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FRIDAY EDITION,
 JANUARY 1, 2021

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VOLUME 116, NUMBER 88

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HAPPY NEW YEAR
Upcoming Events

Howard County Commissioners Meeting
 January 4
 at
 3:30 p.m.
 County Courthouse

City offices available by appointment or electronic communication only

Silver Wings Ball
 Jan. 30, 2021
 The Club at Silver Hills
 5:30 p.m. cocktails
 6:45 p.m. dinner,

City, County, and other local businesses will be closed for New Years Day Friday, Jan. 1

INDEX

News 1 & 3
 Obituaries2
 Religion 7-9
 Sports 10
 Local/Area.....4-6
 Classifieds11-13

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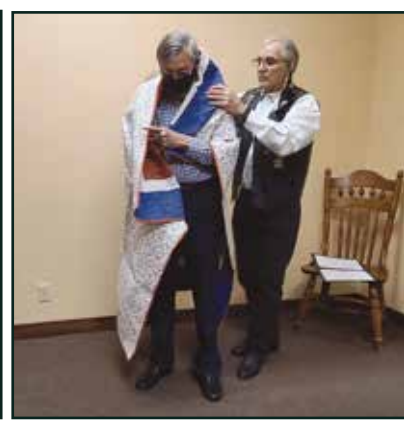
Quilt of Valor Bill Myers honored for his service

By **AMANDA DUFORAT**
 Managing Editor

Every veteran who made the choice to serve their country helped pave the path of freedom that our nation is able to enjoy to this day. Each veteran has a unique story to tell and carries a badge of honor for their service that is etched on their hearts. Last weekend, the most recent recipient of a Quilt of Valor – Bill Myers with Myers and Smith – was the guest of honor in a Quilt of Valor ceremony as he was honored for his service.

“About 10 years ago I received a quilt in the mail, and I remember thinking I didn’t order this. I opened it up and there was nice note in it. It touched

See **QUILT**, Page 3



HERALD photo/Amanda Duforat
 Bill Myers was surrounded by loved ones as he was presented with a Quilt of Valor by Veteran Mike Tarpley.

Businesses in a pandemic: Adjusting to the needs of the community, building partnerships



Courtesy photos
 Goode Party Events hosted a Pancakes with Santa event as an opportunity for kids in the community to visit with Santa and enjoy a few more holiday activities this year.

Editor’s Note: Goode Party Events and Sign Dreamers Big Spring was featured earlier this year as one of the businesses who spoke on launching their business in a pandemic. This story is a follow up on these two businesses as to how the pandemic had an impact on them and what they are doing to adjust in this uncertain time.

By **AMANDA DUFORAT**
 Managing Editor

Small businesses have been feeling the brunt of the pandemic hit over the past several months, as they dealt with statewide shutdowns, and limited occupancy restrictions.

Goode opened her her business on Dec. 14, 2019 offering inflatables as a way to

provide activities for the youth in the community to take part in. Shortly after the launch of her business, the ideas began to flow as business began to pickup even in the midst of a growing pandemic. In addition to the inflatables, she added display yard signs to help families celebrate special occasions and accomplish-

ments.
 “It’s hard to believe we have reached the first year of business already,” Goode said. “We started out with the inflatables and decided to transition out of the inflatables and move into a

See **PARTY**, Page 3

Spare a thought for local charities in the area: CASA of West Texas

By **IRIS RANGEL**
 Herald Staff Writer

CASA of West Texas was established in 1990 in order to represent abused children in court as an umbrella agency under Centers for Children and Families, later to become independent in 2000. Approaching their 30th anniversary soon, CASA continues to serve children that are removed from their homes due to severe child abuse and neglect.

“There are many ways you can fulfill our needs here at CASA,” CASA’s Volunteer Recruitment and Marketing Specialist Hope Stalder said. “Our children are always desperate for more volunteers, donations are appreciated, or just helping us spread the word in any way you can is also always an incredible way to help our organization.”

During times of disarray, sometimes a CASA is the only stable entity in a child’s life, which solidifies the importance of CASA’s work. CASA (or Court Appointed Special Advocates) are appointed by a judge to serve as the child’s Guardian Ad Litem, in order to advocate for the child’s best interest. A CASA volunteer will serve as the

Guardian Ad Litem for 12-18 months, or possibly longer dependent upon the circumstances considered.

Children in the foster care system are much more susceptible to fall through the cracks of the overburdened child welfare system when a CASA volunteer is not available. CASA of West Texas has grown to serve several counties including Midland, Howard, Martin, Dawson, Gaines, Andrews and Glasscock Counties. Of those seven counties, Howard County is the second largest county CASA serves, according to Stalder. Last year alone, CASA provided advocacy to 130 children in the Howard County area. “We need a strong presence in this community for these victims. We are extremely blessed to have the community support that we do – we couldn’t have made it this far without it,” she said.

According to Stalder, CASA is hosting two CASA Information Sessions in January 2021. The first information session will be held on Jan. 6, 2021 with the second being held on Jan. 20. Both will be from 12 – 1 p.m. virtually. The information sessions will cover what it takes to become

See **CASA**, Page 3



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Take Note

• West Texas Centers will be hosting the January 2021 Mental Health First Aid training classes twice in January. The classes will be held on Jan. 26, 2021 for Adult Mental Health First Aid, and Jan. 28, 2021 for Youth Mental Health First Aid. Both classes will be virtual.

• A gofund me page for Ed Flores, who recently tested positive for coronavirus and was recently transferred to Lubbock. Donations are requested to help with medical bills and travel expenses so his wife can be close with him. Ed worked with Shroyer for about 25 years and 87 Auto Sale as a mechanic; he has always been willing to help out people even when they didn't have enough money to pay him. Donations can be made at GoFundMe by Monica Medina. For more information on how to help, e-mail jessemonica1234@gmail.com or call 432-517-7675.

• Isaiah 58's last distribution will be Dec. 15 from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. The food pantry will be closed for the holiday season, through the end of the year beginning Dec. 21. through January 5, 2021.

• The City of Big Spring recently announced that due to a recent increase in COVID-19 cases, all indoor city-owned rental facilities including our venue, The Big Spring Municipal Auditorium, will be closed for the rest of the year. With this announcement and with no other venue options that will properly social distance our musicians, we will be unable to kick off our season on Dec. 19 with our "Holiday Spectacular" Concert. Be watching our Facebook page, Symphony website (Big Springsymphony.org), the Big Spring Herald, KBYG and KBST for further details and a new kick-off date for our season, appropriately entitled, "The Versatile Big Spring Symphony". Thank you for your continued support and patience as we navigate through these unusual times. We hope to see you very soon. May you and your family stay safe and healthy through the rest of this Holiday Season!

• The Howard County Courthouse will only be open by appointment. All doors except the handicapped entrance located on the west side of the building will be locked. All who enter will be screened following Covid guidelines. Face masks are required for all who enter.

• City of Big Spring offices have moved to by appointment only or electronic communication only. Contact information for all departments can be found on the city website at mybigspring.com.

• Forsan Food Pantry will be open twice a month from 4:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. Families who are in need can pull up to the front doors of the Junior High/High School and receive a free box of pre-packed meals. If you have any questions or need to pick up a box at a different time, contact Kaci Wash at 432-457-2223 ext 821 or Jenny Sayles at jennysales@yahoo.com.

• Cub Scouts meet Monday from 6:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. at Naz Family Church, located at 1400 S. Lancaster.

• Howard County Republican Club meets the second Monday of each month at 421 Main Street. Everyone is welcome. The meeting takes place at Noon. For more information call 432-213-7628.

• A new group named Taking Care of Business has started in Howard County. It is made up of people of all ages and genders who want to be better than they are. The focus of the fledgling organization is to engage in meaningful discussions that promote personal growth. Additionally, the organization will plan and execute worthwhile activities within the community. There is no membership fee and attendance is not taken. The only requirements are that you be positive or want to be more positive than you are, consider yourself to be a good person but want to be better than you are, and that you have a desire to help others be better too. Childcare is available during the discussion time if you let us know. Topics to be avoided include Religion and Politics, though we can dance around them.

Taking Care of Business is being sponsored by the local Masons and it meets in the Masonic Lodge on the court square. It is not necessary that you have any masonic affiliation to participate in this Growth Group. All Covid-19 safety protocols will be followed as defined by local, state, and federal authorities. At this time refreshments will not be served but you are welcome to bring your own and not share. The meetings take place at 219 South Main Big Spring, Texas. For more information write to Colonel.Allen.M.Morris@Gmail.com or just come to the meeting.

• The Life Center in Big Spring is helping moms and dads with a Diaper Day Giveaway! Call for a five minute phone appointment and a pickup time for free diapers, wipes and formula. 432-606-5041.

• The Senior Supper Club has come out of hibernation to resume its normal Tuesday evening dinners. The Come-One-Come-All group will be meeting on Tuesdays at 5 p.m. and orders will be placed around 5:30 p.m. after much socializing from a distance. The Senior Supper Club is an informal group of folks from Howard County who meet at least weekly and sometimes more for Dutch-Treat food at different area restaurants. Sometimes the group also meets for cards, dominoes, or desserts and fellowship. For more information, contact Colonel.Allen.M.Morris@Gmail.com.

• St. Vincent de Paul will be open the following dates beginning November 2020. Food distribution will take place the second Thursday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and other assistance will be suspended at this time, but will resume on Dec. 17. Distributions will take place at 1009 Hearn at SVDP Building. In December 2020, the food distribution will continue the 2nd Thursday as scheduled. SVDP will be closed from December 18 through January 7, 2021.

• Permian Basin Multiple Sclerosis Support Group for information, encouragement and support. The group meets monthly on the Second Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express at 5321 John Ben Sheppard Parkway, Odessa. If you or someone you know has been touched by MS, or if you are just interested in more information please feel to contact Gary Tidwell at garylteagle1987@gmail.com.

• VFW Post 2013 meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. New members are being sought. The Post is located at 500 Driver Rd. Qualified veterans, those who have served in a foreign war, who are interested in joining the VFW are encouraged to attend a meeting to find out more information.

TxDOT addresses weather concerns

Odessa TxDOT crew members will be on shift work throughout this winter storm event. Conditions vary widely across the 12-county Odessa District at this time. Overnight weather is expected to dramatically change driving conditions across the district and across the state.

If driving is a must, motorists are asked to use extreme caution, especially on New Year's Eve. If celebrating in public, please do so responsibly. Have a designated driver who doesn't drink or arrange for a ride in some other manner. Please do not mix alcohol with trying to drive in winter weather. That can be a deadly combination.

The National Weather Service is predicting heavy snow along the Interstate 10 corridor and in areas south of there. A lesser amount of snow is expected across most of the rest of the district.

It is important to remember that there will be patches of ice on the road as areas drop below freezing tonight. Any moisture on the road may freeze overnight and created slick spots on the road. Drivers need to continue to drive with extreme caution since it is impossible to prevent ice in every location despite round-the clock efforts of crews.

Crews will continue to treat overpasses and bridges in an effort to prevent a buildup of ice. Other materials may also be used as the situation calls for it.

Snow can be packed and become ice as it melts from traffic and then refreezes overnight. Locations that were relatively problem-free Wednesday afternoon can be much different during the rest of this storm event as precipitation and traffic patterns change.

Driving conditions across the state can be found at www.drivetexas.org.

It is impossible to treat all roads, and motorists should drive as if no road has been treated. It is advisable that motorists double commute times if they must travel. Here are some basic driving tips for winter weather:

- Clear all snow and ice from windows to ensure proper visibility before driving.
- Slow down. Speed limits are meant for optimal driving conditions. Smart winter driving requires driving to existing conditions.
- Allow more room to stop. It is always possible that hitting ice will lengthen stopping distances.
- Allow more room between you and other vehicles.
- Do not use cruise control.
- If you start to skid, take your foot off the gas and steer where you want to go.
- Never slam on the brakes. Always use brakes gradually (again this lengthens stopping distances).
- Make sure your vehicle is maintained properly.
- Remember that bridges often ice over faster than other roads and that shady spots take longer to thaw.

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QUILT

Continued from Page 1

me pretty good to get that out of the blue, and since then I have developed a good relationship with the ladies who make the quilts. They send them to me and I get to pick who gets them.”

The Quilt of Valor presented to Myers was the 69th quilt local Veteran and Quilt of Valor Presenter Mike Tarpley has had the honor of presenting to a fellow veteran.

Quilts of Valor Foundation is a national organization founded in 2003 by a “Blue Star” mom, Catherine Roberts. The idea of finding a way to provide comfort for veterans came to her while her son was deployed in Iraq. While he was deployed, she constantly felt 10 seconds away from panic and those feelings turned into quilt making.

Since the founding of the organization, more than 140,000 quilts have been awarded in the United States, Germany, Iraq and Afghanistan. With each quilt the mission to honor service members and veterans is fulfilled - one human-being reaching out and touching another without judgement, reaching out with acceptance and with acknowledgement of service to our nation in very trying circumstances.

The quilts are made up of three layers: the top with its many colors, shapes and fabrics represent the community and the many individuals we are; the batting - filler - is the center of the quilt, its

warmth.

“This second layer represents the hope that this quilt will bring warmth, comfort, peace and healing to the individual who receives it,” Tarpley said during the presentation.

The backing is the final layer and it represents strength that supports the other layers. It represents the strength of the recipient, the support of his or her family, communities and nation. Each of the stitches holding the layers together represent love, gratitude and sometimes the tears of the maker. Each quilt represents the three-part message from the givers to the recipient.

“We honor you for your service. We honor you for leaving all you hold dear and to stand in harm’s way in a time of crisis, protecting us from the effects of war,” Tarpley said. “Next, we know that freedom is not free. The cost of freedom is the dedication of lives of men and women like you, and this quilt is meant to say thank you for your sacrifice.”

He continued, “Finally, this quilt is meant to offer comfort to you and to remind you that although your family and friends cannot be with you at all times, you are forever in our thoughts and hearts.”

Myers served in Vietnam from 1968-1969 arriving a few days after the Tet Offensive. He served as a combat medic in the 1st Battalion 5th Mechanized Infantry in an area west of Saigon over to Cambodia.

His battalion would conduct sweeps during the day, ambush patrol at night and run convoys.

“We saw a lot of action, a lot of combat and lost a lot of men. We had a lot who came home injured for life,” Myers said. “I was blessed; I was never injured. The platoon I served in, there was myself and one sergeant who was never hurt. When I became a senior aide man, on several occasions, the entire command group was hurt, but I never was. There were several occasions all the rest of them were.”

As almost any veteran would, Myers described his experience as one he doesn’t regret. His service to our nation is one he holds dear and is proud to have walked.

“I wouldn’t want to do it again, but as we say if a division of Chinese infantry was coming up Highway 87, the Vietnam vets would be the first to meet them,” he said.

After the presentation, Myers extended his gratitude to those who were in attendance for the short ceremony. As each family member, co-worker and friend who was there extended their appreciation and gratitude to Myers for his service, they left a piece of themselves as they gently touched his quilt.

“I can’t say what this means to me. I thought I was going to cry, and I don’t cry,” Myers said. “I am overwhelmed with this honor.”

Amanda Duforat is the Managing Editor at the Big Spring Herald. To contact her, email editor@bigspringherald.com or call 432-263-7331.

PARTY

Continued from Page 1

structure building.”

The transition to an actual store front came in August, and according to Goode, the switch was like opening a new business. With the opening of the business doors, another switch occurred and the services took on a new direction. As business picked up, transitions were needed in order for service to the community to continue in a quality way.

“We decided to change direction due to work picking up again and my husband was getting back into his busy schedule. I couldn’t do everything myself as the water slides alone are couple hundreds of pounds,” Goode said.

While her husband’s work was picking up, the winter months were drawing near, which served up the perfect opportunity for a business shift. In opening a facility, the activities would be able to continue through the colder weather and provide expanded services for the community to enjoy.

“I prayed and told God if this was meant to be it the pieces would fall into place. Next thing I knew I saw a ‘For Lease’ sign and called,” she said. “When I walked inside, the vision became real so we took the risk and signed.”

While signing for a new business lease may be a crazy move during the middle of a pandemic, it was a leap of faith for Goode and her family, as she knew she was stepping out to serve the community and follow a direction she had been given. As preparation began for the new business, final details were put in place and the doors to Good Party Events officially opened in September. The partnerships continued to flow in as Goode Party Events joined with The Joyful Season event and featured her characters and promoted her services at one of the first community events that took place this year.

“We pushed out 25-30 characters during that weekend and it was amazing. We had people come from out of state and stayed in a hotel just to come and bring their children,” she said.

While the best laid plans always seem to change before they come to fruition,

Goode can attest to that. The initial plan was to have a place for kids to hangout after school, but the vision and the hectic life of families -even in a pandemic - came to mind.

“We were still new and most parents are busy after school between practices, homework, dinner, etc. So, I just started planning some small events for the kids to attend,” she said. “We needed something a little bit different. We ran with that thinking and since then we have done Pizza with the Turtles, Halloween cookie decorating, Popcorn and pajamas. Just small things for families to come and hangout and spend time with each other.”

She continued, “There are times things are super packed and others not so much, but I’m learning that’s how business works! We just recently did a small gathering Downtown with the bubble machine and characters after the parade. It was cold and rainy but so much fun. Even the adults we’re in the bubbles!”

Even in the downtimes, Goode doesn’t give up hope for she sees the silver lining. Through the support of her family, friends and the community, her efforts and the drive to continue is supported.

“The best reward is to see the children light up and the happiness you see in their eyes. That’s is all that matters to me,” she said. “I have a purpose in my life and it is to make a positive difference. I went and did some visits with families that didn’t get to trick or treat and the kids were so excited to see a character bring them a bag! It’s the smallest thing that matters the most to our children.”

Goode Party Events offers a wide range of services, from party venue, to games and an area for youth to safely hang out for a few hours, and party services. The physical location offers tvs, arcade style games, air hockey, foosball, board games, pool table, just a mix of things for entertainment. There are more than 50 characters that can show up to your party as well; yard signs are still available. As for community events, there are paint parties on the books and more activities, events and services are being added as the days roll by. As the pandemic continues, with no certainty of it letting up, Goode encourages small businesses to keep leaning into the support from the community and the other small businesses.

“Hang in there. I know that we are still going

See **PARTY2**, Page 4

MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL

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Alvin Marin, 83, died Thursday. Visitation January 10, 2020 with a vigil service at 7:00 PM at Myers & Smith Chapel. Funeral service at 10:00 January 11, 2020.

Marcelino Rangel, 86, of died Monday. Viewing and visitation will be at Myers & Smith Funeral Home on Sunday, January 3, 2021 from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM with a vigil at 7:00 PM. Services will be at 10:00 AM at Holy Trinity Catholic Church on Monday, January 4, 2021. Burial will be at Trinity Memorial Park.

Irma Chapa, 56, died Monday. Viewing and visitation will be Monday, January 4, 2021 from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM with a vigil service at 7:00 PM.

Funeral service will be Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at 10:00 AM at the Holy Trinity Catholic Church. Burial will be at Trinity Memorial Park.

Mauricio Hernandez, 66 of Big Spring died December 17, 2020. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Sheri Bailey, 51, died Monday. The family will receive friends from 11am-9pm on Friday, January 1, 2021 at Myers & Smith Funeral Home. The funeral service will be Saturday, January 2, 2021 at 11am at Cornerstone Covenant Church. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park.

Jackie Murphree, 53, died Monday. No services will be held.

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PARTY2

Continued from Page 3

through a tough and stressful time, but we really do have an amazing community that loves the small businesses," Goode said.

Two of the recently established partnerships for Goode Party Events is one with Skateland Reloaded and another with Cornerstone Covenant Church. In an effort to provide some Christmas cheer and an opportunity for the youth to get out and celebrate with friends and other youth, Goode Party Events brought along some special guests and helped host a Christmas Party at Skateland

Reloaded. Following the skate party, special guests made an appearance at a community outreach event hosted by Cornerstone Covenant Church.

"To see what they did for the community is just simply amazing. It is very important that we as small businesses support each other cause we can make such an amazing impact in our community, especially in this time of the pandemic," she said.

Part of building good working partnerships in the community is offering support to other business. Goode has found that through the support of other organizations and community members, her business has also received support which has in turn resulted in growth and sustainability even during these months dealing with pandemic restrictions.

"I have some big plans in the works for 2021 and I am so excited to see what all will unfold. The community better get ready," she said.

Goode added, "I want to thank every single person who has attended one of our events, helped spread the word about us, used any of our services or contributed to what we are doing in any form or fashion. We are so grateful for all the support; we know we wouldn't be here today without all of the support. Thank you once again, we truly love our community."

Amanda Duforat is the Managing Editor at the Big Spring Herald. To contact her, e-mail editor@bigspringherald.com or call 432-263-7331.

Biden criticizes pace of vaccine rollout, vows to accelerate

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — President-elect Joe Biden criticized the Trump administration Tuesday for the pace of distributing COVID-19 vaccines and predicted that "things will get worse before they get better" when it comes to the pandemic.

"We need to be honest — the next few weeks and months are going to be very tough, very tough for our nation. Maybe the toughest during this entire pandemic," Biden said during remarks in Wilmington, Delaware on Tuesday.

His comments come as the coronavirus pandemic has killed more than 336,000 Americans, with experts warning holiday travel and gatherings could precipitate yet another spike in virus cases even as the virus has already been surging in states nationwide.

Biden encouraged Americans to "steel our spines" for challenges to come and predicted that "things are going to get worse before they get better."

He also went after the Trump administration over its vaccination efforts, warning that the project, dubbed Operation Warp Speed, is moving at a slower pace than needed.

"As I long feared and warned the effort to distribute and administer the vaccine is not progressing as it should," he said.

Earlier this month, Trump administration officials said they planned to have 20 million doses of the vaccine distributed by the end of the year. But according to data provided by the Centers for Disease Control, just over 11.4 million doses have been distributed and only 2.1 million people have received their first dose.

At the current pace, Biden said, "it's gonna take years, not months, to vaccinate the American people."

President Donald Trump deflected Biden's critique. "It is up to the States to distribute the vaccines once brought to the designated areas by the Federal Government," he tweeted Tuesday.

CASA

Continued from Page 1

a CASA volunteer and the basics. There will also be a virtual volunteer training on Feb. 2, 2020.

"For anyone who is looking to make a difference in the life of a child in the new year, this is the perfect opportunity," Stalder said.

If you are interested in volunteering and making a difference, contact Hope Stalder at 432-683-1114.

Iris Rangel is a Staff Writer at the Big Spring Herald. To contact her, email reporter@bigspringherald.com or call 432-263-7331.

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The City of Big Spring

2021
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DPS Announces Temporary Waiver for DL/ID Expirations Ending in April 2021

AUSTIN – The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) today announced that the waiver on expiration dates for driver licenses (DLs) and identification cards (IDs) ends on April 14, 2021. Customers who need to renew are urged to make an appointment today.

The waiver, granted by Governor Greg Abbott in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, applied to DLs, commercial DLs, commercial learner permits, ID cards and election identification certificates that expired on or after March 13, 2020.

Expanded office hours

To assist customers needing DL services, designated offices will be offering expanded hours from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Friday, starting on Jan. 4. Appointments are already being accepted for the additional hours. The participating offices were selected based on the volume of customer transactions.

In addition, this Saturday, Dec. 19, is the last day for Saturday appointments, which are still available at many locations across the state.

Online renewals still a convenient option

Many Texans are eligible to skip the trip to the office entirely by renewing their DL/ID card or changing their address online at Texas.gov. Customers can also renew by phone at 1-866-357-3639 (1-866-DL-RENEW). The requirements and cost for online and phone renewal are the same as in-person transactions.

Scheduling an appointment

DPS launched a new appointment solution when DL offices reopened in May, and all services are now conducted by appointment only. (DL offices have implemented several COVID-19 protocols to ensure a safe environment.) To schedule an appointment or check availability, visit the online appointment scheduler. If you are unable to find an appointment at the office of your choice, check back for availability at that office or other locations nearby. Please check often as availability does change.

The appointment system is designed to provide additional convenience, reducing the time Texans wait in line. Customers can book appointments for a specific day and time, up to six months in ad-

vance, and show up 30 minutes or less before their scheduled time. Customers can check-in using the kiosk inside the office or from their mobile device.

A reminder, if you are unable to make your scheduled appointment, please change it ahead of time. Customers not showing up has become a major issue statewide. From May 26 through Nov. 30, approximately 27% of people were no-shows for their appointments.

To help combat that issue, many offices are offering customers without an appointment a spot on a "standby" list. These customers are required to wait in the office and are assisted in the event of a cancelation or no-show. The number of standby appointments available is limited to ensure all customers who are placed on the list will be served by the end of the day.

Additionally, a limited number of same-day appointments will be available at each DL office. These appointments are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Customers who book these appointments can leave the DL office until their designated time.

Nashville bombing spotlights vulnerable voice, data networks

PHOENIX (AP) — The Christmas Day bombing in downtown Nashville led to phone and data service outages and disruptions over hundreds of miles in the southern U.S., raising new concerns about the vulnerability of U.S. communications.

The blast seriously damaged a key AT&T network facility, an important hub that provides local wireless, internet and video service and connects to regional networks. Backup generators went down, which took service out hours after the blast. A fire broke out and forced an evacuation. The building flooded, with more than three feet of water later pumped out of the basement; AT&T said there was still water on the second floor as of Monday.

The immediate repercussions were surprisingly widespread. AT&T customers lost service — phones, internet or video — across large parts of Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama. There were 911 centers in the region that couldn't take calls; others didn't receive crucial data associated with callers, such as their locations. The Nashville police department's phones and internet failed. Stores went cash-only.

At some hospitals, electronic medical records, internet service or phones stopped working. The Nashville airport halted flights for about three hours on Christmas. Rival carrier T-Mobile also had service issues as far away as Atlanta, 250 miles away, because the company uses AT&T equipment for moving customer data from towers to the T-Mobile network.

"People didn't even realize their dependencies until it failed," said Doug Schmidt, a Vanderbilt University computer science professor. "I don't think anyone recognized the crucial role that particular building played" in the region's telecom infrastructure, he said.

The explosion, which took place in the heart of the Nashville's historic downtown, killed the bomber, injured several people and damaged dozens of buildings. Federal officials are investigating the motive and haven't said whether the AT&T building was specifically targeted.

AT&T said 96% of its wireless network was restored Sunday. As of Monday evening, AT&T said "nearly all services" were back up. On Wednesday, it was "activating the last of the remaining wireline equipment."

AT&T said it sent temporary cell towers to help in affected areas and rerouted traffic to other facilities as it worked to restore power to the Nashville building. But not all traffic can be rerouted, spokesperson Jim Greer said, and there was physical equipment that had to be fixed in a building that was part of an active crime scene, which complicated AT&T workers' access.

"We are all too dependent on phone, cell phone, TV and internet to have outages for any reason," Rep. Jim Cooper, the Democrat who repre-

sents Nashville in Congress, said in an emailed statement Wednesday. He said the U.S. "needs to harden our telecom facilities so we have greater redundancy and reliability" and called for congressional hearings on reducing telecom vulnerabilities.

The impact on emergency services may have raised the most serious flags. At one point, roughly a hundred 911 centers had service problems in Tennessee alone, said Brian Fontes, head of the National Emergency Number Association. A 911 call center should still be operational even if there is damage to a phone company's hub, said David Turetsky, a lecturer at the University at Albany and a former public safety official at the Federal Communications Commission. If multiple call centers were out of service for several days, "that is of concern," he said.

Cooper and experts like Fontes also gave AT&T credit for their work on reinstating services. "To be able to get some services up and running within 24 to 48 hours of

a catastrophic blast in this case is pretty amazing," Fontes said.

Local authorities turned to social media on Christmas Day, posting on Facebook and Twitter that 911 was down and trying to reassure residents by offering other numbers to call. A Facebook page for Morgan County 911 in northern Alabama said Saturday that Alabama 911 centers were up and running but advised AT&T customers with issues to try calling via internet, and to go to the local police or fire station for help if they couldn't get through.

The Nashville police department uses the FirstNet system built by AT&T, which the carrier boasts can provide "fast, highly reliable interoperable communications" in emergencies and that is meant to prioritize first responders when networks are stressed. But problems emerged around midday Friday, said spokesperson Kristin Mumford. The department had to turn to a backup provider, CenturyLink, for its land-

lines and internet at headquarters and precincts and obtained loaner cellphones and mobile hotspots from Verizon.

The transition to backups was "actually rather seamless," Mumford said, although the public couldn't make calls to police precincts. She said the AT&T service started coming back Sunday and as of Wednesday morning, overall service with cellphones, internet and landlines was "about 90% up."

The Parthenon, a museum replica of the Parthenon in Athens located about three miles from the explosion, still didn't have a working phone four days after the blast. But its credit-card system came back online Tuesday, said John Holmes, an assistant director of Metro Parks, the museum's owner. During the weekend, the museum was cash-only, although it let in people without cash for free.

It's not as if the physical vulnerability of communications networks comes as a surprise.



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John 7:22

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Love has no fear because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of judgment, and this shows that his love has not been perfected in us. 1 John 4:18

EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF PRAYER

Love has no fear because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of judgment, and this shows that his love has not been perfected in us. 1 John 4:18

The Lord says, "I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name. When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue them and honor them. I will satisfy them with a long life and give them my salvation. Psalm 91: 14-16

GOOD NEWS

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Jesus traveled throughout Galilee teaching in the synagogues, preaching everywhere the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed people who had every kind of sickness and disease. Matthew 4:23

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart
Illustration of hands in prayer.

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As a glove responds to the strength of the hand, so you will respond to the leading of Christ to the point where you say, "I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me." Galatians 2:20

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Rejoice, you people of Jerusalem! Rejoice in the Lord your God! For the rains he sends are an expression of his grace. Once more the autumn rains will come, as well as the rains of spring. (Joel 2:23)

God's love supply is never empty. "For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth." (Psalm 103:11)

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Count Your Blessings
Illustration of a Bible and seven crosses.

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Church News

Life Church

We are excited to open our doors and welcome our Life Church friends to the campus this Sunday. In order to meet this Sunday we will continue to follow the guidelines that have been set and provided by the Texas State Attorney General: limited capacity, proper spacing between seats and rows, sanctuary will be cleaned and disinfected, if you or someone in your family have underlying health issues we are encouraging you to watch and participate in the service remotely. Masks are encouraged to be worn. Wash your hands and use hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer will be available as you enter the sanctuary.

Join us in the Life Church Sanctuary at 10:30 a.m. for an experience in the Word and in Worship.

We will kick off the new year with our Annual Prayer and Fast from Jan. 10-31.

Ladies, you are invited to join us every Wednesday at noon for our Seek Prayer Group. The Zoom meeting information for Seek can be found on our One Sisterhood Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/onesisterhoodbigspringtx/>

Champion Culture Youth will meet on Wednesdays from 7:00pm-8:30pm on the Life Church Campus. For more information about Champion Culture and their plans for the summer visit and follow the Champion Culture Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ChampionCultureLifeChurch/>

Life Kids will have their classes this Sunday. Our Nursery is available for those ages newborn to 2. Our Toddlers class serve those ages 3 & 4. Our Elementary class serves those ages 5-10 Visit and follow the Life Kids Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Life-Kids-Life-Church-Big-Spring-TX-1654730487977488/> for more information.

Our Neighbor to Neighbor Outreach team will be going to visit our neighbors around our campus on Saturday morning from 10-11:30 a.m. The purpose of this ministry is to find the need and fill it.

For more information about our events or groups please visit our website www.golifechurch.net

Crestview Baptist Church

At Crestview Baptist Church, we believe the most fulfilling pursuit for a body of believers is not entertainment, gimmicks, or programs. The most fulfilling pursuit for a follower of Christ is to know Christ and His Word, so that we may live for Him. If you believe that, please come and worship the King with us! Sunday School starts at 10 a.m. Worship begins at 11 a.m., and our Sunday and Wednesday night meetings are at 6:30 p.m. We are studying the Doctrine of The Church. Come and be with us at 2305 Gatesville Rd., Big Spring.

NazFamily Church

This Sunday - "It is what it is." We hear that phrase often, and there is some wisdom in accepting reality. However, we all know people who have simply given up, stopped trying and settled in life. The challenges of 2020 caused many people throw in the towel. We believe that there is more to life than this!

When we settle for less, we won't experience all that God has in store for us. First John is a short letter overflowing with godly wisdom and spiritual truth that invites us to experience abundant life in Christ. Join us this Sunday as we begin a new series First John: Life. Light. Love.

The Bridge - The New Year will usher in a new time and location for the NazFamily Bridge Campus. On

Sunday, Jan. 3, the Bridge will begin a 5 p.m. worship service at our 1400 S. Lancaster location. All are welcome!

Men's Breakfast - Start off 2021 headed in the right direction. Join us for our Men's Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, Jan. 2 at 8 a.m. It is a great time of food, fellowship, and faith building together.

Food Boxes - Every Tuesday & Thursday we make food boxes available in our church office from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. for anyone in need. If you know someone who needs an extra blessing they can come by the office at that time or contact us at 432-267-7015.

Child Sponsorship - You can make a difference in the life of a child!

For far too many children, the only future they see is one that's dimmed by poverty. But Nazarene Compassionate Ministries' child sponsorship program gives children a chance to create a future bright with possibility. Sponsorship has brought the future into focus for thousands of children living in poverty, but there are thousands more still waiting for a sponsor. You can have an eternal impact in the life of a child for \$30 per month. To sign up as a sponsor or learn more go to www.ncm.org.

First Presbyterian Church, Big

Spring

Royal Padden Jr. and Danny Kennemur lit the Christ Candle in the Advent Wreath at the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, which was streamed live for those unable to attend in person. Readers of Scripture were Buddy Cochrane, Danny Kennemur, and Lucy and Paschal Odom.

First Presbyterian Church now has a Sermon Podcast on iTunes. The sermon from last week may be found at www.fpcbigspring.com/Sermons.

For anyone wishing to join in a daily prayer, one may go to www.fpcbigspring.com and select Daily Prayers. Rev. Allen Cross also posts a Weekly Devotional each Wednesday at that website, which may provide food for thought or help during time of stress or feelings of isolation.

Wednesday Lectionary Bible Study meets at 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Anyone wishing to join in the study by Zoom can find the link to the meeting in Faith Notes or online at the First Presbyterian Fellowship group or on the Calendar on the church website on Facebook.

The Thursday Lunch Bunch meets in Fellowship Hall at 11:30.

Presbyterian Women will meet at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 26 for a business meeting and Bible study. The study will be Lessons 4 and 5 from the book

Into the Light: Hope through Prayers of Lamentation by P. Lynn Miller.

The Discovery Class began a study by Margaret Feinburg entitled Taste and See, a culinary exploration that puts scripture in terms of everyday activities.

The Youth Bible Study, led by Tom Koger, meets in the Youth Room.

The Children's Class continues with a lesson on "Surprise Visitors" and "Visitors from the East" for January 3. Nancy Koger is teaching this class.

The Sunday morning Take Ten fellowship in the parlor between Sunday School and worship has resumed. Kay Kennemur is host for this week.

Lectionary passages for the Second Sunday of Christmas are: Psalm 147: 12-20; Jeremiah 31:7-14; Ephesians 1: 3-14; John 1: (1-9) 10-18.: Rev. Allen Cross will lead the worship service and officiate at Communion. The sermon topic will be listed in the service bulletin. Organist/music director Gabe Martinez leads the music on the organ and piano.

Anyone who is not attending worship physically may hear the service on KBST 1490 AM at 11:00 a.m. as usual or online at www.fpcbigspring.com by selecting the SERMONS tab and the correct date. A copy of the liturgy for the service may be downloaded from the website or by receiving a copy by calling the church office

Please call the church office at 263-4211 for other information. We would be pleased for you to Like us on Facebook. Although the physical address of First Presbyterian Church is 701 Rannels, the mailing address is P. O. Box 2222, Big Spring, Texas 79721.

College Baptist Church

Christmas past for another year. What did you give Him for His birthday? There is still time to serve Him. Start your New Year right. Go to Church.

What an opportunity to serve Him! Just praising God at College Baptist Church, as we welcome new members through salvation and baptism! Come see what God is doing at the corner of 11th and Birdwell Lane. We are open on Sunday morning at 9:15 for Bible Study for all ages.

Worship time is at 10:45 a.m. Wednesday activities begin at 5:45-6:30 p.m. for a fellowship meal. Youth activities start at 6 p.m. and adults meet for Bible Study and Prayer Meeting at 7 p.m. with children meeting for King's Kids and Krafts. Girl's Missions meet on Sunday at 5 p.m. Come join in the fun as we prepare for the celebration of a New Year serving our Lord.

Services for the first Sunday of the New Year, January 3, 2021, are in the building. We are live streaming and on our Face Book page as well. Catch up on God's perfect plan! We have face masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer available, and we are practicing social distancing. Families are sitting together. Visitors, it was a joy to welcome

you on Sunday. Come join us—it will be exciting to welcome new faces and old alike. Our services are lively and worshipful.

College Baptist Church has almost reached our Lottie Moon Christmas offering goal. This goal is a challenging one where every dollar given will reach to the foreign mission field as we continue on mission for our Lord.

We definitely enjoy the worship time as our ministry team leads us in songs of praise, and where our pastor, Bro. Ken McMeans, inspires us as we delve into God's Word, leading us as Jesus lives through us. Come study the makings of a Godly family founded on the Rock Solid Foundation of Jesus. Keep your spiritual vision on Jesus as we enter into the New Year, as our pastor reminds us every Sunday, Jesus is coming SOON! Take a part in these joyful activities, and exciting worship, praising the Mighty God we serve. Please call: 432-267-7429, for more information concerning Men's, Ladies' and youth meetings at this great and friendly church.

Alive in Christ Lutheran Church

"Celebrating and Sharing God's Love and Grace in our lives".

We are located at 2805 Lynn Drive in the Kentwood Neighborhood in Big Spring. If you would like to reach Pastor Kohl or the church office, please call(432-264-7818, or e-mail us at aliveinchristtx@gmail.com.

Bible Study and Sunday School begin at 9:30 a.m. and we are having class each Sunday morning. Our Sunday Service begins at 10:30 a.m. You can catch us on Facebook Live on our Facebook page. If you are new to the area or haven't been to church before or in a while, please accept this as an invitation to join us this Sunday.

The readings for this Sunday are Isaiah 60: 1-6, Ephesians 3:1-12, and Matthew 2:1-12. The psalm is Psalm 72:1-11 (12-15).

Our Wednesday Evening Bible Study is back. A meal is served at 5:30 and our bible study begins at 6:00. We are studying Lutheranism 101. Please come and join us.

Bo Vizcaino will present the scripture readings this week.

Tune in to KBYG every morning for a devotional sponsored in part by the Lutheran Hour. Tune in to 106.3 FM or 1400 AM between 6:45

and 6:50 each morning for these wonderful devotions: "Morning Meditation Thoughts". Also tune in every Sunday morning at 8:30 to listen to the Lutheran Hour.

Cornerstone Covenant Church

Cornerstone Covenant Church (aka - CCC) is a unified, spirit-led, purpose-driven church, which cultivates an atmosphere of faith so that lives can be transformed by Jesus Christ.

We would love the opportunity to Connect with



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Please join us this week at one of the following events:

Sunday, Jan. 3 - Join us this Sunday at our 9 a.m. & 11 a.m. for our onsite worship service. Our 11 a.m. service will be onsite & online. You can find our CCC Live Worship Experience online at [facebook.com/CCCBigSpring](https://www.facebook.com/CCCBigSpring) or at Cornerstone Covenant Church Live on YouTube (look for the CCC logo).

Wednesday, Jan. 6 - Join us ONSITE & ON-LINE this Wednesday at our 7 p.m. worship/bible study service. We love seeing what happens in people's lives when they discover God through the study of His Word. Let us explore the Bible together and see what it tells us about the God who has woven His story through history and is present with us now.

Transportation Ministry - You need a ride to church? CCC offers pick-up services on Sundays for our 11 a.m. worship service. If you are needing a ride for Sunday please contact the church office.

Cornerstone Covenant Church (CCC) is a unified, spirit-led, purpose-driven church, which cultivates an atmosphere of faith so that lives can be transformed by Jesus Christ. Please join us every Sunday at 9 a.m. (onsite) 11 a.m. (onsite & online) and Wednesday at 7 p.m. (onsite) for worship services.

CCC is located at 706 East 12th Street. For office hours or other questions please contact our Administrative Office at 432-264-0015 or e-mail us at info@cccbigspring.org.

You can also find us at www.cccbigspring.org if you would like more information.



Reflections: A New Year! Finally!

No year in my lifetime has been welcomed more than 2021. Multiple vaccines have been approved with the promise that we will be able to put the Covid-19 threat behind us by mid-summer. Businesses are making plans to gear up for the recovery. Jobs are expected to return. By fall we should be able to pack our stadiums and cheer on our favorite sports teams. Once again, we can travel. Family vacations, reunions and gatherings for Thanksgiving and Christmas should return to normal by year's end.



**BILL
TINSLEY**

A year ago, in this column, I wrote, "2020 rings with the hope of perfect vision and a perfect year. But we already know it will have its challenges. 2020 will not be easy. It certainly will not be perfect."

To say that "2020 would not be easy and that it certainly would not be perfect" proved to be a vast understatement. None of us could have predicted the pandemic that would shock and stun the world. This has been an unusually difficult year. While

some have prospered, many have lost their jobs, struggled with isolation and separation from family and friends. Restaurants, the travel industry, and live entertainment have especially been hit hard. More than 340,000 have died of Covid-19 related causes.

We still have a long way to go. The earliest vaccines are just now being administered, but we are hopeful.

We have not given up. People remain resilient, perseverant, ready to pitch in and help those who need assistance the most. Restaurants, struggling under the restrictions of the pandemic have provided meals to front line workers.

Doctors, nurses and medical staff have served sacrificially putting themselves at risk to care for Covid-19 patients. Like so many others, our daughter-in-law is a nurse and a breast cancer survivor. She suffered severe symptoms after contracting COVID-19 from her patients. Once recovered, she has returned to continue her care. Our son-in-law has volunteered as a bone-marrow donor for someone struggling with leukemia. We are proud of our kids and the millions of others who continue to put

the interest of others before their own during these trying times.

Jesus was clear that every generation would have such trials. He warned of wars and rumors of wars, plagues, famines and natural disasters. Jesus said, "There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with great glory. But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (Luke 21:25-28).

God has promised, "I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope;" (Jeremiah 29:11).

Bill Tinsley reflects on current events and life experience from a faith perspective. His books are available at www.tinsleycenter.com. Email bill@tinsleycenter.com.

All Things New

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." Revelation 21:5



**TOM
SLOAN**

Notice that our text verse does not say - I make all new things. It says - I make all things new. Jesus never looks at sinners and says - I need to get rid of these sinners and get some new ones. Instead, He says - behold, I make these sinners new. This is the ministry of reconciliation. Jesus never trades bad sinners in for sinners who sin less. Instead, He brings something new to sinner's lives which they have never seen. He shows us (who are aware of the sinfulness of our sin) something we never even knew existed, things like unconditional love, radical mercy, endless forgiveness, surprising acceptance, undeserved blessings and scandalous grace. And when Jesus shows us these things, we feel new. We may not get any better for a long time, but we know that things are different now that Jesus has shown us that there is no condemnation in Him.

We are constantly looking for new things, but

Jesus makes all things new. We love to make New Year's resolutions because we feel like a new year would be a better one and somehow things would be different. We call it a New Year because it is a different one. But Jesus doesn't need a New Year to make all things new in our lives. He changes things by making the same things new. I can assure you that no matter how many New Years you have experienced, you are still just as human and sinner as you were two, five or thirty-nine years ago. But the difference with this coming New Year is that, by faith in Christ alone, you can be made new. In Jesus, we are new because we know new things we didn't know before. We didn't know that He was the end of the Law for our righteousness. We didn't know that He has promised to remember our sins no more. We were ignorant of the fact that Jesus' passion is to forgive, bless, sanctify and accept those of us who have been the vilest of sinners. And the knowledge of these things is more than enough to cause any sinner to go to God.

These things are sufficient to make any human being a new creature in Christ. We can be encouraged in the fact that Jesus is not looking to trade us in for something new because He makes all things new in our lives.

Memories of Christmas Part 4

As a child at Christmas time, my Daddy would often be on a Railroad run on Christmas Eve. Mother would let us open a small gift, sit all six of us down on the shag carpet around her rocking chair and she would read the Luke account of the birth of Jesus from chapter 2.



**LILLIAN
BOHANNAN**

Then she would always sing "Silent Night" as a closing song to this ritual.

Recently I attended a candlelight service Christmas Eve with my brother's pastor-son.

I had a chance to speak with him before the service began. He said he was going to do the Christmas account from Luke 2. I asked him why he was doing that. He said he grew up in my brother's family and as long as he could remember they did this same ritual ending with "Silent Night."

I was amazed. My brother carried on the tradition that I did for my son. My son carried on that tradition for his daughters. When the call for the children came to come up on the stage, my granddaughters 18, and 23 asked me if they could go up there, too, in honor of their great grandmother.

So we went up for the story, sitting on the stage with all the other children.

It almost felt like I was home again in northern Nevada, listening to my mother tell it again.

Traditions were fulfilled that night for me. It's something my granddaughters will never forget. We even ended the service with "Silent Night."

What I wonder is if in Heaven, Mother was sitting at the feet of Jesus's rocking chair listening to Him tell the account of His birth and why He came? I can imagine the joy in Heaven that night in the reality that He really did come to our earth to be born, and with the purpose to die for the penalty of our sin.

When He died, it was a silent night.

When He rose again, Joy came in that morning.

Do you know the joy of His love?

Ask Him for it.

He's waiting.

Protests erupt against new Montenegro govt over religion law

PODGORICA, Montenegro (AP) — Several thousand people rallied Monday in Montenegro, accusing the young country's new government of being pro-Serb because of its plans to amend a religious property law that is strongly opposed by the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Carrying Montenegrin flags and chanting "Treason," protesters gathered outside the parliament building in Podgorica, the capital, where lawmakers plan to discuss the proposed changes.

The demonstration was the first major protest in the small Balkan country against the coalition government that came to power after the opposition won a slim majority over a long-ruling pro-Western party during an August parliamentary election.

The religious property law was an issue in the election. The Serbian Orthodox Church alleged the law was designed to strip the church of its property, which the previous government denied. The church led months of protests that helped strengthen the opposition ahead of the election.

Montenegro declared independence from a union with Serbia following a 2006 referendum. The country's residents remain divided over relations with Belgrade. Some 30% of Montenegrins identify themselves as Serbs, and the Serbian Orthodox Church enjoys the biggest following of any organized religion.

The previous government, led by the Democratic Party of Socialists, steered Montenegro away from the influence of Serbia and Russia. The Adriatic nation joined NATO in 2017 and is seeking European Union membership.

Participants at Monday's demonstration blasted the new government's plan to revoke parts of the religious law dealing with property. They accused the government of setting the stage for the "occupation" of Montenegro.

It was not immediately clear when the parliamentary vote on amending the law will take place.



Submit your church news to the Big Spring Herald and let the community know how to join in on your services this holiday season.

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Forsan Lady Buffs basketball charging through season behind Evans & Woodall



HERALD Photos/Shawn Moran

Above left: Rylee Evans attempts to make an in-bounds pass from the baseline. Above right: Woodall shoots a free throw.

By SHAWN MORAN

Herald Sports Writer

When facing the Forsan Lady Buffs, opposing defenses have their hands full with several girls that can shoot jumpers, solid size on the interior, and a team that has the ability to make strong passes around the court until they find the open teammate.

"Experience is going to go a long way for us this year," Johnson said heading into this season. "We know we'll need Rylee to be a leader again this year but we're going to have to have some other players step up and relieve some of those duties."

Who is the player that has stepped into that scoring role?

Enter Kaeli Woodall.

The sophomore shooting guard has shown up big in numerous games this year and has taken some of the scoring responsibility off of Evans. Woodall was named the District Co-Newcomer of the Year following last season and she has continued to get better since then. There have been several games this year, including the season-opener, where Woodall has led the team in scoring. She can knock-down jump shots and drive the lane for a layup or a floater. She is also a great facilitator and records several assists per game.

"It's been great having her play well and with her being able to score consistently has helped free up

opportunities for the rest of her teammates on the court," Johnson said.

Evans is now a senior and the All-District First Team selection from last year has picked up right where she left off. The point guard is still knocking down three-pointers after three-pointers and coming up with a handful of steals on defense every time she steps onto the hardwood.

The Lady Buffs currently have an 11-3 record and just battled one of the best 1A teams in the state until the final buzzer. They currently have the by far the best record in District 8-2A and are 2-0 in district games that they have already played. Forsan has just five games remaining in their regular season and they are setting themselves up for a post-season run.

So, what do the two star Forsan players think about the season that they are currently having?

"We together as a team have built and grown off of last year and past years," Woodall said. "I feel like we've done a lot better than we have in the past."

Evans added, "It's a lot of fun this year. There's a different kind of energy."

Indeed, every player on the court for the Lady Buffs always seems to be giving maximum effort and the wins have begun to pile up. Forsan recorded a 14-16 overall record last season and did not grab their eleventh win until Jan. 17. This season, the Lady Buffs started off 6-0 and have also had a

separate four-game win streak.

"It's a lot better whenever other people on the court are scoring too," Evans said. "It makes the energy from the bench to on the court better. The defense plays better when people are scoring inside and outside."

Is there anything that the duo has learned from each other?

"We have a lot of passion for this game and I believe we have more heart than any other team," Woodall said. "As long as we play together as a team we can conquer anything."

With still two-and-a-half years left of Woodall suiting up in the black and white, and this being Johnson's first year as head coach, the future is bright for Forsan basketball. Evans will graduate this spring, but the sharpshooter has already left her mark on the Forsan basketball program and will be looking to add to her athletic legacy with a postseason run this season.

First, the Lady Buffs will focus on winning their district. Forsan is feeling confident heading into those games and the team knows that if they continue to play together, the sky is the limit.

Shawn Moran is the sports writer at the Big Spring Herald. To contact him, e-mail sports@bigspringherald.com or call 432-263-7331.

Showtime Steers travel to Denver City & grab 72-62 win

By SHAWN MORAN

Herald Sports Writer

Team captain Kyler Seymore is officially back.

The senior guard scored 37 points on Wednesday afternoon when the Showtime Steers took a trip to Denver City to challenge the Mustangs. Seymore was able to knockdown eight shots from beyond the arc and scored 17 points in the second quarter alone.

Big Spring was able to lead for the entire game and got back on track following a loss on the road to Abilene Cooper earlier in the week.

The Showtime Steers will take the court next when they host Midland Lee on Saturday afternoon in a non-district matchup. Big Spring has three non-district games remaining before their district opener against Snyder on Jan. 12.

Forsan Buffaloes fall on the road to No. 7 Borden County

By SHAWN MORAN

Herald Sports Writer

The Forsan Buffaloes (6-9) started off well and played a tough first half against one of the top-ranked teams in the state. However, Borden County limited the Buffs to only 12 second half points and ran away with a 65-36 victory.

Thomas Gabehart led Forsan with 12 points on four made three-pointers

and forward Ernesto Rivera added 10 points from inside and the free throw line.

Senior Mason Cole led the Coyotes with 24 points while three other Borden County players finished with double-digits points scored as well. The Coyotes rotated just eight players, but their top-level talent was too much for Forsan to handle on Wednesday afternoon.

The Gap: Superpowers hoard talent, leaving ND, others behind

By RALPH D. RUSSO

AP College Football Writer

Notre Dame coach Brian Kelly is clearly tired of the question: Do the Fighting Irish have something to prove as they again prepare to take on one of college football's elite teams in the College Football Playoff?

"No, I mean, we're knocking on the door every year playing really good teams and great opponents," Kelly said. "I don't know why this narrative continues to pop up when we're always in the games."

What often gets categorized as a Notre Dame problem is actually a major college football problem. A tiny group of teams have bolted away from the field simply because they are accumulating far more talent than their competitors.

The elite high school players are clustering at a small number of schools and creating an almost insurmountable gap between the very best and the rest.

No. 4 Notre Dame heads into its latest referendum game against No. 1 Alabama on Friday in the relocated Rose Bowl semifinal in Texas as a nearly three-touchdown underdog. In the other semifinal, a more fair fight is expected between No. 2 Clemson and No. 3 Ohio State at the Sugar Bowl.

Kelly has raised Notre Dame football to its highest level since Lou Holtz led the school to its last national title in 1988. The Irish are 43-7 over the last four years.

Still, Notre Dame drags into the playoff the recent memories of a BCS

blowout against the Crimson Tide in 2013, a lopsided semifinal loss to Clemson two seasons ago and overall a six-game losing streak in BCS/All America Six games that dates to the 2000 Fiesta Bowl.

"No, we haven't won a national championship, that's correct," Kelly said. "I'm not changing the record. But we are there every single year and we're grinding it out just like everybody else. And only one team gets to celebrate at the end of the year."

No team has celebrated more than Alabama. Under Nick Saban, the Crimson Tide have won five national titles since 2009. The dynasty is fueled by unprecedented success in recruiting. According to 247 Sports' talent composite, the Tide had the second-most talented roster in college football this season behind Georgia after being No. 1 last year, second the year before and first two seasons before that.

Alabama came into the season with 12 former five-star recruits — including running back Najee Harris and linebacker Dylan Moses — and 58 former four stars on its roster. Alabama has signed 41 top 100 recruits from

2017-20.

Ohio State stacks up pretty well with the Tide this season, with 14 former five stars — including quarterback Justin Fields — and 52 four stars.

NBA Standings (Through 12/29/20)

EASTERN CONFERENCE

TEAM	W	L	PCT	GB	HOME	AWAY	DIV	CONF	PPG	OPPG
Orlando Magic	4	0	1.000	-	1-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	120.3	111.8
Atlanta Hawks	3	0	1.000	0.5	1-0	2-0	0-0	2-0	124.7	112.0
Indiana Pacers	3	1	.750	0.5	2-1	1-0	1-0	3-1	116.3	109.0
Cleveland Cavaliers	3	1	.750	0.5	2-1	1-0	1-0	3-1	113.3	105.5
Philadelphia 76ers	3	1	.750	0.5	2-0	1-1	2-0	3-1	104.0	101.8
Brooklyn Nets	2	2	.500	1.5	1-1	1-1	1-0	1-1	115.8	104.0
New York Knicks	2	2	.500	1.5	1-1	1-1	0-1	2-2	105.3	106.5
Boston Celtics	2	2	.500	1.5	1-1	1-1	0-1	2-2	110.0	115.8
Milwaukee Bucks	2	2	.500	1.5	1-0	1-2	0-0	1-2	128.3	112.0
Miami Heat	1	2	.333	2.0	1-1	0-1	0-1	0-2	105.0	118.3
Charlotte Hornets	1	2	.333	2.0	1-1	0-1	0-0	1-1	109.0	111.3
Chicago Bulls	1	3	.250	2.5	0-3	1-0	0-1	1-2	113.3	121.3
Toronto Raptors	0	3	.000	3.0	0-1	0-2	0-1	0-1	102.0	110.7
Detroit Pistons	0	4	.000	4.0	0-2	0-2	0-1	0-2	111.5	120.8
Washington Wizards	0	4	.000	3.5	0-3	0-1	0-2	0-4	111.8	119.5

WESTERN CONFERENCE

TEAM	W	L	PCT	GB	HOME	AWAY	DIV	CONF	PPG	OPPG
Los Angeles Clippers	3	1	.750	-	1-1	2-0	1-0	3-1	108.5	110.5
Phoenix Suns	3	1	.750	-	2-0	1-1	1-1	3-1	109.0	98.5
Sacramento Kings	3	1	.750	-	2-1	1-0	1-1	3-1	113.8	114.0
Utah Jazz	2	1	.667	-	0-1	2-0	2-1	2-1	113.7	108.3
Portland Trail Blazers	2	1	.667	-	1-1	1-0	0-1	2-1	114.3	117.7
San Antonio Spurs	2	1	.667	-	1-0	1-1	1-1	1-1	115.0	110.3
New Orleans Pelicans	2	2	.500	1.0	1-0	1-2	1-0	1-1	98.8	104.0
Golden State Warriors	2	2	.500	0.5	0-0	2-2	0-0	0-0	110.8	124.3
Los Angeles Lakers	2	2	.500	0.5	2-2	0-0	0-1	2-2	120.3	109.3
Minnesota T-Wolves	2	2	.500	1.0	1-0	1-2	1-0	1-2	104.8	115.8
Dallas Mavericks	1	2	.333	1.0	0-0	1-2	0-0	1-2	113.7	105.7
Memphis Grizzlies	1	2	.333	1.0	0-2	1-0	0-1	0-1	115.7	121.3
OKC Thunder	1	2	.333	1.0	0-2	1-0	0-1	0-1	108.3	111.7
Denver Nuggets	1	3	.250	2.0	1-2	0-1	0-0	1-3	117.3	120.3
Houston Rockets	0	2	.000	1.5	0-0	0-2	0-0	0-2	118.5	126.0

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J	S	A	A	H	V	O	A	Y	G	U	I	J	B	F	T	I	F	L	O
Y	R	P	B	I	V	R	O	F	U	S	N	Y	E	S	R	S	T	P	C
A	I	J	A	B	N	C	B	S	R	E	K	C	E	H	C	L	A	L	C
I	S	C	T	H	R	F	B	V	Y	S	K	C	Y	V	J	S	K	P	A

WORDS

- ACCOMPLISHED
- AMUSES
- BOARD
- BRAIN
- CHECKERS
- CHESS
- CLUE
- CROSSWORD
- CRYPTOGRAM
- DIFFERENCES
- ENJOYMENT
- INGENUITY
- MAZES
- MEMORY
- METHOD
- PASTIME
- POPULAR
- PUZZLING
- SCRAMBLE
- SOLUTION
- STIMULATING
- SUDOKU
- TRIVIA
- WORD SEARCH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

I SHOULD PROBABLY GET A RIDE HOME.

BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING



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Annie's Mailbox

Not Her Fan

Dear Annie: Like so many others, I lost my old job because of COVID-19. I was a waitress in a small restaurant and bar. Now, I work in a yarn mill. I am not unfriendly with my co-workers, but don't socialize with them, as we have very little in common. There is a former co-worker, who now is having modest success musically. She is playing in regional venues and appeared on statewide PBS. She is somewhat of a local hero. I am not a fan in the least! I heard from mill management that she was a very poor employee, and, more importantly to me, I heard from teacher friends that she was a very neglectful

parent. She will be playing a concert at the mill after work. They'll have a catered meal for us that we can eat while watching the concert before going home. I would much prefer to leave after the work is done, as I am not a fan of her's and would rather spend the time with my family. Would I be rude to leave? -- Heard Enough

Dear Heard: As soon as you clock out, your time is your own. I see nothing wrong with going home to your family. It's also the safer option, COVID-19-wise.

As an aside, though, I encourage you to celebrate your co-worker's musical success, because it will be much

better for your health than resenting it.

Dear Annie: I, as well as many others, do not understand why television shows have to play music when the people on the show are talking. I may not have the best hearing, but it is very difficult to understand what the actors are saying. Sometimes, the music covers up their voices completely. If I want to listen to music, I'll turn on the radio, not the TV. If there is something you can do to convince them to stop playing the music, that would be awesome. -- What Did You Say

Dear WDYS: I wish I had that kind of power! As it is, I'm happy to print your letter to raise

what awareness I can, because you're not the first person to write to me about this problem. For what it's worth, some hard-of-hearing readers have reported that closed captioning makes watching TV far less frustrating. Also, some televisions come with a "Clear Voice" audio setting that might help.

Dear Annie: I have a salaried job and can mostly work from home. I have fared better during this pandemic than many people, but right now I feel like butter that's been spread over too much toast. I find myself obsessed with current events -- constantly refreshing Twitter or turning on the news. I scroll through my

phone in bed. And it's the first thing I look at when I wake up. I feel so hopeless, but I can't stop looking. -- Fading Fast

Dear Fading: First and foremost, make your bedroom a phone-free zone. Having our phones around keeps our brains engaged and makes it difficult to fall asleep and get high-quality sleep. And quality sleep is essential to mental health.

Secondly, go on a news diet. Set a certain amount of minutes or a certain window of time during which you'll check the news, and steer clear of it otherwise. (There are even apps designed to help with this: The program SelfControl allows us-

ers to block themselves from accessing certain sites for a designated amount of time.) You shouldn't stick your head in the sand, but you shouldn't stare straight into the sun, either.

Lastly, you'll feel less depressed about the general state of the world if you feel you're doing your part to improve it. Figure out which causes you care most passionately about, and get plugged in with a relevant organization in your area. As Muhammad Ali said, "Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth."

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

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Please thoroughly wash your hands to keep us healthy!

Tomorrow's Horoscope

Leo Moon Optimism

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Tired ways of thinking are cutting you off from a relationship's potential to thrill you. And, anyway, you no longer need that old pattern. You'll hand it over like it was the cost of admission to a joyride, which it basically is.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Find where your interests overlap those of the others. It will be so much easier to fight for what you care about beside others who also care and are deeply invested in the outcome.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Through strength, focus and controlled breath, you work through the easy parts, sail along with the fun parts and grind away at the tough parts until you accomplish what you set out to do.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It shouldn't surprise you one bit that people want to be around your energy, ideas and unique voice. You, however, may need to make the first move because you're the one with the energy and courage it takes to initiate.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). There will be those who mistake cynicism and being hard to please with sophistication and taste. Of course, the truly sophisticated and tasteful will tend to be inclusive, curious and optimistic.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You could take the freeway, or stroll the breezeway, but you'll like forego those and any established "way" there is in favor of tramping through the wilderness of your own soul to a destination known to none before you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

The theme of the day is very much in keeping with the scales that are your birth symbol. And if you can balance your lower urges and higher instincts, then you are a master of balance indeed.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). On this is a day of promise, you recognize there are already so many fulfilled promises that it seems almost greedy to want more. Then again, this is not just for you. You want more for everyone.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The day feels about as fresh as your heart. Maybe a part of it still needs to heal, but don't let that hold you back from showing up and radiating warmth which will only abet in the mending.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Knowing what's weird about your life is the first step in knowing what's funny about it, and therefore what's relatable and perhaps even charming. So go on and delve into the weird parts.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Don't wait for the day to send you a formal invitation to its opportunities. This is 2021, not 1821, and to the one who is willing to make brave attempts, the opportunities are practically limitless.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).

You finished that year, did all you could, and, now, you're done with it. You're headed in with some interesting ideas -- thoughts that lean toward ridiculous even. And yet, you're really onto something!

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 1). You go into the year with a clean slate -- the feeling that you owe no one and no one owes you. Not totally so? It becomes true as you move with ever-greater conviction in what you're creating. As you build a product or relationship, you build your personhood. Here come exciting freedoms and abundant resources. Scorpio and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 22, 1, 18 and 42.

WEEKEND LOVE FORECAST: ARIES: Like the first bird of morning, you call out a few notes and wait for a reply. The answers will come slow at first but quickly once the atmosphere warms up. **TAURUS:** Resist the urge to impress, as it's more impressive to feel you have nothing to prove. **GEMINI:** Don't wait to be given attention. Grab it, take it where you want it, entertain, charm, lead. **CANCER:** Everyone wants to get in on a winning situation, but it takes someone really special

Write Holiday Mathis at HolidayMathis.com.

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Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Test your play

1. You are declarer with the West hand at Five Diamonds doubled.

West	East
♠ 4	♠ A Q 7 5 2
♥ 7	♥ 6 5
♦ Q J 8 6 5 2	♦ K 10 9 4
♣ Q J 10 8 4	♣ A K

The bidding has gone:

North	East	South	West
1♥	Dble	3♥	4♦
4♥	5♦	Pass	Pass

Dble

North leads the nine of clubs. How would you play the hand?

2. You are declarer with the West hand at Seven Diamonds, and North leads the heart king. How would you play the hand? (Assume the trumps are divided no worse than 3-1.)

West	East
♠ K J 2	♠ A 8 5
♥ —	♥ 10 7 6 4
♦ A K Q J 8 5	♦ 10 9 7
♣ A Q J 6	♣ K 7 2

1. The bidding clearly indicates that North has the ace of diamonds, and the club lead has all the earmarks of a singleton. If you led a trump at trick two, you'd run the risk of North winning with the ace and putting South on lead with a heart to make the killing club return.

To try to prevent this from happening, play the ace of spades at trick two and continue with the queen! Assuming South follows low, which

is highly likely, discard your heart on the spade queen. This play costs you nothing, as it merely substitutes a spade loser for a heart loser.

North wins the trick but now can't put his partner on lead with a heart, so you get home safe and sound. North's hand probably looks something like this:

♠ K J 8 6
♥ A K 8 4 3 2
♦ A 3
♣ 9

in which case the play of the A-Q of spades is the only way to make the contract.

2. By far the best method of play is to attempt a dummy reversal, which, if successful, will make it unnecessary for you to rely on a spade finesse.

Ruff the first heart with the jack, lead the five of trump to the seven, ruff the six of hearts with the queen, lead the eight of trump to the nine, then ruff the seven of hearts with the king, followed by the ten of hearts, ruffed with your last trump, the ace.

A low spade to the ace allows you to cash dummy's ten of diamonds, on which you discard the jack of spades. You then take the last four tricks with the king of spades and A-Q-J of clubs. The 13 tricks you score consist of two spades, four clubs and seven — count them — trump tricks.

Tomorrow: The turn of the screw.
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SUDOKU

		6			7	2		
4			6					
	5							
					8	7	5	
		8			1			
		1					4	9
	7			9	2	4		
		2	7					8
			8		6	3		

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Advanced

Here's How It Works: Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

2	2	3	3	1	6	1	8	1
4	5	8	1	6	3	4	7	4
1	6	2	2	7	4	3	9	8
8	7	3	5	9	2	2	4	1
6								
7	1	3	1	2	5	8	4	9
5	9	8	4	7	1	6	2	3
6	2	4	9	3	8	3	8	3
2	5	9	3	8	4	1	6	7
4	1	7	6	2	9	2	9	3
3	8	6	1	5	7	2	9	4

ANSWER: