Merry Christmas!!!

BIG SPRING HERALD

Reflecting A Proud Community

CHRISTMAS EVE
December 24, 1997

50 cents

BSHS' Mendoza among 27 from area to gain academy nominations

By CARLTON JOHNSON
Staff Writer

Big Spring High School senior Gabriel Mendoza and Colorado High School (Colorado City) senior Jonathan Jones are among 27 students attending high schools in the 17th Congressional District to receive nominations from Congressman Charles Stenholm to the U.S. Service Academies.

MENDOZA

Mendoza has been nominated to the Air Force Academy and Naval Academy, while Jones will be competing for an appointment to the Naval Academy.

The names of Mendoza and Jones have been submitted, along with the 17th District's other candidates for consideration as members of the academy classes entering in July 1998.

According to Stenholm's San Angelo office, the nominees will now be contacted by the academies with additional information and instructions, and will be scheduled for medical and physical examinations.

The Service Academies for which the students are competing for appointments include the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y.; the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo.; the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md.; and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, N.Y.

Other 17th District students seeking appointments to one of the academies and the academies to which they have been nominated include: Eric Adkins of Abilene, Naval; Kacie Anderson of San Angelo, Military and Naval; Denny Berend of Graham, Air Force and Naval; Jared Blong of Abilene, Air Force and Naval; Zackary Briseno of Snyder, Military and Naval; James Burton of Anson, Naval; Jeffrey Carness of Abilene, Air Force and Naval; Daniel Chapman of Glen Rose, Naval; Scott Chapman of Glen Rose, Air Force and Military; Matt Davis of Sweetwater, Naval; Nicholas Downing of Glen Rose, Naval; James Brian Duncan Jr. of Graham, Military; Sean Duncan of Snyder, Naval; William Fox of Abilene, Naval and Military; Richard Dale Gray of Glen Rose, Military and Naval; Shawn Cody Hatch of Decatur, Air Force and Military; James Matthew Hefton of Stephenville, Naval; Bryan Jones of Anson, Air Force and Naval; Andrea Lauer of San Angelo, Air Force and Military; Jeffrey Mechlem of Bridgeport, Air Force and Naval; Hien Nguyen of San Angelo, Naval; Nathaniel Swift of Cross Plains, Naval and Military; Jacob Taylor of Abilene, Naval; Robert Trevino of San Angelo, Military and Naval; and Whitney Willbanks of Boyd, Air Force and Naval.

Nominations are available annually to young men and young women who will be at least 17 years of age, and not past their 22nd birthday, upon entry into a U.S. Service Academy in July. Nominees are selected by a competitive process, judged on scholastic aptitude, moral character, leadership ability and community involvement.

The academies offer a 4-year degree in a variety of areas ranging from civil engineering and physics, to American Studies and behavioral science. While attending the academies, cadets and midshipmen will earn an annual salary from which expenses for books, uniforms and incidentals are taken. Tuition, room, board, medical and dental expenses are paid for by the academies.

Upon graduation from the academies, cadets and midshipman will serve as officers in the service for a minimum of six years.

All academy appointment announcements will be made by late spring, according to Stenholm's office.

SA officials say local response to drives good

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

As the Salvation Army's annual Christmas drives draw to a close, officials say public response has been as good as ever.

The Salvation Army participated in four different programs this season — the traditional Bell Ringer fundraiser, Toys for Tots, Christmas Cheer and Angel Trees.

The Bell Ringer program operated a five sites throughout Big Spring, and may have inadvertently suffered because of a proliferation of fundraisers this season.

Danelle Castillo of the Salvation Army said that, as of Saturday, the Bell Ringers had collected $34,885, down about $5,000 from this time last year.

Castillo pointed to the economy and other major fundraising efforts like the United Way as reasons behind the decreased giving.

"There were just a lot of different needs being served this season," she said.

The local Salvation Army uses money collected from the kettles to help finance various programs through the year.

"We go shopping for our Christmas program in June and July, and we use money from the kettles to pay for the toys then," Castillo said. "We have to anticipate how many children we'll need to serve. So we order the toys, and part of the money we raise at Christmas time goes to pay for toys for those children."

But if the Bell Ringer program was a disappointment, the other Christmas programs were anything but, Castillo said.

The Toys for Tots program raised more than $1,700 at two sites in Big Spring. The Salvation Army has sent out toys to about 730 children so far this season, with more scheduled for disbursement in the next day or so, Castillo said.

See **RESPONSE**, Page 2A

Variety of church celebrations planned

By DEBBIE L. JENSEN
Features Editor

Candles, carols and communion are among the ways local churches have planned to celebrate Christmas Eve.

From the traditional to the contemporary, local observances will include plays, special readings and children's stories.

Some churches also plan Christmas Day services.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 508 N. Aylford, will celebrate mass today at 5 p.m. and 9 p.m., following on Christmas Day with a 10:30 a.m. service.

St. Thomas Catholic Church, 605 N. Main, plans Christmas Eve service tonight at 7:30 p.m., and will also celebrate mass Christmas Day at 10:30 a.m.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 1009 Hearn, will observe mass today at 5:30 p.m., and then again at midnight. The church plans a Christmas Day service at 10:30 a.m.

First United Methodist Church will have a traditional candlelight ceremony at 6:30 p.m. today at the church, 400 Scurry.

First Presbyterian Church, 8th and Runnels, plans a service of "carols and candles" tonight, 7 p.m. with special Bible readings. A service with communion is planned at 11 p.m. Guest minister for the 11 p.m. service will be the Rev. Walt Lee of First Presbyterian Church, Coahoma.

HERALD photo/Jonathan Garrett

Gypsy Gulley, left, and Mary Thompson, get candles ready at First Presbyterian Church Tuesday for tonight's service of candles and carols. The church is one of many locally that plans special services for tonight's Christmas Eve celebrations.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church will have Christmas Eve Eucharist beginning at 10:30 p.m. at the church, 1001 Goliad. Following the service will be a reception with refreshments.

On Christmas Day, St. Mary's will observe Holy Eucharist at 10:30 a.m.

First Christian Church plans a traditional service today with candlelight and reading of the Biblical Christmas story, beginning at 6 p.m., 911 Goliad. Also part of this celebration will be the special children's

See **CELEBRATIONS**, Page 2A

Blue ribbons on cruisers honor dead law officers

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

Christmas lights are usually a joyful reminder of the holiday season, but they take on a more somber meaning at the Big Spring Police Department.

The BSPD is participating in Project Blue Light during the Christmas season. It is a nationwide program honoring law enforcement personnel in general and officers who have been killed in the line of duty.

In accordance with the program, the department has strung blue lights on the exterior and interior of the Troy Hogue Law Enforcement Center. Additionally, blue ribbons have been tied to antennas of BSPD vehicles.

BSPD Lt. Pam Jordan said the program began in Philadelphia, Pa. in 1988 when Dolly Craig hung blue lights in the window of her home to honor her policeman son-in-law, who was killed in the line of duty two years earlier.

The Christmas season was picked for the program because that's when the slain officers are missed most by their families.

"Since then, it has spread across the country, and expanded to include all law enforcement personnel," Jordan said. "We thought it was a good idea and picked it up."

The program is sponsored nationally by Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., an organization of families of police officers who have been killed while on duty.

During the holiday season, COPS officials are asking everyone to put blue lights in their holiday decorations and to tie blue ribbons on car antennas to show support for law enforcement officers.

The BSPD, which has had four officers killed in the line of duty in its history, will observe the program through the end of December, Jordan said.

RSVP makes sure kids get bicycles for Christmas

By DEBBIE L. JENSEN
Features Editor

Retired Senior Volunteer Program has teamed up with some other local groups to see some children's Christmas wishes come true.

The agency, with help from an inmate work program and the police department, is distributing like-new bicycles to kids through the Northside Community Center and West Texas Opportunities.

"This is one of the best things we've found to do for the community," said Nancy Jones, director of RSVP.

She collects the unclaimed bicycles from the Big Spring Police Department and delivers them to a welding shop used by the inmates from Colorado City Wilderness Camp. With money raised from the RSVP Travelers group, Jones buys parts, paint and other supplies.

Inmates work on the bicycles in their spare time, after their regular cleanup and building projects throughout the city are finished.

"They really do good work," said Jones, who honored three of the inmates Monday with a cake and certificates. "It's been a great association for us."

The bicycles, in all shapes, styles and sizes, were lined up in Jones' office Monday at the Polly Mays Municipal Annex, where she was distributing them to local families. Parents came by to choose the bikes that would be a surprise for their kids on Christmas morning.

"We had requests for (bicycles for) 5-year-olds up to teenagers," Jones said. "I feel like by giving them these bikes, maybe we've freed up some of their budget to buy things the children need."

"It's a great project," agreed Max Webb, director of the Northside Community Center, who arranged for distribution of most of the bikes. Some others went to West Texas Opportunities.

Jones said many people have worked to make the project possible, but she is especially pleased with the work of the inmates.

"I just can't tell you how hard they've worked, and how much that work has meant to some kids," she said. "I was impressed with their skills. We just could not do this project without the work of the inmates."

Last year, the program repaired and refurbished 20 bicycles. This year, they had 33 bikes to distribute.

Jones said anyone with an unwanted bicycle can contact her at RSVP, 264-2397, to help the program

Front page has only 'good' news

To our Readers:

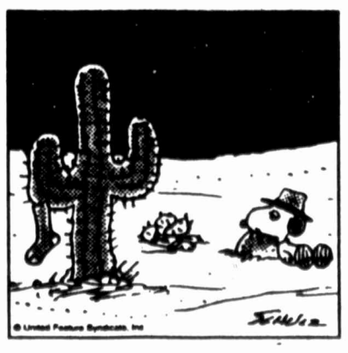
On today's front page, you will find nothing but local "good news" stories. This is a practice we began a year ago.

We hear questions throughout the year along the lines of, "Why don't you just print good news?" and, as much as we might like that, there's more than just good news that happens in our world.

Today's morning edition was produced late Tuesday so that our employees might enjoy as much of the holidays with their families as possible.

Thank you for your support during the year ... and Merry Christmas.

John H. Walker
Managing Editor



1 shopping day left
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WEATHER

Today: Christmas: Fri: Sat:

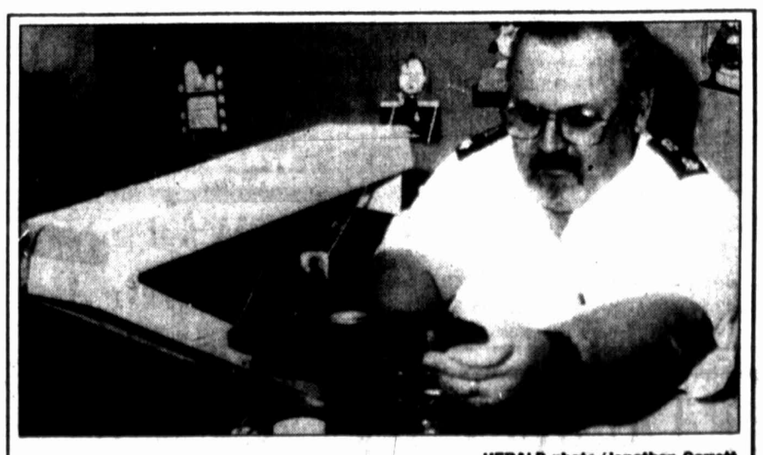
Today, partly cloudy. Highs 45 northwest to 60 south. Tonight, partly cloudy. Lows upper 20s to lower 30s. Christmas Day, increasing clouds. Highs in upper 40s to lower 50s. Friday and Saturday, a chance of rain or snow. Lows upper 20s to lower 30s. Highs mainly in the 40s.

INDEX

Vol. 94, No. 56

Abby / 5B	Horoscope / 5B	Obituaries / 2A
Classified / 4-5B	Life! / 9-10A	Opinion / 4A
Comics / 6B	Local / 2A	Scoreboard / 2B
Holiday News / 7-8A	Nation / 5A	Sports / 1-3A

To reach all departments, please call 263-7331



HERALD photo/Jonathan Garrett

Major Roy Tolcher counts money from one of the Salvation Army Christmas Kettles.

OBITUARIES

Rev. Paul Czerkus

Service for Rev. Paul Czerkus, 94, Big Spring, formerly of Williamson County, will be 11 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 27, 1997, at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in the Sandy Hill community, north of Brenham, with Rev. Carroll Kohl, pastor of St. Paul Lutheran, of Big Spring, officiating. Graveside service will be in the church cemetery.

CZERKUS

Rev. Czerkus died Monday, Dec. 22, in a Big Spring hospital.

Survivors include: his wife, Lydia; two daughters, Pauline Nelson, Big Spring, and Elizabeth Brown, Dallas; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; one sister, Esther Heninger, Wichita Falls; and three nieces.

Local arrangements under the direction of Myers & Smith Funeral Home & Chapel.

BRIEFS

LINE DANCING IS OFFERED at the Big Spring Family YMCA, Fridays from 11 a.m.-noon. This is a great way to get exercise and have fun at the same time. Call for more information, 267-8234.

THE HISTORIC SPRING IN Comanche Trail park will be decorated with a lighted display of thousands of lights nightly beginning at 6:30 p.m. through Jan. 1.

For more information, call Pat Simmons, 263-4607.

THE MOBILE MEALS PROGRAM, also known as Meals on Wheels, needs volunteers to deliver meals.

If you can spare one hour per week to deliver eight or 10 meals, we need you. About 85 to 90 meals are prepared, packaged and delivered within the city limits of Big Spring. If you can volunteer, please call 263-4016 before 3 p.m.

THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE is looking for volunteers to assist taxpayers with preparation of their 1997 Income Tax Returns. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) training for volunteers will be Monday-Friday, Jan. 12-16 from 9:30 a.m. to noon at the First Presbyterian Church Eighth and Runnels.

For more information call Dorothy Kennemur at 398-5522.

BIG SPRING FAMILY YMCA is continuing a holiday camp for children in the community whose parents must work during the school break.

Trained staff will provide educational, fun activities in a safe environment. Dates are Dec. 26, 29, 30 and Jan. 2. Hours are 6:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

For more information, call 267-8234.

MYERS & SMITH
FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL
24th & Johnson 267-8288

Rev. Paul Czerkus, 94, died Monday. Services are 11 AM Saturday at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Sandy Hill Community. Burial will be in the church cemetery.

NALLEY-PICKLE & WELCH
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Trinity Memorial Park and Crematory
906 Gregg St.
(915) 267-6331

Dorothy "Dottie Jo" Reynolds, 67, died Monday. Graveside services will be 10:00 AM Wednesday at Trinity Memorial Park.

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RESPONSE

Continued from Page 1

The Angel Tree program was about the most successful of the Army's Christmas drives, Castillo said. Through the program, people "adopted" children whose names were on the trees and provided them with new clothing they could not otherwise afford.

There were five trees with children's names and a senior citizen's tree with 67 elderly people's names. All of the "angels" were adopted this season.

"Every year, it seems we help more people than the year before," Castillo said. "The giving is better ... People really take care of their angels, which is great for the children at Christmas time."

Salvation Army personnel delivered the new clothing this week, Castillo said.

The Christmas Cheer program works in conjunction with the Angel Trees, with particular concern paid to children who didn't qualify for Angel Tree aid. Through Christmas Cheer, the Salvation Army provided a food box for the family and two toys per child.

Children who qualified for the Angel Tree also received toys through Christmas Cheer, Castillo said.

In all, 278 families were helped by the Salvation Army through its various Christmas drives. No families who applied for help were turned down, Castillo said.

The Salvation Army will hold its annual Christmas Day dinner from noon-3 p.m. at the emergency shelter on 308 Aylsford. Castillo said that if homebound persons will call the shelter, SA personnel will deliver a meal that day.

CELEBRATIONS

Continued from Page 1

Christmas story, "The Three Trees."

Crossroads Church, 3401 E. 11th, plans a special service tonight, 7 p.m.

Wesley United Methodist plans a Christmas Eve service today at 7 p.m. that will include the performance of a short play, "What would it be like if Jesus were born today in Big Spring?" written by James Sanderson, youth minister.

The play paints the picture of the birth of Christ through the eyes of 20th Century contemporaries. Wesley Methodist is located at 12th and Owens.

SPRINGBOARD

IF YOU HAVE ANY CHANGES IN A SPRINGBOARD ITEM OR FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT GINA GARZA, 263-7331 ext. 238, BETWEEN 8:30 A.M. AND 2 P.M. All Springboard items must be submitted in writing. Mail to: Springboard, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, Texas 79720; bring it by the office at 710 Scurry; or fax it to 264-7205.

TODAY

•Downtown Lions Club, noon, Howard College Cactus Room. Call Archie Kountz, 267-3821.

•Line dance classes, 1 p.m., Senior Citizens Center, following lunch. For more information call 398-5522 or 267-1628. All ages welcome.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. open meeting and 8 to 9 p.m. 12&12 Study.

THURSDAY

•Good Shepherd Fellowship Church, 610 Abrams, has services 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

•Spring Tabernacle Church, 1209 Wright, has free food for area needy, 10 a.m. to noon.

•Big Spring Senior Citizens Center art classed, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., 55 and older.

•Al-Anon, 8 to 9 p.m., Scenic Mountain Medical Center small cafeteria.

•NA meeting, 6 to 7:30 p.m., St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, noon to 1 p.m. open meeting, 615 Settles. 8 to 9 p.m. closed meeting at Scenic Mountain Medical Center cafeteria.

FRIDAY

•Spring City Senior Citizens country/western dance, 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Music by CW & Co. Area seniors invited.

•Good Shepherd Fellowship Church, 610 Abrams, 7 p.m. Bible study.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. open meeting and 8 to 9 p.m. Big Book Study.

SATURDAY

•Candlelight NA meeting, 10 to 11:30 p.m., St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1001 Goliad.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, open meetings at noon, 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.

•Open birthday night, covered dish, 8 p.m. and 7 p.m. birthday meeting, 615 Settles. This is to celebrate AA sobriety yearly birthdays.

SUNDAY

•Good Shepherd Fellowship Church, 610 Abrams, has services at 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, 11 a.m. closed meeting and 7 p.m. open meeting.

MONDAY

•Big Spring Evening Lion's Club, 6:30 p.m., 1607 E. Third. Call Al Valdes, 263-6810.

•Project Freedom, Christian support group, 7 p.m. Call 263-5140 or 263-2241.

•TOPS Clubs (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) 5:15 p.m. weigh in and 6:15 p.m. meeting, Best Home Health Care, 1710 E. Marcy Dr.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. open meeting and 8 to 9 p.m. at the VA Medical Center on fourth floor.

TUESDAY

•Most Excellent Way, a chemical dependency support group, 7 p.m., Living Water Church, 1008 Birdwell Lane. Call 267-1424 after 5 p.m. or 263-3168 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

•Al-Anon, 8 to 9 p.m., 615 Settles.

•Narcotics Anonymous, 6 to 7:30 p.m., St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

•Beginning line dance class will be taught at 9 a.m. at the Senior Citizens Center. Call 267-1628 for more information. All ages welcome.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. open meeting and 8 to 9 p.m. closed meeting at the VA Medical Center on fourth floor.

WEDNESDAY

•Downtown Lions Club, noon, Howard College Cactus Room. Call Archie Kountz, 267-3821.

•Line dance classes, 1 p.m., Senior Citizens Center, following lunch. For more information call 398-5522 or 267-1628. All ages welcome.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. open meeting and 8 to 9 p.m. 12&12 Study.

•"Healthy Horizons," an educational seminar provided by Scenic Mountain Medical Center, 4 p.m., Scenic Mountain Home Health, 600 Main. For more information call 267-1314.

THURSDAY

•Good Shepherd Fellowship Church, 610 Abrams, has services 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

•Spring Tabernacle Church, 1209 Wright, has free food for area needy, 10 a.m. to noon.

•Big Spring Senior Citizens Center art classed, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., 55 and older.

•Al-Anon, 8 to 9 p.m., Scenic Mountain Medical Center small cafeteria.

•NA meeting, 6 to 7:30 p.m., St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

•Masonic Lodge No. 1340, 7:30 p.m., 2101 Lancaster. Call Ron Long, 267-8715.

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Human tree definitely wired for the holidays

By COLLINS CONNER
St. Petersburg Times

He doesn't look like a living legend.

Verl Brant looks like what he is: a scrawny, 70-year-old guy with a bad cough and the chewed-up hands of a laborer.

And there's nothing noble about his surroundings; he lives with his wife, Jean, who's 60, in a single-wide mobile home, on a thin, barren street in the Polk County town of Mulberry (Pop. 3,314).

But let Verl step into his woven paper jumpsuit with the tinsel garlands and the lights stuck to it. Let him pull the suit's hood up so its tricolored star pokes straight up from his forehead. And let him plug himself in.

Then, like Clark Kent in a phone booth, Verl is transformed.

The colored lights twinkle against his silver and red garlands. His feet perform a little jig. His head bobs; the foil star bobs. And he becomes . . .

VERL, The Human Christmas Tree.

"Ain't I weird?" he asks.

For 10 years, Verl was a folk hero in Orlando, Fla., where the usual heroes are suave or sleek or sell perfume named for their jewelry.

Verl installed acoustical ceilings and pulled asbestos from aging walls. By the time he met Jean, they had been around the block a few times, had kids from earlier marriages. "I met him at a hurricane party," Jean says. "He told his sister he wanted to date me. I flung myself around and said, "Stand in line!' " It was love at first snipe.

They merged their families and had a child of their own.

Each November, he and Jean would stuff their home with holiday ornaments and put lights in the yard and collect cartoon characters to stand among the lights.

In 1985, when Verl's mama began to suffer from Alzheimer's, Verl and Jean tried to cheer her up. Verl strung lights all over the yard, while his mama watched from the porch. He turned the lights on. No smile. Nothing.

He draped more lights. Nothing.

He went into the garage, where he had put the paper suits he wore for asbestos-removal jobs. They were tightly woven, zip-up suits with long sleeves and a hood. He pinned strings of lights to the suit, plugged the strings into an extension cord and sprinted across the lawn.

"At first she gave me the dickens: 'You're going to get electrocuted!' Then she started singing and clapping her hands," Verl says. So he kept dancing, flitting his hands up in the air, kicking his feet out and watching his mama smile.

Down the street, the students of Orlando's Fern Creek Elementary School were just finishing their Christmas pageant and were streaming into the school's parking lot with their parents and teachers. They saw the bouncing lights.

"The whole school started running down the street," Verl says. "Within an hour, I don't know where all these people come from. The street, both ways, nose-to-nose cars. Nobody could go nowhere."

A legend was born.

Distributed by Scripps Howard News Service

Filling in for Santa makes for long days

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — It's not easy being Santa. Bob Garnes knows.

In the height of the holiday season, he leaves home at 7:33 a.m. for a five-hour stint ho-ho-hoing at the mall. Then another appearance in the afternoon, with just enough time for a burger. The other day, another Santa quit, and Garnes was back in his red suit all evening.

Not all would-be Santas can handle the stress that dozens of tiny toddlers can bring.

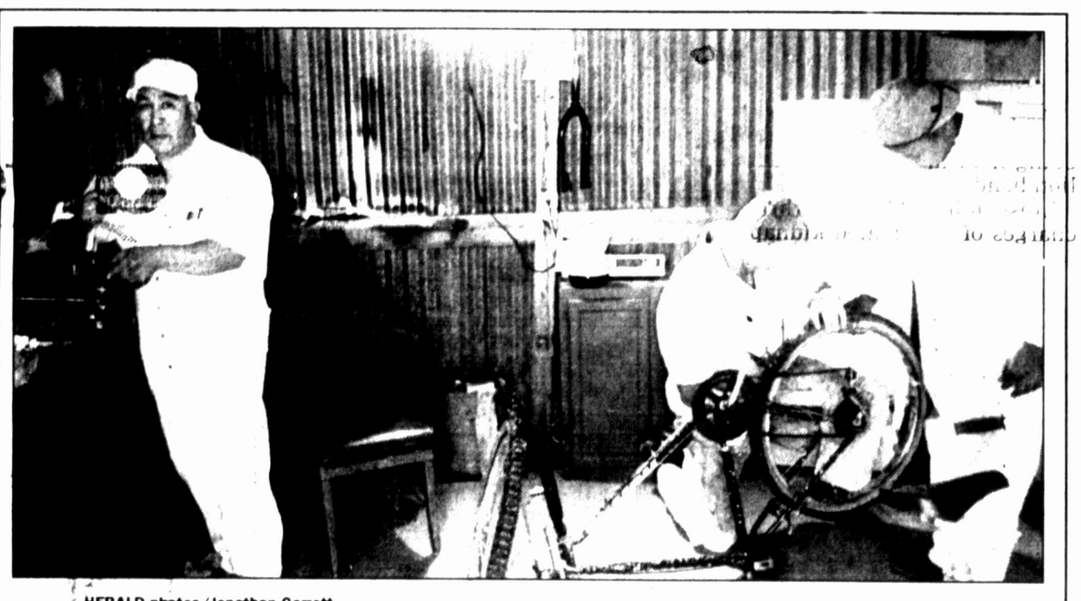
"He just didn't have the proper attitude to become a Santa," Garnes said. "He thought he could just sit down and children would tell them what they wanted and that would be it. He discovered it wasn't so easy."

"I call it Santa burnout," said Diana Sutton, owner of Photo Promotions, the Portland company that employs Garnes and 15 other Santas. She also employs numerous Easter bunnies, but that's another story.

Garnes, 47, takes naturally to the job. At 5-foot-6 and 326 pounds, with white hair, beard and what can only be called a Santa-like demeanor, most kids take him at face value.

"I'm Santa 365 days a year," he said. For his regular job, he runs a daycare called Mr. Mom.

He started wearing the red suit about 12 or 13 years ago at school and church gatherings, then went professional three years ago.



HERALD photos/Jonathan Garrett

At top, Colorado City Wilderness Camp inmates, from left, John Herrera, Elvon Nowlin and Willie Bowman gave their spare time to work on bicycles to be distributed to needy families in Big Spring. At right, Nancy Jones of Retired Senior Volunteer Program presents a bicycle to Elda Bernal. The RSVP program will begin right away taking donations of used or unwanted bicycles to give to the local children next Christmas.

A Note Of Thanks
We'd like to throw in a chorus of thanks for your kind patronage and wish you and yours a glorious season filled with love and harmony. Happy Holidays!
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Ohio-based utility to buy Dallas-based Central & South West Corp.

NEW YORK (AP) — The nation's third-largest utility is paying $6.45 billion to create a giant power company serving 11 states, announcing the merger as two other big utility deals were falling apart.

The failures, however, will not slow the wave of electric and gas company mergers as more states move to loosen regulations and let customers choose their own power providers.

"Ultimately, they're all going to come along. It will be a cascading effect — as one does it another will follow," said Daniel Scotto, an analyst with Bear Stearns.

In the deal announced Monday, American Electric Power Co. of Columbus, Ohio, will spread into four new states with its planned purchase of Dallas-based Central & South West Corp., whose four electric utilities serve 1.7 million customers in Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana.

"Our industry is undergoing massive change and restructuring. There's no indication that things will be easing up any time soon," said E.R. Brooks, chairman and chief executive of CSW.

Currently, 14 states have firm plans to deregulate their utility industries and others will soon follow, particularly in the Middle Atlantic and Northeast regions, Scotto said.

States such as Arizona, Nevada and Florida that have strong population growth are also likely areas for future utility mergers, said analyst Andrew Levi of Furman Selz.

AEP, through its seven subsidiaries, provides energy to approximately 2.9 million customers in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia and Tennessee.

The companies, which also serve 4 million combined customers in England, now begin the lengthy process of convincing regulators they will not harm competition and increase rates — a stumbling block for some big utility marriages.

Baltimore Gas and Electric Co. and Potomac Electric Power Co. on Monday abandoned their $3 billion combination, saying regulators in Maryland and Washington, D.C., wanted to impose conditions that would have offset any financial benefits from the merger.

In May, federal regulators rejected a proposed $6 billion merger of the two largest electric utilities in Minnesota and Wisconsin, maintaining the new company would wield too much control over the electricity market.

The AEP announcement also came after Western Resources Inc. on Friday scrapped the terms of its $2 billion purchase of Kansas City Power & Light, saying it would try to negotiate a better price. The value of Western's shares has jumped since the stock swap was announced in February.

These failed deals, however, represent only a small portion of the utility industry's merger boom over the past few years. Since 1994, $91.9 billion worth of utility deals have been announced, according to Securities Data Co. of Newark, N.J.

The AEP-CSW merger is expected to save $2 billion over 10 years through the elimination of duplicate corporate and administrative tasks and increased purchasing power.

AEP said about 1,300 jobs will be cut from a combined total domestic work force of about 26,000. AEP employs about 18,000 workers; CSW employs more than 8,000. It hopes to minimize layoffs through reduced hiring and attrition.

Under terms of the deal, AEP will swap 0.6 of its shares for each share of CSW. In Monday afternoon trading, AEP shares were down $1.18fl at $50.811/4, while CSW shares rose $1.121/2 to $27.121.2. Both stocks trade on the New York Stock Exchange.

Children return to day care center 'like nothing happened'

PLANO (AP) — More than half of the children who attend a day care center have returned to the house where an armed man held 80 children and 5 adults hostage for more than 30 hours.

Many of the parents brought food, flowers and other thank-yous Monday celebrate the peaceful end to the ordeal.

Karen Shannon, assistant director of the Rigsbee Child Development Center, said 57 of the center's 90 children returned Monday.

"They just waltzed in here like nothing happened," Ms. Shannon said.

"We have some wonderful parents," owner Carol Hinton said. "They were very grateful to our teachers. We had some heroes in our school."

James Monroe Lipscomb Jr., the man charged in the incident, met Monday with his attorney and members of his family at the Collin County Jail in McKinney, where he is being held in lieu of $2.5 million bond.

Lipscomb, 33, faces three charges of aggravated kidnapping and one count of aggravated assault in connection with his armed takeover of the center Wednesday afternoon. He surrendered almost 30 hours later after freeing 80 children and five adults unharmed.

The man was calm although he was "in shock mode," said Ronald Danfort, his attorney. He said Lipscomb was concerned about his children and wanted to speak with his wife, Kris.

"Everything hasn't hit him yet, but it's starting to come in," the attorney said.

Ms. Hinton said that more than the 57 students would have returned to class monday, but some are at home with chicken pox and others have begun Christmas vacations.

In time, she said, most of them will return.

Security at the center will be improved with the installation of an electronic front door, she said.

A Plano police officer is to meet privately tonight with parents and teachers to discuss the standoff.

Lucky Lotto ticket bails out unlucky store owner

DALLAS (AP) — Crime, weather and sheer bad luck have plagued Joe Said's little Quick Shop convenience store in northwest Dallas recently.

His shop has been hit in several burglaries. A truck wrecked the front doors in October. The, last weekend, the roof leaked during last weekend's torrential rains.

Throughout, the Jersusalem-born merchant has tried to maintain a positive outlook.

Now, he's about to have about 180,000 reasons to be upbeat.

"One day I was sure something good was going to happen," he said.

His financial salvation: a group of five senior citizens who together bought 25 tickets for last Saturday's drawing. One of them had the winning numbers: 5, 9, 34, 43, 44 and 45, winning $18 million for themselves and a retailer's bonus of about $180,000 for Said.

He knew one of the pool participants by first name, and the customer was the one who told the Jerusalem-born store owner Sunday of their windfall.

"At first I didn't believe him, but then he showed me the ticket," said Said, who grew up in Kuwait and moved to the United States 16 years ago.

The winnings will help ease the pain of some of Said's recent misfortune. Regular customers navigated nine leak-collection buckets throughout the store Sunday to congratulate Said.

"He's had such bad things happen," Becky Eads said. "We're real happy for him."

Unlike actual lottery winnings, ticket vendors receive the full amount of their commissions in a lump sum.

Said is leasing the building and doesn't have to pay for the roof, but the damage has cost him business. Some of the money will go to his two employees, and he hasn't decided what to do with the rest.

"God blesses all the time," Said said. "After all the mischief we've had, I knew he was going to take care of me."

Despite the winnings, Said doesn't play the lottery himself, and he doesn't intend to start now.

"I'm not a gambler," he said. "I gave up gambling a long time ago."

Report: FBI probes judge's link to pedophile priest in Dallas

DALLAS (AP) — Federal investigators are trying to determine whether a powerful appeals judge wrongfully acted on behalf of a pedophile priest, according to a published report.

The Dallas Morning News reported in a copyright story today that two officials in Polk County in southeast Texas said that an FBI agent questioned them about 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Henry Politz's connection to Gilbert Gauthe.

Gauthe's 1985 conviction on 33 counts of abusing altar boys revealed how Catholic officials covered up child molestation.

A source close to the FBI confirmed the investigation was under way, but FBI officials wouldn't say whether such a probe exists.

Politz said he has no knowledge of the investigation and wouldn't talk about Gauthe. "There will be no comment about that," he said Monday.

The 65-year-old Politz grew up near the Gauthe family farm in the south Louisiana town of Napoleonville. Gauthe moved to Texas after being released from a Louisiana state prison in 1995, 10 years earlier than his lawyer and prosecutors anticipated.

When Polk County officials charged him with molesting a young neighbor in 1996, Shreveport-based Judge Politz arranged high-profile lawyers for him.

They arranged a deal in which Gauthe pleaded no contest to injury to a child — a non-sexual charge — and was sentenced to seven years's probation.

Gauthe, 52, currently lives near a middle school on the Texas-Louisiana border. He declined to be interviewed.

The judge's pastor last month wrote a letter published in The Times in Shreveport, defending Politz's relationship with Gauthe.

"A judge of impeachable ethics, acting out of charity and compassion, has had his reputation, which has been a lifetime in the making, besmirched," Monsignor Murray Clayton wrote.

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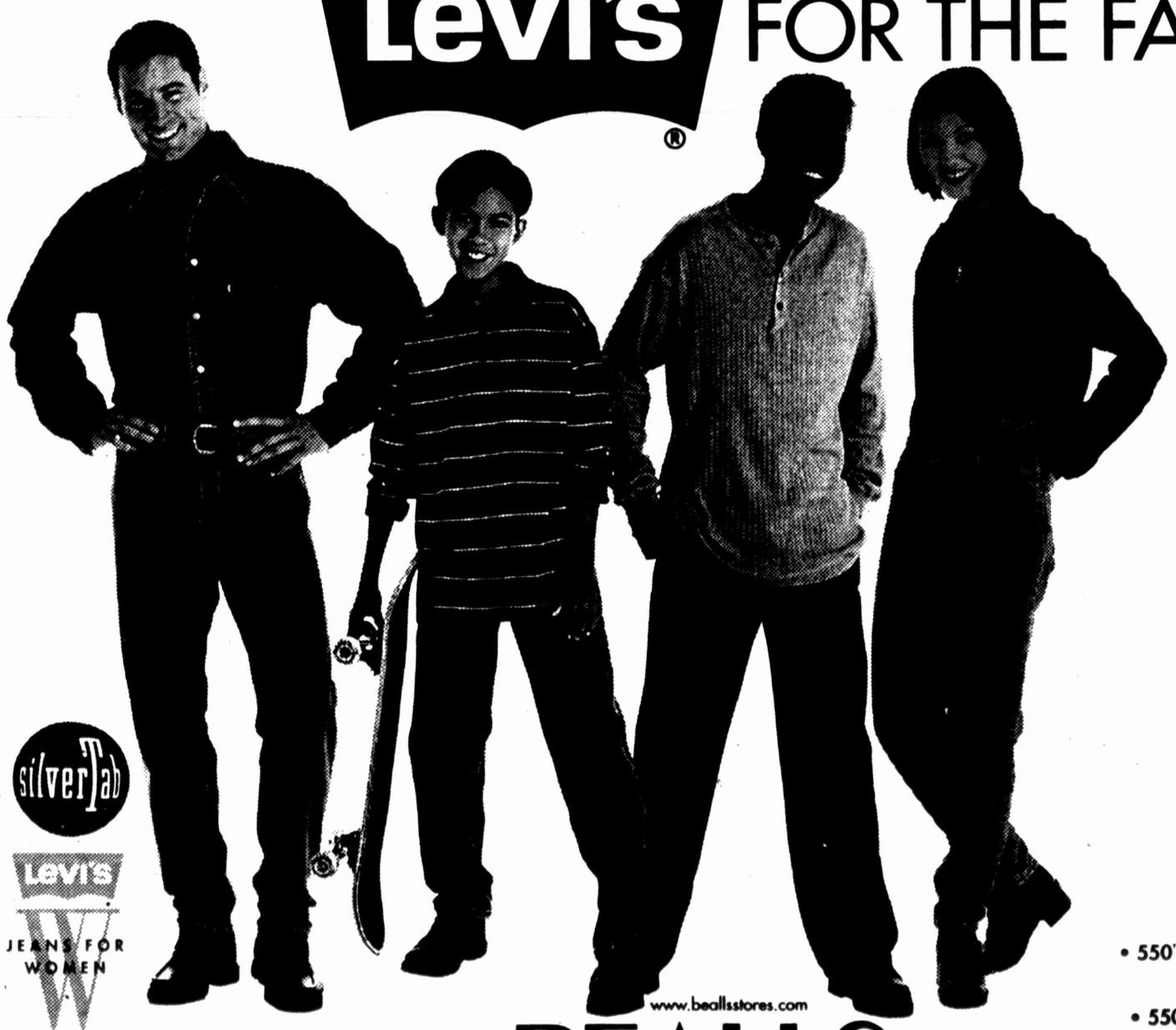

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EDITORIAL

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

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

Charles C. Williams Publisher
John H. Walker Managing Editor
Steve Reagan Copy/Layout Editor
Debbie Jensen Features Editor

OTHER VIEWS

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus

We take pleasure in answering at once and thus prominently the communication below, expressing at the same time our great gratification that its faithful author is numbered among the friends of The Sun:

"Dear Editor:
I am 8 years old.
Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus.
Papa says, "If you see it in the Sun it's so."
Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?
Virginia O'Hanlon,
115 West 95th Street"

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies. You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what make the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, not even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

•••••

"Is there a Santa Claus?" is the question Virginia, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Phillip F. O'Hanlon, put to the editor of the (New York) Sun in September, 1897. Her letter was received by Edward P. Mitchell, who turned who turned it over to his associate, Francis Pharcelius Church, to answer. With some reluctance Mr. Church undertook the assignment. The product of his fine nature, mellow wisdom and sound craftsmanship was the editorial article "Is there a Santa Claus?" - the most famous editorial article that has ever been written. It has been produced in every conceivable form, in every quarter of the globe.

Its publication has become a tradition at many newspapers, including the Herald, where it serves to remind us that belief and imagination are integral parts of our respective lives.

HOW TO REACH US

You may reach us by telephone at 263-7331, by fax at 264-7205, by mail at P.O. Box 1431 or by e-mail at either bsherald@xroadstx.com or jwalker@xroadstx.com.

Our physical address is 710 Scurry St., Big Spring and our office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Our offices are closed to the public on Saturdays and Sundays, as well as holidays.

Meagan, Polly and Toxie — and Christmas

John H. Walker
Managing Editor

As we pause to give thanks this holiday season for the many blessings we have received, how many of us thought the year would turn out as it did?

Perhaps the fact things do not always go as we plan is part of God's great scheme to remind that we aren't in control of things as much as we would like to be.

Over the course of the past 12 months, our community has lost a number of her residents. Most notable in my mind are two that were at the opposite ends of life — Meagan Stanley and Polly Mays — and another, Toxie Cathey.

Young Meagan was just beginning her life when it was ended by leukemia while Polly, who had served her adopted hometown so faithfully for so many years, lost her battle with cancer as she headed toward the twilight of her life.

Both Meagan and Polly serve to remind me of what a positive force we can become if we so choose.

Although not of her own doing, Meagan pulled the entire Howard County community together as men, women and children — many of whom who knew nothing more about the youngster than she needed their help.

The effort to try and help Meagan crossed social boundaries, it leapt over racial boundaries and bridged the economic boundaries of our community. Men, women and children from all walks of life lined up to do what they could to help.

Almost every reference I've heard regarding Polly started with the fact she was a community historian — but she was so much more than that.

Polly Mays stepped forward to run and was the first woman ever elected to the Big Spring City Council. She was the mayor pro tem of the council and she volunteered in a variety of venues — the Heritage Museum, the Big Spring State Hospital, Big Spring Humane Society (which she helped start), First Presbyterian Church and the annual Highland South Fourth of July Parade (which she helped start).

There are few places around our community that you can go, and few organizations of which you can be a member, that Polly hasn't touched in some way.

And reading of the many activities in which Meagan was involved and looking at the sparkle that simply exploded from her young eyes, one can only wonder what things she could have done to benefit her community had she been given a full life.

And there was Toxie.

So much like Santa Claus was Toxie's appearance that it was a role he filled professionally. So much like the spirit of Santa Claus was his demeanor that he constantly sought to give and help and assist.

I never saw Toxie Cathey that he didn't have a smile on his face. Perhaps that's one of the duties of those who so resemble Santa Claus — to never let others see a frown and to always, always, always smile.

To me, memories of these three people tie Christmas together in one, simple package ... young Meagan with the dream of the future, Polly with a lifetime of giving and Toxie with his Santa-like qualities.

As youngsters, we dream of what the future can hold for us. At this time of year, amid the shaking of packages and the efforts to find out just exactly what is under the tree, we dream of presents galore.

As adults, we travel a varied route. Starting out, we still have some of that wide-eyed innocence of the child ... we're still dreaming about what life holds for us, but we've also started to think of things we can do to change everything.

As our lives begin to wind down, we find ourselves to be more reflective ... looking back on what we've managed to accomplish and what we were able to do to make this world a better place.

And with it all comes the spirit of Santa Claus ... those twinkling eyes, that jovial laugh and the spirit to help — at least momentarily — make the less pleasant thoughts in life go away.

My year certainly didn't turn out the way I would have wanted, but just because things don't go our way is no excuse to not be thankful for the many blessings we have.

That's what the season is about.

Yes, I admit I'm excited about watching Miranda and Andrew tear into their packages and at hearing the "oohs" and "aahs" and giggles that are so special when they come from a child.

And I'm thankful for those two grandbabies. They serve as a reminder to me every day why what we do here on this earth is important ... why it all makes a difference ... and why every single life on this planet is precious.

I recall a motivational advertisement from an airline magazine:

"One hundred years from now, it will not matter how much money I made or how big my house was ... but the world might be a better place because of the difference I made in the life of a child."

From me to you. From Miranda Michele and Andrew Wayne and the rest of my extended family, may God give you and yours the richest of blessings this holiday season.

Merry Christmas and the happiest of New Year's.

LETTER POLICIES

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.

Please:

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

Giving and receiving ...

By SHARON RANDALL
Scripps Howard News Service

This is for an 8-year-old I'll call Michael. That's not his real name, but there are lots of "Michaels." Maybe one of them will read this. Dear Michael,

I just wrapped a Christmas gift that has your name on it. No, silly, I won't tell you what it is. You have to wait until Christmas.

Your teacher told me about you — how you're such a nice boy, how you like to learn and hardly ever get into trouble. That was you she was talking about, right?

She heard your family was having kind of a hard time lately, so she asked me and some of her friends to help. She told us your names and ages — your sisters' and brothers', even your mom's. I said, "I'll take Michael."

That's why you're getting a Christmas gift from me, one of those strangers you've been told not to talk to. Pretty weird, huh? Life can be hard to figure sometimes, whether you're 8 or a lot older.

I mean, why should you have to get a gift from someone who doesn't know you, instead of from your mom, who knows what you want, but can't afford to buy it? And why does your mom have to work so hard and worry so much? And why can't your dad be there to help?

Why do some people have so little — no place to sleep, not enough to eat, no warm clothes to wear in the cold — when others seem to have so much they keep trying to give it away? Why does one family get hard times when for others, life seems so easy?

Those are big questions, Michael. I've been asking them since I was your age and I still don't have the answers.

Here's what I think: Life isn't fair, but it gets to call the shots. And if you want to play well, you don't waste time arguing calls.

Maybe that's why we like to help each other at Christmas. We hear a story of how a baby born to a poor family was sent to right the wrongs of the world. It reminds us — rich or poor, young or old, kings and babies alike — that we all have the power, the chance, to right a few wrongs ourselves.

But mostly we like helping others because it makes us feel good. It's a gift for the giver as much as for the receiver. Sometimes we like giving so much we forget how hard it is to receive.

I remember a Christmas when I was your age. My family like yours had hit hard times, and some good, caring people tried to help. They brought us food — a big ham and some cookies — and a Christmas tree decorated with lights and paper birds.

It was a kind and generous thing they did, and I was not ungrateful. But it was hard somehow to look in their eyes. I didn't know what to say or do. Neither did my mother. She even forgot to serve coffee.

Later, she told my brothers and me to remember how it felt to receive, because one day we would do the giving.

Life, she said, is a bank. Sometimes you put in; other times you take out. Either way, it's all the same bank.

This Christmas, Michael, you have to learn to receive. It's one of life's harder lessons. But try to remember how it feels. Because someday, you will do the giving.

Merry Christmas, Michael.

No fair peeking.

(Sharon Randall is a winner of the American Association of Sunday and Feature Editors and the Best of the West commentary awards.)

Mallard Fillmore by BRUCE TINSLEY

Mallard Fillmore by BRUCE TINSLEY

Taxpayer relief act is anything but as difficulties, paperwork mount

By JONATHAN WEISMAN
Congressional Quarterly

WASHINGTON — In his standard-issue navy suit and red power tie, accountant Bill Caldwell is the kind of guy who can, with all sincerity, call a cut in the capital gains tax "a really exciting opportunity." A new type of Individual Retirement Account is also a "really exciting opportunity," although the more limited education IRA is merely "a nice opportunity."

A sparse crowd of amateur investors — some still in their Washington work suits, others more casually attired — gathered last week in a conference room at Smith Barney Inc. to hear the experts dissect Congress's mammoth 1997 tax act. They got an earful.

Capital gains, Caldwell explains, were once subject to two relatively simple tax rates. Now taxation of investment profits will depend on what assets you owned, how long you owned them, and when you sold them. Rates could be 28 percent, 25 percent, 20 percent, 18 percent, 10 percent or 8 percent.

"This is going to be a lot of fun when it comes time to do your own returns," Caldwell says jovially. He knows most people in the room won't even try.

As the Internal Revenue Service prepares to mail the forms that bring the fruits of the 1997 tax law to the taxpayers, others have moved beyond concern. They are angry.

"They're calling this the Taxpayer Relief Act. They've got to be joking," grouses Ric Edelman, an accountant and chairman of Edelman Financial Services in Fairfax County, Va. "There's no relief in this at all."

The tax cuts enacted in August came at a price: dozens of new twists to an already tangled tax code.

Americans spend between $75 billion and $226 billion a year keeping records, hiring tax professionals, filling out, filing and processing their taxes, according to a review of studies by University of Michigan economist Joel Slemrod. The new tax law will increase those costs, he says.

Harvard University law Professor Daniel Halperin has suggested that the Federal Trade Commission investigate whether the Taxpayer Relief Act's name violates truth-in-advertising regulations.

Even Republicans are beginning to sound defensive.

"People keep saying this was Congress' tax law," said House Ways and Means Committee spokesman Ari Fleischer. "I submit to you this was ... signed by the president and worked out between the Republicans and the White House."

At a time when Republicans are touting a single, flat-tax rate, the new law created 11 marginal rates that rise and fall unpredictably, according to American Enterprise Institute researchers Diana Furchtgott-Roth and Kevin Hassett. Far from flat, the rate structure looks more like the New York skyline.

The act created 285 new sections to the tax code and 824 amendments to existing sections. Thirty-six provisions were retroactive; 114 took effect immediately, and 69 more will become effective Jan. 1.

"The real havoc for small businesses and some people will not be the complexity of the forms but figuring out what applies to me," said James Lucier, director of economic research at Americans for Tax Reform, which advocates lower federal and state taxes. "It's all in the tea leaves."

And the 1998 tax year promises to be even more difficult, as a $400-per-child tax credit takes effect along with an array of education tax credits.

Accountants and tax attorneys are predicting a large increase in taxpayer errors. Complexity, plus an upsurge of congressional attacks on the IRS, could dampen the United States' stellar voluntary compliance rate.

"It seems to me, given the complexity, (IRS agents) are not going to be able to be particularly tough about it, at least not for a long time," Halperin ventured. "Some of the changes indicate the IRS has lost control of the system."

Intuit is anticipating a boom in sales of tax preparation software. Professional tax preparers are expecting an onslaught. Consultants are urging accountants to use the 1997 tax law to "expand (their) practice" and "make the newest tax act your best practice development tool ever," according to a brochure sent to Edelman.

Accountants may be celebrating, but they are also wary. Clients will be clamoring for help, but they might not understand just how much more work the new tax law will mean for their accountants, especially if they sold a lot of stock in 1997, said Michael E. Mares, chief of the tax executive committee for the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. They will be in for an unpleasant shock when they get their CPA's bill.

It is highly unlikely a flat tax or a consumption tax will be enacted anytime soon to replace the tax system, but some onerous items could be knocked out one at a time, Lucier suggested.

That could quell tax-reform fever, Furchtgott-Roth said. "Relative to other countries, our system works very, very well," she said. "Small fixes...will go a long way to satisfying people."

Slemrod, the economist, agrees. These are still tax cuts, he says. The most complex provisions will hit people who already use accountants. For others, the Brigadoon of tax relief lies in the future: higher education tax breaks and child tax credits. President Clinton has promised still more tax credits for child care.

"The '97 tax bill makes fundamental tax reform less likely, not more likely," Slemrod said. "Nobody's going to complain once they see the results."

(Distributed by Scripps Howard News Service.)

Survey finds web surfers are social people, not nerds

By KEITH DEVLIN
The (Manchester) Guardian

Net users — far from being the nerdy misfits of popular mythology are more sociable than non-surfers, a recent survey has found.

In the December issue of the computer professionals' magazine Communications of the Association for Computing Machinery, James Katz, a senior scientist at Bellcore in New Jersey, and Philip Aspden, executive director of the Center for Research on the Information Society, report on a study of 2,500 Internet users that they have just completed.

They went to some effort to ensure their sample was as diverse as possible. Besides racial, gender, geographic, religious, and financial diversity, they also included Net novices as well as longtime users.

What did they find? First, Net users tend to belong to more, not fewer, organizations that involve regular face-to-face contact. So much for that nerdy loner caricature. Moreover, they found that a lot of Net use involved families staying in touch. Add the promotion of family values to your list of Net pluses.

What about cyberspace replacing the meal out or the night at the pub with friends? Far from replacing personal contact, the majority (60 percent) of those who reported making new friends through the Net said this eventually led to a face-to-face meeting.

In short, Katz and Aspden's research indicates that the Net is populated in large part by families and social groups using it to maintain their existing relationships over long distances, and people making new friendships that in the majority of cases lead to face-to-face contact.

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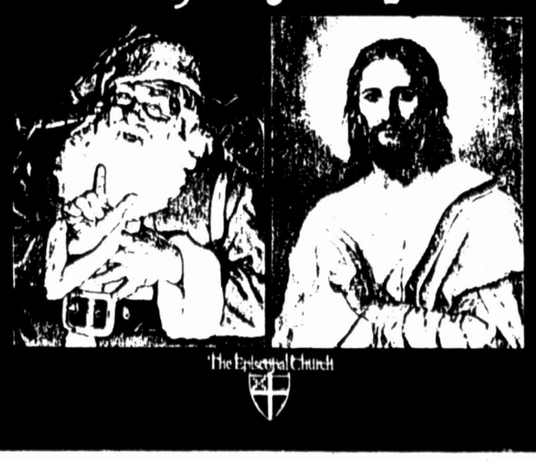

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15 children among 42 dead as gunmen attack two Mexican towns

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (AP) — Gunmen attacked two rebel-controlled towns in southern Mexico, killing at least 42 people — including 15 children — the Red Cross and peasant activists said today.

There was no government confirmation or denial of the reports a day after the event. If confirmed, it would be the bloodiest attack in Chiapas state since 135 people died in the Zapatista uprising in January 1994.

Mauricio Rosas, director of the Red Cross office in San Cristobal, told the Mexico City radio station Formato 21 that the 42 victims included 21 women, six men, 14 children and an infant.

He said the bodies showed signs of being shot and hacked to death with machetes.

Members of the peasant group Las Abejas said that in addition to the 42 people killed, six others were missing after the massacre Monday, according to Manuel Gomez Perez, an official of the rebels' self-proclaimed local government.

Witnesses reported hearing gunshots for four hours in the town of Acteal, 12 miles north of San Cristobal de las Casas, he said. The nearby town of Quextic also was reportedly attacked.

Las Abejas sympathizes with the Zapatista rebels, who in 1995 set up their own government for Chenalho county based in the town of Polho. It is in competition with the officially recognized local government, run by the Institutional Revolutionary Party, known as the PRI

The party's national president, Mariano Palacios Alcocer, rushed to distance his party from the attack, which some have blamed on a group known as Peace and Justice that is affiliated with the PRI.

"The PRI rejects violence in all its forms," Palacios Alcocer told reporters today.

A spokeswoman for the Chiapas state government said she had no information about the attack. The state attorney general sent two people to investigate.

Clashes between supporters of the local government and the Institutional Revolutionary Party have raged for seven months, killing 30 Tzotzil Indian peasants and leaving nearly 7,000 homeless.

"It's an incomprehensible situation in which we have not been able to stop the violence," Roman Catholic Bishop Samuel Ruiz told XEWM radio in San Cristobal.

"Many died, but we don't know for sure how many are dead and how many are injured," Gomez Perez said by telephone from Polho.

Gonzalo Ituarte, spokesman for the diocese of San Cristobal de las Casas, reported 43 dead — eight in Acteal and 35 in nearby Quextic.

Three children were hospitalized in San Cristobal with gunshot wounds, XEWM reported. Survivors said women and children were shot at point-blank range, the radio station said.

The station said Red Cross workers have not been able to enter the affected area because it is too dangerous.

At least 300 people have died in similar clashes in Chiapas state since the 1994 uprising — by some estimates, 600. Tens of thousands of state police and federal troops have been unable to calm tensions. In some cases, human rights workers have accused police of siding with the ruling party-affiliated peasants who have attacked rebel supporters.

Peace talks between the rebels and the federal government broke down more than a year ago, with the rebels accusing the government of stalling on the implementation of a partial accord signed in February 1996.

Human rights and Roman Catholic church organizations have called for the renewal of peace talks as a way of stemming the violence.

Lawyer: Case against 'Carlos' was work of secret agents

PARIS (AP) — An attorney defending the man known as "Carlos the Jackal" asked a French jury Wednesday to acquit his client of murder charges, saying the evidence was fabricated and testimony was not credible.

In an impassioned plea for the man once considered the world's most wanted terrorist, lawyer Olivier Maudret also assured the jury that Ilich Ramirez Sanchez would not go free even if acquitted.

That's because Ramirez, 48, is also under investigation in France for four terrorist attacks.

"What I propose is acquittal," Maudret said. "The solution to acquit should not shock you: Carlos will not leave jail.

"I don't ask it for Carlos, but for us, for our country, what it does best, in the name of law and truth."

The three judges and nine civilian jury members were expected to issue a verdict Wednesday night.

Earlier, Francois Honnorat, another of Ramirez's troika of attorneys, said the prosecution had based its case on evidence fabricated by government intelligence agents.

Honnorat accused prosecutors and judges of "marching" the defendant through the proceedings while presenting only "the appearance of proof."

Ramirez is accused of killing two French investigators and a Lebanese citizen in 1975.

Prosecutor Gino Necchi said he will seek a life sentence if Ramirez is convicted of killing agents Raymond Dous and Jean Donatini, and Michel Moukharbal, a Lebanese colleague of Ramirez.

The Venezuelan-born Ramirez was captured in Khartoum, Sudan, on Aug. 14, 1994, and taken to Paris.

He is widely accused of carrying out the 1975 seizure of OPEC oil ministers and was involved in the 1976 Palestinian hijacking of a French jetliner to Entebbe, Uganda.

Since the start of the trial, the defense has sought the presence of three witnesses to the shootings, which took place in a Latin Quarter apartment rented by a friend of Ramirez.

The prosecution claims they were unable to find the people in question, all Latin American students studying in Paris. Instead, the court heard 22-year-old depositions given by witnesses shortly after the shootings.

Honnorat criticized the depositions, saying none of the witnesses had a clear view of the person who fired the gun or of the weapon itself.

The trial has been repeatedly interrupted by a merry-go-round of defense lawyers who have come and gone and repeated demands for new information by the defense.

Ramirez was convicted in absentia for the killings in 1992, but French law required the retrial now that he is in custody.

Korea stocks plunge 7.5 percent on news of dwindling foreign reserves

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea's stock market suffered its biggest one-day drop ever Wednesday on news of dwindling foreign reserves and further downgrading of its currency credit rating.

Market analysts had warned that South Korea could face a national bankruptcy unless emergency foreign loans are obtained to meet huge short-term debts due in coming weeks.

"The reality is that we have no money," President-elect Kim Dae-jung said after discussions Wednesday with top U.S. officials. "We don't know if we can manage tomorrow or the day after. I worry about this day and night.

"The reality for me is that I have to clean up after somebody else's mess," Kim said.

The benchmark Korean Composite Stock Index, which has shed nearly 60 percent this year, fell 7.5 percent more Wednesday, closing at 366.36, down 29.70 points from Monday. Until Wednesday, the biggest daily drop had been a 7.17 percent fall Nov. 24.

The South Korean currency, which has lost nearly 60 percent of its value in the past two months, hit an all-time low of 1995 against the dollar in Wednesday's morning session. The won later recovered to close at 1965, compared to 1850 on Monday.

Yields on the benchmark three-year corporate bonds rose by 1 percent to a new high of 31.11 percent on worries of tighter liquidity expected in the coming months.

The international credit rating agency Standard & Poor's lowered South Korea's long-term foreign currency rating four notches to B+ from BBB- Wednesday.

The new rating puts the country — a member of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development — on an equivalent rating to Pakistan, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela.

The new S&P rating would make it practically impossible for South Korea to borrow overseas.

"We just don't have enough dollars," said Choe Seung-wook, an analyst at J. Henry Schroder Ltd. "Korea is now standing in the road between bankruptcy and recovery."

Fears were spreading that South Korea may not be able to meet huge short-term foreign debts due rapidly in the coming weeks. As of Dec. 11, it had $10 billion in usable foreign reserves.

With $5 billion expected to be provided by the World Bank and the Asian Bank in the coming week, South Korea will be able to meet its short-term debt of $15 billion due by year's end, aides to the president-elect said.

But without an infusion of new outside loans, the country may would have difficulty meeting an estimated $1 billion due in January, they said.

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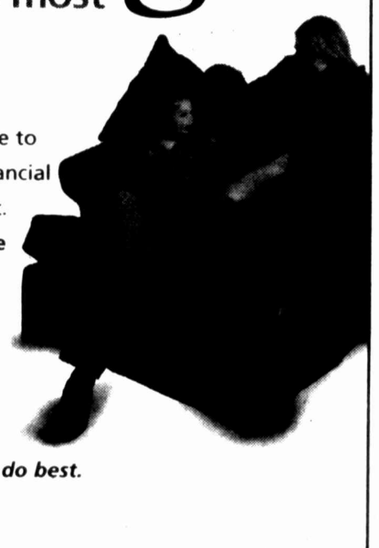
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Good samartitans arrange a Christmas surprise for soldier

By CAROLINE ABELS
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Sgt. James McTeir, 33, stationed at Fort Gordon, Ga., is going to be surprised by his mother on Christmas morning when he reaches into his stocking at her Pittsburgh home and discovers an object he thought he'd lost in a Florida motel 15 years ago — an object that has actually been hiding out in a South Carolina desk drawer.

He will then slip the object onto his finger and "ring" in the new year like no one else.

So don't tell McTeir that his beloved 1983 class ring from Turtle Creek Area High School was found Friday in Columbia, S.C., at the headquarters of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

McTeir thought the dark gold ring had disappeared on a trip to Florida he made with his father during high school, said his mother, Nancy McTeir.

Staffers at the South Carolina Tourism Department stumbled across the band in a desk drawer Friday as they were reorganizing their office furniture.

One of them suggested that Lou Fontana, head of the Tourism Department's communications and public relations section, put out a call for the owner on local television stations.

"But I said, 'No, we can do a lot better than that,'" Fontana said.

So staff members jumped onto the Internet to find the location of Turtle Creek Area High School. The school's name and "James McTeir" were the only words inscribed on the band.

"We didn't know if Turtle Creek was in Florida, Georgia, Michigan — we had no clue," Fontana said.

The search was made more frustrating by the intervening metamorphosis of Turtle Creek Area High School into Woodland Hills High School.

While staff members searched, someone told Fontana that the dark gold ring had turned up in 1991 in a "welcome center" along Interstate 95 in Dillon, S.C.

At some point the ring was sent to the Tourism Department in Columbia, which runs the welcome centers. Why it languished in the drawer for six years or where it was from 1983 until 1991 remains a mystery.

After Friday's Internet search revealed that Turtle Creek was in Pennsylvania, Fontana phoned the borough's town hall and learned the new name of Turtle Creek High School.

A guidance counselor at Woodland Hills High then found McTeir's name in some old files and put Fontana in touch with Nancy McTeir.

Fontana FedEx'd the ring to the McTeir home.

"I'm going to stuff it in his stocking," Nancy McTeir said.

James McTeir will also receive a "Smiling Faces, Beautiful Places" T-shirt from the South Carolina Department of Tourism.

(Distributed by Scripps Howard News Service.)

Wide variety of holiday celebrations across country

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

The holidays tend to make people nostalgic for the past, and there are many celebrations and open houses around the country to indulge the feeling:

• "An Old World Christmas at the Pabst Mansion" in Milwaukee is observed through Jan 16 with 19th century decorations and traditions that pay tribute to the Danish, English, German and Polish immigrants who settled in Wisconsin. For information, call (414) 931-0808.

• Folks in Wisconsin park their 4x4's and get into the spirit of things by taking a sleigh ride in the snowy countryside. Dozens of farms and riding stables across the state offer horse-drawn outings. On some, you get a ride to a Christmas tree farm and the opportunity to cut your own tree; others include stops for bonfires, marshmallow roasts and barbecues. Operators are listed in the Wisconsin Winter Event & Recreation Guide. For a free copy, call 1 (800) 432-8747.

• Benjamin Harrison, the nation's 23rd president, was the first one to put up a Christmas tree in the White House. His restored 1875 home in Indianapolis will be decorated with tree and trimmings of the period. The tree will be a duplicate of Harrison's 1889 White House tree, with wooden soldiers, hand-blown glass figures, candles and cotton batting. For information, call (317) 631-1898.

• The old-fashioned ancient oak trees and lagoons in New Orleans' City Park are illuminated by new-fashioned neon, fiberoptics and kinetic displays for the annual "Celebration in the Oaks," through Jan. 4. The park's stand of mature live oaks, said to be the largest in the world, are decorated as massive Christmas trees. Also decorated and lighted are the New Orleans Botanical Garden, Storyland and Carousel Gardens. For information call (504) 483-9415.

• Bonfires are a holiday specialty in New Orleans. The Algiers Bonfire lights up during the 5:30 p.m. ceremony on the Algiers Levee across from the courthouse. There will be a Christmas concert and caroling by candlelight on the river. Tonight, residents and visitors can see the feux de joie (fires of joy) along the levee.

• "First Night New York '98" is a 13-hour non-alcoholic revel Dec. 31-Jan. 1 in New York City, with activities all over town. Among them will be a skating party at Central Park's Wollman Rink, a masquerade ball at the Wintergarden in the World Financial Center, jazz concerts at St. Peter's Church, country-western and square dancing at the Lexington Avenue Armory, dancing in the Manhattan Mall, and pony rides in Bryant Park. Call (212) 922-9393.

• San Antonio's most glittering attraction is the illumination of its River Walk with 70,000 lights on its trees and bridges through Jam. 4. In another event, Pony Express Christmas Couriers make a 90-mile gallop from Goliad to San Antonio during "Christmas Along The Alamo-La Bahia Corridor."

• The stately Biltmore House in Asheville, N.C. recalls Christmases of the George Vanderbilt era a century ago during its holiday celebrations through Jan. 4. A 40-foot tree in the banquet hall is decorated with brightly papered packages, and there are trees in the tapestry gallery decorated with German hand-blown glass ornaments. Over 35 decorated trees are found throughout the house, along with 200 wreaths, 2,000 poinsettias, 600 hand-tied bows and nearly 22,000 feet of evergreen roping. An especially romantic time to visit is during the Candlelight Christmas Evenings, when the house is filled with glowing candles and lighted fireplaces. For information call (704) 274-6333.

• "Yuletide at Winterthur," through Jan. 11 at the du Pont estate in Winterthur, Del., evokes Christmases in the 18th and 19th centuries. There also will be trees decorated with ornaments of the 19th century. For information, call (302) 888-4600.

• Holiday visitors can see some of the most historic properties in New York's Hudson River Valley by candlelight during December. Sunnyside, home of writer Washington Irving, will have evening tours Dec. 13, 14, 19, 20, and 21. Reservations are strongly recommended; for information, call (914) 631-8200.

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Santa look-a-likes say appearance is fun, but has its downside

By BETH GALLASPY
Beaumont Enterprise

BEAUMONT — The white beard, the rosy cheeks, the belly that jiggles like a bowl full of jelly. Whether they like it or not, these guys have what it takes to light up a room full of kids year round.

Larry Gist isn't thrilled about getting mistaken for the man in red for the past 10 years, but he takes it in stride.

"Children are always very nice to me," the senior district judge said. "They think I'm on vacation."

Gist said his beloved beard and the fact that he's easy to describe to strangers are the good points about looking like Santa Claus.

"But the bad thing is it's unhealthy," he said. "I work out. I run. I chase the elves, but it doesn't get off the weight."

Jerry LaCroix, a professional musician who prefers playing rock 'n' roll to jingle bells, doesn't relish his resemblance to Santa either. He knows he can't deny it, though, especially when he wears red.

"I tell kids to be good and mind their moms," LaCroix said. How does he know they think he's Santa?

"You can tell that look," LaCroix said.

Occasionally he has used the appearance to his advantage by wearing a red hat with a white fuzzy rim and a puff ball on the end while playing at Christmas parties.

And what woman can resist that man of her girlhood dreams?

"I tell them to come sit on Santa's lap and tell me what they want for Christmas, tell me if they've been naughty or nice," he said, laughing. "So that works pretty good sometimes."

Brothers Bill and James Aldridge look almost like twin St. Nicks, though if size is any indication of the degree of jollity, Bill might have a few "ho-ho-ho's" on his younger brother.

For the pair who have taken turns filling the Santa chair at Central Mall for 13 years, though, the year-round look came after they started donning the traditional red suit at Christmas.

"I just like kids," said Bill, echoing a sentiment shared by his brother to explain their reasons for growing their white hair and beards long enough to irritate their wives.

Both used artificial beards when they first started imitating the big guy about 20 years ago. Bill decided to go for the real thing when some kids at a party wanted Santa to eat with them and he didn't know how to attempt it without consuming the beard. James shortly followed suit.

Instead of a sleigh, Bill drives a dump truck for Orange County. And while the aroma accompanying James' mode of transportation for work might resemble that of eight tiny reindeer in need of a bath, he doesn't have a sleigh either.

"I drive a garbage truck for the city of Nederland and I have kids that wait for me to come by," James said. "They stand there and wave and I open the door and holler at them: 'You better be good.'"

James introduces himself as Santa Claus and plays the part wherever he goes. He just hasn't changed the name on his driver's license or his address to the North Pole.

"I have just as much fun in street clothes as I do as Santa," James said.

For Gerold Buffalow, being told he looks like Santa has been a new experience this year. His bushy beard and long hair, brown in years past, have a smattering of gray now, prompting customers at the Christmas tree lot where he works to suggest he slip into a red suit.

He has heard kids telling their parents, "There's Santa."

"I tell them, 'No, I'm not, but I know him real well and I'm going to put in a good word for you.'"

Live Christmas tree can be worth extra effort

Scripps Howard News Service

Some people have a ball, literally, when it comes to choosing their Christmas tree.

They're the ones who buy a live tree, the kind with the heavy ball of earth around it, and plant it after displaying it in their home for a few days over the holiday.

It's a method that's becoming more popular. More than 3.5 million of the Christmas trees bought this year will be living trees.

But it's not something to be taken lightly, especially when the burlap ball on a 6-foot tree can weigh 75 to 150 pounds. Living Christmas trees — which generally cost 25 percent to 50 percent more than a cut tree — aren't for everybody.

They can be a chore, although growers point out that if the consumer doesn't mind the extra effort, the rewards can be worth it. Not only do you improve your landscaping, you plant a fond memory.

You need to purchase a tree that has enough of an earth ball on it to support the livability of the tree, say experts, who add that the ball should have 8 to 10 inches of soil per caliper inch of tree.

For example, a 3- to 4-foot-tall tree should have a 20- to 24-inch earthball. Experts recommend people buy a smaller tree with a large ball than a large tree with a small ball.

Nurserymen sometimes reduce the size of the ball to make it easier for customers to carry, but this can cut down chances of the tree surviving.

It's also important to select a tree that will do well in your particular climate. Ask a nurseryman or landscaper for help.

Most mistakes are made soon after purchase, with the tree being left inside too long or not watered properly.

Here are some other tips:

— Be sure to dig the hole for the tree when you get it home in late November or early December. Don't wait until the ground may be hard frozen.

— Pick a species suited to your area. Choose a tree with long full branches and a large root ball that is not frozen.

— Store it in an unheated area sheltered from the wind, sun and freezing temperatures. Keep the root ball slightly damp and covered.

— When you bring the tree in the house, stand it in a large container and pack sawdust, peat moss or old newspapers around the trunk. Put it near a window and away from heat or air vents.

— Don't overwater; that could cause the tree to come out of dormancy.

— After displaying the tree, acclimate it in a basement, garage or sheltered area.

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Aviary is Mountain View's touch of springtime

By DEBBIE L. JENSEN
Features Editor

No matter what the weather outside, residents, employees and visitors to Mountain View Lodge enjoy a little bit of springtime.

The nursing home earlier this year installed an aviary in its lobby, which is home to a variety of colorful, chirping and singing birds.

"Some of the people who do not join us for activities on a regular basis, do come and watch the birds," said Galynn Gamble, activities director for Mountain View.

"The residents love it, families love it, and visitors love it."

Gamble, who attended a seminar in San Antonio where she learned about the aviaries, ordered the setup and its feathered residents from Mayfair Aviaries in South Dakota.

"I knew absolutely nothing about birds," she said. "But I'm learning."

Some of the birds lay eggs and baby birds have even hatched in the aviary. They have nesting baskets, greenery, seeds, water and a birdbath. They also eat a boiled egg every day.

"It's beautiful," said resident Merle Petherbridge, who walks by the aviary several times a day while exercising at the nursing home.

"I love to watch the birds," said Winema Pearce, a resident who once had a home for many wild birds in a large backyard.

"I go up there every morning and every afternoon," Pearce said.

Gamble said the aviary appeals to many different residents for different reasons.

"So many people don't have a lot that they want to do," she said. "It really is very calming."

During the first few days after the aviary arrived, Gamble said staff and residents alike would stand in the lobby during their spare time, just watching.

It is equipped with a timer that turns the lights on and off, and lined with a corn-based substance that emits no odor, Gamble said.

The aviary is cleaned once a week, and every three months, it is maintained by the company.

It is home at present to canaries, finches, doves and two orange weavers.

They are varying shades of bright orange, blues and yellows, and browns. In the morning, they sing, and the doves coo.

"I love it in the morning, when you can hear the birds all the way down the hall," Gamble said.

"This is one of the best things we ever did down here."

HERALD photos/Debbie L. Jensen

Above, Agnes Currie, a resident of Mountain View Lodge, watches the birds in the nursing home's aviary. At right, the birds are a popular attraction for residents, visitors and staff.

Busy year in review

Dana Tarter
Extension Agent

Before we know it, 1998 will be ringing in and there will be no better time to reflect on some of the important happenings at the Howard County Extension office in the past year.

January brought the Howard County Junior Livestock show under the direction of Dusty Johnston. 4-H and FFA members exhibited their projects, demonstrated the knowledge and skills gained throughout the year and brought their animals to auction with overwhelming community support.

Parenting Survival Skills course was offered with the Extension Office and the Texas Workforce JOBS program cooperating. Sonya Metcalf provided the leadership to this program organizing the course schedule and providing training for participants in self esteem and job search skills.

Family & Community Education Clubs kicked off the year with leaders Mryl Soles, Jowili Etchison, Frances Zant and Irene Priebe traveling to Kermit to attend the District Training meeting and learn more about the State FCE program and how to manage clubs at the county level.

March was an extremely busy month with lots of activities and programs. One big event held during this month was the Howard County Ag Expo. Gibson Feagin chairs the committee that plans and organizes this event which includes, recognition of the Ag Producer of the Year and an appreciation luncheon to honor area agricultural producers.

Local Food Service Managers began a six week course "Serving Safe Food" which was conducted by the County Extension office and offered at Howard College. This course, a "train the trainer" program, focused on food safety and gave food service managers tools necessary to train employees in proper food handling.

Now changes at the County Extension office began to take place with the retirement of County Extension Agent Don Richardson in March and the move to the County Extension Office facility to the courthouse basement in April.

The annual Big Spring Area Health Fair took place in April with Marci Lykken as chair of the health committee, planning the event. Approximately 2,000 come through the doors at this event to take advantage of the screenings and other free health information available. The County Extension office had an exhibit at the fair with information on "The Silent Killer — Osteoporosis."

Junior Leadership graduation was conducted in May. A banquet meal was sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and certificates were awarded to the 23 youth who completed the program.

Please see **TARTER**, page 10A.

The gingerbread lady

Baker turns holiday creation into thriving business

By PAULA METZINGER
Lufkin Daily News

LUFKIN — Marill Gerth is rolling in dough -- thick, brown, sticky, spicy gingerbread dough.

The Lufkin woman has turned a family Christmas project into a thriving business where the oven never cools down.

Working at a pace that would send Santa's elves into a tailspin, employees at Gingerbread Delights by Marill were preparing enough 10-inch gingerbread boy and girl cookies to populate a city.

And like the gingerbread man in the familiar children's story, these gingerbread creations will run away to the shelves of Neiman Marcus, Dillard's, Nordstrom's and other department stores to add to the enchantment of Christmas in homes across the country.

"It started in Dallas in 1981, with a gingerbread house on the mini-page of the newspaper. We had always done a birthday cake for Jesus and wanted to make a gingerbread house," Mrs. Gerth said. "I really did start in my kitchen with my family."

The first venture was successful and then came houses made for Girl Scout troops, Boy Scout troops, friends and family.

In 1983 the Gerths moved to Lufkin and she dreamed of starting her own gingerbread house business while working as a dental hygienist at the Lufkin State School.

"I've always known from the first I wanted to do gingerbread houses," she said. "There's no right or wrong. You can do it any way you want and if you think you made a mistake you can wipe it off and start over."

Mrs. Gerth said she would buy gingerbread house kits on the market and knew she could make a better product.

'There's no right or wrong. You can do it any way you want and if you think you made a mistake you can wipe it off and start over.'
Marill Gerth

And being a Texan, and more specifically a Dallas, Texan, she dreamed of marketing her gingerbread houses to Neiman-Marcus.

"I called (Neiman's) and said 'I have something I really want to show you'," she said.

The woman at Neiman's said just send us one, Mrs. Gerth said.

"Well, I just decided I would make one and take it to them and then they would have to see me. They just said leave it and we will call you. But that didn't dampen my spirits," she said.

She left the kit at Neiman's and came back to Lufkin to wait for a call.

Neiman's did call, but they wanted the houses assembled. Mrs. Gerth said she wasn't sure she could ship the finished product and asked for a summer to work on the shipping problem.

The summer of 1995, gingerbread houses left Lufkin and arrived in Dallas with varying problems.

They would call and say the icing fell off or the roof was broken, she said.

Finally, using double boxing, the product arrived in Dallas safe and sound and Gingerbread Delights by Marill had it's first contract.

Not only for the houses, they also wanted a line of cookies, she said.

Mrs. Gerth and her elves, otherwise known as family, friends and friends of friends, started mixing and baking to fill Neiman's order. Working out of borrowed space after regular hours in a local bakery and in her own home they managed to meet the order of the famous department store.

This year the company has moved out of borrowed space to it's own building furnished with equipment purchased from a salvage company.

Customers have also expanded and the cookies are featured in Dillard's Christmas catalog and are marketed through Gourmet Food Products. Gingerbread Delight cookies are sold at "The Very Thing" and in Nacogdoches at "The Cottage" and "Coffee with Style at Schmidt's."

On a recent day workers were mixing, baking, icing, packing and loading boxes while a delivery truck waited in the drive. And the smell of freshly-baked gingerbread filled the air.

All around, stacked on top of one another and on stainless steel cooling racks were silver cookie sheets filled with gingerbread cookies in the shape of boys, girls, snowflakes, Santas, angels and snowmen.

There was a "morgue" filled with pieces of cookies that didn't make it and a "hospital" tray filled with cookies that needed to be re-decorated.

In the tiny office at Gingerbread Delights a subdivision of gingerbread houses filled a table top. The Texas house had a Texas-shaped door while the traditional Christmas house featured a door shaped like a Christmas tree.

There was also a Black Forest Chalet, Noah's Ark, complete with animals and Mr. and Mrs. Noah and a nativity.

SUPPORT GROUPS

MONDAY

•Al-A-Teen, 7:30 p.m., 615 Settles.

•Turning Point A.A., 8-9 p.m., St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 10th and Goliad. Open to all substance abusers.

•TOPS Club (Take off Pounds Sensibly), weigh-in 5:15 p.m., Best Home Health Care, 1710 E. Marcy Dr., 6:15 p.m. Call 263-1340 or 263-8633.

•Project Freedom, Christian support group for survivors of physical/emotional/sexual and/or spiritual abuse. Call 263-5140 or 263-2241 for dates/times of upcoming groups.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon open meeting.

•Encouragers Support Group (formerly Widow/Widower support group) first and third Mondays each month. First Monday meetings are at a local restaurant at 6 p.m. Third Monday meetings are at 5:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church Seventh and Runnels (enter through north door). Various activities, guest speakers, games, covered dish supper, visit. For more information call 398-5522 or 399-4369.

•Big Spring Group of Narcotics Anonymous, 6 p.m., St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1001 Goliad.

TUESDAY

•Support for MS and Related Diseases, 6:30 p.m. second Tuesday of each month, Canterbury South, Public invited. Call Leslie, 267-1069.

•Al-Anon, 8 p.m., 615 Settles.

•Seniors' diabetic support group, 2 p.m., Canterbury South. Call 263-1265.

•Compassionate Friends support group for parents who have experienced death of a child, 7:30 p.m. first Tuesday in February, April, June, August, October and December in the Family Life Center Building, First Baptist Church, 705 West Marcy. Enter by southeast door. Call 267-2769.

•Cancer support group, first Tuesday of each month, 7-8 p.m., VA Medical Center room 213. Call Beverly Rice, 268-5077.

•"Most Excellent Way," a chemical dependency support group, Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Living Water Church, 1008 Birdwell Lane. Call 267-1424 after 5 p.m. or 263-3168 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon open meeting and 8 p.m. closed meeting.

•Family Education and Support, sponsored by Howard County Mental Health Center, meets the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at 319 Runnels. For more information call Shannon Nabors at 263-0027.

•The Big Spring Alliance for the Mentally Ill meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 409 Runnels (formerly the TU building) For further information call Sondra at 267-7220

•Samaritan Counseling Center of West Texas will have Dr. Ronald Meyer, D.Min., LCDC, LMFT, specializing in individual and marriage counseling, Attention Deficit Disorder and chemical dependency, available for clients at the First Christian Church. Appointments for counseling services are made by calling 1-800-329-4144.

•Narcotics Anonymous, 6:30 p.m., St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

WEDNESDAY

•Gamblers Anonymous, 7 p.m., St. Stephen's Catholic Church, room 1, 4601 Neeley, Midland. Call 263-8920.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon open meeting and 8 p.m. 12 and 12 study.

•Samaritan Counseling Center of West Texas will have Sharon Beam, licensed professional counselor interim specializing in play therapy for children, adolescent counseling and women's issues, available for clients at the First Presbyterian Church, Runnels and Eighth St. Appointments

Please see **SUPPORT**, page 10A.

SLICE of *life!*

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Put the brakes on holiday drunk driving this year

(NAPS) — About 1,868 lives could be saved on the road this holiday season. That's how many people died in alcohol-related car collisions in the U.S. between Thanksgiving and New Year's in 1996.

Whether you're the host of a party or the guest, the more you know about drinking and driving, the better. Here are some common myths:

•Myth: You can sober up with black coffee, a cold shower, fresh air or exercise.

Reality: The only thing that sobers up a drinker is time; about one hour per ounce of liquor.

•Myth: You can tell if someone is sober just by looking at them.

Reality: Some people can hardly stand when they are drunk; others appear normal, but both are impaired.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Holiday camp continues

Big Spring Family YMCA is planning a holiday camp for children in the community whose parents must work during the school break.

The camp continues Friday, Monday, Tuesday, and Jan. 2. Hours are 6:30 a.m.-6 p.m. For more information, call 267-8234.

IRS volunteer training

The Internal Revenue Service is looking for volunteers to assist taxpayers with preparation of their 1997 Income Tax Returns. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) training for volunteers will be Monday-Friday, Jan. 12-16 from 9:30 a.m. to noon at the First Presbyterian Church, Eighth and Runnels.

For more information call Dorothy Kennemur at 398-5522.

THE LAST WORD

I often quote myself. It adds spice to my conversation.
George Bernard Shaw

The cost of living has gone up another dollar a quart.
W.C. Fields

I'd be astounded if this planet is still going by 50 years from now. I don't think we will reach 2000. It would be miraculous.
Alistair Cooke

Christmas Reader's Corner

"Holly Golly Sleigh"

I was on my way, to see my kids in Pa.,
felling so lucky and jolly.
When my danged ole Sleigh
got tangled up in Holly, by Golly.
Would you believe I had no fear,
my only dream was to see
my children so dear.
The nigh was cold and the
stars were shining bright.
So I took a different turn,
just to see the sights.
Before I knew it, it had
started to snow and low and
behold, I had landed at the North Pole.
Well golly, I've always dreamed
about going to Ak., and the
first thing I thought was of
Wayne and Ray.
I took one more turn and
headed that way
in this danged ole Holly Golly Sleigh.
By then it was late and I
was feeling real cold,
so I hitched my Sleigh
to a star for home.
It wasn't long before
I heard someone call,
Merry Christmas Mom and
Happy New Year from all.

By: Mozelle Osborne

•••

"Only a'Sleeping"

Oh, blow ye winds
over the prairie
and blow ye wind
over his grave
a handsome young
cowboy, lies sleeping
and the wind blows
over his grave
An old wolf came down
from the hillside
bringing red berries
to lay
he howled and he
mourned for the cowboy
and the berries he
lay on his grave
The cowboy was rounding
up cattle,
his horse a wild
pony, 'they say'
he 'spooked' and he
threw the poor cowboy
and he died on the
ground where he lay.
Six mounted cowboys
came riding
from out of the west
there that day
they buried him out on the prairie,
in a spot on the
ground where he lay.
The wolf brought the
berries for cowboy
who died there
on that Christmas Day
He knows that he's
only a'sleeping
but he sleeps in as
cold shallow grave.
Oh blow ye wind
over the prairie,
singing a song
by his grave
And the old wolf
joined in with
the wind song
and he howled
and he mourned
by his grave.

By: Bernice Reed Jones

SUPPORT

Continued from page 9A.

for counseling services are made by calling 1-800-329-4144.

THURSDAY

•Salvation Army drug education program, sponsored by Permian Basin Regional Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, 7 p.m., Salvation Army building, 308 Aylford.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon open meeting.

•Grief Support related to the death of a loved one. Call Nurses Unlimited, Inc., at 264-6523.

•Alzheimer's Association Support Group, fourth Thursday of the month, Comanche Trail Nursing Center, 3200 Parkway, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY

•Turning Point A.A., 8-9:30 p.m., St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 10th and Goliad. Open to all substance abusers.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon open meeting and 8 p.m. Big Book Study.

SATURDAY

•Alzheimer's Association Support Group, second Saturday of the month, Carriage Inn Retirement Center, 501 W. 17th, 10 a.m.

•Family support group for current and former patients and their families, 1 p.m. weekly, Reflections Unit of Scenic Mountain Medical Center. Call Beverly Grant, 263-0074.

•Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon, 8 p.m., 10 p.m. open meetings, 615 Settles.

TARTER

Continued from page 9A.

June brought travel to Texas A&M University for 4-H members Katie Gaskins, Clay Hart, Lindsay Moates, Tonya Tabor, Taylor Bristow and Jerod Johnston to participate in State 4-H Roundup. District 4-H Teen Leadership Lab at Howard College which brought 50 4-H members and leaders from across the West Texas area to participate in leadership building activities and elect District officers for the 1997-98 4-H year.

The 4-H Junior Rodeo was held in July with Johnny and Cindy Middleton chairing the planning committee for this event which raises funds for the Howard County 4-H program.

Keith Klement moved to Archer County to assume duties there as County Extension Agent-Agriculture and Howard County welcomed David Kight as County Extension Agent Agriculture. 4-H members in the Shooting Sports program were busy preparing for the District and State Shooting Sports contest.

August found 4-H families attending a 4-H Fun Night at the YMCA, re-enrolling in 4-H and planning activities for the upcoming year under the leadership of officers, Katie Gaskins, Clay Hart, Brandon Neagle, Brennan Bailey, Nick Bailey, Lindsay Moates, Kyle Kight, Cassie Gover and Club Managers Donna Bibb and Julie Bailey.

September kicked off with the Howard County Fair. The 4-H Omelet Supper event chaired by Teresa Gaskins, involved all 4-H families in a fundraising effort that exceeded profits of previous years. Under the leadership of Mike Moates and Farm Bureau the Ag in the Classroom program reached over 500 Howard county fourth and fifth grade students. Assistant Agriculture Agent Brandon McGinty officially begins duties in Howard County.

The Annual Pecan Show and Pecan Food Show was held in November with local growers and bakers showing off their skills at the county courthouse.

In December 4-H members ended the year by volunteering their time at the West Texas Food Bank. This community service project will be ongoing throughout 1998 but what a special, final 4-H project for 1997.

It has been a busy year with lots of changes and the programs mentioned here are just a few that have taken place. The volunteers mentioned are too, just a few that have provided valuable leadership in 1997.

To find out more about the Texas Agricultural Extension Service in Howard County, call 264-2236.

SPORTS

Big Spring Herald
Wednesday, Dec. 24, 1997

SCOREBOARD

On the Tube

College Basketball
AU-Puerto Rico vs. Arkansas, 11 a.m., FXS, Ch. 29
Michigan vs. Murray State, 1:30 p.m., FXS, Ch. 29
Iowa vs. Texas Christian, 4 p.m., FXS, Ch. 29
St. Louis vs. Syracuse, 6:30 p.m., FXS, Ch. 29

On the Tube

College Football
Bowl Kickoff and Season Review, 6:30 p.m., ESPN, Ch. 30
Other
Arete Awards for Courage, 9 p.m., ESPN, Ch. 30

Got a story idea or a sports news tip?
Call Sports, 263-7331 Ext. 233
or leave voice mail

Port Arthur educator inducted into Black Sports Hall of Fame

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

PORT ARTHUR — Arreader Guidry sits tucked away in a tiny office at Lincoln High School, shuttling students in and out and taking phone calls from parents.

There's not an empty spot on a wall, and every inch of desk and cabinet space holds tangible memories of her past.

Plaques, proclamations, pictures — pictures of young people and people who once were young. She touched all their lives.

The plaques honor her perfect attendance — 46 years' worth.

She reaches out to caress the petals of flowers sent to her from an admirer. On her desk she arranges a greeting card lovingly signed by a former student. A lump rises in her throat, tears gather at the rims of her eyes. The emotions sometimes are too much.

During all her years at Lincoln, Ms. Guidry spent her time lending a hand — sometimes stern, but more often gentle — in raising a lot of children on the west side of Port Arthur.

She's taught generations. She'll be 81 this January and, after 55 years in education, she's the oldest active educator in the state of Texas.

And she's determined to touch more lives before she's through.

Many of the children she deals with today are great-grandchildren of those she taught when she started at Lincoln back in 1949.

Now, after years of self-sacrifice, Ms. Guidry finally got the chance for some self-satisfaction. She was inducted into the Texas Black Sports Hall of Fame in Dallas earlier this month.

She spends time in the classroom teaching English and health.

But she says she learned the most on the school's old graveled track.

She coached 16 consecutive state-championship track teams and eight consecutive state-championship basketball teams in the Prairie View Interscholastic League, the governing organization for black high school sports during segregation.

Even more important, she fought sex discrimination in her own school and won. And she did it without money or new uniforms or the prestige.

She always commanded respect and always got it.

"For my girls, it was God first and me next," she said.

She wraps herself in those memories. Like a good book, she cuddles up with her life story, sometimes patting herself deservedly on the back.

She is nothing like the stereotypical woman of her era. She is strong-willed and self-confident. Brazen and aggressive.

She taught by living the life she wanted her students to live. She takes credit for doing everything she could to help others achieve their goals. But mostly she gives credit to those who touched her life.

"I look around and see girls who I coached and how I affected their lives and how they affected mine," she said. "It was always give and take."

Early in her life and during most of her coaching career, it was more give than take.

Ms. Guidry's mother died giving birth to her. She lived with her grandparents and her older sister started baby sitting her by taking her to school each day.

"I guess since I was so young, I was just absorbing everything," Ms. Guidry said. "I don't remember actually learning my ABCs or my multiplication tables. It all was just a part of me."

When she did start school for real, she started as a fifth grader. Called a

See **GUIDRY**, page 3B

Sun Bowl zero-gain for Iowa

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Iowa isn't about to apologize for bringing nearly 700 people to the Dec. 31 Sun Bowl game, athletic director Bob Bowlsby says.

"We don't have any apologies to make for the way we do things," he said. "I think what we do is very consistent with what goes on nationwide relative to bowl travel, if not a little bit on the austere side."

Hawkeye fans have purchased only 2,000 of the 8,000 tickets the university was required to buy, which means about $210,000 will be deducted from the $1 million guarantee to cover the unsold $35 tickets.

Travel, lodging and meal expenses for the team, marching band, cheerleaders, pompon squad, athletic department staff, university administrators and their spouses and families will consume much of the remaining $790,000.

"That's what it takes to transport 700 people to a bowl site," Bowlsby said. "When you take that number of people on the road, it's a very major airlift."

The chartered aircraft alone will cost $300,000, he said.

The athletic department was criticized for spending nearly all of the $1 million the football team received for playing in last year's Alamo Bowl in San Antonio, Texas. But Bowlsby rejected that criticism and said things will be handled in a similar manner this year when the Hawkeyes take on No. 16 Arizona State.

Some Big Ten Conference schools take up to 2,000 people to their bowl games, Bowlsby said.

The Big Ten views the $1 million as expense money, not as potential athletic department income, he said.

In fact, schools that spend less than $1 million are not even required to submit a detailed accounting of expenses to the league.

Bowlsby's boss, Ann Rhodes, said bowl travel is governed by conference rules, university policy and state law. The university complies with all three, said Rhodes, vice president for university relations.

Last year, spouses and children were allowed to accompany athletic department employ-

See **IOWA**, page 3B

End of an era?

Switzer won't be only sweeping change

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

IRVING — Barry Switzer's days at Valley Ranch appear numbered, with owner Jerry Jones the only one who can say when that number is up.

While the end of the four-year Switzer era appears near, other changes will sweep through the Dallas Cowboys after their most disappointing season since 1989, when Jimmy Johnson was a rookie NFL coach in a 1-15 campaign.

Offensive coordinator Ernie Zampese expects to be fired and several veteran players probably have played their final game as Cowboys.

Dallas dozed through a 20-7 loss to the NFC East champion New York Giants on Sunday to end the season at 6-10. Dallas will have the No. 8 spot in the draft, highest since 1991.

Switzer is 45-26 with the Cowboys, but his teams have been 17-17, including playoff games, since they beat Pittsburgh in the 1996 Super Bowl.

The Cowboys' vast complex was shut down Monday for the holidays. Owner Jerry Jones has said nothing would be done regarding coaching or personnel changes until late January or February.

It is the first time the Cowboys haven't been in the playoffs since 1990.

Jones knows changes have to made, even though it may include the painful dismissal or reassignment of his close friend Switzer.

"I'm not looking at this thing through rose-colored glasses," Jones said. "We have a lot of work to be done."

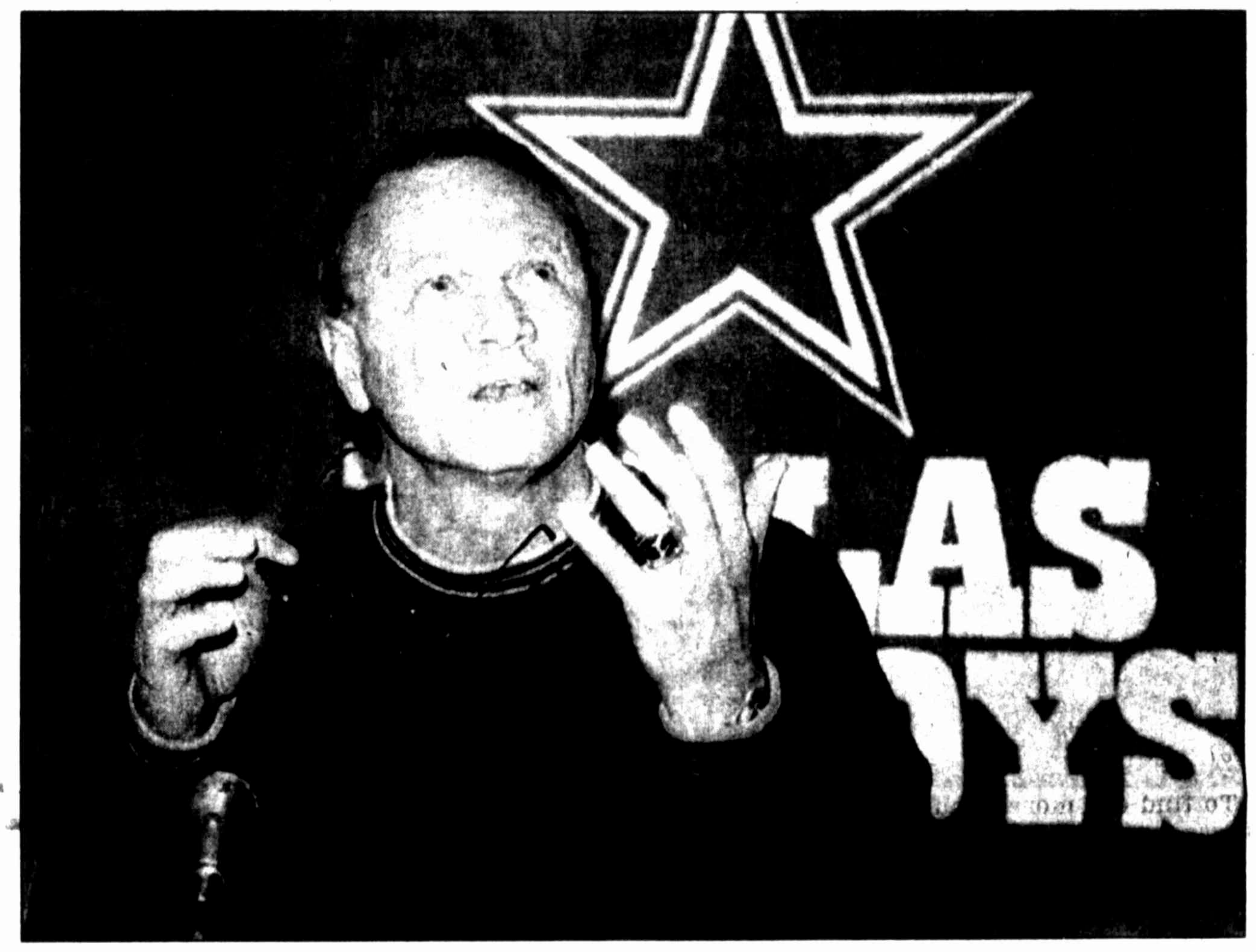
Switzer himself said his days as coach are probably over.

"I'm not sure I want to come back," Switzer said. "I'll sit down with Jerry and talk about it and then we'll let you know what we decide. There will be a lot of changes."

Switzer said he and Jones have talked about a possible consultant role, but Jones corrected his coach by saying they have never talked. Jones considers Switzer a good evaluator of talent and, besides, Switzer has several years to go on his $1 million per year contract.

Jones is already talking like he and Switzer have had a good run.

'I feel very rewarded that Barry and our team have a Super Bowl ring," Jones said. "This would be very hard to take if that didn't happen."



AP Laserphoto

Dallas Cowboys coach Barry Switzer, show here during a press conference following a playoff win over Philadelphia two years ago, doesn't figure to be in team owner Jerry Jones' plans for long. Other big changes in the team could also be coming.

While Switzer went Christmas shopping, Jones had his own shopping list for players.

Dallas' dynamic trio of quarterback Troy Aikman, wide receiver Michael Irvin and Emmitt Smith, will return although they all had subpar seasons.

Aikman had 19 touchdown passes, but served up 12 interceptions.

"I'm disappointed with my performance and the team's and I look forward to doing what it takes to get this team back to where it was," Aikman said. "In fact, if we can get things together I'd like to play another six years."

Irvin caught 75 passes for 1,180 yards, but had only nine TD receptions. He spent most of the season being double-covered.

Smith, despite injuries, still managed 1,074 yards behind a banged-up offensive line.

Both Irvin and Smith will return because it would cost too much against the salary cap for Jones to trade them.

Dallas desperately needs a pass-rushing end. Broderick Thomas, Shante Carver and Kavika Pittman were busts this year. Jones could trade up to help the Cowboys' miserable pass rush.

The Cowboys also need offensive linemen. Veteran Mark Tuinei is unlikely to return because of injuries which kept him on the sidelines most of the season.

Guard Nate Newton was overweight and injured most of the year. Dallas wants him back, but 40 to 50 pounds lighter.

Dallas must re-sign free agent Larry Allen, who moved from right guard to left tackle late in the season and was most impressive. His free agency price tag could be around $4 million a year.

Wide receiver Anthony Miller is a free agent, but Jones has indicated the Cowboys want to re-sign him.

"I want to come back to the Cowboys and finish what we started," Miller said.

Fullback and kick returner Herschel Walker also may have played his last game for the Cowboys.

"I want to return," Walker said. "I don't want to be like a rat jumping off a ship."

Defensively, 15-year veteran Bill Bates could also be a victim of the salary cap. Bates wants to break the Dallas career record of seasons played, but the Cowboys probably could save $150,000 by going to a younger player.

Free agent safety Brock Marion probably won't be back because he will command a high salary, and the Cowboys don't want to be part of a bidding war because rookie Omar Stoutmire showed promise.

Dallas will be better on the defensive line if tackle Leon Lett stays on his drug rehabilitation program. Lett missed the first 13 games of '97 because of an NFL-mandated suspension.

Broken ribs to Deion Sanders cost the Cowboys his services for the last three games.

A big question mark for the Cowboys is whether fullback Daryl Johnston can return from a herniated disc in his neck.

Rodman is Bulls' nice guy?

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

DEERFIELD, Ill. — Dennis Rodman has a "smiley" face painted on the back of his head, has only three technical fouls this season and hasn't been late for a Chicago Bulls game in a month.

Beneath all those tattoos and body piercings — could the Worm really be a nice guy?

"Dennis is staying out of trouble," Michael Jordan said. "We probably expected him to be a pain in the butt this year but he hasn't been. He's just gone out and rebounded and done his job. You have to respect that."

Only a few weeks after saying he was bored with basketball, Rodman is calm, content and committed. He wants to win a seventh consecutive NBA rebounding title and to help the Bulls capture their sixth championship of the 1990s.

"I'm just enjoying this year. I'm having a lot of fun," said Rodman, the flamboyant forward from Dallas who is averaging 14 rebounds and is coming off a season-high 24-board effort against New Jersey. "I'm not trying to make a statement or trying to be the flamboyant kid on the block."

One look at his head shows he hasn't totally given up his flamboyance. It might be the most imaginative dye-job yet for Rodman, who has been coloring his short-cropped hair for several years.

The base coat is yellow. On the back are two black dots and a black smile, arranged to form the famous symbol from the '70s. His hairline is trimmed with red and green for the holiday season.

"It's all for the kids who turn on the NBA: Have a ... nice day," Rodman said, throwing in a profanity to demonstrate that he isn't totally reformed.

"I love having the most famous hair in the world. People wonder what's going to happen next. It was (trainer) Chip Schaefer's doing. Chip told me, 'Be a happy face, shock everybody.' Well, here it is."

Much more shocking has been the on-court demeanor of a guy who was assessed 25 technical fouls in 1996-97 — followed by at least one in each of last season's first 13 playoff games.

This year? No tirades, no head-butts, few skirmishes with

See **RODMAN**, page 3B

Lions' Brown has surgery, may end career

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

PONTIAC, Mich. — Because he is young and healthy, Reggie Brown's chances of recovery are good. Yet his football career appears to be over.

The Detroit linebacker had neck surgery Monday after his spine was injured during Sunday's victory over the New York Jets that put the Lions into the playoffs. He will wear a neck brace known as a halo the next three months.

Team physician Dr. David Collon said the surgery to fuse the first and second vertebra in Brown's neck went well at Detroit's Henry Ford Hospital.

"His condition remains stable," Collon said. "At this point, we begin the process of observation to see how his condition progresses."

Brown's face turned blue after a collision on a tackle, and a doctor gave him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on the field.

"At this point, it is hard to say how serious and how permanent his injury is," Collon said. "The first 72 hours after such an injury are important. The next two weeks also will tell us a lot."

When asked if the 23-year-old player's career was over, Collon said: "I guess you could make that supposition."

Brown, who was carried off the Silverdome field in an ambulance Sunday, regained consciousness at a Pontiac hospital, Collon said. After about 45 minutes, Brown was taken to Henry Ford Hospital, where he will remain for about two weeks.

"He was unconscious until just before we got to the hospital," said Dr. Terry Lock, another team physician. "Then, he was very lucid. He was especially worried about his girlfriend."

Collon said Brown had a clear understanding of his situation and was handling it very well.

"He's starting from a very good position," Collon said. "He's strong, he's young and he's healthy. I'd say his chances are very good."

Lions coach Bobby Ross said he visited with Brown briefly Monday.

"Reggie was very happy that we won the game," Ross said. "It wasn't a long conversation."

With the victory, the Lions captured a spot in the playoffs, but the celebration was tempered by the injury that caused the raucous Silverdome crowd to fall almost silent. Brown's injury in the fourth quarter delayed play for 17 minutes as medical personnel worked to revive him.

See **BROWN**, page 3B

[illegible] to Snyder

[illegible] in the same position for [illegible] fourth quarter and having [illegible]es.

The [illegible] district basketball victory for Snyder [illegible]

[illegible] first quarter, 15-12, and by [illegible] with the Tigers for [illegible]

How[illegible] minutes, Snyder enjoyed a [illegible] approached coach Gary [illegible] an aggressive style of [illegible] teams and traps.

[illegible] and the result was a 23-[illegible] paced Big Spring with 19 [illegible]

[illegible] to take chances like that," [illegible] well and it really wasn't a blowout [illegible] many chances there late in the [illegible]

SPORTS EXTRA

TRANSACTIONS

BASEBALL
American League

ANAHEIM ANGELS—Declined to offer a 1998 contract to OF Tony Phillips. Signed INF Chip Hale to a minor-league contract.

BALTIMORE ORIOLES—Declined to offer 1998 contracts to OF Geronimo Berroa and 3B Willie Otanez.

DETROIT TIGERS—Declined to offer 1998 contracts to 1B Bob Hamelin and RHP Fernando Hernandez. Agreed to terms with C Joe Oliver on a minor-league contract.

NEW YORK YANKEES—Agreed to terms with RHP Darren Holmes on a three-year contract.

OAKLAND ATHLETICS—Agreed to terms with INF Kurt Abbott, C Damon Berryhill, RHP Buddy Groom and OF Shane Mack on one-year contracts. Declined to offer 1998 contracts to SS Tilson Brito and C Izzy Molina.

SEATTLE MARINERS—Agreed to terms with LHP Tim Davis on one-year contract. Named Joe Chard and Gail Hunter corporate sales directors and Giles Dowden corporate marketing manager.

TAMPA BAY DEVIL RAYS—Declined to offer a 1998 contract to LHP Ryan Karp.

TEXAS RANGERS—Agreed to terms with INF Tom Quinlan and OF Joe Hall on minor-league contracts.

TORONTO BLUE JAYS—Declined to offer 1998 contracts to 2B Carlos Garcia and INF Jeff Patzke.

National League

ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS—Named Dwayne Murphy first base and outfield coach.

ATLANTA BRAVES—Declined to offer 1988 contracts to 2B Mike Mordecai and C Tim Spehr. Agreed to terms with RHP Brian Edmondson on a one-year contract.

FLORIDA MARLINS—Agreed to terms with INF Randy Knorr on a minor-league contract.

COLORADO ROCKIES—Declined to offer a 1998 contract to RHP Steve Reed.

HOUSTON ASTROS—Signed C Marc Ronan, OF Rob Butler, OF Dax Jones, RHP Bob MacDonald and LHP Bob Scanlan to minor-league contracts.

MILWAUKEE BREWERS—Declined to offer a 1998 contract to OF Matt Mieske.

MONTREAL EXPOS—Declined to offer a 1998 contract to INF Andy Stankiewicz.

NEW YORK METS—Traded OF Carl Everett to the Houston Astros for RHP John Hudek.

PITTSBURGH PIRATES—Named Tracy Woodson manager of Erie of the New York-Penn League.

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS—Declined to offer 1998 contracts to RHP Brian Barber and OF Miguel Mejia.

BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association

NEW YORK KNICKS—Placed C Patrick Ewing on the injured list. Activated F Ronnie Grandison.

FOOTBALL
National Football League

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS—Fired Lindy Infante, coach, and Bill Tobin, director of football operations.

NEW YORK GIANTS—Signed TE Alfred Pupuno.

HOCKEY
National Hockey League

NHL—Suspended Boston Bruins F Ted Donato for three games, without pay, and fined him $1,000 for receiving a match penalty for high-sticking in a game on Dec. 20.

MINNESOTA HOCKEY—Named Bill Robertson director of communications.

PHOENIX COYOTES—Placed D Sean Gagnon and LW Jim McKegzie on the injured list.

COLLEGE

AMERICAN SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE—Announced East Texas Baptist University will join the league.

COASTAL CAROLINA—Named Shaun Docking men's soccer coach.

FRANKLIN & MARSHALL—Announced the resignation of Doug Harris, men's soccer coach. Named Chris Shinn men's soccer coach.

LAFAYETTE—Announced the resignation of Nelson Rodriguez, men's soccer coach.

ST. PETER'S—Announced the resignation of Gerry McKeown, men's soccer coach.

NBA

Tuesday's Games
Dallas at Cleveland
Charlotte at Boston
L.A. Clippers at Chicago
Indiana at San Antonio
Sacramento at Portland
Minnesota at Seattle
Denver at Golden State
Today's Games
No games scheduled
Thursday's Games
Houston at Utah, 2 p.m.
Miami at Chicago, 4:30 p.m.

NHL

Tuesday's Games
Detroit at Buffalo
New Jersey at Washington
Montreal at Ottawa
Tampa Bay at N.Y. Rangers
Carolina at Philadelphia
St. Louis at Florida
Edmonton at Toronto
Los Angeles at Colorado
Calgary at Phoenix
Dallas at Vancouver
Today's Games
No games scheduled
Thursday's Games
No games scheduled
Friday's Games
Pittsburgh at Washington, 6 p.m.
Florida at Carolina, 6:30 p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Buffalo, 6:30 p.m.
N.Y. Islanders at New Jersey, 6:30 p.m.
Toronto at Detroit, 6:30 p.m.
Chicago at St. Louis, 7:30 p.m.
Phoenix at San Jose, 9:30 p.m.

BOWL GAMES

Thursday, Dec. 25
Blue-Gray Classic
At Montgomery, Ala.
Blue vs. Gray, Noon (ABC)
Aloha Bowl
At Honolulu
Michigan State (7-4) vs. Washington (7-4), 2:30 p.m. (ABC)

* * *

Friday, Dec. 26
Motor City Bowl
At Pontiac, Mich.
Marshall (10-2) vs. Mississippi (7-4), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

* * *

Saturday, Dec. 27
Heritage Bowl
At Atlanta
South Carolina State (9-2) vs. Southern University (10-1), 1:30 p.m. (ESPN)
Insight.com Bowl
At Tucson, Ariz.
Arizona (6-5) vs. New Mexico (9-3), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

* * *

Sunday, Dec. 28
Independence Bowl
At Shreveport, La.
LSU (8-3) vs. Notre Dame (7-5), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

* * *

Monday, Dec. 29
Humanitarian Bowl
At Boise, Idaho
Utah State (6-5) vs. Cincinnati (7-4), 2:30 p.m. (ESPN2)
Carquest Bowl
At Miami
Georgia Tech (6-5) vs. West Virginia (7-4), 6:30 p.m. (TBS)
Holiday Bowl
At San Diego
Missouri (7-4) vs. Colorado State (10-2), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

* * *

Tuesday, Dec. 30
Alamo Bowl
At San Antonio
Oklahoma State (8-3) vs. Purdue (8-3), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

* * *

Wednesday, Dec. 31
Sun Bowl
At El Paso, Texas
Arizona State (8-3) vs. Iowa (7-4), 1 p.m. (CBS)
Liberty Bowl
At Memphis, Tenn.
Pittsburgh (6-5) vs. Southern Mississippi (8-3), 2:30 p.m. (ESPN)
Fiesta Bowl
At Tempe, Ariz.
Kansas State (10-1) vs. Syracuse (9-3), 6 p.m. (CBS)

* * *

Thursday, Jan. 1
Outback Bowl
At Tampa, Fla.
Wisconsin (8-4) vs. Georgia (9-2), 10 a.m. (ESPN)
Gator Bowl
At Jacksonville, Fla.
North Carolina (10-1) vs. Virginia Tech (7-4), 11:30 a.m. (NBC)
Citrus Bowl
At Orlando, Fla.
Penn State (9-2) vs. Florida (9-2), 12 p.m. (ABC)
Cotton Bowl
At Dallas
Texas A&M (9-3) vs. UCLA (9-2), 12:30 p.m. (CBS)
Rose Bowl
At Pasadena, Calif.
Michigan (11-0) vs. Washington State (10-1), 4 p.m. (ABC)
Sugar Bowl
At New Orleans
Florida State (10-1) vs. Ohio State (10-2), 7 p.m. (ABC)

* * *

Friday, Jan. 2
Peach Bowl
At Atlanta
Clemson (7-4) vs. Auburn (9-3), 2 p.m. (ESPN)
Orange Bowl
At Miami
Nebraska (12-0) vs. Tennessee (11-1), 7 p.m. (CBS)

FINAL NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
x-New England	10	6	0	.625	369	289
y-Miami	9	7	0	.563	339	327
N.Y. Jets	9	7	0	.563	348	287
Buffalo	6	10	0	.375	255	367
Indianapolis	3	13	0	.188	313	401
Central						
x-Pittsburgh	11	5	0	.688	372	307
y-Jacksonville	11	5	0	.688	394	318
Tennessee	8	8	0	.500	333	310
Cincinnati	7	9	0	.438	355	405
Baltimore	6	9	1	.406	326	345
West						
x-Kansas City	13	3	0	.813	375	232
y-Denver	12	4	0	.750	472	287
Seattle	8	8	0	.500	365	362
Oakland	4	12	0	.250	324	419
San Diego	4	12	0	.250	266	425

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
x-N.Y. Giants	10	5	1	.656	307	265
Washington	8	7	1	.531	327	289
Philadelphia	6	9	1	.406	317	372
Dallas	6	10	0	.375	304	314
Arizona	4	12	0	.250	283	379
Central						
x-Green Bay	13	3	0	.813	422	282
y-Tampa Bay	10	6	0	.625	299	263
y-Detroit	9	7	0	.563	379	306
y-Minnesota	9	7	0	.563	354	359
Chicago	4	12	0	.250	263	421
West						
x-San Francisco	13	3	0	.813	375	265
Carolina	7	9	0	.438	265	314
Atlanta	7	9	0	.438	320	361
New Orleans	6	10	0	.375	237	327
St. Louis	5	11	0	.313	299	359

x-won division title
y-clinched playoff berth
Saturday's Games
Green Bay 31, Buffalo 21
St. Louis 30, Carolina 18
Sunday's Games
Cincinnati 16, Baltimore 14
Tampa Bay 31, Chicago 15
Minnesota 39, Indianapolis 28
Kansas City 25, New Orleans 13
New York Giants 20, Dallas 7
Washington 35, Philadelphia 32
Tennessee 16, Pittsburgh 6
Arizona 29, Atlanta 26
Jacksonville 20, Oakland 9
Detroit 13, New York Jets 10
Denver 38, San Diego 3
Seattle 38, San Francisco 9
Monday's Game
New England 14, Miami 12
End Regular Season

NFL PLAYOFFS

Wild Cards
Saturday, Dec. 27
Minnesota at N.Y. Giants, 11:30 a.m. (ABC)
Jacksonville at Denver, 3 p.m. (ABC)
Sunday, Dec. 28
Miami at New England, 11:30 a.m. (NBC)
Detroit at Tampa Bay, 3 p.m. (FOX)

* * *

Divisional Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 3
Denver, Jacksonville, or New England at Pittsburgh, 11:30 a.m. (NBC)
Detroit, Minnesota or Tampa Bay at San Francisco, 3 p.m. (FOX)
Sunday, Jan. 4
Detroit, N.Y. Giants or Tampa Bay at Green Bay, 11:30 a.m. (FOX)
Denver, Jacksonville, or Miami at Kansas City, 3 p.m. (NBC)

* * *

Conference Championships
Sunday, Jan. 11
Divisional playoff winners, TBA

* * *

Super Bowl
Sunday, Jan. 25
At San Diego
AFC champion vs. NFC champion, 5 p.m.

NCAA-MEN

1. North Carolina (70)	12-0
2. Kansas	13-1
3. Duke	10-1
4. Kentucky	9-1
5. Arizona	7-2
6. Utah	10-0
7. Purdue	9-2
8. Stanford	7-0
9. UCLA	6-1
10. South Carolina	6-1
11. Connecticut	9-1
12. Arkansas	8-0
13. Xavier	6-2
14. New Mexico	7-1
15. Iowa	8-1
16. Mississippi	7-1
17. Florida St.	8-2
18. Princeton	8-1
19. Syracuse	9-0
20. Maryland	5-3
21. Clemson	7-3
22. Rhode Island	5-1
23. West Virginia	9-1
24. Temple	6-3
25. Texas Christian	9-1

NJCAA-WOMEN

1. Trinity Valley, Texas	12-0
2. Connors State, Okla.	14-0
3. Central Florida	8-0
4. Central Arizona College	7-0
5. Howard, Texas	13-0
6. Weatherford, Texas	10-1
7. Walters State, Tenn.	9-0
8. Gulf Coast, Fla.	8-1
9. Westark, Ark.	10-1
10. Okaloosa-Walton, Fla.	12-1
11. Southern Idaho	10-1
12. Louisburg, N.C.	8-1
13. Cowley County, Kan.	11-0
14. John A. Logan, Ill.	4-1
15. Sheridan, Wyo.	11-2
16. Seward County, Kan.	8-2
17. Jones County, Miss.	10-0
18. N. Arkansas Comm. Tech.	9-1
19. Olney Central, Ill.	8-1
20. St. Catharine, Ky.	9-0

Phillips, Berroa and Hamelin among baseball's free agents

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Tony Phillips, Geronimo Berroa and Bob Hamelin were among 32 players who became free agents when their teams failed to offer them 1998 contracts before the Dec. 20 deadline.

Phillips, 38, pleaded guilty to misdemeanor cocaine possession last month and was ordered into a drug diversion program that could clear his record. Police said Phillips was trying to buy $30 worth of cocaine when he was arrested at an Anaheim motel on Aug. 10.

Anaheim tried to get rid of him then, but the union filed a grievance and the team was stopped.

Traded to the Angels by the Chicago White Sox on May 18, Phillips hit .275 with eight homers, 57 RBIs and 96 runs scored.

Berroa hit .283 with 26 homers and 90 RBIs for Baltimore. Hamelin, the 1994 AL Rookie of the Year, was released by Kansas City during spring training and signed with Detroit, hitting .270 last season with 18 homers and 52 RBIs.

As teams rushed to sign players before the end-of-year break, the New York Yankees and reliever Darren Holmes agreed Monday to a $6.4 million, three-year contract, and Oakland agreed to deals with a pair of free agents, a $450,000, one-year contract outfielder Shane Mack and a minor-league deal with catcher Damon Berryhill that would pay him $350,000 if he makes the team.

Another free-agent catcher, Darren Oliver, agreed to a minor-league contract with the Detroit Tigers.

And in a trade, the New York Mets sent outfielder Carl Everett to Houston for reliever John Hudek. Everett's tenure in New York has been tenuous since since Aug. 7, when his two children were taken into custody by New York City officials after a Shea Stadium child care worker noticed bruises on Everett's 6-year-old daughter.

"We are confident that that issue is heading in the right direction and under control and, hopefully, will not be a major distraction to either Carl or the ballclub in the coming year," Astros general manager Gerry Hunsicker said.

While 32 non-tender free agents were created, more than two dozen arbitration-eligible players agreed to contracts in the past week.

Oakland and infielder Kurt Abbott, obtained last week from Florida, agreed to a $1 million, one-year contract that includes $75,000 in performance bonuses. The Athletics also agreed to a $595,000, one-year contract with right-hander Buddy Groom.

Seattle left-hander Tim Davis agreed to a $227,500, one-year contract, and Atlanta right-hander Brian Edmondson agreed to a one-year contract worth $170,000, the minimum in the majors next season.

Over the weekend:

— The Mets agreed to one-year contracts with catcher Todd Pratt ($300,000 in the majors, $100,000 in the minors) and infielder Luis Lopez ($375,000).

— St. Louis agreed to one-year contracts with catchers Tom Lampkin ($475,000) and Danny Sheaffer ($475,000), left-hander Lance Painter ($380,000) and right-hander Mark Petkovsek ($475,000).

— Texas catcher Bill Haselman agreed to a $625,000, one-year contract.

WEST TEXAS MEDICAL ASSOCIATES
EAR, NOSE, THROAT & ALLERGY CLINIC
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Malone-Hogan Clinic
Allen Anderson, MD
Paul Fry, MD
Keith D. Walvoord, MD
For Appointments Call
915-267-6361
Dr. Walvoord, & Fry will be in Mondays.
Dr. Anderson will be in on Wednesdays
Staff Available Monday-Friday

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Big Spring Independent School District
Financial Statement for the Year Ending
August 31, 1997

	Governmental Fund Types				Trust Funds	Total
	100-199 General Fund	200-499 Special Revenue Fund	500-599 Debt Service Fund	600-699 Capital Project Fund	800-829 Expendable Trust Fund	August 31, 1997
REVENUES:						
Local and Intermediate Sources	$ 10,214,751	$ 539,237	$ 745,795	$ 440,187	$ 375,753	$ 12,315,723
State Program Revenues	10,719,179	185,911				10,905,090
Federal Program Revenues	115,896	2,296,622				2,412,518
Total Revenues	$ 21,049,826	$ 3,021,770	$ 745,795	$ 440,187	$ 375,753	$ 25,633,331
EXPENDITURES:						
Instruction & Instructional Related Services	$ 12,069,126	$ 1,291,348	$	$	$	$ 13,360,474
Instructional & School Leadership	1,562,202	71,842				1,634,044
Support Services - Student (Pupil)	2,362,652	1,790,659				4,153,311
Administration Support Services	775,459					775,459
Support Services - Nonstudent	3,052,309	29,428				3,081,737
Debt Services	48,808		628,858			677,666
Capital Outlay	1,433,432			4,667,715		6,101,147
Total Expenditures	$ 21,303,988	$ 3,183,277	$ 628,858	$ 4,667,715	$	$ 29,783,838
Excess(Deficiency) Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	$ (254,162)	$ (161,507)	$ 116,937	$ (4,227,528)	$ 375,753	$ (4,150,507)
Other Resources	953,974	150,000		12,520,000		13,623,974
Other (Uses)	(150,000)				(946,484)	(1,096,484)
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues and Other Resources Over (Under) Expenditures and Other Uses	$ 549,812	$ (11,507)	$ 116,937	$ 8,292,472	$ (570,731)	$ 8,376,983
Fund Balance - September 1, 1996 (Beginning)	5,527,292	29,340	21,771		576,698	6,155,101
Increase (Decrease) in Fund Balance	66,993	11,408				78,401
Fund Balance - August 31, 1997 (Ending)	$ 6,144,097	$ 29,241	$ 138,708	$ 8,292,472	$ 5,967	$ 14,610,485

SPORTS BRIEFS

From staff and wire reports

Registration for youth league continues

The Big Spring YMCA is taking registrations for a its youth basketball league.

The registration deadline was Dec. 6, but late registrations are being accepted with a $5 additional fee.

No tryouts will be held for the league, which organizers say will have an emphasis on participation and fundamentals, not winning.

Practice begins the week of Jan. 5 and the first games will be played on Saturday, Jan. 17.

For more information, call 267-8234.

Recreational swims scheduled at YMCA

Recreational swimming has been scheduled for Dec. 26 at the Big Spring Family YMCA.

The swim is scheduled for 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, contact YMCA officials by calling 267-8234.

TP&WD officials offer recommendations

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department officials are reminding local landowners and hunters that the white-tailed deer season continues through Jan. 4, 1998.

The bag limit is four deer with no more than two bucks. Deer population surveys in Howard County have resulted in TP&WD officials recommending that hunters not harvest antlerless deer north of I-20 and recommend that they take one doe per 800 acres and one buck per 1,300 acres south of I-20.

For more information, contact wildlife biologist Bill Del Monte at (915) 798-3152.

Local chapter needs softball umpires

The Permian Basin chapter of the Southwest Softball Umpires Association needs umpires to work high school softball games throughout West Texas, including the Big Spring area, this spring.

For more information, contact Mack Gipson at (915) 520-5961 or Freddie Ezell at (915) 520-6502.

USA Volleyball clinics scheduled

USA Volleyball, the West Texas Girl Scout Council and Nike will bring the Nike Volleyvan to Big Spring High School's Steer Gym on Jan. 17.

A clinic for girls in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades will be conducted to stress the importance of enjoying the game, as well as receiving basic skills work.

For more information, contact BSHS head volleyball coach Traci Pierce by calling 264-3641.

Christmas On The Farm.

A very happy holiday to all our good neighbors. Thank you for putting your trust in us.
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Lamesa Hwy. 87 263-3382

Correction Notice
Due to unforeseen demand, the Pentium® 166MHz computers and the Hewlett Packard 3100 computer package advertised in our December 25 insert may not be available at all stores.
We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.
BEST BUY

IOWA

Continued from page 1B

ees and university administrators.

Rhodes and Bowlsby defended the practice, which she said will continue for the Sun Bowl.

"If you're going to ask someone to travel over Christmas, I think you'd better expect that the spouse and children are going to go along with them," Rhodes said. "I don't know why anyone would have any trouble with that, given that the bowl game generates the revenue to cover the travel."

Rhodes, whose family went on the trip last December, is staying home this time.

"I prefer not to travel during the holidays," she said.

University President Mary Sue Coleman and seven other administrators are going to El Paso.

Included among the 670 people who were flown to the 1996 Alamo Bowl were six baby sitters. A similar number is expected to travel to the Sun Bowl.

Rhodes and Bowlsby said the baby sitters will look after children while their parents attend bowl events and university outreach efforts associated with the event.

There is more to a bowl than the game, according to Rhodes. She said it is an opportunity to reconnect with alumni, to recruit students and to entertain potential donors.

Questions also have been raised about taking athletic department employees who are not directly associated with the football program. One-third of such employees are flown to each bowl, so a worker gets to attend every third bowl game.

"We use it as an opportunity to say thanks to people for the contribution they make to our program," Bowlsby said. "It's one small way of being able to say to them that we appreciate what they do."

Gov. Terry Branstad and other state officials do not get a free ride, however, because the Iowa gift law prohibits them from accepting anything worth more than $3.

GUIDRY

Continued from page 1B

genius by some, she graduated from Charlton-Pollard High School, one of Beaumont's former black schools, at 15.

Illness made her education at Xavier College in Louisiana difficult, but by 20 or 21, she had her degree. She spent four years teaching at Xavier, then moved to Lincoln.

The year was 1949.

"I had a principal (at Lincoln) back then who was a perfectionist, and he would allow nothing less than success in athletics," she said. "He had already sent other people on their way for not being successful.

"So I was determined to prove to him I could be as much a perfectionist as he was or even better."

Her "girls," as she calls them, did without and still did it well. They ran track and played basketball without shoes at times. She ran her programs without a budget.

RODMAN

Continued from page 1B

opponents and little referee-baiting.

"The Bulls put (behavior clauses) in the contract," coach Phil Jackson said. "Rather than being a rebel, he's chosen to do the things that are appropriate. He's having a lot more fun. And he's right back at the top of the league in rebounding."

Jackson, who will be going for career victory No. 500 on Tuesday night against the Los Angeles Clippers, deserves some credit.

"Phil has a lot of egos on this team and has been able to fit guys like Dennis in," guard Ron Harper said. "Dennis has had problems with other coaches, but he knows Phil is on his side."

The other main theory: At 36 and in probably his final NBA season, Rodman doesn't want to be remembered only as a thug and a malcontent.

Asked at last week's party for underprivileged children to deliver a holiday message, Rodman said: "If I had one wish ... I would want everyone to have a home and enjoy the finer things in life for one day or one week."

Whatever's going on, Jordan likes the new, unmenacing Dennis.

"I'd like to keep it that way. We don't have to worry about him. Last year, you didn't know if he was going to get kicked out of a game or not," Jordan said. "Let him stay happy. Don't try to get him stirred up now."

Rodman, however, needs no help to stir up trouble.

"I've still got something up my sleeve," he said, a mischievous smile crossing his face. "I'm just waiting until the right time to pull it out."

BROWN

Continued from page 1B

"The scariest thing was that he was turning purple," wide receiver Johnnie Morton said. "His eyes were rolling back. I was shedding tears because I had never seen something like that."

Lock and trainer Kent Falb were among the first to reach Brown on the field. The doctor gave Brown mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

"Initially, he was having trouble breathing," Lock said. "We wondered if he had swallowed his mouthpiece. But he doesn't wear a mouthpiece. So we began mouth-to-mouth."

Collon said the handling by the staff on the field was excellent.

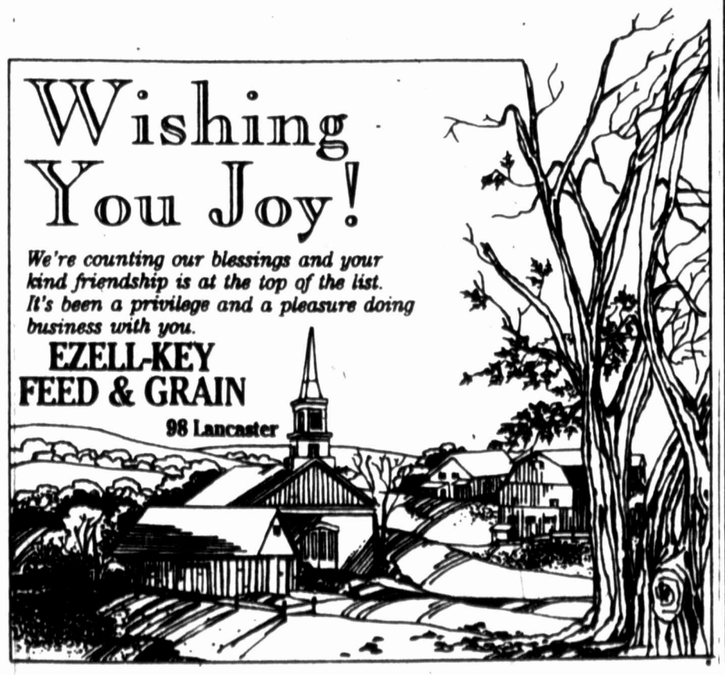
"Wrong moves could have been fatal," Collon said.

Players on both teams prayed as Brown was treated, and as he was about to be driven off the field in an ambulance each team huddled in prayer. Some players had tears in their eyes.

"I think they did a remarkable job of keeping their focus," Ross said. "But I think it was hard on both teams. It bothered the Jets, too. You could see that in their faces."

Brown was assisting in a tackle on running back Adrian Murrell in the fourth quarter when Lamont Burns, a Jets lineman, fell backward and hit Brown in the head.

Brown is the third Detroit player this season whose career has been cut short.



Dean sets record then said goodbye to N. Carolina

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

NCAA BASKETBALL

The biggest moment of almost every year in college basketball comes on the Monday night that ends the NCAA tournament. Not in 1997, even when the championship game was Arizona's thrilling overtime victory over Kentucky.

No, a Thursday in early October drew the most attention when Dean Smith announced his retirement. The sport will never be the same.

Just seven months earlier Smith had passed Adolph Rupp to become college basketball's winningest coach. Smith led North Carolina to the Final Four after it started the Atlantic Coast Conference season 0-3 for the first time in his 36 years with the Tar Heels.

There had been talk about Smith leaving, but no one was ready for that day in the building named after him when he said goodbye with tears in his eyes and his voice choked with emotion.

"Some day this had to happen and the hardest thing is for those guys over there," Smith said, pointing to his team.

"What loyalty I've had from my players."

And they from their coach.

Smith was much more than his 879 wins, two national championships, 11 Final Fours, 13 Atlantic Coast Conference championships, 30 All-Americans and an Olympic gold medal. He was a man known as a tireless civil rights advocate, a college professor with a whistle around his neck, an educator.

"He certainly has a right to retire and go into something else," said Bill Guthridge, who replaced the 66-year-old Smith after sitting next to him on the Tar Heels' bench for 30 seasons. "I guarantee it will be something productive for society, whatever he does. He's an amazing man."

Smith broke Rupp's record with a second-round NCAA tournament victory over Colorado, a game attended by many of his former players. His last victory came in the regional finals over Louisville and his last defeat was in the Final Four to Arizona.

The Wildcats went on to their first national title two days later and it brought another longtime coach into the national spotlight, Lute Olson.

Olson had taken three other teams to the Final Four and his latest trip was with one that had finished fifth in the Pac-10 regular season. The NCAA tournament, however, was a six-game ride that took Arizona past three No. 1 seeds and was capped by a 84-79 win over defending national champion Kentucky.

"We've had other teams here, outstanding teams, more experienced teams." said Olson, whose perfectly coifed white hair was mussed by his players before they cut down the nets.

"But I'm just so proud of these guys. It's been a never-say-die group. They've had faith in themselves, they've had faith in their teammates."

The Wildcats' top eight players returned for this season, easily explaining Arizona's preseason No. 1 ranking.

Only two teams held the No. 1 spot last season, Cincinnati in the preseason poll and for the first two of the regular season, then Kansas the rest of the way, three times as a unanimous pick, including the final poll.

But the Jayhawks lost to Arizona in the round of 16 and failed to reach the Final Four for the fourth straight season despite being ranked No. 1 in each of them.

Last season's All-America team featured two seniors — Tim Duncan of Wake Forest and Keith Van Horn of Utah. Of the underclassmen only Kansas' Raef LaFrentz returned; sophomore Ron Mercer of Kentucky and junior Danny Fortson of Cincinnati left school early for the NBA.

Rick Pitino also left for the NBA, returning to pro coaching after eight seasons at Kentucky, a program he resurrected from probation to a national title in 1996 and the championship game the next season.

That coaching change was just one of 65 entering the current season and in addition to Smith's retirement, others also came at the last minute.

Within weeks of the start of practice in mid-October, Bill Frieder resigned at Arizona State, Bill Musselman did the same at South Alabama and Steve Fisher was forced out as coach at Michigan, a school he led to the 1989 national title and two subsequent Final Four appearances.

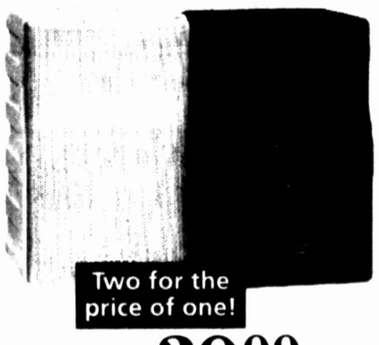
The coaching ranks also lost one of its most popular members when Colgate's Jack Bruen died on Dec. 19 after a two-month battle with pancreatic cancer. He was 48.

The sport had to hear again the words it fears most: A point-shaving scandal at Arizona State that had been rumored for more than a year was confirmed in December.

In a plea agreement with prosecutors, former Sun Devils Stevin "Hedake" Smith and Isaac Burton Jr. pleaded guilty to taking bribes to fix four games in 1994. Four other men were also indicteds.

Michigan won the NIT title over Florida State in what would be the last games at those schools for Fisher and Pat Kennedy, who left the Seminoles to take over as coach at DePaul.

LOWEST PRICES of the YEAR!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HALF PRICE! 39.99 Each
Hi-performance mini speaker
Great for surround or satellite/subwoofer system. 4" woofer, 1" dome tweeter with die-cast metal enclosure. 100 watts max. (50W RMS). reg. 79.99 each. White with metal grille #40-2076, Black with cloth grille #40-2071

HERE'S YOUR TICKET TO EVERY SUPER BOWL™ EVER PLAYED.
For the first time ever, you can receive a collector's edition of 32 Super Bowl™ pre-paid calling cards when you sign up for Sprint long distance at the Sprint Store at RadioShack
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Sprint
*Certain restrictions apply. Must remain a Sprint Sense long distance customer. Not valid with any other offer. Offer ends 1/25/98. New customers only.
The Official Telecommunications Provider to the NFL

YOUR CHOICE 39.99 SAVE $20
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Both feature 25-channel operation and CCT circuitry for clear sound and maximum range. reg. 59.99 each. Deskwall trim style #43-1037. Space-saving upright #40-1038

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Get big stereo sound
Compact portable delivers crisp sound through dual 3" speakers. Cassette records from AM/FM or built-in microphone. reg. 39.99, #14-732. Add 4 "C" batteries or adapter. AC #273-1663, DC #270-1562

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Enter the number showing on your pager. If it's stored in the directory, the caller's name is displayed. reg. 34.99, #65-884

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Talk hands free! Ideal for data entry pros, receptionists or teens. Hold button. reg. 39.99, #43-891

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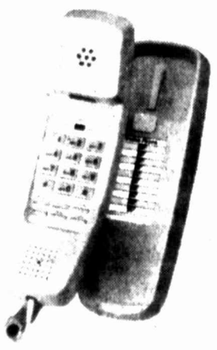
Shows indoor and outdoor temps at the same time. F° or C° readout. For desk or wall. reg. 29.99, #63-869. Add "AA" battery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Dual-channel watch monitors one CB channel while you listen to another. Built-in Weatheradio™. reg. 119.99, #21-1597

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Full legal power CB walkie-talkie
Low-power setting conserves battery when you're talking to someone nearby. 40 channels. reg. 79.99, #21-1646. Add 8 "AA" batteries or adapter. AC #273-1653, DC #270-1533

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Must sell 90 Honda Accord: $4,500. 85 Chevy conversion van $3,750 both excellent shape 263-5924.

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WE BUY REAL ESTATE NOTES ANNUITIES.
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HELP WANTED

Sante Fe Sandwiches needs help from : 9-2. No phone calls please. Apply in person. Big Spring Mall.

NEEDED: A couple to help manage & maintain a busy local RV park. House on site provided, utilities furnished. Interviews in person. Call for appt. 267-7900. No children.

Domino's Pizza
Part-time / Full-time Drivers. Good driving record a must. Great part time job to make those bills for people who just want 2-3 days a week to supplement their income. Start at $5.50/hour + tips & mileage. 2202 Gregg.

Wanted Local Manufacturer seeking Experienced Manager for Manufacturing facility. Welding procedures and knowledge of metals is a must. Send resume to P.O. Box 791, Big Spring, TX 79721.

WANTED FOUNDATION SUB-CONTRACTORS
Jim Walter Homes has plenty of work available for the right subcontractor to begin immediately. Sub-contractor must have tools and transportation necessary to perform work.
Contact: Lynn Fudge
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P.O. Box 2718 or
Hwy. 87 South & Loop 306
San Angelo, TX 76902
1-800-766-1167 or 651-6228
An Equal Opportunity Employer

HELP WANTED

ACCOUNTING CLERK: Coahoma area. Oil & Gas experience, computer knowledge, general office skills. Flexible hours, approx. 4 hours per day. Salary depends on experience. Send resume to: PO Drawer H, Coahoma, Tx 79511-0908.

Bus Girl needed. Evening and/or day Monday-Saturday. Apply at Red Mesa Grill: 2401 Gregg.12/19/97

Part-time Secretary / Receptionist. Must have computer & corporate bookkeeping. Apply at Morris Robertson Body Shop, 207 Goliad.

PRODUCTION FOREMAN: 15 year minimum experience. Extensive knowledge with workovers, completions, and waterfloods. Good cost management and personnel skills. Coahoma & Sand Springs area. Salary depends on experience. Health benefits and 401K plant. Annual performance bonus. Send resume to: PO Drawer H, Coahoma, Tx 79511-0908.

Waitress needed: Must be 18 & able to **WORK,** split shift. Mon. - Sat. Apply at Red Mesa Grill: 2401 Gregg.

Experienced Machinist & Welder. General shop hand. Apply in person at Browne Bros. in Colorado City.

Full-time LVN position, Otolaryngology office, Mon.-Fri. Apply at Malone & Hogan ENT office.

MECHANIC w/tools. Bring resume to Westex Auto Parts, Inc. 1511 Hwy. 350 North. EOE. No phone calls!!

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OTR, Regional, Flatbed, Great Benefits
Health & Dental Insurance, Guarantees, Truck Purchase Option Plan Call (281) 862-0700

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Sales specialists needed to do demonstrations in major grocery chains. Dependable, sales minded, part time, Friday, Saturday & Sunday, $7.00 per hour. 1-800-580-3367.

MAINTENANCE MAN needed for apartment complex. Must have own tools, able to do make ready, and all types of maintenance. Must have a/c & heating knowledge. Can be part-time. Send resume to :P.O. Box 710, Big Spring, Texas.

Team & Single Drivers Wanted
We offer an excellent benefit package: $500 Sign-on-bonus, competitive wage package, 401k with company contribution, retention bonus, Health/Dental/Life insurance, and uniforms.

REQUIREMENTS ARE: 23 years old with 2 years semi driving experience of completion of an accredited truck driver school, CDL with haz-mat and tanker endorsements, pass, DOT and company requirements. We will help train you for a successful future in the tank truck industry.

Apply in person at STEERE TANK LINES INC., 1200 ST. Hwy 176, Phone #(915)263-7656.

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$100 TO $396.88
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1610 AC+=: Approx. 25 miles North of Sterling City, TX on pavement. Good grass, level to rolling country, large deer.
2131 ACS: N of Water Valley, Tx. Spring w/lots of pecan trees and wildlife! Plenty of hills & grazing. Barns, pens, highway frontage & minerals.
1600+OR-ACS: scenic ranch, Robert Lee, TX. Oak, cedar, mesquite, flat hills, beautiful creek. Plenty grass & good hunting. Lee, Lee & Puckitt Assoc., Inc. 915-655-6989.

GRAIN HAY FEED

FOR SALE: Round bales of red top cane hay. Contact Johnny Middleton 267-7625.

AUCTIONS

PUBLIC AUCTION
Brick home to be moved. Approx. 2085 sq.ft. located in the Ackerly area. This home will be offered at approx. 2pm, Saturday, January 10, 1998. Home may be seen on Sunday, December 28, 1997 from 2-5pm. or by appointment. Owner has the right to accept or reject bids. For more info. call 915-728-8292. Auctioneer Grady W. Morris, TXS 6785.

SPRING CITY AUCTION
wishes you & yours a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year.
Next auction will be Jan. 8th
2000 W. 4th • 7:00pm

DOGS, PETS, ETC

FOR SALE. Blue Chow puppy, Beagle and Black lab, 1 pair peacocks, 1 pair geese, chrome headache rack. 263-1701.

AKC Golden Retrievers. Ready to Go!! $150. 264-9232.

Shear K-9
We can new take care of all your boarding & grooming needs.
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FREE KENNEL CLUB BREEDER REFERRAL SERVICE
Helps you find reputable breeders/quality puppies. Purebred rescue information. 263-3404 daytime.

FOUND / LOST PETS

LOST: White Poodle, Snyder Hwy. answers to Kibby. Needs pain medication. 267-6112.

MISCELLANEOUS

Baldwin electric piano. 263-4980 Leave message if no answer.

Princess Di Beanie Baby. Open for sealed bids until Dec. 24th 5:00pm.
Shae's Gift Shop
1809 Lancaster • 263-1154

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Our 20th Anniversary Discounts
Cakes, Flowers, Arches & Abras
267-8191

Just Arrived!!
30 sets of used full size mattressess, starting at $29.00 per set.
Branham Furniture
2004 W. 4th • 263-3066

FOR SALE: 1/4 Interest in 1978 Bonanza V-35 Airplane fully loaded. $25,000. Call Eddie Cole 263-5000.

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120 acres in Martin Co. 2 yrs in Soil Conservation for sale. Call 263-7648, 263-3855.

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Lease or Sell. Commerical building, 2 offices, 2 garage base, large paved lot, recently remodeled. 1501 W. 4th. 263-2382.

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2701 Central - Kentwood: 3 bdr., 2 bth. Corner lot 1 blk. from school : 52,500.00 Call 263-5802

I PAY CASH FOR HOUSES
quick, courteous response. Don Hankins, 806-794-5964.

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Call Kristi Lynn
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- **Positive self starter with sales aptitude to aggressively sell newspaper advertising.**
- **Ability and desire to provide excellent customer service.**
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4 Lines / 1 mo. = $39.95 per month.

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WE LOVE ❤ Veterans. $0 down payment to any qualified veteran on a **NEW Key Home.** Interest rates are great, call today and let us start your new custom built Key Home. 264-9440.

For Sale: 2 bd. home on .77 acre tract. As is! $22,000. Call 264-6236 or 263-6275 or 267-4518.

FOR SALE: 1870 sq.ft., 3 bedroom, 2 bath formal living and dining with den. Completely remodeled, sprinkler system, RO unit, Central H/A, fireplace. 1702 Harvard. 270-2535 or 263-8559.

HOUSES FOR SALE

DESPERATE SELLERS say "Take Over Payments" on this beautiful Highland South home. Assume V.A. loan on this very well maintained home with new central heating and cooling unit, new roof, new motor for lovely pool, and new pool cover. 3 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, 2 living areas, delightful kitchen with eating bar and pantry. 4 car garage! Call ERA Reeder Realtors, 267-8266 or Lila Estes, 267-6657.

For Sale By Owner: Lg. 2 bd., 1 bath home on 1 1/2 lot. CH/RA. Many extras. $27,000. 263-1171.

Mobile Home to be moved. 2 bdr., 1 bath, all appliances. Front & back porch. 267-5818.

ASSUMPTION
Non qualifying. No Credit Check. 2716 Central. Loan balance approximately $51,275.00. Total monthly payment $730.00. 17 years remaining. 10.25% interest rate. $67,500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, fireplace, central heat/air. 2 car garage, fenced yard. Call 264-9440 or 915-550-4476.

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Every home priced to sell!! $500 to $3200 off the List Priceof every home. USA HOMES, 4608 W. Wall, Midland, TX 520-2177, 1-800-520-2177.

AS LOW AS $238/mo!!!
Huge 16'x90' Home... Bigger than an 18' wide!!! Bigger than a 28'x44' or a 28'x48' doublewide!! Absolutely the most home for your money!! See the 16'x90' home today at USA HOMES, 4608 W. Wall, Midland, TX 520-2177, 1-800-520-2177. 10% down, 9% var, 360 mos.

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Shop' Til You Drop or come to USA Homes countdown to 1998 sale. We will not be undersold, DOUBLEWIDE Homes as low as $29,999. USA Homes, USA Homes 4608 W. Wall, Midland TX 520-2177, 1-806-520-2177

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*1998 3 bedroom Fleetwood. America's largest homebuilder! Exclusively at Homes of America Odessa, Tx. $803.00 down, $183 , month, 180 months, 12% apr. 1-915-363-0881 1-800-705-0881 Se habla espanol

*Esta Navidad Haga su sueno realidad casa mobil doble 4 recamaras 2 banos $1913 de enganche y $330 por mes. interes fijo 300 meses. Homes of America Odessa, Tx. 1-915-363-0881 1-800-725-0881

*Huge selection of used homes starting at $1499 Homes of America Odessa, Tx. 1-915-363-0881 1-800-725-0881

*Save big $$ on this 1997 doublewide, 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 5 yr. warranty, garden tub. 5% down, $296.00 month, 240 months, 10.75% apr. Homes of America Odessa, Tx. 1-915-363-0881 1-800-725-0881

FURNISHED APTS.

Furnished efficiency apartment. 408 W. 5th. $250./mo., $100./dep. Bills paid. Sorry, no pets!! 263-4922.

Apartments, houses, mobile home. References required. 263-6944, 263-2341.

PONDEROSA APARTMENTS
*Furnished & Unfurnished
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1425 E. 6th St 263-6319

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Neat 1 bd.- 2 bdr. 1 bath,- 4 bd., 2 bath, $300 per mo.- Also 4 acres chained link fence with truck scales, steel box car, office & shed at 1400 N. Birdwell lane, was a scrap iron yard. 264- 0510

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HOROSCOPE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR THURSDAY, DEC. 25:
You will be unusually fortunate this year, both financially and emotionally. For you, wishing on a star works. Others pitch in and help you manifest dreams. Expand your horizons and circle of friends. Plan to make what you have always wanted a reality. Relationships flow because of exceptional communications, especially after January. Your pace is busy, but extremely rewarding. If you are single, it will only be by your choice that you remain so. Certainly, you will have your pick. Suitors reflect your core desires. If attached, romance rebuilds in this exceptional year. SCORPIO is a friend always.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
Extremes mark the day. You could see some of your deepest wishes fulfilled. Look to a partnership and that special person in your life. Another acknowledges who you are and appreciates you to the fullest. Express gratitude in your particular style. Tonight: All the different ways of saying "thank you."*****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
Others clearly enjoy your company and presence. This Christmas Day has a very social overtone and allows you to express the depth of your caring. Perhaps you don't realize what a star you are. Make the most out of opportunities that knock on your door. Tonight: Visit with parents and older relatives.*****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
You might be the one who keeps the celebration happening. Visit with others, while you make sure Christmas dinner is moving and other happenings are occurring as planned. You might be overwhelmed by a call and your level of emotion. Share what is happening. Tonight: Slow down, please.****

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
There is a unique and special ambience to this holiday. It might be one of the most loving and indulgent Christmases in history. A partner or several loved ones go way overboard, as they express their caring. Don't question it; just enjoy what is happening. Tonight: Close moments.*****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
You assume a lower profile than normal; however, a partner delights in drawing you out of your cocoon. This could become quite the game, with relatives also participating. Share some of your mellow feelings with loved ones. Don't forget that special family member. Tonight: There is a lot to grin about.****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
Yes, all the fussing seems worth it now, as all goes according to design. There is an unusual element of abundance, excess and high emotions. Your need to help and pitch in touches others. They feel nurtured by you. There is a sense of empathy and understanding. Tonight: Kick back and watch football.*****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
You sparkle with energy, magnetism and delight. Others cannot express their appreciation strongly enough. You kindle the fires of not only romance but also friendship, because of your understanding and depth. Do let your naughty side emerge. Tonight: Feeling like a kid again.****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
Nothing can stop you but you. You are full of vigor, excitement and fun. Being with you is contagious and inspiring. Don't forget to make a call to a friend who simply isn't into the holidays. You are the hub of activity and joy. Home is definitely where the heart is. Tonight: Dance away.****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
Go with the personal, moving nature of this day. You are in your head, daydreaming about what could be and what you want. The pace is unusually hectic, even for Christmas. You are in demand, others seeking you out en masse. Caring is intense. Tonight: Mellow and dreamy.***

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
You are delighted by your gifts, the company and the general conviviality of the day. You find this an unusually perfect holiday. You might attend a second get-together with friends or others show up later. You get something you have wanted for a long time. Tonight: All grins.*****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
You are the star, in the limelight. You might be a bit scattered and everywhere, as you make sure the holidays are up to snuff for everyone. At the last minute, you might invite others over and let it all happen. The essence of your sign abounds; friendship and good will. Tonight: Could be late!****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
Your mind is on the future, loved ones at a distance and what could be. Examine what is realistic; but for now, let your imagination and loving flow. You might have a secret that you cannot share. Follow your intuition. Tonight: Touch base with friends.*****

BORN TODAY
Singer Jimmy Buffett (1946), baseball player Rickey Henderson (1958), actress Sissy Spacek (1949)

For America's best extended horoscope, recorded by Jacqueline Bigar, call (900) 740-7444, 99 cents per minute. Also featured are The Spoken Tarot and The Runes, which answer your yes-or-no questions. Callers must be 18 or older. A service of InterMedia Inc., Jenkintown, Pa.

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Spreading spirit of Santa can bring joy year-round

DEAR ABBY: I was disappointed in your response to "Grandma in Saratoga Springs" regarding her grandson's belief in Santa Claus. I don't disagree that the truth should be told, Abby, but HOW the truth is presented can make all the difference in the world in the eyes and heart of a child. The truth about Santa was shared with me in such a wonderful way, there were no bad feelings — only a lifetime of inspiration.

Abigail Van Buren
Columnist

When I asked if there really was a Santa Claus, my mother responded, "Santa isn't a real person who lives at the North Pole, but the Santa we see on TV, in stores and at parties is a reminder of the Santa 'spirit,' which spreads joy and happiness. Daddy is Santa Claus, and Mom is Santa Claus, and Grandma and Grandpa are Santa Claus. They buy you gifts and do nice things for you because they love you and want to make you happy. Now that you're old enough, you, too, can be Santa Claus."

I was, and am, Santa Claus. At first, part of being Santa was keeping the illusion of Santa alive for the younger children. I got to stay up late, and it was my job to wrap the stocking stuffers and stuff the stockings. It meant drinking the milk and eating the cookies left for Santa. Trying to make the carrots left for the reindeer appear "reindeer-nibbled" was more difficult, and not as desirable.

As I have grown older, the Santa spirit has grown and spread. In college, my dorm mates and I played "Secret Santas," delivering goodies and little gifts to each other during finals week. Later in life, I'd drop off a batch of Christmas cookies to the nearest fire or police station as I made my way to my parents' house on Christmas Eve. You can be Santa Claus while shopping — whistle Christmas carols, wear sleigh bells that jingle while you walk, smile at those you pass — be kind and patient with store clerks.

I love being Santa Claus because there is so much joy in giving. It's better than any present you can receive. I hope that my Santa spirit will be with me throughout the year, and that others will find the same joy that comes from being Santa Claus. — A JOLLY ELF IN ASHTABULA, OHIO

DEAR JOLLY ELF: I'm certain that your Santa spirit will be with you throughout the year, and many readers will be inspired by your spirit of giving. Thank you for an upper of a letter.

DEAR ABBY: I have aunts, uncles and cousins I never see because we have nothing in common. I also have two siblings who detest me, and the feelings are mutual.

I have built my own "family" over the years, and I'm much closer to them than to my blood relatives, excluding my parents, with whom I am very close.

My problem is that it seems like the world expects —and insists — that you be close. Comments like, "But he's your BROTHER!" make my blood boil. Why do they insist that I like people I wouldn't bother with if I met them on the street or at a cocktail party?

I'd much rather give my love and compassion to people I care about than be a hypocrite just because of an accident of birth. Is it such a sin not to like a family member? Abby, please respond, as I respect your opinion. — BEEKMAN PLACE

DEAR BEEKMAN PLACE: It is not a "sin" to dislike a family member. However, it is interesting that you have cut yourself off not only from two siblings, but also from aunts, uncles and cousins, and I cannot help but wonder why you are avoiding the majority of your family.

CONFIDENTIAL TO MY READERS: Have a merry Christmas, but also keep in mind: If you're drinking, do not drive; if you're driving, please do not drink.

Abby shares more of her favorite, easy-to-prepare recipes. To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $3.95 ($4.50 in Canada) to: Dear Abby, More Favorite Recipes, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

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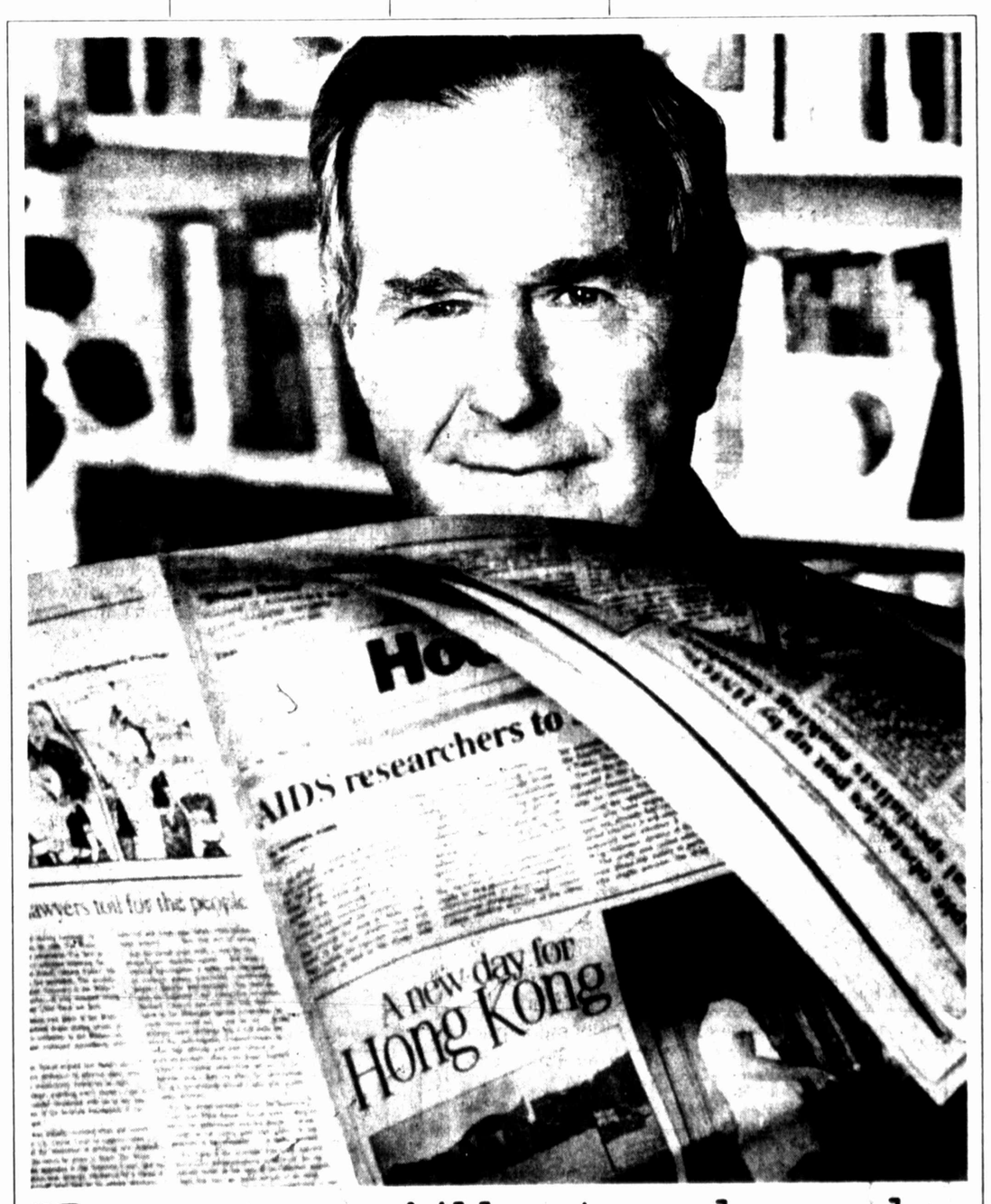

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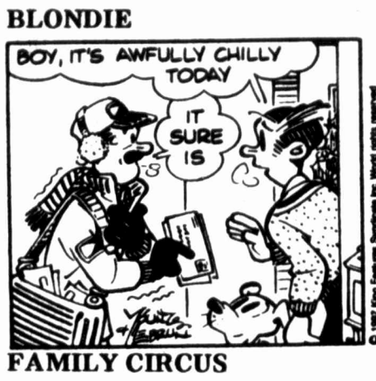
DEC 24 1997

WEDNESDAY DEC. 24

	KMID (2) Midland	KPEJ (3) Odessa	KERA (5) Dallas	FAM (6)	KOSA (7) Odessa	WFAA (8) Dallas	KWES (9) Midland	WTBS (11) Atlanta	UNI (13) Spanish	DISN (14) Premium	NASH (15) Nashville	TMC (16) Premium	SHOW (20) Premium	HBO (22) Premium	KMLM (24) Odessa	A&E (25) New York	DISC (29) Discovery	TNT (28) Atlanta	FSN (29) Sports	ESPN (30) Sports	AMC (31) Classics	BET (33) Black Ent.
6 :PM :30	News (CC) Fortune	Simpsons Home Imp.	Science Guy Creatures	(CC)	News Grace Under	News (CC) Fortune	News Seinfeld (CC)	Andy Griffith Andy Griffith	Premios Eres	Movie: Toy Story (CC)	Dukes of Hazzard	(:25) Movie:	On the Set	Wife (CC)	Light of the Southwest	Law & Order (CC)	Gimme Shelter	Lois & Clark-Superman	Sports News College	Kickoff	Gladiators Movie: A	Planet Groove
7 :PM :30	Spin City (CC) Dharma-Greg	Figure Skating: ISU	Christmas at St. Olaf (CC)	Movie: Christmas	Nanny (CC) Gregory Hines	Spin City (CC) Dharma-Greg	Movie: Dennis the	Grinch-C'mas (:35) Movie:		Small Orie	To Be Announced	Unstrung Heroes (CC)	Movie: Jumanji (CC)	Movie: Black Sheep (CC)	Crefio Dollar	Biography	Wild Discovery	Movie: A Christmas	Basketball: St. Louis vs.	Review Best of	Christmas Carol (CC)	
8 :PM :30	Drew Carey Ellen (CC)	Skate	Denyce Graves	Eve	Public Eye (CC)	Drew Carey Ellen (CC)	Menace (CC)	Pete's Dragon	?Que Crees? en Navidad	(7:55) Movie: The	Prime Time Country (CC)	Movie: Home for the Holi-	Extras	Movie: Mo'	Precious Van Impe	American Justice	Discover Magazine	Story	Syracuse Dilka	Sportscenter	Remember WENN (CC)	Hit List
9 :PM :30	Primetime Live (CC)	Star Trek: Voyager (CC)	Carols From King's	Kenny & Dolly	Chicago Hope (CC)	Primetime Live (CC)	Dateline (CC)	(:35) Movie:	Fuera Lente Loco	Preacher's Wife (CC)	Merry Christmas	days (CC) (:45) Movie:	Dead Man's (:45) Fast	Money (CC)	Praise the Lord (CC)	20th Century	Warrior Island	Movie: A Christmas	Cowboys World Cup Ski	Arete Awards for Courage	Movie: Holiday Inn	Comicview
10 :PM :30	News (CC) Cheers	Home Imp. Mad Abo. You	News-Lehrer	700 Club	News Christmas Eve	Family First Nightline	News Christmas Eve	Babes in Toyland	P. Impacto Noticiero Uni.	Walt Disney Presents	Dallas	The Tie That Binds (CC)	Track (CC) (:35) Movie:	Movie: Star Trek: First		Law & Order (CC)	Justice Files	Story	FOX Sports News	Sportscenter	(CC)	BET Tonight
11 :PM :30	Nightline (:36) Keenen	Vibe	(:15) Great Perform-	Three Stooges	Service Serving God	Ent. Tonight First Method-	(:32) Christ-	(:35) Movie:	Misa de Gallo del Papa	Zorro (CC) Mickey Mouse	Dukes of Hazzard	(:25) Movie:	Punchline (CC)	Contact (CC)	Jerry Savelle Duplantis	Biography	Wild Discovery	Movie: A Christmas	FOX Sports News	NFL's Grea-test Moments	Movie: A Christmas	227 (CC) Midnight Love
12 :AM :30	Ivory Wayans Politically Inc.	Martin (CC) In the Heat of	ances (:40) Movie:	Paid Program Paid Program	Married... With Ent. Tonight	ist Christmas Politically Inc.	mas Mass Gayle King	King of Kings	Club America	In Search of the Casta-	Prime Time Country (CC)	Homage	(:45) Movie:	(11:55) Movie:	Full Gospel Update News	American Justice	Discover Magazine	Story	Big 12 Showcase	Swimming: Ocean Chall.	Carol (CC) Remember	

HAGAR

BLONDIE



FAMILY CIRCUS

DENNIS THE MENACE

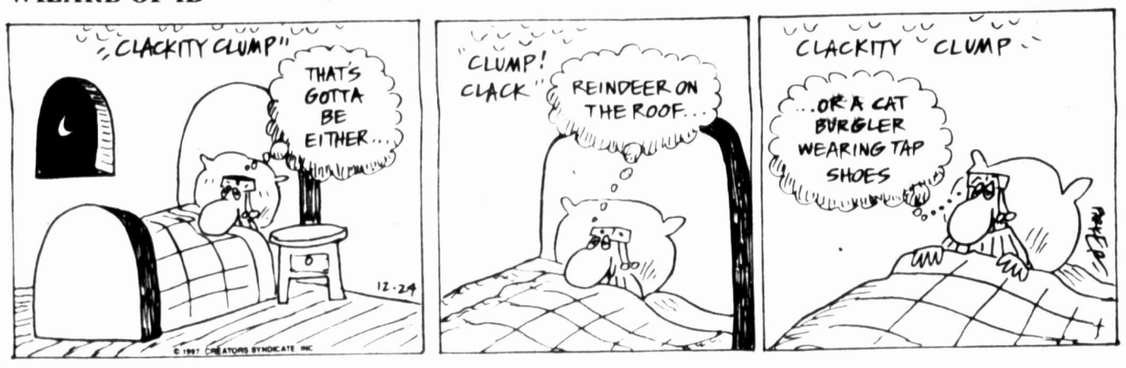
B.C.

"Know what? Baby Jesus was smarter than all three wise men put together."

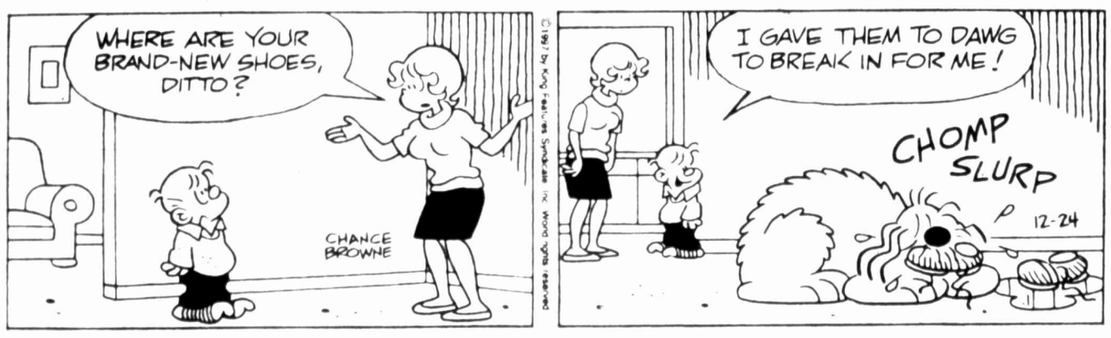
"I THINK I CAN STILL SEE A LITTLE BIT OF THE FLOOR."

GEECH

WIZARD OF ID



HI AND LOIS



GASOLINE ALLEY

SNUFFY SMITH

BEETLE BAILY

THIS DATE IN HISTORY

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

Today is Wednesday, Dec. 24, the 358th day of 1997. There are seven days left in the year. This is Christmas Eve.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 24, 1814, the War of 1812 officially ended as the United States and Britain signed the Treaty of Ghent in Belgium.

On this date:

In 1524, Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama, who had discovered a sea route around Africa to India, died in Cochin, India.

In 1851, fire devastated the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., destroying about 35,000 volumes.

In 1865, several veterans of the Confederate Army formed a private social club in Pulaski, Tenn., called the Ku Klux Klan.

In 1871, Giuseppe Verdi's opera "Aida" had its world premiere in Cairo, Egypt, to celebrate the opening of the Suez Canal.

In 1906, Canadian physicist Reginald A. Fessenden became the first person to broadcast a music program over radio, from Brant Rock, Mass.

In 1920, Enrico Caruso gave his last public performance, singing in Jacques Halevy's "La Juive" at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

In 1943, President Roosevelt appointed Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower supreme commander of Allied forces as part of Operation Overlord.

In 1951, Gian Carlo Menotti's "Amahl and the Night Visitors," the first opera written specifically for television, was first broadcast by NBC.

In 1968, the Apollo 8 astronauts, orbiting the moon, read passages from the Old Testament Book of Genesis during a Christmas Eve television broadcast.

In 1980, Americans remembered the U.S. hostages in Iran by burning candles or shining lights for 417 seconds — one second for each day of captivity.

Ten years ago: In Lebanon, the kidnappers of Terry Anderson released a videotape in which The Associated Press correspondent told his family he was in good health, and said to President Reagan, "Surely by now you know what must be done and how you can do it." (Anderson was freed nearly four years later.)

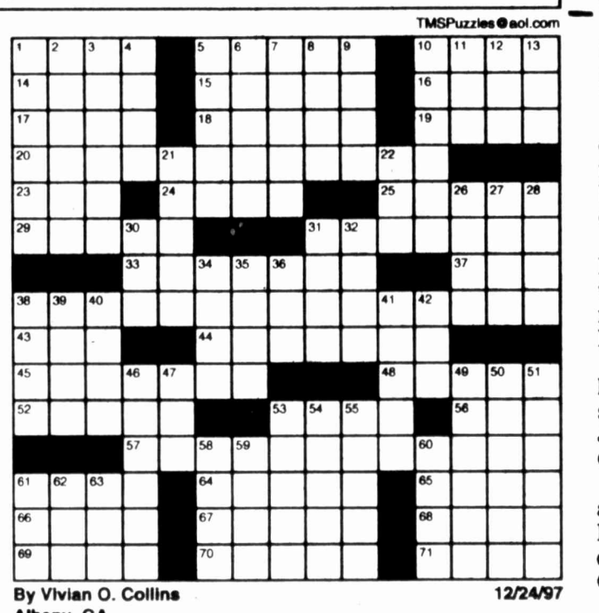
Five years ago: President Bush pardoned former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and five others in the Iran-Contra scandal. President-elect Clinton appointed Bruce Babbitt interior secretary, Mike Espy agriculture secretary and Federico Pena transportation secretary; Clinton also chose Zoe Baird to be attorney general, but the nomination fell apart over Baird's hiring of illegal aliens as domestic workers.

One year ago: The streets of Belgrade, Yugoslavia, turned violent as demonstrators traded blows with supporters of President Slobodan Milosevic and then were clubbed by riot police.

THE Daily Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



ACROSS
1 Meat paste
5 Cowboy's rope
10 Legendary soccer player
14 Messes up
15 Iroquois tribe
16 Stratford's river
17 Idyllic meadows
18 Bruce or Mansell
19 Telephoned
20 Hepburn Oscar-winner of 1981
23 __ Tai coctail
24 Hardships
25 "The Prince of Tides" star
29 Songwriters' grp.
31 Unqualified
33 Laertes' sister
37 Take to court
38 Hepburn Oscar-winner of 1968
43 Std.
44 Make headway
45 Demosthenes, Cicero, et al.
48 Particulars
52 Mortise insert
53 Hammerhead
56 Infielder Ripken
57 Hepburn Oscar-winner of 1933
61 Ali's last name
64 Japanese car maker
65 Writer Wiesel
66 Module
67 Chose
68 Dimensions: abbr.
69 Western alliance, briefly
70 Chicago tower
71 Helper: abbr.

DOWN
1 Jai alai
2 Sports venues
3 Calamitous
4 Exxon, formerly
5 Ivan of tennis
6 Prospero's servant
7 Billboards
8 Leak slowly
9 Norway's capital
10 Absolution
11 Gabor sister
12 Actor Chaney
13 Chang's twin
21 Fra Filippo __
22 Compass dir.
26 Final one
27 Quiz answer
28 Ogler
30 Abbreviation in e-mail, often
31 __ colada
32 Grassy expanse
34 Rime
35 Finishes
36 Actress Tyler
38 Lively pace
39 In this place
40 Alaska's first governor
41 Cake topping
42 Profit
46 Part of a BLT
47 Lennon's widow
49 French schools
50 Callas and Shriver
51 Crafty to the max
53 Ship of Columbus
54 Concluder
55 Yikes
58 Greek letters
59 Slangy negative
60 1964 British Open golf champion
61 Dinner roll
62 Santa __ winds
63 Took the bait

By Vivian O. Collins
Albany, GA
12/24/97

Tuesday's Puzzle solved.

S	A	I	D	■	A	G	A	P	E	■	D	O	C	S
A	L	D	A	■	A	L	T	O	S	■	A	L	O	E
L	I	L	Y	■	R	O	O	S	T	■	R	I	L	E
A	B	E	■	D	O	W	N	T	H	E	R	O	A	D
D	I	S	P	E	N	S	E	■	E	L	Y	■	■	■
■	■	■	E	M	S	■	■	S	T	I	L	T	O	N
M	A	C	R	O	■	A	S	T	I	■	■	E	V	E
A	R	O	U	N	D	T	H	E	C	O	R	N	E	R
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C	A	L	L	O	U	S	■	■	H	E	N	■	■	■
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O	V	E	R	T	H	E	H	I	L	L	■	L	O	T
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S	L	E	D	■	R	E	T	A	R	■	K	E	N	T

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