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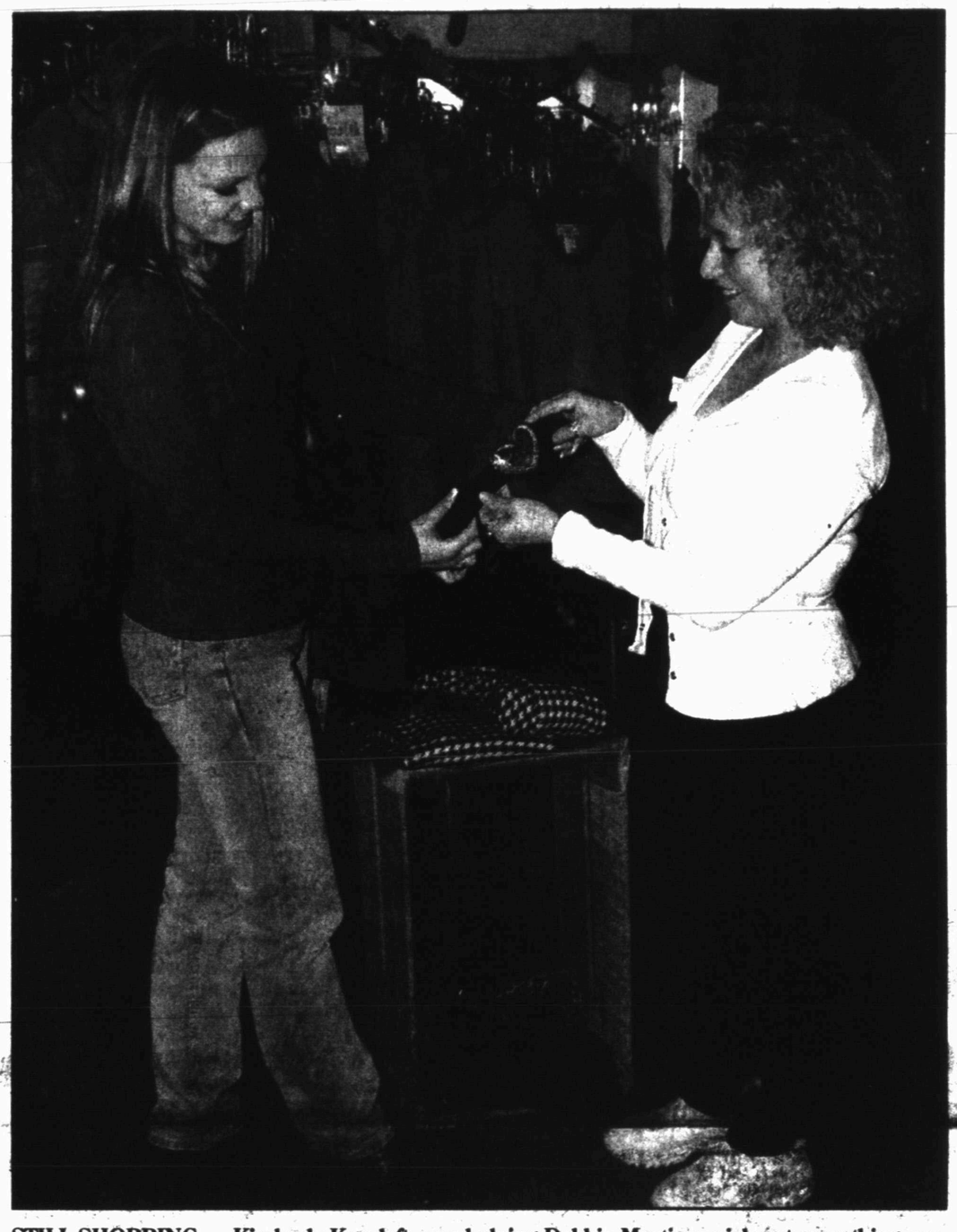
WT-Int. Crude - $19.28
WTIC Posted - $16.25
Natural Gas - $2.657

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

WEDNESDAY

Dec. 19, 2001
Vol. 53 No. 199
10 Pages 50¢

Home of Shawn Wittie



STILL SHOPPING — Kimberly Key, left, was helping Debbie Martinez pick out something special for a Christmas gift this morning at Hackfeld's. After today, only five shopping days remain until Christmas. (SDN Staff Photo)

Stenholm also draws opponent...

Precinct 4 gains another commissioner candidate

Ronnie Clawson, a Snyder firefighter, today announced his intent to become a Democratic candidate in the race for the Precinct 4 county commissioner.

Ronnie Clawson

The precinct 4 commissioner's seat becomes the first locally-contested race as incumbent Cholanne Lindsey, also a Democrat, had earlier filed for a second term.

Clawson, 53, moved to Snyder from Rotan in 1969 and has been a member of the fire department for 21 years. He has lived in precinct 4 for the past 11 years.

Clawson and his wife, Sandra, have two grown children, Jodi Clawson of Snyder and Darren Clawson and his wife, Natalie, of San Angelo. The couple also has two granddaughters.

Clawson said he is nearing retirement from the fire department and being a commissioner is something that "has interested me for a while."

"If I am elected to the position I want to get in there and have a look around and see what's what. Everything the county spends money on has to be a priority to the commissioners' court."

Clawson also said his time with the fire department has taught him how to work with a budget.

"I have worked for the city of Snyder for more than 20 years and it is a taxing entity like the county," he said. "And I also have managed my own business – Snyder Paint and Body – for 24 years in Snyder so I know how to work under a budget."

U.S. Rep. Charles Stenholm drew a Republican opponent in next year's 17th Congressional District election.

Abilene resident Russell Gill, a 37-year-old pilot for Delta Airlines, filed the necessary papers Monday in Austin to have his name placed on the Republican primary ballot.

Rep. Stenholm, a Democrat, was first elected to Congress in 1978.

San Angelo attorneys Thomas M. Goff and Drew Darby, Christoval business owner and social worker Jeri Slone, plus San Angelo businessman Scott Campbell are seeking the state representative's post being vacated by Rob Junell.

Goff, Darby, and Campbell are Republicans, while Slone is a Democrat.

Jan. 2 is the filing deadline.

All the incumbents have filed for re-election with the exception of County Judge Ricky Fritz, but the Republican judge has said he plans to seek a third term.

A former Snyder mayor, Rod Waller, filed with the Republican Party for the county judge's post.

Republicans who have filed for re-election include Trina Rodgers, district clerk; Nelda Colvin, treasurer; Joan Bunch, county clerk; and Deborah Boyd, Precinct 1 Justice of the Peace.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Roy Idom is not seeking re-election and Republican Robbie Floyd announced for the post.

Also seeking re-election Democratic Sheriff Darren Jackson.

Drew Bullard is the GOP chairman for Scurry County, while Jerry Gannaway is the Demo county chairman.

Snyder ISD sets meeting

Snyder ISD's board of trustees will meet at noon Thursday to continue the evaluation of Supt. Gayle Lomax.

The board will meet in executive session and is expected to finish the yearly review that began last week with the handing out of the evaluation forms.

Lomax has been superintendent of schools beginning with the 1994-1995 school year.

The meeting will be in the boardroom at the administration building.

DCOS to meet on Thursday

The board of directors of the Development Corporation of Snyder faces a short agenda Thursday afternoon as it concludes business for 2001.

The board will meet at 4 p.m. in the DCOS boardroom in the American State Bank building and hear executive director John DeLille's monthly report, and review the financial statements.

THE SDN COLUMN

By Roy McQueen

The feller on Deep Creek says, "Don't worry about how many shopping days remain, but rather how much cash is left."

Prisons are unique. Normally they can find experts in almost any field – cooks, barbers, carpenters, repairmen and sometimes, even a newspaper type.

A female lockup up in Oregon has something just in time for the season – its own jolly ole St. Nick.

Actually, she's substantially larger than the typical Santa which is said to weigh a mere 250 pounds on the average.

Lu Mitchell, an inmate at the Women's Correctional Center, is so large that she has to have help just walking around her bunk.

When she entered the prison, she tipped the scales at a jolly 648 pounds. The state's department of corrections customized her bed, prison clothes – and her diet.

The inmate, convicted of stealing from her employer, maintains her innocence and says she pleaded guilty only because she couldn't prove her case and feared a stiffer penalty if the charge was contested.

So she could play Santa – and perhaps walk out of another prison – the huge body she lives in, officials have her on a strict diet.

At her sentencing hearing, the prosecutor told the judge that a search warrant turned up "chunks of chocolate all over the place" at the woman's home.

Since being incarcerated, the diet appears to be working, shedding 11 inches from her waist.

Said [illegible] three squares a day, she's gonna drop weight. Basically, it's the best diet she's ever been on."

Maybe the real Santa will drop by and leave her a double helping of rice cakes.

Did you hear about the guy who does his Christmas shopping the hard way?

A fellow in Wisconsin shoplifted a toy all-terrain vehicle, medication, batteries, a pellet pistol and a flip phone from a Wal-Mart store.

He was arrested and the merchandise confiscated as evidence and taken to the police station.

The man has since been charged with breaking into the police station to retrieve the merchandise.

Officers first discovered that a rock had been thrown through the police department window, but the only stuff missing were the items shoplifted from Wal-Mart.

DISD violates meetings law

DALLAS (AP) — School board members are headed back to the drawing board in their process of designing a new district voting map that reflects the city's current population.

A state district judge voided the map members approved after they were found to have illegally discussed it behind closed doors. Board members had hoped the judge would let them simply hold another vote.

But on Tuesday, Civil District Judge Catharina Haynes ordered the board to begin the whole process over, holding public hearings to reconsider more than two dozen district maps that were discarded.

The ruling is a boost for plaintiffs, who want the district to create at least one more Latino-majority voting district.

Haynes previously ruled that school trustees held private meetings and did not properly alert the public to an Oct. 1 meeting where the DISD trustees adopted their plan.

The judge also issued an injunction to prevent the board from meeting in private to discuss redistricting. She found "there is a risk of imminent harm if injunctive relief is not granted in that deliberations and debate regarding redistricting may continue to occur in closed sessions."

The Texas Open Meetings Act only allows matters such as lawsuits, personnel decisions and property negotiations to be discussed in closed session.

Area sales tax rebates

City	Dec. '01	Dec. '00	+/-	Year '01	Year '00	+/-
Abilene	$1,779,512.27	$1,719,772.44	3.47%	$25,305,363.89	$24,491,586.48	3.32%
Big Spring	$266,601.93	$227,171.89	17.35%	$3,729,636.26	$3,541,115.86	5.32%
Colorado City	$27,152.10	$30,175.01	-10.01%	$429,896.28	$432,393.22	-0.57%
Lamesa	$59,599.65	$58,230.96	2.35%	$888,237.47	$860,513.56	3.22%
Lubbock	$[illegible]	$[illegible]	[illegible]	$[illegible]	$[illegible]	[illegible]
Post	$22,015.66	$21,241.73	3.64%	$297,484.81	$265,489.04	12.05%
Roby	$1,234.77	$1,115.26	10.71%	$22,647.38	$26,653.83	-15.03%
Rotan	$9,354.67	$7,234.30	29.30%	$134,589.84	$129,779.29	3.70%
Snyder	$117,406.49	$105,152.12	11.65%	$1,449,705.56	$1,431,564.04	1.26%
Sweetwater	$135,214.52	$123,879.87	9.14%	$1,895,888.98	$1,835,352.96	3.29%

SALES TAX REBATES — The sales tax rebate to the city of Snyder for the month of December is up 11.65 percent compared to the same month in 2000. Snyder's check is $117,406.49 compared to $105,152.12 last December.

Renovation project...

Construction bids for hospital's ER on board's agenda

Cogdell Memorial Hospital board is expected to award the construction bid for the renovation and addition to the hospital's emergency room [illegible] when it meets at 8 a.m. Thursday.

This project is part of three major changes planned at the hospital that will be financed by $4.9 million in certificates of obligation authorized by Scurry County.

Other areas of the hospital to see changes are the intensive care unit and the surgical unit.

The board will also review a proposed lease with Republic Leasing for medicine dispensing machines located in the [illegible] and on the third floor medical unit.

Dr. Bid Cooper, chief of staff, will give the hospital's medical report, and the monthly financial statements will be reviewed as well as the certification of the accounts payable.

The board also will go into executive session for the yearly evaluation of CEO George Parsley.

ASK US

Q—How many wells are the Colorado Municipal Water District pumping within the city limits of Snyder?

A—Zero, according to Carolyn House, director of utilities for the city.

FORECAST - ALMANAC

Snyder Temps: High Tuesday, 70 degrees; low, 32; 7 a.m. Wednesday, 33; no precipitation; total for 2001, 20.77 inches.

Area Forecast: Tonight, mostly clear; low near 30; S winds 5-15 mph. Thursday, partly cloudy, high lower 60s; S winds 10-20 mph.

M. J. Diaz
Partly Cloudy

Sunset:
5:45 p.m.
Sunrise:
7:38 a.m.
Of 352 days in 2001, the sun has shone 339 days in Snyder.

TODAY'S THOUGHT

Purpose is the engine, the power that drives and directs our lives.
—John R. Noe

DEC 19 2001

Report: State tax revenues decline

By ROBERT TANNER
AP National Writer

States' tax income began declining sharply in the first quarter of the current budget year, the first such drop in a decade, with the West and the Northeast the hardest hit, a new report found.

The report released today brought painful news for state budget writers, who have already cut spending to adjust to the recession and are about to start planning for the year ahead. Budget writers were also trying to deal with slowing revenue growth that occurred in fiscal 2000.

With drops in personal and corporate income tax leading the way, states reported collecting 3.1 percent less in revenue from July through September compared to the same period a year ago, according to the survey released by the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government at the State University of New York in Albany.

In the fiscal year ending June 30, revenue growth had slowed, falling below what state budget writers predicted. The first three months of the new fiscal year went into the red, with revenue no longer growing and actually falling below amounts received last year.

"There's no good news," said Nick Jenny, the report's author and a senior policy analyst at the institute. "There's a fairly big hole that's going to open up in most state budgets."

The report found:

—Regionally, the West suffered the most, with an 8.3 percent decline in revenue; New England and the Mid-Atlantic regions each saw a 5.8 percent decline. The Southwest saw the only positive growth at 2.7 percent.

—Adjusted for inflation, revenues fell by 5 percent, the largest decline seen since the recession of the early 1990s.

—Nationally, personal income tax revenue declined by 3.4 percent, the worst quarterly performance in more than a decade.

—Corporate income tax declined by 25 percent for the fourth straight quarter of falling revenues.

—Sales taxes showed no growth, after five quarters of weak but slight growth.

Jenny noted that some of the tax revenue may just be delayed, as many states, following Sept. 11, allowed some postponement of tax payments. But he said that would at best explain only part of the reversal.

The report confirmed what many state budget officials have seen over the past few months.

On the Net:
http://rockinst.org/

Guelker, Rowland nominees for All-USA Academic Team

Western Texas College sophomores Michelle Guelker and Vicky Rowland will represent the college as nominees for the 2001-2002 All-USA Academic Team, which is sponsored by USA TODAY, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), and Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society.

As nominees, the two will be recognized as members of the All-State academic team and will receive scholarships for $200 or $400, based on their national ranking. Each year, 60 outstanding community college students comprising three teams are selected to the ALL-USA Academic Team.

All winners and their colleges will be featured in the Life Section of USA TODAY on Monday, April 22, 2002. First Team winners will also receive a $2,500 scholarship and will be honored at the annual AACC convention in Seattle, Washington, April 20-23.

Guelker is the daughter of Tommy and Debby Guelker of Colorado City. Sheis a graduate of Colorado High School and currently serves as Officer of Leadership for Phi Theta Kappa at WTC.

Rowland is the daughter of the late H. Thee Hill and Brownie Hill of Casper, Wyoming. She and her husband, John, have three sons, Chris, Thomas, and Joe Bishop. She is a graduate of Natrona County High School and is currently a member of Phi Theta Kappa at WTC, where she served as secretary/treasurer for the fall semester. She also received an award from the psychology department at WTC during the annual awards assembly last spring.

NOMINEES — Western Texas College sophomores Vicky Rowland, left, and Michelle Guelker will represent the college as nominees for the 2001-2002 All-USA Academic Team, which is sponsored by USA TODAY, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), and Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. (WTC Photo)

Last year, 794 community and technical colleges participated in the program, nominated nearly 1,500 outstanding students to the All-USA Academic Team. Once all nominations are received, three independent judges will review and score each nomination. Approximately 100 nominations receiving the most total points will proceed to the second round of judging conducted in Washington, D.C.

In the second round, three independent judges review and score each nomination. These judges represent various federal agencies and national education associations. The 60 top nominations then proceed to the third round of judging, where twelve judges score the nominations to determine first, second, and third team ranking.

Each nomination is ranked in three categories: 1) academic recognition, honors, awards; 2) activities and leadership, community service, work experience; and 3) student essay.

Janitor's income will be studied

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A school janitor earned more than $70,000 last year — more than any other principal in the system. And his son happens to be the schools chief.

The Orleans Parish School Board said it will ask an independent investigator to examine the pay of Alphonse Davis, 70, who made $38,754 in overtime last year. His base salary was $27,738.

At time-and-a-half, Davis would have worked about 1,850 hours over and above his regular 7 3/4-hour days. That would amount to an average of about 35 hours of overtime each week. With vacation, holiday and other pay added in, he made $70,691.

Alphonse Davis, the schools chief who shares the same name as his father, said Monday that he did nothing wrong and was not aware of his father's earnings, which grew substantially after the younger Davis took over the school system in 1999.

"I'm a believer in my father's integrity," Davis said. "It's entirely probable that he worked all these hours. He's a hard worker."

Davis said he will have chief operating officer Roger Reese review his father's pay.

The janitor has been with the school system for 40 years, and is now the head custodian at George Washington Carver High School.

At a meeting Monday, school board members agreed to find an independent investigator to examine the records of Davis' father.

"We don't have enough information yet, and we need to know that the information that we have is credible," board Vice President Cheryl Mills said.

Davis said his father was working extra hours because the school has undergone renovations, which have required a school employee to be on the grounds at odd hours.

events

LOTTO TEXAS TEXAS LOTTERY

RESULTS

Pick 3

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Tuesday by the Texas Lottery, in order:
9-3-2

Cash Five

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Cash Five numbers drawn Tuesday by the Texas Lottery:
1-12-20-29-37

Texas Two Step

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Texas Two Step numbers drawn Tuesday by the Texas Lottery:
10-25-28-34
Bonus number 28
Estimated jackpot: $200,000

High-tech devices advocated for farms

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Call it "Star Trek: The Next Harvest": An agriculture extension agent strides into a field and, guided by a hand-held computer and global-positioning device, walks right to the middle of the most productive plot in the county.

There, he pulls up a series of overlaying computer maps and examines crop yield histories, soil and crop conditions — even the closest pest activity.

The details help farmers answer the question, "If it's good here, why isn't it good somewhere else?" said John Nowatzki, a North Dakota State University Extension Service specialist.

The scenario should become more common in the next three years, thanks to a $742,000 grant from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as part of a program to find practical applications for data NASA can provide, Nowatzki said.

Nowatzki is using the money to organize a state project that encourages farmers to use satellite images and data in their operations. Scientists and farmers also will be able to study images of fields down to 1 square meter — enough detail to detect crop diseases and pest damage.

If an outbreak of wheat scab is found in one area, for example, computers could use the visual "signature" of the disease to search maps of the rest of a farmer's fields for similar outbreaks. The disease could be tracked and the effectiveness of fungicides evaluated.

University agriculture extension offices in several states promote the use of the Global Positioning System on farms and ranches and help train farmers in its use.

Berry's World

Date Book

Wednesday, Dec. 19, 2001

Today is the 353rd day of 2001 and the 89th day of fall.

TODAY'S HISTORY: On this day in 1732, in Philadelphia, Pa., Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanac was published for the first time.

On this day in 1910, in Marcus Hook, Pa., the American Vicose Co. began the commercial production of rayon.

On this day in 1974, at the swearing-in of Nelson Rockefeller as vice president, television cameras were allowed in the U.S. Senate chamber for the first time.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: Ralph Richardson (1902-1983), actor; Leonid Brezhnev (1906-1982), Soviet leader; Jean Genet (1910-1986), writer; Edith Piaf (1915-1963), singer; Cicely Tyson (1933-), actress, is 68; Phil Ochs (1940-1976), singer; Richard E. Leakey (1944-), anthropologist, is 57; Kevin McHale (1957-), basketball player, is 44.

TODAY'S SPORTS: On this day in 1982, Garo Yepremian of the Miami Dolphins kicked a 42-yard field goal against the New York Giants with four seconds remaining. The Dolphins won 15-14

TODAY'S QUOTE: "Anyone who knows a strange fact shares in its singularity." — Jean Genet

TODAY'S MOON: Between new moon (Dec. 14) and first quarter (Dec. 22).

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Roy McQueen, Publisher
Wade Warren, Managing Editor
MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Associated Press is exclusively entitled to use for republication all news dispatches in this newspaper and also local news published for republication of special dispatches.

During this week just 'fore Christmas

All through West Texas State Bank
We'll be serving up some special treats,
To show to you our thanks.

It's the Wassail time of year
And time for Cookies too.
We've cooked up some special recipes.
We're serving them just for you.

So finish up the shopping,
And tying up those loose ends.
And be sure to drop by the Bank this week,
As we say Merry Christmas to all our friends.

Noel

OPEN HOUSE
December 19, 20, & 21
Wassail and Cookies 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

WEST TEXAS STATE BANK
FDIC

Did you take
FEN-PHEN?

The diet drug Fen-Phen was marketed under several names including **Redux, Pondimin, Fenfluramine**, or **Dexfenfluramine**. If you took these diet drugs, you should know that it may not be too late to opt-out of the nationwide class action for the purpose of pursuing a lawsuit against the drug company individually

FOR MORE INFORMATION, AND TO FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR A FREE, NON-INVASIVE ECHOCARDIOGRAPHIC SCREENING, PLEASE CALL US

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Not certified by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.
We often work in conjunction with other law firms on clients' cases.

Astro-graph

By Bernice Bede Osol

Your Birthday

Thursday, Dec. 20, 2001

Chances are there could be a number of improved conditions in your chosen field of endeavor that'll make things easier for you in the year ahead and advance you several rungs up the ladder.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — Do not dilute or shirk your sense of duty today, and your possibilities for personal gain will be amplified. Staying the course and not being drawn off will pay handsome dividends.

Sagittarius, treat yourself to a birthday gift. Send for your Astro-Graph predictions for the year ahead by mailing $2 and SASE to Astro-Graph, c/o this newspaper, P.O. Box 1758, Murray Hill Station, New York, NY 10156. Be sure to state your Zodiac sign.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Do not ignore some sage advice or suggestions today from someone just because you don't like this person. That would be like shooting yourself in the foot.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — When involved in a distasteful task today, consider the long-range aspects of it and you won't find the job so disagreeable. Awareness of the benefits will inspire effective efforts.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20)— You could be very lucky in most areas today, with the exception of dealing with your own family. If an old problem erupts, concentrate on the good and remain even-tempered.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — Don't be angry if someone you asked a favor of can't help you today, even if you've done much for this person. Being forced to go elsewhere will turn out extremely lucky for you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — There may be one fly in the ointment today bollixing up an otherwise good project on which you and others are working. Brainstorm the problem to reveal a new, terrific direction.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — You may not get what you were hoping for from a material deal today, but you might get something better in place of it that could turn out to be more valuable.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — The secret today is not to take yourself too seriously. When you relax and take things as they come, you'll accomplish more and have fun doing so as well.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — Guard against inclinations today to look a gift horse in the mouth, if it isn't what you were hoping for. Being a gracious receiver will make you look good in the eyes of others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — The more generous you are when negotiating an agreement today, the more you are likely to receive in return. Subdue any self-serving tendencies that you might experience.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — Don't make a big thing today over someone who tries to take credit for something you did. This person will eventually be identified as a second stringer.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Negative thoughts or self-doubts could lurk about today, but conditions in general are actually quite lucky for you. Be careful not to paint an unrealistic picture and induce failure.

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OTTO RETIRES — Connie Otto, second from left, was honored with a retirement reception Friday morning at Stanfield Elementary School. Family members pictured with Otto are her son, Chance Springer, his wife, Sloane, and their daughter, Vail. For the past 14 years, Otto has served as Stanfield's CAI proctor. Before that, she was a "roll runner" at the high school for a year. (Staff Photo by Shirley A. Gorman)

Dear Abby

By Abigail Van Buren

Roomate's gifts to girl make her boyfriend appear cheap

DEAR ABBY: I am 18 years old and a freshman in college. I have been dating my girlfriend "Holly" for about eight months.

My roommate is also friends with Holly, and that is the problem. He treats Holly like she is a princess and gives her extravagant gifts, sometimes for no reason at all. This irritates me because it makes me look like a terrible boyfriend.

I cannot approach him about it since he is my roommate, and I have to live with him for the rest of the year. Holly realizes that it irritates me, but I can't have her say anything because then it would be extremely weird whenever she comes to visit — even more than it is now.

How should I handle this? — **CONFUSED IN CLEMSON, S.C.**

DEAR CONFUSED: You must speak up. For your roommate to buy expensive gifts for Holly, knowing she is your girlfriend, is inappropriate. (If you and Holly break up — THAT'S the time he should make his move, but not now.)

For Holly to accept those gifts is insensitive. You're certainly within your rights to let them both know this bothers you. And there's no time like the present to make your roommate aware of your feelings.

**

DEAR ABBY: My wife recently had her yearly mammogram and we are grateful it came out OK.

I asked my wife if she continues to check her breasts between the mammograms. Her response was yes, but that she wasn't quite sure what to look for. Her physician told her, "You will know it when you find it." I am not sure this was a clear enough answer.

Why don't doctors have on hand one synthetic breast WITH a lump and one WITHOUT to enable the patient to know exactly what she is looking for? In my opinion, it would be a good idea for men also to be taught what to look for in the male breast.

I could suggest this to the medical profession, but I am afraid it wouldn't get the attention it deserves. Your column is a better way to get the word out. — **JOHN COLOMBE, INDIANAPOLIS**

DEAR JOHN: I believe you've hit on something. I'm pleased to spread the word.

While not all women's breasts feel the same, a model with various sized "lumps" could be a lifesaver for a lot of people — men included. Many men are not aware that they, too, can have breast cancer. Although it is less common in men, there is definitely a risk for males too.

**

DEAR ABBY: You printed a letter from "Surprised Wife in Oklahoma City," whose son had asked for his deceased father's military records. The widow was shocked to discover they contained a reference to her husband having been before a board of inquiry for striking an officer. She said her husband had never mentioned it to her or his family because it would have been a "disgrace."

Abby, I see no disgrace here. The function of a court of inquiry is to inquire into a situation and determine whether any legal action is appropriate. Since there is no mention of a military trial in her husband's records, the court of inquiry must have determined that her husband did nothing deserving of punishment.

The Army's opinion of her husband was expressed in the wording on his honorable discharge certificate "awarded as a testimonial of honest and faithful service." If it's good enough for the military, it should be good enough for her and her son. — **DICK SCHUBERT, DENVER**

DEAR DICK: Thank you for the short course on the military legal system. I'm sure it will comfort the widow who wrote that letter.

**

Dear Abby is written by Pauline Phillips and daughter Jeanne Phillips.

**

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable — and most frequently requested — poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

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Defector seeks political changes in his homeland

WASHINGTON (AP) — Najib al-Salhi is not prone to ambiguities when he talks about Saddam Hussein. "Saddam is crazy," the former Iraqi Army general said the other day as he discussed his 23-year quest to depose the Iraqi president.

For 17 of those years he did so clandestinely, from within the military inside Iraq. For the past five years he has operated from the outside, first in Jordan, now in a Virginia suburb of Washington.

During the interview, al-Salhi spoke matter-of-factly about mass graves outside Baghdad where he said remains of Saddam's suspected opponents lie. He also recalled the poison gas used against an Iraqi Kurdish village in 1988; the tanks that he said were sent in to crush remains of those killed as anti-Saddam uprisings were suppressed.

Beyond that, he said, Saddam terrorizes military officers into obedience by having agents kidnap and rape relatives, then sending videotapes of the attacks back to the officers. Torture of officers' fathers and mothers is not unusual, he says.

Al-Salhi, 49, has no doubt his own family in Iraq has been subjected to such treatment.

"I try not to think about it," he said, speaking through an interpreter. "I don't want to create obstacles to my work. We have to make sacrifices to get to our goals."

Al-Salhi, who held the rank of staff general before deserting and who boasts a string of degrees, is founder and general secretary of the Movement of Free Officers, which he said maintains clandestine contacts with dissident officers inside Iraq.

The goal is to bring political change in Iraq and explore possibilities for a coup d'etat. The group also publishes articles in anti-Saddam journals outside Iraq and keeps in touch with a range of Iraqi dissident groups.

A book al-Salhi wrote about Saddam's repression of Shiites in southern Iraq was translated to English by the State Department. He contended the death toll from that campaign is in the 250,000 range.

To the delight of al-Salhi and his allies, the constituency in the United States for taking action against Iraq appears to be stronger now than at any time since the end of the Gulf War more than 10 years ago.

It has been stimulated in large measure by the success of U.S. forces in blasting the Taliban regime in Afghanistan out of power.

Referring to Iraq, President Bush said recently that countries that develop weapons of mass destruction intended for terrorist purposes "will be held accountable."

A bipartisan group of leading members of Congress urged Bush two weeks ago to take decisive action against Iraq because the threat from that country "cannot be permanently contained."

Skeptics warn that the Afghanistan model cannot be duplicated easily in Iraq. They point out that there is no equivalent in Iraq to Afghanistan's northern alliance, a vital element in the defeat of the Taliban.

The Iraqi military also is much larger and better equipped than the Taliban militia. Beyond that, if the United States takes on Iraq, it would not have nearly the international support it has enjoyed in the Afghan campaign.

Retired Marine Corps Gen. Anthony Zinni, former commander of the U.S. Central Command and now a Middle East envoy, is another skeptic. He wrote shortly before his retirement last year that the $97 million in military support that Congress has appropriated for use by Iraqi rebels won't get the job done.

"What will we have?" he asked. "A Bay of Goats, most likely."

Al-Salhi said the naysayers fail to consider the vulnerability of the Iraqi regime after decades of unabated repression.

"My work is to convince U.S. officials we have to get this job done," he said. "The Iraqi people are waiting for U.S. efforts to get rid of Saddam."

Owners of dog that mauled 1-year-old girl are charged

LOVELL, Wyo. (AP) — The owners of a dog that attacked and killed a 1-year-old girl who wandered to into their yard have been charged with felony involuntary manslaughter.

Court documents allege that the dog's owners recklessly caused Kristin Jolley's death Oct. 29 and that they starved and mistreated the dog until it became "a vicious animal that attacked and killed an innocent child."

The dog's previous owner, Karen Hytrek, told authorities that when she gave Max to Anne Shine and Matthew Martinez the dog weighed about 110 pounds, "was good-natured, was never known to have bitten anyone and interacted well with children who attended school next to her home."

Veterinarian Jane Undem, who examined the dog, said Max weighed about 65 pounds at the time of the attack. She said he was "ravenous" when he was brought to her clinic, devouring four cups of dry dog food and then trying to eat some cat food. The dog was killed so Undem could conduct a complete exam.

The charge filed Monday against Shine and Martinez carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a $10,000 fine. A hearing was scheduled for Dec. 27.

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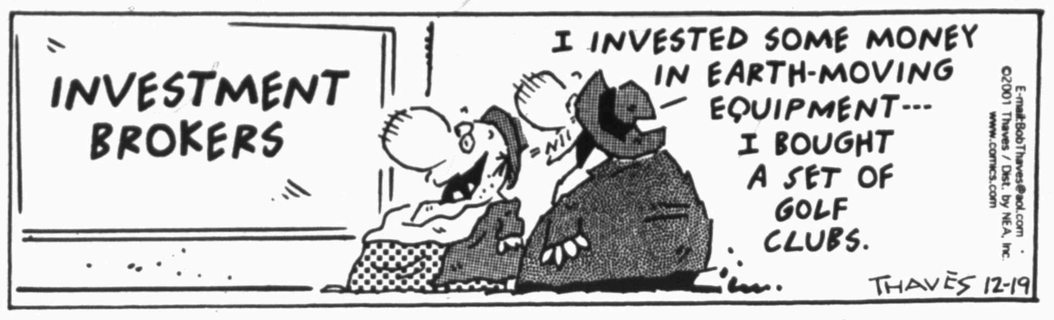

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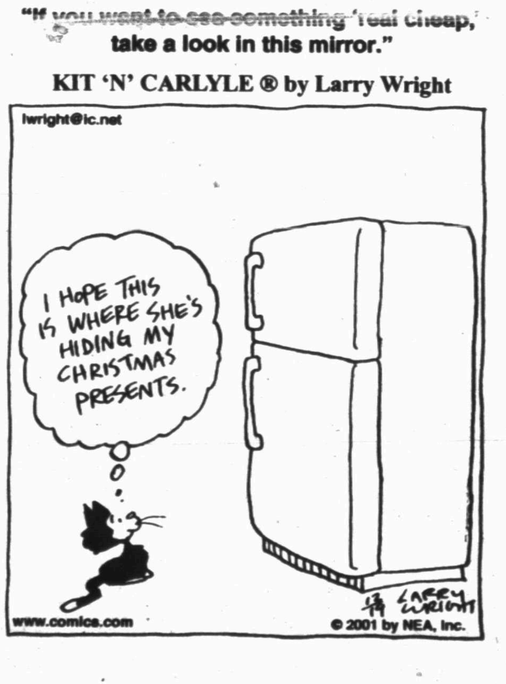

NEA Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1 Cheesy snack
6 Goes first
11 Dryer's companion
12 Lemon or lime
13 Rodeo event
14 Upward slope
15 Prayer endings
16 Hurricane track
17 Gallon fraction
18 Son of Val and Aleta
19 Southpaws' stats
23 Zilch
25 Fender damage
26 Spade, of whodunits
29 Sofa
32 RR stat
33 IRS form expert
34 Virtuous one
35 Stretch the truth
36 Norwegian port
38 Dits' partners
40 Mall frequenter
41 Poker stake
42 Chianti or Burgundy
46 Boards
48 Like some showers
49 Residents
52 Duplicated
53 Worships
54 Without any shakiness
55 Curves
56 Cuddly bear

DOWN

1 Wynonna's mom
2 Colorado resort
3 Glazed fabric
4 Some layers
5 Grp.
6 Rooter
7 Wrote on glass
8 "— we there yet?"
9 Grayish-brown
10 Sleek plane
11 Outer garment
12 "Brian's Song" star
16 Furnished
18 Opera highlight
20 Snorkeler's locale
21 Opposed
22 Iffy attempt
24 MS polishers
26 Man from Dundee
27 Basilica part
28 Masculine
30 GP expertise
31 — degree
37 Forward
39 Filched
41 Order around
43 Achilles' epic
44 Economically disadvantaged
45 Vortex
47 Fiesta shouts
48 Carryall
49 Experiment room
50 Tribute in verse
51 Bilk
52 Wisc. hrs.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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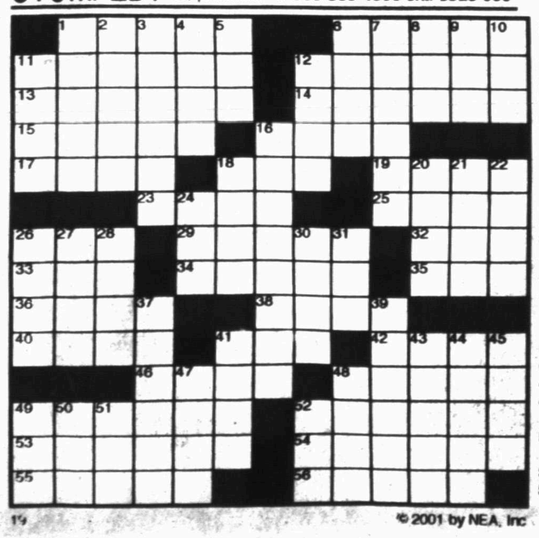

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Snyder Daily News Comics

DENNIS THE MENACE ® by Hank Ketcham

"BOY! WHAT A COOL JOB! HE ONLY WORKS ONE NIGHT A YEAR!"

SHS
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Big Spring
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1-2 4, Smith 1-4 0-3 2. T
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Snyder
Russell 2-5 0-1 4, Burl
ples 1-4 0-2 2, Putnam
3-10 3-11 9, Schwertne
2 3-4 3, Chambers 1-2
14-30 38.
Three-point goals: Big
Patel 2, Braxton and
Rebounds: Big Spring
Snyder 28 (Peoples 8
Spring 23, Snyder 17.
Long.

District
Girls Bas

Team	W
Plainview	3
Estacado	3
Levelland	2
Big Spring	1
Snyder	1
Frenship	1
Andrews	1
Lake View	0

Tuesday's results:
Snyder 38; Andrew
25; Plainview 44, Le
cado 71, Frenship 6
Jan. 3 games: Pla
Lake View at Big Sp
Estacado; Levelland

Martinez sign
ST. LOUIS (AP)
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SPORTS

SHS girls fall 52-38 to Steers

In a game slowed by turnovers and fouls, the Big Spring Lady Steers found a way to finish with a flurry.

Big Spring outscored Snyder, 25-9, over the final nine minutes to chalk up a 52-38 District 4-4A victory Tuesday at the SHS gym.

Snyder fell to 1-2 in district play, but had chances to change its fortune.

The teams combined for 43 turnovers and 40 fouls, but the Lady Tigers couldn't take advantage. Snyder made only 14 of 30 attempts from the line.

Still the Lady Tigers held a 29-27 lead with 1:46 left in the third before Big Spring took control for good.

The Lady Steers got back-to-back three-pointers from Brittany Bryant and Jessica Long to cap the third quarter with a 36-29 advantage.

Snyder tried to rally in the fourth, cutting the deficit to 43-38 on a Chaelyn Robinson bucket with 2:42 left on the clock.

Robinson's layup represented the Lady Tigers' final points.

Big Spring scored the final nine points of the night, including its sixth three-pointer to preserve the 52-38 win.

Snyder shot only 29 percent from the floor, and trailed in the rebounding margin, 35-28.

Robinson's nine points paced Snyder. Afton Schwertner added eight.

The Lady Tigers are in action again Dec. 27 at the Abilene High tournament. They resume district competition Jan. 3 against defending state champion Plainview.

Big Spring	**12**	**11**	**13**	**16**	**— 52**
Snyder	**13**	**10**	**06**	**09**	**— 38**

Big Spring
K. Long 2-4 0-0 4, Wrightsil 5-12 0-3 10, Braxton 3-10 1-2 8, Bryant 4-7 4-6 14, Brock 1-4 0-2 2, Patel 2-4 2-2 8, J. Long 1-2 1-2 4, Smith 1-4 0-3 2. **Totals 19-47 8-20 52.**

Snyder
Russell 2-5 0-1 4, Burleson 1-5 3-4 5, Peoples 1-4 0-2 2, Putnam 1-5 3-4 5, Robinson 3-10 3-11 9, Schwertner 3-8 2-4 8, Daniell 0-2 3-4 3, Chambers 1-2 0-0 2. **Totals 12-41 14-30 38.**

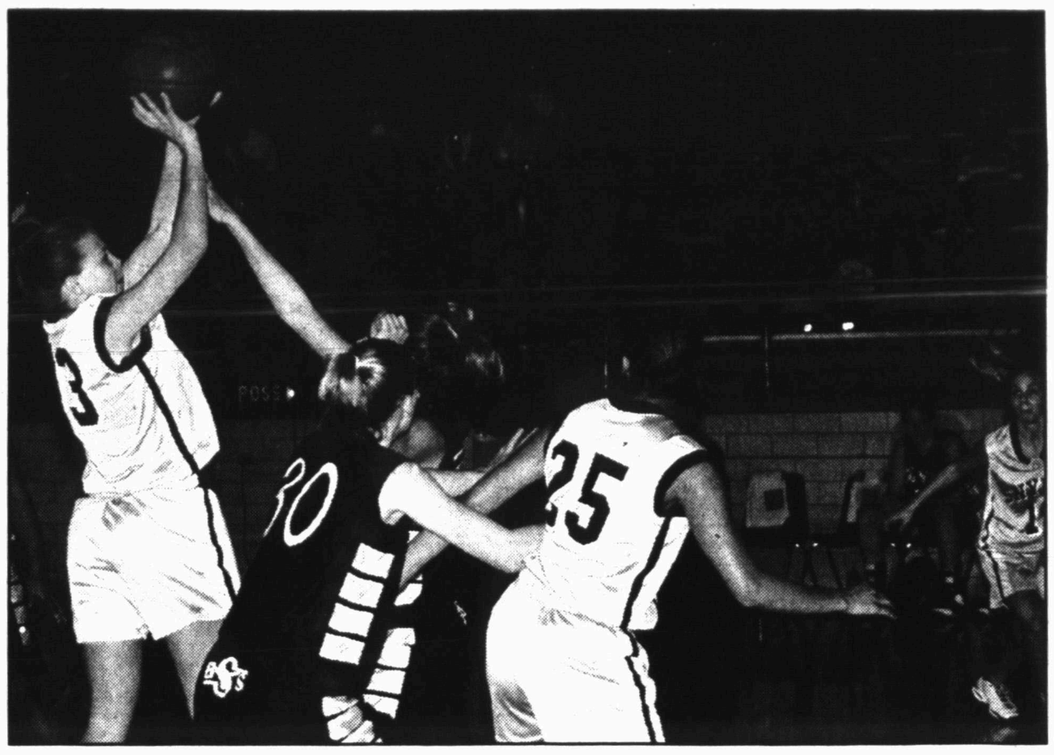
Three-point goals: Big Spring 6 (Bryant 2, Patel 2, Braxton and J. Long), Snyder 0. Rebounds: Big Spring 35 (Wrightsil 10), Snyder 28 (Peoples 8). Total fouls: Big Spring 23, Snyder 17. Fouled out — K. Long.

District 4-4A Girls Basketball

Team	District W	District L	Season W	Season L
Plainview	3	0	14	1
Estacado	3	0	12	2
Levelland	2	1	13	3
Big Spring	1	2	9	6
Snyder	1	2	5	9
Frenship	1	2	10	6
Andrews	1	2	10	4
Lake View	0	3	2	12

Tuesday's results: Big Spring 52, Snyder 38; Andrews 61, Lake View 25; Plainview 44, Levelland 26; Estacado 71, Frenship 66.

Jan. 3 games: Plainview at Snyder; Lake View at Big Spring; Andrews at Estacado; Levelland at Frenship.



SHOOTING FOR TWO — Snyder's Erin Burleson puts up a shot Tuesday night against Big Spring as Zipporah Peoples (25) and Hailey Putnam (15) rush in to grab the rebound. The Lady Tigers dropped the District 4-4A contest, 52-38. (SDN Staff Photo)

UNT falters in bowl game

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — North Texas went the entire regular season without winning a game outside the Sun Belt Conference.

The Mean Green couldn't do it in the inaugural New Orleans Bowl, either.

Justin Gallimore blocked a punt and recovered it for a touchdown as Colorado State opened the bowl season with a 45-20 victory over North Texas on Tuesday night.

The Mean Green (5-7) were the first team with a losing record to play in a bowl game since 1970, when William & Mary went to the Tangerine at 5-6 and lost to Toledo 40-12.

North Texas earned the bid by finishing first in the Sun Belt, which posted a combined 5-32 nonconference record, but didn't fare well against the Rams.

"They're definitely one of the better teams we have faced this year," North Texas linebacker Brad Kassel said. "Offensively, they were able to find weaknesses and exploit them."

A crowd of 18,898 saw Colorado State quarterback Bradlee Van Pelt throw for one touchdown and run for another score. The Superdome fans were well behaved, a day after the NFL game between St. Louis and the Saints was briefly delayed at the stadium because of debris thrown from the stands.

Gallimore's touchdown gave Colorado State (7-5) a 31-14 lead, and came just four plays after Van Pelt fumbled on the North Texas 16.

After receiving the opening kickoff, Colorado State needed only three plays to complete a 74-yard scoring drive.

Lady Bulldogs bow to Trent

IRA — The Ira Lady Bulldogs went cold in the fourth quarter, and the Trent Gorillas took advantage to notch a 60-37 victory in Tuesday night's non-district action.

Ira trailed by only six points after three quarters of play, but managed only five points in the final frame. Trent put together a 22-5 run to seal the victory.

Celeigh Sterling poured in 28 points to pace the Lady Bulldogs.

Lindsey Wilson added 14 points. Michelle Nettles tallied 10, and Amanda Calley finished with eight.

Ira, which fell to 2-6 on the season, is in action again at 3:30 Friday against Jayton.

Ira downs Trent in OT

IRA — The Ira Bulldogs needed an extra frame to knock off the Trent Gorillas, 52-46, Tuesday night.

Ira outscored Trent, 8-2, in the overtime period to push its record to 7-3.

"We stayed patient on the offensive end and stuck with what was working," said Ira coach Bubba Edwards. "Then when Trent started getting a little tired, we just started outrunning them down the floor."

After scoring only two points in the first half, Jake Barnes poured in 16 the rest of the way to pace the Bulldogs.

Cade Tucker tallied 12 points, and Eric Dickerhoff added 11. Jase Olvera registered four points. Jess Wall posted three, and Todd Wall and Cole Shafer chipped in two each.

The Bulldogs are in action again at 5 p.m. Friday against Jayton.

District 4-4A Boys Basketball

Team	District W	District L	Season W	Season L
Snyder	1	0	3	10
Estacado	1	0	12	3
Plainview	1	0	8	4
Andrews	1	0	8	5
Frenship	0	1	10	4
Big Spring	0	1	5	8
Levelland	0	1	5	11
Lake View	0	1	4	9

Tuesday's results: Snyder 55, Big Spring 51; Andrews 60, Lake View 49; Plainview 84, Levelland 82; Estacado 51, Frenship 40.

Jan. 3 games: Plainview at Snyder; Lake View at Big Spring; Andrews at Estacado; Levelland at Frenship.

NCAA Basketball

MEN
EAST
Alabama 70, Temple 67
Colgate 85, Hobart 48
Dartmouth 70, Quinnipiac 68
Drexel 83, Northeastern 72
Vermont 74, Harvard 54
SOUTH
Auburn 73, South Alabama 58
Birmingham-Southern 65, Elon 58
Charlotte 86, UTEP 58
Chattanooga 83, Bluefield St. 51
Duke 95, Kentucky 92, OT
Florida 103, High Point 49
Hampton 84, Old Dominion 77
Miami 90, Florida A&M 62
New Orleans 60, LSU 59
South Carolina 69, S. Carolina St. 50
Southern Miss. 64, Millsaps 51
Va. Commonwealth 75, Gardner-Webb 68
Winthrop 66, Clemson 61
Wofford 77, Reinhardt 55
MIDWEST
Dayton 76, Austin Peay 61
DePaul 79, Chicago St. 63
Illinois 87, Illinois St. 70
SOUTHWEST
Ark.-Little Rock 83, Morgan St. 56
Oklahoma 109, E. Illinois 50
TCU 74, SMU 62
Texas A&M-Corpus Christi 80, San Francisco 75
FAR WEST
Boise St. 55, N. Arizona 44
Colorado St. 80, S. Illinois 62
Loyola Marymount 76, Long Beach St. 68
Loyola of Chicago 72, St. Mary's, Cal. 70
San Jose St. 78, Notre Dame, Calif. 65
Utah 71, S. Utah 47
Weber St. 87, Savannah St. 56
WOMEN
EAST
Clemson 73, Penn St. 69
Delaware 83, La Salle 66
Holy Cross 80, Fordham 76, 2OT
Loyola of Chicago 87, Northeastern 83
SOUTH
Alabama 72, Jacksonville St. 53
Ark.-Pine Bluff 60, MVSU 55
Buffalo 49, East Carolina 40
Chattanooga 79, Georgia Southern 67
Fla. International 91, Florida Atlantic 64
Florida 81, Elon 53
Florida A&M 63, Morris Brown 46
Georgia Tech 71, Georgia St. 68
LSU 88, Mercer 31
Marshall 77, Robert Morris 60
Ohio St. 88, Virginia 79
South Alabama 63, N. Carolina A&T 37
South Carolina 94, Coastal Carolina 34
South Florida 66, Manhattan 58
Wake Forest 76, N.C.-Asheville 46
Wofford 63, New Orleans 62
MIDWEST
Cincinnati 75, Sacred Heart 42
Dayton 89, Wright St. 34
Northwestern 54, Long Beach St. 39
Ohio 97, Tenn.-Martin 87, OT
Saint Louis 61, UMKC 43
W. Kentucky 73, Miami (Ohio) 68
SOUTHWEST
Lamar 55, Louisiana-Monroe 45
Northwestern St. 74, Sam Houston St. 61
TCU 62, Texas A&M-Corpus Christi 56
FAR WEST
New Mexico 82, New Mexico St. 55
Portland St. 60, CS Northridge 56
TOURNAMENT
Ala Moana Hotel Paradise Classic
Third Place
N.C. Charlotte 56, Tennessee St. 40
Cancun Invitational Championship
Pepperdine 89, Furman 57
Third Place
Tulsa 75, Oral Roberts 58

National Basketball Association

By The Associated Press
All Times EST

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New Jersey	15	7	.682	—
Boston	14	8	.636	1
New York	12	13	.480	4½
Washington	11	12	.478	4½
Orlando	12	14	.461	5
Philadelphia	10	14	.417	6
Miami	5	18	.217	10½

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	14	7	.667	—
Detroit	14	8	.636	½
Indiana	14	12	.539	2½
Toronto	12	12	.500	3½
Charlotte	11	13	.458	4½
Cleveland	10	14	.417	5½
Atlanta	9	15	.375	6½
Chicago	4	19	.174	11

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	18	4	.818	—
Minnesota	16	7	.696	2½
Dallas	16	9	.640	3½
Utah	12	13	.480	7½
Denver	9	15	.375	10
Houston	7	19	.269	13
Memphis	5	19	.208	14

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Lakers	18	3	.857	—
Sacramento	19	7	.731	1½
L.A. Clippers	14	11	.560	6
Phoenix	14	12	.539	6½
Portland	12	11	.522	7
Seattle	11	15	.423	9½
Golden State	9	16	.360	11

Tuesday's Games
Cleveland 102, Chicago 84
New York 100, Charlotte 95
Utah 95, Miami 56
Indiana 103, Atlanta 100
Milwaukee 114, Memphis 105
Dallas 107, Minnesota 103
L.A. Clippers 96, Phoenix 92
Portland 101, Houston 92
San Antonio 102, Denver 93
Sacramento 102, Detroit 98

Wednesday's Games
Atlanta at Washington, 7 p.m.
Cleveland at Boston, 7 p.m.
Charlotte at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Utah at Orlando, 7:30 p.m.
Minnesota at New Jersey, 7:30 p.m.
Toronto at Indiana, 8 p.m.
Portland at San Antonio, 8:30 p.m.
Sacramento at Seattle, 10 p.m.
Detroit at Golden State, 10:30 p.m.

Thursday's Games
Chicago at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Memphis at New York, 7:30 p.m.
Milwaukee at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Houston, 9 p.m.

Tigers hang in for 55-51 win

By Eric Drennan
Sports Editor

The Snyder Tigers are shooting better and committing fewer turnovers. But more importantly, the Tigers are learning how to win in the fourth quarter.

Snyder hung in through the first three quarters, then overcame a five-point deficit in the final period to knock off the Big Spring Steers, 55-51, Tuesday night in the District 4-4A opener at the SHS gym.

It was Snyder's second consecutive victory by way of a fourth-quarter rally, and it put the Tigers on the right track in district competition.

"I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that we've been on the other end, so we know what gets you beat in close ballgames," said Snyder coach Bud Birks. "Now we're starting to avoid the errors that cost you close games.

"This is a big win for us. It's gets us off to a good start in district, and it makes for a good Christmas."

Trailing, 47-42, with 5:06 left in the game, Snyder started its comeback with a pair of buckets in the paint by Josh Mendoza and Corey Clay.

The Tigers forced two Big Spring turnovers that resulted in short-range baskets from Nick Landes and T.J. Jones to grab a 50-47 advantage with 2:35 remaining.

Two free throws brought Big Spring within a point, but the Steers would get no closer.

Mendoza got free on the inside again for a 52-49 margin, and the Tigers forced the Steers into tough shots down the stretch.

Mendoza converted a free throw, before Big Spring finally scored again on an Arthur Belvin put back with 11 seconds on the clock.

Leading by two points, Chris McLeod sealed the victory from the stripe in the final seconds.

"We handled the ball pretty well against their press," Birks said. "Our point guards were able to get open and bring the ball down without any help, and that was a big key."

Another key was an outstanding first half by McLeod. The senior poured in 19 of his game-high 21 points in the first half.

"In the first half, there were times when we were able to just beat them down the floor," Birks stated. "Chris was flying out of there after a missed a shot and Josh was hitting him with the long outlet pass."

After falling behind, 12-9, in the opening period, the Tigers opened up their biggest lead of the night, 24-16, in the second quarter.

A 10-4 Big Spring run cut the gap to 28-26 by halftime, and the tally was knotted at 40-40 entering the fourth quarter.

Snyder's stingy defense held the Steers to a 38-percent shooting effort from the floor.

The Tigers also out rebounded the Steers, 30-27. Mendoza grabbed 11 boards to go along with 13 points.

Snyder is in action again Dec. 27 against Winters at the Brownwood tournament. The Tigers resume district play Jan. 3 against Plainview.

Big Spring	**12**	**14**	**14**	**11**	**— 51**
Snyder	**09**	**19**	**12**	**15**	**— 55**

Big Spring
C. Woodruff 1-7 0-0 2, Belvin 6-11 3-5 16, Fleming 4-10 6-6 14, Greathouse 0-2 2-2 2, Jackson 2-3 4-5 9, Wilkins 2-4 0-2 4, Watson 0-1 0-3 0, J. Woodruff 1-4 1-2 4. **Totals 16-42 16-25 51.**

Snyder
Clay 1-4 0-0 2, Mendoza 6-9 1-3 13, McLeod 9-17 3-5 21, Landes 3-8 0-2 7, Bedell 0-0 1-2 1, Thompson 2-4 1-1 5, Scott 1-3 0-0 2, Driggers 1-3 0-0 2, Jones 1-2 0-2 2. **Totals 24-50 6-15 55.**

Three-point goals: Big Spring 3 (Belvin, Jackson and J. Woodruff), Snyder 1 (Landes). Rebounds: Big Spring 27 (Wilkins 8), Snyder 30 (Mendoza 11). Total fouls: Big Spring 19, Snyder 22. Fouled out — Jackson.

Sports Briefs

Martinez signed by Cardinals

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Tino Martinez signed a three-year contract with St. Louis, giving the Cardinals a power-hitting replacement for Mark McGwire at first base.

Knoblauch headed to Royals

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Chuck Knoblauch is going from the New York Yankees, where he won three World Series titles, to a Kansas City team that twice in the past three seasons has lost almost 100 games. He signed a one-year contract.

Rangers trade for Rocker

CLEVELAND (AP) — John Rocker, who never fit in when he joined the Cleveland Indians last season, was traded to the Texas Rangers for minor league pitcher Dave Elder.

Buhner to retire

SEATTLE (AP) — Jay Buhner, Seattle's right fielder for 14 years, plans to retire at age 37 because of a series of injuries, the Seattle Times reported. Buhner told the newspaper he would make a formal announcement this week.

Rams banish bottled beer

ST. LOUIS (AP) — The St. Louis Rams, after seeing two NFL games interrupted by rowdy fans, will ban the sale of bottled beer at home for the rest of the season, according to a published report.

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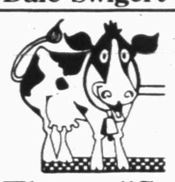

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Somalia to cooperate with war on terrorism

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — The United States has decided to take its fight against Osama bin Laden's terror network to Somalia, a senior German official said early today.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there was no longer a question of whether to go after al-Qaida terrorists in the east African nation, but only when and how.

However, a Pentagon spokesman said Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has not said named the United States' next target in its anti-terrorism campaign.

"I can almost guarantee you that the secretary has not indicated what any next country — if there is a next country — will be," spokesman Richard McGraw said today in Washington.

Rumsfeld on Tuesday had mentioned Yemen and Sudan as countries suspected of supporting terrorism.

At NATO headquarters in Brussels, Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said: "We are not going to speculate on any next operation."

But when pressed, he said: "Countries that harbor terrorists worry us. Somalia is one potential country, but there are others as well."

Somali Transport Minister Abdi Guled Mohamed said today that "there are no terrorists that we know of" in Somalia. He said Somalia's transitional government has told the Bush administration it is ready to cooperate in the war against terrorism.

"We have said since Sept. 11 that we want to help. If the Americans say there are terrorists in Somalia, they should tell us how they know this," he said in Nairobi, Kenya, where he was attending peace talks between Somali faction leaders and the transitional government.

"If there are terrorists there, than we will put them in prison, put them where they belong. We will work with the Americans to fight terrorists," he added.

The United States, however, does not recognize the transitional government led by Abdiqasim Salat Hassan, U.S. diplomat Glen Warren told reporters in Mogadishu, the Somali capital.

"We of the American government do not recognize any government or regional government or any other sort of administration in Somalia," Warren said.

U.S. officials have said the United States is concerned Somalia's lack of central authority makes it an attractive base for terrorists.

Earlier this month, nine people identified by aid workers and a regional security official as Americans visited a town in western Somalia, where they met with local faction leaders and Ethiopian military officers.

The Americans met with leaders of the Rahanwein Resistance Army, a clan-based faction opposed to Somalia's fledgling transitional government, and with Mohamed Saeed Hirsi, the leader of an Ethiopian-backed faction also opposed to the government, the official said on condition of anonymity.

In Yemen, Yemeni forces trained and equipped with U.S. funds engaged armed tribesmen in a bid Tuesday to capture suspected al-Qaida members, government officials and tribal sources said.

Tanks, helicopters and artillery pounded mountain villages and hillsides in what appeared to be the most serious military operation yet in an Arab country in search of suspects allegedly connected to al-Qaida, blamed for the Sept. 11 attacks.

Iraq also has been identified by President Bush and other senior administration officials as a potential U.S. target. Bush administration officials also have called the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Tajikstan and Uzbekistan countries with terrorism problems.

Several African countries called on the United States to avoid military action in Somalia and to cooperate with the transitional government, which has expressed readiness to "get rid of any terrorist camps if it was proved they existed on Somali lands."

Motorola Inc. continues to restructure

CHICAGO (AP) — Motorola Inc. is getting significantly smaller — again — in pursuit of the profitability it maintains it will achieve again in 2002 after a 11/2-year losing streak.

The struggling technology giant, hamstrung since 2000 by a weakened economy and operating problems of its own making, is trimming another 9,400 jobs in the latest of a series of sweeping cuts.

The cell phone and semiconductor manufacturer said the most recent move Tuesday will improve its efficiency and, combined with semiconductor plant closings and other measures, result in about $1 billion in annual cost savings. But company executives also indicated they expect two more money-losing quarters after this one, making it six straight in the red, before an anticipated return to profitability in next year's third quarter.

The new shakeup further extends the third restructuring since 1998 for the Schaumburg, Ill.-based company, whose comeback efforts have been offset by troubles in the world economy.

The once-leading cell phone maker has posted small market-share gains in that slowed industry in recent months, with a slew of new phones helping it to slightly narrow the huge deficit with dominant Nokia. But industry experts remained skeptical about Motorola's latest claim that its recovery measures will soon pay off.

"Three years of restructuring, and now it looks like four," said analyst Brian Modoff of Deutsche Banc Alex Brown.

"In (cell phone) handsets they've made some improvement. But it's a technology conglomerate and there are a lot of things going on," he said. "They clearly have a lot more work ahead of them in a challenging and competitive environment."

The clearest sign of new obstacles on the path to recovery: The company said its first-quarter loss will be greater than expected, 11 cents to 14 cents.

Wall Street was not impressed. Motorola's shares fell 61 cents, or 3.7 percent, to $16 a share in early trading today morning on the New York Stock Exchange. Top competitors Nokia, Ericsson Telephone and Siemens also saw their stocks sink, particularly on concerns about Motorola's signal that 2002 sales could fall 10 percent.

Motorola, which disclosed the cuts while also announcing that its fourth-quarter guidance remains unchanged from October, is lopping another 8 percent of employees off its payrolls all told. The company has now shrunk its work force by 32 percent — 42,900 jobs through layoffs and 5,500 through sales of businesses — since it stood at 150,000 worldwide in August 2000, evidently leaving a little more than 107,000 after the announced cuts occur.

The new job reductions, to be made over the course of the next year, include 4,000 from its semiconductor operations, 1,300 from its equipment manufacturing businesses and another 4,100 distributed companywide.

After thousands of layoffs earlier in the year in Motorola's cell phone and pager business, the Austin, Texas-headquartered semiconductor unit appears to take the brunt of the latest announced layoffs.

Dr. Gott

By Peter Gott, M.D.

Humor helps healing

DEAR DR. GOTT: Why do doctors have to take everything so seriously? Mine never smiles. Any comments?

DEAR READER: I really like my doctor.

Part of the reason is that I don't have to see him frequently; about once every five years is enough, for a routine examination.

I've known him for more than 35 years. Although only slightly older than I, he was one of my mentors when I was a resident. More important, he is extremely bright, very dedicated, likes to bicycle and has a marvelous sense of humor. This last quality is crucial to me, and I often wish more physicians had a similar, irreverent, off-the-wall perspective. True, illness is not funny. But my doctor manages to maintain a delicate balance between seriousness and drollness; when dealing with a healthy patient, there's usually a twinkle in his eye. Let me illustrate.

In early June, just before my 66th birthday, I took a day off and traveled to the major city where my doctor practices. I thought I was due for a mid-decade check-up.

His office seemed slightly chaotic, as I knew it would be: telephones ringing constantly, patients' charts scattered all over his desk, worn carpets, doors opening and closing, you know, the usual ambiance of a deliriously busy, almost-out-of-control practice. He had to examine me in the X-ray room because his associate was ensconced in the main examination area. Female technicians kept sticking their heads in at the door, exclaiming "Oops!" and soundlessly retreating.

Despite the interruptions, however, my physician was able to question me thoroughly about the usual, trivial, age-related complaints that had invaded my life: getting up a couple of times at night to go to the john, less endurance during my long bike rides, pesky muscle aches, minor skin changes from years of excessive sun exposure — all the usual stuff. I told him how I was in a period of some stress and turmoil because my wife and I had separated. This was written down without comment, and I didn't elaborate because I was reluctant to bore him with the details of a highly personal situation over which he had no control. Anyway, I was handling it as well as I could.

Finally, he began the examination. I don't know about you, but I always feel uncomfortably vulnerable sitting on a cold examining table in my underwear, like a kid again, helpless, knowing the drill, yet being uncontrollably apprehensive that the physician might find something ... something wrong, something hidden and awful. Fortunately, everything checked out and my doctor pronounced me fit.

"Now," he concluded, "if you'll just drop your shorts, I'll finish the exam."

I complied and stood before him in all my middle-aged glory, with my boxers around my ankles.

He took a step backward in disbelief, pursed his lips, arched his eyebrows and exhaled in mock seriousness.

"Well," he intoned, "I can certainly see why your wife left you."

Of course, we both cracked up. The exam was completed without further incident.

Later, while analyzing my reactions to this unusual transaction, I reasoned — once again — that humor plays an invaluable role in medical practice. My doctor is living proof that a good doctor/patient relationship doesn't have to be — in fact, shouldn't be — based on unrelieved, self-conscious seriousness orchestrated by a practitioner who is too insecure to lighten up.

I suppose a few of my own patients may believe I am sometimes too flip in my dealings with them. Maybe my personal, twisted sense of humor is occasionally misperceived as insensitivity. I hope not, but it's possible. However, I'm working hard on this. I know I'll probably never achieve the enviable balance my own doctor exhibits; that's a gift. But I'll keep trying. After all, I have a darned good model to emulate.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I am 58 and have recently noticed that one testicle is noticeably smaller than the other. Is this normal, or should I be concerned?

DEAR READER: As men age, one or both testicles often become softer and smaller. This is normal.

On the other hand, sometimes smaller doesn't mean smaller. I remember a man in his 60s, who came to me early in my practice with an observation identical to yours. On examination, however, I discovered that his "smaller" testicle was normal; the larger one was actually the problem. He had a tumor in it. Thus, although it may sound strange, I worry less about your small testicle than I do about your "normal" one.

You should see your family doctor for an exam. In the event that one testicle has truly shrunk, you needn't worry. But I'd feel more secure knowing that the other one hasn't enlarged.

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Family upset letter to Walker not delivered

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The parents of John Walker Lindh, the 20-year-old American captured alongside Taliban fighters, said Tuesday they are upset that a letter they sent him via the Red Cross hasn't been delivered.

"It is very painful to think that John has no idea his family is sending him love and support during the most difficult time of his life," Frank Lindh and Marilyn Walker said in a statement released by their attorney.

In the letter given to the Red Cross on Dec. 4, Lindh and Walker "told John that we loved him, that we want to see him, and that we hired an attorney for him. He has not received any of these messages."

Earlier this month, Lindh sent a letter to his parents saying he was safe and regrets not contacting them sooner. He apparently dictated the letter, dated Dec. 3, to an International Red Cross volunteer.

Dominick Albano, a spokesman for the Red Cross in San Francisco, said late Tuesday the parents' letter to their son was at the organization's Pakistan office. He said it's not unusual for such a delivery to take up to three months. Lindh's unique status further complicates matters.

"This situation with the Walkers is completely unprecedented," Albano said. "It's a murky area. We're working closely with all parties involved and we're certainly committed to helping the family."

Markets

Midday Stocks

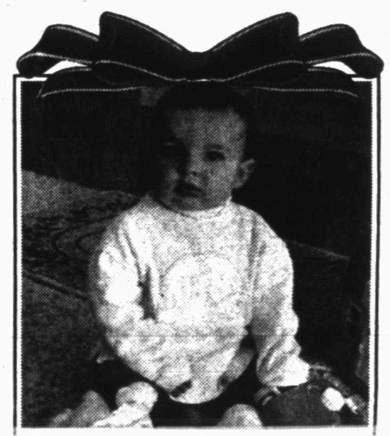
NEW YORK (AP)

	High	Low	Last	
AMR Corp		22.50	22.05	22.11—.39
AOL TimeWrn		32.85	32.09	32.75
AT&T Corp s		17.05	16.55	16.89 + .24
Albertsons		31.73	31.30	31.40 + .45
Alltel		63.55	63.17	63.45—.15
AmEl Pw		42.67	40.95	42.56 + .40
AndarkPtr		53.80	52.01	53.80 + 1.61
ATMOS Egy		21.15	20.92	21.10
Aviall		7.97	7.59	7.78—.20
BP PLC		45.56	44.06	44.58—.28
BakerHughes		35.45	34.20	35.41 + 1.36
Bank of Amer		63.74	62.61	63.65 + .57
BellSouth		38.70	38.35	38.46—.45
BethSteel		65	61	62 .01
Burlnsthrn		28.51	28.27	28.39—.14
Caterpillar		51.70	51.02	51.35—.01
ChevronTex		87.20	85.97	86.88 + .63
Citigroup		49.25	48.50	49.20 + 1.10
CocaCola		47.90	46.25	47.62 + 1.12
ColgatePal		58.03	57.05	57.70 + .15
ComclMetals		34.45	33.50	33.96 + .28
Cooperin		36.10	35.75	35.91—.09
DaimlrChry		40.90	40.14	40.40—.71
DeltaAirl		29.98	29.12	29.37—.15
Dillards Inc		15.29	15.00	15.11—.24
DowChem		36.50	35.71	36.25—.74
DuPont		43.00	42.55	42.90—.32
EastmanChem		39.18	38.25	38.89—.41
EstKodak		30.79	30.25	30.54—.66
EDS Corp		68.95	67.64	68.77 + 1.02
Entergy		38.20	37.10	38.10 + .40
ExxonMobil s		37.99	37.41	37.96 + .41
FstBksAm		31.30	31.30	31.30 + .10
FootLocker		15.20	14.80	15.11 + .06
GenDynam		79.04	78.60	78.70—.01
GenElec		41.37	39.50	40.72 + 1.00
GenMills		50.42	49.91	50.37—.02
GenMotors		47.57	47.35	47.42—.21
GaPacGP		27.90	27.20	27.50—.35
Goodrich		24.78	24.21	24.78 + .32
Goodyear s		24.90	24.58	24.62—.66
GtAtlPac		23.65	22.88	23.22 + .23
Halliburtn		13.28	12.61	13.15 + .32
Hanson ADS		34.43	34.06	34.06—1.52
HarteHanks		26.78	26.47	26.53—.02
HomeDepot		50.10	49.66	49.93—.23
Honeywellntl		32.35	31.80	32.35 + .07
IBM		122.00	121.01	121.90—.30
IntlPaper		40.34	40.00	40.18—.60
JohnsonJn s		57.20	56.82	57.13 + .34
K mart		5.11	4.80	4.98—.13
KinderMorg		54.70	52.70	54.70 + 2.00
Kroger Co		20.35	19.92	20.14 + .04
LockheedM		46.00	45.50	45.84—.06
Lowes Cos s		46.18	44.04	45.88 + .11
Lubys		6.05	5.86	5.88—.17
LucentTech		6.25	6.11	6.16—.08
MayDeptStr		35.25	35.00	35.10—.53
Medtronic		49.44	48.60	49.18 + .39
Motorola		16.04	15.50	15.62—.99
NCR Corp		37.05	36.52	36.72—.55
Navistar		40.25	39.90	40.15 + .16
Penney JC		24.96	24.17	24.96 + .41
PepBoys		18.00	17.80	17.88—.12
PepsiCo		49.33	48.60	49.20 + 1.82
Pharmacia		42.74	42.50	42.62—.17
PhelpDod		32.53	31.22	31.99—1.09
PhilipPet		57.67	56.55	57.66 + .97
PilgrmPrd B		13.65	13.32	13.34—.35
Praxair		53.88	53.15	53.85—.69
ProctGamb		81.18	80.42	81.05—.33
PubS NwMx		27.35	26.66	27.35 + .47
RadioShack		30.45	29.24	30.45 + .56
ReliantEngy		25.28	23.76	25.25 + .99
RoyalDut		47.30	46.70	47.29—.45
SBC Comm		39.20	38.75	39.14—.06
SaraLee		21.99	21.65	21.88—.04
Scripps EW		66.40	65.30	66.32 + .45
SearsRoeb		46.30	45.75	46.20—.36
SherwinW		27.41	27.20	27.35—.10
SouthernCo s		24.21	23.62	24.21 + .43
SwstAirl s		19.14	18.91	18.99—.15
SprintFON		19.87	19.02	19.84 + .14
SprintPCS		23.49	23.15	23.32—.56
Sunoco Inc		36.63	36.10	36.42 + .43
TXU Corp		46.15	45.32	46.15 + .76
TempleInland		56.48	55.82	56.13—.50
Textind		37.85	36.53	37.75 + 1.42
TexasInst		29.00	28.25	28.48—1.33
Textron		38.85	38.31	38.85 + .21
TriconGlbR		52.80	52.50	52.60 + .03
TrinityInds		27.90	27.02	27.35—.65
TylerTech		4.15	4.09	4.10 + .03
USX-Marathn		28.17	27.65	28.03 + .15
USX-USS		16.49	16.04	16.25—.30
UnionPacif		57.62	55.70	55.90—.87
UnitedTech		63.73	62.68	63.52 + .16
Unocal		34.17	33.79	34.10 + .25
VerizonComm		48.20	47.78	47.93—.12
WalMart		55.90	55.35	55.82 + .11
WellsFargo		43.63	43.26	43.50—.05
WstnGasRs		31.57	30.92	31.34 + .36
WinnDixie		13.91	13.48	13.90 + .10
Xerox Cp		8.70	8.35	8.52—.19

BABY'S FIRST CHRISTMAS

Many bundles of joy
Be they girl or boy,
Have been delivered since last year
Bringing loads of holiday cheer.

To the families they've blessed,
We're wishing all the best.
May glad tidings come your way
On baby's first Christmas Day!



Merry Christmas

If you have had a baby during 2001 you can be part of this special "Baby's First Christmas" to run December 24th in the Snyder Daily News.

Deadline: Thursday, December 20 at 5:00 p.m.

Submit your child's photo, a short message and $15 to:
SNYDER DAILY NEWS
3600 College Ave
573-5486

DEC 19 2001

Scurry County Country

Texas Parks & Wildlife

By Jim Lionberger, Wildlife Biologist

Quail Management Practices Should Begin Soon

Now is the time for landowners and land managers to begin planning their quail management practices. Practices such as discing and spot grazing can stimulate the growth of forbs that quail and other wildlife species prefer as food. This is achieved by creating a soil disturbance, resulting in a backward swing of the plant succession process.

In addition to providing food in the form of seeds and greens, forb production is also advantageous by attracting insects that are very important in the diet of nesting hens and quail chicks.

Quail chicks depend heavily upon insects as food during their first eight to ten weeks of life. Practices such as half-cutting can provide quality loafing cover for quail by increasing the cover value of mesquite.

Discing should be performed by mid-March prior to the beginning of the growing season. The soil disturbance caused by discing can stimulate the growth of forbs of "weeks" that are preferred food items for quail and other wildlife species. Disc in strips near existing woody cover such as a brushy field border or timbered creek. Using a tandem disc at a depth of three to six inches should work well. Different soil types will result in different forb response to discing. Forbs such as annual sunflower and giant ragweed may be produced by discing on bottomland soils. Discing on upland soils may produce croton, partridge pea, western ragweed and broomweed.

"Spot" or flash grazing is another practice that can stimulate forb growth. This practice involves heavy, short duration grazing of small enclosures such as waste areas or traps. Forb growth is stimulated as a result of soil disturbance created by the hoof action of the grazing animals. "Spot" grazing should be completed and cattle removed by mid-March, prior to the growing season.

Half-cutting is bet performed on smooth barked, multi-trunked mesquites. A "living brush pile" is created by cutting halfway through the topside of the outer trunks approximately 3 feet above the ground. The trunks or limbs should be pulled outward, away from the center, allowing the tops to lie on the ground forming a wagon wheel pattern. Half-cutting should be performed in late spring or early summer when the sap is flowing. Half-cut mesquites should be spaced approximately 50 to 75 yards apart.

Free technical assistance with your wildlife management efforts is available through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Private Land Enhancement Program. For technical assistance in the Snyder area, contact Jim Lionberger, wildlife biologist at 915-863-2755. For technical assistance in the Panhandle, contact Danny Swepston, district wildlife biologist at 806-655-3782, for the wildlife biologist in your area.

AG Talk

By Rep. Charlie Stenholm, U.S. Congressman 17th District

Senate Farm Bill

The Senate continues to work on the farm bill and, as of last Thursday this legislation is still a work in progress.

Farm groups have continued to urge the Senate to complete work on the farm bill as soon as possible so that Senators and House members can meet in a conference committee to work out differences between the two bills.

Once a conference is completed, both the House and Senate would still have to vote on the final version before it could be sent to the president for a signature.

The House pushed hard to complete a farm bill this year and I hope the Senate will do likewise.

Senate Finance Committee Approves TPA

Two weeks ago, the House passed legislation granting the president trade promotion authority (TPA).

Formerly known as fast track authority, TPA would increase the president's authority to negotiate international trade agreements with other countries.

Last week, the Senate Finance Committee overwhelmingly voted to give the president such trade authority.

It appears, however, that this measure will not be brought before the full Senate until sometime next year.

U.S. Extremely Unlikely to Get Mad Cow Disease

Harvard University has now released a study indicating that the U.S. was "extremely unlikely" to get bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or mad cow disease).

According to the report, the measures that have been taken by government and industry make the U.S. robust against the spread of mad cow disease, in the event it should occur in the U.S. at some point in time.

The U.S. livestock and meat industries were understandably pleased with the report that confirms the effectiveness of the steps that have already been taken to suppress mad cow disease.

These include import controls that block imports of meat and live animals from nations with BSE; feed controls that prevent the introduction of the disease into herds; and a surveillance program that is statistically designed to detect, with a high degree of certainty, BSE in cattle.

The USDA indicated that next year it intends to double the number of cattle it tests for BSE to more than 12,500.

U.S. Ag Exports on the Rise

U.S. agricultural exports for fiscal year 2002 are expected to reach $54.5 billion, according to USDA. This will be the highest export figure in five years.

I should point out, however, that this forecast is $2.5 billion less than USDA's August projection. This is because growing world surpluses and shrinking demand have reduced the prices that had been expected.

The fact of the matter is that the strong U.S. dollar makes U.S. exports less competitive with other nations.

In terms of agricultural imports into the U.S., the figure remains steady at $39 billion, which is unchanged from last year.

In an interesting development last week, a ship carrying 24,000 tons of U.S. corn was on its way to Cuba. This is a very positive development for U.S. agriculture.

The decades old embargo the U.S. has had on trade with Cuba has only served to hurt our own farmers and ranchers.

Our trading partners benefit from trade with Cuba, and the U.S. needs to do likewise.

The trade potential with Cuba is tremendous, and I am hopeful this shipment of corn will be the first of many future shipments of U.S. commodities to Cuba.

Ethanol Production Increases

Ethanol production continues to rise and, in October, averaged a record-high 121,000 barrels per day, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

This year, U.S. ethanol production is on course to produce an annual record of 1.8 billion gallons, according to the Renewable Fuels Association. Increased ethanol production is another positive development for U.S. agriculture.

-30-

Congressman Stenholm represents the 17th District of Texas in the U.S. House of Representatives and is the Ranking Member of the House Committee on Agriculture

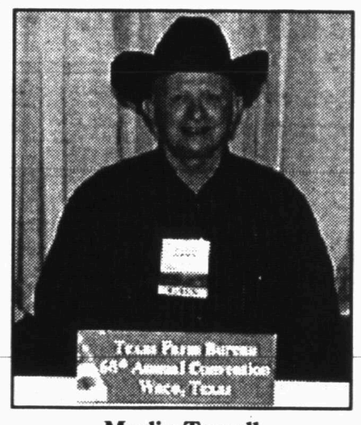
Terrell attends 68th annual Texas Farm Bureau meeting

Marlin Terrell, president of Scurry County Farm Bureau, recently participated in the 68th annual Texas Farm Bureau convention Dec.2-5 in Waco.

Policies directing the state's largest farm organization were adopted by more than 1,200 delegates from 207 organized Farm Bureaus. Approved recommendations on national policies will advance to the American Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting to be held in January in Reno, Nev.

Addressing the delegates were Donald Patman of Waxahachie, TFB president; James Maxton of Mount Pleasant, secretary-treasurer; and Vernie Glasson, TFB executive director.

The business session covered the final two days of the meeting. The last order of business was the election of the president, Donald Patman.



Marlin Terrell

Crop Report

COLLEGE STATION (AP) — The weather is starting to turn cold in West Texas, but livestock is holding up well this winter, Texas Cooperative Extension reports.

"Where cattle are maintained on native range, cold is a relative thing for livestock," said Dr. Bruce Carpenter, extension livestock specialist in Fort Stockton. "In most of Texas, animals usually do fairly well under most winter conditions. Make sure natural shelter is available, and when extreme winter conditions do arise, such as wind or rain, extra supplement may be needed."

Animals such as cattle with winter coats and sheep with wool can tolerate cold weather better than other animals, Carpenter said. Angora goats and sheep recently shorn are more sensitive to the cold, especially in the spring.

He said the highest concentration of mother cows are found near or east of I-35. Most of the feeder and stocker cattle are found in the Panhandle and Rolling Plains areas. Most sheep and goats can be found around the Edwards Plateau region.

In Far West Texas, hay is not a common feed for livestock. However, during the winter some extra nutrients such as protein and vitamin A may be needed, Carpenter said. In central and eastern regions in Texas, there is often an opportunity to provide improved cool-season forage such as green clover and ryegrass, he said.

Galen Chandler, district extension director in Vernon, said cattle remain in fair condition but supplemental feeding is continuing. Producers continue to cull herds and ship nonproductive cows, he said.

Cool-season grasses and winter forages are growing and are improving range and pasture conditions, Chandler said. Pastures that have been overgrazed are much slower to respond to the improved growing conditions.

Randy Upshaw, district extension director in Dallas, said most bermudagrass is dormant. Late planted ryegrass and winter grasses are doing well, he said.

Livestock remain in fair to good condition, although coats are getting heavier, Upshaw said. Hay supplies are adequate for now.

Bob Robinson, district extension director in Amarillo, said wheat is providing good grazing for stocker cattle in some areas. Greenbugs continue to cause damage in a few fields.

He said cattle conditions continue to decline but are still rated fair to good.

Scott Durham, district extension director in San Angelo, said most range and pastures remain in poor condition. Some improvement has been seen in areas that have received significant moisture, he said. Livestock remain in fair to good condition.

The following specific livestock, crop and weather conditions were reported by district extension directors:

PANHANDLE: soil moisture is very short to short. Wheat continues to make good growth in areas with adequate moisture. Wheat is providing good grazing for stocker cattle in some areas. Greenbugs continue to cause damage. Cotton harvest is wrapping up.

SOUTH PLAINS: soil moisture is short to adequate. Pastures and ranges in poor to fair condition. Supplemental feeding continues. Wheat is continuing to improve due to recent rain and snow. Peanut and grain sorghum harvest complete. Cotton harvest winding down.

ROLLING PLAINS: soil moisture is very short to adequate. Cotton harvest continues. Fields being harvested as they dry out. Wheat is making good growth. Greenbugs continue to increase. Weed infestations in small grains are increasing.

NORTH TEXAS: soil moisture is adequate to surplus. Land preparation for corn has slowed due to rain. Almost all cotton has been harvested with above average yields. All oats have been planted and have emerged. All peanuts, grain sorghum and soybeans are harvested.

EAST TEXAS: soil moisture is adequate to surplus. Winter pastures responding well to improved moisture and mild temperatures. Cattle in good condition. Market prices are down slightly. Pecan harvest is near completion.

FAR WEST TEXAS: soil moisture is very short to adequate. Most cotton has been harvested and ginned. Wheat is doing well due to recent moisture received. Some green-up of cool-season growth in pastures is appearing. Pecan harvest continues and is complete in some counties.

WEST CENTRAL TEXAS: soil moisture is short to adequate. Cotton stripping continues. Harvest slowed due to wet weather. Oats show good growth. Late wheat planting continues. Fields are progressing well. Greenbug pressures have increased. Some early planted fields are being grazed.

SOUTHWEST TEXAS: soil moisture is adequate. Land is ready for early spring planting. The harvesting of cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, greens and other winter vegetables was interrupted by rain, but should resume when fields dry down. Yields and quality is good.

Markets

Colorado City

The Colorado City Livestock Auction had a run of 798 head of cattle for the Saturday, Dec. 15, sale. Compared to last week: Feeder steers and heifers were steady to $3 lower. Slaughter cows were steady to $1 higher, bulls $1 higher. Bred cows were $50/hd. higher. Pairs were $50/hd. higher. Trade was active, demand very good.

Feeder steers:
200-300: 117-124
300-400: 112-118
400-500: 99.50-106
500-600: 91-97
600-700: 75-77.50
Feeder heifers:
300-400: 96.50-101
400-500: 88-92
500-600: 79-84
600-700: 72.50-75
Replacement cows:
Bred cows (5-7 months): 620-760
Bred cows (3-7 months): 430-580
Cow/Calf Pairs
Bred cows: 740-890
Aged: 585-750
Slaughter cows:
Breakers: 1000-1250 Lbs. 34.50-39.25
Boners: 1000-1200 Lbs. 37-41.50
Lean: 900-1200: 34-39.50
800-1000 Lbs.: 32-36
Under 750 Lb.: 20-32.50
Slaughter bulls:
Yield Grade 1-2: 1300-2100 Lbs.: 48-52
Low Dressing: 1000-1500: 41.50-45

Lubbock

The Lubbock Stockyards, Inc. had a run of 779 head of cattle for the Thursday, Dec. 13, sale. Cows were steady. Yearlings and calves were $2 lower. Trading and demand were good.

Slaughter cows
(High dressing — cutters — utilities: 33-41
Canner and low cutters: 27.33
Slaughter bulls: 42-52
Feeder steers — choice:
300-400: 100-125
400-500: 90-110
500-600: 85-93
600-700: 81-86
700-800: 77-84
Feeder heifers:
300-400: 90-110
400-500: 85-101
500-600: 77-85
600-700: 75-82
700-800: 65-75
Feeder Bulls — good and choice:
500-600: 83-93
700-800: 65-77.50
Cow and calf pairs:
Good: 650-925
Grade: 600-650
Springers: 450-740
Baby calves: 100-150
Doodlers: 175-240

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Galveston says no to merger

HOUSTON (AP) — After Galveston residents soundly rejected a proposed merger of the island's 184-year-old port with Houston's sprawling facility, some supporters of the measure said the historic opportunity to create the largest port on the Gulf coast was lost forever.

The Port of Houston Authority had promised to invest $30 million to repair Galveston's dilapidated waterfront. Supporters of the proposal had estimated the 10-year deal would have been valued at $90 million.

But unofficial final returns showed 4,060 voters, or 57.2 percent, against the proposal and 3,041, or 43 percent, in favor. The turnout of 7,101 was about 18 percent of the 39,000 registered voters.

"Those who opposed the merger proposal now must take initiative and come up with a plan to save the port, increase the jobs and improve our economy," said Fred Wychlep, a former Galveston port board chairman and merger backer.

Houston, with the country's largest port for foreign tonnage, resumes its position as a competitor of the Galveston facility with the vote results.

But Wychlep, who maintained the Houston port' s proposal to create thousands of new jobs was the best deal available, said facetiously that the only way Galveston's port can compete with Houston's now is to "build a very low bridge to the Bolivar Peninsula."

A low bridge would cut off the Houston Ship Channel and force shippers to use the Galveston port.

Former Galveston port chairman and ex-mayor John Unbehagen led a group of influential citizens who worked to defeat the proposal. He and others said the city and Port of Galveston should ask private port operators worldwide as well as the Port of Houston for a chance to come up with a better deal.

"Galvestonians were asked to vote on a deal that wasn't a deal yet," Unbehagen said, referring to the fact that no actual contract for a merger exists. "We have to see if there are any other proposals from the private operators or the Port of Houston in which the citizens of Galveston would get remuneration for the property that belongs to Galveston."

Some opponents had balked at the idea of the Port of Galveston becoming a unit of the Houston facility, which handled more than 1 million containers in 2000 for the second consecutive year.

The Port of Houston is the second-largest port in the United States and the eighth-largest worldwide.

"The city of Galveston has spoken and said that they own the port, not the city council, the mayor, the International Longshoremans Association or the Port of Houston Authority," said George Liberato, spokesman for Citizens for Port Reform, the political action committee that fought the proposal.

Some opposition against the proposal stemmed from Galveston's perceived lack of influence on the Port of Commission. The commission was to be expanded by one member to eight.

Jim Edmonds, chairman of the Port of Houston Authority board, had estimated Houston's investment in the Galveston port would bring in 2,200 jobs to Galveston.

"As far as I'm concerned, we gave these folks an opportunity they'll never get again," said Edmonds. "We at the Port of Houston are going to go ahead with our business."

Police say teen threatened to burn down school

DELTONA, Fla. (AP) — Police arrested a 14-year-old boy who classmates said threatened to burn down his school with a bottle of gasoline he was carrying in his backpack.

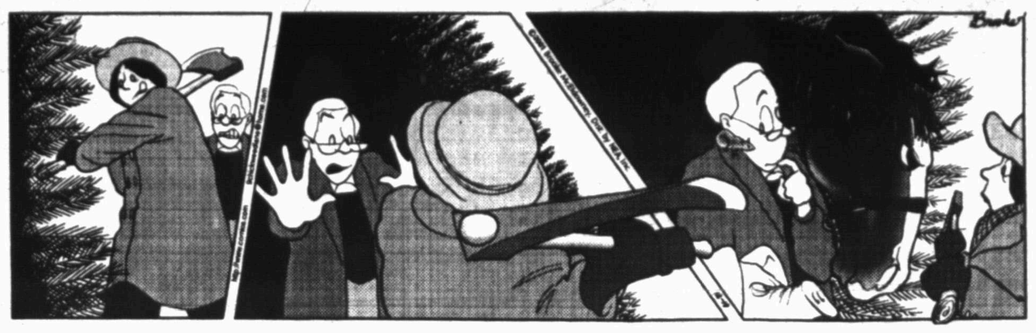
Christopher James Lycans was charged Monday with three felony counts, including possession of a weapon at school.

Lycans had about 20 ounces of gasoline in a plastic bottle and a lighter, investigators said. Students said he had been showing off the gasoline on the bus when he made the threats.

"He was showing it to several students, and they're the ones who told us he had it," said Heritage Middle School Principal Kathleen Reed. "We're very, very fortunate because I think it had a tremendous potential for harm."

Lycans was arrested at school and brought to the Division of Youth Services in Daytona Beach. He may also be expelled.

A Fairy Merry Christmas by Brooke McEldowney



Current and retired workers recount loss of life savings

WASHINGTON (AP) — As the stock price plummeted, current and retired employees of failed Enron Corp. helplessly watched their life savings dissolve because the company barred them from selling Enron shares from retirement accounts.

Their anger and sense of betrayal after years of loyal service to the energy-trading giant were displayed at a Senate hearing Tuesday at which several Enron employees testified.

"We have been lied to and we have been cheated," retiree Janice Farmer declared at the hearing by the Senate Commerce subcommittee on consumer affairs, held to examine one of the biggest corporate failures ever.

Farmer had nearly $700,000 in Enron stock and now faces living on a $63 monthly pension check. Charles Prestwood, who retired after 33 1/2 years in the natural gas business, mostly with Enron, lost nearly all his $1.3 million in savings.

The employees disputed Enron officials' assertion that they were locked out of their accounts for 10 business days this fall, saying it was much longer — increasing their losses.

"This is a tragedy for many, including the workers and investors who ... have been cheated out of billions of dollars," said Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., the subcommittee's chairman.

With the company's stock having hemorrhaged more than $60 billion in value in recent months, Dorgan said, "Some at the top of the pyramid got rich and many at the bottom lost everything. It appears to me to be a combination of incompetence, greed, rampant speculation with investors' money and perhaps some criminal behavior."

Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., was more blunt, telling reporters: "I personally hope some of these people wind up in jail."

The Justice Department is investigating Houston-based Enron for possible criminal conduct. The Labor Department and the Securities and Exchange Commission are pursuing civil investigations.

While ordinary employees were prohibited from selling company stock from their Enron-heavy 401(k) accounts, Enron executives cashed out more than $1 billion in stock when it was near its peak, lawmakers say.

And nearly 600 employees deemed critical to Enron's operations received more than $100 million in bonuses last month as the company faced a merger that unraveled and then went into bankruptcy.

Worth more than $80 a year ago, Enron's stock has tumbled to less than a dollar a share.

In addition to retirees and some 4,500 out-of-work employees, countless investors around the country have been burned by Enron's rapid descent into federal bankruptcy court in recent weeks.

Enron, which was the nation's seventh-biggest company in revenue and admired by Wall Street as a technological innovator, has acknowledged it overstated profits for four years.

The chief executive of its longtime auditor, Arthur Andersen LLP, told a House hearing last week that the accounting firm notified Enron's audit committee on Nov. 2 of "possible illegal acts within the company."

For the second time in less than a week, no Enron officials were present at a congressional hearing to defend the company's actions. Chairman and CEO Kenneth Lay declined an invitation to testify but told the Senate panel he would attend a future hearing. He is a friend of President Bush and a big campaign contributor.

Boxer and Sen. Jon Corzine, D-N.J., proposed a bill Tuesday aimed at preventing future Enron-style meltdowns for employees' retirement savings. It would restrict to 20 percent the amount an employee can have in any one stock in their accounts. There would be a 90-day limit on the period during which employers can bar workers from selling stock contributed by the company.

On the Net:
Senate Commerce Committee: http://commerce.senate.gov
Enron: http://www.enron.com

Bridge

By Phillip Alder

North 12-19-01
♠ A Q 8 6
♥ K Q J 10
♦ A Q J
♣ 7 3

West
♠ J 10 4 3
♥ 9 7 5
♦ 7 4
♣ Q J 10 8

East
♠ —
♥ A 8 6 3 2
♦ 8 5 3 2
♣ 9 6 4 2

South
♠ K 9 7 5 2
♥ 4
♦ K 10 9 6
♣ A K 5

Dealer: North
Vulnerable: Neither

South	West	North	East
		1 ♦	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: ♣ Q

Wednesday, Dec. 19, 2001

The pessimist can be happy

By Phillip Alder

Ian McEwan wrote in The Guardian newspaper in England on 05-26-83, "One has to have the courage of one's pessimism."

If sitting in the South seat, how would you try to make six spades after West leads the club queen?

North and South bid to an excellent slam, second best behind six no-trump. Note North's first bid. You open one diamond with only a three-card suit when having this distribution and no other. North's four-spade rebid shows game values with four-card support. (If you use splinter bids, it also denies a singleton or void.) Roman Key Card Blackwood would be good here because South would learn that his partner has the spade queen.

With a heart to lose, declarer sees that he has to play the trump suit for no losers. The optimist assumes a 2-2 or 3-1 break, and that play will be over almost immediately. The pessimist, though, courageously worries about a 4-0 split. If East has all four missing spades, the contract is beyond resuscitation. But if West has all four, they can be picked up. South started with his spade king. When East pitched a club — if you cannot follow suit, always try to play a card of the same color — declarer led a low spade, capturing West's 10 with dummy's queen. Back to hand with a club, South finessed dummy's spade eight, drew the last trump, and conceded a trick to East's heart ace.

West has two trump honors: the 10 and jack. To capture both, you need two honors in the dummy, the hand over West's. So, start with South's single honor.

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USDA says it will continue testing meat processors

WASHINGTON (AP) — Government inspectors will continue testing meat processors for salmonella bacteria, despite a court ruling that the test results can't be used to close a plant, Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman said Tuesday.

"We will increase our vigilance in meat plants to ensure compliance and the safety of our food supply," Veneman said.

The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said that salmonella alone doesn't make meat unsafe and said plants could not be required to meet limits for the bacteria. Veneman said USDA will use the tests to tell whether a plant's sanitation systems are working properly.

If a plant fails two sets of tests for salmonella, USDA will immediately investigate the plant's operations, and the facility would be closed if it fails to fix deficiencies, she said. The department also plans to review its training of inspectors.

"This ruling does not impair our ability to close plants that do not meet the statutory and regulatory requirements of the law for processing meat and poultry," said Veneman. "We can and will shut down plants that do not meet that responsibility."

Carol Tucker Foreman, director of the Consumer Federation of America's Food Policy Institute, said the court case "blew a huge hole in public protection" and Veneman is trying to "patch that gaping hole with Band-Aids."

Senate Democrats considered, but dropped, the idea of proposing an amendment to a farm bill that would have authorized USDA to close plants that failed the salmonella tests.

Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, said he would hold hearings on the issue next year. Democrats had considered proposing an amendment to the farm bill that would have ensured that USDA could close plants that flunk the tests.

The salmonella standards are opposed by several Democratic senators who represent states with large meat and poultry processors.

The standards, first imposed in 1996, set limits on how frequently meat or poultry can test positive for the bacteria. The limits are based on what USDA found to be the average contamination levels around the country and vary by the type of meat.

The department considers the tests a good measure of a plant's cleanliness.

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2nd Front Page

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

Al-Qaida fighters attempt bloody escape

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP) — Dozens of fighters loyal to Osama bin Laden, arrested as they crossed the border from Afghanistan, rose up against their Pakistani guards today, seized weapons and escaped. Seven al-Qaida fighters and six police were killed, officials said.

After a brief and bloody gunbattle as the fighters tried to commandeer their prison bus, which overturned, Pakistani tribal forces and army helicopter gunships pursued the fugitives, capturing 21. Eleven hours later, they were searching for 20 more in the mountainous border region, officials said.

The al-Qaida fighters — mostly Arabs — were from among 156 arrested over the past two days as they came across the border, the government of Northwest Frontier Province said in a statement. Just on the other side of the frontier, Afghan forces backed by U.S. airstrikes drove al-Qaida followers from their mountain base in Tora Bora in recent days, sending many fleeing into Pakistan.

Hundreds of al-Qaida — including some top commanders — were allowed to escape by commanders in the Afghan eastern alliance that led the assault on Tora Bora, an alliance official said. Two alliance commanders have been rebuked for conniving to let bin Laden followers flee into Pakistan, the official said.

In Tora Bora, the search continued for remaining al-Qaida members or clues to the whereabouts of bin Laden. U.S. helicopters ran night missions through the mountain valleys, while Afghan fighters brought more prisoners and documents from a sweep of snow-laden cave hideouts.

The prisoner revolt took place near the northwestern Pakistani town of Parachinar. The prisoners, held in the town overnight, were being transferred in a convoy of buses and trucks to a larger facility, the provincial government said.

"One of the Arabs shouted 'Allahu Akbar!' (Arabic for "God is great") and with that slogan, the others attacked," bus driver Rehman Ali told The Associated Press. He said they seized guns from the six guards on the bus and shot them dead. Three prisoners were killed in the struggle.

Ali said the prisoners tried to drive the bus away, but lost control and it overturned. The fighters poured out and engaged security guards from the other buses in a firefight, he said. Three more prisoners were killed and one was wounded, and seven police were wounded, he said.

The provincial government said a total of seven Arabs and six security officials were killed. Their reports could not be reconciled. The government said 48 al-Qaida men were on the bus.

Tribal security officials and soldiers went after them, using ground troops and helicopter gunships, catching 21, and throwing a security cordon over the area to search for the rest, the provincial government said..

Pakistan has poured helicopters and thousands of soldiers into the tribal areas along the border and set up 300 checkpoints to cut off escape routes from Tora Bora. Pakistan earlier said it had arrested at least 108 fighters fleeing the area, including at least 60 Arabs and other non-Afghans.

International forces were preparing to take positions in Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, in time for the inauguration Saturday of a six-month interim government. Military advisers from 17 countries that have offered to contribute peacekeepers were meeting in London to nail down details.

The U.N. Security Council was poised to approve the force, possibly by Thursday, after key council members agreed the troops would be authorized to use military force if necessary. A vanguard of 200 British soldiers could move from Bagram airport to Kabul, at the head of a force that could grow to number 3,000 to 5,000.

The appointed Afghan leader, Hamid Karzai, said today bin Laden should be turned over international justice, if caught — a call echoed by the top U.N. war crimes prosecutor. But the United States insisted it must try the man wanted for the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

Israeli troops ready to leave some areas

JERUSALEM (AP) — The Palestinian Authority said today it has arrested 15 of its own security force members — the first time in nearly 16 months of conflict that Palestinian policemen were taken into custody on suspicion they participated in attacks on Israelis.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, meanwhile, said Israel was ready to withdraw troops from areas where the Palestinian Authority is seen as taking tough action against suspected militants.

Peres said Israel suggested to the Palestinian Authority that i begin in Nablus, the West Bank's largest city, or in nearby Jenin, both strongholds of the militant Hamas and Islamic Jihad groups.

"If they (Palestinian security forces) take over, we shall immediately withdraw our forces," Peres told reporters.

According to Jibril Rajoub, the Palestinian security chief in the West Bank, Israeli and Palestinian security officials were to meet later today. Israeli officials had no immediate comment.

Secretary of State Colin Powell asked Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in phone calls Tuesday to resume security talks.

The meeting would be the first direct contact since Israel's Cabinet cut ties with the Palestinian Authority last week and declared Arafat "irrelevant" to Israel's efforts to prevent terror attacks.

Since then, Arafat has called for an end to attacks against Israel, including suicide bomb attacks, referring to them as "terrorist activity" for the first time. In recent days, more than two dozen offices of Hamas and Islamic Jihad have been shut down by the Palestinian Authority, including six closed Tuesday night.

The Palestinian Authority announced today that it has arrested 15 members of its security forces on suspicion they were involved in attacks on Israelis.

Among those detained were policemen who joined various militias, including the Al Aqsa Brigade which has ties to Arafat's Fatah movement, said a Palestinian security official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

A Palestinian security chief in Gaza, Mohammed Dahlan, said the Palestinian Authority would not tolerate independent action by the militants. "We will arrest anyone who violates Authority decisions," he told The Associated Press.

Israel's armed forces chief, Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz, said that of 242 people killed on the Israeli side since September 2000, at least 80 were killed by members of the Palestinian security forces. Nearly 840 people have been killed on the Palestinian side during the past 16 months.

Israel has been skeptical of Arafat's crackdown.

Sharon told British Prime Minister Tony Blair in a phone conversation today that Arafat still has not "made a strategic decision to abandon the path of terror," Sharon's office said in a statement. Sharon told Blair that several recent attacks on Israelis were carried out by groups linked to Arafat.

Israeli security sources, meanwhile, reported a drop in the frequency of Palestinian attacks, although the army said a soldier was shot and lightly wounded on today as he drove near the West Bank village of Hirbat a-Falah.

There were three relatively minor incidents overnight, including shooting at an Israeli army post in Gaza in which no one was hurt.

Israeli troops today staged a brief incursion into Palestinian Authority territory near the town of Jenin.

Call load light for law officers

Arrest

Sheriff's deputies arrested a 20-year-old man at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday on an outstanding warrant from Pecos County on an original charge of misdemeanor theft.

Criminal mischief

Toni Valdez reported someone breaking figurines in his yard at 2410 30th Street. An officer responded and advised a report for criminal mischief would be submitted.

Theft

Janice Upton reported the theft of a cellular phone Tuesday. Officers were dispatched to the Varsity Square Shopping Center and advised a report for burglary of a vehicle was filed.

Births

Arturo Santos and Eva Abolos announce the birth of their son, Arturo Santos, at 3:34 p.m. on Dec. 16, in Cogdell Memorial Hospital. Arturo weighed seven pounds, five ounces.

His grandparents are Alferdo and Maria de Jesus Santos of Guerro, Mexico, and Quirino Abalos and Maria Hernandez of Snyder.

Obituaries

Eber Suarez

1974-2001

Funeral service for Eberardo "Eber" Hernandez Suarez is set for 2 p.m. Thursday in Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church. Burial will follow in Snyder Cemetery under the direction of Bell-Cypert-Seale Funeral Home.

Rosary will be held at 7 this evening in the Bell-Cypert-Seale Funeral Home Chapel.

Eber Suarez

Mr. Suarez, 27, died Friday, Dec. 14, in a two-vehicle accident two miles north of Kerrville.

Born May 25, 1974 in Snyder, he was a 1993 graduate of Snyder High School and attended Western Texas College before graduating from Texas Tech University with a bachelor's degree in art. He was employed by IHS Studios in Kerrville.

Survivors include his parents, Alejo and Silvina Suarez of Snyder; a son, Ethan Nakai Suarez of Corpus; a brother, Alejo "Alex" Suarez of Snyder; and a sister, Angelica Murillo of Snyder.

Personal, Professional Service

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James W. Neal

1922-2001

PAINT ROCK — James William Neal, the brother of Virginia White of Snyder, died Tuesday, Dec. 18, at his residence in Paint Rock.

Graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. Friday in the Concho Cemetery with the Rev. Ferris Akins, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Ballinger, officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Rains-Seale Funeral Home.

Born Aug. 19, 1922 in Snyder, he married Frances La Verne Shelburne in February, 1942. He served as a P38 fighter pilot in the Army Air Force during World War II.

Mr. Neal was a retired rancher and soil conservationist, and a member of the Paint Rock First Baptist Church where he served as a deacon and teacher.

He was preceded in death by his parents, two sisters, and one brother.

Survivors include his wife, Frances Neal of Paint Rock; two sons and daughters-in-law, William and Susan Neal of Brady and Robert Neal of Paint Rock; a daughter and son-in-law, Mary and David Holubec of Melvin; another sister, Margaret Judkins of Oregon; and five grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the First Baptist Church of Paint Rock or the Hospice of San Angelo.

Ernest Tate

1911-2001

ABILENE – Ernest Tate, a former resident of Snyder, died Tuesday, Dec. 18, in an Abilene hospital.

Funeral service for Mr. Tate, 90, is set for 10 a.m. Thursday in the Elliott-Hamil Funeral Home Chapel with burial to follow in the Elmwood Memorial Park.

Born June 14, 1911 in Water Valley, he graduated from Snyder High School and earned a degree from Texas Tech University in 1941. He married Dalma Pauline Keith on Feb. 6, 1951 in Caps. She died in 1994. He also was preceded in death by nine brothers and two sisters.

Mr. Tate was a retired teacher and principal. He worked for the Noodle ISD for 20 years and retired from the Anson ISD after three years. He was a member of the Retired Teachers Association and the First Baptist Church.

Survivors include a son, Ernest Tate of Abilene; a grandson, Seth Tate; and several nieces and nephews.

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events

WHAT'S UP?

ONGOINGS

Chamber open house

Snyder Chamber of Commerce will host a Christmas open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday.

Home for the Holidays

Home for the Holidays has been rescheduled for 6 p.m. Thursday at the First United Methodist Church. Anyone attending is asked to bring a pair of scissors for a take home craft. If you have already reserved a spot, you do not have to call again, For more information call the Scurry County Cooperative Extension office at 573-5423.

CADA Christmas schedule

The Snyder Area Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse will be closed for the holidays starting Friday through Jan. 2.

American Legion Christmas appreciation

The American Legion Christmas appreciation for members and customers will begin at 7 p.m. Saturday.

Birthday party for Jesus

Northside Baptist Church will have a birthday party for Jesus from 2-3:30 p.m. Saturday in the fellowship, 1909 16th St. For van pick up, call 573-7105.

Northside Baptist cantata

The Northside Baptist Church Christmas cantata, "When Christmas Comes to Me," will be at 11 a.m. Sunday. There will be interpretation for the hearing-impaired. Call 573-7105 for transportation.

Seniors helping seniors

Snyder High School's senior class would like to help senior citizens decorate for Christmas. Students will provide the labor by putting up lights or decorating Christmas trees, etc. Call 573-6301 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Friday to make arrangements.

Christmas Eve service

Trinity United Methodist Church, located at the entrance to Cogdell Medical Center, will have a Candlelight Service at 6 p.m. Christmas Eve.

Candlelight service

First United Methodist Church will hold a candlelight service at 7 p.m. Christmas Eve.

Funeral expense account

An account has been opened at West Texas State Bank for donations to assist in funeral expenses for accident victim Stacy Copeland. Contact Lisa Williams, 573-2980, or Beth Bowen, 573-2670, for additional information.

Windbreak trees

Upper Colorado Soil and Water Conservation District is taking orders for windbreak trees, both evergreen and hardwoods. Call 573-6317.

VFW membership drive

The VFW is conducting its annual membership drive. Membership is restricted to veterans who served overseas in times of conflict or war. For more information, contact the post commander Jim Bailey at 573-5338.

FBC support groups

Support groups dealing with divorce, death, cancer or caring for elderly parents meets at 6:30 p.m. the second Thursday of each month at the First Baptist Church educational building. A special group for students facing these problems is held at the same time.

Nurse testing dates

Testing for the next class of the Vocational Nursing program at Western Texas College will be Jan. 22 and Jan. 29, with the last day to interview set for Feb. 2. Classes are scheduled to begin March 4. Potential students must bring a photo ID. To schedule an appointment, call the Counseling Center at 573-8511 ext. 313.

Military support group

Family members, volunteers, friends, and active or inactive soldiers of Scurry County interested in forming a local Military Support Group are asked to contact Dale or Elaine Byrd at 573-8088 after 4 p.m., or e-mail the byrds@ntsonline.net. The purpose of this group is to provide an avenue of mutual support, assistance, community resources, and a network of communication.

Cancer treatment transportation

Transportation for cancer patients to Lubbock, Abilene or Midland is available free of charge. Call Sammie Jarrell at 573-5993 or Blakey Fargason at 574-8041. If not home, leave message on answering machine.

Stricter laws sought to keep guns away from terrorists

WASHINGTON (AP) — A day before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, a Lebanese man was convicted of conspiring to ship weapons acquired at Michigan gun shows to the terrorist organization Hezbollah.

The man was prohibited from buying guns because of a conviction for grand theft. But he did not have to undergo a background check because no federal or Michigan state law requires such checks for sales between private or unlicensed gun sellers and buyers at shows, according to a report released Wednesday by the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence.

The scheme, which the man was running with his brother, whose record was clean, was revealed by a police informant, the report said.

Using such examples, the report called for stricter federal controls on guns, including requiring complete criminal background checks wherever a gun is sold, including at gun shows, through classified ads or over the Internet.

"For terrorists around the world, the United States is the great gun bazaar," said the report, which details how terrorists amass firearms in the United States.

Bills to close the loophole for background checks at gun shows — which the report called a "breeding ground for gun sales to terrorists" — have been introduced by Sens. Jack Reed, D-R.I., John McCain, R-Ariz., and Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., and Rep. Mike Castle, R-Del.

Andrew Arulanandam, a spokesman for the National Rifle Association, said the Brady center was trying to exploit the attacks.