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THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

MONDAY

Dec. 16, 2002
Vol. 54 No. 197
10 Pages 50¢

Home of Sharon Strong

For all county-owned facilities...

Commissioners adopt new ball field rules

By Brian Brisendine
SDN Staff Writer

Scurry County commissioners' court this morning gave approval to county parks head Scott Crenwelge to present a contract to Snyder ISD for use of the baseball and softball fields.

The contract, Crenwelge said, "puts in writing, what we've been doing for several years."

The contract calls for SISD to pay half the cost of over-seeding, verti-cutting and fertilizing, as well as half the cost of water and sewer during baseball and softball seasons.

The local school district must also agree to pay $5,000 toward contract labor salary for upkeep on Moffett Field.

Precinct 3 commissioner Howard Limmer questioned how the use of concession stands at the ballparks could affect the county's pending talks with Coca-Cola.

Crenwelge said any entity that operates a county concession stand must agree to use Coca-Cola products if the county approves a relationship with the soft drink vendor.

The court also approved regulations for the county's parks and recreational facilities.

The regulations deal mainly with the booking and use of county facilities.

Crenwelge said private entities often book ball fields to hold tournaments, then charge participants. The new regulations will require the park department's approval to do so.

Also included in the regulations is an $850 fine for turning the lights on at the ballparks before 8:30 p.m. The amount is the same as what the county is charged by its electric provider if the lights are on before necessary.

Crenwelge said the fine would be imposed on the person or organization using the field and should help reduce utility costs.

A resignation letter from coliseum foreman Whit Parks also was presented for information. Crenwelge said a replacement would be sought in January.

In other business, the court accepted resignations from two members of the Child Welfare Board.

Board members Dennis Ball and Bill Dickinson submitted resignations citing "differences of opinion with a recent attorney general ruling," according to County Judge Ricky Fritz.

The recent AG ruling opened the Child Welfare Board's meetings to the public. The judge said Ball and Dickinson "both disagreed with the ruling and don't want to participate in an open meeting dealing with children."

Fritz said both were good board members and replacements would be considered after the new year.

No action was taken on a request by the board to remove a board member for lack of participation. "I feel like that is an action the board itself should take on, not the court," Fritz said.

The court unanimously accepted a proclamation declaring Wednesday as "Shirley Fritz Day" in Scurry County.

Fritz is retiring as executive director for Snyder Day Care Center and Scurry Community Services after 31 years.

Precinct 4 commissioner Chloanne Lindsey thanked Mrs. Fritz "for all of her hard work for the community over the years."

The court also heard a report from director Charlene Akers on activities at Scurry County Museum.

Akers told the court of a recent $100,000 matching grant received from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The grant, Akers said, will not only benefit the museum financially, but provide a "first step in getting significant endowment funds in the future."

Akers also reported the success of this summer's motorcycle exhibit and said more than 1,400 out of town visitors viewed the temporary display.

County holidays for 2003 were approved with little discussion, as was the investment policy. County Treasurer Nelda Colvin said there are no changes in the policy.

The court also voted to go out for bids on fuel, oil and grease, with the bids to be opened and considered at the court's next meeting Jan. 6.

Twenty-three line item transfers were approved, as were six budget amendments, including one for $55,263.60 for the purchase of 130 acres at Winston Field.

Fritz presided over the one-hour meeting and commissioners present were Limmer, Lindsey, Ralph Trevey and Roy Idom.

GOODFELLOWS — Henry Valdez places food in the trunk of a local family's car Saturday as the Snyder Goodfellows worked to distribute the donated food at Scurry County Coliseum. Some 190 familes received assistance from the Goodfellows Saturday. (SDN Staff Photo)

Man scaling Houston skyscraper jumps, dies

HOUSTON (AP) — A man scaling the southwest corner of one of Houston's best-known skyscrapers jumped about 30 stories to his death this morning.

The man was about halfway up the 901-foot, 64-story Williams Tower when he leapt about 7:45 a.m., Houston Fire Department spokesman Jay Evans said.

Police recovered a driver's license and a note containing a message of a political nature. Authorities declined to reveal the man's identity or details of the note, other than to say it did not mention plans to jump.

"He did not have any of the normal professional equipment you'd normally see on someone trying to climb a building," Evans said. He said there was no immediate sign of any harnesses, belts or suction cups.

The man was wearing a powder bag on his waist, using it to apply rosin to his hands, and also employed some sort of handheld pick on the window molding as he moved higher.

Police received the first call about the climber at 6:53 a.m. and witnesses said he appeared to spring from the black Galleria-area glass tower. Evans said the man somehow reached the outside of the building from the 10th floor.

Police tried to talk to the man from an open window a few floors below as he continued to ascend.

Witness Pat McGarey, a tower worker, said the man was yelling or singing and periodically waved his hands before taking an extended pause.

"It clearly looked like he jumped as opposed to falling," McGarey said.

Rescue personnel and a crowd of onlookers gathered below, television helicopters hovered above and motorists from the West Loop freeway, the busiest in Texas, all had a view of the black-clad man as he climbed, then jumped.

Evans said building climbers in Houston typically have reached the top or were rescued or apprehended beforehand.

"We've been very fortunate here in Houston, with many tall buildings," Evans said.

The Art Deco-inspired skyscraper was formerly known as the Transco Tower was built in 1983 and is known for the floodlight beacon at it's top. It was designed by famed architect Philip Johnson.

Strike averted...

New Yorkers scuttle plans for alternate modes of transportation

NEW YORK (AP) — Millions of New Yorkers dropped their emergency plans and took their usual buses and subways to work today as the union representing transit workers suspended its strike threat and kept negotiating.

The union and transit agency are at odds over pay raises, health benefits and disciplinary and sick leave policies. The union's original strike deadline of 12:01 a.m. passed without a walkout — at least temporarily averting a strike that could paralyze the nation's largest city during the busy holiday season.

The continued talks meant Chris Cavanagh didn't have to hike to his Brooklyn office from lower Manhattan, where a bus takes him from his home in Hazlett, N.J.

"I would have walked across the Brooklyn Bridge," Cavanagh said of the 1.13-mile span over the East River. "Everyone says it's a beautiful waik. I was going to find out."

Transport Workers Union chief Roger Toussaint and Metropolitan Transportation Authority negotiator Gary Dellaverson continued talks into the early morning. The two men took a break around 4 a.m. while lower-level talks continued and then they resumed negotiations, focusing on the issue of wages.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg has said a strike — which would violate state law — could cost the city up to $350 million a day in police overtime costs and lost business and taxes. Others warn a strike would create chaos in the streets, stranding travelers and endangering lives.

The union said the two sides were making progress on noneconomic issues, but not on wages — potentially a significant obstacle to a settlement. Management is offering no raise in the first year of the contract.

"We stopped the clock. But despite this measure of good faith, management continues to insist on a zero (raise) in the first year of your contract," Toussaint said in a recorded message to union members today.

The extension of talks meant the New Yorkers who depend on the nation's largest mass transit system were spared an enormous headache — at least temporarily. City buses and subways provide 7 million rides a day.

"I thought they would keep talking. It makes no sense to shut down the city at this time of year," said Kevin Godfrey, a token booth operator, after learning that a strike wasn't ordered after the deadline passed.

Brian Ellis, who works overnight as a video editor for Fox News, said a strike would have forced him to remain at his office for hours after his shift ended just so he could catch a special bus home to Brooklyn.

"It would have been really horrible," Ellis said today.

The union's 34,000 members had authorized their leaders to call a strike any time after the old contract expired.

Earlier Sunday, Bloomberg warned New Yorkers to plan for a strike and declared "we are all in this together." Gov. George Pataki rejected demands that he intervene, saying "There is no person capable of riding in on a white horse with a bag of money to resolve this contract."

GOOD DEED – Snyder Wheels Car Club held a toy drive for the local Christmas for Kids program Saturday at the Sonic. The group collected a pickup full of toys and $126 in cash. Club members shown from left are James Delarosa, Dakota Carroll, Wayne Woodward, Robbie Jamison, Robbie Glasscock, Charlie Wilson, Judy Martin, Jim Edmonds and David Martinez. (Contributed Photo)

ASK US

Q—What edition of Texas Monthly magazine had a story in it about Lorber Industries?
A—November 1998.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Jo Cotton...

...is director of volunteers for Cogdell Memorial Hospital Auxiliary. She has lived in Snyder 52 years and has two daughters, Dorothy Lloyd of Snyder and Denise Ellard of San Antonio; four grandchildren and seven great-grandchidren. She enjoys reading and computer games.

TODAY'S THOUGHT

Every scholar is surrounded by wiser men than he.
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

DEC 16 2002

events

WHAT'S UP?

ONGOINGS

Angel project

The angel project done for Carole Haynes is a continuing effort and anyone who has a decorated angel may drop it off at Stanfield Elementary.

Community Services raffle

Scurry County Community Services is holding a drawing for a $75 gift certificate to United and $75 to Wal-Mart. Tickets are $1 and all proceeds will be used to buy Christmas gifts for children.

Support groups

Adult family violence support group and children's family violence support group meets at 6:30 p.m. every Monday at Gateway Family Service. For information call 573-1822.

Child welfare board

A meeting of the Scurry County child welfare board will be held at 7 tonight in the Texas Department of Human Services conference room, 3409 Snyder Shopping Center.

Bible study tapes

Bible videos air each week on Channel 2. To be shown at 7 this evening is "A Conversation with Byron Nelson," followed by "Christians Use of the Old Testament."

Softball board meeting

The Snyder Girls Softball Association will have a board meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the BP Pipeline office at 2311 Ave. K.

Mesquite Country Emmaus celebration

Mesquite Country Emmaus' annual candlelight Christmas celebration will be at 7 p.m. Tuesday at The Word is Life Deliverance Church, 312 Coliseum Dr. Babe chicks meet at 6 p.m.

Retirement reception

A retirement reception for Shirley Fritz will be held from 2-5 p.m. Wednesday at Snyder Day Care.

Retirement reception

There will be a retirement reception for Mary Brandon and Julia Juarez at East Elementary from 2:30-3:30 p.m. on Thursday in Room 13.

FBC services televised

First Baptist Church services are televised on channel 2 at 3 p.m. each Thursday.

Christmas Cantata

Northside Baptist Church's Christmas Cantata will be presented at 11 a.m. Sunday. The church is located at 1909 16th St. For transportation, call 573-7105.

Church of God

Ira Church of God's young adults are taking orders for smoked turkeys, 11-12 pounds. To order call 573-8148.

Windbreak trees

Orders for windbreak trees and drip irrigation are being taken at the Upper Colorado Soil and Water Conservation office through Jan. 31. The office is located in the Scurry County USDA office complex at 5309 Big Spring Highway. Call 573-6317, ext. 2.

SHS booster club fund raiser

The SHS drama booster club is collecting old cell phones and used printer cartridges for recycling. Drop off at the sheriff's office. For more information, call Jan Scott at 573-8027.

Choir trip planned

SHS choirs are also planning a trip to Boston on Easter weekend, April 17-21. There are six available positions for anyone who wants to make the trip. For more information, call Ronda Haire, choir director, at 573-6301.

Trinity Bible study

A 10-week study, "Bad Girls of the Bible," begins Wednesday, Jan. 8, at Trinity United Methodist Church. Melissa Petty will lead the study and all women are invited to attend. To order a book or for more information call 573-3988.

WTC testing dates

Western Texas College's testing dates for LVN ASSET COMPASS QUICKTASP include Jan. 4, 12:30 p.m.; Jan. 7, 9 a.m.,1:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.; Jan. 21, 1:30 p.m.; and Jan. 28, 1:30 p.m. For more information, contact the counseling office at 573-8511 ext. 313.

Tigers Lair yearbook

Orders for 2002 Tigers Lair yearbooks are still being taken. The cost is $50 with additional options available. Call 574-6138 for information.

Cancer treatment transportation

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

N.Y. murder suspect arrested in Gainesville

GAINESVILLE (AP) — Police arrested a New York murder suspect at a Gainesville motel after law enforcement officers followed a trail of several days' activity on the victim's bank account.

New York state police said Nicole M. Hicks, 36, had not been seen for several days before her body was found Friday in her apartment in Endwell, N.Y., 65 miles south of Syracuse. The Broome Community College student was strangled with a garrote, officials said.

John A. Leonard, 37, lived at her residence and had not been seen since today, New York authorities said.

Significant activity on Hicks' bank account in the past week led police south along interstate corridors to Gainesville, police said. Leonard, who was seen driving Hicks' car, was taken into custody on Saturday by Gainesville police, authorities said.

Leonard was charged at 4:30 a.m. Sunday as a fugitive from justice with an underlying charge of second-degree murder, officials said. He was booked into the Cooke County Jail in Gainesville, pending extradition.

Video of party in bad taste

HOUSTON (AP) — Skits and jokes by a few former Enron executives at a party six years ago were funny then, but now border on bad taste in light of the events of the past year.

A videotape of a January 1997 going-away party for former Enron President Rich Kinder features nearly half an hour of absurd skits, songs and testimonials by company executives and prominent Houstonians, the Houston Chronicle reported .

The collection is all meant in good fun, but some of the comments are ironic in the current climate of corporate scandal.

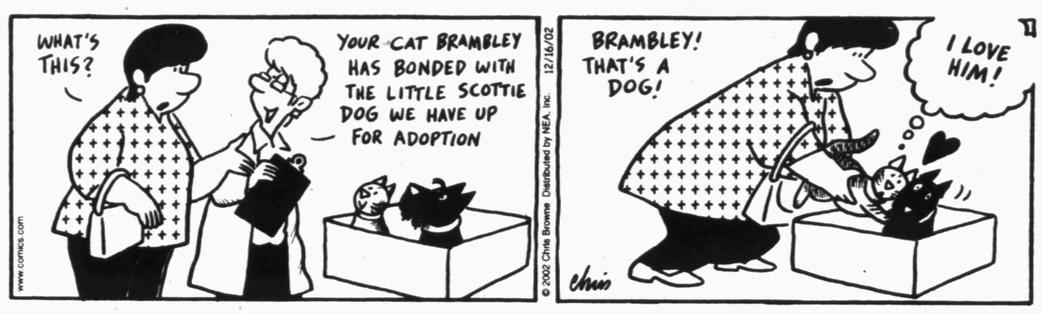
In one skit, former administrative executive Peggy Menchaca played the part of Kinder as he received a budget report from then-President Jeff Skilling, who played himself, and financial planning executiveTod Lindholm.

When the pretend Kinder expressed doubt that Skilling can pull off 600 percent revenue growth for the coming year, Skilling revealed how it could be done.

"We're going to move from mark-to-market accounting to something I call HFV, or hypothetical future value accounting," Skilling joked as he read from a script.

Duncan's Christmas

Duncan's Christmas



Old bug causing new headaches in Texas

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Outbreaks of a common skin infection are becoming more common and occasionally life-threatening in Texas as the bacteria develop resistance to common antibiotics, officials say.

It's called methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA — also known as a "staph" infection.

Outbreaks of the bacterial infection have popped up locally and across the country, including the athletic teams of several Texas schools.

"There seem to be outbreaks in schools, gyms and contact sports. Why there are so many more in Texas, I can't tell you," said Dr. Sheldon Kaplan, professor of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and chief of infectious diseases at Texas Children's Hospital.

Roger Sanchez, an epidemiologist at the Metropolitan Health District, has asked infectious disease specialists to work with local schools to try to prevent outbreaks.

"Me, not being in the locker room — I don't know what is spreading this," Sanchez said. "We need to talk to coaches and trainers and explain what this is and how they can help curtail the spread of the disease."

In September, Smithson Valley High School in Spring Branch had 22 cases of deep skin infections caused by the bacteria, and two of those cases were bacteria resistant to the usual antibiotics, said Sharon Wright, the nurse supervisor for the Comal School District.

The infection spread among athletes and faculty until the local health department ordered that the school's locker room be disinfected. No new cases have occurred since then, officials said.

The infection also strikes non-athletes.

A 58-year-old grandmother noticed two small marks on her hip that she thought were insect bites. They itched, but didn't hurt, and she forgot about them until three days later when her daughter told her: "Mom, that looks bad. It's black."

A diabetic, she hurried to her doctor the same day and was found to have a temperature of 102 degrees.

Brighton's 10 Days of Christmas!

December 15th to December 24th

Please join us to celebrate Brighton's 10 Days of Christmas!

Register to win in our 10 daily Brighton drawings.

Dec. 15th win a Key Fob.
Dec. 16th win a pair of Earrings.
Dec. 17th win a Night Light.
Dec. 18th win a Bracelet.
Dec. 19th win a Clock.
Dec. 20th win a Necklace.
Dec. 21st win a Belt.
Dec. 22nd win Sunglasses.
Dec. 23rd win a Watch.
Dec. 24th win a Wallet.

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Brighton.

Date Book

Monday, Dec. 16, 2002

Today is the 350th day of 2002 and the 86th day of fall.

TODAY'S HISTORY: On this day in 1773, a band of Massachusetts colonists dressed up as Mohawk Indians and boarded three British tea ships. During the midnight raid, which has since been called the Boston Tea Party, the colonists dumped 342 chests of tea to protest the British tax on tea imported to the colonies.

On this day in 1835, a fire destroyed 530 buildings in New York City.

On this day in 1944, the Battle of the Bulge began as German forces launched a surprise attack on the Allies.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: Jane Austen (1775-1817), writer; George Santayana (1863-1952), philosopher; Sir Noel Coward (1899-1973), playwright and actor; Margaret Mead (1901-1978), anthropologist; Arthur C. Clarke (1917-), writer, is 85.

TODAY'S SPORTS: On this day in 1973, in a game between the Buffalo Bills and the New York Jets, O.J. Simpson became the first NFL athlete to rush for more than 2,000 yards in a single season.

TODAY'S QUOTE: "It may be that our role on the planet is not to worship God — but to create him." — Arthur C. Clarke

TODAY'S MOON: Between first quarter (Dec. 11) and full moon (Dec. 19).

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events

LOTTO TEXAS™
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RESULTS

Saturday's Lottery Numbers
Lotto Texas

AUSTIN (AP) — One ticket correctly matched all six numbers drawn Saturday night for the twice-weekly Lotto Texas game, state lottery officials said.

The ticket was worth an estimated $4 million.

The ticket was sold in: Watauga

The numbers drawn Saturday night from a field of 54 were: 3-17-21-27-31-40.

Wednesday night's drawing will be worth an estimated $4 million.

Pick 3
(Day) 5-8-5
(Night) 0-4-6
Cash Five
1-2-5-23-28

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Dear Abby

By Abigail Van Buren

In-laws' attempt at Baptism has woman wholly confused

DEAR ABBY: I am happily married to a man with a strong Catholic upbringing. I was raised without any religious ties, and therefore I was never baptized. This has never bothered me.

Since I do not believe in baptism, I made a conscious decision not to be baptized. This has caused considerable concern for my husband's parents, who are convinced I'll end up in hell.

A few weeks ago as I entered my in-laws' home, they surprised me by sprinkling holy water on me and mumbling a few words. When I described the incident to some friends, they informed me that I have now been baptized — whether I like it or not. Abby, is this possible? — **WHAT'S GOING ON IN ST. PAUL**

DEAR WHAT'S: No, it isn't. According to Father Greg Coiro, a Catholic priest, once a person is past the age of 7 — he referred to it as "the age of reason" — the decision to be baptized must be a conscious one. The only exception to that would be a "conditional baptism" for someone who is in a coma.

So, you weren't baptized. You were only moistened.

**

DEAR ABBY: A few years back, you published a poem that asked the question, "What do you want for Christmas?" The answer was, "Nothing!" I sent it to family members that year, but have since lost it. Please print it again. — **"OLD" FAN IN ILLINOIS**

DEAR "OLD": I'm happy to. The verse was written by two "Longtime Readers in Missouri" to help senior citizens tell their families and friends what they want — and what they don't want — for Christmas. **Read on:**

So many of you asked us (since Yuletide's drawing near)

"What do you want for Christmas? What can we give this year?"

If we say, "We want nothing!" you buy something anyway,

So here's a list of what we'd like; believe now what we say:

Pajamas for a little child, food to feed the poor.

Blankets for a shelter, and we ask but little more — Perform good deeds and let us know,

Or volunteer your time.

These last are worth a fortune,

And they needn't cost a dime.

We have too many things now, vases, candles, tapes and clocks.

We have our fill of garments, ties, underwear and socks.

Candy is too fattening, crossword books we've more than 20.

We don't need trays or plates or cups,

And knickknacks we have plenty.

We've no walls to hang more pictures;

We have books we've not yet read;

So please take what you'd spend on us

And help the poor instead!

Just send a Christmas card to us and tell us what you've done;

We'll open them on Christmas Eve and read them one by one.

It won't cost as much for postage as a package sent would do,

You'll need no wrapping paper, ribbons, ink or glue.

And we'll thank God you listened to what we had to say,

So we'll be the instruments to help someone this way.

**

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

**

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

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UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Four boys die after icy plunge into river

LAWRENCE, Mass. (AP) — One of three boys who survived an icy plunge into the Merrimack River as four friends drowned said today he prayed God would rescue him.

Ten-year-old Jaycob Morales also described the horrifying moment when 11-year-old friend William Rodriguez slipped away from him in the ice-covered river.

"I was scared and cold, but I was hoping that God would get me out of this mess," he said on NBC's "Today" show.

Another survivor, 9-year-old Francis Spraus, sobbed when asked on the "Today" show about the terrifying moments when his friends fell through the ice.

"I thank God that God gave me another life," he said through tears.

Besides William, the others who died Saturday were Christopher Casado, 7, Victor Baez, 9, and 8-year-old Mackendy Constant.

On the "Today" show, Jaycob said William went out onto the ice as the boys were returning from the Lawrence Boys and Girls Club. Jaycob said Ivan Casado, Christopher's 9-year-old brother, warned William against going out too far because the ice was thin, only 1 to 2 inches thick.

Jaycob said he saw William fall through the ice.

"I went to go help him out and I fell in," he said.

"William — I was helping him — and then when I went to go help little Victor ... Ivan started screaming William's name, and William just drowned," he said.

Jaycob said Mackendy took off his coat and tried to pass it to the boys to pull them out. "Then when they tried to pull us out, everybody fell into the water," he said.

Ivan, closest to shore in waist-deep water, scrambled up the bank and went for help. He found a neighbor, Jacques Fournier, 63, who called emergency personnel and then tried rescuing them with a rope that proved to be too short.

"My legs started to get stiff and I had a freezing headache," Francis told the Eagle-Tribune of Lawrence. "I was hanging on to Christopher but he started to slip under. I tried holding on to his hand, but it was like he let go."

The boys who died were trapped under the ice for at least 10 minutes, and were unconscious when they were recovered, Police Chief John J. Romero said. They were about 25 feet from shore in water up to 8 feet deep, he said.

Mayor Michael J. Sullivan was expected to announce details of a trust fund for the families. Grief counselors were being sent to city schools to help students.

On Sunday, mourners placed candles bearing the children's names, religious tokens, flowers and toys on the muddy berm overlooking the river in this working class city of 72,000 about 25 miles north of Boston.

"A lot of us are going to miss those kids," Manuel Reyes, 14, said as he stared at the river that had claimed his basketball buddies.

"We're feeling a lot of pain but we're proud of them," said Eusebio Alicea, 36, the Casado brothers' uncle. "We consider them little heroes."

Body found identified as missing boy

CHANNAHON, Ill. (AP) — The body of a 3-year-old boy found Sunday in the Des Plaines River is the son of a man arrested in Florida on suspicion of killing his girlfriend and kidnapping his children from his ex-wife, police said.

The boy's body was discovered by two fishermen after it washed ashore just south of Joliet. Authorities said Joshua Gleeson was identified through dental records and an autopsy found he had been shot twice in the head with a small-caliber weapon.

A task force has been investigating the disappearance of the boy and his 5-year-old sister, Ashley, who haven't been seen since Nov. 22. Searchers planned to look for the girl today in the area where the boy was found.

Patrick Gleeson, 48, was arrested Dec. 8 as he slept in his van in Daytona Beach, Fla., and charged in the death of his girlfriend. The body of Dena Fuglseth, 43, was found Nov. 29 in the cellar of their house near Holland, Mich.

Police said he also failed to return the children to his ex-wife, Edna Smith of Dwight, who had legal custody. The children were reported missing Nov. 25.

Judge bans homemade videos from trial

VENTURA, Calif. (AP) — Attorneys for an heir to the Max Factor cosmetics fortune will not be allowed to introduce homemade videos of the 38-year-old having sex with a woman he allegedly raped, a judge ruled.

Attorney Roger Jon Diamond had argued that the videotapes proved Andrew Luster, a great-grandson of the cosmetics magnate, was an aspiring pornography producer who taped sexual encounters with consenting women.

Bridge

By Phillip Alder

North 12-16-02
♠ A J 10 7 2
♥ A 9 3
♦ 3
♣ A Q 7 5

West
♠ Q 8 6 4 3
♥ Q J 10
♦ A 7
♣ J 10 4

East
♠ K 9
♥ 4 2
♦ K 10 9 8 4
♣ 8 6 3 2

South
♠ 5
♥ K 8 7 6 5
♦ Q J 6 5 2
♣ K 9

Dealer: East
Vulnerable: North-South

South	West	North	East
			Pass
Pass	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	All pass

Opening lead: ♥ Q

Jack led poorly and played well on this deal from the final.

At the other table, the Jack West led the diamond ace, an inferior choice when one knows from the auction that dummy has at most a singleton. After this, WBridge 5 had no trouble winning 10 tricks via one spade, four hearts, three clubs and two diamond ruffs in the dummy.

WBridge 5 West found the trump lead. However, Jack timed the play well. After winning with dummy's heart ace, declarer played a diamond to the jack and ace. Back in with the heart king, Jack cashed the club king, played a spade to the ace, ruffed a spade, took dummy's ace-queen of clubs (discarding a diamond from hand), trumped another spade, and ruffed a diamond. That was 10 tricks down, nine in and one out. Dummy, on lead, retained the jack-10 of spades and club seven. West was known to have the queen-eight of spades and one other card.

A human would ruff a spade in hand for the 10th trick. But Jack went for the crowd-pleasing play, ruffing dummy's last club. West overruffed, but after cashing the spade queen, had to concede the last trick to dummy's spade jack.

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Monday, Dec. 16, 2002

Computers close in score and standard

By Phillip Alder

Computer bridge championships, like the one held in Montreal last August, are the equivalent of a human and her or his three clones playing. All four players on a team "think" identically.

The winning program was Jack, written by Dutchman Hans Kuijf. It won the final by the comfortable(!) margin of one point over WBridge 5, the product of Frenchman Yves Costel.

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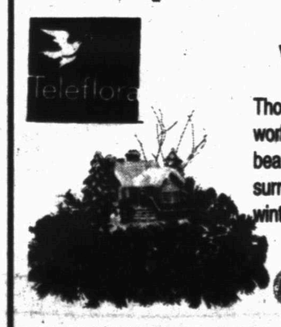

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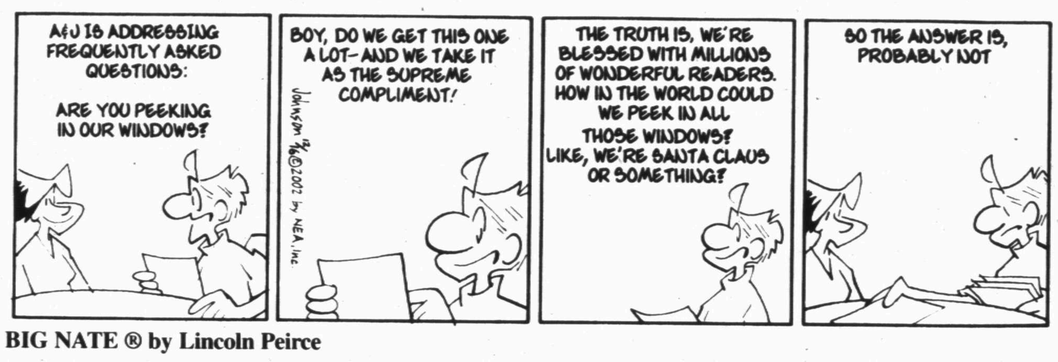

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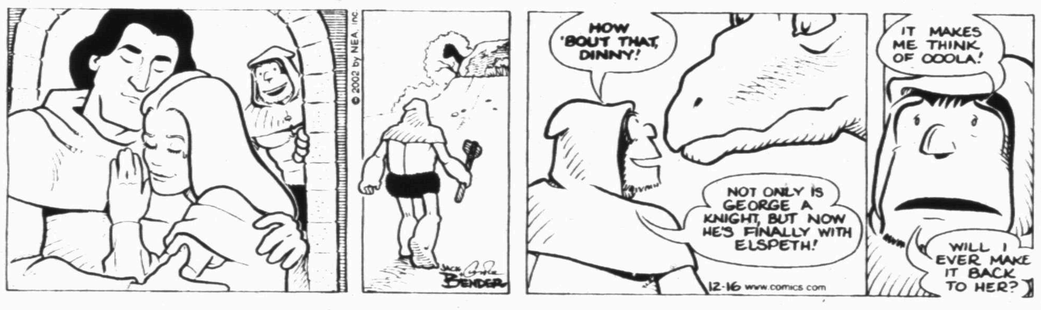

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"You were sleepwalking again last night."

KIT 'N' CARLYLE ® by Larry Wright

NEA Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1 Crowd
4 Tea holder
7 Cake alternative
10 Actor — Wallach
11 Kitchen tool
13 Attorney's deg.
14 Harden
15 Sharpshooter — Oakley
16 "Aladdin" prince
17 1950s records
19 Wash off
21 Med. personnel
22 Grayish-brown
23 Frizzy hairdos
26 Guile
30 Rider's whip
31 Ear of corn
32 Not pro
33 Straw item
34 Lily, to Pierre
35 Food list
36 Mayan ruins locale
39 Veinlike deposits
40 Gob of gum
41 Mont. neighbor
42 Barkin or DeGeneres
45 Eye parts
48 Manner
49 Handed over
51 Ballpark official
53 Many millennia
54 Street talk
55 Regret
56 Worker's ID
57 Annapolis grad
58 Hall-of-Famer Mel —

DOWN

1 Alcott girl
2 Margarine
3 Beak
4 Hollow stems
5 Tall vases
6 Architect I.M. —
7 Strategy
8 Misfortunes
9 Ms. Adams
11 Hurts
12 Summer TV fare
18 Hard candy
20 Motel of yore
22 Does film editing
23 "— -Breaky Heart"
24 Herr's wife
25 Campus grp.
26 Dime, e.g.
27 Sealed a deal
28 Fewer than one
29 Veldt grazers
31 Wearing clothes
35 Heifers' helios
37 Impress
38 Zingy flavors
39 Recumbent
41 Birdhouse occupants
42 Wool producers
43 Far East land
44 Gayle's sis
45 Lendl of tennis
46 Kind of dollar
47 Soot
50 Seine site
52 Stroke

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

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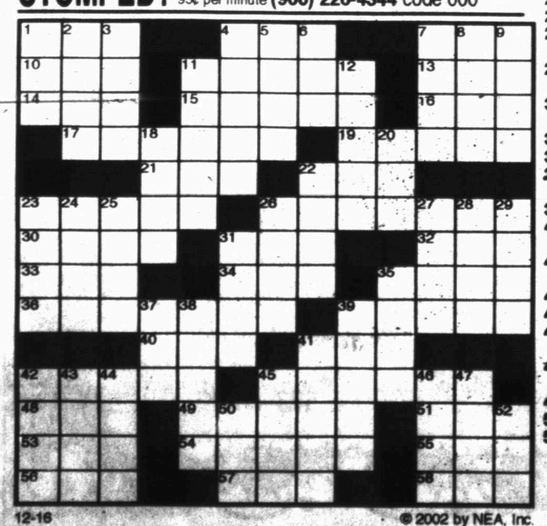

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Snyder Daily News Comics

DENNIS THE MENACE ® by Hank Ketcham

"THAT'S MARGARET. SHE'S BEEN GOOD ALL YEAR. THE PROBLEM IS, SHE KNOWS IT."

SPORTS

Lady Bulldogs win 10th straight, claim Highland tourney

HIGHLAND — The Lady Bulldogs claimed the Highland Hilltop Classic trophy Saturday, topping Roscoe, 40-39, in a close, intense championship tilt.

"It was tight the entire way," Head Coach Brent Parr said. "It was back and forth all night."

Ira (10-3) trailed by as many as 10 in the first half. The Lady Bulldogs tied the game at 19 with a few seconds left in the second quarter, before Roscoe hit a three as the horn sounded.

The teams traded the lead the whole second half, before Celeigh Sterling nailed two free throws at the end to give Ira the trophy.

Sterling took advantage of her trips to the free throw line, hitting all 11 free throws in recording a game-high 19 points.

"The girls are working hard and doing a good job," he said. "We need to keep it up through district."

Lindsey Wilson dropped in nine points from the post, and Amanda Calley hit a key three-pointer in the fourth quarter to give her five points in the contest.

Michelle Nettles hit three from the charity stripe, and Amber Sanchez and Brittany Dickerhoff both drilled a field goal for the Lady Bulldogs, who have now won 10 consecutive games.

The girls will host Ralls today, with tip off scheduled for 5 o'clock.

Bulldogs pounded in finals

HIGHLAND — The Ira Bulldogs picked the wrong game to not play well.

Ira (6-3) suffered a 71-42 pounding at the hands of Blackwell Saturday night in the championship game at the Highland Hilltop Classic, and Head Coach Randy Jones said the team struggled on both sides of the ball.

"We didn't play well and we didn't play good defense," he said. "We gave up 48 points in the first half, and you're not going to beat anyone doing that."

Jones said the Bulldogs never got into a rhythm offensively, adding that the players need to be more selective with their shots.

"We were out of sync all night," he said. "We were not patient. We have a ways to go."

Jake Barnes led the Bulldogs with 15 points, but Jones said the team did not get the ball to their big man enough.

"If we can be more selective, more patient and get the ball into Jake more, we'll be alright," he said. "All of those things are fixable. We just have to keep working."

Jess Wall posted 10 points, and Eric Dickerhoff 9 and Jeff Fine 8.

The Bulldogs host Ralls this evening at 6:30.

Sports Briefs

Baseball booster club

The baseball booster club will meet Wednesday night at 7 in the film room.

Harrison sets reception mark

CLEVELAND (AP) — Marvin Harrison set the NFL single-season record for receptions, catching nine passes in Indianapolis' win over the Cleveland Browns to break Herman Moore's mark of 123 set in 1995. Harrison now has 127 catches this season.

Palmer wins Heisman by huge margin

NEW YORK (AP) — Southern Cal quarterback Carson Palmer won the Heisman Trophy. He received 242 out of 811 first-place votes and 1,328 points overall — 233 more than Iowa quarterback Brad Banks.

Byrd beats Holyfield to the punch

ATLANTIC CITY (AP) — Chris Byrd exposed Evander Holyfield as an aging fighter, using his superior speed to frustrate the former champion over 12 rounds and deny him a chance to win a heavyweight title for the fifth time, the vacant IBF crown.

Winter meetings yielding deals

NASHVILLE (AP) — Edgardo Alfonzo signed with San Francisco and four trades sent Erubiel Durazo, Jeremy Giambi and Rey Ordonez to new teams.

A four-team deal sent Durazo from Arizona to Oakland, pitcher Elmer Dessens from Cincinnati to the Diamondbacks, shortstop Felipe Lopez from Toronto to the Reds and a player to be named — possibly minor league pitcher Jason Arnold — to the Blue Jays.

Lady Tigers crush Brady

WYLIE — The Lady Tigers finished up the Catclaw tournament in resounding fashion Saturday, destroying Brady, 54-26, to claim seventh-place in the tourney.

Zipporah Peoples got back on track, putting in 17 points, as Snyder (11-3) blasted out to a 24-9 halftime lead.

The ladies scored 30 in the second half of the runaway victory, with Hailey Putnam recording 10 and Erin Burleson banking in eight points.

Everyone got into the act for Snyder, as April Lollar scored six points and Sequoya Powell added four.

Sirena Medrano, Dara Chambers, Anna Henson and Desiree braziel all hit field goals for Snyder, who will take on Frenship at 6:30 Tuesday night at Scurry County Coliseum.

TOURNAMENT CHAMPS — The eighth grade girls Gold squad sports its medals from the Lamesa tourney. They are, clockwise from top left, Sydney Wright, Candace Chandler, Cheyene Roemisch, Katy Crenwelge, Terann Ragland, Jordan Stansell and Brianna Bernal. Kaitlyn Greenlee is not pictured. (Contributed Photo)

Beat D-City, 51-24...

Eighth grade Gold girls dominant in capturing Lamesa tourney crown

LAMESA — The eighth grade girls Gold team got 16 points and 14 rebounds from Jordan Stansell on its way to capturing the Lamesa tournament championship game over Denver City, 51-24.

Head Coach Canita Rhodes said the team had great continuity, as all the girls who dressed got in on the scoring action.

The girls pulled away with a 20-3 fourth quarter domination, as Terann Ragland and Katy Crenwelge each banked in 10 points for the champions.

Crenwelge had eight boards, and Candace Chandler pulled down seven, while scoring six points.

Brianna Bernal canned seven points and Sydney Wright dropped in a field goal for the girls, who stole 19 balls from Denver City.

The girls advanced to the championship tilt by beating Andrews, 39-22, and humbling Big Spring, 39-22.

The seventh grade Gold squad fell just shy of the trophy at Lamesa, falling to Denver City, 38-36.

The girls trailed by eight with less than two minutes to play in the game before rallying to tie the score at 30-30 at the end of regulation.

In the overtime, the lead changed hands four times before the junior high Mustangs got the last shot to take the win.

Audrey Jones led the way with 15 points and 13 boards, and Alex Urias added seven points and two assists.

Devin Davidson and Kelly Holdren scored six each, and Allison Sharrock added a field goal.

The seventh grade girls advanced to the championship game by crushing Big Spring, 45-25, in the semifinal game.

Jones was a wrecking crew, cleaning the glass for 15 boards and single-handedly outscoring Big Spring with 34 points.

Allison Sharrock handed out seven assists, and Cayelea Rhodes had four points, five steals and two assists.

Amanda Martinez and Kelly Holdren also scored for the girls in the semi-final match up.

Olney tops Tigers, 51-39 at Wylie

WYLIE — The Tigers fell victim to their own cold shooting Saturday night, falling to Olney, 51-39, in the consolation finals at the Wylie Catclaw tournament.

The Tigers shot two of 15 from behind the arc, and Head Coach Bud Birks said the tight zone defense employed by Olney was the reason for so many three-point shots.

"That's what they gave us, and we couldn't hit," he said. "We didn't shoot well enough to win."

The Tigers fell behind, 14-6, at the end of the first period, and never recovered, eventually trailing by 14 points at halftime.

"Our defense played alright," Birks said. "They (Olney) are a good team, but if we hit just a few of those shots, the outcome could have been different."

On a night when outside shooting was called for, Snyder was missing perimeter threat Lee Scott, who sat out the game with an illness.

Marcus Villarreal hit one of the treys for Snyder, racking up nine points before getting into foul trouble.

Birks said the Tigers need to become more aggressive against the zone defense.

"We didn't attack the zone, and that's something we have to work on," he said.

The Tigers shot 61 percent from the charity stripe, with Tucker Early, Logan Hill and Villarreal hitting all of their attempts.

The junior varsity boys took care of Abilene at the Sweetwater tournament, 53-43, behind 11 points from Lico Castillo and 10 points Isreal Sosa.

The JV will host Big Spring at 6 Tuesday night at the high school gym, and the varsity Tigers will take on the Steers at 8 as basketball returns to Scurry County Coliseum.

Olney	14	20	13	4 —	51
Snyder	6	14	10	9 —	39

Snyder — McGaha 2 0-0 5, Hill 2 2-2 6, Jones 1 5-2 4, Clifton 0 3-2 2, Villarreal 3 2-2 9, Williams 0 2-0 0, Mendoza 5 2-1 11, Early 0 2-2 2. **Totals 13 18-11 39.**
Three-point goals: McGaha, Villareal.

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Vick Chambers,
Planning & Zoning Department

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Gore's departure welcomed by Democrats

By Ron Fournier
AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Al Gore would have been a formidable Democratic primary candidate, but his decision to forgo the 2004 race probably helped his party's chances in the general election against President Bush, Democrats say.

Many did not want to see Bush-Gore II.

"He would have been the easiest of our guys for Bush to beat," said Gale Kaufman, a party strategist in California. "And I don't think we need to make things easy on Bush. We need people who can speak out against the president, keep him off balance."

In nearly two dozen interviews after Gore announced his plans Sunday night, Democrats dutifully claimed their party had lost a top candidate, but many also spoke of the silver lining. One after another, they praised Gore for taking an early exit from a primary race he could have won, sparing them a repeat of 2000.

Campaign workers and donors frozen in place while Gore made up his mind can now go to work for other Democratic hopefuls. And with Gore on the sidelines, the Democratic field may grow even larger than expected.

"Given his obvious ambivalence about running, he has done the party a great favor by leaving early and creating a wide-open field that will allow somebody else to emerge," said Joe Lockhart, who was White House press secretary for President Clinton.

Announcing his plans, Gore said Sunday night he has the energy and drive to run for president, but a rematch would have put the focus on the past and not the future.

"There are a lot of people within the Democratic Party who felt exhausted (by the 2000 race) ... who felt like, OK, 'I don't want to go through that again.' And I'm frankly sensitive to that feeling," the former vice president told CBS' "60 Minutes."

Many Democratic activists had voiced opposition to Gore running, citing the fumbled opportunities of the 2000 campaign when he had the advantages of incumbency and a booming economy. Gore lost the presidency to Bush after an extensive recount in Florida came up short by just over 500 votes.

"I think (Gore's decision) actually should be helpful from the standpoint that a rerun of last time — with the dynamics now of

AP Analysis

a sitting president doing well in the polls — would not have been the best thing for the Democratic Party," strategist Kaufman said.

Gore has not had enough time to combat perceptions that he is unlikeable and insincere — a politician constantly trying to reinvent himself, several Democrats said.

"It clearly takes a very talented, very experienced candidate out of the race. It's a shame whenever a party loses somebody with that kind of electoral experience," said Ron Klain, who helped run Gore's failed 2000 bid.

"On the other hand, it obviously opens it up for a lot of new folks to step forward."

The Democrat who stood to gain the most from Gore's decision is Lieberman, who had vowed not to challenge Gore for the nomination. He is expected to soon announce his candidacy.

Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry, who along with retiring Vermont Gov. Howard Dean has already jumped into the race, might be able to take advantage of the short window of time when the field is small.

North Carolina Sen. John Edwards, who has sent strong signals that he is likely run, was mentioned by several activists who discussed the need for a new face for the party.

Gore's departure leaves more room on the party's left for Missouri Rep. Dick Gephardt, a longtime ally of organized labor who is considering the race.

Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota is expected to announce his plans next month, but GOP victories in November's congressional elections hurt both Gephardt and Daschle.

The wide-open field will be appealing to dark horses, including retired Gen. Wesley Clark and Sens. Joe Biden of Delaware and Christopher Dodd of Connecticut.

The White House had no comment on the political implications Sunday, but the president's advisers have privately said they relished another shot at Gore.

"He would have been the most predictable candidate," Republican pollster Whit Ayres said. "You know exactly how to run against Gore and now it's going to be a much less predictable race for the president."

Despite disclaimers by Gore, some Democrats said they expected to see him seek the presidency again — perhaps in 2008 when Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York is said to be considering a race too. And opting out of the 2004 race may be the best way to reinvent his overly political image, they said.

"Obviously, he's not going away," said Kathleen Sullivan, former chairwoman of the New Hampshire Democratic Party. "This gives him an opportunity to be a spokesman for the party without being accused of having ulterior motives."

Gore himself said he probably won't get another chance. "I'm not planning on some future race," he said.

Either way, Democrats said he exited smartly.

"A lot of guys don't have enough sense and class to know when it's over," Democratic consultant Jim Duffy of Washington said. "Gore realizes he had a run at it and it didn't work out. It's over."

Pilot program would restrict tractor-trailer rigs in Texas

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Tractor-trailer rig drivers might have fewer lanes to use next summer if San Antonio signs onto a 1997 state law authorizing cities to restrict truckers from the fast lane of major highways during peak travel hours.

San Antonio might implement a six-month pilot program by summer on U.S. 90 and I-10, a stretch of almost 20 miles inside the city's Loop 410, according to Monday's San Antonio Express-News.

Houston was the first to implement the rule in September 2000 on an eight-mile stretch of Interstate 10, roughly from Interstate 610 to the Sam Houston Parkway. Trucks were ordered to stay out of the far left lane from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, except when passing other vehicles.

A Texas Transportation Institute study found that wrecks dropped by 68 percent on that portion of I-10 over a nine-month period, with no deaths in the crashes that did occur.

Houston officials then decided to expand the lane restrictions to portions of Interstate 45 and Texas 225.

Earlier this year, the state Transportation Department sent letters to San Antonio and 71 other Texas cities promoting the law and suggesting they try the rule prohibiting commercial trucks from driving in the left lane of major highways with at least three through lanes.

A public hearing may be held by the San Antonio City Council in January on the proposal. State transportation officials and the council would have to approve the plan.

Councilwoman Bonnie Conner, vice chairwoman of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, would like the rules used for I-10 on San Antonio's north side and also for I-35, which has more traffic.

"We need to do everything we can as far as capacity and moving the traffic along," Conner said.

Trucking officials say they worry that the restrictions can be taken too far and can lead to congestion for traffic trying to merge onto the interstate.

Lance Shillingburg, director of education for the Texas Motor Transportation Association, noted that the Texas Transportation Institute's study couldn't say how much of the plunge in accidents was due to the lane restriction or how much to a presence of police.

Each freeway is different and needs careful scrutiny, Shillingburg said.

A similar law prohibits drivers from staying in the left lane on highways longer than it takes to pass another vehicle.

Nutrition by Ed blonz, Ph.D.

Of coral calcium and Nobel Prizes

Dear Dr. Blonz: You recently criticized a product called coral calcium, and in your comments you stated that the product does not possess the curative properties that it is purported to have. You seem to be no better than the people making these claims. Do you have proof that it doesn't work? If so, let's see it! Dr. Eric Enby, a Nobel Prize nominee from Gothenburg, Sweden, endorses coral calcium as being very beneficial. I read your column online, but I have not otherwise heard of you or of Dr. Enby. At least he gives some data to back up his claims. Thanks. **— J.C., via e-mail**

Dear J.C.: Your question is important because it has implications that go far beyond this particular product.

First, I question the wisdom of a nonrestrictive policy regarding health claims for dietary supplements. As it turns out, no such policy exists under the law. The current guidelines of the Federal Trade Commission state that advertising claims must be supported by competent and reliable scientific evidence. The problem is that there are just too many products and claims out there for the FTC's limited enforcement capabilities. So while many product claims may be in violation of the law, they slip through the cracks and continue to be marketed in a misleading manner.

Furthermore, I do not agree that the burden of proof should rest on those attempting to show that a product doesn't work when there is no evidence to prove nor reason to believe that it does.

I made comments concerning the product called coral calcium because it is based on a form of calcium and magnesium that is readily available from food and other sources. I checked the "data" provided for this product and found a lack of evidence to support anything magical in its formula. There was absolutely no proof that it has any powers to fight — as some of its advertisements claim — cancer, diabetes, arthritis, heart disease, osteoporosis, eczema, Alzheimer's disease, kidney stones, gall stones, gout, indigestion, lupus, hiatal hernia or chronic fatigue syndrome.

It's not news that calcium and other nutrients play a role in curbing osteoporosis and other ailments. But we can get these nutrients from food or from other types of calcium supplements, and there is no evidence to support the claims that coral calcium has any additional benefits.

I have no comments to make about "Nobel Prize nominee" Dr. Enby, other than to say that I have seen this gambit used before. The nomination and selection of Nobel Prize winners varies according to the category and the awarding institutions, but the organizations involved in presenting this prestigious award do not publish a list of nominees. They only list those who actually win the award. When someone is publicly touted as a Nobel Prize nominee, the question thus becomes "nominated in what category and by whom?" (Details of the Nobel Prize nomination process can be found at www.nobel.se/help/faq/nominations.html.)

My research indicates that the award associated with Dr. Enby is not the Nobel Prize, but an alternative prize called the Right Livelihood Award. It is a prestigious award, plugged by its promoters as an "alternative Nobel Prize," which is fine. Apparently, some promoters of coral calcium have dropped the "alternative" in order to associate Dr. Enby — and their product — with the real Nobel Prize. Significantly, the administrators of the Right Livelihood Award state that their nominations must not be publicized by candidates or anyone acting on behalf of candidates.

Bottom line: The people who promote coral calcium are interested in your business. There is nothing wrong with that, but as with any purchase, it is important that you be informed before you buy. Stay well and have a healthful holiday season.

Send questions to: "On Nutrition," Ed Blonz, c/o Newspaper Enterprise Association, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. For e-mail, address inquiries to: ed@blonz.com. Due to the volume of mail, personal replies cannot be provided.

Ed Blonz, Ph.D., is a nutrition scientist and the author of "Power Nutrition" (Signet, 1998) and the "Your Personal Nutritionist" book series (Signet, 1996).

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Markets

Midday Stocks

NEW YORK (AP)

	High	Low	Last	
AMR Corp	7.62	7.36	7.49	—.05
AOL TimeWrn	13.55	13.12	13.38	+.10
AT&T Corp rs	27.60	27.01	27.14	—.42
Albertsons	21.99	21.73	21.96	+.22
Alltel	51.98	50.94	51.95	+.95
AmEl Pw	26.55	25.92	26.46	+.73
AndarkPtr	50.49	49.90	49.93	+.01
ATMOS Egy	23.15	22.85	23.14	+.35
Aviall	8.49	8.40	8.45	
BP PLC	40.48	39.94	40.42	+1.15
BakerHughes	33.15	32.87	33.07	+.21
Bank of Amer	69.56	68.41	69.52	+1.27
BellSouth	26.80	26.05	26.65	+.63
BurlNoSFe	26.59	26.34	26.58	+.53
Caterpillar	46.30	44.85	46.16	+1.56
CenterPoint	7.90	7.60	7.88	+.41
ChevronTex	68.86	67.79	68.81	+1.18
Citigroup	36.87	36.25	36.76	+.76
CocaCola	45.99	45.51	45.79	—.06
ColgatePal	52.98	52.15	52.28	—.62
CmclMetals s	16.47	16.17	16.35	+.05
ConocoPhill	48.99	48.42	48.94	+.54
Cooper Inds	36.48	35.72	36.38	+.51
DaimlrChry	32.76	32.00	32.60	+.94
DeltaAirl	12.71	12.50	12.69	+.53
Dillards Inc	16.44	16.00	16.20	+.04
DowChem	29.45	28.74	29.44	+.39
DuPont	43.50	42.60	43.42	+.86
EastmanChem	36.98	36.12	36.93	+.65
EstKodak	37.30	36.90	37.20	+.39
EDS Corp	19.50	18.63	19.14	—.50
Entergy	45.14	44.72	45.01	+.30
ExxonMobil	35.99	35.30	35.94	+.90
FootLocker	12.50	12.26	12.43	+.18
GenDynam	78.65	76.86	78.32	+.77
GenElec	26.20	25.60	26.09	+.59
GenMills	43.89	43.52	43.75	+.26
GenMotors	37.20	36.60	37.13	+.61
GaPacific	16.14	15.77	16.00	+.03
Goodrich	17.66	17.30	17.62	+.29
Goodyear	7.32	7.13	7.32	+.20
GtAtlPac	7.50	7.20	7.47	+.22
Halliburtn	20.05	19.55	19.91	+.16
Hanson ADS	22.80	22.67	22.76	+.73
HarteHanks s	18.85	18.32	18.75	+.49
HomeDepot	26.75	26.26	26.67	+.28
HoneywellIntl	24.20	23.77	24.20	+.49
IBM	80.00	79.05	79.53	—.47
IntlPaper	34.94	34.55	34.87	+.64
JohnsonJn	54.98	54.45	54.62	—.29
vjK mart	60	57	59	+.02
KinderMorg	42.64	42.15	42.59	+.59
Kroger Co	15.19	15.00	15.16	+.09
LockheedM	50.31	49.20	49.85	+.15
Lowes Cos	39.61	38.50	39.55	+.64
Lubys	3.25	3.17	3.25	+.05
LucentTech	1.48	1.42	1.45	+.05
MarathonOil	21.84	21.38	21.74	+.37
MayDeptStr	23.73	23.01	23.43	+.17
Medtronic	45.49	45.05	45.29	—.13
Motorola	9.94	9.55	9.91	+.39
NCR Corp	24.80	23.86	24.55	+.70
Navistar	24.40	23.84	24.35	+.85
PNM Rescs	23.40	23.13	23.19	—.12
Penney JC	23.91	23.59	23.87	+.27
PepBoys	11.27	10.90	11.25	+.35
PepsiCo	42.20	41.60	42.05	+.20
Pharmacia	41.60	41.18	41.33	—.07
PhelpDodge	31.74	30.95	31.74	+.71
PilgrmPrd B	8.10	8.02	8.07	+.04
Praxair	55.60	55.04	55.46	+.78
ProctGamb	87.95	86.33	86.82	—.59
RadioShack	20.31	19.97	20.31	+.21
RoyalDut	43.44	42.85	43.39	+.79
SBC Comm	26.92	25.98	26.86	+1.11
SaraLee	22.41	22.11	22.34	—.03
Scripps EW	75.52	74.36	75.34	—.17
SearsRoeb	25.38	24.41	25.27	+.56
SherwinW	28.95	28.52	28.95	+.52
SouthernCo	27.98	27.70	27.85	
SwstAirl	15.25	15.02	15.16	+.02
SprintFON	14.60	14.25	14.58	+.40
SprintPCS	5.07	4.71	4.74	—.27
Sunoco Inc	32.98	32.71	32.90	+.38
TXU Corp	18.00	17.15	17.23	—.32
TempleInland	44.80	43.90	44.74	+.45
TexInd	27.54	26.80	27.50	+.68
TexasInst	17.19	16.53	17.02	+.32
Textron	41.79	41.02	41.74	+.92
TrinityInds	19.04	18.61	19.00	+.40
TylerTech	4.58	4.40	4.40	—.27
UnionPacif	60.38	60.00	60.19	+.69
USSteel	13.25	13.07	13.22	+.12
UnitedTech	61.50	59.94	61.34	+1.24
Unocal	31.97	31.45	31.91	+.55
VerizonComm	39.80	38.85	39.74	+1.04
WalMart	51.41	50.36	51.16	+.62
WellsFargo	46.55	45.90	46.52	+.52
WstnGasRs	38.00	37.36	37.80	+.31
WinnDixie	14.40	14.17	14.40	+.11
Xerox Cp	8.05	7.80	8.01	+.24
YumBrands s	23.31	22.87	23.04	—.21

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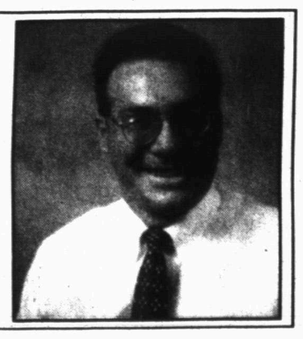


DEC 16 2002

Insurance giant Conseco in finiancial ruin

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — When Conseco Inc. bought Green Tree Financial in 1998, the fast-growing insurer hailed the deal as the breakthrough it needed to become a financial-services supermarket to middle America.

Instead, the $6 billion acquisition has turned into a nightmare, triggering a torturous stock slide that has left Conseco facing bankruptcy.

The nation's seventh-largest insurance provider could file for Chapter 11 protection as soon as the end of this month — a step the company said it would take if it could reach a reorganization plan with creditors.

Although such a filing would not be surprising given Conseco's recent woes, it would mark a dramatic downfall for the company whose stock was once a Wall Street darling. From 1988 to 1998, the company's stock averaged a total return of 47 percent per year and Conseco shares traded as high as $58. Today, the stock trades at less than a nickel per share.

Observers say the 23-year-old company was led astray by a series of missteps in the 1990s that took it off its earlier path of successful insurance acquisitions and into a wide range of unrelated businesses. The company gained naming rights to Conseco Fieldhouse, home of the NBA's Indiana Pacers, and bought interests in everything from a riverboat casino to Manhattan's General Motors building in partnership with developer Donald Trump.

"The senior management of the company went on an aggressive growth path at the wrong time, and brought on billions of dollars of debt that we're now dealing with today," said Robert Rodriguez, of Los Angeles-based First Pacific Advisors, one of the Carmel, Ind.-based company's largest institutional shareholders.

In particular, the Green Tree deal is viewed as a watershed event. The acquisition, experts say, transformed Conseco into a debt-burdened shell unable to shake off $6.5 billion in debt.

"It was the major act that pushed the ball rolling down the hill," Todd Saxton, an Indiana University business professor specializing in corporate strategy and governance, said Friday.

Observers now say Green Tree's problems should have been obvious when Conseco, under the leadership of its co-founder Stephen Hilbert, bought it.

Green Tree's balance sheet "was a disaster in the making," said David Erb, managing director of Merrion Group LLC, a New Jersey-based investment firm.

"It was an acquisition that was completely out of Conseco's expertise," Erb said. "There was really little synergy between Green Tree and the insurance operations, and Hilbert vastly overpaid for it."

Indeed, Conseco shares dropped nearly 15 percent the day the Green Tree deal was announced.

The stock's slide continued, and, two years later, Hilbert was ousted after piling up $8.2 billion in debt, including a $545 million loan that enabled company insiders to buy additional company stock.

Hilbert's successor was Gary Wendt, who earned a reputation as a savvy cost-cutter in the 1990s as head of GE Capital Services.

Wendt unloaded about $2 billion in debt, largely through asset sales, but was unable to boost the company's languishing stock as manufactured housing industry troubles continued amid the recession, leaving Conseco with a glut of repossessed properties. Meanwhile, credit downgrades hurt insurance operations.

Wendt gave up on his turnaround plan in August in favor of the restructuring talks, and resigned as chief executive Oct. 3 while staying on as board chairman. He was replaced by William Shea, who joined Conseco as chief operating officer in Sept. 2001.

With $52 billion in assets as of Sept. 30 and about 13,000 employees nationwide, the company hopes to emerge from bankruptcy quickly so its insurance operations can shake off inferior credit ratings tied to the parent company's debt. Conseco maintains its insurance operations, which accounted for $5.8 billion, or three-quarters, of Conseco's revenues last year, are sound.

Grayson County looks south for future economic growth

DALLAS (AP) — The economic center of Grayson County has long been Lake Texoma. But increasingly, officials say growth sprawling northward from Dallas is key to the county's economic future.

"Grayson County will develop just like Collin County," said David Dorman, mayor of Melissa, a town north of McKinney in north-central Collin County. "Growth is going to go from Dallas to the Oklahoma border."

Already, infrastructure is being put in place that will connect Grayson County to its southern, big-city neighbors.

A route is nearly complete to extend the Dallas North Tollway to the Grayson County line, north of Celina. Officials in Grayson County have secured a path to eventually extend the tollway into the county's northern reaches.

Two years ago, Dallas Area Rapid Transit bought a railroad route running from Plano to Sherman that eventually could bring commuter rail.

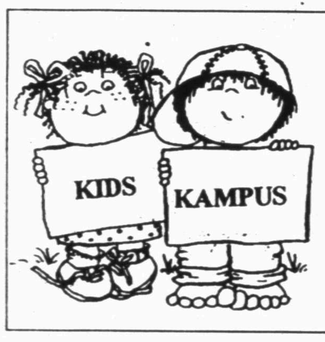
Towns in Collin and Grayson counties have formed an alliance to build a 35-mile, $9.7 million pipeline to supply water from Lake Texoma.

Meanwhile, construction is under way to rebuild U.S. 75 through southern Grayson County to make it easily expandable to six lanes.

Plans are under way to extend Preston Road — the pipeline for the growth rushing through Frisco — all the way to Pottsboro at Lake Texoma.

The extension of Preston Road could open a potential linchpin for Grayson's development — a former Air Force base now operating as a general aviation airport used mostly by private planes.

"We are really interested in their airport," Collin County Commissioner Jack Hatchell said.



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Today's chuckle

Santa lookalike robs drug store

CHESTER, Va. (AP) — Police are looking for a man with a familiar description who robbed a drug store at gunpoint: long white hair and beard, a white-fur-trimmed red suit and hat, black boots, prominent belly.

Police Capt. Mike Spraker said the Santa Claus lookalike obtained an undisclosed amount of the painkiller OxyContin from the Eckerd Drug Store in Chester on Saturday night.

"An individual dressed as Santa — beard, hat, the whole works — just walked to the back of the store to the pharmacist, displayed his weapon and asked for the OxyContin," he said.

Spraker said the robber fled on foot. A canine unit tracked his trail to the parking lot of a nearby apartment complex, where police believe he got into a car and drove away.

"No reindeer or sleds were observed in the area," said Spraker, who said he wanted any children hearing about the incident to know "we immediately contacted the North Pole and verified Santa was there. This Santa was definitely an impostor."

Shark attack victim may return to school

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP) — Shark attack victim Jessie Arbogast's teachers and family want him back in school next year, but his doctors say dramatic improvements are becoming more unlikely with the passage of time.

Arbogast, now 10, remains in a wheelchair, receives fluids through a feeding tube and says little other than relatives' names when his speech therapist isn't around.

He has been unable to walk or sit up on his own since July 2001, when a 61/2-foot bull shark attacked him on a Florida Panhandle beach. The shark severed his arm and bit his leg, which drained the boy of blood and left him brain-damaged.

But his teachers believe Arbogast still knows everything he did before the accident, even if he can't always express it.

"The subject has been broached about him going back to school on a part-time basis after the new year," Diana Flosenzier, Arbogast's aunt, told the Pensacola News Journal for a story in Sunday's editions. "The teachers definitely would like to start reintegrating him in a classroom setting."

His doctors support returning Arbogast to school in Ocean Springs, Miss., but say significant improvements are becoming less likely.

"How much further can he regenerate?" asked Dr. Ben Renfroe, pediatric neurologist at Sacred Heart Hospital. "We're probably reaching a point where dramatic improvements are not going to happen."

Arbogast can move his reattached arm nearly as well as the other, his aunt said. He recently learned to bend over and touch his opposite foot on command, with assistance balancing.

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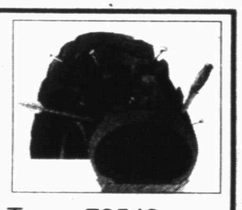
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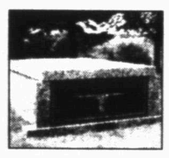
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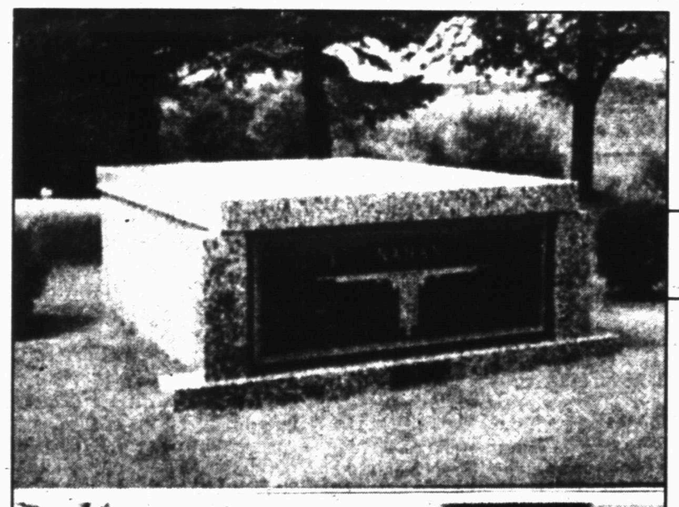

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State

Astro

By Bernice

Tuesday, Dec
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Astro-graph

By Bernice Bede Osol

Your Birthday

Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2002

You alone can accomplish your desires and aims in the year ahead if you put your mind to the task. In fact, other people getting involved in your affairs will gum things up instead of being of aid to you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — That stubborn streak that pops out of you every once in a while could rear its ugly head today. If you're inflexible with anybody, you could run up against someone who is even more rigid than you are.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — A responsibility you should have attended to already might have to be dealt with today. Don't make things harder on yourself by delaying it any further. It means big trouble.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — Things may not turn out as you thought today. An event you believed would be great fun may turn out to be a bust, while a lesser event billed as nothing may exceed everyone's expectations.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — Count to 10 before telling anyone off today. Regrettable remarks can easily slip for which you'll later reproach yourself.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — If you know from experience that certain topics that must be discussed today agitate someone, keep this person out of conversations. Without him/her stirring the pot, things can be worked out.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Business conditions might be a bit tricky today, making it difficult to get a handle on the true picture. If you have any major decisions that need to be made, postpone them until all the facts are in.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — People in general could be a bit argumentative today, and that goes for your partner as well. If you sense s/he is somewhat testy, don't try to force any demands on your partner.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Improper behavior on the part of anybody at work today could disrupt a situation that has been running smoothly. Take care that you're not the one who causes things to fall apart.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — Friends and acquaintances always respond better to consultation than they do to regimentation. If you're in charge of a social situation today, don't come on too strong.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — In matters where you have authority over others today, wield your power wisely. Any tyrannical action will make enemies out of those who won't readily forgive and forget.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — There is nothing wrong with championing an unpopular cause, so long as you know going in that it won't be easy. You'll have to take care not to further anger people who already disagree with you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Financial situations could be quite problematic today, so you need to be extremely careful with them. Don't leave anything up to chance.

Sagittarius, treat yourself to a birthday gift. Send for your Astro-Graph predictions for the year ahead by mailing $2 and an SASE to Astro-Graph, c/o this newspaper, P.O. Box 167, Wickliffe, OH 44092. Be sure to state your zodiac sign.

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West Texas utility fighting with farmers

LUBBOCK (AP) — A modern-day range war is raging in West Texas, pitting a powerful local utility against farmers who accuse the company of gouging them on the cost of pumping water to their fields.

The fight is playing out in the courts, state regulatory agencies and the Legislature, where the company has close ties to the man expected to be the next House speaker.

The company's financial reputation could become a casualty of the battle. State regulators have questioned the utility's heavy debt load, even suggesting the possibility of bankruptcy.

On one side is Cap Rock Energy Corp., which incorporated as an electric cooperative in 1939. The utility buys power and distributes it to 11,000 customers in 31 counties, mostly in rural areas around its West Texas home in Midland.

Local opposition to the utility grew after it successfully lobbied for an amendment in a 1999 electric-deregulation bill that gave Cap Rock power to set its own rates and protection against would-be competitors. No other privately owned utility in Texas gets such treatment.

The anti-competitive amendment originated in the Senate and was supported in the House by Rep. Tom Craddick, R-Midland, the presumptive speaker of the Texas House when the Legislature convenes next month.

Cap Rock is in the process of converting from a not-for-profit cooperative to a for-profit company. Its shares already trade on the American Stock Exchange, and it is an investor-owned utility for tax purposes.

But Cap Rock is still a cooperative in the eyes of state regulators. That is largely because the St. Lawrence Cotton Growers Association and other groups that had been members of the co-op tried to block the switch.

Cap Rock responded by suing the groups.

The cotton growers say Cap Rock unfairly charges them double the rates it levies on city dwellers, and they accuse the company of financial wrongdoing.

"This is an Enron Junior," declared Don Richards, a lawyer for the cotton growers. "They made bad management decisions both in the co-op and the subsidiaries. They gave themselves income off subsidiaries, but it's the property of the cooperative."

A Cap Rock spokeswoman, Kelly Mcbeth, said the company was under fire because of its connection with Rep. Craddick. "This is politically motivated," she said.

The final decision on ending Cap Rock's status and regulation as a cooperative rests with the state Public Utility Commission, which has asked the state attorney general's office for an opinion on the legality of the conversion.

Two hearing officers recommended that the conversion to investor-owned company be approved, but they said the company should reduce expenses, and they added a chilling note about its finances.

Cap Rock, they said in a Sept. 25 document, "exhibits many of the characteristics of a corporation with a substantial probability of bankruptcy," including a high ratio of long term debt to equity.

The hearing officers also wrote that despite losses from operations and failed acquisition attempts over the past five years, Cap Rock officers and directors received more than $1 million in bonuses. In the past two years, it has written off $7.2 million in losses from failed acquisitions.

According to Cap Rock's most recent quarterly financial report, the company's revenue fell 5 percent in the first nine months of this year, to $57.2 million, but its net income nearly doubled, to $8.2 million. But its long term debt, $149.4 million, was more than 20 times assets.

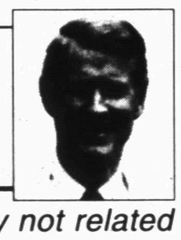
"We are timely servicing our debt and our stock is holding value," said Mcbeth, the company spokeswoman. She declined to comment further.

Slade Cutter, a financial analyst with the PUC, said Cap Rock's failure to complete acquisitions of other utility providers could indicate financial problems.

"The fact that they weren't able to secure financing for those transactions is evidence that lenders evaluate them as too risky," Cutter said.

Dr. Gott

By Peter Gott, M.D.



Menopause and vertigo? Probably not related

DEAR DR. GOTT: Is there a connection between menopause and vertigo? Since my change of life, I've suffered from two to four attacks every year. They begin with uncontrollable dizziness, followed by eight to 12 hours of vomiting. I usually am confined to bed for several days to recuperate. Two relatives have suffered the same symptoms and have been treated with Compazine. Once menopause was over in my relatives, the vertigo disappeared.

DEAR READER: I don't know whether vertigo and menopause are related. It's an intriguing hypothesis. However, the trouble is that vertigo is common and menopause is universal. Therefore, you'd expect the two conditions to co-exist in many instances. Vertigo, with its attendant violent vomiting, is usually due to a disturbance in the inner ear, where the organs of balance lie. (The current theory is that tiny calcium deposits in the inner ear fluid may float around and eventually touch nerves, causing vertigo.) Fortunately, attacks of vertigo rarely last more than a day or two, so treatment is directed at relieving symptoms. Although the anti-nausea drug Compazine may help, I've had more luck with the prescription drug Antivert, which, if taken at the first sign of trouble, may abort an attack of vertigo. Ask your doctor about this, as well as the vertigo/menopause issue.

To give you related information, I am sending you a copy of my Health Report "Menopause." Other readers who would like a copy should send a self-addressed, stamped envelope and $2 to Newsletter, P.O. Box 167, Wickliffe, OH 44092. Be sure to mention the title.

DEAR DR. GOTT: Because of a bleeding ulcer, I recently underwent surgery. During the procedure, my spleen was injured and had to be removed. What will happen to me without a spleen?

DEAR READER: Nothing, probably. But you will require special therapy for infections.

The normal spleen, a spongy organ in the upper left abdomen, has several functions, the most important of which is to filter the blood. In a routine, ho-hum average day, the spleen removes old, worn out blood cells from the blood stream. It also filters out infectious microorganisms.

You won't miss your spleen; it's not a vital organ and the blood-filtration is not crucial to health. Nonetheless, loss of the spleen as a bacterial filter does put you at greater statistical risk for certain infections, notably those spread through the bloodstream. Hence, your doctor will probably supply you with aggressive antibiotic coverage if you become ill with a bacterial infection, such as pneumonia or an abscess.

Because the spleen is a relatively fragile organ — much like an overripe orange — it may easily be damaged during abdominal surgery. Once this happens, it's easier and safer simply to remove it, rather than attempt a repair.

There are many healthy people walking around without spleens. You should have no untoward consequences from the loss of yours.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I'm 13 and seriously nearsighted. I got my first glasses at the age of 5 and now require thicker lenses, so I assume the problem is progressive. Is there a name for this condition, and what can be done about it?

DEAR READER: You have myopia: near-sightedness. This can easily be corrected by appropriate lenses. Your eye doctor can advise you about what to expect in the future. Ordinarily, myopia is not strikingly progressive. In fact, it may improve with age as our eyes become less able to focus on close-up objects.

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Toyota, railroad executives meet

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A meeting between Union Pacific Railroad and Toyota officials might signal progress for San Antonio officials who are trying to lure the automaker to build an assembly plant in Bexar County.

The two parties met on Friday when railroad officials flew to Toyota's U.S. headquarters near Cincinnati to try to resolve a disagreement about rail access.

The automaker wants to use Union Pacific's rail lines for a site it's considering in south Bexar County for a $750 million truck-production plant. The company has said it wants access to two rail lines to keep shipping cost down.

The railroad has recoiled at sharing its lines because, they say, the tracks would loss their value. They talked to Toyota officials about whether other rail companies would be allowed to use its tracks if the plant is built.

San Antonio Mayor Ed Garza said he's encouraged by the talks.

"This is big," Garza said Saturday. "It's a positive move. It allows us to get closer to finalizing San Antonio's package."

City officials were concerned the companies had reached an impasse in their discussion.

Oil Patch News

Scurry County

Rocker A Operating Co. will drill the No. 43-R Fuller in the Corazon field, 11 miles southeast of Justiceburg. Planned for a depth of 2,350 feet, drill site is in Section 604, Block 97, H&TC survey.

Howard County

Miranda Energy Corp. will drill the No. 5 Chalk in the Howard-Glasscock field, four miles southeast of Forsan. Planned for a depth of 3,250 feet, the re-entry project is located in Section 140, Block 29, W&NW survey.

LCS Production Co. will drill the No. 3 Yabar in the Varel field, five miles northwest of Big Spring. Planned for a depth of 5,999 feet, location is in Section 16, Block 33, T1N, T&P survey.

LCS Production Co. will drill the No. 4 Yarbar in the Varel field, five miles northwest of Big Spring. Planned depth is 5,999 feet, and drill site is in Section 16, Block 33, T1N, T&P survey.

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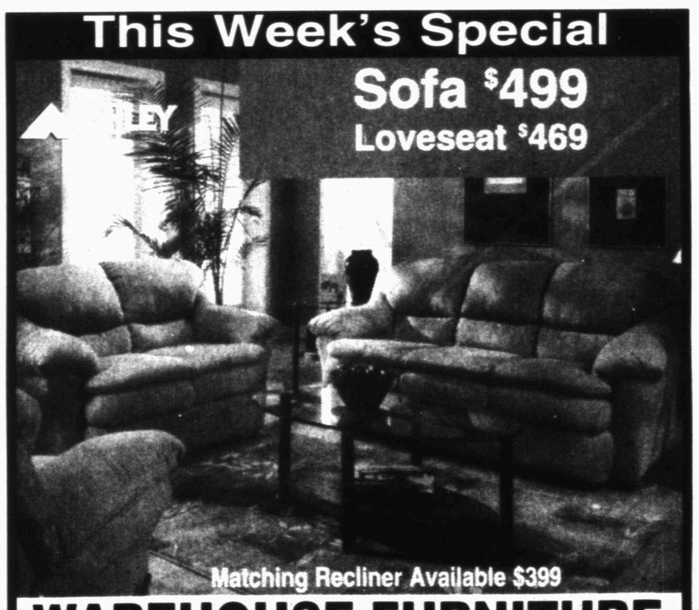
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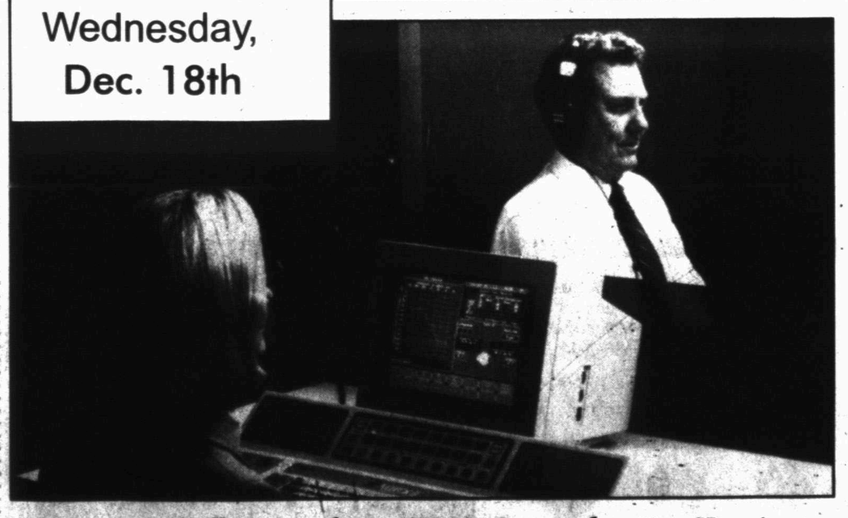
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DEC 16 2002

2nd Front Page

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

Court upholds fines for California farmer

WASHINGTON (AP) — An evenly divided Supreme Court upheld a judgment today against a California farmer who accused the government of going overboard to protect wetlands.

The Supreme Court, on a 4-4 vote, affirmed Angelo Tsakopoulos' punishment for converting wetlands into vineyards and orchards without obtaining a federal pollution permit.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency determined that Tsakopoulos' Borden Ranch violated the Clean Water Act of 1972. He was ordered to pay $500,000 in fines and restore four acres of wetlands.

His lawyer argued last week before the Supreme Court that he was wrongly punished.

One member of the court, Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, who is from California, did not participate in the case. The remaining eight members were "equally divided," the justices said in an unsigned opinion. They did not announce the breakdown of the vote.

Tie votes are rare at the Supreme Court. The justices may get another chance to deal with the subject, in a case in which all nine justices are participating.

Tsakopoulos, of Galt, Calif., wanted the court to rule that farmers do not need the same pollution permits to plow fields that developers need to build other things like factories. At issue is the use of a "deep ripping" plow that punctures the soil at a depth of about six feet. Deep ripping is a common farming practice for preparing orchards for planting.

Lower courts have ruled that farmers using bulldozers and other heavy machinery to convert cropland need federal permits if wetlands are jeopardized.

Also today, the Supreme Court:

— Refused to consider shielding states from lawsuits over unequal pay for people in the same job. The justices turned back an appeal from a Texas college, which now must pay damages to a female professor who sued under a 1963 federal law requiring employers to give men and women equal pay for equal work. The college contended that states cannot be sued in federal court under the Equal Pay Act because states have constitutional protection.

Demo, GOP to face each other in runoff

AUSTIN (AP) — Two lawyers, one a Democrat and the other a Republican, will face each other in a runoff after Saturday's special election to fill the vacant District 62 seat in the Texas State House.

With all of the votes counted, Sherman Republican Larry Phillips led with 33 percent, or 3,015 votes. Democrat D.L. "Donnie" Jarvis Jr., of Van Alstyne, took second with 26 percent, or 2,383 votes.

Trailing were Republicans Harry Reynolds with 1,901 votes for 21 percent, Kiki Osterman 1,110 votes for 12 percent, and John Hefton with 755 votes for 8 percent.

A runoff will probably be scheduled for Jan. 4 or Jan. 7, according to the secretary of state's office. Gov. Rick Perry was expected to set the runoff date on Wednesday, when he certifies the results.

Perry called the special election to replace Ron Clark, the Republican incumbent who won the Nov. 5 election but declined the seat when he was appointed to a federal judgeship by President Bush.

Jarvis, 34, lost to Clark on Nov. 5 but said Saturday he believes a Democrat can win the district.

"I think that the people of this district have always been independent thinkers," he said.

Phillips, 36, is running his first campaign.

"I'm very excited," he said. "We're going to continue to communicate our message of constituent services, like Ron Clark, and to ensure that we get our conservative message to the voters and ask them to come out one more time."

Republican senators mired in debate over replacing Sen. Lott

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush's spokesman called Sen. Trent Lott's support of a 1948 segregationist presidential campaign "offensive and repugnant" today, increasing pressure on the GOP's Senate chief amid a challenge to his leadership.

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer refused several times to defend Lott's position as GOP Senate leader one day after Oklahoma Sen. Don Nickles called for new leadership elections.

"The White House isn't commenting on that," Fleischer said. "The White House doesn't comment on every idea, every motion."

Fleischer carefully avoided repeating the White House position of last week — that Lott should be allowed to retain his post.

On Sunday, Nickles became the first GOP senator to call for new leadership elections.

"I am concerned that Trent has been weakened to the point that may jeopardize his ability to enact our agenda and speak to all Americans," said Nickles, who flirted with a challenge to Lott earlier this fall and could run if new elections are held.

"There are several outstanding senators who are more than capable of effective leadership and I hope we have an opportunity to choose," Nickles said.

Lott did not respond to Nickles' comments. Spokesman Ron Bonjean said the Mississippi Republican was preparing for a 30-minute appearance tonight on Black Entertainment Television, part of a campaign to save his leadership post. Lott intends to use the time "to discuss the serious issues of diversity, opportunity and race in America," Bonjean said.

The White House steered clear of Nickles' remarks as Bush's advisers said the president would not try to save Lott's job. Fleischer steadfastly declined to be drawn into any discussion of the potential leadership race among Senate Republicans. "The White House isn't commenting on that," he said. But Fleischer condemned in sharpened tones the comments last week that landed Lott in trouble.

White House officials have told Republicans that Bush is willing to accept the consequences if Lott loses the majority leader position, quits the Senate and allows Mississippi's Democratic governor to replace him, GOP officials say.

Bush's political advisers say they were not impressed with Lott's explanations, including a news conference Friday, but they insist they're not getting involved in the Senate's internal debate over Lott's future. Sen. Bill Frist, a potential candidate to replace Lott as majority leader, is a favorite of the White House.

Sens. John Warner of Virginia and Chuck Hagel of Nebraska said they supported a hurry-up meeting of the rank and file in view of the controversy swirling around Lott.

Republicans "must either reconfirm their confidence in Senator Trent Lott's leadership or select a new leader," Hagel said.

Births

Michael Shane and Lisa L. Christensen of Snyder announce the birth of their son, Parker Shane Christensen, at 10:11 a.m. on Dec. 14 in Cogdell Memorial Hospital. Parker Shane weighed six pounds, 13 ounces.

Lot and Colleen Christensen of Mesa, Ariz., are his paternal grandparents and Dean and Elga Layton of Centerville, Utah, are maternal grandparents.

— — —

Matthew Tyler Jones announces the birth of his sister, Zoé Alazaya Espinosa. Zoé Alazaya weighed six pounds, three ounces and was born at 5:45 p.m. on Dec. 6 in Rolling Plains Memorial Hospital in Sweetwater. Parents are Jennifer Brady Jones and Carlos Espinosa.

Maternal grandparents are Leon and Dianne Brady of Hermleigh. Great-grandfather is J.B. Davidson of Andrews. Paternal grandparents are Dionisio Espinosa of Snyder and Marie Luna of Fort Worth. Great-grandmother is Maria Luna of Snyder.

Two arrests over weekend

Arrests

Deputies arrested a 19-year-old man Saturday morning on outstanding county warrants for motion to revoke probation.

A 21-year-old man was taken into custody in the 3700 block of College Ave. Sunday afternoon on a warrant for motor vehicle inspection violation.

Thefts

A man requested officers outside Eckerd's Sunday morning to report the theft of newspaper vending machines belonging to the Snyder Daily News and the Abilene Reporter News.

Chase Danes of 3730 Ave. U reported his bicycle and scooter stolen and a report for theft was filed.

Criminal mischief

Tiffany Brown reported damage done to her Dodge Spirit and officers submitted an offense report for criminal mischief.

Close patrols

A woman in the 3400 block of Irving reported vandalism at 2 p.m. Saturday and requested a close patrol of the area.

An anonymous caller reported a noise disturbance in the 4100 block of Ave. R Saturday evening. Officers were unable to locate the noise, but advised a close patrol would be maintained.

A woman in the 3700 block of Highland requested officers at 12:10 a.m. today after hearing a neighbor's gate open and close and the neighbors being out of town. The caller also advised she saw a prowler in the backyard. Officers initiated a close patrol for the remainder of the night.

A man reported loud music at a residence in the 100 block of Elm Sunday night and requested a close patrol of the area.

Fight

A caller reported a fight at the American Legion at 12:35 a.m. Sunday. Officers responded, but everyone involved had left the premises.

Dog bite

Chad Rogers reported that his dog was attacked by a stray Sunday afternoon. Officers submitted a report for dog bite. The stray was caught and taken to the animal shelter.

Gas drive off

A clerk at Rip Griffin's Truck Stop reported a gas drive off worth $20 at 8:15 p.m. Sunday.

Obituaries

Sue Hart

1941-2002

ABILENE — Sue Hart, a former resident of Snyder, died Saturday, Dec. 14, in an East Texas medical facility.

Funeral service for Mrs. Hart, 61, was set for 2 p.m. today in the Elliott-Hamil Chapel of Faith and interment was to follow in Elmwood Memorial Park.

Born June 4, 1941 in Brown County, she graduated from Snyder High School and moved from Snyder to Abilene in 1967.

Mrs. Hart, a homemaker, worked for Butterfield School for five years and was a member of View Baptist Church.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Tommy and Susie Morris.

Survivors include two sons, Jay Leslie Hart and Kelly Lee Hart, both of Abilene; four sisters, Maxine Whittenburg of Murchison, Doris Wright of Yucipia, Calif., Debra Murphy and Margaret Rylander, both of Snyder; four brothers, Alfred Morris, Doug Morris, Eugene Morris, all of Snyder, and Roy Morris of Odessa; and four grandchildren.

Cheyenne May

1999-2002

JACKSONVILLE — Cheyenne Love May, 3, of Odessa died Saturday, Dec. 14, along with her grandfather, Kevin "Kippy" Sipes of Jacksonville in an automobile accident near Baird.

Cheyenne May

Funeral service for Cheyenne will be held at 1 p.m. Tuesday in the Thompson Funeral Home Chapel in Jacksonville with the Rev. Jack Thrift officiating. Burial will be in the Vinson Cemetery in the Afton Grove Community.

Cheyenne was born Oct. 8, 1999 in Jacksonville.

Survivors include her mother and stepfather, Krystal Rae and Jimmy Sipes of Odessa; her father, Chuck May of Jacksonville; her stepmother, Melinda Rowe of Jacksonville; a sister, Summer Breeze Sipes of Jacksonville; paternal grandparents, James Wesley and Onita May of Lake Striker and Patsy May of Snyder; maternal grandparents, Debra Kaye Sipes of Jacksonville and Nancy and Terry Curry of Odessa; great-grandmother, Mary Clay of Snyder; an aunt, Joyce May of Snyder; and an aunt and uncle, James and Maggie May of Jacksonville.

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Today's Weather

Local 3-Day Forecast

Tue 12/17	Wed 12/18	Thu 12/19
68/41	**61/30**	**53/24**
Sunshine along with some passing clouds. High 68F. Winds SW at 15 to 25 mph.	Times of sun and clouds. Highs in the low 60s and lows in the low 30s.	Mix of sun and clouds. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the mid 20s.
Sunrise 7:40 AM / Sunset 5:40 PM	Sunrise 7:40 AM / Sunset 5:40 PM	Sunrise 7:41 AM / Sunset 5:41 PM

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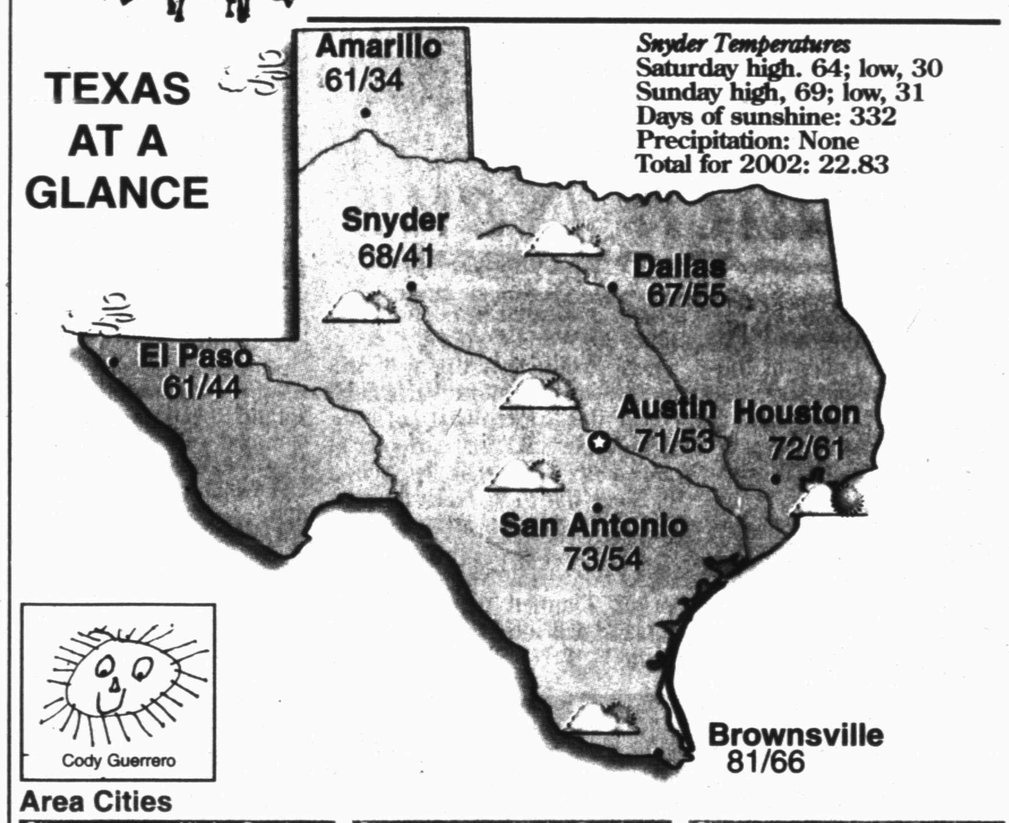
TEXAS AT A GLANCE



Snyder Temperatures
Saturday high. 64; low, 30
Sunday high, 69; low, 31
Days of sunshine: 332
Precipitation: None
Total for 2002: 22.83

Cody Guerrero

Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	69	48	pt sunny	El Paso	61	44	windy	Midland	72	44	windy
Amarillo	61	34	windy	Fort Stockton	74	45	pt sunny	Raymondville	79	60	pt sunny
Austin	71	53	pt sunny	Gainesville	65	48	pt sunny	Rosenberg	72	61	pt sunny
Beaumont	71	60	pt sunny	Greenville	65	52	pt sunny	San Antonio	73	54	pt sunny
Brownsville	81	66	pt sunny	Houston	72	61	cloudy	San Marcos	72	55	pt sunny
Brownwood	71	48	pt sunny	Kingsville	77	58	pt sunny	Sulphur Springs	66	53	pt sunny
Corpus Christi	75	60	pt sunny	Livingston	70	57	cloudy	Sweetwater	70	45	pt sunny
Corsicana	69	57	cloudy	Longview	68	57	cloudy	Tyler	69	61	pt sunny
Dallas	67	55	pt sunny	Lubbock	66	37	windy	Weatherford	66	47	pt sunny
Del Rio	75	53	pt sunny	Lufkin	70	62	cloudy	Wichita Falls	66	45	pt sunny

National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	51	43	cloudy	Houston	72	61	cloudy	Phoenix	61	48	rain
Boston	28	20	pt sunny	Los Angeles	60	48	rain	San Francisco	53	46	rain
Chicago	38	34	pt sunny	Miami	76	66	pt sunny	Seattle	48	38	rain
Dallas	67	55	pt sunny	Minneapolis	39	35	cloudy	St. Louis	50	46	cloudy
Denver	52	24	pt sunny	New York	33	22	sunny	Washington, DC	37	25	pt sunny

Moon Phases

First	Full	Last	New
Dec 11	Dec 19	Dec 27	Jan 2

UV Index

Tue 12/17	Wed 12/18	Thu 12/19
Low	Low	Low

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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