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HERALD photo/Bill McClellan

Cotton sits in the yard of a Big Spring gin. Unfortunately, it was not a good year for cotton in Howard County, according to AgriLife Extension Agent Tommy Yeater.

Local cotton crop can't overcome drought, rain

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

Mother Nature was not kind to area cotton growers this year.

In many cases, Howard County cotton farmers are experiencing yields that are lacking in both quantity and quality, and experts are pointing their fingers at the weather as the main culprit.

Tommy Yeater of the county Agrilife Extension Service said dry conditions throughout the growing season stunted crop growth. Then, in an almost-cruel twist of fate, when it did



rain, some farms received way too much precipitation, resulting in heavily damaged plants.

"It wasn't very good for cotton at the start of the sea-

son," Yeater said. "When we needed rain, we didn't get it, then a lot of farmers north of Big Spring got a lot of rain ... which caused the plants to shed their bolls and start growing new ones. That means many of the plants had small or no bolls at all."

Yeater estimates that the double whammy of dry and wet conditions forced about 65 percent of county farmers to simply call it a year and file crop insurance claims. Those who harvested didn't see much of a return on their investment.

See **COTTON**, Page 3

TAKING A BREAK

Schools dismiss Friday, city, county set days off

BY LYNDEL MOODY
Staff Writer

Area public school and Howard College students will head into the mid-term break Friday.

Coahoma and Forsan schools will get a 30-minute jump on Big Spring students as both school districts will release students from classes at noon Friday. Big Spring ISD will release students at 12:30 p.m. All three public schools will suspend classes until Jan. 6, when the spring semester begins. Area teachers will need to report back to their campuses Jan. 5 for in-service training.

The Howard College and

SouthWest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf campuses will also be quiet for the next two weeks. The campuses will close at noon Friday and remain closed until Monday, Jan. 5. Online registration will continue through the holiday break but staff will not be in the office to answer questions. The Harold Davis Fitness Center and Howard Cottage will follow the same schedule.

Next week, city and county employees will receive a four-plus day weekend to observe the Christmas Holidays. Howard County offices will

See **CLOSING**, Page 3

Firefighters to enjoy H-E-B- donated coffee

□ See photo, Page 3

BY LYNDEL MOODY
Staff Writer

Coffee never tasted so sweet. But don't forget the creamer.

Local H-E-B representatives handed over more than 1,000 Keurig coffee boxes — 1,014 to be exact — six Keurig machines and several creamer containers Wednesday to be

distributed at each fire station and the local Life Flight unit.

The donation — all 12,168 coffee pods — were the result of contributions from the public during a two-week drive. The Keurings were the store's contribution.

"Cafe Olé is the H-E-B

See **COFFEE**, Page 3

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To reach us:
Please call 263-7331. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you miss your paper, please call (432) 263-7331 before 6 p.m. weekdays.

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Make reservations for Big Spring Day in Austin

BY LYNDEL MOODY
Staff Writer

Reservations to ride the bus to Austin for Howard County Day at the state Capitol are now being taken.

Every two years, when state lawmakers meet for session,

a group of Howard County residents and leaders make a day trip to the state Capitol in an effort to leave an impression on the minds of the legislators.

"This accomplishes two things," said Terry Wegman, executive director of the Big Spring Economic Development. "First, we visit with and say thank you to our state representative and senator and those other folks who have always been in our corner.

"I don't think many people realize there are more legislators representing the Houston area than all of West Texas. We want to remind them we are out here and to keep West Texas in mind."

Wegman

"Secondly, if we can get 50 to 100 people in the chambers of the House and Senate when they call out the resolutions making it Howard County Day, it will leave an impression on our lawmakers and

maybe they will remember us," Wegman continued. "I don't think many people realize there are more legislators representing the Houston area than all of West Texas. We want to remind them we are out here and to keep West Texas in mind."

Howard County Day at the state capitol is set for Feb. 10. For those who don't want to fight that infamous Austin traffic, Howard College is lending one of its buses for the trip. The cost to reserve a seat is \$40. Also, those who attend are asked to wear a Howard County shirt and khaki pants or skirts. Special Howard County shirts can be ordered for \$29 at the

See **AUSTIN**, Page 3

Gifts of Love

Rhythm of Love

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Obituaries

Jayne Kelso



Jayne Kelso, 81, of Garden City, died Sunday, Dec. 14, 2014, in a Midland hospital. Funeral services will be held at 10 a.m. Friday, Dec. 19, 2014, at Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel, with Danny Whitehead, pastor of First Baptist Church in Garden City, officiating. Interment will follow at Garden City Cemetery.

The family will receive friends from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 18, 2014 at Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home.

She was born Nov. 3, 1933, in Lexington, Ill. and married Bob Kelso February 21, 1954 in Bloomington, Ill. He preceded her in death Aug. 28, 2007.

Jayne came to Big Spring in 1970 and moved to Garden City in 1978. She worked as a key punch operator for 20 years, the last few years at Webb Air Force Base in Big Spring, and in food service for Garden City Independent School District for 20 years. She loved her family and spending time with her grandchildren and enjoyed spectator sports. Jayne was a devoted wife, mother and “Granny”.

She was a member of the First Baptist Church in Garden City where she taught Sunday school, served as the Sunday School superintendent and as the church secretary.

Vernie Jueldeen Thompson McCormick

Vernie Jueldeen Thompson McCormick, 81, of Llano, Texas, formerly of Big Spring, died Monday, Dec. 15, 2014, in a Llano nursing home. Funeral services will be at 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 20, 2014, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel. Interment will follow at Trinity Memorial Park.

She was born Nov. 10, 1933, in Trent, Texas and married Irland Faye McCormick Aug. 19, 1950, in Big Spring, Texas.

Jueldeen received her G.E.D. from Big Spring High School, where she met her husband. Jueldeen was a devoted mother and enjoyed cooking, quilt-

Survivors include one daughter, Cindy O’Daniel and husband, Robbie of Coahoma; three sons, Don Kelso and wife, Jean of Big Spring, Ken Kelso and wife, Kim of Midland and Billy Kelso and wife, Shanda of Post; eight grandchildren, Clayton Kelso and wife, Kelsey, Kelli Crouse and husband, Jim, Chance O’Daniel and wife, Stacey, Brendon Kelso, Kelsi Pierce and husband, Erik, Kade Kelso and wife, Lauren, Kara Kelso and fiancé, Matt Knicky and Brody Kelso; 12 great-grandchildren, Case Mount, Coby Mount, Bailey Crouse, Emery Crouse, Barrett Pierce (due Dec. 22), Brenley Kelso, Cannon Kelso, Shaylee O’Daniel, Karson Kelso, Leila Pierce, Ben Rubio and Rylan Rubio; her beloved pet, Tinker Bell; one sister, Joyce Neiryndck and husband, Bob of Bloomington, Ill.; one brother, Ken Miller and wife, Diane of Phoenix, Ariz.; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Gene and Joyce Kelso of Temple and Wayne and Linda Kelso of Little River; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was also preceded in death by her parents. The family suggests memorials to Home Hospice, 200 W. Illinois, Ste. 190, Midland, Texas 79701 or First Baptist Church, P. O. Box 177, Garden City, Texas 79739.

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

Paid obituary

ing, sewing, crocheting and travel.

She is survived by her husband of 64 years, Irland McCormick; three children, Mikical Irland McCormick and wife Karen, of Big Spring, Ricky Dean McCormick and wife, Betty of Brookshire, and Judy Pat Lemcke of Junction, Texas; eight grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Julian Murdock Thompson and Beulah Lois Henson; her brother, J.W. Thompson.

Arrangements under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Online condolences may be made at: www.npwelch.com

John Cramer



John Cramer, 85, of Temple, formerly of Big Spring, died Saturday, Dec. 13, 2014 at William R. Courtney Texas State Veterans Home. He will lie in state Friday, Dec. 19, 2014, from 9 a.m. until noon at Scanio-Harper Funeral Home in Temple, Texas. Grave-side services with military honors will be held at 2 p.m. at the Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Killeen.

He was born April 14, 1929, in Muskegon, Mich. to Magdalene (Dressen) and John M. Cramer. He enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and served in Thailand during the Vietnam War. He retired as a master sergeant after 22 years of service from Webb Air Force Base in Big Spring, Texas. After retirement, he enjoyed making crafts and selling them at various arts and craft festivals around Texas.

He is survived by one son, Alan Cramer of Beaumont; one daughter, Sue Ann Benson of Austin; one brother and two sisters; five grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Irene Cramer; and one son, Mike Cramer.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorials to organizations that promote smoking cessation.

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

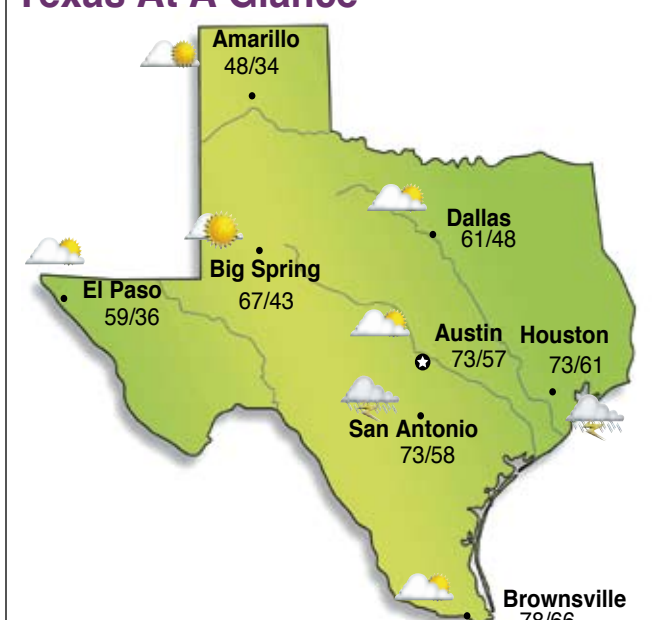
Today's Weather

Local 5-Day Forecast

Fri 12/19	Sat 12/20	Sun 12/21	Mon 12/22	Tue 12/23
67/43 Sunshine and some clouds. High 67F. Winds W at 5 to 10 mph.	55/38 Showers ending by midday. Highs in the mid 50s and lows in the upper 30s.	62/43 Partly cloudy. Highs in the low 60s and lows in the low 40s.	64/46 Mostly sunny. Highs in the mid 60s and lows in the mid 40s.	72/43 Mainly sunny and windy. Highs in the low 70s and lows in the low 40s.
Sunrise: 7:41 AM Sunset: 5:44 PM	Sunrise: 7:42 AM Sunset: 5:44 PM	Sunrise: 7:42 AM Sunset: 5:45 PM	Sunrise: 7:43 AM Sunset: 5:45 PM	Sunrise: 7:43 AM Sunset: 5:46 PM



Texas At A Glance



Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	67	45	mst sunny	Kingsville	76	65	t-storm
Amarillo	48	34	pt sunny	Livingston	65	53	t-storm
Austin	73	57	cloudy	Longview	60	47	cloudy
Beaumont	70	57	t-storm	Lubbock	59	37	mst sunny
Brownsville	78	66	cloudy	Lufkin	65	52	rain
Brownwood	68	47	cloudy	Midland	65	42	mst sunny
Corpus Christi	74	65	t-storm	Raymondville	79	66	cloudy
Corsicana	65	49	pt sunny	Rosenberg	71	62	t-storm
Dallas	61	48	cloudy	San Antonio	73	58	t-storm
Del Rio	71	57	pt sunny	San Marcos	72	56	t-storm
El Paso	59	36	cloudy	Sulphur Springs	56	47	cloudy
Fort Stockton	64	43	pt sunny	Sweetwater	66	43	mst sunny
Gainesville	55	44	cloudy	Tyler	62	48	cloudy
Greenville	58	46	cloudy	Weatherford	63	47	pt sunny
Houston	73	61	t-storm	Wichita Falls	54	43	pt sunny

National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	58	36	cloudy	Minneapolis	26	20	pt sunny
Boston	45	29	pt sunny	New York	44	33	sunny

FRIDAY

• 7p.m. — TheStepping Stone Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets at Spring Town Plaza (inside the mall, across from the movie box office, next to Sears).

• AA open discussion meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at 605 Settles.

• Open Big Book study meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

SATURDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. Open podium/speakers meeting 8 p.m. until 9 p.m. Open birthday night, no smoking meeting the last Saturday of each month at 8 p.m. Covered dish supper at 7 p.m.

SUNDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous closed meeting from 11 a.m. to noon at 615 Settles. Open meeting 7 p.m. until 8 p.m.

MONDAY

• VA Alcoholics Anonymous support group, 7-8 p.m., Veterans Healing Center.

• Reformers Unanimous International is a faith-based addictions program helping people find freedom from addiction. Meetings begin at 7 p.m. Mondays at Trinity Baptist Church in Big Spring. Enter at the main entrance of the church.

• SteppingStone Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets at Spring Town Plaza (inside the mall, across from the movie box office, next to Sears).

• Open meeting at 7 p.m.

TUESDAY

• Big Spring and Snyder Parkinsons Support Group meeting at the Big Spring Senior Center at 10:30 a.m. the second Tuesday of the month.

WEDNESDAY

• STACEY FAYE POE was booked by HCSO on capias warrants for expired motor vehicle certificate.

• A.L. THOMPSON III was booked by HCSO on a charge of possession of marijuana less than 2 ounces.

• QUINNTEL LAMAR EMERSON was booked by BSPD on a Mitchell County warrant for arson.

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

Tuesday:

• MEDICAL call reported at the 1600 block of E. 16th St. One patient transported to Scenic Mountain Medical Center.

Wednesday:

• MEDICAL call reported at the 1700 block of Lancaster. One patient transported to SMMC.

• MEDICAL call reported at Highland Dr. One patient transported to SMMC.

This is a group for all Parkinson’s disease patients, spouses and caregivers.

For more information about the support group or about Parkinson’s Disease, contact Jo Bidwell at the Lubbock APDA office at 806-785-0942.

• VA Alcoholics Anonymous support group, 7:30-8:30 p.m., Veterans Healing Center.

These Financial Institutions will observe the following holiday hours:

Citizens Federal Credit Union
Christmas Eve - Closing at 1pm
CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY

State National Bank
Christmas Eve - Closing at 12pm
CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY

Merry Christmas!

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H-E-B employees and Big Spring firefighters pose for a picture in front of more than 1,000 Keurig coffee boxes and several creamer containers that were donated to the fire department and Life Flight unit Wednesday afternoon. The donation was the result of a two-week public drive held at the store. HEB contributed six Keurig coffee makers which will be distributed to the five fire stations and the Life Flight unit.

HERALD photo/Lyndel Moody

COFFEE

Continued from Page 1

brand coffee,” said Kenda Jones, local H-E-B administrative assistant. “Every year we have a competition to sell the most. One of our partners (employees) said we

do this every year, why don’t we donate the sales our first responders? When selling, we’d ask people if they would like to donate one to our emergency responders.”

On hand to help load up the boxes Wednesday were H-E-B employees and several Big Spring firefighters.

“Coffee is a big part of our job,” said Craig Ferguson, Big Spring Fire Chief. “This is wonderful. It’s great to have H-E-B as one of our community partners.”

Contact Lyndel Moody at 263-7331, ext. 234, or by citydesk@big-springherald.com.

AUSTIN

Continued from Page 1

Chamber of Commerce or the Big Spring Economic Development board, both at 215 W. Third St.

A full day of activities are planned for the Austin trip. The bus will leave at 4:30 a.m. from the east parking lot of the Dorothy Garrett Coliseum. At 10 a.m., event organizers are hoping to fill the chamber balcony with How-

ard County supporters when the House reads a resolution making Feb. 10, 2014, Howard County Day at the Capitol. A second resolution is expected to be read at 11 a.m. on the floor of the Senate.

At noon, a group photo is scheduled to be taken in the rotunda of the state Capitol and then the Big Spring High School choral group, “Rhapsody” will perform at 12:15 p.m., also in the rotunda.

The bus back to Howard County will depart at 1 p.m. with a stop off around 2 p.m. at Opie’s Barbe-

cue for a lunch break. The lunch is dutch treat. The bus is expected to arrive back in Big Spring at 7 p.m.

For more information or to make reservations, contact the Big Spring Economic Development at 264-6032 or the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce, 263-7641.

Contact Lyndel Moody at 263-7331, ext. 234, or by citydesk@big-springherald.com.

► Take Note

- Crossroads Hospice needs volunteers for patient care. Contact Eva at 263-5300.

- A couple wants to make sure veterans living at the Lamun-Lusk-Sanchez State Veterans home receiving a little Christmas cheer. Trisha and Robert Hildreth are requesting donations for the 100-plus veterans who reside at the home. Some of the items requested are baseball caps, belts size 32-40, pretty scarves for the female veterans, small stocking suffer type items, stretch knit gloves, bingo card games and play money. Unwrapped donations can be brought to the Big Spring Herald offices at 710 Scurry St. The deadline to drop off a donation is 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 18. For more information, contact Trisha Hildreth at 432-459-2309.

- Santa Claus will be at Spring Town Plaza from 1-3 p.m. Saturday for one last visit before return-

ing to the North Pole to prepare for Christmas

- Hometown Christmas, a local organization that helps provide underprivileged children with Christmas gifts, is accepting donations immediately. The organization tries to supply eligible boys and girls with one to two toys and a set of clothes each. If you would like to donate funds, toys or clothes, bring them to Wells Fargo Bank during regular business hours. The bank is located at Fourth and Main downtown. For more information, contact Beverly Johnson at 264-8373,
- A hungry child cannot learn. Food2Kids - Big Spring was created to provide nutrition for hundreds of children who do not get a substantial meal on the weekends. F2K began last November and this

volunteer program now serves more than 300 children weekly. Once the need has been identified, F2K fills a sack of food to send home each Friday during the school year. You can help. Volunteers are needed and donations can be sent to Food2Kids - Big Spring, P.O. Box 1641, Big Spring 79721. Find us on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/Food2Kids

- Order of the Eastern Star Big Spring Chapter 67 meets the third Thursday of each month at 219 Main St. Dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. Lodge meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. For more information, contact Jimmy Ruth at 270-7263.
- The Cross Roads Young Marines are taking applications for another boot camp. For more information, call 432-517-4791. Young Marines welcomes boys

and girls ages 8 to 18 who are still attending school.

- The Big Spring Senior Center dance is open to all ages. Cost is \$8 per person.

- Victim Services is a non-profit independent community-based program serving victims of all violent crime, including, but not limited to, assault, sexual assault and domestic violence. Victim Services advocates are available 24 hours of day, 365 days a year to provide crisis intervention or accompaniment to the hospital and law enforcement agencies as needed. For more information, call Linda Calvio at 432-263-3312.

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Three jailed for ag assault In Howard Co.

Herald Staff Report

Three people are in custody after allegedly assaulting an Odessa man on Interstate 20 west of Big Spring Tuesday.

Howard County sheriff’s deputies responded to the rest area at the 168 mile marker of I-20 early Tuesday and made contact with Michael Nofsinger, who told officials he had been assaulted by three males.

“Nofsinger advised he had responded to the area to assist three persons known to him because their vehicle had broken down,” a sheriff’s office news release stated. “He attempted to assist with repairing the vehicle, but they could not get the vehicle repaired at that time.”

The three men, identified as William Rex Beckham, Dylan Alton

Helms and a male juvenile, then insisted that Nofsinger drive them to Oklahoma.

“When Nofsinger refused, one of the males produced a pistol and threatened Nofsinger and they began assaulting him,” the news release stated. “Nofsinger took the keys from his vehicle and ran south into a pasture area and hid while he called 911.”

With assistance from Texas Department of Criminal Justice tracking dogs and a Department of Public Safety helicopter, deputies soon located the three suspects. All three were charged with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, a second-degree felony, while Beckham was additionally charged with unauthorized use of a vehicle and unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon.

COTTON

Continued from Page 1

Prices for harvested cotton have been low, ranging between 40 cents and 50 cents a pound, “and the quality has not been very good,” Yeater said. Yields have been low, as well, averaging about three-quarters of a bale per acre, he added.

The news wasn’t all gloomy, however.

While the heavy rains of September were horrible for cotton farmers, they were a godsend for area ranchers — there is now plenty of feed for livestock — and ground moisture from the rains could help farmers when it comes time to plant next year’s crop.

Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-7331 ext. 235 or by e-mail at reporter@bigspringherald.com

CLOSING

Continued from Page 1

close at noon Christmas Eve, Wednesday, Dec. 24, and stay closed until 8 a.m. Monday morning, Dec. 29. On Monday, Dec. 22, the county offices will temporarily close during the hours of 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. for an annual Christmas luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

On Christmas Eve, city of Big Spring offices will close at 3 p.m. and not reopen until 8 a.m., Monday, Dec. 29. The landfill will reopen on Saturday, Dec. 27, from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. There will be no sanitation pickup on Wednesday, Dec. 24 through Friday, Dec. 26. Emergency services will continue normal

operations. Emergency Utilities Department will also be on call and can be contacted at 264-2392.

Contact Staff Writer Lyndel Moody by e-mail at citydesk@bigspringherald.com

MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL

24th & Johnson 267-8288

John Cramer, 85, died Saturday. He will lie in state Friday from 9 a.m. until 12 noon at Scanio-Harper Funeral Home in Temple, Texas. Graveside services will be held at 2 p.m. at the Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Killeen. 2015 Norman Rockwell Calendars are in!

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Opinion

“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.

Share Christmas with the Herald

The Herald is asking its readers to help us celebrate Christmas.

No, we aren't asking for gifts, candies or the like. We're just asking for you to help make the holidays a bit brighter for us and other readers.

Here's how you do it:

Over the next few days, take a photo of your Christmas lights — indoor or outdoor — and other decorations.

Shoot a picture of yourself, your spouse, children, even a pet, in a Santa hat, elf suit or reindeer antlers. Use your imagination.

Write us a short story (include a photo) about your best Christmas ever, favorite gift, special tree ornament.

Caroling with a group this weekend? Send us a group picture.

We'll need you to send us your name (no anonymous submissions, we won't publish them) and a phone number (we won't publish the number, it's just for verification purposes).

The Herald will print as many of your stories and photos as possible before and on Christmas Day, so get them in soon. The deadline is 3 p.m. Monday. Send them to editor@bigspringherald.com.

Sorry, we can't publish Christmas thoughts and photos received after the 24th, but hey, your baby would look great in a New Year's banner!

ADDRESSES

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

• **BARACK OBAMA**
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Washington, D.C. 20500

• **TED CRUZ**
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• **JOHN CORNYN**
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• **RANDY NEUGEBAUER**
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Texas 72nd District
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Christophobes march on

America's Christophobes have been plenty busy lately. Maybe the Christmas season makes them especially nervous.

A few weeks ago, Atlanta Fire Rescue Department Chief Kelvin Cochran was suspended for a month without pay for the unforgivable sin of self-publishing a Christian book in which he expressed his disapproving views about homosexual behavior, among other things.

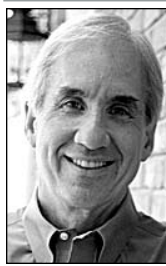
City spokeswoman Anne Torres said: "We understand that (Cochran) was distributing the book to other employees. We are still not sure yet what the circumstances surrounding that are. ... The bottom line is that the (Mayor Kasim) Reed administration does not tolerate discrimination of any kind."

Now that's an Orwellian assertion if I've ever heard one, for I suppose Torres meant that Reed does not tolerate discrimination of any kind except the kinds he deems worthy, such as his fascist suspension of Chief Cochran.

The city's action against Cochran is, in fact, discrimination, and the entity doing the discrimination is the city itself. So Reed condemns himself with his own statements. His hypocrisy is further illuminated by his characterizing Cochran's mere personal publication of a book as prohibited discriminatory behavior when Cochran took no discriminatory actions against anyone, let alone in his official capacity.

Yes, Cochran reportedly distributed his book to some of his employees. But there is apparently no indication that he followed up with a department pop quiz.

According to news reports, the city is now investigating whether Cochran broke any city laws or discriminated against some employees in the city's fire department. Really? If they don't know whether he broke any laws or committed acts of discrimination, then why did they say he did and suspend him?



DAVID LIMBAUGH

I'll tell you why: No one dare utter opinions that conflict with the politically correct dictate that homosexual behavior is above criticism. Thought police act first and then investigate later.

But the city is talking out of both sides of its mouth. While peremptorily suspending Cochran and then saying it's investigating whether discrimination occurred, it's also saying, through its spokeswoman, that "a number of passages in the book ... directly conflict with the city's nondiscrimination policies."

One wonders what passages could conflict with such policies? As long as we still have free speech in this nation — and in the city of Atlanta — how can a passage conflict with such policies? Does she mean that passages advocate prohibited actions or that they express views that the city doesn't allow to be thought, much less expressed? Does it matter at all that these passages are based on protected religious beliefs, which makes the city's action all the more outrageous?

Mayor Reed said, "I am deeply disturbed by the sentiments expressed in the paperback regarding the LGBT community." Well, good for him, but is that legal justification for him to discriminate against his fire chief, hitting him in his pocketbook? Is that what it has come to?

Yes, this is indeed what it has come to.

Henceforth, Cochran will be prohibited from distributing the book on city property and will be required to undergo sensitivity training. If a city employee, especially one in a leadership position, publicly expresses opinions that offend the sensibilities of the Minister of Truth, he will be forced to submit to re-education camp as a condition to retaining his job.

More recently, the U.S. Army disciplined a military chaplain for making references to the Bible during a suicide prevention seminar Nov. 20 at the University of North Georgia as he shared his personal experiences with depression while an Army Ranger.

Joseph Lawhorn referred to Israel's King David of Old Testament renown. This brought a "letter of concern" from Col.

David Fivecoat, commander of the Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade at Fort Benning, Georgia. "During this training," wrote Fivecoat, "you advocated, or were perceived to advocate, for Christianity and used Christian scripture and solutions." Fivecoat warned Lawhorn to be "cognizant of the various beliefs held by diverse Soldiers" and "create an environment of tolerance and understanding."

This letter will be in Lawhorn's file for up to three years.

To show just how paranoid some of our government institutions have become about Christianity, Lawhorn only used his own example of dealing with depression as one of many, and at no time did he suggest that a Christian solution is the only or even the preferred way of dealing with depression. He supposedly never challenged the validity of other methods. Moreover, no one at the session filed a formal complaint.

So as we've seen in other areas of our society, Christianity is so toxic to many in the militant secular culture that its ideas can't even be presented among many others, much less in a stand-alone context, by government personnel — at any level.

In today's America, even a Christian chaplain — is that redundant anymore? — can't invoke Christian ideas, even if he's not evangelizing.

If things keep going this way in America, we'll all eventually have to keep our disfavored opinions to ourselves, inside our own homes — assuming the government hasn't installed monitors in our homes to ensure that we don't share such forbidden ideas with our children.

David Limbaugh is a writer, author and attorney. His latest book is "Jesus on Trial: A Lawyer Affirms the Truth of the Gospel." Follow him on Twitter @davidlimbaugh and his website at www.davidlimbaugh.com. To read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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Pottersville goes online

What is it that makes the holiday movie classic "It's a Wonderful Life" feel so ancient? It's the relationships, but which ones?

Not George Bailey's warm and loving family. We have close families today. It's not the far-off relationships, as with long-lost school friends. We have more of them than ever, thanks to Facebook and other digital communities.

The relationships they had in Bedford Falls that are often missing today are those between the very intimate and the quite distant. Townspeople like Gower the druggist, Ernie the cabdriver, Bert the cop -- George knew them all by name, and he knew their stories.

George's family, owners of a building and loan, was fairly prosperous. But the Baileys remained tightly woven with people of varying incomes, education and ethnicity. Each of them was an individual, not just a useful provider of a good or service.

This is society's middle ring, so strong in the Main Street America of 70 years ago but much weakened since by several forces. One is the clustering of like-minded people from similar backgrounds in the same neighborhood. Another is the migration of social life and shopping

from in-person to the Internet.

Marc Dunkelman writes of the fading town-based model of society in his book, "The Vanishing Neighbor: The Transformation of American Community." The middle ring, he says, was "where communities of people with different skills and interests, disparate concerns and values, collaborated with their neighbors in the pursuit of the common good."

"It's a Wonderful Life" wallows in sentimentality, but it does not sprinkle sugar on the stresses of middle-ring relationships. A key theme is George's ability to deal humanely with the town's flawed human beings. For example, he treats the local floozy, Violet, with unfailing kindness, even lending her money so she doesn't have to sell her furs.

There's a harsh scene in which a drunken Gower slaps young George around. George responds with tearful sympathy for the grief he knows the druggist is suffering.

Today the parents might sue the druggist for assaulting their child. And Gower's reputation would have been shredded beyond repair on social media.

The Facebook generation would probably unfriend these needy or difficult people in two minutes. But in the social matrix of Bedford Falls, these connections are for life.

Sacrifice for others is another theme. George gives up his dreams of adventure to protect his neighbors from the evil banker Mr. Potter. Gratitude for his good deeds, however, does

not flow freely.

When there's a run on the bank, angry depositors ignore George's assurances they'd eventually get their money back. He has to remind a man named Joe that when he was behind on house payments, the bank let his family keep its home.

Some want to take Mr. Potter's offer of pennies on the dollar. George implores them: "We've got to stick together. ... We've got to have faith in each other."

In a nightmare sequence, George sees what Bedford Falls would have become without him. It's Pottersville now, a hellish place where malice is the default, the vulnerable are humiliated and seedy bars, strip clubs and pool halls expel their neon nastiness onto the streets. (The jazz is good, though.)

As our relationships move online, this dark vision is looking awfully familiar. There's "flaming," the spread of false personal attacks. And doxxing, the malicious disclosure of private information. Hacking into private accounts has become commonplace. Stolen personal photos are posted on anonymous websites. And adults are using false identities to traumatize children.

This is what happens when middle-ring relationships are replaced by an outer ring crowded with strangers. Is it all Pottersville from here on? Let's hope not.

Follow Froma Harrop on Twitter @FromaHarrop. She can be reached at fharrop@gmail.com.

DAILY PRAYER

Each day with you, Lord, is a day full of opportunity.

Amen

District Champions



Forsan Jr. High earns District 8-AA, North Zone acadmic meet champs

Forsan Junior High School students walked away from competition recently as District 8-AA, North Zone Academic Meet team champions.

The meet was held Wednesday, Dec. 10 through Thursday, Dec. 11. Forsan won the meet, scoring 793.3 points. Miles came in second with 506.3 points and Christoval placed third with 462.3 points. Students competed in several events including art, calculator applications,

chess puzzle, dictionary skills, editorial writing, impromptu speaking, listening skills, maps, graphs and charts, mathematics, modern oratory, number sense, oral reading, ready writing, science, social studies and spelling.

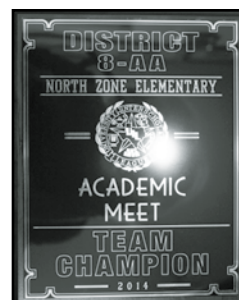
The One Act Play Festival was held at an earlier date and Forsan placed second in this contest. Fifty seventh and eighth grade students from Forsan participated in the two day event.

Forsan Elementary fares well at meet

The Forsan Elementary at Elbow School won the District 8-AA North Zone Elementary, University Interscholastic League Academic Meet Team Champion.

The 2014 academic meet was held on Wednesday, Dec. 10, and Thursday, Dec. 11, at Irion County. Ninety-one Forsan students in grades second through sixth grades competed in 41 events including creative writing, ready writing, number sense, spelling, listening skills, maps, graphs and charts, oral reading, story telling, music memory, art, social studies, impromptu speaking and chess puzzle.

Forsan Elementary, including 6th grade from Forsan Junior High earned the championship with 895.5 points; Irion County won second place with 761 points; and Miles took third place with 633.5 points.



Coahoma bands fare well at UIL contest

Privett, McFall qualify for Area Band Auditions

Jessica Privett and Tyler McFall played a sweet note — several in fact — all the way to a place at UIL Area Band auditions.

The Coahoma High School band participated in All-Region Band auditions at Greenwood High School on Monday, Dec. 8.

Privett, a junior, earned a chair in the Honor Band and McFall, a freshman, placed in the Symphonic band. The two will vie for a shot at state competition on Jan. 10, when Idalou High School host Area Band auditions.

Three other Coahoma students also earned a chair in the All-Region Symphonic Band. They are Belia Nelson, Abigail Sanchez and Logan Nachlinger, all juniors at Coahoma High School.

The All-Region Band concert will be held on Jan. 24, at Midland High School.



Coahoma Jr. High band places nine on All-Region Middle School

Coahoma junior high had nine students qualify for the All-Region Middle School Honor Band during auditions held Saturday, Dec. 13, at Kermit Junior High School

They were Andrea King, flute, 8th; Naughtia Rockwell, clarinet, 7th; Leslie Darlin, bass clarinet 7th; Naomi White, trumpet, 8th; Bailey Wells, trumpet 7th; Christian Klug, trumpet, 8th; Kaelob Stewart, trumpet, 7th; Jaydan Mann, baritone; 8th; and Brittany Ceballos, baritone, 8th.

The Middle School region band concert will be on Jan. 17, at Stanton High School.

The Coahoma band program is under the direction of John Landin.

BSJHS students place well in academic contest

Big Spring Junior High School students participated in UIL Academic contest held in Sweetwater on Dec. 10.

The following are the results:

Seventh Graders
Collin Ross, impromptu speech, 5th;
Christian Roberts, math, 3rd; Jhett Hutcherson, math, 6th; math team of Jhett Hutcherson, Christian Roberts and Benjamin Williams, 1st.

Spelling team of Madison Cox, Linda Proctor and Casey Thibeault, 3rd;
Ashley Crisp, listening, 2nd, social studies, 3rd, ready writing, 5th;
Kynleigh Joy, art, 1st, and calculator applications, 4th; Christian Roberts, number sense, 5th; Kadence Orison, science, 1st, and chess, 1st; Darian Oyler, chess, 1st; and Kenra Thibeault, editorial writing, 4th.

Eighth Grade
Mason Harrington, social studies, 6th; Mikal Banks, mathematics, 2nd,



and number sense, 5th; Robert Sotelo, mathematics, 5th; the eighth grade math team of Mikal Banks, Robert Sotelo and Casey Shubert, 2nd; the eighth grade number sense team, Robert Sotelo, Mikal Banks and Kody Foust, 3rd; Kody Foust, ready writing, 4th, and calculator applications, 4th; and Manuel Marquez, calculator applications, 4th.



Steer Pride Corner

Submitted by George Bancroft,
BSISD community relations coordinator

Big Spring Intermediate School students are encouraged to do some reading during lunch and are embracing the opportunity to learn during their leisure time. Pictured right are Daniel Zarraga, Manuel Castillo, and Christopher Carrillo.



At left, these four sixth grade students from BSI competed at the UIL Academic completion in Sweetwater on Dec. 10. Ransom Colette placed first out of 22 participating in mathematics. In Social Studies, Tyler Lopez placed 1st, Jocelyn Gonzales placed 3rd, and Ashlin Calvio placed 4th. Loryne Colette is the BSI UIL Sponsor.



Above, left, the "Coat Club" at Marcy Elementary helped Ms. Kristin Tubb hand out coats to kids donated by Life Church. At right, JJ and Javarious Ford pose for a picture on the Marcy Elementary School's Christmas Parade award-winning float.



The Marcy Elementary staff showed their support for their WatchDOGS by wearing their staff shirts.

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Randle, Dunbar wait to find status of Murray

IRVING, Texas (AP) — Joseph Randle says he goes into every game not really knowing what his workload will be.

So the Dallas running back doesn't really see this week as anything unusual, even if he might be taking the place of NFL rushing leader DeMarco Murray.

The Cowboys don't know if Murray can play Sunday against Indianapolis after breaking his left hand in last weekend's victory at Philadelphia. He had a large cast Tuesday, a day after surgery on his left ring finger, but went through some drills in prac-

tice Wednesday with a much smaller wrap.

While Colts coach Chuck Pagano says his team is practicing as if Murray will play, Randle and Lance Dunbar are preparing for a rare moment in the spotlight.

The Cowboys (10-4) are in position to clinch a playoff berth, but facing the possibility of missing the postseason if they lose one of their last two games.

"I feel like I can get the job done," Randle said. "I don't want to let the team down. I know this is a huge game for our season."

Randle started twice last season when Murray had a sprained knee, but the Cowboys weren't counting so heavily on the running game then.

While Randle is averaging 7 yards per carry in spot duty this year, he had 91 yards rushing on 33 carries — a 2.8-yard average — as the featured back against Philadelphia and Detroit.

"Just have to trust me about getting my job done," said Randle, who has 237 yards rushing.

This could be Randle's best shot at redemption since a shoplifting arrest in October

that got worse for the second-year back. A booking video showed him making disparaging comments about previous legal trouble for receiver Dez Bryant and defensive tackle Josh Brent.

Bryant was involved in a domestic violence complaint two years ago, and Brent recently returned to the team after a 10-game suspension for an intoxication manslaughter conviction in the death of teammate Jerry Brown.

Not long after police in a Dallas suburb released the video, Randle and Bryant were arguing on the practice field when

tight end Jason Witten intervened.

Less than two weeks later, Randle had his most significant play of the season — a 40-yard touchdown run against Jacksonville in London. He also had a 17-yard scoring run on his only carry against Chicago two weeks ago.

"I just think he's gotten more and more confident," coach Jason Garrett said. "Sometimes, that can be challenging when you've been sitting there, sitting there, sitting there watching somebody else play and now it's your turn."

Lady Steers tabbed to finish 2nd in 2-4A race

By TOMMY WELLS

Sports Editor

A year ago, the Big Spring High School Lady Steers' basketball program turned a corner. The team, under the tutelage of Mike Warren, earned plenty of respect by fighting its way past a tie-breaker matchup with Sweetwater to reach the state playoffs.

This season, now under the watchful eye of new coach Stacy Smalley, the Lady Steers are expected to take a huge step forward.

Just ask TexPrep, one of the state's premier high school basketball publications.

The preseason magazine ranked Big Spring as the second-best team in the new District 2-4A race, meaning the Lady Steers should make an even better showing ... and a return to the postseason. Big Spring will open district play on Jan. 16 against preseason favorite, Levelland.

According to the publication, Levelland will win the District 2-4A title. The Loboettes went 26-8 and advanced to the regional quarterfinals a

The following is a look at the predicted order of finish in the District 2-4A race, according to TexPrep preseason basketball magazine.

No.	Team
1.....	Levelland
2.....	Big Spring
3.....	Estacado
4.....	Snyder
5.....	Lamesa
6.....	Sweetwater

season ago.

Levelland, which is ranked No. 16 in the latest Class 4A poll, will be led by Haylee Jackson.

The Lady Steers, who are keyed by the return of Julianna Rodriguez and Diamonique Mayes, was 19-11 a year ago. Rodriguez and Mayes were both all-district selections last season.

Estacado and Snyder are expected to fight it out for the final two playoff berths, according to TexPrep. Estacado posted a 15-15 mark a year ago. Snyder, which will be led by Lindzi Clementer, went 15-13.

Lamesa, despite returning three all-district players from a team that won its Class 3A district last year, is predicted to finish fourth, while Sweetwater is picked to finish last.



Tony Claxton photos (www.claxtonphotography.com)

Diamonique Mayes and the Big Spring Lady Steers are expected to make a run at the District 2-4A championships this season, according to TexPrep, a preseason high school basketball magazine.

Big Spring freshmen girls suffer tough 51-37 loss to Rangerettes

By TOMMY WELLS

Sports Editor

Despite a solid effort from several starters, including Sidney Evans and Jori Hanlen, the Big Spring High School Lady Steers' freshman team came out on the short end of a 51-37 setback to the Greenwood Rangers on Tuesday in Midland.

Evans turned in a stellar effort offensively for Big Spring. She led all scorers by throwing in a game-high 16 points.

Jeran Vanover and Lexi Delafuente also played well. Vanover added eight points.

Delafuente played an excellent floor game and had several assists and steals in addition to scoring four points.

Hanlen, Kalli Hale, D'Amberly Baldwin, Mirella Villa, and Hannah Gomez all contributed to the Lady Steers' excellent pres-

sure defense that kept the contest close most of the night.

The Lady Steers opened the contest with a hot start. They reeled off 10 points in the first quarter and held a slim 10-9 cushion.

The Rangerettes rallied back to post a 13-7 run in the second and took a 22-17 lead into the half.

After BSHS had rallied to within 32-29 in the third, Greenwood managed to pull away in the final minutes. They outscored Big Spring by a 17-7 clip in the fourth quarter.

Hale finished with four points, while Baldwin and Villa had two each.

The next game for the freshmen will be played on Friday in the Steer Gym against Grape Creek. The contest will tip off beginning at 4:30 p.m.



Photo courtesy Cindy Smith

WJCAC thriller ...

The Howard College Hawks will return to Western Junior College Athletic Conference on Jan. 3 when they host rival South Plains in the Dorothy Garrett Coliseum.

Lady Buffs open district with victory

By TOMMY WELLS

Sports Editor

The Forsan High School Lady Buffaloes accomplished the first of their 2014 basketball goals on Tuesday night. They opened District 8-2A play with a win.

The Lady Buffaloes tipped off their district campaign on a high note by downing the Iraan Lady Braves, 43-36, in front of the home fans.

With the victory, Forsan moved to the top of the 8-team district race.

Leading the Lady Buffaloes to victory was freshman standout Chasidy Grantham. She finished the game with a team-high 11 points. Senior Mary-Ashley McDaniel also came up huge for Forsan. She pumped in nine points in the contest.

Forsan is joined in the district by Christoval, Eldorado, Iraan, McCamey, Irion County, Miles and Ozona.

The Lady Buffs will return to action tomorrow when they travel to McCamey.

Big Spring JV rolls to 59-52 romp over G'wood

Chase Williams pumped in a game-high 23 points and Jesus Archuleta added 10 more on Tuesday and powered the Big Spring Steers' junior varsity basketball team to a 59-52 win over the Greenwood Rangers.

In addition to double-digit efforts from Wil-

liams and Archuleta, the Steers also picked up outstanding play from Steven Henry and Preston Alexander. Both finished the game with eight points. A.J. Hodnett added six, while Chance Williams and Jordan Walker threw in three and one, respectively.

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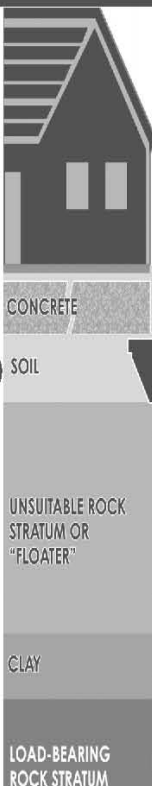

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Solar/Lunar
Intensity

As civilized and well mannered as you may be, the fact remains that if you are reading this, you're probably that soft, warm-blooded, highly adaptable and sharply instinctive animal called "human."

The wild Sagittarius sun and the intense Scorpio moon machinate with unexpectedly emotional results. Chalk it up to human nature.



HOLIDAY
MATHIS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). When plans snag, you might wonder whether your intuition is off. It's not. Believe it or not, the snag is for the best. Eventually, all will work out in an unexpected and fortuitous way.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You don't need to measure up to anyone else's standards, only your own. It will be good luck to listen to the

person who is, for some reason, often ignored.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). If there's a better way to make money, you're likely to notice it today. That person performing a task you find fascinating is doing the thing that you could be doing and being paid well for it, too! Investigate.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Those ideas about wrong and right may look good on paper, but they play out in such nuanced and complicated ways that in the end the moral stance doesn't settle so neatly.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Start the conversation. Whether or not things take off, you'll be glad you took the initiative, if only for the education of it. Saying interesting things isn't necessary. The point is just to get the other person talking. It's about rapport.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). In recent days, your heart song has been a hummable, pleasant melody. Today it has operatic force. The affection you feel is a gift, whether or not you

Tomorrow's Horoscope

choose to do anything about it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). People will communicate to you messages that you already knew but maybe weren't supposed to. Regardless of how good of an actor you are, your kindness will not allow you to deflate anyone's ego.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You're inclined to share freely all that you've learned, but first consider where your parents are coming from. Some people aren't ready for your knowledge, and it will be wasted on them.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Make a resolution for yourself and stick to it. This will be good practice for New Year's. Even if you stick to it for only a day, you'll be building your "stick to it" muscles.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The older folks will do the "these kids today" talk, and the younger ones will feel annoyed, but not as annoyed as a middle group who realize that the minute they say

"these kids today," they are not among them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). It's been said that just because you own a hammer doesn't mean you can build a house. However, you're a lot closer to being able to build one than the person who doesn't own a hammer. Have faith and get more tools.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Most people don't like to feel controlled, and the strong-willed creative types absolutely hate it. Anyone trying to impose a view or a timeline on you will automatically go on your "watch list."

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 18). Are you ready to be adored? Your January makeover puts stars in someone's eyes. If friends take paths you don't understand, your independence will be empowering. In February, buy and sell what's needed to make a better living. May brings family events and important new connections. Cancer and Taurus people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 20, 5, 44, 16 and 32.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "My boyfriend is a Pisces, and I'm a Scorpio. Are these signs a good match? I want to know whether I'll get married again. Thank you."

Yes! Pisces and Scorpio are both water signs, which indicates deep emotions, soulfulness, empathy and a profound need and ability to connect with others. Where these two can miss is in dealing practically in real-world problems. You can't live on love alone. Make friends and advisers out of earth signs who can keep you two grounded and on track. Earth signs are Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn.

"When I'm with co-workers or talking to the boss, I get super-nervous. Either I shake, drop things or lose my train of thought. Will I ever get better?" (6/30/49)

With so many Cancer influences in your chart, you're hyperaware of your surroundings and the moods of others. Uranus conjunct with your sun makes you somewhat of an eccentric thinker, and therefore your solutions on the job are brilliant -- just not the

norm. Being afraid you won't fit in could be the main problem. Learn to celebrate your uniqueness, and this problem goes away. A career coach, counselor, hypnotist or improvisation class will help.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Australian pop star Sia Furler has become an international hit-factory with her own chart toppers and songs she penned for Beyonce, Rihanna, David Guetta and more. Famously private, Furler has been known to cast others in her videos and perform with her back to the audience. The Sagittarian powerhouse singer has Venus and Uranus in private Scorpio.

If you would like to write to Holiday Mathis, please go to www.creators.com and click on "Write the Author" on the Holiday Mathis page, or you may send her a postcard in the mail. To find out more about Holiday Mathis and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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Sudoku Answer On Page 3

sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9 with no repeats. That means no number is repeated in any row, column or box.

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

www.sudoku-puzzles.net

Contract
Bridge

By Steve Becker

Hidden Asset

West dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 9 8 5 4
♥ K J 7 6
♦ 8 6
♣ 7 3 2

WEST
♠ A K Q 10 2
♥ 10 8 5
♦ 3
♣ Q J 8 4

EAST
♠ J 7 6 3
♥ A 9 4 3 2
♦ 10 4
♣ 10 9

SOUTH
♠ —
♥ Q
♦ A K Q J 9 7 5 2
♣ A K 6 5

The bidding:
West North East South
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ 5 ♦

Opening lead — king of spades.

It is said that necessity is the mother of invention, and certainly anyone who has played bridge long enough realizes that there are times when a player must improvise to be successful.

Take this case where South ruffed the opening spade lead and could see three potential losers — a heart and two clubs. Declarer had a choice of several lines of play to try to make the contract.

1. If the diamond ten fell on the first round of trumps, he could con-

cede the heart queen to the ace and then use dummy's eight of diamonds as an entry to take two club discards.

2. He could play the A-K and another club at once, hoping that if the opposing clubs were not divided 3-3, he could ruff his fourth club in dummy without being overruffed by the ten.

3. He could lead the queen of hearts and hope it was ducked by the defender with the ace.

Eventually, declarer decided that his best shot for the contract was to lead the heart queen at trick two. In addition to the possibility that the queen might be ducked, this also allowed him to keep in reserve a follow-up plan that virtually guaranteed making the contract.

East took the queen of hearts with the ace and returned the ten of clubs at trick three. South won with the ace and thereupon led the five of diamonds to dummy's six!

This unusual move — deliberately losing a trump trick he did not have to lose — had the desired effect. East took the six with the ten and returned the nine of clubs, but he was fighting a losing battle. South won with the king, led the seven of trumps to dummy's eight and discarded the 6-5 of clubs on the K-J of hearts to finish with 11 tricks.

Tomorrow: Test your play.
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Annie's Mailbox ®

Dear Annie: My mother is 95 years old and in OK shape. She has been diagnosed with dementia, and her physician recommended a full-time caregiver because Mom is confused most of the time. She still lives in her home, refusing to leave, and my two siblings and I take care of her the best we can.



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

When we were growing up, Mom was mentally abusive to us and physically abusive to my father. She was not a good mother. When we go to her home to clean and cook, she yells and screams about the same things over and over to the point where I often have to leave. She is not a happy person, always focusing on the negative things in her life. Mom refuses to go to a nursing home, and we cannot force her. Our lives are in a constant state of turmoil and severe stress with no end in sight.

Here's the real problem: Mom's pacemaker is due for replacement. If we don't act relatively soon, the batteries may die and

the pacemaker will cease to function. Obviously, that means Mom could die from heart failure. My two siblings don't want to have the maintenance done. They say her mind is deteriorating so quickly, it would be pointless. They are willing to throw caution to the wind. But, Annie, I don't think I can live with myself if we don't replace the batteries. I need your help. -- Outvoted

Dear Outvoted: Please don't have regrets when your mother dies. These choices can haunt you forever. Ask to speak to Mom's doctor about the pacemaker and her dementia. Even outpatient surgery may be too much for her to handle. Let the doctor advise you. Then look into pooling your resources and getting a caregiver, at least part time, in order to give the rest of you a break.

Eldercare Locator at eldercare.gov (1-800-677-1116) and the Alzheimer's Association (alz.org) can

also provide resources and support.

Dear Annie: My second wife and I have been married for four years. She has two sons from her previous marriage, and I have one daughter and three sons from mine. The problem is how much we spend on them at Christmas.

I say we spend an equal amount on all of the kids. She thinks we should spend twice as much on her two children because I have four. I want to be fair and equitable about this, but cannot seem to convince her that her logic could backfire. These children are all adults in their 20s, and two of them are married.

If I am wrong, I will concede. If I am correct, please help me get this across to her. -- Lost in Love

Dear Lost: If you and your wife have separate incomes, she can spend what she likes on her kids, and you can spend what you choose on yours. However, assuming you are pooling your money and buying gifts together, we say that you should spend the same on all of the children. This isn't a competition between your kids and hers. They are ALL your children now and should be treated equally.

Dear Annie: In your response to "Actively Confused," the husband of the cancer patient, I wish you had emphasized that the wife might have depression.

I was treated for breast cancer 13 years ago. A year after the surgery and radiation, I suffered from major depression, partly caused by the stress of having a serious illness and the hormonal chemotherapy involved. Although I was at higher risk because of a previous episode of depression, it is also something that can happen to anyone with a life-threatening illness.

Irritability and anger are often overlooked as symptoms of depression. If the woman's oncologist is not helpful, perhaps the patient's primary care physician or a mental health professional would be. -- Doing Well in Virginia

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please email your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 737 3rd Street, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254. To find out more about Annie's Mailbox and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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NIE
(Newspapers in Education)

Publishes Tuesday In the
BIG SPRING HERALD

	KMID (3) Midland	UNI (4) Spanish	KPEJ (5) Odessa	KOSA (7) Odessa	KTLE (8) Telemundo	KWES (9) Midland	WTBS (11) Atlanta	KMLM (12) Odessa	KPBT (13) Odessa	KWWT (14) Odessa	DISC (20) Discovery	AMC (21) Classics	SPIKE (22) Spike TV	TNT (23) Atlanta	BET (26) Black Ent.	DISN (27) Disney	ESPN2 (28) Sports	ESPN (29) Sports
5 :PM :30	News ABC	P. Luche	Two Men	News	Tele	News	Seinfeld	Yohanah	Global	ChiPs	Edge of Alaska	Christmas, Rosemary Clooney	Happy Gilmore, Julie Bowen	Castle (DVS)	The Real	Hannah Shake It	Pardon Pre-Bowl	SportsCenter
6 :PM :30	Jeopardy! Wheel	La Gata (SS)	Big Bang	News	Caso Cerrado	News	Seinfeld	Messiah	Business	M*A*S*H	Edge of Alaska			Castle (DVS)	Movie: I'm in Love With a Church Girl, Stephen Baldwin	Sonny Kim Poss	Women's College Volleyball	Bskball Hour
7 :PM :30	The Taste	Mi Corazón Es Tuyo	Bones (DVS)	Big Bang	Ent	The Biggest Loser	Seinfeld	Rik Rocks		M*A*S*H			Movie: Dumb & Dumber, Lauren Holly	NBA Basketball: New York Knicks at Chicago Bulls.		Beethoven-Adv	College Basketball: Connecticut vs. Duke.	
8 :PM :30		Hasta el Fin		Two Men	McCar	People Magazine Awards		Upd		Griffith	To Be Announced					Austin	Women's College Volleyball	
9 :PM :30	Away-Murder	La Malquerida (SS)	Mod Fam	Elementary	Señora Acero (SS)			Fam. Guy		Griffith		(:15) Movie: Miracle on 34th Street	Commercials 2014	NBA Basketball: Thunder at Warriors	Nellyville	Liv-Mad. Dog		SportsCenter
10 :PM :30	News	Impacto	Cleveland	News	Tele	News	Conan	McGee	Charlie Rose	Cheers			Movie: Dumb & Dumber, Lauren Holly			Jessie	30 for 30	SportsCenter
11 :PM :30	Jimmy Kimmel Live	Noticiero	How I Met	Letterman	Titulares	Tonight Show		Justice		Perry Mason					Wendy Williams	Good Good		SportsCenter
12 :AM :30	Nightline	La Que No	TMZ	Ferguson	Tierra de Reyes (SS)	Seth Meyers	Cougar	Called	T. Smiley	Dragnet				Inside the NBA	The Real	Deck	Two/Title	SportsCenter
1 :AM :30	Extra	Amorito Corazón	Friends	Insider	Señora Acero (SS)	News	Office	Israel	T. Smiley	Gallery			Commercials 2014	NBA Basketball: New York Knicks at Chicago Bulls.	Queen Latifah	Wizards	Bskball Hour	SportsCenter
1 :AM :30	Paid	Alma	Law & Order: SVU	Ent	Paid	(:07) Today	Movie: Dis-turbia, Sarah	Upd	Light of the Southwest	Gallery								
1 :AM :30	Paid	P. Luche						BAS		Ironsides			(:45) Movie: Catch a					

DENNIS THE MENACE

12-18

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THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane

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HAGAR

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BLONDIE

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BC

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WIZARD OF ID

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AGNES

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HI AND LOIS

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THE OTHER COAST

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SNUFFY SMITH

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BEETLE BAILEY

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This Date In History

Today is Thursday, Dec. 18, the 352nd day of 2014. There are 13 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 18, 1944, in a pair of related rulings, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Korematsu v. United States*, upheld, 6-3, the government's wartime evacuation of people of Japanese descent, including U.S. citizens, from the West Coast (the decision was limited to the exclusion policy, and did not take up the issue of internment), while in *Ex parte Endo*, the justices unanimously agreed that "concededly loyal" Americans of Japanese ancestry could not continue to be detained. (Both rulings came a day after the U.S. Department of War said it was lifting the internment policy.)

On this date:

In 1787, New Jersey became the third state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1863, in a speech to the Prussian Parliament, Prime Minister Otto von Bismarck declared, "Politics is not an exact science."

In 1865, the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, abolishing slavery, was declared in effect by Secretary of State William H. Seward.

In 1892, Tchaikovsky's ballet "The Nutcracker" publicly premiered in St. Petersburg, Russia.

In 1912, fossil collector Charles Dawson reported to the Geological Society of

London his discovery of supposed early human remains at a gravel pit in Piltdown. (More than four decades later, Piltdown Man was exposed as a hoax.)

In 1915, President Woodrow Wilson, widowed the year before, married Edith Bolling Galt at her Washington home.

In 1940, Adolf Hitler ordered secret preparations for Nazi Germany to invade the Soviet Union. (Operation Barbarossa was launched in June 1941.)

Newsday Crossword

MUM'S THE LAST WORD by Melanie Miller
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Many a reggae musician

6 Savings vehicles

10 Empty space

13 Clear sky

14 Come to the surface

15 Have charges to settle

16 Makes a getaway

18 Tropical menace

19 Is indisposed

20 Bit with a charge

21 Towards higher ground

23 Southeastern capital

25 Environs

26 Cold-weather inconvenience

31 Louts

35 Took charge

36 Right as rain

37 Squash variety

38 \$1000 appliance, circa 1988

39 Pine (for)

40 Org. that films stars

41 Massive amount

42 January birthstone

43 Metaphor for virtual completeness

46 Be durable

47 Member rolls

52 Put forward

55 Surveillance tool

56 Adidas alternative

57 Surveillance tool

58 Some models in bottles

DOWN

1 Steel rod in concrete

2 Enclosed patios

3 Taco exterior

4 Heckle

5 Biblical refuge

6 Fairway club

7 2016 Olympics site

8 Certain to happen

9 Passed through slowly

10 Rapidly expanding desert

11 Troop truant

12 Sound made by a clapper

14 Hilo greeting

17 Wistful sounds

22 Summer blouse

24 Embodiment of a trait

25 Culmination

27 Courses of action

28 OPEC charter member

29 Additive-free

30 Told to go

31 Remove abruptly

32 Berry in health supplements

33 Multitude

34 Future revealer

38 Plentiful source

39 Talks nonstop

41 Declare under oath

42 Garden decoration

44 Obsess over

45 Hopping mad

48 Second deepest US lake

49 Cyber-party notice

50 Closer to fruition

51 With an attitude

52 Hardly any

53 Insightful one

54 Throw out

55 Throw a line out

59 Street in Paris

60 Series that inspired 30 Rock

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51

52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66

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signed a one-year contract. Designated LHP Juan Oramas for assignment.

American Association
AMARILLO THUNDERHEADS — Traded RHP Kellen Moen to Camden in exchange for INF Zack MacPhee.

FOOTBALL
National Football League
CHICAGO BEARS — Signed C/G Taylor Boggs to the practice squad.
DENVER BRONCOS — Signed S Josh Bush from the practice squad. Signed G Jon Halapio to the practice squad.
GREEN BAY PACKERS — Signed S Jean Fanor to the practice squad.
MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Signed S Ahmad Dixon. Signed G Jordan McCray to the practice squad.

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS — Signed TE Steve Maneri. Placed DL Dominique Easley on injured reserve. Signed QB Garrett Gilbert to the practice squad.
TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS — Released CB Crezdon Butler. Signed DL Lawrence Sidbury. Signed DB Varnah Sonie to the practice squad.

Canadian Football League
WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS — Re-signed DB Matt Bucknor. Fired defensive coordinator Gary Etcheverry.

HOCKEY
National Hockey League
NHL — Fined Nashville F James Neal \$2,000 for violating the league's revised rule against diving and embellishing.
BUFFALO SABRES — Sent C Mikhail Grigorenko to Rochester (AHL).
CALGARY FLAMES — Signed coach Bob Hartley to a multiyear contract extension.
CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS — Re-assigned G Scott Darling to Rockford (AHL).
FLORIDA PANTHERS — Re-assigned D Shane O'Brien to San Antonio (AHL).
MONTREAL CANADIENS — Assigned F Sven Andrighetto to Hamilton (AHL).
NEW JERSEY DEVILS — Activated F Patrik Elias from injured reserve.
NEW YORK ISLANDERS — Placed RW Michael Grabner on injured reserve to Dec. 13. Returned D Griffin Reinhart to Bridgeport (AHL).

OLYMPICS
U.S. ANTI-DOPING AGENCY — Suspended track coach Jon Drummond for eight years.

SOCCER
Major League Soccer
SPORTING KANSAS CITY — Signed F Dom Dwyer to a contract extension.

COLLEGE
CHOWAN — Named Melissa Nakasugi women's lacrosse coach.
CUMBERLAND (TENN.) — Announced the resignation of wrestling coach Todd Allen. Named Shaine Jaime interim wrestling coach.
GEORGE MASON — Announced senior F Erik Copas has decided to