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INSIDE

What's up 2
Sports 5
Midday stocks 7
Business directory 8
Weather 9

WT-Int. Crude - $37.14
WTIC Posted - $34.00
Natural Gas - $5.89

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

MONDAY
April 12, 2004
Vol. 55 No. 298
10 Pages 50¢
Home of Cliff Smith



SCULPTING A SAND BOY — Albert Rodriguez, Swade West and Jade Simanton (from left) work to cover Gage Robertson's legs during recess last week at West Elementary. The kindergarten students will be back in class Tuesday following the Easter holidays. (SDN Staff Photo)

For seniors, disabled...

WTC trustees again to discuss tax freeze

Western Texas College trustees again will look at the possibility of a tax freeze for senior citizens and the disabled when the board meets at 7 this evening.

Last month, the topic was discussed with only board member Carolyn Barbee speaking in favor of the cap on taxes for citizens 65 and over.

Dr. Greg Williams, WTC president, said that the college could lose some $3,000 to $4,000 yearly but warned those figures are only estimates. "It's a moving target, no one know for sure."

Also last month, board president Lee Presswood noted the college has little flexibility in setting its tax rate and suggested the other alternative to board action — an election to let citizens have their say.

Early in March, the Scurry County commissioners court voted to approve the tax break, and it also has been hashed over by the Snyder city council with no action taken.

Scurry County chief appraiser Larry Crooks is expected to meet with the WTC board this evening to further explain the ramifications of a tax freeze.

Also tonight, the board will hear a recommendation from the administration to hold off on implementing a non-scholarship golf program at the college for at least two years until additional schools agree to participate.

In one other sports item, trustees also will be asked to name Billy Hefflinger as baseball coach. He has been serving as interim coach.

Action items include revising board policy 4151.1 to include adding admission personnel to the list for degree requirements for classified clerical personnel such as those in recruiting and at the senior center.

Also, formal action on naming Jason McAden as volleyball coach is expected, as is accepting the resignations of Joe Carter, science professor, and Eric Coleman, assistant professor of criminal justice.

Other reports will be heard concerning recruiting, student government, the UIL one-act play festival, Phi Theta Kappa and the Sammy Baugh birthday celebration.

Seven Halliburton workers missing after convoy attack

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Insurgents in Iraq have released nine hostages of various nationalities, including Turks and Pakistanis, a spokesman for Islamic clerics who appealed for the releases said today.

But Muthanna Harith said he had no word on three Japanese civilians still being held. Also, Beijing appealed for the release of seven Chinese workers seized in Iraq.

More than two dozen foreigners from 11 countries — including a Mississippi man whose fate also was unclear — have been kidnapped in recent days by insurgents.

In addition, two U.S. troops and seven employees of American contractor Kellogg, Brown & Root, a division of Houston-based Halliburton, were missing following an attack "two days ago" on a convoy near Abu Ghraib, west of Baghdad, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez said today. He refused to say whether they had been abducted.

Eight of the nine freed hostages appeared in a video broadcast Sunday on the Arab satellite television network Al-Jazeera. The eight included two Turks, three Pakistanis, a Nepalese, a Filipino and an Indian. The identity of the ninth hostage was not immediately known.

"We believe that nine were released last night or today," said Harith, spokesman for the Islamic Clerics Committee. "We know nothing about the Japanese."

Last week, eight South Korean missionaries also were released or escaped.

In Tokyo, optimism faded that the Japanese hostages would be released quickly after Tokyo's top government spokesman suggested authorities were no longer confident of their safety.

Vice President Dick Cheney, in Tokyo on a weeklong Asia tour, promised Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi the United States would "do everything we can to be of assistance."

The Japanese hostages — two aid workers and a photojournalist — were being held by a previously unknown group calling itself the "Mujahedeen Brigades," which demanded Japan pull its troops out of Iraq within three days or it would burn the three alive.

The deadline came and went with no word on their fate.

"At one point we were able to make the judgment from various perspectives that they (the Japanese) were safe, but now that's unconfirmed," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a news conference.

His comments came in sharp contrast to official remarks the day before indicating the three hostages were about to be freed. Japanese media even reported that the military was getting transport planes ready to bring them home.

The American, Thomas Hamill, 43, a truck driver for a U.S. contractor in Iraq, was snatched Friday by gunmen who attacked a fuel convoy.

Weekend storm hits coast area

HOUSTON (AP) — High winds tore the roofs off apartment buildings as a storm system also brought large hail and flooding to the Texas Gulf coast.

Baseball-sized hail and more than three inches of rain battered Houston and its suburbs in the weekend storms, flooding some low-lying areas. Winds gusted up to 50 mph, damaging storefronts and resulting in downed tree limbs.

Families in Baytown took refuge in a Red Cross shelter after a storm Saturday tore off roofs of two apartment complexes. No injuries were reported.

"When it hit, it sounded like a train," said Viola Motton, who waded through water that was a few inches deep in her apartment Sunday. "And then it was like a bowling ball moving all the way across."

Motton was one of the 16 tenants at Royal Place who had to evacuate because the roof of the building had been torn off.

Make plans now for annual cleanup week

Snyder's city-wide cleanup may still be more than a week away but this week is the time to start making plans.

The cleanup is scheduled for April 19-22 and it is conducted not only to remind and encourage residents to clean up property, but gets the city involved by providing dump trucks, trailers and personnel to help haul away large items and large volumes of trash that may be impossible for many to carry to the landfill.

The city helps by providing the trucks but residents who are interested in helping must do their part by scheduling a trash pickup by Friday.

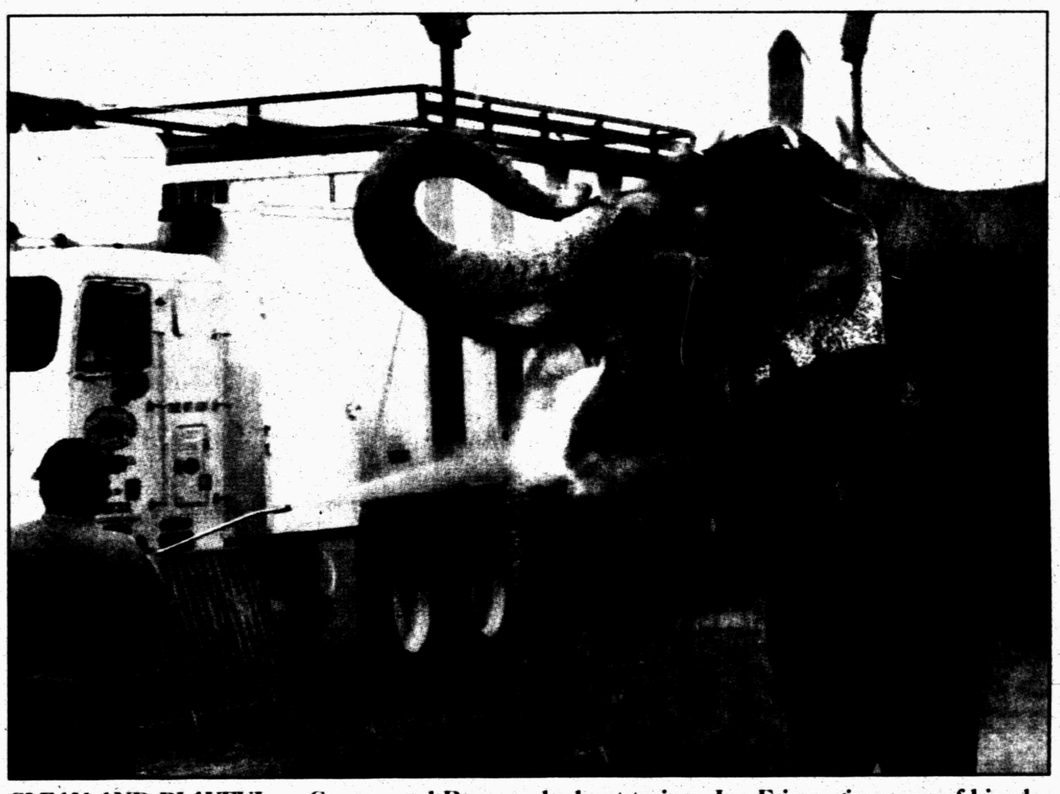
The city will be working west of College Ave. and south of 30th on April 19. The crews will move to east of College Ave. and south of 30th on April 20. City employees will be working west of College Ave. and north of 30th Street on April 21 and move to east of College Ave. and north of 30th Street. Those interested in participating should note the day the truck will be in their area and calling 573-4960 or 573-4969.

Tires are not allowed and items should be able to be lifted up and into a dump truck, according to city officials. Also only residences inside the city limits are eligible and businesses doing demolition or cleanup are excluded.

The city asks that the type of trash requiring pick up be mentioned when reservations are called in. The items should then be placed on the sidewalk by the curb the day before the scheduled pickup. Refrigerators, freezers and other items that use Freon should have the coolant drained and tagged by a licensed recoverer.

The clean up started when the Snyder Chamber of Commerce noted old appliances, tree limbs and assorted trash were pilling up and making parts of the city an eyesore. Since then volunteers have been recruited to help clean up the lots of those who might have difficulty in maintaining their property.

If the schedule is full during the four days set aside for the cleanup, residents who are able may take trash, along with a current utility bill, to the landfill where no dumping fee will be assessed.



CLEAN AND PLAYFUL — Carson and Barnes elephant trainer Joe Frisco gives one of his elephants a drink while giving three of them baths before the show Friday. (SDN Staff Photo)

Polls open Tuesday for runoff vote

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Republican runoff election for Texas Railroad Commission.

Fifteen Scurry County residents cast ballots last week in the early vote early voting period, according to County Clerk Joan Bunch.

The runoff is between incumbent Victor C. Carrillo and Robert Butler. There is only one voting place Tuesday, in the county courtroom on the 3rd floor of the courthouse.

Any registered voter who did not vote in the Democratic primary is eligible to vote.

Man found dead at park

A 71-year-old Snyder man was found dead Sunday in Towle Park. Investigators said foul play is not suspected.

An autopsy was ordered for John Paul Derryberry, 1911 Martha Ann Blvd. #101, after dispatchers received a welfare concern call at 9:59 a.m. Sunday saying that a man possibly was unconscious at one of the tables in the park.

When Snyder Police Corporal Trey Wilson and officer Mike Counts arrived, an ambulance was summoned and then the justice of the peace.

According to Lt. Jerry Parker, a 9mm handgun was found at the scene.

Peace Justice Deborah Boyd pronounced Mr. Derryberry, a retired cowboy, dead and ordered the autopsy, which was being conducted this morning in Lubbock. Snyder detectives were in Lubbock to observe.

ASK US

Q—Are there still tickets available for the Snyder Chamber of Commerce banquet on April 21?

A—Yes, they will be available through Friday at the chamber.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



Donna Farley...

...has lived in Snyder for 24 years and is a retired fifth grade teacher. She and husband Dewey have two sons, Darrin of Kerrville and Dane of Telleride, Colo. When she has a chance, Donna enjoys working on her computer and reading.

TODAY'S THOUGHT

Happiness cannot come from without. It must come from within.

—Helen Keller

APR 12 2004

events

WHAT'S UP?

ONGOINGS

8th grade parents meeting

There will be a meeting at 7:30 p.m. today in the WTC cafeteria for eighth grade parents to plan the end of school party.

Bible study tapes

Bible videos air each week on Channel 2. To be shown at 7 this evening is "How the Cross Changes People," followed by "The Assemblies of the Church."

Snyder Lions Club

The Snyder Lions Club will meet at noon Tuesday at the Martha Ann Woman's Club and the program will be on Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

Antique Tractor Club

The Scurry County Antique Tractor and Equipment Club will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday at Jack's Roadboring on the Colorado City Highway. Anyone interested is invited.

4-H horse club

The Scurry County 4-H horse club will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the East Elementary cafeteria.

AA meeting

An AA meeting is held at noon every Tuesday and Friday at the Witherspoon house next door to the First Presbyterian Church. The meeting is non-smoking and closed. For more information, call 574-2656, or 207-1325.

Free income tax help

There is free help with income taxes every Wednesday from 9 a.m. until noon and 1-3 p.m. at the senior center at 2603 Ave. M.

What's up guidelines

Items for What's Up will be published twice at no charge, the day before and the day of the event. Events or activities requiring additional publicity will be referred to the advertising department where a special non-profit rate is available.

Terrorism memo doesn't end debate

CRAWFORD (AP) — Now that it is public, a pre-Sept. 11 briefing memo on al-Qaida has President Bush and his critics giving opposing versions of whether he should have acted more aggressively to avert the terrorist attacks.

Released late Saturday under pressure, the intelligence memo from Aug. 6, 2001, showed that Bush received reports from as recent as May 2001 and that most of the current information focused on possible plots in the United States.

"I was satisfied that some of the matters were being looked into" and had any specific intelligence pointed to threats of attacks on New York and Washington, "I would have moved mountains" to prevent it, Bush said Sunday during a visit to Fort Hood, 50 miles from his ranch here.

The document has "nothing about an attack on America. It talked about intentions, about somebody who hated America — well, we knew that," he said.

A Republican member of the Sept. 11 commission backed that up today.

Former Illinois Gov. Jim Thompson told ABC's "Good Morning America" that "no reasonable American could hold the president responsible for the attack."

"If I'm the president and I get a special briefing that I've asked for, and he asked for this, and said the FBI is conducting 70 field investigations about this, then I assume the FBI is on top of the job," Thompson said. "The president is not an FBI agent."

Commission member Jamie Gorelick, a former deputy attorney general in the Clinton administration, told NBC"s "Today" show "there is a major game of finger-pointing going on around here. Our job is to get to the bottom of it."

Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., said public figures "shouldn't be scapegoating" and said he believes serious questions must be raised about whether the FBI is equipped to deal with terrorism.

Bayh said most Western governments have separate counterterrorism departments. "We don't. We need to ask ourselves, maybe the time has come to do that," he told CBS's "The Early Show."

The memo specifically told Bush that al-Qaida operatives had reached American shores, had a support system in place and were engaging in "patterns of suspicious activity ... consistent with preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks."

The memo's contents are somewhat of a surprise because for two years, national security adviser Condoleezza Rice starting with a May 2002 news conference left the impression that the document focused on historical information and that any current threats mostly involved overseas targets.

Rice first outlined the then-classified memo's contents at a news conference in May 2002. The "overwhelming bulk of the evidence" before Sept. 11, she declared, was that any terrorist attack "was likely to take place overseas."

The 500-word document mentioned two current threats: suspected al-Qaida operatives might have cased federal buildings in New York and that, according to a phone call to an American embassy in the Middle East, a group of supporters of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden was in the United States to plan attacks with explosives.

The FBI later concluded that two Yemeni men photographing buildings in New York were tourists.

To accentuate the potential domestic threat, the memo told Bush the FBI had 70 investigations related to bin Laden under way.

Richard Ben-Veniste, a Democrat on the commission investigating the Sept. 11 attacks, saw as significant the memo's references to May 2001 intelligence about a possible al-Qaida explosives plot inside the United States.

The "leadership at the top," he said Sunday, should have "butted heads together, get them in the same room, and then pulse the agencies: 'What do you know?' Get all of your agents out there with messages to say, 'Tell us everything you know at this moment.'"

Should the memo have raised "more of an alarm bell than it did? I think in hindsight that's probably true," said Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. He said the Clinton and Bush administrations bear responsibility for Sept. 11.

Sikhs celebrate their New Year

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Thousands of Sikhs celebrated one of their holiest days, as political leaders called for an end to discrimination against members of the religion.

Organizers said more than 10,000 Sikhs from across Southern California were in the city Sunday to celebrate Vaisakhi — which marks their New Year and commemorates the 17th century Sikh leader Guru Gobind Singh.

"We've always been a very quiet community," said Nirinjan Singh Khalsa, executive director of the California Sikh Council. "But that hurt us since 9-11 because people don't know who we are, so we're trying to reach out more."

Thousands of Sikhs marched through the streets of downtown Los Angeles, many chanting "God is One," along side floats adorned with scenes from Sikh history. Drummers kept up a steady beat and men dueled with long sticks to simulate sword fights.

Daljit Khokhar, 43, of Burbank, said he often fields questions about his turban and religion. "We explain it to the people. They are always asking me, but it's getting better," said Khokhar.

At a press conference earlier in the day, Assemblywoman Judy Chu said Sikhs have been the target of hate crimes by extremists in the United States who mistake them for being from the Middle East.

"We must be more even more proactive in fighting this," said Chu, whose resolution condemning hate crimes against Sikhs, Arab-Americans and others has been approved by the Assembly.

Chu and U.S. Rep. Brad Sherman said that a Sikh temple in Fresno was defaced early last month with hate graffiti that included racial slurs and obscenities. It had also been targeted last year for five straight nights of vandalism, and firecrackers sparked a blaze.

Perdeep Bhui, a 29-year-old environmental engineer from Simi Valley, said she had attended several rallies since 2001 in an effort to tell non-Sikhs about her religion.

"People still need to be educated," Bhui said.

On the Net: http://www.sikhcenter.org

Florida Panhandle beaches take steps to curb drownings

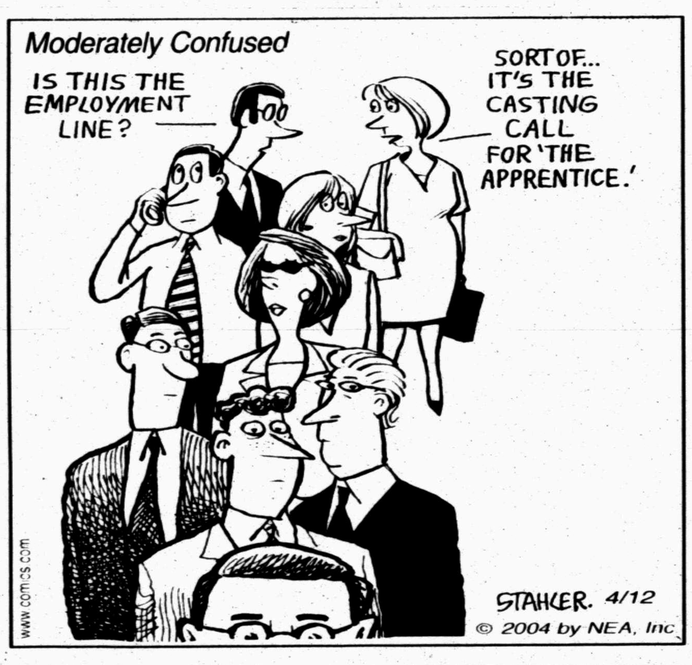
PENSACOLA BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Summer is still weeks away, but already the safety of beaches in Florida's Panhandle is a hot topic.

The debate isn't about whether they're dangerous, because the numbers — more than 40 accidental drownings in three years — clearly show that they are. The back-and-forth, instead, is about whether new beach patrols, more warning flags and additional lifeguards will be enough to save lives.

Critics, including relatives of victims, are pushing for even more lifeguards and stronger efforts to warn tourists that rough surf or rip currents could kill them.

But officials say the improvements are helping. Just three days after the first all-terrain vehicle patrols began here last month, a lifeguard rescued a 19-year-old man who had ignored a red warning flag to keep out of the water.

"I can unequivocally tell you that we would have had our first death already," said Bob West, Pensacola Beach safety director. "We didn't and that alone — that boy going home to his mom — that's immeasurable."



events

TEXAS LOTTERY

RESULTS

Saturday's Lottery Numbers
Lotto Texas

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Lotto Texas drawing Saturday night:

Winning numbers drawn: 07-11-15-16-40 . Bonus Ball: 43.

Number matching five of five, plus Bonus Ball: 0.

Number matching five of five: 2. Prize: $15,858.

Number matching four of five, plus Bonus Ball: 22. Prize: $1,309.

Number matching four of five: 596. Prize: $104.

Number matching three of five, plus Bonus Ball: 622. Prize: $88.

Number matching three of five: 24,819. Prize: $5.

Number matching two of five, plus Bonus Ball: 7,572. Prize: $5.

Number matching one of five, plus Bonus Ball: 32,296. Prize: $3.

Estimated jackpot for Wednesday night drawing: $26,000,000.

Cash Five

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Cash 5 drawing Saturday night:

Winning numbers drawn: 06-13-23-24-33.

Number matching five of five: 1.

Prize per winner: $39,573.

Winning tickets sold in: Fort Worth, Riverside Texaco.

Matching four of five: 145. Prize: $123.

Matching three of five: 4,376. Prize: $9.

Matching two of five: 40,929. Prize: $2.

Next Cash 5 drawing: Monday night.

Pick 3
(Day) 6-4-4
(Night) 4-6-1

World Almanac

Monday, April 12, 2004

Today is the 103rd day of 2004 and the 24th day of spring.

TODAY'S HISTORY: In 1861, the Civil War began as Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter in South Carolina.

In 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt died in Warm Springs, Ga.

In 1961, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human in space.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: Henry Clay (1777-1852), politician and statesman; Tom Clancy (1947-), writer, is 57; David Letterman (1947-), comedian, talk show host, is 57; Vince Gill (1957-), singer, is 47; Claire Danes (1979-), actress, is 25.

TODAY'S SPORTS: In 1927, the New York Yankees defeated the Philadelphia Athletics, 8-3, before the biggest Opening Day crowd ever.

TODAY'S QUOTE: "Sometimes something worth doing is worth overdoing." — David Letterman

TODAY'S FACT: During Yuri Gagarin's historic flight, he completed just one orbit of the Earth, reaching a maximum height of 198 miles above the Earth's sea level, and an orbital speed of 16,740 mph.

TODAY'S NUMBER: 108 — Length in minutes of the first manned space flight (Vostok I with Yuri Gagarin in 1961).

TODAY'S MOON: Between last quarter (April 11) and new moon (April 19)

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'MAKE SNYDER BRIGHTER'
NO CHARGE

We would like to encourage everyone to utilize the City wide 'Clean-up Campaign' being conducted April 19th through April 22nd. This campaign will be co-sponsored by the City of Snyder, the Chamber of Commerce and the Snyder Beautification Committee.

IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, PLEASE CALL IN AND SCHEDULE YOUR PICK-UPS BEFORE THE WEEK OF THE CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN.
CALL 573-4960 OR 573-4969

April 19th thru April 22nd

Utilize dump truck service provided by cleaning up over the prior weekends. A dump truck and driver will be provided During those four days **inside** the city Limits only.

Watch for additional information.

Continuous Service:
The City provides a dump truck to individual customers; the customer must come in and schedule the truck; sign necessary forms; truck is parked around 4:00 p.m. and picked up around 8:00 a.m. the following morning. This is a continuous service and is not available to persons that perform demolition or clean-up as a business and it is provided inside the city limits only.

THESE SERVICES ARE FOR INDIVIDUALS, NOT TO BE USED BY PERSONS IN THE BUSINESS OF DEMOLITION OR CLEAN-UP AND WILL BE LIMITED TO 1 (ONE) LOAD PER RESIDENCE OR BUSINESS.

Sponsored by:
City of Snyder
Snyder Chamber of Commerce
Snyder Beautification Committee

Are you **PAID** what you're **REALLY WORTH??**
TIRED of trading time for money, stuck in the **RAT RACE** making someone else rich?? **FEELING INSECURE** about your **FUTURE**??
Or just plain **SICK & TIRED** of being **SICK & TIRED**??

This is Your Chance to take Ownership of Your Future with...

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...in the next **MULTI-TRILLION $$$** Marketplace!!!

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JOBY WEEKS
Tuesday, April 13 7:00 - 8:30
West Tx. Taekwondo Academy
2500 Ave. R Associates - $3.00/person
$5.00/couple Guests FREE!

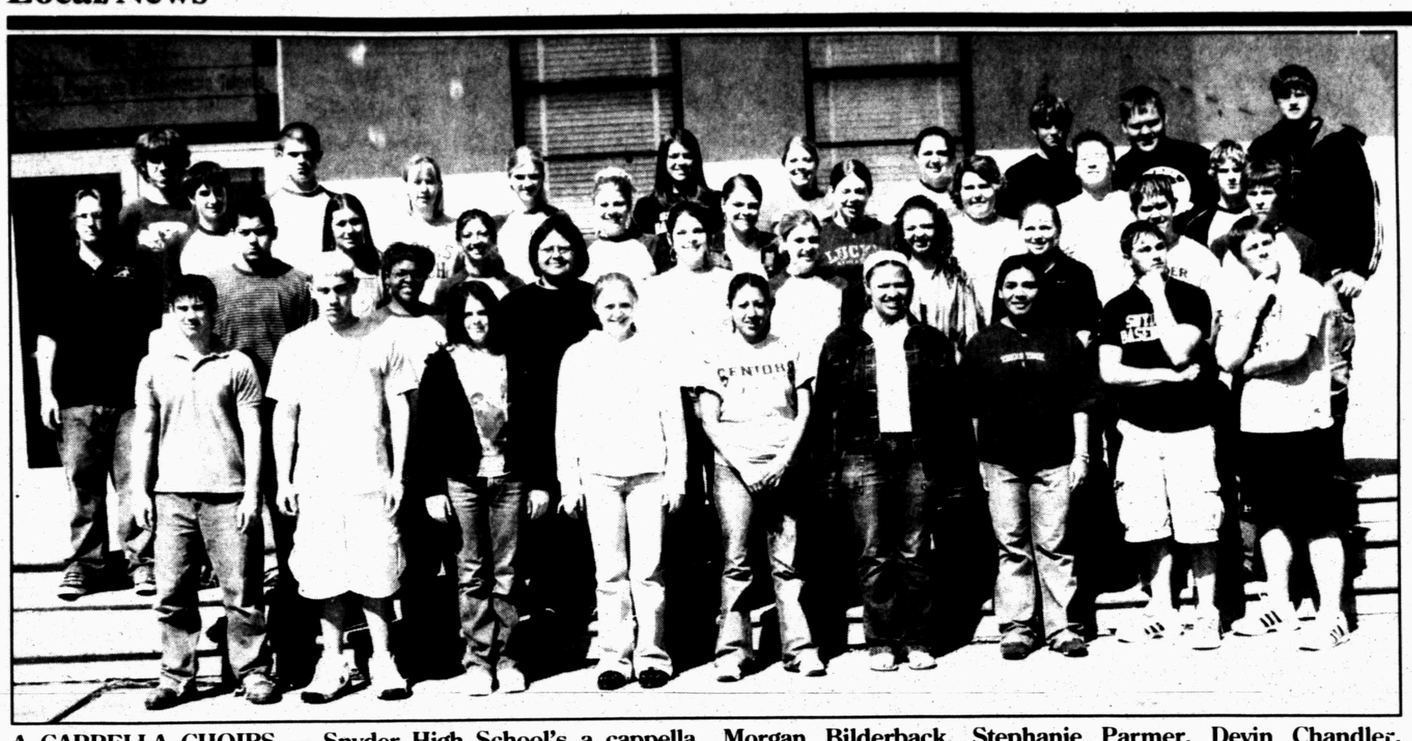
Bring in ad for Drawing

For All Your Prom Needs
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Come In and See Our
Many New Gift Items
Added Weekly



Don't Forget Graduation!

Friendly Flower Shop
3203 1/2 College Ave 915-573-5260, 915-573-3851



A CAPPELLA CHOIRS — Snyder High School's a cappella choirs combined with the varsity men and women's choirs to earn top marks in last week's UIL Concert and Sight Reading Contest. (A complete story and additional pictures were in the weekend SDN). Students pictured are top row from left Brent Tyler, Bryan Clifton, Alexis Dupree, Megan Crisp, Sarah Crawford, Samantha Moyers, Sarah Carpenter, Licco Castillo, Ricky Early and Brandon Robbins. Third row from left are Michael Nelson, Cade Simpson, Michelle Miller, Megan McCormick, Morgan Bilderback, Stephanie Parmer, Devin Chandler, Rebecca Pavlovsky, Ryan Ward and Cody Reed. Second row from left are, Jeremy Rodriguez, Kiki Wofford, Adrienne Garcia, Marisa Munoz, Temi Thompson, Jessica Calvert, Molly Haire, Michael Mann and Jason Cave. Bottom row from left are Corbin Smith, Ramsey Herrera, Mechelle Renfro, Lacey Kincaid, Nadia Chairez, Ana Henson, Corie Hernandez, Chris Smith and Logan Martin. (Staff Photo by Shirley A. Gorman)

Family wants 2 sisters not to return to Iraq

NEW BERLIN, Wis. (AP) — With three daughters serving in Iraq, John and Lori Witmer had a family Web site with photos from Baghdad, notes to home and messages of encouragement.

"Keep praying! They're almost home!" a recent entry says.

The top notice, dated Sunday, carried grim news: "We regret to inform you that Michelle Witmer was killed in action April 9th."

The 20-year-old private died when her Humvee was ambushed in Baghdad, making her the first woman in the Wisconsin National Guard to die in combat.

Her family is asking the military to stop her sisters from being sent back to Iraq after this week's funeral.

"I can't live another year like I've lived this one," John Witmer told The Associated Press. "The sacrifice that this family's made can never be understood by someone who hasn't gone through it... It's a burden I can't bear. My family can't bear it."

Michelle's 24-year-old sister, Rachel, served in the same unit, the 32nd Military Police Company, which was expected to leave Iraq shortly but just had its duty extended 120 days.

Charity Witmer, Michelle's twin, was sent to Iraq late last year as a medic with Company B of the Wisconsin Guard's 118th Medical Battalion.

The surviving sisters were expected home today, two days before Michelle's funeral. The Witmers also have two sons.

The family said state National Guard leaders agreed to take their appeal to the Pentagon today. Relatives also were seeking help from Sen. Russ Feingold, and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr.

John Witmer acknowledged the final decision of whether to return will be up to his daughters. But he said they would have to understand "how terribly we need to know they're not going back."

Witmer said he worried about his daughters joining the military but felt at the time that duty with the National Guard would be relatively safe, especially with a military police unit.

"My daughters wanted the freedom of being able to call their shots with their education," he said. "They were using that to go to school."

Asked on NBC's "Today" whether U.S. actions in Iraq were justified, Witmer said it was a difficult issue to sort out, but he recalled daughter Michelle's comments.

"She felt that she had made a difference in that culture and that there was a liberation that went on," he said. "She was also very concerned that if we had a knee-jerk reaction to some of these horrible things that were happening, that thousands of Iraqi people would suffer from a swift exit."

Dear Abby

By Abigail Van Buren



Young couple feel stiffled by live-in father-in-law

DEAR ABBY: I am 24 years old and have been married for seven years. We have one child.

My father-in-law has lived with us for the past three years. I am tired of this situation. I cannot have anyone over later than 10 p.m. or he goes crazy. Lights and TV have to be off by then, too. He lies on the couch all day. He doesn't clean up after himself. On top of that, he walks into our bedroom without knocking, so you can imagine what our sex life is like.

He is not over the hill or ailing. He is 57, and his only health problem is diabetes. We can't go anywhere without him; he even tags along with us when we visit his ex and her husband.

How do I tell him that we need time to ourselves without hurting his feelings? — **HAD IT IN TEXAS**

DEAR HAD IT: You should be nominated for sainthood for tolerating the situation this long. Stop worrying about his feelings; he is certainly not worrying about yours. Set new house rules. Kindly but firmly take care of your own needs and don't apologize for it. Install a lock on your bedroom door. You and your husband are entitled to your privacy and your own life. If he doesn't like it, give him a deadline to be out, and then enforce it.

**

DEAR ABBY: I applaud "Sad and Disgusted in Virginia" for being proactive about protecting children from verbal and physical abuse. I was slapped often by my mother in grocery stores and parking lots. Plenty of people witnessed her tirades; no one would intervene. What they couldn't see was what went on at home behind closed doors. She hit me with her high-heeled shoes, pots and pans, even a violin, which shattered when it struck my head. No one ever questioned me about my bruises. I was too weak, scared and under my abuser's control to do anything about my situation.

I endured her beatings until I was 21. They stopped only because I moved to another state to attend graduate school.

I no longer have a relationship with my mother. I have often blamed myself for not speaking up about my own abuse. I remember hoping that someone like "Sad and Disgusted" would simply ask, "Are you OK?" That small act might have given me the courage I couldn't muster on my own. — **FREE AT LAST, CHICAGO**

DEAR FREE: I am pleased you finally escaped your abuser. I hope you no longer blame yourself for not telling anyone what was going on. The reason many victims do not speak up about their mistreatment is they have been brainwashed into believing they somehow brought it on themselves. One phrase that echoes repeatedly in the mail I get from victims of abuse is, "He/she said I MADE him/her slap me, hit me, choke me, etc." Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. Adults are responsible for their own behavior. We have free will. What we do or refrain from doing is our personal choice.

**

Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

**

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

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Care packages shipped to Iraq

DALLAS (AP) — The 10,000 care packages shipped over the weekend for U.S. troops serving in Iraq were not generic; many had a personal touch.

The cardboard boxes, packed as part of a program run by the United Service Organizations, contained items soldiers had requested. They included prepaid calling cards, disposable cameras, decks of playing cards and sunscreen.

Grapevine Fire Capt. Randy Bradley and other members of Station No. 5 jumped at the chance to join about 200 other volunteers assembling the shipment Saturday at Embassy Suites Outdoor World in Grapevine.

"It's a lot of work, but it's real gratifying to get here, support the troops and meet people," Bradley told The Dallas Morning News.

A Vietnam veteran and the commander for Veterans of Foreign Wars District 3 said he wished the idea of stuffing boxes for troops had been thought up in his day.

Dying child wished for something for his old playground

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Battling an incurable brain tumor that robbed him of his sight, 9-year-old Mak Shulist made a dying wish that had nothing to do with meeting with a celebrity, shaking a president's hand or going to Walt Disney World.

Before his death Friday, Mak got the Make-A-Wish Foundation to do something for his friends — build a rock-climbing wall on the playground of Ellisville Elementary School.

"It says a lot about the family and the type of person he was — selfless, thoughtful and caring," said Dave Knes, principal at the 600-student school in suburban Ellisville.

"We learned a lesson from a 9-year-old — that even when we're going through tough times we should be thinking of other people and not ourselves."

Mak's illness was diagnosed about a year ago, Knes said, when physical education teachers noticed him losing his balance and falling while he ran around the track.

Despite chemotherapy and radiation treatments, the tumor came back last fall about the time Mak started third grade, Knes said. Mak last attended school in October or November.

"I thought he was going to wish that there was a medicine or something, and he just wished for that," schoolmate Will Randall told KSDK-TV. "And I was like, 'Whoa, he's nice.'"

The family remained private, but a basket appeared outside their home and became a drop-off spot for well-wishers. "People would put a gift in there every day," Knes said.

As Mak's health declined, the Make-a-Wish Foundation hustled to build the 7-foot-high climbing wall.

"From the time the wish was granted to the time they were playing on it was less than two weeks," Knes said. He estimated it cost the foundation $10,000 to $15,000. Volunteers put it together.

On Thursday, Knes videotaped students scaling the wall and describing it in detail for Mak's benefit, and he rushed the tape to Mak's parents.

"We tried to hit the audio really big for him," the principal said. "His mom said he did hear it."

Mak died the next day, surrounded by family.

"Every time I'm going to get on this wall I think about him and what he did for us," said one of his friends, Michael Stafford.

Chubby Checker wants new record

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. (AP) — Singer Chubby Checker wants a new record — a Guinness world record.

Checker, who now goes by "Chubby C" to reflect his reinvention as a rap artist, vied for the distinction in a dance event Saturday sponsored by Myrtle Beach radio station WWXM FM. Nearly 190 people took part as Checker played his 1960 hit "The Twist."

"It's so nice to be here," he said. "This old eagle is laying some new eggs."

As part of the event, at least 114 people did the electric slide and then 151 did the cha-cha. The crowd grew to 188 as dancers did the twist while Checker sang his famous song.

St. Elizabeth Sausage Festival

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT
Sausage Dinner Complete With All The Trimmings

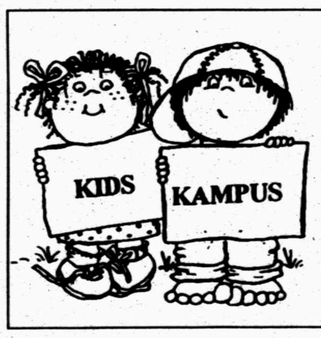
•Game Booths
•Raffles • Country Store

Sunday, April 18
11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
St. Elizabeth Parish Center
30th at Ave. A, Snyder, Texas
Meal Tickets Sold At Door
$7.00 Adults
$4.00 Children 12 & Under
$7.00 All Take Outs

Sausage Sold By The Pound

Krispy Kreme Donuts
sponsored by
Ira Senior Class
April 17 - 8 am - 11 am
Wal-Mart or
Ira Church of God
$6 per dozen

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Sales Representive, Barney Tate visits a work site where a new sprinkler system is being installed by Wright Water Sprinkler Systems employees.

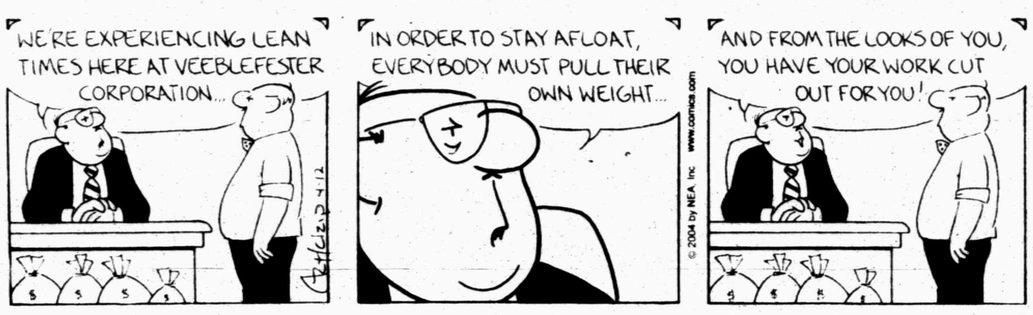
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THE BORN LOSER ® by Art and Chip Sansom



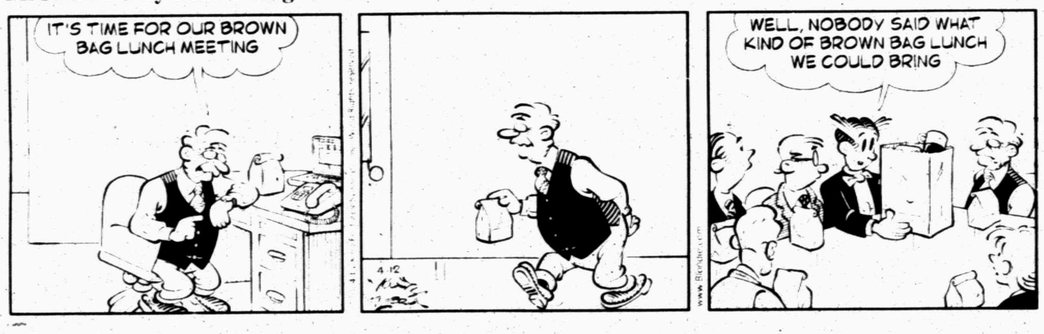
SOUP TO NUTZ ® by Rick Stromoski



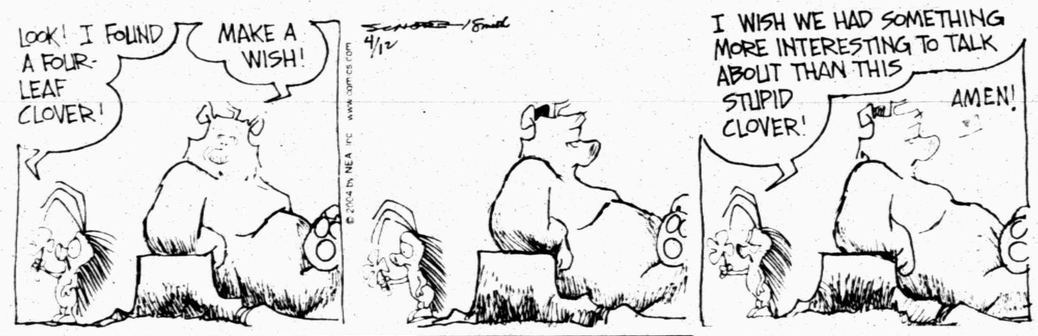
BARNEY GOOGLE & SNUFFY SMITH © by Fred Laswell



BLONDIE © by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



THE GRIZZWELLS ® by Bill Schorr



NEA Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1 Laptops
4 Well-known uncle
7 Ms. Hagen
10 Pitcher's stat
11 Gentles
13 Meadow grazer
14 Skedaddle
15 Very very
16 Fla. neighbor
17 Serengeti herd
19 Arroyo
21 Wind up
22 Lout
23 Caravan halts
26 Sponges up
30 Amazing act
31 Yes, to Jacques
32 Frothy brew
33 Retiree's kitty
34 Map abbr.
35 In a — (miffed)
36 Peace-pipe contents
39 Neatens a hedge
40 "So!"
41 Hippo's "home"
42 Raw-fish delicacy
45 Voodoo slave
48 Ottoman official
49 White wine type
51 Norma —
53 Class
54 Gourmet appetizers
55 Steely, as nerves
56 Wood ash product
57 Achieved
58 The lady

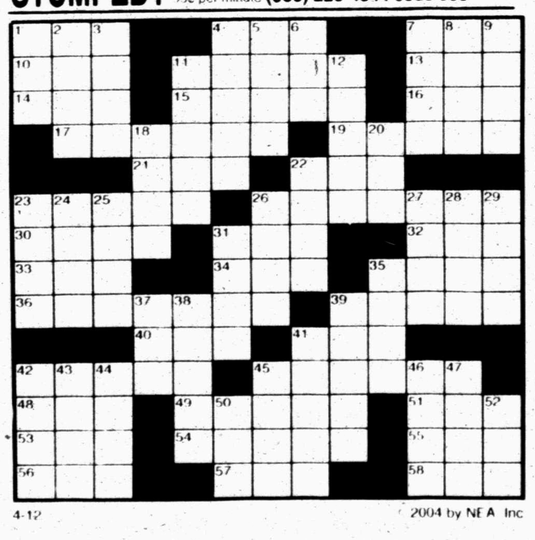
DOWN

1 Part of mph
2 Santa —, Calif.
3 All there
4 Entree go-with
5 Tsp. and oz.
6 Debussy's sea
7 Europe-Asia range
8 Soft mineral
9 Far East nanny
11 Revolves
12 Heroic tales
18 Root vegetable
20 Alien space-craft?
22 Theater award
23 Make a day — —
24 Flying prefix
25 Volvo rival
26 Graph starter
27 Rajah's consort
28 Object on radar
29 Lays the table
31 Whale like Shamu
35 Litterbug
37 Long sigh
38 Peep
39 Shows up
41 Divided into districts
42 Cross the ocean
43 Repulsive
44 Rice wine
45 Pasta variety
46 Rainbow goddess
47 Every
50 Ate for dinner
52 Sense organ

Answer to Previous Puzzle

B	E	A	D		L	I	P		C	R	A	M
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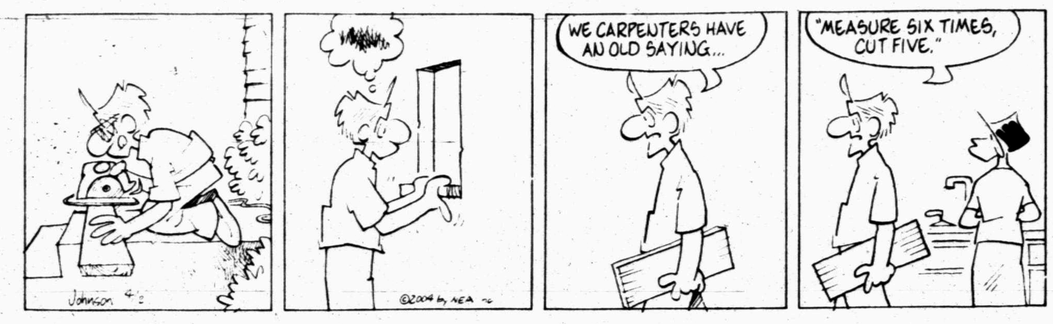


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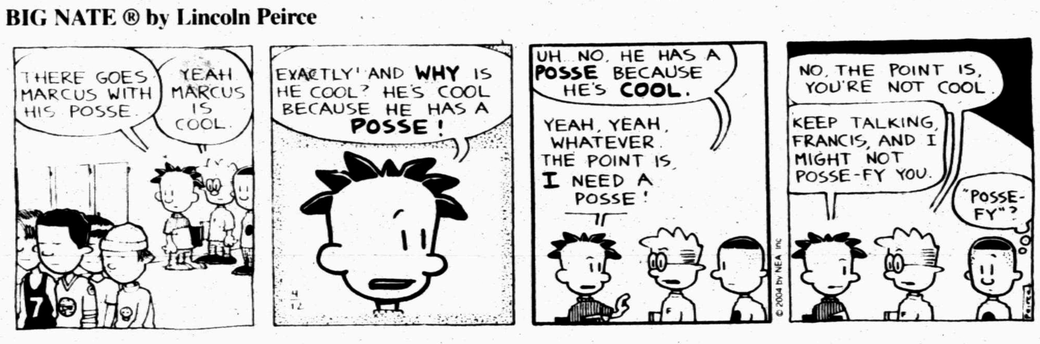
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ARLO & JANIS ® by Jimmy Johnson



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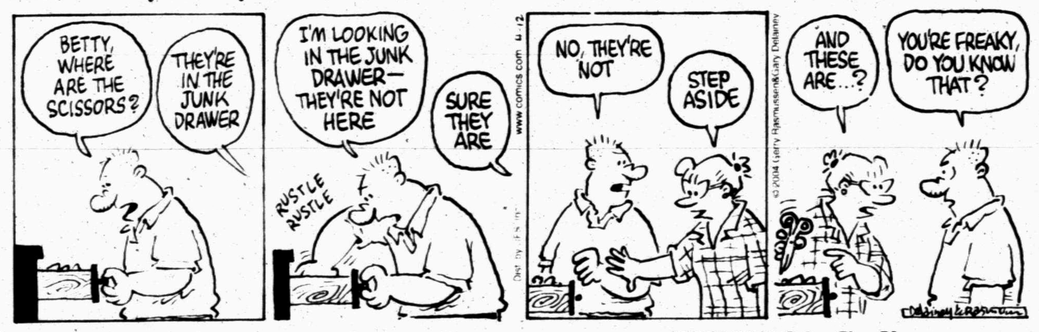
MONTY ® by Jim Meddick



ALLEY OOP ® by Dave Graue & Jack Bender



BETTY ™ by Delainey & Rasmussen



HERMAN ® by Jim Unger



"You need plenty of rest. You'd better stay in the gutter for a few days."

KIT 'N' CARLYLE ® by Larry Wright



Snyder Daily News Comics

DENNIS THE MENACE ® by Hank Ketcham



"ARE WE PASSING THE TIME, GRANDPA, OR IS TIME PASSING US?"

Maj

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West

Los Angeles
San Diego
San Francisco
Arizona
Colorado

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Chicago Cubs 10, Atla
Pittsburgh 4, Cincinna
N.Y. Mets 4, Montreal
Houston 7, Milwaukee
Florida 3, Philadelphia
Colorado 4, Los Angel
St. Louis 6, Arizona 5
San Francisco 6, San

Monda

Cincinnati (P.Wilson 1
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Atlanta (Hampton 0-0)
1), 12:10 p.m.
Pittsburgh (Benson 0-
dux 0-1), 1:20 p.m.
Arizona (Webb 1-0) at

SPORTS

Major breakthrough: Mickelson conquers Augusta

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Phil Mickelson in a green jacket. Even he had a hard time believing it.

The final leg in his odyssey to win a major championship came down to an 18-foot putt Sunday, the kind Mickelson had grown weary of watching others make as he stood to the side.

This time, the last chance belonged to him, a birdie putt that kept him in suspense to the very end. It rolled toward the cup, swirled around the left edge and dropped in.

Mickelson leapt as high as he could and threw both arms in the air, kissed the ball that he plucked from the cup and tossed it into a delirious crowd that felt the same way.

Finally!

"It almost feels like make-believe," Mickelson said. "My first thought was, 'I did it! I finally did it!' I knew I could, but I finally did it."

Those who doubted only had to look at his poise along a dramatic back nine at Augusta National as Ernie Els tried to pull away with an eagle, a birdie and a collection of clutch pars.

Mickelson birdied five of the last seven holes and shot 31 on the back — the best finish by a Masters champion since Jack Nicklaus had a 30 in 1986. He closed with a 69.

The best proof of all was a 43-long green jacket.

"I can't believe this is happening," Mickelson said after Mike Weir slipped the jacket over his shoulders. Sure beats the other thing he's been carrying on his back for 12 years.

"This is the fulfillment of dreams," he said. "I'm just proud to be a champion here. It was an exceptional, unbelievable back nine, and it's something I'll remember forever and ever."

Even as he sat in fabled Butler Cabin, he was reliving the 15-foot birdie putt on the par-3 16th that gave him a share of the lead, and an 18-footer on the final hole that made Mickelson only the fourth player in Masters history to win with a birdie on the final stroke of the tournament.

Until Sunday, he was known as the best player to have never won a major.

Now, he's simply one of the best in the game.

"I didn't think there was any way he would miss it," said Chris DiMarco, who played in the final group and had a par putt from exactly the same line that allowed Mickelson to get a good read.

Els felt helpless after closing with a 67. He was rapping putts on the practice green, hopeful of a playoff and a chance for the third leg of the Grand Slam, but was jolted into despair at the sound of the cheer.

"I played as good as I could," Els said. "What more can you do, you know?"

Mickelson knows that feeling all too well. Of the half-dozen close calls he has had in the majors, nothing was more jarring than Payne Stewart holing a 15-foot par putt on the final hole at Pinehurst to win the '99 U.S. Open, or David Toms making par from 12 feet at the '01 PGA Championship to beat Mickelson by one shot.

"I think Phil deserved this one," Els said. "Full credit to him."

Before walking into the scoring hut to sign his card, Mickelson grabbed daughter Amanda and said, "Daddy won. Can you believe it?"

Mickelson finished at 9-under 279 and earned $1.17 million for his 23rd career victory.

This was the sixth straight major won by a first-timer — something that had never happened in 144 years of championship golf.

K.J. Choi holed a 5-iron from 220 yards on the 11th hole for eagle, kept his hopes alive with a 40-foot birdie putt on the 13th but wound up with a 69, three shots behind.

Tiger Woods was long gone before the fireworks started. He made a double bogey — his third of the tournament — on the 13th hole and shot 71, leaving him 11 shots out of the lead in a tie for 22nd, his worst finish ever at the Masters.

Woods now has gone seven majors without winning, and he has played his last five over par.

But this Masters didn't need him to deliver the drama.

With aces and eagles, so many spectacular shots along the back nine that the gallery was out of breath, it came down to Mickelson and Els in a duel as good as any at a major championship.

Els, playing two groups ahead of Mickelson, beat him on the par 5s with an eagle and a birdie.

Mickelson answered with an approach to the dangerous 14th that grazed the cup for a tap-in birdie.

Snyder golfers prepare to defend District 3-3A titles

The Snyder boys look to deliver a second consecutive District 3-3A golf title when they close out the district tournament Tuesday at Denver City.

Snyder increased its lead to 31 shots after following up a first-round 302 with a second-round 310 last Tuesday at Sammy Baugh Golf Course at WTC.

Alan Gray is tied for the first medalist spot with Seminole's Brady Shivers after shooting a 74-76 150 over the first two rounds.

Jay Weaver is just two shots back of Gray with a 152, with Jake Cottrell right behind Weaver with a 153.

Tanner Bloom is sitting at 156 heading into the third round and Cole Robertson has carded a 160 over the first 36 holes.

The Snyder B team is sitting in with a 654, 13 strokes behind Sweetwater for second place.

"We definitely feel good about the way it's gone so far," head golf coach Ricky Hunter said. "The boys have a big lead, but the second bunch is only 13 shots out of second. We feel like we can get two teams in (regionals)."

The girls also are seeking a second-straight district championship this week when they head to final round Wednesday at Gaines County.

The girls are atop the leaderboard, leading Sweetwater by five strokes with a team score of 653 after 36 holes.

Cami Trout is still second medalist with a 153 after the first 36 holes.

Christi Williams, Brooke Jackson, Amber Luecke and Shannon Mangis are all within five shots of one another.

"We knew it would be tight for the girls," Hunter said. "Seminole is a good course to end it on. We feel good about our chances."

The regional tournament begins Monday, with the 3A boys playing at Nueva Vista in Midland, and the girls teeing-off at Ratliff Ranch in Odessa.

WTC earns first series split

Western Texas College earned its first series split of the season after taking the back end of Saturday's doubleheader with Odessa on the eight-run rule, 15-7.

The Westerners (12-32, 6-20) got a huge day from Landon Thompson, who went 6-for-6 with four RBIs and two steals. Thompson had 12 hits on the weekend, and raised his batting average 41 points by the end of the four-game set, according to head coach Billy Hefflinger.

"Thompson had an unbelievable weekend," he said. "He has just been on fire."

Cody Guzman got his second victory of the year, and the team got a single, double and a triple from Chase Gilbert in the finale.

It was the first time WTC has won on the mercy rule in a conference game.

WTC fell in the first game, 12-7, despite two hits each from Matt Meredith and Rafe Martinez.

"We really needed to win all four, but I'm happy with the split," Hefflinger said.

The Westerners can avoid a play-in for a berth in the conference tournament if they win five of their next six — all against Midland JC — and El Paso sweeps Odessa. If not, the team will play New Mexico Military Institute, the last place team in the north division of the Western Junior College Athletic Conference.

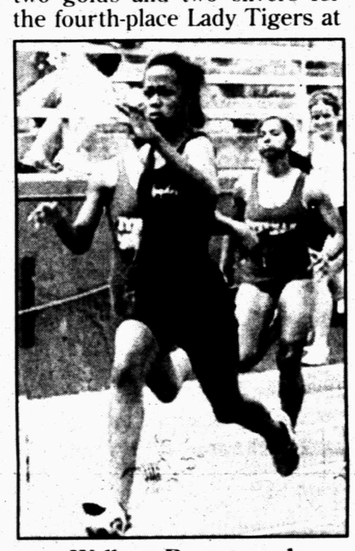
Odessa leads WTC by three games, and has not beaten El Paso in four tries this year. The Westerners are 0-2 against Midland this year.

The team begins a doubleheader at 4 p.m. today at Midland, then closes out the regular season with a four-game set against Midland at home beginning with a noon doubleheader Friday.

Tuesday's scheduled game at Lubbock Christian has been cancelled.

Wells wins two golds, two silvers at C-City

October Wells continued her march towards the regional track meet Friday, grabbing two golds and two silvers for the fourth-place Lady Tigers at the Colorado City meet.



Wells at Brownwood

The Lady Tigers finished with 56 points.

Wells blew out the field in the 100m dash, breaking the tape at 12 even, and followed with a first place leap of 34-9 in the triple jump.

Wells secured a silver in the long jump with a distance of 17-10. She also anchored the sprint relay team of Terann Ragland, Sequoya Powell and Nicki Traylor to a silver medal time of 50.83.

Candace Chandler earned fourth (64.40) in the 400 run, Burleson was sixth (49.64) in the 300 hurdles and Traylor was sixth (27.60) in the 200 sprint.

Burleson, Ragland, Chandler and Jordan Stansell came in fifth in the mile relay with a time of 4:28.59.

The girls will compete in the district meet Wednesday and Saturday at Tiger Stadium.

Girls Little Dribblers

Majors
Jazz 33, Shock 10
Jazz: Medrano 14; Morris 10; Hand 4; Brooks 3l Lord 2. **Shock:** Toombs 4; Wesson 4; Arizmendi 2.

Nikes 34, Sparks 25
Nikes: McGlouthin 20; Espinoza 12; Villa 2.
Sparks: Williamson 12; Urias 9; Glass 2; Gordon 2.

Juniors
Starzz, 33, Rockets 17
Starzz: Bernal 22; Garcia 10; Ornales 1. **Rockets:** Martinez 6; Perales 4; Kellner 4; Holley 2; Sanders 1.

Swoopsters 27, Fever 15
Swoopsters: Martinez 17; Cearley 4; Moore 4; Luecke 2. **Fever:** Stewart 6; Autrey 4; Mitchell 3; Warren 2.

Mercury 32, Comets 27
Mercury: Driggers 17; Davis 13; Edwards 2.
Comets: Hernandez 24; Nobles 3.

Jazz 39, Panthers 6
Jazz: Clanton 13; Medrano 13; Brooks 5; Morris 4; Olvera 2; Hand 2. **Panthers:** Harlan 2; Redman 2; Robbins 2.

Eight-year-olds
Red Hots 19, Suns 5
Red Hots: Hernandez 8; Pierce 6; Herrley 2; Bloom 2; Alacorn 1. **Suns:** Samarron 4; Dunn1.

Swifts 19, Little Tigers 12
Swifts: Claxton 11; Gamble 3; Harlan 2; Romero 2; Alcala 1. **Little Tigers:** Quiros 6; Jaramillo 4.

Hornets 38, Hoopsters 2
Hornets: Jones 12; Massingill 12; Moreno 6; Sanchez 4; Leal 4. **Hoopsters:** Browning 2.

Area Sports Calendar

	TODAY
Baseball:	WTC at Midland JC, DH, 4 p.m.
	SHS JV at Sweetwater, 6 p.m.
	TUESDAY
Baseball:	SHS varsity at Lamesa, 4:30 p.m.
Golf:	SHS boys at Denver City, district final round
Softball:	SHS varsity at Merkel, 5 p.m.
	SHS JV at Merkel, 7 p.m.
	WEDNESDAY
Golf:	SHS girls at Seminole, district final round
Track:	District meet, Snyder
	FRIDAY
Baseball:	SHS varsity at Denver City, 7 p.m.
	WTC vs. Midland JC, DH, noon
Softball:	SHS varsity vs. Denver City, 5 p.m.
	SHS JV vs. Denver City, 7 p.m.
	SATURDAY
Softball:	WTC vs. Clarendon, DH, 2 p.m.
Baseball:	WTC vs. Midland JC, DH, noon
	SHS JV vs. Sweetwater, DH, noon
Track:	District meet, Snyder

Major League Baseball

National League
East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Florida	5	1	.833	—
Atlanta	3	3	.500	2
New York	3	3	.500	2
Montreal	2	4	.333	3
Philadelphia	1	5	.167	4

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Cincinnati	4	2	.667	—
Milwaukee	4	3	.571	½
St. Louis	4	3	.571	½
Chicago	3	3	.500	1
Houston	3	3	.500	1
Pittsburgh	3	3	.500	1

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	4	2	.667	—
San Diego	3	3	.500	1
San Francisco	3	3	.500	1
Arizona	2	4	.333	2
Colorado	2	4	.333	2

Sunday's Games
Chicago Cubs 10, Atlanta 2
Pittsburgh 4, Cincinnati 3
N.Y. Mets 4, Montreal 1
Houston 7, Milwaukee 4
Florida 3, Philadelphia 1
Colorado 4, Los Angeles 2
St. Louis 6, Arizona 5
San Francisco 6, San Diego 3

Monday's Games
Cincinnati (P.Wilson 1-0) at Philadelphia (Wolf 0-0), 12:05 p.m.
Atlanta (Hampton 0-0) at N.Y. Mets (Trachsel 0-1), 12:10 p.m.
Pittsburgh (Benson 0-0) at Chicago Cubs (Maddux 0-1), 1:20 p.m.
Arizona (Webb 1-0) at Colorado (Jennings 0-1), 3:05 p.m.
Milwaukee (Kinney 0-0) at San Francisco (J.Williams 0-1), 3:05 p.m.
Houston (Fernandez 0-0) at St. Louis (W.Williams 0-0), 7:10 p.m.

American League
East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	4	3	.571	—
Tampa Bay	4	3	.571	—
New York	4	4	.500	½
Baltimore	3	4	.429	1
Toronto	1	5	.167	2½

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	5	1	.833	—
Kansas City	4	2	.667	1
Chicago	3	3	.500	2
Minnesota	3	3	.500	2
Cleveland	2	5	.286	3½

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Anaheim	4	2	.667	—
Oakland	4	2	.667	—
Texas	3	3	.500	1
Seattle	1	5	.167	3

Sunday's Games
Detroit 6, Minnesota 5, 10 innings
N.Y. Yankees 5, Chicago White Sox 4
Tampa Bay 10, Baltimore 1
Boston 6, Toronto 4, 12 innings
Kansas City 5, Cleveland 3
Anaheim 7, Texas 2
Seattle 9, Oakland 4, 10 innings

Monday's Games
Minnesota (Lohse 0-1) at Cleveland (C.Lee 0-0), 2:05 p.m.
Anaheim (Washburn 1-0) at Texas (Lewis 1-0), 7:05 p.m.

National Basketball Association

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
y-New Jersey	47	33	.588	—
x-Miami	40	40	.500	7
x-New York	38	42	.475	9
x-Boston	35	45	.438	12
Philadelphia	33	47	.413	14
Washington	25	55	.313	22
Orlando	19	61	.238	28

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
yz-Indiana	59	21	.738	—
x-Detroit	53	27	.663	6
x-Milwaukee	41	39	.513	18
x-New Orleans	40	40	.500	19
Cleveland	33	47	.413	26
Toronto	31	49	.388	28
Atlanta	27	53	.338	32
Chicago	23	57	.288	36

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Minnesota	56	24	.700	—
x-San Antonio	55	25	.688	1
x-Dallas	50	30	.625	6
x-Memphis	50	30	.625	6
x-Houston	44	36	.550	12
Denver	42	38	.525	14
Utah	42	38	.525	14

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Sacramento	55	25	.688	—
x-L.A. Lakers	54	26	.675	1
Portland	41	39	.513	14
Golden State	36	44	.450	19
Seattle	36	44	.450	19
Phoenix	28	52	.350	27
L.A. Clippers	27	53	.338	28

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division
z-clinched conference

Sunday's Games
Chicago 114, Toronto 108, OT
New Jersey 89, Philadelphia 75
Sacramento 102, L.A. Lakers 85
Phoenix 89, Memphis 83
Golden State 108, Dallas 107
San Antonio 88, L.A. Clippers 79

Today's Games
Miami at Boston, 6 p.m.
Milwaukee at Cleveland, 6 p.m.
New Jersey at Atlanta, 6:30 p.m.
Indiana at Philadelphia, 6:30 p.m.
Washington at Detroit, 6:30 p.m.
Utah at Minnesota, 7 p.m.
New York at New Orleans, 7 p.m.
Orlando at Chicago, 7:30 p.m.
Sacramento at Denver, 8 p.m.
Houston at Seattle, 9 p.m.
San Antonio at Portland, 9 p.m.

Stanley Cup

National Hockey League
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(Best-of-7)
Sunday, April 11
Nashville 3, Detroit 1, Detroit leads series 2-1
Montreal 3, Boston 2, Boston leads series 2-1
Vancouver 2, Calgary 1, Vancouver leads series 2-1

Today
Philadelphia at New Jersey, 6 p.m.
Tampa Bay at N.Y. Islanders, 6 p.m.
Toronto at Ottawa, 6 p.m.
Colorado at Dallas, 7 p.m.
San Jose at St. Louis, 8 p.m.

Sports Briefs

Late sign-ups, tryouts for Babe Ruth

Late sign-ups and tryouts for Babe Ruth baseball (13-15 years) will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday at Lewis Field. Contact Dewayne Murdock at 573-2207 or Ray Conner at 573-1366 for more information.

Ladies play day

The WGA will host a ladies play each Tuesday at 9 a.m. at the Scurry County golf course. Format is most pars (gross and net pars or better).

Friday swingers

The SCGA will host a couples play day at 5:30 p.m. each Friday. Format is handicap scramble, and the cost is $10. Call the pro shop at 573-7101 for more information.

Gateway Golf Classic

The third annual Gateway Golf Classic will be held Saturday at Sammy Baugh Golf Course at WTC. Format is four-person scramble, and cost is $240 per team. Shotgun starts are set for 8:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. All proceeds benefit Gateway Family Services. Call 573-4351 for more information.

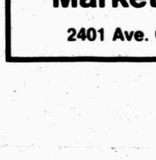
Pettitte placed on 15-day DL

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Houston Astros pitcher Andy Pettitte was placed on the 15-day disabled list Saturday with a strained left elbow.

Pettitte injured the elbow while trying to check his swing in his first start on Tuesday against San Francisco.

An MRI on Thursday revealed inflammation in the elbow and a strain in his flexor tendon, according to the Astros.

The move was made retroactive to Pettitte's last start.

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Study says audits of businesses declined

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Internal Revenue Service audited fewer corporations, small businesses and partnerships last year but more individual taxpayers, according to a study of government data.

Syracuse University's Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, in its analysis of IRS data, concluded that the audit rate for businesses of all sizes slid slightly last year to 2.1 audits for every 1,000 businesses, down from 2.2 audits per 1,000 businesses the previous year.

At the same time, the IRS audited 14 percent more individual tax returns. The audit rate for individuals increased last year to 6.5 audits for every 1,000 taxpayers.

Official audit rates released by the IRS last month show a similar trend.

Researchers said the declining audits of businesses exposes a flaw in the administration's tough stance against corporate wrongdoing.

"These and a number of other measures — documented by the agency's own data — indicate that the actual performance of the IRS differs in significant ways from some of the Bush administration claims when it comes to cracking down on corporate scofflaws," the report said.

Researchers point specifically to declining audits of the largest corporations and a type of business organization that passes income and taxes on to its shareholders or partners — an arrangement found to have been improperly used in some corporate accounting scandals.

IRS Commissioner Mark Everson said in an interview that the agency's broad attack on corporate tax evasion does not show up in the audit numbers.

"Am I satisfied with the numbers? No. I want to see them go up," he said. "I'm not surprised that that's lagging the other indicators. And while I think it's an important indicator, it doesn't tell the whole story."

Some advocates said the trend appears troubling.

"What struck me first was the commissioner earlier this week said that they'd increased enforcement and then I look at these numbers and say, 'What is he talking about?'" said David Keating, senior counselor for the National Taxpayers Union. "It really opens up a credibility gap."

Chellie Pingree, president of Common Cause, a government watchdog group, said the study suggests corporations are not paying their fair share.

"This is at a time when taxes have been drastically cut from the wealthiest in the country, and there are very heavy, legitimate demands on our government, between war in Iraq and homeland security," Pingree said.

In a detailed written response, the IRS said the study ignores the reasons for the decline in corporate audits and other enforcement actions taken against businesses.

The IRS said the decline can be attributed partly to the explosive growth in tax shelters, which make audits more intricate and time-consuming. Tax collectors worked more than 2,200 corporate tax shelter returns in 2003. Each takes an average 71/2 months longer than other corporate returns, and their number is growing.

The agency's work force has shrunk while its workload has grown, the IRS said.

The agency has been criticized for shifting money from tax enforcement to pay for other administrative costs. Everson said he has reversed that practice and expects the agency will have hired 250 more agents by autumn.

Bridge

By Phillip Alder

	North	04-12-04
	♠ J 9 7 6 3	
	♥ A 7 2	
	♦ K 5 2	
	♣ 4 3	
West		**East**
♠ A Q 4		♠ K 10 8
♥ Q J 10 8		♥ K 9 5 4
♦ J 10 9 7		♦ Q
♣ J 8		♣ 10 9 7 6 2
	South	
	♠ 5 2	
	♥ 6 3	
	♦ A 8 6 4 3	
	♣ A K Q 5	

Dealer: South
Vulnerable: Both

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦	All pass

Opening lead: ♥ Q

Monday, April 12, 2004

You prefer, so give preference

By Phillip Alder

During his commencement address at the American University, Washington, D.C., in 1984, John Galbraith said, "Commencement oratory ... must eschew anything that smacks of partisan politics, political preference, sex, religion, or unduly firm opinion. Nonetheless, there must be a speech: speeches in our culture are the vacuum that fills a vacuum."

That's depressing — and debatable, since sound cannot pass through a vacuum.

Bridge, our nonpolitical preference, can fill a vacuum, but in an uplifting, stimulating way.

In bidding, we have preference. When partner bids two suits, we will often tell him which of those two suits we prefer — as on this deal.

After South opens one diamond, North has an easy one-spade response. South's two-club rebid promises at least five diamonds and four clubs. (With only 4-4 in the minors, South would rebid either one no-trump or two spades.) North has only eight points, not enough to invite game. He prefers diamonds to clubs, so expresses that preference by rebidding two diamonds. South, with a minimum opening bid, has done enough.

There is only one trap in the play. After winning trick one with dummy's heart ace and drawing two rounds of trumps, you must take only two top clubs before ruffing the club five on the board. (It doesn't help West to ruff in.) You will lose two spades, one heart and two diamonds. However, if you try immediately to take the third top club, West will ruff and cash his last trump winner, leaving you with a club loser.

How should East-West have reached a heart contract?

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Smithsonian wants to save Saturn V

GALVESTON (AP) — The Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum is working to save the Saturn V rocket at Johnson Space Center, but project organizers say much of the funding is in jeopardy.

Allan Needell, the Smithsonian Institutions Apollo curator, will get his first detailed look at the condition of the rocket today at JSC.

The project to restore the only remaining Saturn V with three working stages was to be funded in large part by a grant from the National Park Service and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The $1.25 million allocated from the Save Americas Treasures program for the rockets restoration is only available if the Smithsonian raises and equal amount on its own.

About $760,000 has come in so far, which the grant will match, but theres $540,000 to go with the countdown nearing zero.

"We really need local, private interests to step forward and believe with us that preservation of the space program is important," Needell told The Galveston County Daily News in today's online edition.

The technological leap that allowed the United States to beat the Soviet Union to the moon, the Saturn V rocket at JSC would have been used to carry Apollo 18, 19 or 20 into space, but those missions were canceled.

"The whole space race depended on our ability to build a next generation, nonmilitary launch vehicle, and that's what the Saturn V was," Needell said.

The 36-story rocket has been on display at JSC's Rocket Park since 1977, where the weather and other deterioration have taken their toll.

"This is equivalent to the Wright flyer or the Mayflower," said Needell, adding it was the last chance to preserve the rocket. "Its a very, very important historical artifact."

Funds raised so far could halt deterioration and NASA has committed to building a temporary climate-controlled building that will protect the artifact for 10 years.





COCK-A-DOODLE DANDY — Two East first grade classes presented *Cock-a-doodle Dandy* last week. Sharlot Sparlin is the music teacher. Mrs. Jana Glass' students (top photo) are back row from left, Armando Arellano, Nicole Fry, Jaime Escalante, Dustin Essery, Mireya Hidalgo, Michael Campos and Benjamin Barrera. Middle row from left are Samantha Torres, Santanya Molina, Dezaree Renshaw, Pedro Martinez, Brittany Rios and Wyatt Gray. Front row from left are Mercedes Rivera, Brandon Sewell, Kristen Cline, Cody Kincheloe, Brooke Clinkinbeard and Brieanna Gutierrez. Cyndee Gayle's students (bottom photo) are from left bottom row, Jasmine Elledge, Brenon Brunson, Kelby Greene, Emily Parmer, Maria Campos, Ruben Vera. Middle row from left, Mark Baldwin, Lauren Braziel, Rebecca Pyburn, Matthew Houghton, Cassie Batchelor and Jessica Clark. Bottom row from left, Trey Pool, Omar Salinas, Ryan Armendarez, Gladys Garcia, Taylor Kiker and Tyler Mitchell. (Staff Photos by Shirley A. Gorman)

Autistic man discovers way to express himself with piano

NEW MILFORD, N.J. (AP) — Paul DeSavino's mother grew increasingly nervous as she watched her son sit at a piano during one of his first public performances last year. He wasn't playing.

Minutes passed and then DeSavino, diagnosed with autism more than three decades ago as a child, played the piece perfectly.

"After the performance I said 'Paul, it was so wonderful but why did you wait so long?'" Marlene DeSavino recalled. "And he said, 'Mom, don't you remember? You told me to take my time, to concentrate, to look ahead.'"

For his family, who once was told DeSavino would eventually have to be placed in an institution, those early performances represented an opportunity.

Music offers children and adults with autism a way to express themselves, said Cindy Edgerton, co-director of the music therapy clinical services at Michigan State University. For many, it can improve language and social interaction skills, she said.

Some, like DeSavino, have what musical experts call perfect pitch. Yet the difficulty communicating that accompanies autism can make musical instruction a challenge.

"We can't discuss something in a way that I would with another student," said Cosmo Buono, DeSavino's instructor. "That I would say really is the biggest issue — I need to make sure that the concept has been understood and once that occurs, then there's no other issue at all."

DeSavino, 34, will perform a 30-minute recital before a special benefit performance at the State Repertory Opera of New Jersey on April 24. The performance will raise money for autism research.

It marks another step in the journey DeSavino and his family have taken since he first began withdrawing as a toddler. His interest in music came early, but the ability to channel that into studying classical music didn't happen for decades.

"His sister used to start singing a song and he would say 'no, no, no' and he'd start singing the song again but in a different key and we realized, 'Wow, why was he doing that?' and it would be the key that he had heard the song in," his mother remembered. "So he had heard it, remembered the sound of that key and corrected his sister and sung it in the right key."

By the time he turned 5, DeSavino would sometimes sit at the piano, only to run away if anyone came near him. About seven years ago, his mother decided he might be ready for formal lessons.

At first she feared he might lose interest in piano and get frustrated.

"Because of his love of music, he has continued, and he's a bit of a perfectionist, so the teacher was able to apply enough pressure but not too much so that it wouldn't frustrate him," she said.

Markets

Midday Stocks

NEW YORK (AP) - Morning stocks

	High	Low	Last	
AMR Corp	13 47	13 21	13 32	+ 01
AT&T Corp	19 20	19 01	19 16	— 07
Albertsons	22 40	22 19	22 35	+ 13
Alltel	50 04	49 40	50 02	+ 62
AmEl Pw	32 30	31 80	32 02	— 08
AndarkPtr	54 27	52 99	54 12	+ 1 34
ATMOS Egy	25 76	25 55	25 70	+ 16
Aviall	15 94	15 79	15 90	+ 16
BP PLC	53 92	53 35	53 88	+ 37
BakerHughes	36 97	36 00	36 95	+ 1 12
Bank of Amer	81 94	81 24	81 82	+ 77
BellSouth	26 76	26 53	26 62	+ 08
BurlNoSFe	32 25	31 85	32 21	
Caterpillar	83 65	82 00	83 65	+ 1 67
CenterPoint	11 59	11 43	11 44	— 13
ChevronTex	91 75	90 05	91 72	+ 1 78
Citigroup	52 09	51 77	52 02	+ 49
CocaCola	51 21	51 02	51 14	— 10
ColgatePal	54 35	54 05	54 05	— 22
CmclMetals	31 40	30 90	31 38	+ 47
ConocoPhill	73 30	71 50	72 84	+ 1 72
Cooper Inds	58 45	57 69	58 41	+ 72
DaimlrChry	41 40	40 98	41 32	+ 19
DeltaAirLines	8 25	8 10	8 13	+ 01
Dillards Inc	17 44	17 21	17 32	+ 11
DowChem	41 69	40 75	41 33	+ 55
DuPont	44 15	43 56	44 05	+ 62
EastmanChem	43 90	43 19	43 81	+ 58
EstKodak	25 61	25 31	25 37	— 07
EDS Corp	20 24	20 01	20 23	+ 02
Entergy	58 35	57 69	58 26	— 02
ExxonMobil	43 14	42 60	43 09	+ 64
FootLocker	25 80	25 29	25 61	+ 27
GenDynam	93 12	92 40	93 02	+ 59
GenElec	31 74	31 50	31 67	+ 26
GenMills	46 56	46 12	46 14	— 25
GenMotors	47 06	46 71	46 97	+ 45
GaPacific	34 94	34 02	34 89	+ 95
Goodrich	28 99	28 55	28 86	+ 35
Goodyear	9 90	9 01	9 47	+ 83
GtAtlPac	8 04	7 81	8 01	+ 24
Halliburtn	31 00	29 93	30 99	+ 1 14
Hanson PLC	39 78	39 51	39 78	+ 17
HarteHanks	23 74	23 30	23 68	+ 24
HomeDepot	36 49	36 23	36 45	+ 25
Honeywellintl	34 89	34 60	34 86	+ 20
IBM	94 12	93 40	94 07	+ 95
IntlPaper	42 56	41 93	42 43	+ 42
JohnsonJn	51 07	50 81	50 96	+ 09
KinderMorg	63 20	63 00	63 10	— 03
Kroger Co	17 25	17 00	17 15	+ 05
LockheedM	47 82	47 11	47 75	+ 21
Lowes Cos	54 05	53 60	54 03	+ 53
Lubys	5 92	5 81	5 85	06
LucentTech	4 53	4 45	4 47	+ 02
MarathonOil	34 25	33 68	34 20	+ 60
MayDeptStr	34 15	33 52	33 99	+ 33
Medtronic	49 55	48 83	49 30	+ 42
Motorola	18 19	17 95	18 05	
NCR Corp	47 00	46 30	46 84	+ 84
Navistar	49 70	48 28	49 40	+ 84
PNM Resrcs	30 50	30 39	30 39	— 01
Penney JC	34 70	34 02	34 39	— 25
PepBoys	27 76	27 42	27 50	+ 06
PepsiCo	54 96	54 67	54 82	+ 06
PhelpDodge	78 93	77 10	78 42	— 48
PilgrimsPride	22 10	21 67	21 90	— 01
Praxair s	38 32	38 01	38 21	+ 20
ProctGamb	107 09	106 65	106 90	+ 53
RadioShack	31 80	31 27	31 76	+ 28
RoyalDut	48 99	48 51	48 94	+ 35
SBC Comm	24 70	24 54	24 57	+ 11
SaraLee	22 10	21 88	21 97	+ 02
Scripps EW	104 75	103 80	104 70	+ 66
SearsRoeb	42 35	42 12	42 21	— 05
SherwinW	37 63	37 40	37 55	+ 25
SouthernCo	29 90	29 64	29 68	— 09
SwstAirl	15 08	14 95	15 07	+ 11
SprintFON	19 55	19 20	19 44	+ 13
SprintPCS	9 80	9 63	9 73	+ 02
Sunoco Inc	63 55	62 30	63 44	+ 2 03
TXU Corp	28 84	28 64	28 75	— 09
TempleInland	63 95	63 25	63 82	+ 73
TexInd	38 46	38 06	38 44	+ 83
TexasInst	29 48	28 97	29 45	+ 47
Textron	53 60	52 58	53 44	+ 67
TimeWarner	17 56	17 35	17 51	+ 12
TrinityInds	27 77	27 54	27 75	+ 21
TylerTech	9 64	9 30	9 64	+ 24
UnionPacif	57 19	56 70	57 04	+ 04
USSteel	39 98	38 80	39 77	+ 78
UnitedTech	90 06	89 76	89 77	— 03
Unocal	37 76	36 50	37 64	+ 74
VerizonComm	37 59	37 31	37 51	+ 20
WalMart	57 43	56 80	57 21	+ 52
WellsFargo	57 58	57 16	57 53	+ 65
WstnGasRs	52 88	51 90	52 74	+ 70
WinnDixie	8 09	7 70	8 00	+ 47
Xerox Cp	14 90	14 62	14 85	+ 08
YumBrands	39 38	38 67	39 25	+ 22

APR 12 2004

Astro-graph

By Bernice Bede Osol



Your Birthday

Wednesday, April 14, 2004

Far more harmonious conditions will prevail in the year ahead than negative ones. Several influences that had proven disruptive to you will be completely eliminated, making room for good things to triumph.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — Most of the time it is first necessary to prime the pump in order to generate a flow, and today may be one of those days. If you expect to receive anything, you must first be a giver.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Decisions you reach today will have far-reaching effects on your personal affairs. Fortunately, you are in a cycle where you will most likely make all the right moves.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — Although you may not have as much control over important matters today as you would like to in your career, those who will be in charge will be acting in ways that will serve your best interests.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Even if associates should be a shade faster thinking on their feet today than you, you are likely to be the one who will recognize the value of their ideas and be far quicker at acting on them.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — Unlike others who have a tendency to choke, challenging situations will tend to awaken your ingenuity today. Competition serves to strengthen your resolve rather than weaken it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — There is nothing wrong with attempting endeavors on your own today, but they're apt to be only marginally successful for you. It'll be with partnership arrangements where you're likely to soar.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — Overall conditions look rather promising for you today, and even if negative events should occur, they'll do little to disrupt these harmonious influences. Make the most of the good times.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Of course be sensible about the way you handle your affairs today, but don't play things so close to the vest that it causes you to be fearful about taking chances. A calculated risk could pay off.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — There should be a considerable amount of material opportunities hovering about you today, and you can do much with little, but don't forget about enlarging a situation that's already underway.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Be positive and hopeful regarding the outcome of events today that would have a favorable effect on your social affairs. You are luckier than usual, and things should turn out quite well.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — Several good things could come your way today that may be denied others under similar circumstances. Thank your lucky stars and be sure to display the proper gratitude.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — Do not be indifferent to the many good things that come your way today because they could affect your self-interests in ways that would bolster your ego. To succeed you must first try.

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Northwest Forest Plan still stirs debate

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ten years after it was adopted to cool a conflict over logging of old-growth trees, the Northwest Forest Plan still provokes hot debate.

The Clinton administration signed the landmark plan on April 13, 1994, to settle lawsuits brought by environmentalists and bring a level of peace in a battling region.

The plan sharply reduced logging on 24 million acres of federal land in Washington, Oregon and northern California to protect the northern spotted owl, salmon and other threatened species.

At the same time, it promised a sustainable supply of timber — including some from older, more commercially valuable trees — to boost an industry crippled by a ban on logging in millions of acres of national forests where spotted owls live.

Critics howled from the start.

"Everybody hated it, because nobody got all they wanted," said Jerry Franklin, a University of Washington forest ecology professor who helped write the plan.

Whatever its shortcomings, the forest plan "accomplished a tremendous amount of good and created a tremendous amount of change," Franklin said.

"I think what the Northwest Forest Plan symbolized was a major sea change in our attitude — how we are going to manage the federal forest stands, and what our priorities were going to be," he said. "And clearly it reversed almost a half-century of focus on commodity extraction."

Former Forest Service Chief Jack Ward Thomas, credited by many as the plan's principal author, offers a less sweeping appraisal.

"I guess what it achieved is, it complied with the law," said Thomas, now a professor of conservation at the University of Montana School of Forestry.

While critics on both sides attribute all sorts of motives to the plan and its authors, Thomas said the driving factor was compliance with the numerous laws governing federal forests.

The National Forest Management Act and the Endangered Species Act, among others, forced officials to act to preserve the old-growth trees that serve as habitat for the spotted owl and other threatened species.

Small Mississippi town waits for word on kidnapped civilian

MACON, Miss. (AP) — In his hometown in eastern Mississippi, Thomas Hamill is known as a good guy — a family man with a young son and daughter who took a job driving trucks in Iraq to make ends meet after his dairy farm took a hit.

Friend and neighbors on Sunday gathered for a vigil outside the county courthouse to pray for the safe return of the civilian who was taken hostage in Iraq. A deadline imposed by his abductors came and went with no word of his fate.

"This is a small town. It hits us hard. God bless him, he's just trying to make a living for his family," said longtime resident Marion Gilbertson.

Hamill, 43, was snatched Friday by gunmen who attacked a fuel convoy he was guarding, the latest in a string of kidnappings in Iraq.

"I'm just praying," said his grandmother, Vera Hamill.

Hamill works for the Houston-based engineering and construction company Kellogg, Brown & Root, a division of Halliburton, his wife, Kellie, told The Associated Press.

His captors had threatened to kill him unless U.S. troops ended their assault on the city of Fallujah. The deadline passed Sunday morning with no news.

James Jones, who went to high school with Hamill, said financial reasons prompted his friend to go to Iraq. He returned briefly a few weeks ago when his wife had open-heart surgery.

"We're just all pulling together for this man," said Mayor Dorothy Baker Hines, one of several hundred residents gathered for the night vigil outside the Noxubee County Court House.

A Halliburton official left Hamill's house Sunday evening without commenting.

Vera Hamill said Halliburton officials asked the family not to talk to the media, fearing they might say something that could jeopardize her grandson's safety.

In a videotape of Hamill, broadcast Saturday on the Arab TV station Al-Jazeera, his expression was calm but wary. A voice-over read by an Al-Jazeera announcer quoted Hamill as saying he was being treated well.

"I am in good shape," the voice-over quoted him as saying. "I hope to return home one day, and I want my family to know that these people are taking care of me, and provide me with food, water and a place to sleep."

Hamill went to Iraq last September as a truck driver for Kellogg, Brown and Root, his wife said.

"I don't really know anything, we don't know anything. ... Prayers are all we need right now," Kellie Hamill told The Commercial Dispatch of Columbus, Miss., in a telephone interview Saturday. "I'm doing about as good as can be expected under the circumstances."

Today's chuckle

Washington cop arrests intoxicated man

ORCHARDS, Wash. (AP) — A man who stopped by Washington State Patrol headquarters to ask about getting a job as a lawman found himself on the other side of the law.



Robert Gulley, an unemployed radio technician, was ticketed for alleged drunk driving as he drove away from the patrol office in this city near Vancouver. He had asked for a job application.

"I guess it was a bad time to go there," Gulley, 25.

When Gulley walked into patrol headquarters Wednesday afternoon, he was slurring his words, had glassy eyes and his breath smelled of alcohol, Trooper Maureen Crandall said.

When she told him it wasn't a good idea to apply to be a trooper while intoxicated, Gulley denied drinking. So Trooper Rich Bettger offered to measure Gulley's blood alcohol level with a hand-held breath tester.

Gulley blew a 0.095, above the state's legal limit for driving of 0.08, indicating he'd had at least three drinks, March said.

Gulley said he had only had one drink — a Long Island iced tea — and that it likely caused a high alcohol reading because he hadn't eaten in more than a day.

When the troopers asked Gulley how he got to the station, they said he told them he'd been given a ride. The officers said they warned Gulley not to drive home.

But after leaving the office and pacing back and forth on a nearby side street for 10 minutes, Gulley got into his car and drove away, troopers said. He was promptly pulled over and ticketed.

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Spotlight



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2nd Front Page

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

Bush, Egypt's Mubarak to meet

CRAWFORD (AP) — Amid violence in Iraq, President Bush and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak face another difficult issue: Gaza and the Israeli prime minister's plan to close all 21 Jewish settlements there.

Mubarak will be concerned in his visit today at Bush's ranch to know how the Israeli plan will link up to the U.S. "road map" for peace that is meant to produce an independent Palestinian state in 2005.

Like other Arab leaders, Mubarak is leery that the Israeli plan might be Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's way to hold on indefinitely to other occupied Arab land. While the proposal calls for closing all 21 Gaza settlements, it would shut down only four of 140 Jewish settlements on the West Bank.

In a letter to Bush, Jordan's King Abdullah II expressed his strong support of America's two-state solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the official Petra news agency said Sunday.

For Bush and Israel, a key issue is the kind of role Mubarak would play to keep a lid on the volatile Gaza area. Gaza borders Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, and Egypt administered the strip before the 1967 war.

The United States would like Mubarak's help in ensuring that Gaza does not fall into anarchy, which would make it a haven for terrorist elements.

Egypt can control the border so that weapons do not cross into Gaza and could mediate between various Palestinian factions.

Apparently, Mubarak is' willing to guard Egypt's side of the border and to train and equip Palestinians to take charge of security on their side. Egypt has ruled out policing Gaza itself.

U.S. tries to regain control of supply routes; attacks continue

FALLUJAH, Iraq (AP) — Gunmen battered American supply lines today, torching armored vehicles and looting a supply truck on its way from the Baghdad airport. The military said about 70 Americans and 700 insurgents had been killed this month, the bloodiest since the fall of Baghdad a year ago.

Two U.S. troops and seven employees of American contractor Kellogg, Brown & Root were missing, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez said today. Seven Chinese civilians were kidnapped, while militants freed nine captive truck drivers.

More U.S. forces maneuvered into place around Fallujah, and the military has warned it will launch an all-out assault on the besieged city if talks there between pro-U.S. Iraqi politicians and city officials fall through.

The military has been trying to regain control of supply routes after several convoys were ambushed at least 10 truck drivers kidnapped. Nine were released, but an American — Thomas Hamill of Macon, Miss. — remained a captive.

On today, a convoy of flatbed trucks carrying M113 armored personnel carriers was attacked and burned on a road in Latifiya, 20 miles south of Baghdad. Witnesses said three people were killed.

A supply truck was also ambushed and set ablaze today on the road from Baghdad's airport. Looters moved in to carry away goods from the truck as Iraqi police looked on without intervening.

An attack on a convoy Sunday killed a Romanian working for a security company, Romania's ambassador to Iraq said. Two German security guards were killed on a highway last week, prompting Germany to urge all of its citizens to leave Iraq today.

Securing roads has now become a top priority for the military, U.S. Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said today.

"Over the past 24 hours we have put significant amount of combat power on both areas of operation to open up those lines of communication so we can not only resupply our forces in Fallujah, Ramadi and our forces down south, but also make those roads safe for travel," Kimmit said.

"They're at a condition that we would call amber; it is certainly not green yet," he said.

Three U.S. Marines were killed Sunday in Anbar province, the area that includes Fallujah, the military said today without giving further details.

Kerry courts young voters with cost of college warnings

BOSTON (AP) — Democrat John Kerry is opening a concerted appeal to younger voters, using new figures his presidential campaign has gathered to show the soaring costs of a college education amid lagging incomes.

Kerry's first destination today was the University of New Hampshire, with stops later in the week at the University of Rhode Island, the City College of New York and the University of Pittsburgh.

The Massachusetts senator is releasing a "misery index" suggesting that working families have been hammered by stagnant incomes at a time college and health insurance costs have soared.

In his college swing, Kerry is expected to focus on the college cost issue, even while his campaign is broadening its economic criticism of Bush.

The study by his campaign said tuition costs at public colleges and universities have soared by 13 percent in the last three years, "the largest increase on record" and reflecting the budget pressures facing cash-strapped states. Private-college costs have grown by 5 percent over the same stretch, it said.

Much of the Democrats' criticism of President Bush is focused on job losses during his tenure, but Kerry's study argued that far broader and more ominous economic trends are at work.

"Less noted, but perhaps even more important," it said, "is the fact that middle-class families are increasingly being squeezed by the rising cost of health care, college tuition and gasoline at the same time that wages and incomes are stagnating and personal bankruptcies are at record levels."

Kerry's campaign planned to formally release the report today at coordinated events in more than a dozen electorally competitive states. The document discusses the economic status of all 50 states.

Between 2000 and 2003, the study says, inflation-adjusted figures show wages dropped 0.2 percent while public-college tuition jumped 13 percent, health insurance premiums grew 11 percent and gasoline prices rose 15 percent.

Kerry's campaign argues that those increased burdens far outstripped any financial gain from a series of Bush-sponsored tax cuts, which the administration contends put more money in the pockets of working families.

"This is an index about how the real economy is affecting real working families," said Gene B. Sperling, a Kerry adviser who was a top economic aide to President Clinton.

Bush campaign spokesman Steve Schmidt dismissed the index as a political stunt.

Numerous arrests top police blotter

• ***Arrests***

At 8:43 a.m. Saturday at 25th and Ave. G, police arrested a 47-year-old female on charges of an expired drivers license and a 41-year old male on charges of public intoxication.

A 28-year-old male was arrested at 4:43 p.m. Saturday on traffic warrants out of Ector County.

Police arrested a 31-year-old male at 7:08 p.m. Saturday on charges of assault/family violence and resisting arrest after they were called to the 1800 block of 19th on a family disturbance call.

At 9:36 p.m. Saturday, police arrested a 28-year-old male in the 2500 block of Ave. A on charges of no driver's license and no insurance.

Police took an underage driver into custody at 10:13 p.m. Saturday at College Ave. and 37th. The juvenile was later issued a citation and released to his parents.

A 48-year-old male was arrested at 1:29 a.m. Sunday at Ave. T and VFW Drive on charges of misdemeanor driving while intoxicated.

At 12:43 p.m. Sunday, on Highway 180, a 26-year-old male was arrested on a Comanche County warrant for theft by check and failure to appear.

A 16-year-old female juvenile was taken into custody at 3 p.m. Sunday for kicking her mother. Juvenile authorities were contacted.

Police arrested a 30-year-old female at 7:35 p.m. Sunday in the 1500 block of 23rd for assault and family violence after they were dispatched to a call of family disturbance a second time.

• ***Criminal Mischief***

Graffiti was found in the women's restrooms at Towle Park at 4:53 p.m. Saturday.

• ***Attempted Theft***

Police were dispatched at 7:43 p.m. Saturday to the 100 block of 25th where a man reported several individuals had attempted to remove a radio from his car.

• ***Theft***

A lawnmower and other items were reported stolen at 12:10 p.m. Sunday in the 3300 block of U.S. 84.

Obituaries

John Derryberry

1932-2004

John Paul Derryberry of Snyder died Sunday, April 11, in Snyder.

Services for Mr. Derryberry, 71, are pending at Bell-Cypert-Seale Funeral Home.

Born May 9, 1932 in Loraine, Mr. Derryberry was a retired cowboy, a bullrider and rodeo clown.

Survivors include two brothers, Larry Dan Derryberry and wife, Sherry, of Snyder and Sonny Derryberry of Edgemont, S.D.; four sisters, Bobbie Ray Moore of Midland, Louise Brimmer of Highmore, S.D., Paulette McCollum of California, and Sandra Kimsey of Texarkana, Ark.; and several nieces and nephews.

K.P. Lofton

1916-2004

SWEETWATER — K.P. Lofton Jr., a former Scurry County resident, died Sunday, April 11, in Abilene Regional Medical Center.

Funeral service for Mr. Lofton, 87, is set for 2 p.m. Tuesday in the Cate-Spencer & Trent Funeral Home Chapel with Mike Ensminger officiating. Burial will follow in the Pyron Cemetery.

Born Sept. 7, 1916 in Fisher County, he married Lillie Mae Kinney in 1938 in Snyder. He lived in Hermleigh and farmed until 1994 when he retired and moved to Sweetwater. He had been a member of the Hermleigh Church of Christ and was a current member of Normandy Avenue Church of Christ in Sweetwater.

His parents, K.P. and Ethel Lofton; a brother, Vernon Lofton; and a sister, Era Dorden, preceded him in death.

Survivors include his wife, Lillie Mae Lofton of Sweetwater; a son and daughter-in-law, Kenneth Wayne and Peggy Lofton of Sweetwater; a daughter and son-in-law, Pat and Tommy Lillard of Mart; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and a nephew, Monte Dorden.

The family suggests memorials to the West Texas Rehab Center in Abilene or to the Normandy Avenue Church of Christ scholarship fund.

Marjorie Cox

1915-2004

MUSKOGEE, Okla. — Marjorie Griffith Cox, sister of Ross Blanchard of Snyder, died Friday, April 9, in Muskogee after a short illness.

Service for Mrs. Cox, 89, was held today at York Street Church of Christ in Muskogee. Burial was to follow in the Greenhill Cemetery under the direction of Lescher-Millsap Funeral Home.

She was born April 15, 1915 in Haskell, Okla., to Ross and Pearl Blanchard. After completing her education, she married Floyd O. Griffith in Muskogee. He died Sept. 4, 1977. She married Frank Cox who also preceded her in death.

Mrs. Cox was an employee of Vivas, working in retail and bookkeeping most of her adult life.

She also was preceded in death by her parents; and one brother, Jack Blanchard.

Survivors also include five children, William Griffith of Muskogee, Jerry Griffith of Grand Rapids, Mich., Majorie Ferrell of Muskogee, Thomas Griffith of Lawton, Okla., Jean Farmer of Keefeton, Okla.; a sister-in-law, Earnestine Blanchard of Snyder; 16 grandchildren; and 34 great-grandchildren.

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Today's Weather

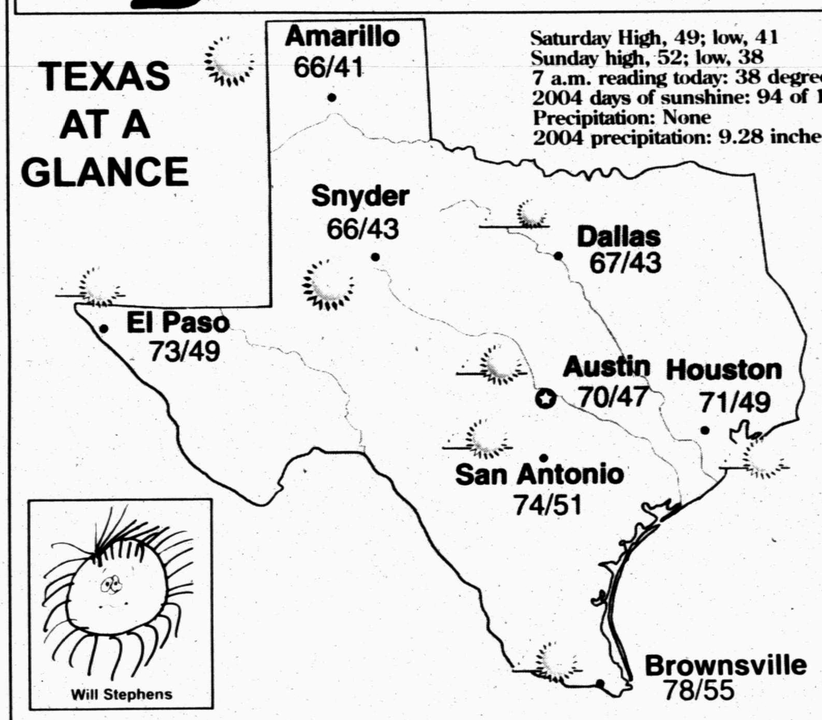
Local 3-Day Forecast

Tue 4/13	Wed 4/14	Thu 4/15
66/43	75/50	80/55
Mainly sunny. High 66F. Winds NNW at 5 to 10 mph.	Sunshine. Highs in the mid 70s and lows in the low 50s.	Fair. Highs in the low 80s and lows in the mid 50s.
Sunrise 7:16 AM, Sunset 8:13 PM	Sunrise 7:15 AM, Sunset 8:13 PM	Sunrise 7:14 AM, Sunset 8:14 PM

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TEXAS AT A GLANCE

Saturday High, 49; low, 41
Sunday high, 52; low, 38
7 a.m. reading today: 38 degrees
2004 days of sunshine: 94 of 102
Precipitation: None
2004 precipitation: 9.28 inches



Will Stephens

	Hi	Lo			Hi	Lo			Hi	Lo	
Abilene	66	44	mst sunny	El Paso	73	49	mst sunny	Midland	69	45	sunny
Amarillo	66	41	sunny	Fort Stockton	72	46	sunny	Raymondville	79	53	mst sunny
Austin	70	47	mst sunny	Gainesville	65	40	pt sunny	Rosenberg	71	48	mst sunny
Beaumont	68	46	pt sunny	Greenville	66	40	pt sunny	San Antonio	74	51	mst sunny
Brownsville	78	55	mst sunny	Houston	71	49	mst sunny	San Marcos	72	47	mst sunny
Brownwood	71	43	mst sunny	Kingsville	77	54	mst sunny	Sulphur Springs	65	39	pt sunny
Corpus Christi	73	56	mst sunny	Livingston	69	42	pt sunny	Sweetwater	67	44	sunny
Corsicana	67	42	pt sunny	Longview	64	40	pt sunny	Tyler	65	41	pt sunny
Dallas	67	43	pt sunny	Lubbock	66	43	sunny	Weatherford	67	40	pt sunny
Del Rio	74	53	sunny	Lufkin	67	42	pt sunny	Wichita Falls	66	41	mst sunny

National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	59	41	rain	Houston	71	49	mst sunny	Phoenix	90	63	mst sunny
Boston	54	52	rain	Los Angeles	72	54	pt sunny	San Francisco	60	47	windy
Chicago	50	36	pt sunny	Miami	81	64	t-storm	Seattle	58	45	rain
Dallas	67	43	pt sunny	Minneapolis	61	40	sunny	St. Louis	56	37	pt sunny
Denver	66	42	mst sunny	New York	58	52	rain	Washington, DC	64	50	t-storm

Moon Phases

Last	New	First	Full
Apr 12	Apr 19	Apr 27	May 4

UV Index

Tue 4/13	Wed 4/14	Thu 4/15
High	High	High

The UV Index is measured on a 0 - 11 number scale, with a higher UV Index showing the need for greater skin protection. 0 — 11

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APR 12 2004

More private guards are providing security in Iraq

MOYOCK, N.C. (AP) — A dark sport utility vehicle threads down a narrow street as the sound of gunfire zings from buildings on the left. The vehicle stalls, and its occupants slide out, firing blanks at their attackers as they scramble for an alley.

The paramilitary exercise provides training for the real warfare of Iraq — but this is no military boot camp.

At Blackwater USA's paramilitary training camp, private security guards prepare to work in Iraq, where they serve as commando teams, give strategic advice, even operate a military's supply lines — all for a price.

The scene from the training camp was eerily echoed weeks later, when three former Army Rangers and a former Navy SEAL employed by Blackwater USA's security consulting subsidiary were killed in Fallujah.

The men were providing security for food deliveries on March 31 when their vehicle was hit by rocket-propelled grenades and gunfire. Their charred, mutilated bodies were dragged through the streets.

A company official said Friday that the men may have been lured into an ambush by Iraqi civil defense workers.

Armed protection teams like the Blackwater group, which was working under a contract with the Coalition Provisional Authority, are the tip of an industry with annual revenues of $100 billion worldwide, said Peter W. Singer, a fellow at the Brookings Institution and author of "Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry."

On Saturday, television footage showed insurgents holding prisoner an American civilian, Thomas Hamill, who works for a division of Halliburton, according to his wife. Hamill wore what appeared to be a light flak jacket of the sort worn by private security guards.

Experts say even the grisly news photos of the Fallujah attack are unlikely to deter people eager to collect some of the estimated $1 billion being spent on private security in Iraq.

The U.S. occupation is "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for them to make big bucks," said Daniel Biran, a former Israeli special forces soldier who is associate managing director for security practice at Boston's Citigate Global Intelligence.

The pay for private workers in dangerous places like Iraq is generous. Experienced people can make $1,000 a day, according to Singer. The first $120,000 earned by Americans working in Iraq is tax-free, Murray said.

And if things get too hairy, private workers — unlike soldiers — can quit.

In comparison, a Green Beret master sergeant with 20 years of service and getting various allowances may earn $67,000 annually, said Ken McGraw, a spokesman for the U.S. Special Operations Command in Tampa, Fla.

Jeff Murray, founder of Murray & Associates in Fayetteville, recently spent two months in Iraq scouting security needs for a British company.

"I would go back, yes," said Murray, a 51-year-old former Army captain. "And I'm actively seeking other clients to represent."

About 15,000 civilians are working for private defense contractors in Iraq, feeding the approximately 135,000 U.S. troops, fueling vehicles and training Iraqi police. An exact figure for the ones who provide armed security is not known.

Blackwater, founded in 1998 by a trio of former Navy SEALs, is considered a top company in the private defense field. It has roughly 450 armed specialists in Iraq, most former U.S. special operations troops and police SWAT team members. Its workers guard people such as Paul Bremer, the top U.S. civilian administrator in Iraq.

Blackwater USA's headquarters is on 6,000 acres at the edge of the Great Dismal Swamp in northeastern North Carolina. The complex has firing ranges and even its own dirt landing strip where pilots can practice reaching and leaving trouble spots. Kennels hold dogs in training for security work.

About 50,000 people have been given firearms or small-group tactics training here, after their backgrounds are thoroughly checked.

Trainees come from around the world. A Chilean team worked out on one recent day. They were preceded at the training site by a Greek anti-terrorism squad and a presidential protection detail from Colombia.

Blackwater is privately held, and declined to disclose its revenues. But its government contracts include training thousands of sailors each year.

Privatization advocates say outsourcing security makes financial sense for the government given that it takes 18 months and costs about $250,000 to train an entry-level Green Beret, while an outsourced security operative can be hired when needed.

Singer, however, says the ranks of corporate warriors are swelling because they are politically more palatable than increasing military force strength, he said.

Oil Patch News

Scurry County

Parallel Petroleum will drill the No. 130-1 McLaughlin in the Diamond M field, 11 miles west of Snyder. Planned for a depth of 6,580 feet, location is in Section 197, Block 97, H&TC survey.

Dr. Gott

By Peter Gott, M.D.



IBS not usually cured with yogurt

DEAR DR. GOTT: My husband was diagnosed with irritable bowel syndrome several years ago. After trying several diets and over-the-counter remedies (to no avail), he learned about yogurt; this virtually stopped his symptoms. One 8-ounce container a day did the trick. Perhaps this will help some of your readers with the same problem.

DEAR READER: The symptoms of IBS — constipation and/or diarrhea, gas and cycles of abdominal discomfort — are often difficult to treat. They may respond to dietary modifications (avoidance of foods that exacerbate the problem) and over-the-counter products such as Metamucil, Fibercon and others.

If harmless lactobacilli (the bacteria that form yogurt from milk) are effective in controlling your husband's symptoms, fine. This therapy is safe, inexpensive and may be appropriate for some patients with irritable bowel syndrome.

However, it is not generally helpful for the majority of IBS patients, for whom dietary restrictions may be useless. Newer medication such as Zelnorm may be more effective.

Therefore, while I support your husband's program and encourage him to continue it, other IBS sufferers may wish to consult their doctors to explore other options.

Therefore, I am sending you a free copy of my completely revised and updated Health Report "Irritable Bowel Syndrome." Other readers who would like a copy should send a long, self-addressed, stamped envelope and $2 to Newsletter, P.O. Box 167, Wickliffe, OH 44092. Be sure to mention the title.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I have a cracking in my jaw and headaches. My doctor has diagnosed TMJ syndrome. Is there a cure for this?

DEAR READER: The temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is the hinge that connects the jaw to the skull. Ordinarily, it opens and closes silently and painlessly. However, in some people, the TMJ may be slightly displaced during movement. This can result from injury, clenching and grinding the teeth at night, or opening the jaw too wide, as during eating or singing. In many cases, no cause can be discovered.

This TMJ displacement often leads to a clicking sound and pain when the jaw is opened. Eventually, this malfunction can cause headache, a common condition known as TMJ dysfunction.

Although the majority of people do not experience loud cracking or severe pain, other patients are quite bothered by this abnormality. In such instances, treatment is appropriate.

The first level of therapy is a bite plate, a prosthetic device made by dentists that prevents damage to the jaws and teeth in people who clench their teeth at night. If this is not effective, various types of oral surgery on the TMJ may be required.

Your doctor may be correct that you have TMJ dysfunction. Nonetheless, you should verify this with your dentist, who can administer treatment.

If readers would like to contact Dr. Gott, they may write him through your newspaper or send their mail directly to Dr. Gott c/o United Media, 200 Madison Ave., 4th fl., New York, NY 10016.

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Response to Gov. Perry's education plan lukewarn

AUSTIN (AP) — After debuting his long-awaited school finance plan, Gov. Rick Perry received a lukewarm reception from a potential key ally: state business leaders.

While business leaders have applauded Perry for making the only formal proposal since the regular legislative session, they are slow to endorse an integral part of the proposal, a "constitutionally linked" property tax.

Final passage of the plan in the Republican-controlled Legislature remains uncertain.

"We're studying it, we are looking at the constitutional linkage that Governor Perry is proposing," said Jeff Clark, state director of the National Federation of Independent Business.

Bill Hammond, president of the state's largest business group, has signed a letter opposing the idea of splitting business and residential property taxes, but on Thursday issued a statement endorsing other aspects of Perry's plan.

"We are excited to work with the Governor and the Texas Legislature to develop an equitable plan for all Texans," said Hammond, president of Texas Association of Business. Hammond praised Perry's proposal to raise additional money for public schools by legalizing state-taxed video lottery terminals at racetracks.

Perry said he intends to call lawmakers back for a special legislative session this month, but has yet to set a date.

Perry is proposing that businesses and homeowners be charged different rates, both lower than the current $1.50 cap per $100 in appraised land value. Under his plan, taxes on homeowners, capped at $1.25, would continue to be levied by school districts. Businesses, however, would be taxed $1.40 by the state.

Both would be linked to ensure that businesses are taxed in proportion to residential property owners.

"Our fear always has been with a split-tax roll, that one moves up more quickly than the other," Clark said.



"I've Got Good News!"– Bill Maddox

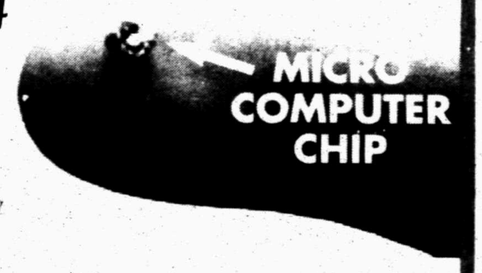
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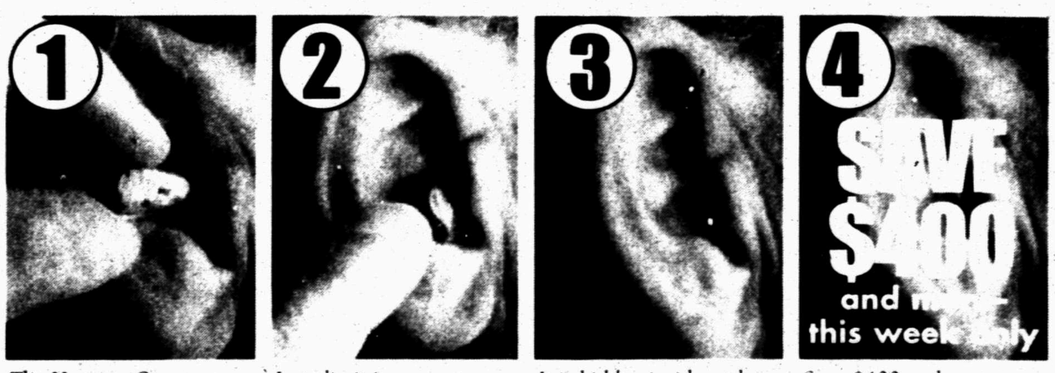
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