35-14, Thursday. Next: vs. Nevada, Saturday, Sept. 9. No. 25 Texas Tech (1-0) beat SMU 35-3. Next: at UTEP, Saturday, Sept. 9.

AP top 25

No. 1 Ohio State (1-0) beat Northern Illinois 35-12. Next: at No.

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MONDAY

Table with 16 columns (WFAA, KMD, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLT, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KPBT, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN, SCIFI) and 7 rows (6-12 PM) listing various TV programs and their channels.

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BLONDIE comic strip panels showing Blondie and Dagwood.



WIZARD OF ID comic strip panels showing a farmer and a palmer.



AGNES comic strip panels showing Agnes and a man.



HI AND LOIS comic strip panels showing Lois and a man.



THE OTHER COAST comic strip panels showing a man and a woman.



SNUFFY SMITH comic strip panels showing Snuffy Smith.



BEEBLE BAILEY comic strip panels showing Beetle Bailey.



BEEBLE BAILEY comic strip panels showing Beetle Bailey.

This Date In History

Today is Monday, Sept. 4, the 247th day of 2006. There are 118 days left in the year. This is Labor Day. Today's Highlight in History: On Sept. 4, 1781, Los Angeles was founded by Spanish settlers. On this date: In 1888, George Eastman received a patent for his roll-film camera, and registered his trademark: Kodak. In 1893, English author Beatrix Potter first told the story of Peter Rabbit in the form of a "picture letter" to Noel Moore, the son of Potter's former governess. In 1944, during World War II, British troops entered Antwerp, Belgium. In 1951, President Truman addressed the nation from the Japanese peace treaty conference in San Francisco in the first live, coast-to-coast television broadcast. In 1957, Arkansas Gov. Orval Faubus called out the National Guard to prevent nine black students from entering Central High School in Little Rock. In 1957, Ford Motor Co. began selling its ill-fated Edsel. In 1967, Michigan Gov. George Romney told a TV interview he'd undergone a "brainwashing" by U.S. officials during a 1965 visit to Vietnam — a comment that apparently damaged Romney's bid for the Republican presidential nomination. In 1971, an Alaska Airlines jet crashed near Juneau, killing 111 people. In 1984, Canada's Progressive Conservatives, led by Brian Mulroney, won a landslide victory in gener-

WHAT'S COOKING

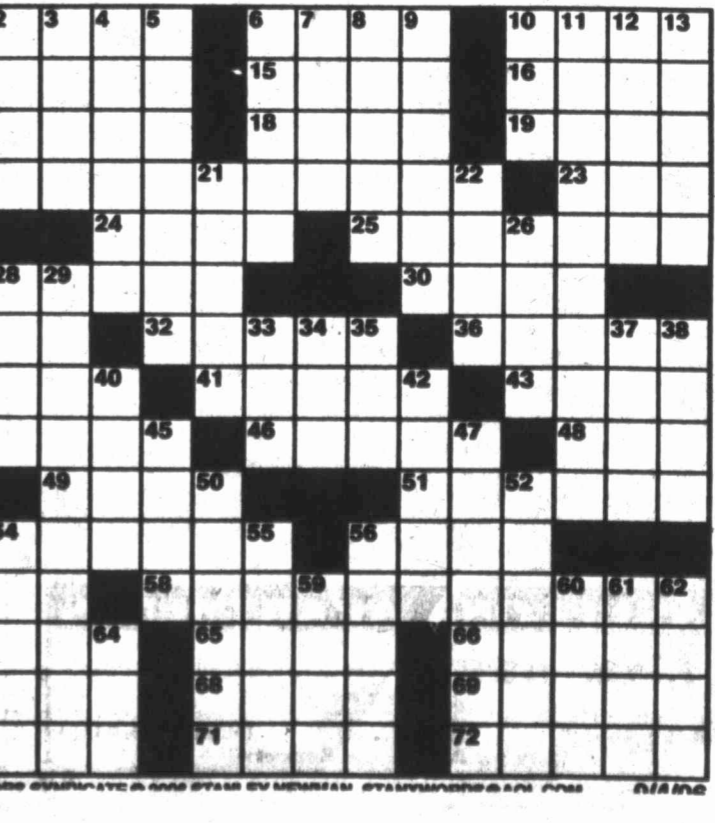
al elections over the Liberal Party of Prime Minister John N. Turner. In 1995, attorney William Kunstler, who spoke out for the politically unpopular in a controversial career, died in New York at age 76. Today's Birthdays: ABC Radio commentator Paul Harvey is 88. Actress Mitzi Gaynor is 75. Singer Merle Haggard is 74. "Bubba" Knight (Gladys Knight & The Pips) is 64. © 2006 The Associated Press.

Newsday Crossword

- ACROSS 1 Oscar or Emmy 6 Hotel posting 10 Pronto, in a memo 14 Hayfield machine 15 Spanish cheers 16 Old Italian money 17 Madonna film role 18 "How clumsy of me!" 19 Urban pollution 20 Vent one's anger 23 French Mrs. 24 RBIs or ERA 25 Glasses and goggles 27 Word-processor spacing feature 30 Fly high 31 Town (Thornton Wilder play) 32 Homeowners' documents 36 Part of a shoe size 39 Paid athletes 41 Less moist 43 Ripped 44 Did a carpenter's dusty job 46 Online correspondence 48 Finished first 49 Drug-fighting cop 51 Holy ones 53 Cottonwood relatives 56 That lady's

WHAT'S COOKING

- 8 Native American abode 9 High-school compositions 10 Capone and Pacino 11 "Don't get so upset!" 12 Kitchen scent 13 Clip-on communicator 21 Destined 22 Calico's cry 26 Stand in line 27 Spinning toys 28 Mystical glow 29 Grocery-bag material 33 Before, in poems 34 Lower, as headlights 35 Baltic or Bering 37 Horse's gait 38 Farmyard egg layers 40 Aquatic mammal 42 Gone up 45 Haul 47 Most massive 50 Thin pancakes 52 "It's true, really!" 53 Birthday celebration 54 Scarlett of fiction 55 No longer fresh 56 Added employees 59 Scramble piece 60 Military force 61 Barbecue favorites 62 Steak or veal 64 Coffee-break time, often



BIG SPRING VOLUME 100 By THOM Staff Wri Recent county officials between aligned ers go to Accord Election Sandra dates ru non-align with Independ