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INSIDE

What's Up 2A
Whatever happened to? 3A
Sports 6-7A
Letters to the editor 6B
Comics 8B

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THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

WEEKEND

Dec. 28 & 29, 2002
Vol. 54 No. 207
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Home of Sabrina Terry

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THE SDN COLUMN

By Roy McQueen

The feller on Deep Creek says, "Everybody has something for which to be grateful. Even the guy who can't pay his bills can be thankful he isn't one of his creditors."

Self-help courses are popular these days, and Snyder's Harold Yearwood brought us some suggestions for the new semester.

These training courses are especially for the tender gender.

—Silence, the Final Frontier: Where no woman has gone before.

—Banking: The undiscovered side of making deposits.

—Parties: going out without new outfits.

—Man Management: Minor household chorses can wait until after the game.

—Bathroom etiquette I: Men need space in the bathroom cabinet, too.

—Bathroom etiquette II: His razor is his.

—Communication Skills I: Tears, the last resort, not the first.

—Communication Skills II: Thinking before you speak.

—Communication Skills III: Getting what you want without nagging.

—Driving a car safely: A skill you can acquire.

—Telephone Techniques: How to hang up.

—Introduction to parking.

—Advanced Parking: Backing into a space.

—Water retention: Fact or fat?

—Cooking I: Bringing back bacon, eggs and butter.

—Cooking II: Bran and tofu are not for human consumption.

—Cooking III: How not to inflict your diets on others.

—Dancing: Why men don't want to.

—Classic clothing: Wearing outfits you already have.

—Household dust: A harmless natural occurrence only noticed by women.

—Integrating your laundry: Washing it all together.

—Oil and gas: Your car needs both, not just tissues and air fresheners.

—TV remotes: For men only.

—Acquiring a sense of humor: in case you're not already married.

Might want to check with Mike Thornton at WTC to see if any of these are on the continuing education schedule next spring.

Court to meet

Scurry County commissioners' court will have only one item of business for consideration when it convenes at 10 a.m. Monday for its last meeting of the year.

The court will set dates for regular meetings for 2003.

The court normally convenes on the third Monday of each month, but special sessions can be held with 72-hour notice.

The meeting also will be the last for County Judge Ricky Fritz and Precinct 2 commissioner Roy Idom.

The meeting will be held in the county courtroom on the third floor of the courthouse.

Swearing-in ceremonies of newly-elected county officials is set for 11 a.m. Wednesday.

UCO Textiles...

Spinning plant gearing up to re-open

By Wade Warren
SDN Managing Editor

When UCO Textiles chairman and CEO Philippe Vlerick was in Snyder to announce his company's intention to purchase the assets of Lorber Industries of Texas, he was asked when he wanted to re-open the plant.

He replied, "Yesterday."

That gave some indication of just how fast his company likes to move.

The deal on the plant was closed last week and work is now well underway to get the plant back in production in January.

"Our plan is to have a start-up crew in here Thursday to get things ready to run again," said UCO plant manager Jack Whitworth.

"We're looking to start with 18 employees and we're guessing it will take about three weeks to start some type of production

"It might not be at full strength, but we want to get it going again as soon as we can."

UCO plans to have 45 people on the Snyder payroll by the end of January, and depending on how well training goes, into full production by the end January.

"As we get cotton in, we'll go on line 24-hours-per-day, seven-days-per-week," said Whitworth.

Whitworth said the home office in Belgium is excited about getting the plant running again.

"Bart Van de Woestyne will be here the second week of January to look over the plant along with others from Belgium," said Whitworth.

Van de Woestyne is the president and chief operating officer of UCO Fabrics.

The plant will be spinning 100 percent cotton yarn for specialty denim products.

"What we produce here will go to UCO's plant in Rockingham, N.C., where they will dye it and weave it for specialty blue jeans," said Whitworth.

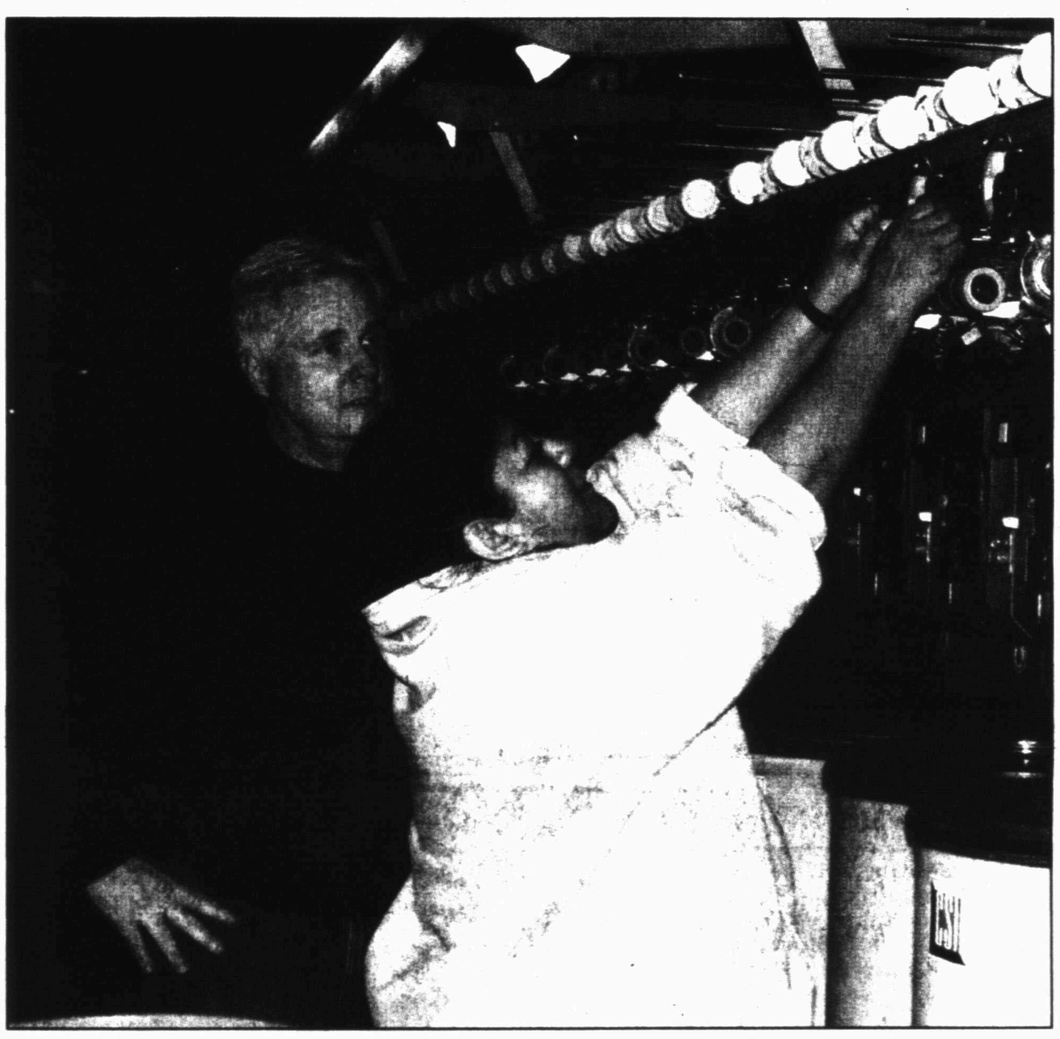
UCO makes high-end specialty denims, and not commodity denims.

Whitworth said the company would be buying West Texas cotton and prefers grade 42.

Plans are now to keep the Snyder location a spinning operation only.

"If there is any expansion here, it would be to expand the spinning capacity," said Whitworth. "If there is any expansion in the weaving operation, it would be in Rockingham."

"UCO is excited to be here, and I'm exited to be back," said Whitworth, who has worked for Lorber Industries in California since the Snyder plant was closed in October 2001.



GETTING READY – UCO Textile employee Sylvia Trevino does some maintenance work on spinning equipment at the former Lorber Industries facility under the direction of plant manager Jack Whitworth. A crew of 18 employees will begin the start-up work at the plant Thursday in anticipation of full production by the end of January. (SDN Staff Photo)

Church ending long career in education

By Wade Warren
SDN Managing Editor

The dean of public school superintendents in Scurry County will officially retire Tuesday as Jerry Church ends a 24-year tenure as head of the Hermleigh school district.

And as Frank Sinatra said in one of his songs, Church might also say, "Regrets, I've had a few, but too few to mention."

Church is leaving the district with an updated computer lab and other modern teaching equipment that would be the envy of any schools the size of Hermleigh, or even larger.



Jerry Church

"Over the last six years, we've put in close to a quarter of a million dollars worth of equipment and it's all been through grants," Church said proudly.

"The grants we've been able to obtain has been a salvation for us.

"We couldn't begin to offer the courses we now have without our distant learning center obtained through grant money."

Several Hermleigh students have taken dual credit courses on their campus that was offered by Western Texas College.

The biggest change in education since he started in Loraine has been in technology.

Just this past year, Hermleigh received a TIF grant that allowed the district to install a mobile laptop wireless lab.

"We can wheel the lab into any classroom and every student in the room will have instant access to the Internet," said Church.

"Classes over the Internet will get bigger and bigger, and we are equipped for it today.".

Church is a graduate of Texas Tech University where he majored in agriculture education.

He ranched a little in Tatum, N. M., following graduation and said the five inches of rain received one year made education look like the place to be.

He has also taught band, shorthand and speech.

"I guess my playing alto sax in the Tech band qualified me for my short band career," laughed Church.

"They needed a speech teacher so I inherited that job. The day I started teaching speech was the first day I had ever been in a speech class. And to top that off, the shorthand teacher didn't come back from the Christmas holidays and guess who got to teach that."

Church said no one factor prompted his retirement.

"Thirty-seven years in education is probably long enough."

Church said over the years he has been blessed with excellent faculty members and students.

"And all in all, we've had very good board members here," said Church.

"That's not to say we haven't had our differences. It's hard for some to realize that in public business, you can't do things the way you do in private business.

"That is often hard for board members to understand. We also have very little local control over our schools," added Church. "I would say that 95 percent of what we do in schools now comes from the Texas Education Agency.

"And the part that bothers me about that is 15 or 20 years ago, the TEA people in Austin were school people who had a hands on idea of what was going on in the real world. Now, nearly all of them have retired and the people at the agency are fresh out of college, just picked up their doctorate, or working on a doctorate.

"I think they pay too much attention to their books and the rules and regulations and don't understand the real world, one might have to make a decision that does not fit the books."

Church won't be totally out of the education picture, as his wife of some 36 years, Nelda, will continue teaching first grade at Roscoe.

Church plans on spending a lot of time raising horses "while I can still get on one."

As far as the future of the Hermleigh schools, Church said it will exist as long as the state lets it. "Our limiting factor is the lack of state funding and lack of students."

In 37 years of education, Church has taught and been associated with countless students.

"I still see some I taught in Loraine when I first started," said Church.

At a recent gathering, a man introduced himself and said proudly that Church had taught him when he was in the sixth grade.

"Those times are very gratifying," said Church. "Many of our students have gone on and done well with themselves.

"Maybe I touched them in some way to help."

2002 saw many changes in Snyder and the world

By Brian Brisendine
SDN Staff Writer

Like most before it, the year of 2002 saw good times and bad on both local and national fronts.

Snyder citizens welcomed the U.S. Air Force to town as that organization was fighting terror across the world. And we watched as instability plagued the national economy, while Snyder faired well with major investments in area oil fields and brisk home sales.

It was also a time of change locally as all three county schools were involved in searches for new superintendents and two Snyder bank presidents also retired.

Propelled by some more worldly events and in spite of others, life went on in West Texas.

Follow with us these next few days a wrap up of news events in Snyder and Scurry County during 2002.

January

Scurry County regained control of the coliseum on the first day of the year, after many months of debate over the fate of the facility.

Kaden Matthew Alarcon was the first baby born in Cogdell Hospital. The eight-pound boy arrived Jan. 2.

Two-term county judge Ricky Fritz announced he would not seek another term. Fritz later revealed plans to run Scurry Community Services after his mother, Shirley Fritz, retires at year's end.

Kinder Morgan CO2 Company purchased Torch Company's interest in the Snyder Gasoline Plant and became the plant's operator.

U.S. bombers blasted Taliban and al-Qaida weapons in final efforts to eradicate the remnants of the terrorist network in Afghanistan.

A high-speed pursuit that began in Big Spring screamed through Snyder and ended with the arrest of two teenagers just blocks from the courthouse square.

Snyder returned to the Middle Ages as more than 500 members of the Society for Creative Anachronism held its semi-annual Kingdom Coronation at the coliseum complete with jousting and sword fights.

Local doctor Jim Burleson carried the Olympic torch in a relay in Amarillo. The Winter Olympics were held in Salt Lake City.

Kmart Corp. filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in one of many of the largest corporate downfalls in history, which plagued the country throughout 2002.

February

Snyder High School moved to Class 3-A, as was expected by

See 2002, Page 12A

ASK US

Q—When is the construction work on the highway east of Ruidoso supposed to be finished?

A—The widening of Hwy. 70 to four lanes is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2004.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



Ina Brown...

...has lived in Snyder one year, moving from Slaton. Her husband, Art, works for Sunoco and the couple has two grown children and five grandchildren. Ina's favorite hobby is playing with her grandkids and she also enjoys reading books and magazines of any kind.

TODAY'S THOUGHT

One of the most time consuming things is to have an enemy.

—E. B. White

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DEC 29 2002

events

WHAT'S UP?

ONGOINGS

Retirement reception

A retirement reception in honor of Supt. Jerry Church will be held from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday at the Hermleigh High School cafeteria.

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.

Bible study tapes

Bible videos air each week on Channel 2. To be shown at 7 p.m. Monday are "Why Did God Separate the Jews from the Gentiles?" followed by "What's In It for Me?"

Lions Club meetings

Snyder Lions Club will not meet Tuesday. Meetings on Jan. 7 and Jan. 14 will be held at Snyder Country Club while repairs are being made at Martha Ann Woman's Club.

FBC services televised

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

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.

Windbreak trees

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

Bass Club meeting

The Snyder Bass Club will hold its first monthly meeting of 2003 at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 7, in the Kinder Morgan offices on U.S. 180.

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.

White Buffalo Festival T-shirts

White Buffalo T-shirts featuring a train are on sale at the Whistle Stop or the coliseum office for $7 each.

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.

FBC support groups

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

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.

Fastow home blaze...

Man accused of setting fire cracks cell window

HOUSTON (AP) — After a judge refused to lower his bail, a man charged with setting fire to the mansion once owned by former Enron Corp. chief financial officer Andrew Fastow cracked two holding cell windows in the criminal courthouse.

Robert Blakely McClendon then complained a few moments later on Friday of chest pains and was taken to LBJ Hospital. He was later released back to jail.

McClendon, 36, is charged with arson in the Dec. 1 fire at the mansion under construction, which Fastow sold amid legal troubles over the fall of Enron.

Before McClendon's informal bond hearing, he had refused to leave the holding cell but eventually came out after speaking to his attorney.

His attorney had argued that McClendon's previous criminal record, which includes a 15-year-old conviction for burglary of a motor vehicle and a 1995 deferred adjudication probation for theft, did not justify his $100,000 bail and asked that it be reduced to $30,000.

Prosecutor Kelly Siegler said that if McClendon made bail, he could do something unpredictable. "who knows what he's going to do? The problem with this defendant is for all these ridiculous reasons he's going around setting these fires."

The judge rejected lowering bail but allowed McClendon's attorney to request a formal hearing where he could present evidence on the record and any decision could be appealed.

McClendon was waiting for deputies to escort him back to jail when he apparently shattered two windows in the holding area. The crashes could be heard in the courtroom.

The behavior follows McClendon's apparent suicide attempt earlier this month after he was arrested.

Monahans woman gets $12,000 for bomb hitting home

MONAHANS (AP) — Gloria Aker got a late Christmas present this week when the U.S. Air Force agreed to settle a claim for damage it caused when it accidentally bombed her Monahans home in July.

Aker's West Texas home was hit by a dummy bomb accidentally dropped from an Air Force F-117A Nighthawk on a practice run from Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico.

Although the dummy didn't contain explosives, it pierced the roof of Aker's home, flew across a bathroom, slammed through a wall into a closet, then plowed six feet into the ground.

On top of that, a device used to locate the bomb discharged smoke throughout the house.

Aker was in her home with her two children when the bomb hit. Her daughter was at her side, but her son was in his bedroom, and she frantically called through the smoke for him. All three were shaken but unharmed.

Aker has been living with her parents while her house is repaired. There are still a few things to be done, such as replacing carpet that the Air Force ripped up when it retrieved the bomb, but she is getting ready to move back.

The children, however, don't have the same comfort level they once did in the house, she said.

"My kids are having a hard time. My son and my daughter, they have nightmares. They're not too excited about going home," said Aker, who said she also has bad dreams of something falling from the sky and triggering flames that engulf her home.

Negotiations to settle her claim dragged on for months, and Aker believed that the Air Force didn't care about her case. The Air Force said that wasn't true.

"We take every claim seriously," said Maj. Tina Barber-Matthew, director of public affairs at Holloman Air Force Base, home to the F-117As. "As a result, we must take the time to evaluate all aspects of the claim to ensure fairness for both the party making the claim and the U.S. government."

Aker said Air Force officials gave her $1,000 shortly after the accident, which paid for a motel and patching her roof, and offered a $5,000 settlement.

But as her expenses mounted to $12,000, she said, it was clear the Air Force deal wasn't good enough.

This week, however, the Air Force offered about $12,000, Barber-Matthew said. Aker has accepted the offer, said her attorney, Mike Milligan.

"She got what she asked for," Milligan said. "She's driving up (Friday) to sign the papers so she can get the check."

Aker will need the money to pay some of the contractors who worked on her home, including $6,000 owed for repair of her bathroom. She also borrowed $775 from Milligan to pay for repairs to the hole in the foundation.

Aker said her landlord, who is selling the house to her, has been understanding even though she missed two house payments.

KEY TO THE KINGDOM
Why did God Seperate the Jews From The Jews the Gentiles
IN SEARCH OF THE LORD'S WAY
What's In It for Me?
Cox Cable TV Channel 2,
Monday, Dec. 30, 7:00 pm

Golfers beat teen over stolen ball

LONGWOOD, Fla. (AP) — Two golfers were arrested for allegedly beating up a 14-year-old boy who took one of their balls, authorities said.

Gary Mottola, of Oviedo, said he was cutting across the Wekiva Golf Club's sixth hole when he saw a golf ball in a sand trap and took it.

Mottola and other witnesses told deputies that the ball's owner, Andrew Young, 41, of Longwood, and Richard Bailey, 44, of Lansing, Mich., kicked and punched the boy after one of the men tackled him and dragged him back to the course.

"All I did was take a ball," said Mottola, who suffered bruises and was treated at a hospital in Longwood, about 15 miles north of Orlando.

Young and Bailey were charged with misdemeanor battery, and each was released from Seminole County jail Friday after posting $500 bond.

Messages left for Young and Bailey at their homes were not immediately returned Friday. Sheriff's officials said the men denied hitting Mottola.

Today's chuckle

Town sold on Internet auction site

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Sold: a fixer-upper Northern California town, for nearly $1.8 million — on Internet auction site eBay. Now tiny Bridgeville waits to see who its new owner is.

If the deal goes through as expected, 82 acres of Bridgeville will go to the unidentified buyer who put in a bid for $1,777,877 just seconds before the Internet auction closed Friday.



Joe Lapple, who owns Bridgeville along with his wife Elizabeth, said he hopes the new owner will fix up the town, which dates back to the 19th century. But the Lapples won't be hanging around to find out. They've already purchased a new home in Fortuna, about 25 miles away.

"We were just waiting to sell this town and pack up all our stuff and be gone," said Joe Lapple.

Bridgeville is the first town to be sold on the Web site, said eBay spokesman Kevin Pursglove. Almost 250 bids were cast during the town's month on the electronic auction block.

"I would say that's above average. That's a pretty heavy level of bidding activity," Pursglove said.

The town, which Elizabeth Lapple acknowledged was a fixer-upper, comes complete with a post office, a mile and a half of river bank, a cemetery and more than a dozen cabins and houses. "Your own zip code will now be 95526," the eBay description reads.

Bidding went well beyond the asking price of $775,000. It started Nov. 27 at $5,000.

Bridgeville is located 260 miles north of San Francisco in rural Humboldt County. Lapple and her husband Joe have owned the town since 1985.

After conventional means of selling proved unsuccessful, the Lapples decided to try their luck on eBay. They say they put the town up for auction because they couldn't afford the estimated cost of renovating it — about $200,000.

Joe Lapple said the highest bid was more than he expected.

"A million and a half, I figured that was the right price," he said.

Final bids for real estate posted on eBay aren't binding.

"It's up to the seller and the high bidder to negotiate how they are going to consummate the deal" after bidding ends, Pursglove said. "They'll close the deal offline."

Although there's been interest in the property over the years, no one ever met the asking price — much less offered more than twice that price — until it was posted on eBay.

Texas still leads in execution numbers

FORT WORTH (AP) — Texas bucked a trend showing fewer states carrying out the death penalty in 2002, according to a study that showed the number of states executing inmates fell to a nine-year low.

In several states, fewer people were executed than last year.

Texas, meanwhile, executed 33 people — almost double the 17 lethal injections administered in 2001 — and recaptured its standing as No. 1 in executions in the nation.

Since resuming executions 20 years ago, 298 Texas inmates have been executed, far more than in any other state. The 17 executions in Texas in 2001 represented a sharp drop for the state, which executed a record 40 people in 2000 and has executed an average of 22 inmates annually since 1992.

"What we are finding is that the use of the death penalty is becoming more and more concentrated in Texas and few other states in the South," said Richard Dieter, who heads the Washington-based Death Penalty Information Center, an anti-death-penalty group that published the study.

"And increasingly, Texas is finding itself standing alone in its increasing application of the death penalty."

Executions in 2002 declined sharply in Oklahoma, which last year supplanted Texas as the nation's leader when it executed 18 inmates. This year, Oklahoma put seven inmates to death. Missouri saw a slight decline — from seven in 2001 to six this year, as did North Carolina, which went from five to two.

In all, only 13 states sent inmates to the death chamber in 2002, the lowest number since 1993, according to the study.

Six states and the federal government, which executed inmates in 2001, executed no one this year.

Although the total number of executions in the United States increased from 66 last year to 71 this year, the number would have declined had Texas not sharply increased its share from 17 to 33, Dieter said.

But Dudley Sharp, a spokesman for the Texas crime-victim advocacy group Justice For All, said executions slowed because the U.S. Supreme Court took up two landmark death-penalty cases, not because of waning public support.

The high court considered whether states could execute mentally retarded inmates and whether a judge or a jury should decide on the aggravating circumstances that might elevate murder to capital murder.

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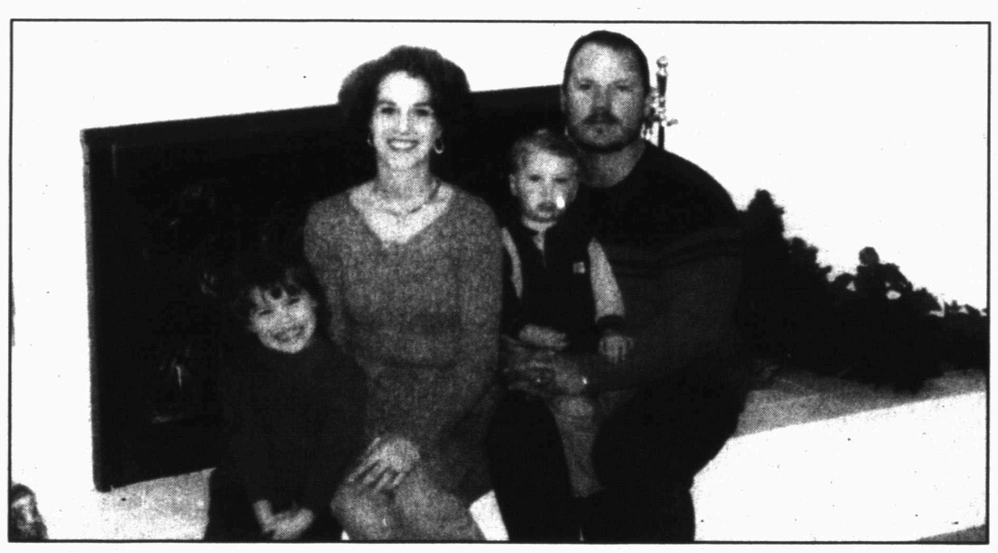
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Wade Warren, Managing Editor
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NEW NAME, NEW OWNERS - SAME FRIENDLY PROFESSIONAL SERVICE
RE-OPENING JANUARY 2



Robbie, Sarah, Bethany & Gunnar Jamison are the new proud owners of the **Auto Clinic** (formerly Davenport Auto Clinic), where Robbie has worked for the past seven and one-half years. The Jamisons would appreciate the continued support of all Davenport customers. They would like to invite you to come see all the changes being made, and give them the opportunity to serve you with all your automotive repair needs.

Sarah would like to thank her customers and friends at Elizabeth Potts Realtors, where she has worked for the past five years. She appreciates the trust that was placed in her and the opportunity to serve the community. She asks that she be allowed to serve you, the customer, in a new way at the **Auto Clinic**.

The **Auto Clinic** has been in business for over 20 years and is located at 405 26th Street, behind Skinny's on Coliseum Drive.

AUTO CLINIC

405 26th Street, Snyder, Texas
(Behind Skinny's on Coliseum Dr.)
915-573-0495
Robbie & Sarah Jamison, Owners

Whatever happened to...

Katie Thornton, daughter of Mike and Rebekah Thornton, is a 1996 graduate of Snyder High School where she was active in the theatre department and choir.



Katie Thornton 1996



Katie Thornton 2002

Under the direction of the late Jerry Worsham, Katie was a member of several state UIL casts that earned state honors. Individually, she was the recipient of numerous awards for her roles in SHS competitive productions.

As a result of her efforts in the drama program at SHS, Katie attended the Honors Colloquium at UT Austin and received a theatre scholarship. After three years at UT, she transferred to Oklahoma City University where she performed in leading roles in *Tartuffe* and *Sylvia*.

Upon graduation from OCU with a bachelor of arts in theatre studies in the fall of 2000, she was accepted at two major universities in Ireland for graduate studies (Trinity University in Dublin and National University of Ireland in Galway). As one of 20 international students accepted that year, she chose the National University of Ireland for her master's degree in theatre studies, graduating in the fall of 2002 with honors.

Presently, Katie is in Snyder for the holidays and will return to her home in London in early February where she will actively pursue a position with one of London's theatre companies.

Snyder, Ira and Hermleigh grads... WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Name _____

Year graduated _____

Parent's name _____

Some general high school activities for which they might be remembered _____

_____

_____

_____

After graduation they (college, military, etc.) _____

_____

_____

_____

Married to _____

Now live in _____

Children _____

_____

Professional work or accomplishment _____

_____

_____

Anything additional _____

_____

_____

Current picture?

Readers are invited to submit information and pictures for this feature. Bring by Snyder Daily News or mail to Box 949 in Snyder, 79550

Sierra Club seeks help to identify special spots

DALLAS (AP) — The pressures of development are creating uncertain futures for natural areas all over Texas, according to a Sierra Club report.

The organization tapped some of its 23,000 members in Texas to identify many of the state's "special places," as well as the threats they face and possible means of saving them.

The places range from the state's watery northeast at Caddo Lake to its hard, dry southwest at Big Bend. In between are coastal marshes and Hill Country canyons.

The threats run the gamut from water wars to suburban expansion — a phenomenon that is consuming about one square mile of Texas' open space every four days, according to some estimates.

In some cases, the group says, only state or federal action will protect the endangered resources. But in others the solution is likely to be a local one: a city or county land-use decision, or land acquisition by a local government or conservation group.

Some tracts are part of the historical habitat of endangered species, such as the hilly Cedar Hill area, where a black-capped vireo might still sing in some isolated spot.

"As long as we keep losing these spaces, we're going to lose a lot of these species," said Rita Beving, conservation co-chairwoman of the Dallas Sierra Club.

GUARANTEED ANNUITIES

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Cloning claim sets off debate

WASHINGTON (AP) — Real or hoax, the claim that the world's first human clone has been born puts the next step squarely into Congress' court: Will it ban baby-making via cloning?

President Bush led a conservative drumbeat Friday urging lawmakers to take that step. But even a ban would reach only so far — presumably people could still go abroad to seek cloning.

The nation has no specific law against human cloning. But the Food and Drug Administration, which regulates human experiments, contends that its regulations forbid human cloning without prior agency permission — permission it has no intention of giving.

FDA officials are investigating whether Clonaid, a company that claimed to have produced the cloned baby girl born to an American woman, illegally performed any of the work on U.S. soil.

There is broad support in Congress for an overt ban of cloning to produce babies, partly from concern that FDA's authority won't hold up in court.

But many senators are not averse to cloning embryos solely for research that could cure diseases such as Alzheimer's or diabetes, and they blocked passage of legislation that would ban that type of cloning, too.

Now the question is whether the uproar over an alleged cloned baby will break that stalemate and whether Bush and his allies would succeed in also banning the cloning of embryonic cells.

Clonaid's announcement "should serve as a chilling reminder that individuals are still trying to clone human beings," said incoming Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn., a physician who backs a ban on all forms of human cloning.

Lawmakers expressed skepticism Friday that Clonaid, a company formed by a sect that believes in extraterrestrials, had indeed produced a clone. Still, leading Republicans, backed by some powerful religious groups, called for a quick ban when Congress returns next month.

"The president believes, like most Americans, that human cloning is deeply troubling," said White House spokesman Scott McClellan. "Despite the widespread skepticism among scientists and medical professionals about today's announcement, it underscores the need for the new Congress to act."

12 women now allege sexual harassment in city's lockup

HALTOM CITY (AP) — Four women who say they were sexually harassed while serving time in the Haltom City Jail have filed federal civil rights lawsuits against the city, bringing to 12 the number of women alleging abuse ranging from verbal harassment to rape.

Three of the women who filed the latest lawsuits name Clint Wade Weaver as the jailer who harassed them. He is also named in several of the previously filed lawsuits.

Weaver, of Azle, pleaded guilty in March to a misdemeanor charge of official oppression after a woman said she was forced to have sex in exchange for early release from the jail.

He was sentenced to two years' probation. He was indicted in October on one count of sexual assault and two counts of improper sexual activity with a person in custody in connection with treatment of female inmates.

Haltom City officials maintain that Weaver is the only jailer who abused inmates.

The city's attorney, Jim Jeffrey, has asked U.S. District Judge Terry Means to dismiss the first eight lawsuits.

Jeffrey was unavailable to comment Friday on the most recent lawsuits, and city officials said they had not seen them.

According to allegations in the latest lawsuits, a woman who was 17 at the time was forced to strip in front of a male guard. Like other female inmates, she had to wear a one-piece jumpsuit without underwear. Because of the jumpsuit's design, her breasts were exposed when she used the toilet.

The woman and her husband tried to file a complaint against the jailer but came to believe that "police in Haltom City would not investigate one of their own."

East Texas officer shot twice by own revolver

EUSTACE, Tex. (AP) — One of the four police officers in the East Texas town of Caney City was shot twice in the chest with his own gun early Friday but wasn't injured because he was wearing a bulletproof vest, authorities said.

A 26-year-old suspect was arrested on attempted capital murder charges hours later, after a manhunt in East Texas.

Police said John Glen Holloway fled after shooting Caney City police officer Michael Allen, 29, in the chest.

"We're just elated that nobody was injured," Lt. Pat McWilliams of the Henderson County Sheriff's Office told the Tyler Morning Telegraph. "This was a very volatile situation and it could have gone the other way."

McWilliams said Allen was investigating the possibility of a burglary of an open soda machine around 4:30 a.m. when he encountered the suspect.

"The officer questioned Holloway and in the process he took the officer's gun and shot him two times," he said.

The officer, who was uninjured, alerted the Henderson County Sheriff's Office to the fleeing subject, McWilliams said.

Caney City police chief Charles Reno said Allen, who has been with the department for more than two years, will be off work for a mandatory seven-day period of counseling.

All Friends of Hermleigh I.S.D. are Invited to A Retirement Reception for Jerry Church, Superintendent December 29, 2002 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Hermleigh High School Cafeteria

events LOTTO TEXAS TEXAS LOTTERY RESULTS

Cash 5

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Cash Five numbers drawn Friday by the Texas Lottery:

2-7-10-23-31

Texas Two Step

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Texas Two Step numbers drawn Friday by the Texas Lottery:

3-4-22-26

Bonus number 29

Estimated jackpot: $200,000

Pick 3

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Friday night by the Texas Lottery, in order:

5-7-8

The Food Cupboard would like to thank all the community for helping with the food drives and the coat drive, and a special thanks to:

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Public Records

Marriage License

Miguel Orihuela Martinez and Cecilia Cruz Favela, both of Snyder.

Hestroverto Nicholas Martinez of Elmendorf AFB, Ark., and Laura Gonzales of Snyder.

Cory John Trujillo and Leslie Janelle Deere, both of Snyder.

Deed Records

Jackson P. Ellis, Barbara Smith, Renee Norwood, Jimmie Nail, Steve Nail Jr., Cindi Johnson and Shane Nail to Jackie W. Smith, a 0.953-acre tract in Section 120, Block 97, H&TC survey.

Travis E. and Helen Joyce Hatter to Scurry County, 22.383 acres in Tracts 65 and 68 of the Dallas Trust and Savings Bank Subdivision of the Grimes Ranch Lands, Sections 11 and 12, Block 1, J.P. Smith survey.

Travis E. and Helen Joyce Hatter to Scurry County, 130.639 acres in Tracts 61-62 and 64-65 of the Dallas Trust and Savings Bank Subdivision of the Grimes Ranch Lands, Section 12 and 13, Block 1, J.P. Smith survey.

Bennie Joe and Shirley Ann Morrison to Jeffery Don and Katherine Ann Kellner, a 0.5967-acret tract in the northwest one-quarter of Section 119, Block 97, H&TC survey.

Douglas G. and Belinda Foster to Rodney G. Foster, 201.3 acres in the west one-half of Section 236, Block 3, H&TC survey.

Linda Davenport, individually and dba Davenport's Auto Clinic to Robbie and Sarah Jamison, tract one being 1.104 acres being part of Lots 1, 2 and 4 and all of Lot 3 in Block 14 of the Grayum and Nelson Heights Addition; tract two being a 0.254-acre tract in Lots 1 and 2 of Block 14, Grayum and Nelson Heights Addition.

Stanley L. Clark to E.L. Farmer and Co., Lots 4-6 in Block 21 of the W.L. Gross Subdivision of the Scarborough Addition.

Clyde Dennis and Ben Dennis to Rose Nell Walker, Lot 4 in Block 4 of the Helm Heights Addition.

Rose Nell Walker to Pearlie Joe Beverly, Lot 4 in Block 4 of the Helms Heights Addition.

Tommy E. Daves to Wayne F. Bethel, tract one being 1.50 acres in the southwest one-quarter of Section 144, Block 3, H&GN survey; tract two being the south one-half of the southwest one-quarter of Section 144, Block 3, H&GN survey.

Wayne F. Bethel to Dave and Kimberly Lane, 8.034 acres out of the southwest one-half of the southwest one-quarter of Section 144, Block 3, H&GN survey.

U.S. frustrated by North Korea

WASHINGTON (AP) — Frustrated by North Korea's relentless march toward building new nuclear weapons, top Bush administration officials are pondering ways — short of force — to compel Pyongyang to change course.

One would be to drive home the point to South Korea, China, Japan, Russia and other countries that North Korea is at odds with the world, not just the United States.

That message is likely to be reinforced in a probable trip to the region by Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, who already had been considering a visit to Seoul for talks with the new South Korean government.

The administration also is quietly encouraging the U.N. monitoring agency, whose inspectors were expelled by North Korea, to take the crisis to the Security Council. U.S. officials said they were not campaigning for the move overtly because they fear backlash from allies already dubious about Bush's use of the United Nations to pursue a tough line against Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

Administration rhetoric is taking an increasingly higher pitch but has failed to deter North Korea from steps that U.S. analysts fear could result within months in production of new atomic weapons on top of the one or two weapons Pyongyang is believed to already have.

While President Bush settled into a weeklong stay at his Texas ranch, Secretary of State Colin Powell and other top administration officials met Friday at the White House to consider how to fine-tune a U.S. policy that is mostly rhetorical.

Meanwhile, North Korea expelled U.N. inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency and announced in a flash of renewed defiance that it would reopen a laboratory for the production of plutonium.

Bush has ordered a no-compromise policy that would require North Korea to halt its nuclear weapons program before the administration would consider talking with Pyongyang or improving a shattered relationship.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan told reporters in Crawford, Texas, where Bush was vacationing, "North Korea's actions are a challenge to all responsible nations."

"We call on the regime in North Korea to reverse its current course," he said.

Privately, administration officials were pleased with the announcement that the U.N. inspectors were not leaving North Korea now despite the order to go, and they were hoping for similar resolve from Asian leaders.

At the same time, the White House was careful to say again that military action against North Korea was not being contemplated.

"We seek a peaceful resolution," spokesman McClellan said. "I think for now we need to let the discussions happen with our friends and allies about the next steps that we take."

Congressional doubts that the administration was dealing creatively with the nuclear threat, exacerbated by the expulsion of the inspectors, was voiced by Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., who plans to challenge Bush for re-election.

"What happened in North Korea today is predictable and totally anticipated based on this administration's complete avoidance of a responsible approach to North Korea in over a year and a half," Kerry said.

On taking office, Bush ordered a reassessment of the Clinton administration's policy that had produced a freeze on a North Korean nuclear program in exchange for energy supplies.

In July 2001, Bush offered Pyongyang a comprehensive dialogue. But last summer, the administration concluded North Korea had started a uranium enrichment program.

In October, Kelly went to Pyongyang with the message that North Korea must suspend its nuclear program before serious talks could start.

The message was ignored, but North Korea acknowledged that it had a program.

Eagle Boy Scout expelled for being athiest to appeal decision

SEATTLE (AP) — An Eagle Scout who was expelled from the Boy Scouts of America after he refused to declare a belief in God is appealing the decision.

Darrell Lambert, 19, who had earned 37 merit badges in a decade with the organization, was told in November he could no longer belong to the Boy Scouts after he revealed he was an atheist.

"Teaching boys to mistrust and reject nonbelievers makes a mockery of the true moral values of Scouts," Lambert wrote in a letter to the organization. "I, personally, have not imposed my beliefs on other Scouts and ask only to be given the same consideration in return."

Interim senator takes parting shot

WASHINGTON (AP) — As Minnesota Sen. Dean Barkley lights a cigar in his temporary office on Capitol Hill, it's clear his coach is turning into a pumpkin.

The walls are bare, the drawers empty. About the only thing on his desk is a can of maple syrup, a goodbye present from the Senate's only other independent, Jim Jeffords of Vermont.

But Barkley can take satisfaction as he wraps up his two-month stint, completing the term of the late Sen. Paul Wellstone, D-Minn. After being appointed by Gov. Jesse Ventura, the interim senator accomplished his three main goals: passage of a homeland security department, creation of a permanent Wellstone memorial, and continuation of Minnesota's welfare waiver.

"I'm quite proud of what I've been able to do," he said Friday in an interview.

Yet Barkley, 52, an easygoing rugby player who was Ventura's campaign chairman in 1998, said he's got a "sinking feeling" about Washington.

"I highly doubt I'll ever get back to this position the old-fashioned way," said Barkley, who came in third in his 1994 and 1996 Senate campaigns which were won by Republican Rod Grams and Wellstone, respectively. "The trend in this town is all about money. Over half of the new members are millionaires."

"This is the only place in America where bribery is legal and sanctified, because it's political," he added, referring to campaign contributions. His solution is the same as Wellstone's: publicly financed elections.

Not that Barkley won't benefit monetarily from the experience. He said he's signed up with two speakers bureaus in town to give speeches at $12,500 each. And he's writing a book about his time in Washington, although he won't shop for a publisher until after his term ends Jan. 3.

"I've got to make money like everybody else," he said.

The lawyer and former car-wash owner is also talking to law firms in Washington and Minnesota, although his preference is to return home. He said he hopes to avoid lobbying.

Despite his dour assessment of Washington, Barkley said he liked the place on a personal level. Other senators, from Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., to Fred Thompson, R-Tenn., were respectful and accepting of him, he said.

"I really enjoyed sitting on the Senate floor and going to the cloakroom and talking to senators and building relationships," he said. He also got a kick out of meeting President Bush in the Oval Office.

Barkley was a sought-out figure when he arrived in Washington just two days after the November elections. Everybody from Bush to Senate leaders to journalists wanted a piece of him.

Both parties in the evenly divided Senate courted him to join their caucus. In the end, Barkley decided to stay an independent, which kept the Senate in Democratic hands, at least temporarily, and he maintained and used the leverage his unique position provided.

When the Senate was debating a Republican bill to create a Homeland Security Department, Barkley would not commit to voting for it until the Bush administration committed to a Minnesota welfare waiver — even though he had planned to vote for it all along.

Barkley said his toughest task was delivering a eulogy from the Senate floor for Wellstone, who was killed in a plane crash Oct. 25 with his wife Sheila, daughter Marcia Wellstone Markuson, and five others.

"I get to the Senate floor for the first time and there's his desk with the black shroud and the flowers on it," Barkley said. "The image of his shrouded desk is one I'll never forget."

One of Barkley's top priorities was paying homage to Wellstone through a "living memorial," and he was able to deliver. Barkley won passage of a bill authorizing $10 million toward the creation of an immigrant community center in St. Paul, Minn., in honor of Paul and Sheila Wellstone.

The late senator had championed immigrant causes, especially on behalf of the Hmong, a Laotian ethnic group that settled in Minnesota.

School vouchers have chance with Republicans in charge

AUSTIN (AP) — It wasn't a hot topic on the campaign trail, but using taxpayer money to send children to private schools is shaping up as one of the legislative session's premier issues.

Democrats have blocked school-voucher legislation in the past, but the outcome might be different next year.

Republicans will control both houses of the Legislature for the first time since the Civil War, plus the governor's mansion, and many GOP leaders support school vouchers.

Gov. Rick Perry, Lt. Gov.-elect David Dewhurst and presumptive House speaker Tom Craddick all favor a pilot voucher program.

"I'm for anything that will improve education," Craddick told The Associated Press. "I think that education is the key for this state, so I'm for trying anything new."

Vouchers will also enjoy support from some Democrats, such as Rep. Ron Wilson from Houston, who filed a bill proposing a pilot program.

"I want to hit those kids who are failing," Wilson said. "The reason we need the program is simply because the kids are failing and the public education system cannot handle them."

In Texas and other states, voucher supporters also have been emboldened by the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in June that taxpayer funds could go to religious schools as long as families have other options, such as nonreligious schools.

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Financial Focus

Offering Retirement Plan Can Give You Tax Benefits

If you're a small-business owner looking back on your financial situation for 2002, you may be wondering if you could have found more ways to reduce your taxes. Here's one possibility to consider for 2003: Start a retirement plan.

You can now receive a tax credit for establishing a new retirement plan, provided you have less than 100 employees. Your credit is worth $500 — 50 percent of the first $1,000 of qualified startup costs — in the first year of your new plan and in each of the two following years. While the tax credit is certainly nice, it only extends for a few years. But once you establish a retirement plan, it can provide you with other tax benefits indefinitely.

The contributions you make to your employees' plans are deductible to your business. And, since you'll be participating in the plan, you'll also be making deductible contributions on your own behalf. Plus, your earnings will grow on a tax-deferred basis, which means your retirement savings will accumulate faster than they would if placed in a vehicle on which you paid taxes every year.

So, there you have it: A tax credit for opening your retirement plan, tax-deductible contributions and tax-deferred earnings. All in all, it's clear that, from a tax standpoint, a retirement plan can help you significantly.

Which type of plan should you choose? There's no one right answer for every business owner. However, here are a few of the most popular plans out there:

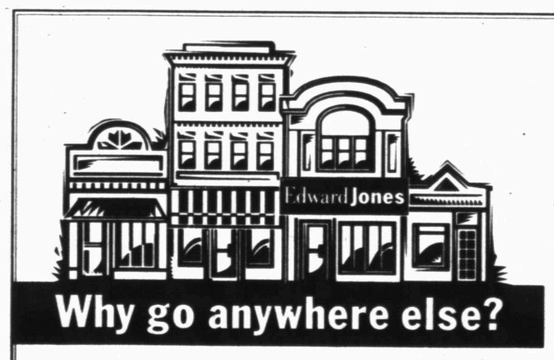
•**SIMPLE IRA** — As the name suggests, a SIMPLE IRA is quite easy to set up and inexpensive to administer. In 2003, employees can contribute up to $8,000 to their SIMPLE IRA, which can be funded with virtually any type of investment. Your business is generally required to match your employees' contributions up to three percent of their salary, unless you decide to put in two percent of each eligible employee's compensation. If you choose the matching option, you can reduce the match to between one and three percent in two of every five years.

•**SEP-IRA** — Like the SIMPLE plan, a SEP-IRA is inexpensive to set up and easy to administer. Your company's contributions can be up to 25 percent of an employee's annual compensation, subject to maximum dollar amounts permitted by the IRS. And you have the flexibility to reduce, increase or stop contributions at any time.

•**Profit-sharing plan** — With a profit-sharing plan, you can provide an incentive to employees by linking their contributions to your business' performance. You can contribute up to 25 percent of the annual compensation of eligible employees, but you're free to determine the contribution amount every year.

You may be wondering about opening a **401(k) plan**. While small businesses are certainly eligible to set up a 401(k), the expense and administrative details have led most owners to consider one of the plans listed above. But in recent years, some financial institutions have begun offering small businesses a less costly and less complex 401(k) — so it could be an option for you.

See your tax advisor before you decide on a retirement plan. Once you find a plan that's right for your needs, put it to work. Your employees will be happy, and, when tax time rolls around, so will you.



Date Books

Saturday, Dec. 28, 2002

Today is the 362nd day of 2002 and the eighth day of winter.

TODAY'S HISTORY: On this day in 1846, Iowa became the 29th state of the Union.

On this day in 1908, an earthquake in Messina, Sicily, killed nearly 80,000 people.

On this day in 1945, the Pledge of Allegiance was officially recognized by the U.S. Congress. In 1954, the Knights of Columbus persuaded Congress to add the words "under God" to the pledge.

BIRTHDAYS: Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924), U.S. president; Earl "Fatha" Hines (1905-1983), musician; Terry Sawchuck (1929-1970), hockey great; Maggie Smith (1934-), actress, is 68; Denzel Washington (1954-), actor, is 48.

TODAY'S SPORTS: On this day in 1958, the Baltimore Colts defeated the New York Giants 23-17 in overtime. This game has since been called by many the "Greatest Game Ever Played."

TODAY'S QUOTE: "America was established not to create wealth but to realize a vision, to realize an ideal — to discover and maintain liberty among men." — Woodrow Wilson

TODAY'S MOON: Between last quarter (Dec. 26) and new moon (Jan 2).

Sunday, Dec. 29, 2002

Today is the 363rd day of 2002 and the ninth day of winter.

TODAY'S HISTORY: On this day in 1845, Texas became the 28th state of the Union.

On this day in 1890, more than 200 American Indian men, women and children were massacred by the U.S. 7th Cavalry at Wounded Knee Creek, S.D.

On this day in 1916, Russian monk and mystic Grigori Efimovich Novjkh, nicknamed Rasputin, was assassinated.

BIRTHDAYS: Charles Goodyear (1800-1860), inventor; Andrew Johnson (1808-1875), U.S. president; Mary Tyler Moore (1937-), actress, is 65; Jon Voight (1938-), actor, is 64; Ted Danson (1947-), actor, is 55.

TODAY'S SPORTS: On this day in 1978, Woody Hayes, football coach for Ohio State, punched a player of the opposing team after the player intercepted a pass in the final minutes of a close game. Hayes was subsequently fired and never coached again.

TODAY'S QUOTE: "Take chances, make mistakes. That's how you grow. Pain nourishes your courage. You have to fail in order to practice being brave." — Mary Tyler Moore

TODAY'S MOON: Between last quarter (Dec. 26) and new moon (Jan 2).

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Local/Na



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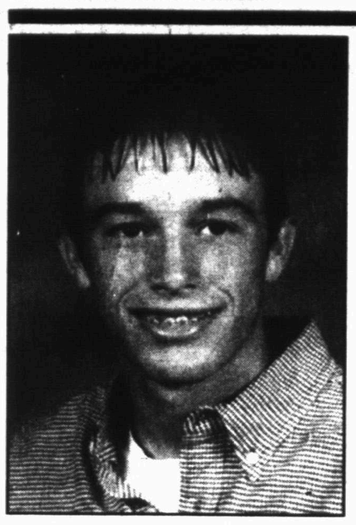
The average 30-year fixed-ra to 5.93 percent ing Dec. 27, dow cent in the prev die Mac report nationwide surv rates.

This week's r est since the began tracking rates in 1971. previous record ed by Freddie cent set in the n ber.

That marked this year that benchmark mor by Freddie Mac Records that re than Freddie week's 30-year the lowest since die Mac spoke Fitzpatrick.

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Brady Reed

Reed again named to Who's Who

Brady Don Reed, Snyder High School senior, has been selected for Who's Who Among American High School Students for the second consecutive year.

A member of First Baptist Church and active in its youth program, Reed is senior class vice president and plays golf for the Snyder Tigers. He also enjoys hunting and fishing.

He is the sons of Mel and Sheryll Reed of Snyder.

Phillip Huff earns degree

SEARCY, Ark. — Phillip D. Huff, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dale Huff of Snyder, was among 270 graduating seniors who received diplomas in commencement exercises at Harding University on Dec. 14.

Huff earned a bachelor of science degree, majoring in mathematics.

Harding is the largest private university in Arkansas with an enrollment of 5,276 students.

Karol Dent is ASU graduate

SAN ANGELO — Karol E. Dent of Snyder was awarded a bachelor of science degree, cum laude, at the fall commencement ceremony held Dec. 13 at Angelo State University.

Frazier winner of SDN subscription

Alvin Frazier of 3605 Hill Ave. was the December winner of a year's subscription to the Snyder Daily News.

A drawing is held each month for all who renew subscriptions for six months are more.

Demos urge quick fix to jobless benefits

WASHINGTON (AP) — Time has run out for nearly 800,000 Americans relying on federal unemployment benefits. But Congress can start off the new year right by passing an extension that would cover all people who still cannot find work, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., said Saturday.

The former first lady's comments, coming in the weekly Democratic radio address, marked a return to the national stage. Since her election two years ago, she has focused on issues affecting her New York constituents and on developing relationships with Senate colleagues.

Clinton and her aides have said consistently that she does not plan to run for president in 2004. But a poll of Democrats released last weekend showed she would lead the field of likely party candidates should she seek the nomination.

Democrats, sensing political opportunity in the loss of unemployment benefits, have blamed Republicans and President Bush, and put Clinton center stage Saturday to deliver the punch.

In the address, Clinton said that another 13-week extension of federal unemployment benefits is smart economic policy, citing a Labor Department study that said each dollar generates $2.15 in the economy.

"We owe hard-working Americans, and our own economy, nothing less in the new year," she said. "It will come too late for this holiday season. But it's never too late to do the right thing."

Congress left for the year without extending the federal benefits, meaning that 750,000 to 800,000 unemployed workers were cut off Saturday. An additional 95,000 jobless workers will exhaust their state benefits each week afterward. Already, 1 million people have used all of their benefits.

There were two competing bills that languished: a $5 billion plan from the Democratic-controlled Senate that would have extended benefits 13 weeks for people now receiving them or who were newly eligible, and a $900 million plan from the GOP-led House for five extra weeks for workers in a few states with high unemployment rates.

Clinton said House Republicans are to blame for their refusal to consider the Senate plan. "They ran out the clock and went home for the holidays without even allowing a simple vote," she said.

As the last Congress neared its final days, with the rival Senate and House bills going nowhere, the White House stayed on the sidelines.

With lawmakers at an impasse, Bush refused to lend his clout to break the logjam until two weeks ago, more than three weeks after Congress had already left town. In his weekly radio address on Dec. 14 and again Saturday, Bush urged Congress to make a retroactive extension a priority in January. But he did not say which plan he supported, who should be covered and for how long.

"Now that the president has endorsed this extension, I urge him to support a meaningful plan that extends benefits for 13-weeks and covers people who have exhausted all of their benefits," Clinton said. "Anything less would leave millions of Americans to begin the New Year with empty pockets and little hope."

In the last recession of the early 1990s, benefits were extended five times. But so far, Congress has authorized only one extension in the current recession. Republicans claim the Senate plan is too costly. But Clinton said the $24 billion in the unemployment insurance trust fund is "much more than enough."

For first time, federal printing office had to bid on budget job

WASHINGTON (AP) — The charts, graphs and endless numbers that comprise the next $2 trillion-plus federal budget will be produced, as before, by the Government Printing Office. Behind that simple fact is a break with 81 years of tradition.

For the first time since the initial budget was printed in 1921, the nation's public printer had to earn the job through competitive bidding.

The Government Printing Office won with an offer of $387,000, the Office of Management and Budget announced this week, a sharp reduction from the more than $500,000 the GPO charged last year. Based on a comparable amount of work, the estimated savings are $118,370, the budget office said.

The White House budget office and the printing office have been feuding over the need for competition, with Bush administration officials arguing it would save money and the GPO insisting the bidding was unnecessary.

After the announcement, both sides claimed victory. The administration touted the savings; the printing office said the competition proved that nobody could beat its price.

The budget for the upcoming fiscal year is to be released Feb. 3. The GPO will print at least four of the five volumes; one might be handled by a private printer if, as last year, the White House wants special color technology.

The GPO also makes the budget available on compact disks and over the Internet.

The printing office was founded in 1861 to separate the government's printing work from political patronage.

The budget work bidding won't end the dispute between the White House and the GPO.

Mitchell Daniels Jr., the director of the Office of Management and Budget, announced in May the administration would require competitive bids for executive branch printing of all types, which now costs $650 million a year.

He estimated the change would save taxpayers $50 million to $70 million annually in surcharges that agencies now pay the printing office.

Printing office spokesman Andrew Sherman has disputed those numbers, pointing out the GPO already subcontracts 75 percent of its work to private companies that must bid for the jobs.

Each federal agency would have to hire its own experts to handle the competition now consolidated at the centralized printing office, Sherman said.

Daniels' spokesman, Trent Duffy, said the bidding for the budget "proves competition works. This represents the potential and opportunity for massive savings across the government when competition is introduced in the contracting process," he said.

Sherman said the GPO's competitive victory shows his office has "the most efficient way to get it done." Only the printing office has a distribution system to send copies to all federal agencies, members of Congress, the courts and 1,200 designated libraries where the public can view the documents, he said.

"No private printer could do that," he said. Asked how the GPO could now do the job for less, Sherman responded, "We sharpened our pencils and re-engineered our processes to give them a better price."

Girl phones for help before murder-suicide

DENVER (AP) — An 8-year-old called 911 and told a dispatcher that her father had threatened to "pop" her stepmother with a handgun. Nine minutes later, police found the girl, her parents and her 4-year-old half-brother dead.

Funeral services were held Friday for the Hernandez family, victims of a murder-suicide in the middle-class neighborhood of Colorado Springs, about 60 miles south of Denver.

Autopsies indicated that Ernest Hernandez, 40, shot his common-law wife, Tosha Wasserburger, 29; Michaela, 8; and Mykel, 4, with an automatic handgun before killing himself, the El Paso County coroner's office said. Hernandez was drunk at the time, officials said.

Michaela, a second-grader, called police at 3:22 a.m. Dec. 20 and said her parents were fighting. "My dad slapped her in her face and just pushed her back," she said.

She told the dispatcher she heard her father load a gun. "My dad's holding the gun telling that he'd pop my stepmom Tosha," she said.

At the end of the three-minute call, the dispatcher assured Michaela that officers were on the way and reminded her to stay safe and remain on the line.

Then there was a long pause and her stepmother was heard saying "She's calling 911." The phone went dead. Hernandez answered the phone when the dispatcher called back. He said, "911. Who called 911?" before hanging up.

A second call was picked up by the answering machine for Hernandez's business.

Officers arrived at the rented house nine minutes later, police spokesman Lt. Skip Arms said Friday. When no one answered the door, they kicked in the front door and found the bodies in a downstairs bedroom.

Hernandez had both personal and financial problems. His heating and air conditioning company had been struggling, and the bank was about to repossess the company van, according to court records.

Police said Friday that Hernandez had lost his bid to win full custody of Michaela, his daughter from a previous marriage, on Dec. 19, the day before the slayings.

Hernandez went out drinking after the hearing, police said.

Neighbors recalled the family as happy, with the two children often playing in the front yard with a pink Barbie jeep and sports equipment.

Police had been called to the home in July and October because of domestic disputes.

Grieving mother returns home to find residence burglarized

HOUSTON (AP) — A mother who was holding her 8-month-old daughter on Christmas Day when her common-law husband allegedly shot and killed the baby has sustained another loss.

The same day authorities captured her common-law husband of two years in Lubbock, the grieving mother returned to her home Friday to find it had been burglarized and that a pair of earrings intended as a gift for her slain daughter was among the items stolen.

"They took my baby's earrings," the child's mother, Alma Mosqueda, 32, said in Saturday's Houston Chronicle. "I just wanted my baby's earrings. I don't care about nothing else."

A television set and other jewelry were also stolen.

The burglary came as Edalio Camacho Navarro, 38, was arrested on a capital murder warrant as he slept shortly after midnight. He was arrested by a Lubbock police SWAT team, acting on a tip, with assistance by Houston police and Texas Rangers.

"At about 12:30, they forced entry into a residence and found the suspect asleep," Lubbock police Sgt. Jeff Davis said. "He was taken into custody without further incident."

A judge in Lubbock denied bond Friday and ordered Camacho Navarro returned to Houston. The Harris County Sheriff's Department tentatively expected to bring him back this weekend.

According to Mosqueda, Camacho Navarro was drunk and toting a loaded .38-caliber revolver just before dawn Wednesday when he accused her of cheating on him.

Mortgage rates are lowest since 1965

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rates on 30-year mortgages dropped to a new low this week, the eighth time that has happened this year.

The average interest rate on a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage fell to 5.93 percent for the week ending Dec. 27, down from 6.03 percent in the previous week, Freddie Mac reported in its weekly nationwide survey of mortgage rates.

This week's rate was the lowest since the mortgage giant began tracking 30-year mortgage rates in 1971. It surpassed the previous record low rate reported by Freddie Mac of 5.94 percent set in the middle of November.

That marked the eighth time this year that the rate on this benchmark mortgage as tracked by Freddie Mac hit a new low. Records that reach back earlier than Freddie Mac's put this week's 30-year mortgage rate at the lowest since 1965, said Freddie Mac spokeswoman Eileen Fitzpatrick.

Rates on 15-year fixed-rate mortgages, a popular option for refinancing, fell this week to 5.32 percent, compared with 5.42 percent in the prior week.

For one-year ARMs, rates dropped to 4.01 percent this week, the lowest level since Freddie Mac began tracking these rates in 1984. Last week's rate was 4.07 percent.

Low mortgage rates this year have been feeding a flurry of home mortgage refinancing activity. The extra monthly cash consumers are saving by refinancing their mortgages at lower interest rates is helping to support consumer spending, which has been the main force keeping the economy going this year.

The Mortgage Bankers Association of America said that refinancing activity accounted for 72.5 percent of total mortgage loan applications filed last week. That was down slightly from 73 percent the previous week.

Low mortgage rates also have been keeping the housing market healthy this year, even as other parts of the economy are struggling because of the uneven economic recovery. Home sales are on track to post a record this year.

Frank Nothaft, Freddie Mac's chief economist, called 2002 an "amazing year" for housing.

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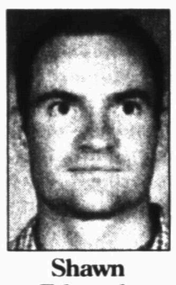
SPORTS

Ex-SHS teacher chases racing dream

By Bobby Allen
SDN Sports Editor

A dream that began before he entered kindergarten is coming to fruition for a former teacher at Snyder High School.

Shawn Edwards, a government and special education teacher at SHS last year, is living his childhood dream by racing on the supercross professional motorcycling tour.



Shawn Edwards

Currently ranked 183rd in the world after racing in the World Supercross Championships in Switzerland and Holland, Edwards took a painful, circuitous route to where he is today.

"I started racing at four-years-old," Edwards, a Lamesa resident said. "I graduated early and I turned pro at 16."

Edwards said he thought he was on the fast track to success on the circuit after winning several amateur titles, when adversity struck in 1993.

An accident left him with a broken pelvis and a severe concussion, keeping him from riding and training for half a year.

"I was a hot prospect in '93," he recalled. "I had offers from several (motorcycle) factories by 18, when the good Lord decided I should do something else."

Edwards said after his injuries, "No factory wanted to touch me. I was racing out of my own pocket at that time."

Out of money, with no sponsorship, and thinking his racing career was over before it really began, Edwards returned to school and earned a B.A. in education from the University of Texas in three years, whereupon he accepted a job at Snyder High School.

He was teaching at Snyder when Clint Golden, owner of Golden Yamaha and Suzuki in Odessa, called and asked him if he wanted to race again.

"Teaching was perfect," he said. "It gave me time off on weekends and in the summer to ride."

Feeling better about his racing career the second go around, Edwards spoke with his parents about moving back home to begin saving money to finance his dream career again.

Driving back and forth from Lamesa to Snyder everyday, and with his father working as his mechanic, Edwards saved enough to again try his hand in the dangerous world of motorcross a second time.

"I couldn't have done it without the help of my parents, allowing an adult child to move back home," he said. "I had no expenses and every penny I had went into racing."

Edwards finished third overall in the amateur standings in 1999, then finally got his professional license in 2000.

Other accidents along the way led to other injuries, including a broken elbow, that plagued him that year, but he was beginning to get offers for sponsorship when devastating injuries again knocked his racing dream off the track.

"I went to Minnesota and tore both ligaments in my knee and fractured my sternum," he said. "I thought it was over."

Edwards had torn the anterior and medial cruciate ligaments in his left knee, and was once again unable to ride.

Edwards came back to Snyder to teach last year, but could never shake his love of motorcycle racing.

In December of last year, he began working with a personal trainer, and now says he is in the best shape of his life.

"I am in superb shape, jogging six miles a day and lifting," he said. "I have been blessed with a good recovery."

Edwards is steadily climbing the professional ranks, this year winning the 4-Stroke National Privateer Honor, which is awarded to the top rider without a major sponsor.

He said he has a good race coming up in Anaheim, Calif. in the first week of January in the American Motorcycle THQ Supercross Series, and will follow that up with the second round in Phoenix on Jan. 11, before traveling back to California for three more rounds.

"It is the dream of every athlete to compete against the best in their sport, and that is what I am doing," he said.

While he has some sponsorship, Edwards is seeking others to help offset the cost of the supercross circuit.

Edwards said he enjoyed the students he had a chance to teach in Snyder, and said he shared this bit of advice with all of his classes.

"Believe in yourself and be willing to sacrifice, and you can accomplish any dream."

Buffalos healthy and eager for Alamo Bowl

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Colorado tailback Chris Brown was out with an injury when the Buffaloes lost the Big 12 championship game and dropped a few spots on the bowl-selection depth chart.

Brown says he's better now, which won't be good news for Wisconsin when it plays the 14th-ranked Buffaloes (9-4) in the Alamo Bowl Saturday night at 7 o'clock.

"I'm going to get out there and run the ball, get us in sync and back on rhythm, which shouldn't be hard at all," Brown said.

The Badgers (7-6) know their defense will be hard-pressed to contain Brown, a second-team All-America selection led the conference in yards rushing and scoring but missed the Big 12 title game against Oklahoma with a bruised sternum.

"He's a big, physical back," Wisconsin defensive coordinator Kevin Cosgrove said. "He breaks a lot of tackles, he has tremendous balance and vision. He's as good as any back we've seen."

The teams bring a similar approach to the game, with both focusing their offenses around running the ball and their defenses on controlling the opponent's ground game.

"I don't know that we'll do anything that they haven't seen," said Wisconsin coach Barry Alvarez. "They see what we're going to do about every day in practice."

Brown (1,744 yards, 18 touchdowns) and fellow junior Bobby Purify (739 yards) were the nation's top rushing duo, thanks in part to the blocking of senior fullback Brandon Drumm.

"The most important person we have on offense is Brandon Drumm," offensive coordinator Shawn Watson said.

Senior Quarterback Robert Hodge passed for more than 1,500 yards and 12 touchdowns for Colorado, which won the Big 12's North division with a 7-1 record.

"We have to get long drives and wear out the defense," Hodge said. "We have good backs, and we know they can carry the team."

Alvarez says he's a little worried about how his youthful defense (five starters are freshmen or sophomores) will match up against the Buffaloes' potent backfield and its experienced offensive line.

"They've been able to be physical with everyone and run the football against everyone. When you do that, you dictate the game, you dictate the tempo," he said. "I just don't know whether we can stand up physically against them."

Wisconsin's ground game centers around sophomore Anthony Davis, who ran for 1,456 yards and 12 touchdowns. Freshman Dwayne Smith added 537 yards rushing and six touchdowns.

The Badgers, who started the season with five non-league wins before going 2-6 in the Big Ten, are young on offense, with seven starters sophomores or freshmen.

Senior quarterback Brooks Bollinger passed for 1,595 yards and 12 touchdowns, and he rushed for nearly 400 yards. Seven of his TD passes were to Jonathan Orr, who had 842 yards receiving as a freshman.

Bollinger says control of the line of scrimmage will be crucial, as will be the ability to make big plays.

"I don't necessarily mean 80-yard touchdowns or something like that. You've got to be able to make plays on third down," he said. "I don't think either of these two teams is going to be too much trick 'em. It's pretty much straight-ahead football."

The status of Drew Wahlroos, Colorado's senior linebacker, was not clear.

Hawks coach gets first victory with buzzer-beater over Spurs

ATLANTA (AP) — Terry Stotts soaked in a bit of the atmosphere before and during his head coaching debut in the NBA, spending time with the referees, opposing players and many other well-wishers.

Oh, and he also drew up the winning play.

Jason Terry hit a fallaway jumper at the buzzer to give Stotts a victory in his first game as the Atlanta Hawks beat the San Antonio Spurs 81-79 on Friday night.

Stotts, a longtime assistant who joined the team this summer, took over for Lon Kruger, who was fired Thursday.

"One of the best things about his experience so far is how happy people are for me," Stotts said. "I haven't actually been happy but I have a lot of people who are happy for me."

After San Antonio's Tim Duncan tied it with a hook from in close, Terry took an inbound pass with 4.3 seconds left and dribbled past Tony Parker and Bruce Bowen. He hoisted an off-balance, line-drive 18-footer just before the final horn, and the ball swished through.

Terry's teammates mobbed him at halfcourt, and the referees immediately ruled the shot was good. They used video replay to officially count the basket.

"Amazing as it sounds, that's the way I drew it up," Stotts said. "You've got to love shooters. I'm glad this one dropped, because this team needed a confidence-builder. It's been a rough stretch."

Shareef Abdur-Rahim had 27 points and 11 rebounds for the Hawks, who won for only the second time in eight games. Glenn Robinson added 18 points, and Terry had 13.

Tim Duncan had 20 of his 27 points in the first half for the Spurs, who'd won four in a row but shot only 44 percent against one of the NBA's worst defensive teams. Atlanta entered allowing 98.6 points a game, sixth-worst in the league.

"We had some good stretches, but we weren't consistent enough," San Antonio center David Robinson said. "We normally play more good minutes than the other team."

With Stotts at the helm, the Hawks showed a renewed interest in defense. Point guard Mike Wilks, who joined the team Tuesday and started in place of Ira Newble, picked up his man fullcourt throughout. He drew one offensive foul from Tony Parker and added two steals in the first game of his career.

"It was an ugly game," Spurs guard Stephen Jackson said. "They were ready to play. I don't know if it had anything to do with the coach or not."

Wilks made his first two shots and finished with seven points, four assists and no turnovers.

"Jason Terry told me to come to him with any questions I had," Wilks said. "They kept talking to me out there. If I got confused, they pointed me in the right direction."

There were other subtle changes, too. Dion Glover, a regular in Kruger's rotation, didn't play for the first time in nearly a month.

"I have 11 guys that I can play, but I can't play 11 guys," Stotts said of his substitution pattern. "Tonight, it was Mike Wilks' turn. Tomorrow night, it might be Dion or somebody else."

Stotts openly chastised Terry for a blind, over-the-shoulder pass that led to a turnover in the fourth quarter. With a timeout coming and a foul called on Glenn Robinson, Stotts glared at Terry and met him on the court, sternly talking into his ear.

After Stotts was done, he slapped Terry on his rear and walked with him to the huddle.

Dolphins-Patriots among many games with playoff implications

By the Associated Press

All the elements will be there when the Philadelphia Eagles visit the Meadowlands Saturday to play the New York Giants: a nasty rivalry, a lot at stake and, most likely, football weather.

"This is the kind of game you live to play," the Giants' Tiki Barber says.

At stake for the Eagles is home-field throughout the playoffs: a win and they clinch it. At stake for the Giants is a playoff berth. New Orleans' shocking loss in Cincinnati last week lifted New York into the NFC's second wild-card spot. So all the Giants have to do is win to ensure a playoff berth.

The Eagles won the first game 17-3 on Oct. 28 and are favored by 1½ points. But New York's offense has new life since coach Jim Fassel started calling the plays after the loss in Philadelphia.

After averaging a little more than 12 points a game with offensive coordinator Sean Payton making the calls, the Giants are averaging more than 27 with Fassel running the offense, and they've scored 81 in their last two games, including 44 in Indianapolis last Sunday.

This week, however, they face the Philadelphia defense, one of the NFL's best. The Eagles, on the other hand, have A.J. Feeley at quarterback, a more stationary target for Michael Strahan, who traditionally has had his way with Jon Runyan, the Eagles' right tackle.

The Eagles have won six straight; the Giants three straight. But the Giants seem on one of those Fassel-inspired rolls they got on late in 1997 and again in 2000.

Home field and hunger.

GIANTS, 24-20.

Kansas City (plus 7) at Oakland (Saturday)

The Chiefs are barely alive.

The Raiders can clinch home field in the AFC with a win.

RAIDERS, 31-22.

Miami (pick 'em) at New England

The Dolphins are 2-5 on the road and traditionally lose in December.

The Patriots have lost two straight unimpressively.

Ricky Williams.

DOLPHINS, 16-12.

Green Bay (plus 1) at New York Jets

If the Eagles lose, the Packers can get NFC home field, so a lot depends on what happens Saturday in the same stadium.

PACKERS, 24-16.

Carolina (plus 7½) at New Orleans

After three straight losses, the Saints need help to get in.

New Orleans already has lost to two last-place teams: Detroit and Cincinnati.

These guys are better.

PANTHERS, 27-23.

Atlanta (minus 2½) at Cleveland

The Falcons win and they're in. The Browns win and they need help.

FALCONS, 30-24.

Jacksonville (off) at Indianapolis

The Colts are another win-and-in team.

COLTS, 44-27

Tampa Bay (off) at Chicago

Can the Bucs finally win in cold weather?

BUCS, 8-3.

Dallas (plus 6½) over Washington

Dallas' 10-game winning streak over the Redskins ends. So does Dave Campo's tenure as the Cowboys' coach.

REDSKINS, 17-6.

Tennessee (minus 8) at Houston

The old Oilers go back to Texas.

TITANS, 31-13.

Seattle (plus 3) at San Diego

Holmgren's job is safe.

SEAHAWKS, 24-19.

Baltimore (plus 7½) at Pittsburgh

It's unlikely, but the Steelers might still get the first round off.

STEELERS, 17-13.

San Francisco (off) at St. Louis (Monday night)

The 49ers may play this one like an exhibition. They still win.

49ERS, 26-20.

Arizona (plus 11) at Denver

The Broncos aren't in very good shape.

BRONCOS, 34-14.

Cincinnati (plus 7) at Buffalo

The Bungles blow the first pick in the draft.

BENGALS, 14-13.

Minnesota (minus 3½) at Detroit

Surging for next season.

VIKINGS 31-26.

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SPORTS

Lady Tigers' defense shuts down Borden Co.

POST — Any team needing a tutorial on defense should study the Lady Tigers' game Friday against Borden County.

The Lady Tigers (14-4) played a defensive gem, holding Borden County — ranked third in the state in 1A — to zero field goals in the second half on their way to a convincing 44-18 victory at the Post tourney.



Zipporah Peoples

"It was a tremendous display of defense," said assistant coach Stephanie McKnight. "The defense took away anything Borden County tried. We are very proud of the girls."

The Lady Coyotes were held to three-of-34 shooting for the game, and scored just five points from the charity stripe in the third and fourth quarters.

"We're very impressed," McKnight said. "If a team is ranked, they are a good team. The girls really stepped up and responded to the challenge."

McKnight said Borden County wasn't cold from the floor, it was the stifling half-court man defense of the Lady Tigers that prevented them from ever getting in to a rhythm on offensive.

Snyder also held the edge in rebounds, 31-23, and the ladies crashed the offensive glass all evening to give themselves second and third chances at the bucket.

Zipporah Peoples had seven points and nine boards — six on the offensive end — and Hailey Putnam had five of her eight rebounds on the offensive end to go with her eight points.

"Zipporah had a great night and Hailey played very well," McKnight said.

Erin Burleson knocked in 13 points to lead all scorers, and freshman Sequoya Powell notched 10 points and collected five boards.

"Sequoya is getting better and better," McKnight said. "She is not yet playing the way she is capable of playing."

Sirena Medrano canned four points, and Dara Chambers and Anna Henson popped in a free throw each for the Lady Tigers, who will take on Post, which beat Petersburg, 47-39, Saturday night at 6 o'clock in the championship game.



REBELS RISING — Mississippi running back Toward Sanford, center, stretches across the goal line for a 1-yard touchdown run past Nebraska defenders in the Independence Bowl in Shreveport, La. Mississippi defeated Nebraska 27-23. (AP Photo)

Shorthanded Tigers drop both games at Brownwood tourney

BROWNWOOD — The Snyder Tigers, dealing with illness and fatigue, dropped the first two games Friday at the Brownwood tournament.

The Tigers were upended, 78-63, by 5A San Marcos, a team head coach Bud Birks said was small yet swift.

San Marcos pressed all game, which contributed to the fatigue swirling about the team.

"They're good. We played alright, we just got a little tired," Birks said.

The Tigers did get a boost with the return of Colby Driggers, who played his first game since breaking his leg in the middle of the gridiron season.

"Colby did a good job," Birks said. "Once he shakes off the rust, he will help us."

The head coach said Logan Hill had his best game of the season against San Marcos, and T.J. Jones and Lee Scott were both solid in the loss.

The boys played against Llano in the second game of the Brownwood tourney, falling 55-52.

The Tigers led, 24-14, before a 15-1 run by Llano turned into a 24-5 run that put the Tigers in a deep hole in the third quarter.

"We were passing the ball well," said assistant coach Zack Williams. "Then we started standing around and stopped getting the ball inside."

The Tigers knuckled down in the fourth quarter, scoring 20 points to pull within three, but Llano made its late free throws to keep Snyder at bay.

Williams said the Yellow Jackets dominated the offensive glass, and added the Tigers suffered some lapses in defense that contributed to the large deficit midway through the game.

"We need to pick it up defensively," he said. "When we played 'D' we played well, but when we relaxed they put it on us. We were rocking and rolling for awhile, then we had silly mistakes at crucial times."

Williams said half the squad — already shorthanded going into the tournament, with Josh Mendoza and Kyle Clifton not making the trip — is sick. He said several players who made the trip got ill in Brownwood.

The Tigers were scheduled to play Comanche at 9 o'clock Saturday morning.

Bulldogs bounce back vs. Rule; ladies have setback at Jayton

JAYTON — The Ira Bulldogs got off to an inauspicious beginning Friday, then took out their frustrations in the second game.

The Bulldogs (8-6) gave up 44 first half points en route to an 81-64 drubbing at the hands of district foe Aspermont.

Jake Barnes got untracked with 22 points and Jess Wall added 18 in the loss. Wes Kellner canned 14.

After the first game loss, Ira returned the favor against Rule, shutting out the Bobcats in the third quarter in a 52-23 thrashing.

Barnes and Eric Dickerhoff led all scorers with 19 and 18 points respectively, as Ira seized control of the game at the opening tip off.

The Bulldogs were slated to play Rule again in the consolation bracket at 2 p.m. Saturday.

The Lady Bulldogs suffered another loss at the Jayton tournament Friday, getting off to a slow start in falling to Paducah, 63-48.

Ira trailed from the outset, giving up 22 first quarter points en route to a 35-21 halftime deficit.

Celeigh Sterling led the way for the ladies with 18, and Lindsey Wilson drained 14.

Big 12 bowl roundup...

Cowboys thump Southern Miss; 'Huskers humbled by Ole Miss as K-State wins

HOUSTON (AP) — Rashaun Woods caught nine passes for 164 yards and a touchdown, and Tatum Bell's 22-yard score with 8:07 to play gave Oklahoma State the lead for good in a 33-23 Houston Bowl victory over Southern Mississippi on Friday.

Bell had 160 yards on 13 carries, and Luke Phillips kicked two of his four field goals in the decisive fourth quarter for the Cowboys (8-5).

Trailing 20-13 at the half, Southern Miss (7-6) took its only lead of the game on a 2-yard touchdown run by James Walley and a 30-yard field goal by Curt Jones, his third of the game, in the third quarter.

The Cowboys pulled even on the first play of the four quarter on Phillips' 28-yard field goal. Josh Fields threw for 310 yards, and his 33-yard pass to Billy Bajema set up Bell's go-ahead touchdown, which put Oklahoma State back in front 30-23.

Ole Miss 27, Nebraska 23

SHREVEPORT, La. (AP) — Eli Manning threw for 313 yards and a touchdown as Mississippi ended Nebraska's 40-year streak of winning seasons with a 27-23 victory Friday in the Independence Bowl.

Nebraska managed just one offensive touchdown on Jammal Lord's pass to Matt Herian in the second quarter. Josh Brown kicked three field goals and DeJuan Groce had a punt return for a score.

The Cornhuskers (7-7) had finished above .500 every year since 1961, when they went 3-6-1.

Manning was 25-for-44 for Ole Miss (7-6) and became the school's career passing leader.

Nebraska had its option working in the first half with 262 total yards, 207 on the ground.

Ole Miss adjusted in the second half and held Nebraska to 97 yards and no touchdowns. Dahrann Diedrick had 92 yards rushing and Lord had 176 total yards.

Kansas State 34 Arizona State 27

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The Kansas State Wildcats were saved by the Ell.

On the verge of what would have been a shocking loss, quarterback Ell Roberson rallied the sixth-ranked Wildcats with three fourth-quarter touchdowns, including a 10-yard pass to Derrick Evans with 1:15 to play for a 34-27 Holiday Bowl win over Arizona State on Friday night.

Kansas State (11-2), the highest-ranked team not in the Bowl Championship Series, was favored by 18 points.

Roberson also scored on sneaks of 2 and 1 yards in the fourth quarter to add to the Holiday Bowl's history of wild finishes. He also scored on a 32-yard run just before halftime.

Arizona State had one last shot at the upset, but Andrew Walter's desperation pass on fourth-and-15 from his 49 was knocked down inside the 5-yard line.

Kansas State trailed 20-14 entering the fourth quarter. By then, Roberson was well on his way to leading a 16-play, 65-yard drive that took 7 minutes, 13 seconds.

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New Jersey	21	9	.700	—
Philadelphia	18	10	.643	2
Boston	18	11	.621	2½
Orlando	16	15	.516	5½
Washington	12	16	.429	8
New York	9	16	.360	9½
Miami	10	19	.345	10½

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	21	8	.724	—
Detroit	19	9	.679	1½
New Orleans	18	12	.600	3½
Atlanta	12	16	.429	8½
Milwaukee	12	16	.429	8½
Chicago	10	19	.345	11
Toronto	8	21	.276	13
Cleveland	6	25	.194	16

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Dallas	24	4	.857	—
San Antonio	18	11	.621	6½
Minnesota	16	13	.552	8½
Houston	15	13	.536	9
Utah	15	13	.536	9
Memphis	9	21	.300	16
Denver	6	22	.214	18

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Sacramento	23	8	.742	—
Phoenix	18	11	.621	4
Portland	16	11	.593	5
Seattle	15	15	.500	7½
L.A. Clippers	12	17	.414	10
L.A. Lakers	11	19	.367	11½
Golden State	10	18	.357	11½

Thursday's Games

Detroit 87, Washington 82
Dallas 83, New Orleans 81
Seattle 97, Toronto 88

Friday's Games

Indiana 113, Cleveland 89
Atlanta 81, San Antonio 79
Memphis 99, Orlando 86
Miami 90, Boston 70
New Jersey 110, Milwaukee 90
New York 99, Houston 83
Minnesota 113, Chicago 100
Phoenix 108, L.A. Clippers 95
Portland 103, Utah 98
Golden State 101, Toronto 96

Saturday's Games

Atlanta at Washington, 7 p.m.
Boston at Orlando, 7 p.m.
New Orleans at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Minnesota at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
San Antonio at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.
New Jersey at Milwaukee, 8:30 p.m.
New York at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Utah, 9 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Denver, 9 p.m.
Portland at Sacramento, 10 p.m.
Golden State at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Phoenix at Cleveland, 7 p.m.
New Orleans at Houston, 8:30 p.m.
Toronto at L.A. Lakers, 9:30 p.m.

National Hockey League

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	T	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Philadelphia	17	8	8	1	43	81	71
New Jersey	18	10	2	3	41	82	72
Pittsburgh	14	14	3	4	35	102	105
N.Y. Rangers	13	19	5	1	32	92	123
N.Y. Islanders	13	16	5	0	31	92	105

Northeast Division

	W	L	T	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Ottawa	22	8	5	0	49	112	77
Boston	20	10	4	1	45	114	91
Toronto	18	14	4	0	40	104	87
Montreal	16	13	4	3	39	101	110
Buffalo	8	20	5	1	22	73	97

Southeast Division

	W	L	T	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Tampa Bay	16	12	5	3	40	105	98
Carolina	15	13	5	3	38	84	90
Washington	17	16	3	0	37	97	102
Florida	10	11	9	5	34	84	105
Atlanta	9	20	1	4	23	87	127

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division

	W	L	T	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Detroit	20	8	6	1	47	107	83
St. Louis	18	10	5	2	43	113	89
Chicago	17	13	5	0	39	81	79
Columbus	12	17	3	2	29	96	102
Nashville	9	16	6	4	28	71	93

Northwest Division

	W	L	T	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Vancouver	21	10	5	0	47	111	89
Minnesota	18	11	7	1	44	96	85
Colorado	13	9	9	5	40	96	91
Edmonton	16	12	4	3	39	94	89
Calgary	10	18	5	3	28	73	102

Pacific Division

	W	L	T	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Dallas	19	10	8	1	47	113	76
Los Angeles	16	12	4	3	39	96	92
Anaheim	15	11	6	3	39	91	85
San Jose	14	15	3	3	34	98	108
Phoenix	11	16	6	3	31	90	113

Two points for a win, one point for a tie and overtime loss.

Friday's Games

Washington 3, New Jersey 2
Atlanta 5, Carolina 3
Ottawa 3, Montreal 2, OT
Tampa Bay 5, Boston 2
Dallas 4, Florida 0
Philadelphia 2, Colorado 1, OT
Toronto 4, Calgary 3

Saturday's Games

Minnesota at Buffalo, 7 p.m.
Boston at Atlanta, 7 p.m.
St. Louis at Columbus, 7 p.m.
Montreal at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.
Carolina at N.Y. Islanders, 7 p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Florida, 7:30 p.m.
Detroit at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Washington at New Jersey, 8 p.m.
Philadelphia at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Toronto at Edmonton, 10 p.m.
Anaheim at Vancouver, 10 p.m.
Chicago at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Los Angeles at Colorado, 6 p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Tampa Bay, 6 p.m.
Columbus at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Anaheim at Calgary, 8 p.m.
Detroit at Dallas, 9 p.m.

National Football League

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Miami	9	6	0	.600	354	274
N.Y. Jets	8	7	0	.533	317	319
New England	8	7	0	.533	354	322
Buffalo	7	8	0	.467	352	388

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-Tennessee	10	5	0	.667	354	321
Indianapolis	9	6	0	.600	329	300
Jacksonville	6	9	0	.400	315	295
Houston	4	11	0	.267	210	343

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-Pittsburgh	9	5	1	.633	356	314
Cleveland	8	7	0	.533	320	304
Baltimore	7	8	0	.467	285	320
Cincinnati	2	13	0	.133	270	429

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-Oakland	10	5	0	.667	426	304
Denver	8	7	0	.533	355	337
Kansas City	8	7	0	.533	467	375
San Diego	8	7	0	.533	305	336

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-Philadelphia	12	3	0	.800	408	231
N.Y. Giants	9	6	0	.600	310	272
Washington	6	9	0	.400	287	351
Dallas	5	10	0	.333	203	309

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-Tampa Bay	11	4	0	.733	331	196
Atlanta	9	5	1	.633	386	290
New Orleans	9	6	0	.600	426	378
Carolina	6	9	0	.400	248	296

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-Green Bay	12	3	0	.800	381	286
Minnesota	5	10	0	.333	352	406
Chicago	4	11	0	.267	281	364
Detroit	3	12	0	.200	270	413

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-San Francisco	10	5	0	.667	347	320
St. Louis	6	9	0	.400	285	349
Seattle	6	9	0	.400	324	341
Arizona	5	10	0	.333	255	380

x-clinched division

Saturday, Dec. 28

Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants, 1:30 p.m.
Kansas City at Oakland, 5 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 29

Minnesota at Detroit, 1 p.m.
Dallas at Washington, 1 p.m.
Tennessee at Houston, 1 p.m.
Miami at New England, 1 p.m.
Baltimore at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.
Cincinnati at Buffalo, 1 p.m.
Atlanta at Cleveland, 1 p.m.
Carolina at New Orleans, 1 p.m.
Jacksonville at Indianapolis, 4:05 p.m.
Green Bay at N.Y. Jets, 4:15 p.m.
Seattle at San Diego, 4:15 p.m.
Arizona at Denver, 4:15 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 30

San Francisco at St. Louis, 9 p.m.

End of Regular Season

CINEMA I & II
1907 Snyder Shopping Center
57-FILMS (573-4567)
CLOSED MONDAYS
MAID IN MANHATTAN PG13
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Sat 2:15, 7:15, 9:20, Sun 2:15, 7:15
Tues. 7:15, 9:20, Weds. & Thurs. 7:15
Tuesday is Bargain Night
dicaprio hanks
CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
PG13
Fri. 2:00, 7:00, 9:45
Sat 2:00, 7:00, 9:45,
Sun 2:00, 7:00
Tues. 7:00, 9:45
Weds. & Thurs. 7:00
Tuesday is Bargain Night

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DEC 29 2002

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NOTICE TO BIDDERS
Scurry County Commissioners' Court will open bids for the Purchase of **Fuel and Bulk Oil** on Monday, January 6th, 2003, at 10:00 a.m., during Special Session of the Commissioners' Court. Specifications may be obtained at the County Judge's Office, Scurry County Courthouse, Snyder, Texas 79549.

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REWARD!
Lost 12/24/02: white Poodle w/blue collar & polka dot bow. Answers to "Sadie". Child's pet. 573-6498 or 868-0289

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Snyder, TX 79550

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Will move furniture.
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Title Secretary
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Snyder, TX 79550
or call 915-573-8558

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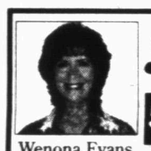
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Notice is hereby given that a public auction will be held on January 7th, 2003 at 10a.m., at North Steps of the Scurry County Courthouse located at 1802 25th Street, Snyder, Texas.

The following abandoned vehicles will be sold under the terms and provisions of the Texas Abandoned Motor Vehicle Act, Article 1436-3, VPC.

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6.	1979 Chevrolet Pickup	VIN#CCS449F462603
7.	1990 Ford Van	VIN#1FMCA11U1LZB69084
8.	1981 Oldsmobile 2 Door	VIN#1G3AM47A6BR530454
9.	1992 Ford 4 Door	VIN#1FACP50U4NA125051
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CARDS OF THANKS

To the friends of the John D. Tate family

We deeply appreciate the prayers, words of comfort, food, flowers, and love each of you gave us during this difficult period. We also want to thank Wright-Colonial Funeral Home for their assistance, Eastside Church of Christ, and Tom Holcomb for the support given to the family.

The family of John D. Tate

The Inmate Christmas Project Volunteers

would like to thank every church, organization, business and individual who contributed to the "Inmate Christmas Project". Every donation was appreciated.

Thank you to those in local and area churches who baked cookies for the Christmas bags, and to others in the community and surrounding area who helped fill and distribute the bags to the inmates.

Also a special "thank you" to Warden Howard and the staff at the Price Daniel Unit. This project would not have been possible without your cooperation.

DEC 29 2002

California to reduce dependence on Colorado River

SAN DIEGO (AP) — California officials have less than four days to come up with a water conservation plan after the Interior Department announced it will reduce the state's dependence on the Colorado River by 13 percent next year.

Interior Secretary Gale Norton warned of a cutback earlier this month after the collapse of a 75-year deal to transfer Colorado River water from desert farms to cities by Dec. 31. The dealbreaker was the Imperial Valley's refusal Dec. 9 to sell a drop of its massive share of Colorado River water to coastal cities.

It was unclear, however, exactly who would be affected and by how much until the Interior Department on Friday approved 2003 orders for Colorado River water.

"This is a California choice," said Assistant Interior Secretary Bennett Raley, the Bush administration's point man on Western water issues. "It's time to deal with reality."

Norton is the first interior secretary to use her authority to ensure the seven Western states on the river get their share. Besides California, the other states that draw on the river are Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona and Nevada.

For years, California has used excess water from the Colorado River because other states didn't use the full amount they were entitled to under a 1929 accord. Rapid growth in the West, combined with the worst drought in the river's recorded history, has forced the Interior Department to crack down.

Imperial Valley officials said the deal's main flaw was that it failed to address its concerns over the Salton Sea, California's largest lake, which would quickly become too salty for fish and birds if it weren't for water running off farm fields.

Interior officials did, however, give California a way out.

The state can avoid the cutback — enough to supply about 1.4 million people — if Southern California water agencies resurrect the transfer deal, which will ensure river water allocations for six other Western states.

The impending cuts will increase the pressure on water officials in the Imperial Valley to approve the deal. The Imperial Valley water board has scheduled a meeting for Monday, following several days of intense discussions with other Southern California water agencies aimed at reviving the deal. The board said it may take action.

"We're working really hard to make a long-term regional solution happen," said Sue Giller, a spokesman for the Imperial Irrigation District. "That's our focus right now."

If a deal is not reached by Dec. 31, the cuts will fall hardest on Los Angeles and San Diego, the nation's second- and seventh-biggest cities, and farmers in Imperial County, California's poorest. The reduction will be achieved by holding back water behind Hoover Dam.

The Metropolitan Water District, which supplies 17 million people in Southern California, is losing the most water of all the agencies involved — enough for more than 800,000 people in 2003. The district has said it has enough reserves to make up the shortfall for at least the next two years

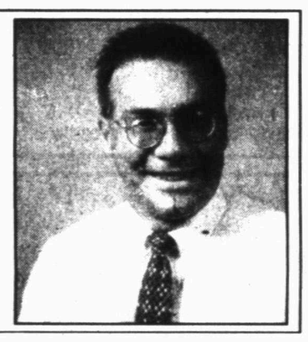
The Colorado River is one of several sources of Southern California's water, including groundwater and water from across the state that is pumped to the south.

In a surprise move, the Interior Department also is cutting back water to Imperial Valley farmers in California's far southeast corner. They are losing enough water to supply 400,000 people, roughly 7 percent of the trillion gallons of water they use to grow $1 billion worth of food in the desert each year.

"The interior secretary does



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Oregon schools struggle to save money

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Across Oregon, schools struggling to save money in this year of budget woes have come up with a reflexive response: Slash the academic year.

No other states have gone that route, national education watchdog groups said this week. Laws in most states require students to be in school for 180 days.

But a loophole in Oregon's laws allows its districts to deviate from the requirements for a maximum of two school years, and that's led superintendents around the state to consider chopping as many as 15 days from the academic calendar for a quick budget fix.

Other cash-strapped states are cutting teacher pay, increasing class size, leaving positions open and laying off staff, said Dave Griffith, the director of public affairs for the Washington, D.C.-area National Association of State Boards of Education.

"They are looking at the curriculum, postponing the kinds of things that are seen as extraneous, like school construction, increasing student fees for extracurriculars — it runs the gamut," he said.

But in Oregon, school officials, dependent on the state government for 70 percent of their funding, say they have no other choice but to cut days.

The budget crunch is due to the state's declining incoming tax revenue, which has meant $178 million in school cuts so far this year. Legislators put a three-year temporary income tax increase on the ballot for a special election this January, which would avert another $95 million in school cuts, but polls suggest it will not pass.

"Our options are starting to get pretty thin," Rob Saxton, superintendent a suburban Portland school district, said recently.

Business leaders are worried about the fallout the cuts might have on Oregon's chances to attract new jobs. They say a reputation for bad schools will discourage companies from moving here.

Students are worried colleges will turn them away, citing their low levels of preparedness after a reduced number of hours in the classroom. And state legislators are under pressure not to make further cuts to education, which eats up 43 percent of Oregon's budget.

"This has attracted a lot of attention," said Gene Evans, spokesman for the Oregon Department of Education. "We are getting the reputation that something is going on in Oregon."

Ask Hollywood by Holly Wood

La vida loca is fine with Martin fan

Q: I just can't get enough of Ricky Martin's beautiful music. Do you have an address where I can write to get his beautiful photo and, hopefully, an autograph? — M.B., Baldwin Park, Calif.

A: You can write to Martin at Empresas Angelo Medina Georgetti 1406,

Santurce, Puerto Rico 00910. Be sure to include an SASE big enough to hold a photo.

Q: I can't remember the name of the TV movie based on the true story of a sniper shooting at the University of Texas. I think it starred Kurt Russell. When did it air, and who else starred in this drama? — L.D., Portersville, Calif.

A: The film called "The Deadly Tower" first aired in 1975 and starred Russell, Richard Yniguez, John Forsythe, Ned Beatty and Pernell Roberts. You can buy a copy at Robert's Hard to Find Videos for $19.95. Call (306) 955-3763, or visit their Web site at www.robertsvideos.com.

Q: I read in your column that Blythe Danner and Ken Howard starred in the comedy series "Adam's Rib." Did he also play the high school coach of a basketball team in this comedy-drama on CBS? — E.G., Parlier, Calif.

A: You don't say which comedy-drama you're referring to, but I assume you're referring to "The White Shadow," which aired from 1978 to 1981. Howard played an NBA player who retires and becomes a coach at an inner-city high school. Joan Pringle and Kevin Hooks co-starred.

Q: What is the meaning of the phrase seen at the end of the each episode of "The District": "For Jack Maple, who lived it"? — J.R., Strawberry Point, Iowa

A: The character of Jack Mannion is based on Maple, who was a co-creator of the show. Maple spent nearly 30 years with the New York Police Department, and dedicated a lot of time to showing police departments across the county how to eliminate corruption and improve efficiency. He died of colon cancer in 2001.

Q: Do you know where I can purchase or rent the video of a movie featuring Jack Weston and Rita Moreno called, I believe, "The Ritz Baths," or something similar? — B.H., Whittier, Calif.

A: The name of the movie is "The Ritz," and it was released in 1976. You can find it at Movies Unlimited for $17.99. Call (800) 668-4344, or visit their Web site at www.moviesunlimited.com. If you only want to rent it, ask your local video store if they can get it for you. They might have it in stock, even if it isn't on the shelves.

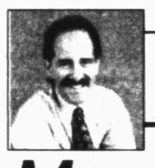
Q: Before he won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor in the movie "Traffic," didn't Benicio Del Toro play a bad guy in one of the James Bond movies, or was it some other actor who looks like him in a fight with Timothy Dalton? — C.L., Strathmore, Calif.

A: You're not imagining things. Del Toro played Dario in "License to Kill." It was the actor's second feature film. (His first was "Big Top Pee-Wee," in which he played Duke the dog-faced boy.) He was also in "The Usual Suspects," "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" and "Snatch."

TRIVIA: Benicio Del Toro's family encouraged him to become a lawyer because they didn't believe he had a future in acting.

(Send your questions to Ask Holly Wood, c/o Newspaper Enterprise Association, 200 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016, or write to HollyWood85@hotmail.com. Because of the volume of mail, personal replies cannot be provided.)

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On Nutrition by Ed Blonz, Ph.D.

Meat preservative poses a risk

Dear Dr. Blonz: I have a two-part question about nitrites and nitrates in food. First, I would like some information about what they do. Next, are you aware of any foods containing a nitrite that converts to nitric oxide, which might be useful to help reduce erectile dysfunction? **— J.B., Chicago, Ill.**

Dear J.B.: Nitrites and nitrates are primarily used as preservatives in cured and smoked meat products. Their main job is to help reduce the risk of botulism, an often-fatal form of food poisoning. The nitrites themselves, ironically, also represent a risk. This occurs when the nitrite reacts with the amine group found on the amino acids that make up protein; the reaction can result in the formation of a cancer-causing chemical known as nitrosamine. Obviously these are not ideal preservatives, but with the exception of freezing or high-temperature cooking, there's no other (relatively) safe way to protect against botulism in low-acid foods such as meat.

It helps to consider that the nitrites from cured and smoked meats represent only a small portion of our dietary intake. Nitrites and nitrates (which the body can convert to nitrites) are naturally present in several vegetables, including turnip greens, beets, celery, rhubarb, spinach, radish, parsley and lettuce. Nitrites are also found in beer and cheese.

Nitrosamines can form in the stomach if you eat a nitrate-rich vegetable and a protein-rich food in the same meal. This scenario is unlikely, however, because other nutrients such as vitamin C or vitamin E are often also present to help limit nitrosamine formation.

In contrast, cured and smoked meat products such as bacon or sausage represent a more ideal environment for nitrosamine formation. All the right ingredients are present at the same time; combined with high-temperature cooking, the nitrosamines can form before you take your first bite.

In weighing the relative risk from botulism against the presence of nitrosamine-causing agents, scientists decided that the use of nitrite and nitrate preservatives is acceptable in cured and smoked meats. But because risk is involved, such preservatives are not permitted in baby foods.

Although most cured and smoked meats contain sodium or potassium nitrite, you can find nitrite-free meat products either as locally produced, short-shelf-life products, or in your market's freezer case where the low temperature can effectively inhibit bacterial growth.

It is prudent to limit your intake of cured and smoked meats that contain nitrites. If you enjoy these foods, see if a nitrite-free brand is available. Another option is to look for a product that contains sodium ascorbate (a salt form of vitamin C), sodium erythorbate or vitamin E; these antioxidants can help limit nitrosamine formation.

On to your second question. Nitric oxide works in the body as a signal to make blood vessels relax and widen. It is an integral process in many physiological functions. Nitroglycerin, one of the medications taken to relieve the intense chest pain known as angina pectoris, works via nitric oxide to relax the muscles that surround the cardiac blood vessels. Some medications taken for erectile dysfunction use a nitric oxide mechanism as well. The issue, however, is having the nitric oxide produced when and where you need it. Nitrites, as explained above, are used in foods to prevent the development of the bacteria responsible for botulism. There is no evidence or reason to believe that having more nitrite in your diet could have any positive effects on erectile dysfunction.

Dear Dr. Blonz: Some of the carbohydrates in beans and other legumes can be removed if the beans are placed in water, brought to a boil and then left to sit in the hot water (with the heat turned off) for perhaps half an hour. The water is then discarded. This is a favorite technique of Narsai David, an East Bay (San Francisco) gourmet maven and "foodie." **— L.S., Alamo, Calif.**

Dear L.S.: Thanks for passing this on. Narsai David is a personal friend and an amazing resource for all things edible.

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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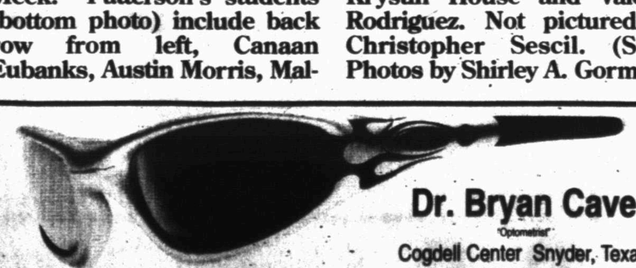
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CHRISTMAS ON CANDY CANE LANE — Stanfield Elementary students in classes of Sheila Collier, Delana Grant and Sherry Patterson presented *Christmas on Candy Cane Lane.* Reba Bailey is the music teacher. Collier's student (top photo) include bottom row from left, Cherie Northcutt, Skylar Davidson, Christian Ortega, Loran Perry and Gavian Hernandez; second row, Jesse Alaniz, Hayley Taylor, Aaron Tate and Daphny Torres; third row, Zach Bowman, Dawn Carrillo, Carli Trout, Triston Lopez, Boomer Fowler; top row, Taryn Kubena, Andrew Velasquez, D.J. Morin, Crystal Sandoval and Jeffrey Stewart; Grant's students (middle photo) include bottom row from left, Tray Anderson, Matthew Wilson, T.J. Villa, Rodney Martinez and Kimberly Hagins; second row, Caleb Green, Drew Moncevias, Tayler Barrerra, Meagan Lewis and Ashley Kincheloe; third row, Martin Torres, Tanner Cooley, Alex Steelman and Amanda Roemer; top row, Anthony Castillo, Zachery Inman, Deseray Rivera, Mekayla Duzan and Hayden Meek. Patterson's students (bottom photo) include back row from left, Canaan Eubanks, Austin Morris, Mallorie Warren, Priscilla Casarez, Dillon Randolph; third row, Reid Pinson, Ryan Dennis, Ivana Valadez, Bianca Silva, Tyler Mayes; second row, Georgette Gunderson, Jaysen Butler, Zachard Harris, Averey Wright, Shelbi Ruiz; front row, Kelly Jones, Ashlie Moon, Logan Perry, Krystin House and Valerie Rodriguez. Not pictured is Christopher Sescil. (Staff Photos by Shirley A. Gorman)



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DEC 29 2002

2nd Front Page

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

U.S. troops put on alert status

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thousands of American troops and dozens of warships will head to Persian Gulf in the coming weeks as the Pentagon puts forces in place to make war on Iraq, defense officials say.

Since Christmas, the Pentagon has begun alerting units around the United States and overseas to prepare for deployment. The Navy has been ordered to prepare two aircraft carrier battle groups and two amphibious assault groups — which carry thousands of Marines — to be ready to head to the region sometime in January, officials said Friday.

Air Force combat aircraft wings and Army units also are receiving orders to deploy, officials said. Military personnel will go to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman and Bahrain, among other locations, reinforcing the 50,000 U.S. military personnel already in the region.

The fresh troops are intended to coerce Iraqi President Saddam Hussein into disclosing and abandoning his efforts to acquire chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, military officials said. No decision to go to war has been made.

"We don't comment on specific unit deployments. However, forces will be flowing to the region to be in place should the president decide to use them," said Jim Wilkinson, a spokesman at U.S. Central Command, which would oversee operations in Iraq.

The Bush administration waited until after Christmas to issue the orders. Officials said tens of thousands of military personnel will receive orders to go to the region, but a precise figure was unavailable.

Some of the units being sent to the region are combat-ready, including infantry outfits, warships and strike aircraft, officials said. Many more are logistics, engineering and support teams, which will prepare for the arrival of even larger combat units in the months ahead, officials said. They will add to the 50,000 U.S. military personnel already in the region.

The Pentagon's orders require the Navy to have its carrier and amphibious assault groups ready to sail to the seas around Iraq within 96 hours after a certain date in January, the officials said, speaking on the condition of anonymity. They did not specify that date.

The Navy has determined that one the carriers will be the USS George Washington. The ship just arrived home to Norfolk, Va., from the Persian Gulf region and has remained ready to return. The Navy has not decided on the second carrier, but officials said it will either be the Everett, Wash.-based USS Abraham Lincoln, now in port at Perth, Australia, having just left the Persian Gulf region, or the USS Kitty Hawk, currently in port in Japan.

An aircraft carrier battle group includes six to eight surface escorts, including cruisers, destroyers, frigates and other vessels, dozens of strike and support aircraft and about 7,500 sailors. An amphibious ready group has about 2,200 Marines.

Rescue teams comb Russian bomb site

GROZNY, Russia (AP) — Rescue workers combed through the rubble of Chechnya's government headquarters Saturday, looking for survivors of twin bombings that killed at least 41 people and wounded 160.

Suicide bombers in a pair of trucks roared into the heavily guarded compound, the seat of the Kremlin-backed administration in Chechnya, just after lunch hour Friday.

The blasts, which had a combined force equivalent to a half-ton of TNT, wrecked the headquarters, blowing away doors, windows and interior walls and leaving the building a concrete shell.

The bombings dealt a severe blow to Russian President Vladimir Putin's efforts to portray Chechnya as returning to normal after more than three years of fighting between Russian forces and separatist guerillas.

Emergency teams worked through the night to move chunks of concrete and plaster in a desperate search for people who may have survived the explosions. At least 41 people were confirmed dead and 160 wounded, Chechen Prime Minister Mikhail Babich said Saturday. Officials earlier said about 200 people were inside the building at the time of the bombings.

The death toll was revised down from 46 Friday night because some of the victims were blown to pieces and their remains were mistakenly counted as separate casualties, said Yuri Kolodkin, a duty officer at the Emergency Situations Ministry in southern Russia. At least 30 of the wounded were in serious condition and were to be flown to Moscow for medical treatment, he said.

A plane carrying medics, emergency officials and several tons of food and medications landed at the Russian military base at Mozdok near Chechnya on Saturday morning, Kolodkin said. The passengers were to fly by helicopter to Grozny, and the food and medical supplies be transported by truck to the Chechen capital.

Viktor Kazantsev, Putin's representative in Russia's Southern Federal District, which includes Chechnya, also left Moscow en route to Grozny, his press office said Saturday.

Some 250 rescuers were working at the blast site and two mobile hospitals were set up at the scene, said Akhmed Dzherkhanov, Deputy Emergency Minister of Chechnya. A construction crane was removing large pieces of debris.

There were no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, but Russian officials variously blamed Chechnya's rebel president Aslan Maskhadov and warlord Shamil Basayev.

The trucks used in the bombings had army license plates, which allowed them to pass through several security checkpoints.

Fog causes 50-car pileup on Sam Houston Tollway

HOUSTON (AP) — At least 50 cars were involved in a traffic pileup Saturday morning as thick fog reduced visibility on the Sam Houston Tollway.

Broadcast reports said about 22 people had been injured, but there were no reports of fatalities. A constable's office spokesman said all the injuries appeared to be minor. Some vehicles caught fire, but all fires had been extinguished by 10:30 a.m.

"You couldn't see anything" because the fog was as thick as "pea soup," said Roger Ealey, 27, of Missouri City, a Houston suburb.

Ealey had just dropped off his wife at work and was driving alone when he suddenly came upon the wreckage. He was driving a Geo Metro subcompact, and dove out of the car as he saw it was about to rear-end a pickup.

Ealey suffered minor injuries and his car was lodged under the pickup.

"The fellow in the truck had his lights off, so I just jumped out before impact," he said.

The pileup happened about 7 and traffic was stalled in both directions of the tollway at the U.S. 90 overpass in southwest Harris County.

Four thefts reported here

•Thefts

Four residents in close proximity reported thefts Friday morning, but officers were unsure if the cases are linked and each remains under investigation.

E.L. Franklin reported Friday morning that several power tools were taken from his vehicle parked at 2803 34th St. An offense report for burglary of a vehicle was submitted.

At 8 a.m. Friday, Joshua Lasher reported a break-in at his home at 2906 Ave. V. He advised several items were taken and a report was filed for burglary of a residence.

Homer Godair called the police just after 9 a.m. Friday to report some tools stolen from his garage during the night at 3411 Ave. U. Officers submitted an offense report for burglary of a building.

At 10:05 a.m. Friday, Terry Martin reported a butane turkey cooker and butane bottle were stolen from his residence at 2502 33rd St. A report for theft was filed.

•Domestic disturbance

Two Snyder officers responded to a report of a domestic disturbance atan apartment in the 4400 block of Ave. U at 3:20 p.m. Friday. Officers contacted a man who was involved in a verbal argument with his 15-year-old niece, but both subjects advised no assault had occurred.

The man left the apartment and advised he would stay away for the remainder of the day. Everything was in order upon the officers' departure.

•Noise complaint

An anonymous caller reported a loud party in the 100 block of 20th Place early Saturday morning. Officers contacted a resident and advised him of the complaint and everything was in order upon their departure.

•Gas drive off

A clerk at McD's reported a gas drive off at 3:20 p.m. Friday in the amount of $25.

A drive off worth $10.01 was reported at 7 p.m. Friday by an employee at Town and Country East.

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2002's 1st quarter sets activity trend

(continued from page 1A)

most. The newly-formed District 3-3A also consists of Denver City, Lamesa, Seminole, Merkel and Sweetwater.

Two escaped Texas fugitives were recaptured in Oklahoma after a six-hour standoff with authorities. Curtis Gambell and Joshua Bagwell escaped from the Montague County Jail and set off a massive manhunt across the southern plains.

Work began in full on Cogdell Hospital's $4.2 million renovation project that includes a new emergency room.

The FBI warned all Americans of possible future terrorist attacks, but was not specific about possible targets.

In an unusual twist, the 2002 county spelling bee champion claimed victory by spelling a familiar word — her name. Raven Luna correctly spelled "raven" to take the top prize and advanced to the regional bee in Lubbock.

County commissioners okayed the hiring of five additional jailers for the law enforcement center in order to comply with a directive from the state jail commission.

For one minute, the world was in perfect symmetry at 8:20 p.m. Feb. 20, 2002. In military time it worked out to: 20:02, 02/20, 2002. It won't happen again until 2112.

A grizzly discovery in Georgia shocked the nation as a family-run crematorium was found to be discarding hundreds of bodies illegally. More than 300 were found in storage sheds, shallow graves and a private lake on the family's property.

Senior District Judge Royal Hart, without explanation, reversed an earlier ruling against the Scurry County commissioners' court, and then granted a summary judgement in favor of Scurry County in an open meetings lawsuit filed by the Snyder Daily News.

March

Oxy Permian celebrated completion of Phase 1 of its CO2 project in the Cogdell field, adding years of life to the 50-plus-year-old field north of Snyder.

An arctic blast roared across Texas with freezing temperatures that claimed the lives of five Dallas residents. Freezing warnings were even issued along the Texas coast and the Mexican border.

Snyder citizens took a trip down memory lane and honored some of their own at the annual chamber of commerce banquet held at the coliseum.

Former SHS grid star Hayward Clay saved the life of a Snyder man inside a burning house. Clay pulled George "Chongo" Moore from the home in the 3400 block of Ave. M.

The nation paused for reflection at the 6-month anniversary of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington D.C. as President Bush called for continued military action against terrorists.

Voters headed to the polls for the primary election and chose Rod Waller as the Republican candidate for county judge and Scott Campbell as the nominee for State Representative.

Houston housewife Andrea Yates was sentenced to life in prison for systematically drowning her five children in a bathtub while her husband was at work.

Heavy rains fell across the state and claimed the life of an East Texas youth. The four-year-old boy drowned while swimming with siblings in a swollen creek.

Snyder received more than two inches of beneficial rain out of the weather system.

A car bomb exploded outside the U.S. Embassy in Lima, Peru killing nine people and injuring dozens more.

Western Texas College kicked off a weekly five-minute news program — "WTC Week in Review" — to air on local cable channel 22.

The mountain homes of many Texans and some Snyder residents were destroyed by wildfires that plagued Ruidoso and the rest of New Mexico during the spring and summer of 2002.

Dilapidated buildings began disappearing around town as city crews cleared several abandoned structures including an eyesore apartment complex on Hwy. 180 near El Paso Ave.

The Justice Department announced it would seek the death penalty against Zacarias Moussaoui, the only person charged in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

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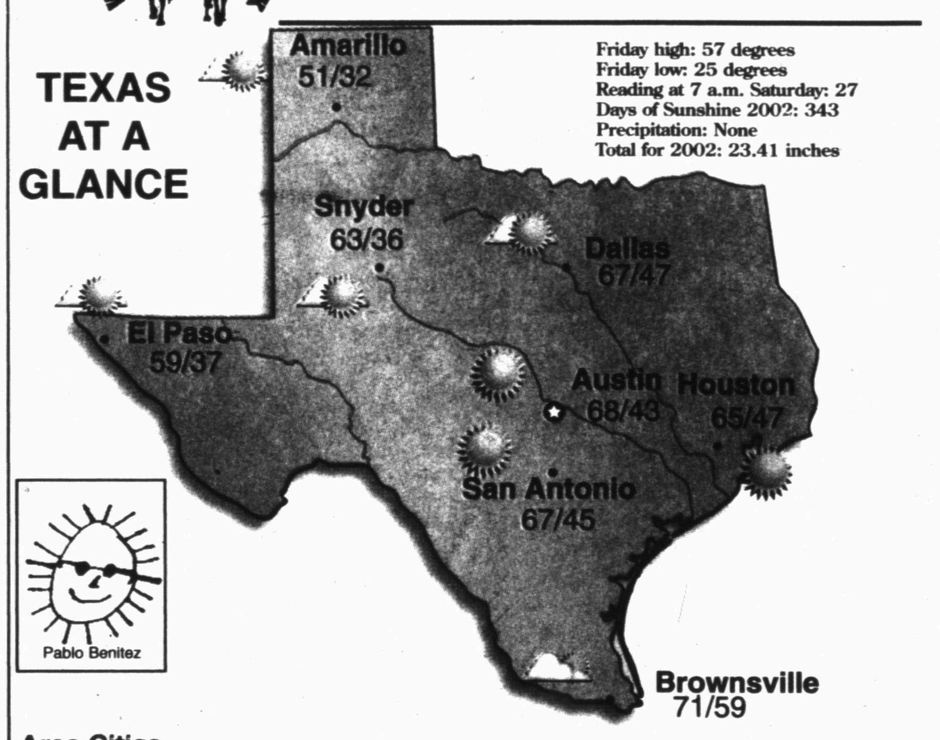
Today's Weather

Local 3-Day Forecast

Sat 12/28	Sun 12/29	Mon 12/30
63/36	64/33	53/21
Mostly sunny skies. High 63F. Winds SW at 10 to 15 mph.	More clouds than sun. Highs in the mid 60s and lows in the low 30s.	Partly cloudy. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the low 20s.
Sunrise 7:45 AM Sunset 5:46 PM	Sunrise 7:45 AM Sunset 5:46 PM	Sunrise 7:45 AM Sunset 5:47 PM

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TEXAS AT A GLANCE



Friday high: 57 degrees
Friday low: 25 degrees
Reading at 7 a.m. Saturday: 27
Days of Sunshine 2002: 343
Precipitation: None
Total for 2002: 23.41 inches

Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	66	43	sunny	El Paso	59	37	mst sunny	Midland	66	39	sunny
Amarillo	51	32	mst sunny	Fort Stockton	69	41	sunny	Raymondville	70	53	pt sunny
Austin	68	43	sunny	Gainesville	64	39	sunny	Rosenberg	65	47	sunny
Beaumont	63	45	sunny	Greenville	64	40	sunny	San Antonio	67	45	sunny
Brownsville	71	59	pt sunny	Houston	65	47	sunny	San Marcos	66	45	sunny
Brownwood	68	41	sunny	Kingsville	69	52	mst sunny	Sulphur Springs	65	41	sunny
Corpus Christi	67	52	mst sunny	Livingston	63	41	sunny	Sweetwater	66	40	mst sunny
Corsicana	67	44	sunny	Longview	63	40	sunny	Tyler	67	46	sunny
Dallas	67	47	mst sunny	Lubbock	61	34	sunny	Weatherford	66	39	sunny
Del Rio	67	47	sunny	Lufkin	65	44	sunny	Wichita Falls	64	40	sunny

National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	53	30	sunny	Houston	65	47	sunny	Phoenix	69	48	pt sunny
Boston	40	31	pt sunny	Los Angeles	65	50	rain	San Francisco	55	45	rain
Chicago	39	32	cloudy	Miami	69	52	pt sunny	Seattle	42	32	rain
Dallas	67	47	mst sunny	Minneapolis	41	29	cloudy	St. Louis	51	35	pt sunny
Denver	61	29	pt sunny	New York	41	32	pt sunny	Washington, DC	46	35	pt sunny

Moon Phases

Last	New	First	Full
Dec 27	Jan 2	Jan 10	Jan 18

UV Index

Sat 12/28	Sun 12/29	Mon 12/30
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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Area woman on cancer cause hunt

By JOHN FUQUAY
Lubbock A-J Staff

HOCKLEY COUNTY — Karen Summers was living in Orange County, California, in 1994 when a doctor told her that her sore throat, weight fluctuations and moodiness were caused by thyroid cancer.

Without treatment, the doctor gave her six months to live. Summers had a thyroidectomy and began five years of radiation treatment.

In a jolt from her West Texas past, Summers had a chance encounter while getting treatment at a nationally-known facility in Santa Monica, Calif.

There she met another woman who was in for the same treatment. The woman was from Whiteface, Tex., on the Cochran-Hockley county line.

"I spoke with her, and she advised me of how many people in the surrounding community had passed on or had cancer," Summers said.

Summers believed she actually was one of the cancer victims about whom the woman was speaking. For two years in the mid-1980s, Summers lived in Levelland in Hockley County west of Lubbock.

"I always felt like I had (cancer) when I moved, but I didn't know it," she said.

Now she knows, and she feels like a years-long crusade finally may be over.

Six years after Summers suspected a cancer cluster in the Cochran-Hockley county area, the presence of a previously undetected contaminant has been confirmed.

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality tested water wells in several West Texas counties in April and found traces of perchlorate listed by the federal government as a probable carcinogen and clinically linked to thyroid disorders.

After meeting the Whiteface woman in Santa Monica, Summers took on a new mission in life.

"I told her I would move back to Whiteface, and I would pursue the question of how I got cancer myself," Summers said.

And so began a journey to find out why cancer seemed so prevalent in rural communities west of Lubbock.

Summers said she encountered many obstacles along the way, and today, perchlorate remains a complex and mysterious contaminant.

"I had already pursued every government agency that could do a test, and everybody shut a door on me," she said. "After years of research, now there are people out there lobbying for testing any new cluster where somebody has a suspicion."

Return to Texas

In 1996, Summers put her life on hold and moved to Whiteface, population 465.

She had lived in Levelland from 1984 to 1986 after a relative made slow-paced West Texas living sound more appealing than the corporate world in which Summers labored in the Los Angeles area.

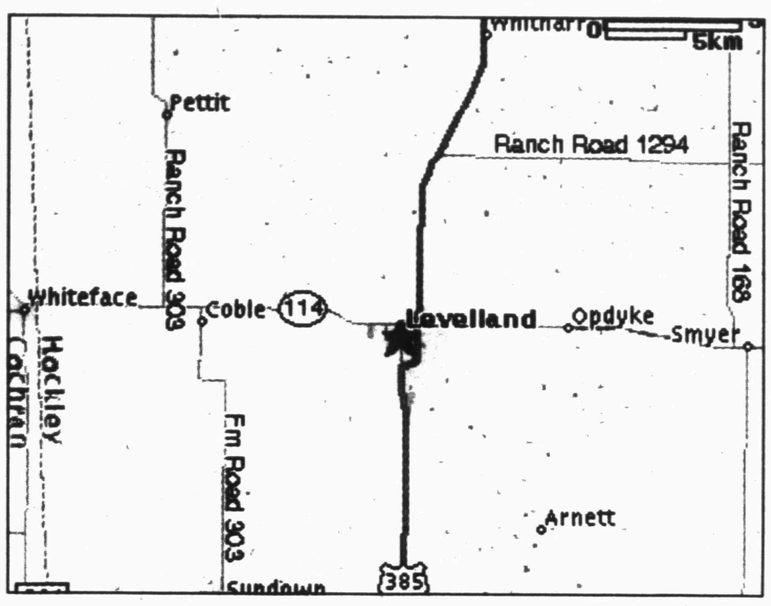
Summers, now 43, had a day job in Whiteface in 1996 and faithfully attended her son's sporting events. In her free time, she looked for carcinogens in area drinking water.

Almost everywhere she turned, she said, she found another woman who had some form of cancer. From neighbors, parents at school and even at Levelland City Hall, where she went to find out what was in the water, someone either had cancer or knew someone else who did.

"When I lived in Orange County it was unheard of, very rare. But in Whiteface, which obviously is a very small town, it was common. Most of the women I came across either had their thyroid removed or were on synthroid.

"One pharmacy I talked to in Levelland gave out more than 600 prescriptions for synthroid, a thyroid treatment," she said.

"I decided to start my own cancer survey."



Soil contaminants

Reese Air Force Base, which was undergoing closure procedures at the time, had long been identified as a source of groundwater contamination, primarily from on-base dump sites and years of spilled jet fuel that seeped into the soil.

In addition, a motor fuels company operated a production plant from 1939 to 1954 farther west on Texas 114 in Hockley County. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency added the former plant's territory to its Superfund Site list, making it a high cleanup priority.

A groundwater plume near Reese and along Texas 114 is known to contain varying levels of many contaminants, but tests found the levels too low to create a health hazard.

Summers said she knew state and federal regulatory agencies had detected trichloroethylene, a cleaning solvent more commonly known as TCE, in a groundwater plume be neath Reese.

"I wanted to find out if TCE could cause thyroid disorder," she said. "Upon researching that, I came across perchlorate."

Perchlorate most commonly is used as a component in the solid fuel propellant of rockets and missiles. However, as a result of more recent and reliable testing, experts have found that perchlorate can be generated naturally.

During research of Internet sites, Summers found the name of a fellow Californian who was a specialist in perchlorate contamination. California has led the way in perchlorate detection, helping to draw federal attention to the contaminant.

California connection

It's a recent phenomenon," said Steve Walden, a manager in the public drinking water division of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

"In 1997 there was no analytical or laboratory method to detect perchlorate in low levels in water," he said. "In 1997, California developed a method to detect low levels of perchlorate, and in 1998 the capability began to spread."

One of the driving forces behind California's advanced perchlorate technology is Larry Ladd, a medical geographer who has conducted extensive research on the potential health effects of perchlorate.

Ladd's hometown of Rancho Cordova, Calif., has lost 20 municipal water wells since 1997 due to rocket fuel contamination. Ladd has worked on volunteer community groups for both the California Department of Health Services and the EPA.

He knew about Hockley County before Summers called.

"I had worked out a map, a model of places to pursue the most, and Hockley County was high on my places to look at," Ladd said.

He was familiar with the Texas 114 Superfund Site and was working on a theory that perchlorate might be generated from a reaction with another enzyme during oil field production.

He also knew that a fertilizer producer in Chile had sold products in the United States that were tainted with naturally occurring perchlorate. Some of those products were used as a cotton fertilizer and defoliant.

"We had two positive hits, one in Morton and one in Whiteface, of about four or five parts per billion," Ladd said.

Despite the finding, Ladd said, he could not confirm the contamination was the source of Summers' cancer.

"It would be a real stretch for me to say that four or five parts per billion of perchlorate contributed to thyroid cancer," he said. "But we passed on what we had to the EPA and (TCEQ) in Texas."

EPA begins new tests

Walden said the EPA adopted an Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule that led to additional water testing earlier this year.

"Perchlorate came up as one of the protocols, and that was an area we wanted to test," he said.

The TCEQ was in nine West Texas counties in April, testing groundwater for perchlorate.

A well near Midland tested positive with 10 parts per billion of perchlorate, and perchlorate subsequently was found in water supplies in eight nearby counties. Four parts per billion is considered the minimum safe level.

Walden said pregnant women and children under three should drink bottled water in Midland, Gaines, Ector, Dawson, Martin, Howard, Glasscock and Andrews counties.

He said a finding of 30 parts per billion in a water tower in Levelland was from a chemical reaction caused by a lightning strike.

"That was not groundwater related," he said. "That's been corrected."

As to the perchlorate found in water wells, Walden, Ladd and others remain uncertain of the source.

"I'm confident we're going to find out," Walden said. "We have a competent team doing competent work."

After years of trying to draw attention to possible perchlorate contamination in West Texas, Summers believes her mission finally paid off.

She moved back to California seven months ago and plans to charter a charitable foundation, Purity for a Child's Journey, that will provide reverse osmosis water systems to public schools.

"I'm sure that with (Ladd's test) results and my perseverance, that got their attention," she said. "God told me to go out there and do this, and I did."

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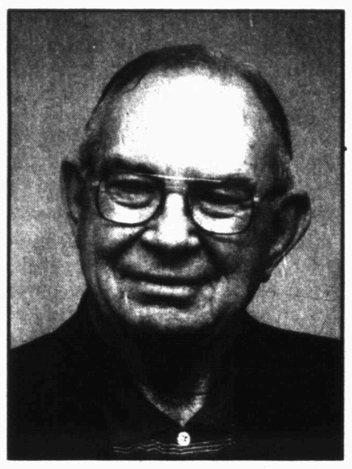
Blanchard birthday celebrated at church

Ross Blanchard, a resident of Snyder for 69 years, celebrated his 80th birthday with family and friends at the First Christian Church Saturday, Dec. 14.

Over 100 people attended the celebration, hosted by his children and nieces.

A longtime businessman, Blanchard is still active in real estate. He has been a deacon and member of the First Christian Church for 69 years. His family said he is a caring and giving individual, assisting many Snyder residents when in need.

In addition to many friends from Snyder, Sweetwater, Big Spring, San Angelo, Fort Worth, Dallas and Oklahoma, guests also included his wife, Ernestine Blanchard; his sister, Marjorie Cox of Muskogee, Okla.; his brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Bobby and Dona Sanderson of Blackwell; his children, Joni McKee of Georgetown; Robert and Dorothy Harris of Sterling City; and Gary Harris of Dallas; his nieces, Jana Bentle of Sweetwater; Linda Horwood of Sterling City; Jean Farmer and Sue Ferrell of Muskogee; Jane Wall of Fort Worth; and a nephew, Brent Blanchard from Sweetwater.



Ross Blanchard

Yuletide season has special meaning

CHRISTMAS, Mich. (AP) — Every day is a holiday in this Upper Peninsula community, but the Yuletide season is something special.

Staff at Christmas Mall and Cabins know that better than most, as each year they accommodate the throngs who come here to have their envelopes stamped with the town's unique postmark.

"Every year we get more and more," said Joe Beauchaine, part owner of the business. Over the past six years, more than 100,000 pieces of mail received the Christmas postmark.

Karen and Joe Beauchaine began marking mail in 1997, after they bought the business. That year, they stamped 11,218 pieces.

This year, nearly 20,000 postmarks were stamped by Christmas Eve, a new record for the outlying branch office of the U.S. Postal Service, The Mining Journal of Marquette reported.

"We have pickup twice a day now because of the amount of mail," Beauchaine said. "We have so much going out of here, we fill up crates."

Customers from as far away as Hawaii, Florida, California and Canada drop off cards and other correspondence to be postmarked Christmas.

After Thanksgiving each year, mail flow through the post office runs up to 2,000 pieces per day, mostly holiday cards. Mall workers say postmarking creates a lot of extra work, but it's worth the effort.

"We do enjoy doing it," Beauchaine said.

I think government should be small in scope, and as local as possible.

—Adlai Stevenson

Bridal Registry

LYNN POLK AND BRAD HART
LESLIE DEERE AND COREY TRUJILLO
LAURIE HUDDLESTON AND JOEY ROLAND
STEPHANIE COX AND CHRIS REED
SARAH ANN DYKES AND JOE MAC CHEYNE

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Bridge

By Phillip Alder

North 12-28-02
♠ A J 3 2
♥ Q J 5
♦ —
♣ A K Q 5 3 2

West
♠ 9 7 6
♥ K
♦ A K Q 10 9 8 3
♣ 8 4

East
♠ 10
♥ A 8 7 4 3
♦ J 7 5 4 2
♣ 10 7

South
♠ K Q 8 5 4
♥ 10 9 6 2
♦ 6
♣ J 9 6

Dealer: West
Vulnerable: North-South

South	West	North	East
	1 ♦	Dbl.	1 ♥
1 ♠	2 ♦	4 ♦	5 ♦
5 ♠	6 ♦	Pass	Pass
6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl.
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Opening lead: ♥ K

Saturday, Dec. 28, 2002

It is hero or goat time

By Phillip Alder

You might remember the Peanuts cartoon in which Charlie Brown, about to throw the key pitch in a baseball game, says, "It is hero or goat time."

At the bridge table, sometimes you face an unenviable guess. If you would like to be on the dilemma's horns in this deal, look only at the North and East hands. After a competitive auction to six spades doubled, your partner leads the heart king. How would you plan the defense?

West's two-diamond rebid denied three hearts; with that number, he would have doubled: a Support Double. North's four diamonds was a splinter bid, promising game values in spades with at most a singleton diamond. Her later pass over six diamonds invited a slam in spades and virtually guaranteed a diamond void. (If South had doubled, the penalty would have been 300.)

Sitting East was David Berkowitz, a many-time national champion. It looked obvious to encourage partner to lead a second round of hearts. But he stopped and thought further. Did West, Larry Cohen, have two hearts or one? Remember, he had denied three during the auction.

Eventually, Berkowitz heroically overtook with the heart ace and returned a heart, which Cohen ruffed to defeat the slam. That was the only defense. If East had played low at trick one, South would have won 12 tricks via five spades, six clubs and a diamond ruff in the dummy.

How did Berkowitz find this play? Afterwards, he said that he thought his partner would have led a low heart if holding king-doubleton. Cohen was not convinced!

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7.4 million copies sold

NEW YORK (AP) — Everyone wanted seats for "The Eminem Show" in 2002.

The rapper's album sold far more than any other — more than 7.4 million copies, according to year-end figures this week from Nielsen SoundScan.

"The Eminem Show," released in late May, features huge hits such as "Without Me" and "Cleanin' Out My Closet." It sold 1.3 million copies in its first week alone.

Eminem's other album, the soundtrack to his movie "8 Mile," was the fifth-highest selling of the year, with about 3.2 million copies sold.

Coming in second was another rapper: Nelly, whose "Nellyville" sold about 4.8 million copies. It contains this summer's ubiquitous party song, "Hot in Herre."

Canadian teen pop singer Avril Lavigne was No. 3 with "Let Go," which sold nearly 3.9 million copies. It includes the hits "Complicated" and "Skier Boi."

Dance On Broadway
2415 Ave. R
Swing Dance Lessons
Saturdays, January 18, 25, Feb. 1, 8
Class Times: 5:45-6:45 - Children's Swing 8-12 years
7-8 p.m. - Beginners (Swing)
8-9 p.m. - Fast Swing/Jitterbug
Cost: $25 per person
Call To Register 574-1595 or 725-1010



ENTERTAINED AT LIONS CLUB — Boys and girls attending Joy School at the East Side Church of Christ entertained Lions Club members before Christmas. Lions Club will not meet Tuesday and the next two meetings on Jan. 7 and 14 will be at the Snyder Country Club due to repairs at the Martha Ann Woman's Club. (Staff Photo by Jo Ann Nunley)

Easier way to keep those pounds off

Each year, promises to eat healthy and lose weight top Americans' New Year's resolutions. That's no surprise since the latest studies by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report that in the year 2000 more than 30 percent of American adults, or 59 million people, were obese.

If you are among the thousands of Americans who can't seem to keep those pounds off, but don't want to change your lifestyle, you're in luck.

These award-winning recipes from Overweightpeople.com will start your own personal menu of entrees and snacks that are low in fat, low in sodium, and low in preparation time.

LOW FAT BANANA NUT BREAD

2 tsp. cinnamon
2¼ cup pastry flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
*½ cup fruit juice reduction
3 ripe bananas
2 med. eggs
1/8 cup vegetable oil
¼ cup apple sauce
½ cup chopped walnuts

Grease a standard bread pan with non-fat cooking spray. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Combine all dry ingredients and hold aside, combine all wet ingredients, except bananas. Place bananas in mixing bowl and mix at slow speed alternating wet and dry until all ingredients are added. (Slowly blend. Do not over mix). Pour into pan and bake 25 to 35 min.

*1 12 oz. can apple juice concentrate simmered on med/ high heat until it reduces to approx. 1 cup. The remainder can be saved, covered in fridge.

SKINNY WALDORF SALAD

1 cup diced apples
1 cup drained Mandarin oranges
1 cup diced celery
½ cup dried cranberries
½ cup chopped walnuts
1 cup non-fat Cool Whip
¼ cup low-fat mayonnaise
½ tsp. cinnamon

Blend together Cool Whip, mayonnaise and cinnamon. Then fold in all other ingredients. Do not chop apples too early, they will turn. For best results chop and blend apples just before serving.

For more low-fat, low-sodium, and great-tasting recipes like these, and other information, visit www.overweightpeople.com.

When meals are designed for you personally, you can keep those extra pounds off.

Appears in court

LONDON (AP) — A member of the British garage band So Solid Crew wept Friday as he appeared in court on drug and firearms charges.

Shane Neil, 23, is charged with possession of a firearm and ammunition, possession of illegal drugs with intent to supply and supplying illegal drugs.

Neil, whose stage name is Kaish, wept several times and bowed his head during the hour-long hearing. He was arrested Nov. 14 near London's Leicester Square and has been in custody ever since; a judge denied him bail.

Neil is the third member of the 20-strong south London combo to face weapons charges.

Singer and producer Jason Phillips, who uses the stage name G-Man, was arrested last month on suspicion of possessing a gun.

Rapper Ashley Walters, who uses the stage name Asher D, was sentenced in March to 18 months in prison after pleading guilty to possessing a loaded gun.

Statistics say stay active despite the cold weather

According to statistics at the Mayo Clinic, more than 65 million Americans suffer from back pain each year, preventing them from enjoying weekend leisure activities. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to help you stay active.

According to David Draper, Ed.D., A.T.C., Professor, certified athletic trainer and director of the graduate program in sports medicine/athletic training at Brigham Young University, neck and arm pain is the most common exercise-related pain, which often results from a wide variety of activities including unaccustomed exercise, physically-demanding work, and overuse or repetitive use of a muscle or joint. "Pulled muscles are more likely to occur in the fall and winter months because your muscles tighten and contract in the cold weather," adds Dr. Draper. "But sometimes sore muscles occur despite taking the right precautions. In these cases, I recommend continuous, low-level heat therapy."

Here are his tips to help you perform at the top of your game:

Stretch your muscles: Not only does stretching improve performance, it helps prevent injuries and improves flexibility. One of the best times to stretch is right after a workout, such as running, skating or skiing. Stretching fatigued muscles immediately following the exercise that caused the fatigue helps enhance the promotion of muscle growth, and will actually help decrease the level of post-exercise soreness.

Treat sore muscles: If stretching didn't do the trick, don't think sore muscles will just go away; beat them to the punch with heat therapy. ThermaCare is an air-activated heat wrap designed to provide at least eight hours of continuous, low-level heat therapy, powerful pain relief and deep muscle relaxation. Once exposed to air, ThermaCare HeatWraps reach a therapeutic temperature of up to 104 F within 30 minutes, which increases circulation, thereby enhancing the body's natural restorative process.

Eat right: Smaller, more frequent meals are easier to digest and increase your metabolism, helping keep fuel reserves at their peak. Your body can only handle so much food at one time, and the digestive process is much more efficient with smaller quantities of food, making nutrient absorption more complete. Also, it's extremely important to stay hydrated throughout the day, so drink a lot of water.

Dress Appropriately: Layer your clothes. Wear tights under sweatpants, and a turtleneck under a sweatshirt with a light jacket. Once you warm up, layers can be removed.

Keep these tips in mind and you'll be able to perform at your best and feel great too.

SC Library News & Views

By Janie Romine, librarian

The Scurry County Library will be closed on Jan. 1, New Year's Day. We will be closing at 6 p.m. on Dec. 31 and at 6 p.m. on Jan. 2.

We will return to the normal schedule next week. Everyone have a Happy New Year!

We have received several more large type edition books and some of the new titles are:

The Glass Lake, by Maeve Binchy

The Simple Truth, by David Baldacci

Jupiter's Bones, by Faye Kellerman

All the Queen's Men, by Linda Howard

Red Devil of the Range, by Max Brand

Renegade. Rifles: The Trailsman, by Jon Sharpe

Iron Man, Iron Horse, by Will Cook

New Non-Fiction

Portrait of a Killer: Jack the Ripper Case Closed, by Patricia Cornwell

The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq, by Kenneth Pollack

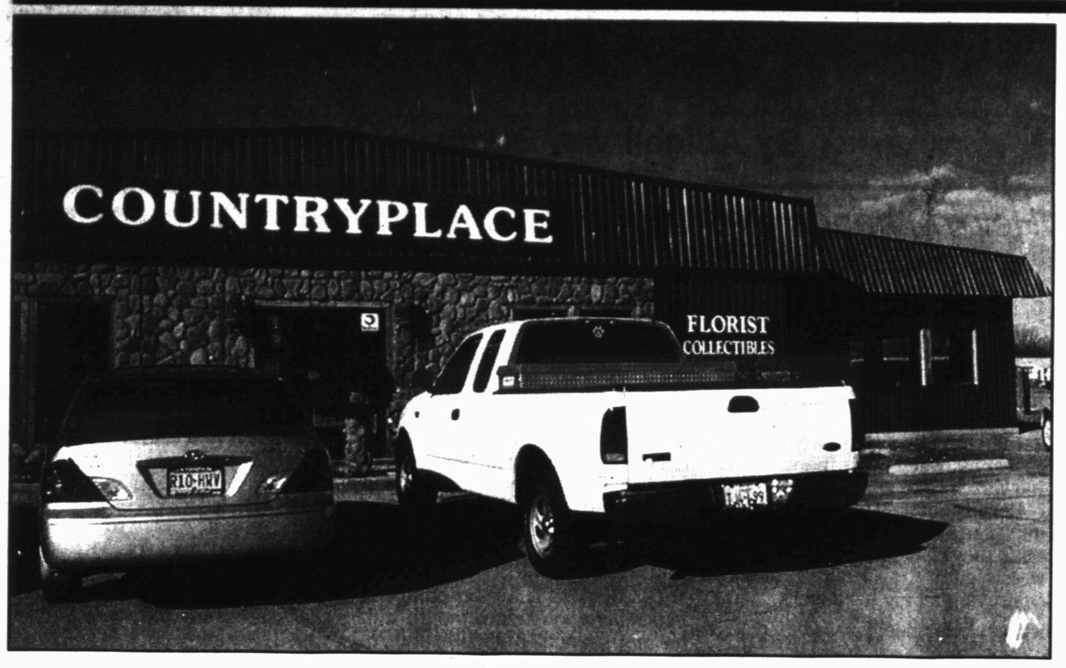
Comfort of Home: An Illustrated Step-by-step Guide for Caregivers, by Maria Meyer

BOOK FEATURE

GAME ON!, by Pat Doyle. If you teach, supervise, or work with children in any way, the 77 games in this user-friendly resource will make your job easier.

The Game Finder will help you pick games your group will enjoy. You'll find activities for groups of all sizes, as well as variations and safety considerations.

CHILD CARE
Open 7 Days A Week
5 a.m. - Midnight
Birth to 12 Years Old
Transportation Provided
111 37th Street 573-4848



Countryplace Floral and Gifts

New eatery addition to Countryplace

Glenda Glasscock, owner of Countryplace Floral and Gifts at 4213 College Ave., is adding on 1,000 square feet to the building with plans for an eatery.

It will specialize in an old-fashioned drugstore fountain where ice cream will be served and soups and sandwiches, baked potatoes with toppings, special hot dogs, old fashioned banana splits, sodas and other desserts.

There will be seating for guests and a drive-in window will be added for patrons' convenience. Glenda hasn't yet decided on the hours that it will be open.

The entrance will be through the existing building where she has a Merle Norman shop, complete flower shop, gift shop, Naturescapes CDs, bridal and baby registry and tuxedoes.

Countryplace opened in July of 1992.

The flower shop offers fresh arrangements for all needs and she plans to decorate with fresh flowers on the tables in the eatery each day.

Due to wet weather the contractor, Rio Evans, has been delayed but expects the eatery to be completed and ready for opening in mid February.

Community Calendar

MONDAY

Storytime at the Scurry County Library for 4- and 5-year-olds; 10 a.m.

Rock and Roll Quilting Club; Hermleigh Community Center; everyone is invited for free quilting lessons, and special projects are to help someone in need; call 863-2426 for more information; 8 a.m. to noon.

Scurry County Museum's hours are Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

NA-Just for Today; Park Club at Winston Park; 573-1438.

Manic Depression (Bipolar) support group; Family Life Community Church, 904 26th Street; 7 p.m.

Scurry County AA closed meeting; Park Club in Winston Park; for information call 573-1292 or 573-9458; 8 p.m.

TUESDAY

Gateway Family Services parenting discussion group, focuses on a variety of parenting issues and special challenges; no charge; call 73-1822 for more information; 10:30 a.m.

Weight Watchers meeting; Colonial Hill Baptist Church; for more information call Kathy at 573-1289 during the evening; weigh-in is at 5:30 p.m.

ABCL Open Pairs Duplicate Bridge; Snyder Country Club; 7 p.m.

Beginners' AA open meeting; Snyder Park Club, 1212 37th Street; 573-8268, 574-1292 or 573-1141; 7 p.m.

Al-Anon open meeting; Park Club in Winston Park, 37th and Ave. M; for more information call 573-3733, 573-2101 or 573-1141; 8 p.m.

TOPS TX56 (take off pounds sensibly); weigh-in and meeting 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.; Trinity United Methodist Church. For more information call Phillis Leatherwood at 573-6105.

WEDNESDAY

NA Just For Today, open meeting; Park Club; for information, call 573-1438; 8 p.m.

THURSDAY

Horseshoe Pitching For Fun; horseshoe courts located at the coliseum; everybody welcome, for further information call 573-9762.

Deep Creek Cloggers lesson; at the coliseum annex; 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

AA Big Book Study; closed meeting; contact numbers are 574-8015, 574-1292 or 573-1141; 7 p.m.

FRIDAY

Free blood pressure clinics; Senior Citizens Center; 9:30 to 11 a.m.

Blood pressures will be taken at Cogdell Hospital Home Health Services, 1800 Cogdell Blvd., Suite B; 1-2 p.m.

ABCL Open Pairs Duplicate Bridge; Snyder Country Club; 1:30 p.m.

Cornelius-Dodson House; open by appointment, call 573-0538 or 573-0770.

Scurry County AA closed meeting; Park Club at Winston Park; for information call 574-1292 or 573-9458; 8 p.m.

Al-Anon open meeting; Park Club; 573-3733, 573-2101 or 5731141; 8 p.m.

SATURDAY

NA-Just For Today open meeting; Park Club; for information call 573-1438; 7 p.m.

SUNDAY

Scurry County AA open meeting; Park Club in Winston Park; for information call 574-1292 or 573-9458; 10 a.m.

It pays to understand the basic rules of money

If you're banking on owning a home, financing an education, securing a retirement or getting the best deals on credit, it's important to understand some basic rules about money.

Here are some tips from a program called Money Rules-an initiative run by America's Community Bankers. The advice could help you build a better financial future.

• When shopping for a credit card you should evaluate all fees, as well as the introductory and regular interest rate.

• If you only make minimum payments on your credit card, you may never pay off the debt. Try to set up a payment calendar and work toward paying off your balance.

• Write down how much you spend every week. This will help you develop a budget, and also identify ways to cut expenses and save money.

• Pay your bills on time and in full, if possible. If you mail your bills, you should do this at least five business days before they are due. This will help you avoid expensive-and unnecessary-late fees and other charges.

• Ideally, you should save some percentage (e.g., five percent) of your annual income for retirement, but no amount of savings is too small and it's never too late to begin.

• When applying for a mortgage loan, your credit rating and how much you owe may be as important as how much you make.

• A checking account with your local community bank may help you save money by avoiding costly check cashing firms, and also by making it easier for you to itemize and budget.

• Being denied credit for no apparent reason or having routine financial statements stop arriving in a timely manner may mean you're an identity theft victim.

For more tips, visit the Web site www.AmericasCommunityBankers.com.

Love your neighbor, but don't tear down the fence.

—German proverb

Black-eyed peas bring good luck

Texans believe black-eyed peas should be eaten on New Year's Day to assure good luck all year long. This tradition is so strong that even people who don't like them are likely to insist on eating at least a few on Jan. 1 to start the New Year right.

3 cups dried black-eyed peas
1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
½ pound salt pork, cut into 1-inch pieces
5 cups water
Salt to taste

Soak the dried peas, in water to cover, 2-4 hours or overnight.

Drain the peas and place in a large pot along with the onion and salt pork. Add 5 cups of water and bring to a boil. Lower heat, cover, and simmer for 1½ hours or until peas are tender. Add salt to taste.

Yield: 8 servings

BLACK-EYED PEAS

6 slices bacon
1 c. green pepper, chopped
1 c. onion, chopped
1 c. celery
1 (No. 303) can black-eyed peas (dry or green)
1 (No. 303) can tomatoes

Fry bacon and drain. Saute in bacon drippings green pepper, onion, and celery.

Add black-eyed peas and tomatoes. Crumble bacon in peas and simmer 20 minutes.

BLACK-EYED PEA, SWEET POTATO SALAD WITH CHUTNEY

8 servings
2 sweet potatoes, medium, peeled and cut into pieces
1 red onion, quartered and thinly sliced
1 tablespoon canola oil
2 cloves minced garlic
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon dried thyme
½ teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon ground coriander
1/3 cup lime juice
½ cup mango chutney
4 cups drained cooked (canned?) black-eyed peas
½ cup chopped fresh parsley
salt and pepper, to taste

In a large pot, cover sweet potato pieces with water, bring to a slow boil, and cook for about 15 minutes, or until chunks are tender but not falling apart. Remove from heat and drain.

In a large skillet over medium heat, saute onion in oil until translucent, about 4 minutes. Add garlic, basil, thyme, cumin and coriander. Cook, stirring, for another 2 to 3 minutes.

In a large bowl, mix together the lime juice and chutney. Add black-eyed peas, parsley, sweet potatoes, and onion–herb mixture and toss to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper and refrigerate until serving.

SWEET AND SOUR BLACK-EYED PEAS

3 (No. 2) cans black-eyed peas, drained
2 c. carrots, diced, cooked and drained
1 med. onion, chopped
1 med. green pepper, chopped
1 small jar chopped pimientos, drained
¾ c. sugar
¾ c. vinegar
2/3 c salad oil

Combine all ingredients and marinate overnight. Can be served hot or cold.

Yield: 20-25 servings

PEAS & HOG JOWL FOR NEW YEARS

½ lb. hog jowl
1 lb. dried black-eyed peas

Wash and pick out peas. Soak in water 3 hours. In meantime, place jowl in 1 qt. cold water with 1½ tsp. salt, cover and bring to boiling.

Add drained peas and cover and cook 2 to 3 hours. A small dried red pepper may be boiled with the peas, but remove before serving.

BLACK-EYED PEAS

1 cup dried black-eyed peas
4 cups water
½ teaspoon sugar
1 small onion, chopped
1 small piece salt meat, or ham

Wash peas in 3 or 4 waters; combine in a saucepan with water, half on the onions, sugar and salt meat; cover with a tight fitting lid and simmer over low fire 1 hour. Add remaining onion and cook 20 minutes longer.

FUN COOKING GUIDE: Never boil peas or beans over a high fire as this tears them up and they are not tasty.

Tampering with food is a crime

JACKSON, Tenn. (AP) — What would you like on your burger? Lettuce? Mayo? Pickles?

Perhaps some bat?

A Lexington teenager faces up to six years behind bars for placing a dead bat on a bun as a joke and giving it to a man who took a bite, thinking it was a burger, police said.

The girl, whose identity is being withheld because she is a juvenile, will be charged with violating a new law that prohibits tampering with someone's food and giving it as a gift, according to Lexington Police Investigator Donna Hetherington.

"It appears to be a practical joke that went very bad. She just wasn't using a whole lot of common sense," Hetherington said Thursday.

Timothy Gooch, 21, went to a local hospital's emergency room after biting into the bat Tuesday night. He was not injured and the bat tested negative for rabies, state Health Department spokeswoman Diane Denton said Thursday.

Hetherington said the bat had been killed when someone ran over it and that the teen had never seen one before. "She thought this would be funny, but it wasn't," Hetherington said.

End of Year Clearance Sale
Monday, December 30 - 30% Off Storewide
Tuesday, December 31 - 40% Off Storewide
excludes Bridal Rentals
Open 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
All Sales Final -
No Gift Wrapping On Sale Merchandise
Special Occasions
Office 574-2004
507 Coliseum Drive
Across from old Minute Market
Home 863-2794

SALE
Up To 75% Off
Linda's Merle Norman
1413 Hailey Sweetwater Tx
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SUNDAY SERVICE
Any 2 Regular Foot Long Sandwiches
$6.99
THE SUBWAY A SANDWICH SHOULD BE.
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573-9782

IT ONLY HAPPENS TWICE A YEAR...
SEMI-ANNUAL CLEARANCE
SALE
All Fall and Winter Apparel Marked Down
20%-30%-40%-50%-60%-75% Off
SHOP EARLY FOR BEST SELECTIONS!
Sale Starts Monday, December 30th
Open 6 am till 6 pm
All Christmas Items and Sweaters 50% OFF
Latria's
SHOES & APPAREL
213 Oak • PO Box 738 Sweetwater, TX 79556
915-235-2535

COUNTRYPLACE
Floral & Gifts
Teleflora FLORAFAX
573-1817
Full-Service Florist
Bridal Registry
Laurie Huddleston & Joey Roland
Lynn Polk & Brad Hart
Leslie Deere & Cory Trujillo
Johnnie Riggs & Aaron Stansell
Sarah Ann Dykes & Joe Mac Cheyne
Laura Gonzales & Bebos Martinez
Infant Registry
Ryan & Holly (Jones) Bullard
Jennifer Mireles
MERLE NORMAN COSMETIC STUDIOS
Glenda Glasscock
4213 College Ave.
Snyder, Texas
573-1817
Camille Beckman
Tupperware
VERA BRADLEY
YANKEE CANDLES
FOSSIL
ASCOT Tuxedo Rental

United Airlines heads to court to void contracts with labor

CHICAGO (AP) — In an effort to protect its $1.5 billion in interim financing, bankrupt United Airlines is heading to court to void its labor contracts.

United has until Feb. 15 to cut costs or it could lose the loans it has received to keep flying. It plans to file a motion Friday in U.S. Bankruptcy Court, asking a judge to begin the process of voiding contracts with its unions.

United and the six unions viewed the filing as a procedural move. The union representing United flight attendants called it a "positive development."

If the contracts are voided, United would have 51 days to negotiate an agreement with unions to cut wages by $2.4 billion annually. Otherwise, a federal judge could have the final say on labor contracts.

The unions previously agreed to about $1 billion in yearly cuts as part of United's failed try for a government loan guarantee. The company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy Dec. 10.

United — the world's second-biggest airline — says its labor costs are the highest in the industry. So far, the company has not outlined anything specific about its latest cost-cutting proposals.

Spokesman Joe Hopkins said the Elk Grove Village, Ill.-based carrier had no comment beyond a one-sentence news release announcing its plan.

The carrier had announced last week that it would make the motion Thursday if labor groups did not agree to the wage cuts. United's statement attributed the delay to ongoing negotiations and labor union requests.

Union representatives have criticized United for giving them a list of proposed givebacks instead of a complete business plan. Labor groups want to see such a plan before agreeing to cost cuts, Air Line Pilots Association spokesman Dave Kelly said Thursday.

"Until we get that information, it's really hard for us to determine what the company is asking for and how we can work with the company to reach that rational business plan," Kelly said.

Shares in United parent UAL Corp. rose 15 cents to $1.44 each in early trading Friday.

Senior Center News

Senior citizens interested in bridge lessons are asked to phone the center and speak to Pam. The class is scheduled to begin January 14 at 1 p.m. If the class fills, the volunteer teaching the class has offered to begin another class if there is enough interest.

Transportation is available during the morning Monday-Friday. Our program allows for trips locally only. Call the center and speak to Valerie about transportation needs!

Citizens in need of the noon meal delivery are asked to phone the center and speak to Glenda. There are certain guidelines that individuals must meet before qualifying for this service and a visit will be made to the home.

Please phone the center at 573-4035 or visit our facility at 2603 Avenue M for information on any program.

Monday-Friday seniors may quilt, play dominoes or pool, exercise, and/or help with the meals on wheels program. The New Year is almost here and it is a wonderful time to make changes in our lives and make new friends.

MONDAY

Party bridge begins at 9:30 and daily exercise at 11 a.m. The eighty-eight room is always available. Some seniors enjoy playing in the morning and others after lunch.

TUESDAY

Join us for bingo and our celebration of the New Year. A few of our bingo games and prizes will be a little different. Seniors who are able are asked to bring a "white elephant gift." A "white elephant gift" is some item in your home that you are tired of, but please do not bring clothes or food items and do not wrap your item. We will have other prizes as well. The fun begins at 10 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

The Senior Center will be closed for New Year's Day. We hope each of you have a healthy, prosperous, and peaceful New Year!

THURSDAY

The fabric painting class begins at 9 and continues throughout the morning. The Sunshine Choir will practice in the dining room at 10. Don't miss exercise at 11 a.m.

FRIDAY

Bridge and the blood pressure clinic both begin at 9:30 a.m. Seniors may participate in eighty-eight at 10. Join us for exercise at 11 a.m.

Senior Menu

Monday
Steak Fingers w/gravy
Mashed potatoes
Green beans
Perfection Salad
Sugar Cookie

Tuesday
Chicken Pot Pie
Harvard Beets
Tossed Salad
Ranger Cookie

Wednesday
Closed for New Year's

Thursday
Baked Ham
Spinach
Baked Potato
Sliced Peaches
Spice Cake

Friday
Fried Fish
Broiled Okra
Macaroni & Tomatoes
Creamy Slaw
Pineapple Upside-down cake

Dear Abby

By Abigail Van Buren



Helping hands weed flowers out of woman's natural garden

DEAR ABBY: I have a pet peeve I'd like to educate people about. As an amateur gardener, I take great pride in my garden. However, when friends and relatives come over to visit, they sometimes start "pulling weeds." Please understand, my garden is a NATURAL garden. Therefore, what may appear as "weeds" to others are my "flowers."

Because of a stroke I suffered, I must use a cane. I know these folks think they're helping me by pulling weeds, but in reality they're destroying all my hard work. What can I say to them, Abby? — **WATCHING MY GARDEN GROW IN TULSA**

DEAR WATCHING: How about "Stop!" And since your "helpful" friends and relatives are ignorant about ecological gardens, post small signs in your yard identifying the various kinds of plants on display. That way, it will be obvious, even to the well-meaning but unenlightened, that they are not "weeds."

**

DEAR ABBY: I am a 20-year-old single mother who once enjoyed a beautiful life. Everything changed this past year when my husband — the father of my then-unborn child — died suddenly.

After his death, I suffered severe emotional pain and did not wish to go on living. However, I knew I must — for the sake of our baby.

Here's where it gets complicated: I recently met a young man and have fallen in love. Abby, please understand that I still love my late husband with all my heart. I cry for him every day and miss him terribly. I even talk to him late at night while I'm holding our child. But I can't help loving the new man in my life, too. The love and understanding he offers me is wonderful. Please help me know what I should do. — **TORN IN DALLAS**

P.S. Also, what should I do when it is time to teach my child what to call the new love of Mommy's life?

DEAR TORN: Please accept my deepest sympathy for the loss of your husband. Let me offer a word of caution. You suffered a great loss when your husband died, and he died at a time when you were particularly vulnerable.

Since you still "cry for him every day and talk to him every night," do not rush into another relationship until you have gotten grief counseling (your doctor or clergyperson can refer you). What your child should call your new love will evolve naturally.

**

DEAR ABBY: I am a 14-year-old girl. When I was only 18 months old, I lost my mom. She was killed in a motorcycle accident. My father isn't around, so I live with my grandparents. They don't want me to see my dad, but I wouldn't mind seeing him once in a while.

Grandma and Grandpa say my dad's a bad guy — but he's still my dad and I love him.

Do you have any suggestions about what I should do, Abby? Should I wait until I'm older to understand this better, or what? — **NEEDING GUIDANCE IN INDIANA**

DEAR NEEDING: At 14, you are old enough to learn the truth about your father. If you cannot make your grandparents understand that, perhaps another adult could intercede on your behalf.

Dad may not turn out to be the person you would hope — but you're not a little girl anymore, and you have the right to find out if he's worthy of your love.

**

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I spend one weekend a month with his mother, taking her shopping, to dinner, movies, etc. My problem is I always wind up sitting in the backseat whenever she is with us.

It's not as though we have a little car and it would be hard for her to maneuver in and out. We have a nice-sized van, and I think she could get in and out of the back just as easily as she can from the front seat.

It has been this way for a couple of years now, and I haven't said anything to my husband because she is his mother. But I feel as his wife I should be honest with my husband.

Please help. We are about to go on vacation with my mother-in-law, and I don't want to have to spend it in the backseat for a six-hour drive. — **AFRAID TO SPEAK UP IN PHILLY**

DEAR AFRAID: If you want to sit in front, you must be up-front with your husband about your feelings. The longer you quietly tolerate the seating arrangement, the longer it will continue. The next time the two of you go to pick up his mother, roll down the window and say, "Hop in the back, Mom; I want to sit next to your wonderful son." And your husband should back you up. Bon voyage, and have a nice trip.

**

DEAR ABBY: My neighbor of five years, "Christopher," recently confided to me that he is a cross-dresser. At first I gave him credit for being so open about it, but ever since that conversation, I see him dressed only as "Kristin."

Whenever he sees me outside, Christopher comes over all dolled up. He even walks his dog dressed as Kristin — complete with heels and hose. He thinks I don't have a problem with it, but now that I'm actually seeing him dressed in women's clothing, I'm not so sure.

He is now asking me to "do lunch" and wants to accompany me to my all-female gym.

Please help me, Abby. I liked him as Christopher, but I'm really uncomfortable with Kristin. It's to the point where I no longer feel comfortable going outside for fear I'll have to deal with this guy. What can I say to him? — **CONFUSED IN MINNESOTA**

DEAR CONFUSED: Honesty is the best policy. Say, "With all respect, I think you're lovely as Kristin, but I'm more comfortable with my friend, Christopher." That should get you off the hook.

**

DEAR ABBY: One of my co-workers, "Helen," celebrated her birthday. It's a tradition at our office to "surprise" the birthday person with a cake, so Helen's closest co-worker went out to buy one. When it came time for the surprise, everyone was astonished to see Helen's age written on the icing!

None of us here is a kid anymore, and that information should not have been included on the cake. The woman who planned the party thought it was hilarious, but Helen was not amused.

Abby, was it wrong for Helen's age to be revealed in such a manner? And how should she approach her friend to let her know it was a bad idea? — **CARING CO-WORKER IN THE GARDEN STATE**

DEAR CARING CO-WORKER: Yes, it was wrong. Helen deserves an apology. Mentioning age in the workplace can be discriminatory. And unless you want a prankster doing the same thing to you, I recommend that everyone present at the "surprise party" tell the offender it was a bad idea.

**

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

**

Good advice for everyone — teens to seniors — is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby — Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

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Texas plant to supply fighter jets to Poland

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Poland announced Friday it has chosen U.S. F-16 jet fighters to modernize its air force to NATO standards in a contract worth some $3.5 billion, three years after the former Soviet bloc nation joined the western alliance.

Fort Worth-based Lockheed-Martin Aeronautics Co. beat out rival bids by two European makers with an offer to supply 48 of the planes.

"This is an optimum solution for the military security of the state and it meets our obligation as an ally," Defense Minister Jerzy Szmajdzinski told a news conference.

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THE TIME IS NOW!

We don't want the opportunity to slip away from us, so before 2003 arrives, we're sending our thanks and best wishes to everyone who has passed our way this year.

We truly appreciate your business and look forward to seeing you in the new year.

Happy New Year Everyone!

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Scurry County Anti-drug Connection

The best things in life are drug free

The Snyder Daily News, in cooperation with the Scurry County Anti Drug Connection and Al-Anon support groups devote this column to current information on substance abuse, and how we, as a community, can work together to create a safe and drug free environment for our children.

A NEW YEAR, A NEW START

Talk this time of year inevitably falls to resolutions, starting anew, turning over new leaves. Many are anxious to leave behind the old year with its trials and tribulations and begin a fresh one. We resolve that this will be the year we quit smoking, lose weight, triumph over the failures of the past.

It is good to set goals, especially ones for a healthier you. It is important to remember, however, that to reach a goal we must wake up each new morning with a resolve to finish the race. Feb. 1 has to be just as significant as Jan. 1, because in order to accomplish any long-term objective, we must do something each day to get us a little closer to the goal. For the recovering alcoholic that might mean reading a daily meditation each morning and attending a meeting each night. For someone who is trying to stay off cigarettes, it might mean making a list every morning — even if it is the same list — of the reasons to quit. For the person trying to get the weight off, it might mean waking up with a morning walk and keeping a daily journal of eating habits, feelings and progress.

The key is to find the tools that work for you, and use them on a daily basis. There is so much information out there on every problem under the sun. Take what you can use, apply it to your life, and leave the rest. What works for someone else, may not work for you, or it may be just the thing you need.

It is easy to get caught up in the spirit of the new year and set an enormous list of resolutions. This can just set you up for disappointment if you are being unrealistic. Make a list of the things you would like to see yourself accomplish over the next twelve months, but do not stop there. Analyze each goal and jot down what you will need to do daily to make it a reality. Be realistic. Don't just say, "I'm going to lose a hundred pounds by Memorial Day." A more realistic goal would be to resolve to take the necessary steps every day to become a healthier person. You define what that means.

This is also a good time to pass the wisdom on to your children. Talk to them about the importance of setting and working towards healthy, positive goals. Talk to them about how alcohol and drugs do not fit into those goals. Remember that children learn what they are taught, and the best way to teach them is to be a positive role model. If you feel you are not where you need to be, make the decision to change what you can. Do not be afraid to seek outside support or guidance with problems you cannot handle alone. Resolving to take care of yourself is the best goal to set New Year's Day and everyday!

We wish you a healthy, happy, drug-free New Year!

For more information on how you and/or your business or organization can be involved in promoting a drug-free community, contact the Scurry County Anti-Drug Connection at the Snyder Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, 574-1931 or 573-1141.

Man rearrested after victim in coma for 13 years dies

NEW YORK (AP) — A man who spent nearly seven years in prison for his role in a 1989 assault was arrested again, days after the victim died following 13 years in a coma, authorities said.

Mervil Granja, 35, was arrested Thursday, after the Brooklyn District Attorney reclassified the case as a homicide, said Detective Joe Cavitolo, a police spokesman. The charges against Granja were not immediately known.

Granja was convicted of second-degree assault for standing by while Matthew Young, now 33, beat Michael Slow, 38, with a baseball bat.

Slow died Monday at Seaview Rehabilitation Center on Staten Island. He had been in a coma since the May 5, 1989, beating in Brooklyn.

Granja was released from prison in 1996. Young was released last summer after serving more than 11 years for first-degree assault.

Cavitolo said he did not know whether a warrant for Young's arrest had been issued.

—

The basic monetary unit of China is the yuan, and its chief fractional unit is the fen.

Dr. Gott

By Peter Gott, M.D.

Licorice is not appropriate for hypertension

DEAR DR. GOTT: My husband takes medication for hypertension, but his blood pressure is difficult to control, especially after he has eaten licorice, a sweet that he favors and upon which he binges now and then. Is there a relation between the candy and the blood pressure?

DEAR READER: Yes, indeed. In some people, the compounds in licorice can not only worsen hypertension, but may also cause a serious imbalance of potassium in the body.

In my opinion, your husband should forego all licorice and have his blood pressure monitored for several weeks. I wouldn't be surprised if he felt stronger and discovered that his pressure had stabilized.

To give you related information, I am sending you a copy of my newly updated Health Report "Hypertension." 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: In your column recommending Benadryl as a sleep aid, you said that the drug is "not habit forming." Perhaps you, like a plethora of Madison Avenue ad writers of several decades ago, are saying "habit forming" when you really mean "addicting." Come clean. Brushing one's teeth can be "habit forming."

DEAR READER: OK, I'll come clean. Benadryl is no more habit-forming than tooth brushing. It is certainly not addicting in any sense of the word. Therefore, I'll stick to my original statement: Benadryl in doses of 50 to 100 milligrams at bedtime is a harmless sleep-aid that is virtually devoid of serious side effects, unlike the many prescription drugs used for this purpose. Don't, however, rely on products to which Benadryl has been added, such as cough and cold remedies.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I'm a nurse. Many years ago, my husband began using Benadryl, on occasion, to help him sleep. Because the generic equivalent, diphenhydramine, is so much cheaper than the trade-name product, he switched over without incident. The over-the-counter drug works fine, with no side effects, including hangover. I'm not ordinarily a proponent of generics, but I just wanted you to know.

DEAR READER: Thank you for writing. I've had several letters from other readers who confirm that the generic brand, although cheaper than Benadryl, works just as well.

DEAR DR. GOTT: Is there a medication that will shrink benign uterine tumors? Mine have progressively enlarged, yet I hate to undergo a hysterectomy.

DEAR READER: There is no drug that specifically shrinks fibroids, benign muscular growths in the uterine wall. This condition is extremely common and can lead to irregular or heavy menstrual bleeding, painful intercourse and abdominal fullness, depending on the size of the fibroids.

Although the only permanent cure for fibroids is hysterectomy, in many cases (for unknown reasons), the growths may diminish in size, even disappear, over time. Therefore, most women are content to ignore their fibroids, if possible, using surgery as a last resort. However, you should discuss this with your gynecologist, who may choose simply to monitor your fibroids with periodic examinations or ultrasound testing.

DEAR DR. GOTT: Are gifted people the products of special genes?

DEAR READER: Very likely. Let me use a specific illustration to prove a point.

Itzhak Perlman and Andre Previn have it. Jean Sibelius and Nat "King" Cole had it. If you have it, you were born with it; you cannot learn it. What is it? Perfect pitch, the remarkable ability to recognize and name a note.

Scientists have held a long fascination with this gift, which is effortless for those who have it and for whom each note is as distinctive as a different color. In fact, perfect pitch may be associated with another oddity called synesthesia, in which one sensory modality may evoke a response in another. For example, the great composer Jean Sibelius correlated colors with musical pitches. The key of B-flat major was, to him, blue yellow, whereas the key of B major was bright red.

Of course, not all people with perfect pitch have been identified. Most of them probably don't know they have it. Nonetheless, with some musical training, 90 percent of persons with the gift know by age 10 that they have it.

Scientific studies have proven that perfect pitch is, indeed, inherited. But how much of an unusual mental ability is the result of inheritance? This is a difficult question because traits that need to be analyzed and tracked through generations are hard to quantify. Human calculators, idiot savants, musical prodigies and other intellectual curiosities have been attributed to environmental as well as genetic factors. Perfect pitch, however is an ideal trait to analyze because it's simple, it's easily demonstrated and you either have it or you don't.

The genetic cause of perfect pitch was not what really fascinated researchers. Several study subjects wondered if perfect pitch could be related to learning disabilities and migraine headaches, because both conditions were prevalent in these families. The relation has been confirmed. Although critics pointed out that the perfect pitch/learning disability/migraine combination could occur randomly, researchers have shown that the occurrence of the three conditions in certain families was more than could be accounted for by chance.

Because studies have linked genes for dyslexia, a type of learning disorder, to chromosomes 5 and 15, scientists are hoping that future research will identify the precise location of a single gene that will confirm the perfect pitch/learning/migraine inter-relation. If such a gene were discovered, scientists could take the first step toward treating people with information-processing disorders, as well as unlocking the enormous potential of the normal human brain.

Researchers have already located the genes responsible for Wilms' tumor, Marfan syndrome, Duchenne's muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis, neurofibromatosis, Fragile X syndrome, chronic granulomatosis and familial polyposis. And they are working on target genes for Huntington's disease, Alzheimer's disease, polycystic kidney disorder and breast cancer.

The perfect-pitch gene would be the first example of a chromosome causing a super-normal condition, rather than a disease. This kind of research is exciting. Who knows what the future holds?

DEAR DR. GOTT: I had a recent Holter monitor that showed more than 4500 PVCs in 24 hours, the vast majority of which I was unaware. Would this signify that insufficient blood is being pumped to my extremities and brain? Would this contribute to Alzheimer's disease?

DEAR READER: Your Holter monitor recorded more than 4500 premature ventricular contractions. This sounds like a lot, but it really isn't. Many normal people have PVCs, especially during times of stress and exhaustion or from taking stimulants such as caffeine. These beats do not reflect poor circulation to the body's tissues, in most instances.

Nonetheless, the number and type of PVCs must be correlated with other factors, such as age, symptoms and the presence of heart disease. For instance, were you to have had a recent heart attack, 4500 PVCs puts you out of the normal category and into a high-risk group. This amount of cardiac irritability is unacceptable in the presence of heart disease and should be suppressed with medication.

Similarly, were you 90 years old and constantly upset by "palpitations," therapy might be considered to maintain your quality of life.

Because I am uncertain about the background upon which your PVCs are occurring, you should ask your physician whether the premature beats are of concern or can be ignored.

In any case, this heart irregularity bears no relation whatsoever to Alzheimer's disease, a devastating disorder of unknown cause.

Because you question Alzheimer's disease, I am sending you a copy of my Health Report "Alzheimer's Disease." 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.

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Daley hospitalized

CHICAGO (AP) — Mayor Richard M. Daley and his wife were hospitalized Friday morning with symptoms of the "stomach flu" after fainting at home, doctors said.

Maggie Daley may have suffered a broken rib when she fell after fainting, Dr. David Zull told reporters outside Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

Both Daleys experienced vomiting and diarrhea and were being treated for dehydration, said Zull, an emergency room physician. He said it was likely they would be kept at the hospital overnight.

The Following Financial Institutions Will Be Closed Wednesday, Jan. 1 In Observance Of The New Year

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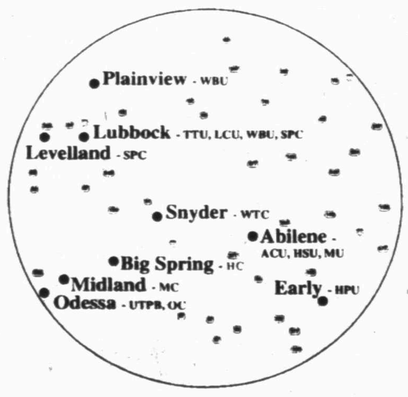
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DEC 29 2002

Letters to the editor

Proud of our hospital

Dear Editor:

Before I moved to Snyder in December of 2000 I had visited a few times and thought this was nice place because it reminded me of some of the small towns I had grown up in as a child.

I knew that Snyder had a hospital, but until I applied for a job at Cogdell I did not realize how big the hospital was. I can remember thinking how fortunate Snyder was to have such a large facility and how good the doctors are. I was equally surprised to learn that it was a county run facility, because the ones I had worked for previously that were county owned were disorganized and some have closed.

I have been employed by CMH for the last two years and am proud to tell anyone that they are my employer. It is a blessing to have Cogdell Memorial Hospital in this community and for the surrounding areas for efficient and quality care when it is most needed. My husband, children and I have been seen and treated by this facility and it has always been a positive experience.

For a small community Cogdell Memorial Hospital has a lot to offer and we should all be thankful and be proactive to issues and concerns regarding the hospital instead of reactive.

Sincerely,
Rhonda Seedig-Vasquez

Good work

Dear Editor:

I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the Christmas edition of the SDN. The color throughout the paper was awesome. Most people don't realize how much work it requires. The guys that do that are really talented.

I am a lifelong reader of the SDN and appreciate the entire staff from the publisher all the way to the carrier. Thanks for always printing the Honor Roll Page every 6 weeks. I always enjoy seeing my kid's pictures in the paper whether it is on the front, back or in between — makes no difference to me.

Keep up the good work and remember, some people are never satisfied.

Debi Guzman

Saints and Sinners by George R. Plagenz

Responses to readers' letters

Q: The Bible is a great source of inspiration, but it is not a history book as some ministers seem to think. It bothers me when I hear pastors take literally the stories of creation, for example, and Jonah and the Whale. — R.B.C., Albuquerque, N.M.

A: Some ancient stories, it is true, are no more than folk tales — made up, like Aesop's fables. Others are myths based on an actual event — what we might call a historical novel today. Or, like some fiction, myths often present a truth in story-form with a pseudo-historical setting, such as in the story of Jonah and the Whale.

Another story the origins of which Bible scholars have long puzzled over concerns the Tower of Babel. Some have doubted that there ever was a Tower of Babel.

But new light has been shed on the mystery.

Archeologists who dug out the ancient city of Babylon in what was once southern Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq) in the 1920s found numerous tower-like structures called ziggurats. Some experts now believe that the largest of them — with a 300-square-foot foundation — was the biblical Tower of Babel.

The evidence suggests that the tower was built by the Sumerians — a people who came to the flat country of Babylon from a mountainous region to the south. It was the Sumerians' hope that God would someday come down to Earth using the mountains as a stepladder on which to descend. Finding no mountains in their new home of Babylon, they decided to build their own stepladder consisting of brick towers of varying heights.

Later, when the Jews were marched into captivity in Babylon, they were astonished by the diversity of languages and religions they found in this teeming cosmopolitan city. Seeing the towers pointing up toward the sky, they put two and two together. Or thought they did.

Their explanation, which was ingenious (if not a bit inaccurate), went like this:

The Babylonians had been trying to build a tower on which they could climb to heaven. This displeased God, who conceived a way to foil their plan.

The workmen on the tallest tower, who, up to this point, all spoke one language, went to the job one day and discovered to their bewilderment that they were speaking different languages. When a laborer spoke to the man next to him, the man couldn't understand him. And vice versa. Under the circumstances, it was impossible to go on with the construction. Work on the tower ground to a halt.

In this way, Jews accounted for the presence of the mysterious tower and for the great variety of languages they heard being spoken. The story also may have been inspired by the fact that the name of the Babylonian tower was called Bab-ilu ("Gate of God.") In Hebrew, the name translates as Babel, or Bavel. The similarity in pronunciation of babel and balal ("to confuse") may have led to a play on words.

Q. Our minister spoke about the Second Coming. Do we modern Christians believe in the Second Coming? — **A.W. Plainview, Texas**

Millions of modern Christians — particularly evangelicals — recite the Nicene Creed each Sunday, which asserts that Jesus "shall come again in glory to judge the living and the dead."

Actually, there has been an upsurge of interest in the Second Coming in recent years. Evangelist Billy Graham once attributed this revival to "a widespread feeling that the problems of modern civilization have become insoluble by human effort and the only hope is for Jesus to return to earth and put things right."

Others worry that this expectation of an imminent end can become an excuse for not dealing with the problems of society. Why try to improve the world if it is going to come to a sudden end soon?

Many Christian scholars regard the Second Coming as a metaphor for Armageddon — the belief that history will some day reach a point where evil will be overcome and the Kingdom of God will be ushered in by Jesus in some way utterly beyond our comprehension symbolized by the Second Coming.

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Open Government Barometer

Number of Executive Sessions held by public entities in 2002.

Snyder ISD	17
DCOS	12
Scurry County	9
Ira ISD	9
City of Snyder	4
Hermleigh ISD	4
WTC	3
Cogdell Hospital	3

NEWSPAPERS: LIGHTING FREEDOM'S WAY



The Village Idiot by Jim Mullen

Snowplows are forever

I see People magazine's sexiest man alive Ben Affleck has bought his girlfriend, movie star and singer Jennifer Lopez, a diamond the size of an ice cube for an engagement ring. What is wrong with him? She could poke herself in the eye with that thing while she's trying to eat. What would Ben buy her then? A diamond eyeball?

That's why I've never given Sue a diamond. It's a safety issue. She never has to worry about being mugged. She doesn't have to walk around the farm with a bunch of bodyguards. She won't be blamed for blinding oncoming traffic while she drives. I've saved her from all that. Because, unlike Ben, I care.

For her birthday this year I got her the most romantic gift a man can give a woman. A snowplow blade for the lawn tractor. She'll never have to clear out the driveway with that old, bent shovel again. Try and do that with your diamond, J-Lo. Even though leaf blowers were on sale and there were good deals on nail guns, I said no, she can wait for our anniversary for that. There was a nice looking chainsaw, but if she doesn't like it, is that something I want her to be holding?

We have a strict rule at our house. If it removes hair or dirt, it's not a present. What woman, surrounded by her nearest and dearest after a heartwarming birthday party, wants to rip open the wrapping paper of your gift and see the words "Removes Unsightly Chest Hair!" in big bold letters on the box?

Likewise, no matter how much they cost, fancy vacuum cleaners and carpet steamers are not appropriate. If you think your wife's a lousy housekeeper, just tell her. There's no reason to get her a gift that sends that message. Sure, she'll leave you, but think how much money you'll save on presents.

Don't buy things that are hard to wrap. Dry wall. Bait. Snow tires. All thoughtful presents to be sure, but tricky to keep secret. How much wiser to buy a year's worth of gift certificates to the local cineplex so you can see Ben Affleck and J-Lo movies together. Not only will you be getting out of the house, you'll be helping Ben pay for that stupid ring.

Wait a minute, you say, a snowplow blade's hard to wrap. It's just as much a non-present as a carpet steamer. Yes, but Sue's been complaining about shoveling the driveway all winter. Why she can't muscle the car out of the driveway the way I do, I'll never understand. Some people are just neat freaks, I guess.

No doubt she's complained about the snow every winter, I just never heard it before. I'm finding out that if you really listen to people, you'll get all kinds of ideas for presents. Little things they need fixed, gadgets they want, bills they'd like paid, places they'd like to visit, friends they'd like to see. But I've yet to hear anyone say, "You know what would make my life better, easier and more fun? A big, useless diamond."

Still, there are some who say a snowplow blade isn't a romantic gift at all. There are some who say that I'm just too cheap to get Sue a diamond the size of a duck egg. There are some who say if I'd shovel the driveway for her, she wouldn't need a snowplow blade. We have a name for those kind of people. They are called "in-laws."

Jim Mullen is the author of "It Takes A Village Idiot: A Memoir of Life After the City" (Simon and Schuster, 2001). He also contributes regularly to Entertainment Weekly, where he can be reached at jim_mullen@ew.com

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

San Antonio Express-News

Expanding Texas gambling

Texas lawmakers face a difficult task as they try to balance the budget in the legislative session that begins next month.

When the new crop of legislators rolls into Austin for the biennial session, the state will face a significant budget shortfall. Estimates of the budget gap's size range from $5 billion to $12 billion.

Gambling promoters sense opportunity in the situation, and the talk about expanding the state's gaming industry is circulating at the Capitol.

The latest idea is to create "racinos" that feature a mixture of horse- or dog-race wagering and electronic gambling machines, which are being referred to as video lottery. Currently, the state allows pari-mutuel gambling on horses and dogs, but the electronic gambling devices are outlawed.

A racing industry spokesman told the Express-News that the machines could "provide the state with a ready source of additional revenue."

That may be true, but gambling is a sleazy way to earn revenue. Texas is already knee-deep in the lottery and pari-mutuel betting, and lottery proponents want the state to expand into a multistate lottery game and add online keno.

Additional gambling would create more problems than it would be worth.

A 1997 state task force found that illegal gambling increased dramatically in Texas as legal gambling grew.

And the disturbing fact gaming proponents don't want to talk about is that gambling is addictive for some. Studies conducted in the late 1990s found that as many as 11 million Americans are addicted to gambling.

Texas can avoid the social costs of expanded gambling by addressing budget problems in a straightforward manner.

El Paso Times

Safer pipelines for Texas

Any map of underground pipelines in Texas would closely resemble the intricate latticework of cobwebs in an unattended attic.

A state that for half a century has depended so heavily on energy production must have a means of transporting that fuel to refineries and markets. Although pipelines have been shown to be generally safer than tanker trucks, deadly dangers still lurk beneath the state's more than 268,000 square miles.

That's why it was good to see President Bush last week sign legislation that's aimed at improving safety along the nation's 2.2 million miles of oil and natural gas pipelines. While the measure is federal in scope, it of course has a tremendous impact on Texas.

And, it has a significant impact on El Paso. Although we're not in the oil patch, El Paso is a hub for pipelines, and in the past few years the city has been in great need of a new Longhorn Pipeline that would transport fuel here from Houston. Longhorn officials have cleared numerous legal and legislative hurdles in their quest for opening that much-needed pipeline.

The law that Bush signed requires pipeline inspections at least once in the next 10 years and every seven years after that. It's encouraging that the frequency of inspections would be higher for pipelines near large cities. It's also encouraging that the bill addresses the public's right to know about pipeline hazards. It would set up environmental reviews that would emphasize more timely pipeline repairs. State oversight of pipeline safety would be increased.

Pipeline safety is a matter of life and death. Twelve people were killed in an August 2000 explosion near Carlsbad, N.M., and a June 1999 explosion killed three people in Bellingham Wash. The bill that Bush signed has its critics. Frank King, whose son was killed in the Bellingham tragedy, has said pipelines should be inspected even more frequently. "There are natural gas pipelines in the ground that have never been inspected," he complained.

The Dallas Morning News

Smallpox inoculations

As the prospects for war with Iraq grow, the U.S. policy regarding the vaccination of military troops and emergency medical personnel for smallpox has become even more pressing.

President Bush is following the right path on this one. He ordered the inoculation of about a half million military and diplomatic personnel in high-risk areas where the threat of a bio-terrorist attack is more likely, and proposed vaccination of up to 450,000 hospital and emergency team workers throughout the nation on a volunteer basis. This makes sense. Should terrorists unleash smallpox in the United States, medical workers, police, firefighters and others would be most susceptible to the deadly disease as they attempted to aid those who were stricken.

The risks associated with taking the smallpox vaccine convinced President Bush to let the hospital and emergency personnel decide for themselves whether to be inoculated. In the past, as many as 52 people out of every 1 million vaccinated for the first time experienced potentially life-threatening reactions. Based upon past experience, it is estimated that one or two people per million who receive the vaccine may die as a result.

The vaccines are expected to be widely available in late January. The sooner the better.

The Bush administration's deliberated long and hard over whether to pursue a massive, mandatory nationwide vaccination program. It's plan allows a new and perhaps safer vaccine to be licensed by 2004 and made available to the general public then.

While older Americans may be puzzled by the current debate about the risks of the vaccine, it's important to remember that the required inoculations a half century ago were administered at a time when smallpox was still a threat to this nation. Medical experts felt then that the danger of contracting smallpox far outweighed the risk of side effects from the vaccine. Nowadays the risk-benefit analysis is different. At issue now is the danger of contracting a nearly eradicated disease via terrorist action versus the risk of side effects from the vaccine.

Houston Chronicle

Media coverage of Hispanics

According to the latest U.S. Census figures, more than 35 million Latinos live in the United States. Hispanics constitute the nation's fastest growing minority group in this country.

So a newly released study by the National Association of Hispanic Journalists showing that the major television networks and CNN aired only 99 news stories about Hispanics out of a total of the 16,000 news stories they broadcast last year is startling. Those numbers, if accurate, show American television audiences are not getting a complete picture of the role Hispanics play in American society.

According to the Hispanic journalists' survey, entitled "Network Brownout Report," the proportion of news coverage that ABC, CBS, NBC and CNN devoted to Hispanic-themed news in 2001 was just 0.62 percent of all news stories aired. Even that anemic performance represented improvement over 2000, in which stories about Hispanics constituted only 0.53 percent of news stories.

National

Gary Dem

DENVER (years after w his second pre quietly settlin vate law prac has found his

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Refusing to his political fu to say when decision.

"You're eith you're on th the only way

Astro

By Bernic

Sunday, D

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PISCES (Fe — Watch what careful not to b you'll regret say hurtful. You'll h ing your statem

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TAURUS (Ap Bear in mind tha et can only be st you be the one purchase at the body else.

GEMINI (Ma Good things ar today without yo to bring them about what you yourself and you

CANCER (Ju Be up front with what you can aff is too expensiv understand if y activity today tha for your wallet.

LEO (July Being wishy-wa that you should could cause you Get your respon way early so you worry.

VIRGO (Aug You might be te ish promises too what you want remember: if th have to hold up gain.

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Gary Hart could again make Democratic bid for President

DENVER (AP) — Fifteen years after withdrawing from his second presidential bid and quietly settling back into private law practice, Gary Hart has found his voice again.

Frustrated because people didn't listen to his warnings about terrorist attacks and worried about the future of the nation, Hart has done nothing to turn away attention generated when he hinted that he may seek the Democratic presidential nomination again.

Refusing to comment about his political future, he declined to say when he will make a decision.

"You're either on the field or you're on the sidelines, and the only way you get on the field is either to be appointed to office or to run for office," Hart said from the 18th floor of his downtown law office.

"And if you've got something to say and some ideas that you think you want to have heard, how do you get the word out? I've been making speeches on security, but I've got other things to say."

Hart, 66, long has been considered by other politicians and analysts as an intelligent policy expert with intriguing ideas, but few believe he is seriously considering a run for president in 2004, said Larry Sabato, director of the University of Virginia Center for Politics.

"Surely at this time he recognizes he's nothing more than Don Quixote tilting at a Democratic windmill," Sabato said.

Hart represented Colorado in the U.S. Senate for two terms ending in 1987. He ran for president in 1983 and 1987.

In 1987, Hart withdrew from the presidential race after reporters spotted him at a Washington town house with model Donna Rice, then 29.

While many supporters might have forgiven Hart, few have forgotten, Denver political analyst Floyd Ciruli said.

Hart would have a difficult time assembling the complex machinery of a presidential campaign, Ciruli said.

Since leaving politics, Hart returned with Lee, his wife of 44 years, to his home in the Rocky Mountain foothills community of Troublesome Gulch west of Denver and to an international law practice.

He has written numerous nonfiction books, most recently "Restoration of the Republic: The Jeffersonian Ideal in 21st-Century America," and a mystery novel, "The Double Man," co-authored with former Sen. William Cohen, R-Maine.

Ranch manager wants halt to Panhandle cloud seeding

AMARILLO (AP) — Arguing that cloud seeding is based on faulty science, a ranch manager wants a High Plains groundwater conservation district to quit the practice and has circulated a petition to force the issue.

The Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District's cloud-seeding program will enter the fourth year of a five-year program in 2003. But JA Ranch manager Jay O'Brien said the program relies on faulty science.

"They only seed clouds they feel are the best candidates for seeding. If they really wanted to test, they would seed at random," O'Brien told the Amarillo Globe-News in Friday's editions. "And you need an area larger than a seven-county area."

C.E. Williams, general manager of the White Deer-based PGCD, agreed that larger areas are more desirable. But he said no one has presented evidence to indicate the district's figures aren't accurate.

"The Texas Department of Agriculture has a contract with the National Academy of Science to review our methodology," said Williams. "We have made some mistakes, but overall, I think the numbers are in our favor. All of our work is public, and anybody is welcome to come here and review it."

O'Brien described a ranch in northwest Potter County where the district reported 16 inches of rain from May to September 2001, but the foreman on the ranch reported only 7.5 inches.

"The areas with the fewest rain gauges show the most rain, with the exception of Wheeler County," he said.

Williams didn't dispute that the rain gauge was faulty. But he said the district is using all the gauges possible in remote ranch country.

"He (O'Brien) won't let us put any (rain gauges) on his acreage," Williams said.

O'Brien added that the district also had presented faulty economic benefit data. Williams said the district was using data from Texas A&M University and welcomed anyone to review the data and discuss the issues at his office.

"We have found the (cloud seeding) program is positive, even if maybe it's not as positive as we'd like it to be," he said. "A little rain spread out over whole area is a tremendous economic benefit."

He said no science supports O'Brien's contention that seeding potentially took water away from one producer and gave it to another.

"Cloud seeding decreases the intensity of rain. Those who run ranches depend on heavy rains to fill tanks and things like that. We don't want them experimenting with our livelihood," O'Brien said.

He said he has asked ranch owners and operators to support an end to the program by signing a petition.

"I figure the owners or operators of more than half the land in those counties have signed, although two of the district's board members told me I'd have to have half the voters," O'Brien said.

Astro-graph

By Bernice Bede Osol



Your Birthday

Sunday, Dec. 29, 2002

An especially good opportunity could open up for you in the year ahead that will mean extra funds in your pocket. Just be sure all warrantees, contracts or legal agreements are securely tied down.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Normally your sharp eye can separate the wheat from the chaff where bargains are concerned. However, today the glare of the glitter may distort your vision for value.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — If it looks like you need it, good friends will tell you what you'd like to hear today rather than what is true. If it concerns anything important, make certain they know to be truthful.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — Watch what you say today and be careful not to blurt out something you'll regret saying, especially if it is hurtful. You'll have trouble retracting your statement if you do.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — If you must borrow something from another today, make a concerted effort to treat it with great care. If you're careless, you'll have to get it fixed or replace it with a new one.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Bear in mind that your family budget can only be stretched so far. Don't you be the one who makes a large purchase at the expense of everybody else.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — Good things aren't apt to happen today without you making an effort to bring them about. Be realistic about what you can expect from yourself and your abilities.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Be up front with your friends as to what you can afford to do and what is too expensive for you. They'll understand if you bow out of an activity today that's too extravagant for your wallet.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — Being wishy-washy about things that you should take seriously today could cause you personal problems. Get your responsibilities out of the way early so you can relax and not worry.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — You might be tempted to make lavish promises today in order to get what you want out of others, but remember: if they produce, you'll have to hold up your end of the bargain.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — Although this might be a day of rest for most, if you have a financial or business obligation that needs to be taken care of today, don't ignore it. It might be pretty costly if you do.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Don't rely on your handsome countenance to get you by today. In order to achieve your objectives, you are going to have to roll up your sleeves and do them yourself.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — Turning a deaf ear to someone who needs your assistance today will have a price tag attached to it. When that day of reckoning occurs, you will have wished you had come through for this person.

Monday, Dec. 30, 2002

In the year ahead you may choose to departmentalize various segments of your life, separating and selecting with whom you do what. You will categorize different sets of special jobs and people according to their importance.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — You may think the most important thing for you today is to achieve the approval from your associates of your ideas and concepts, but you'll be wrong. The only sanction you need is your own.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — The kindness you display today toward someone in need of help is commendable. It will be repaid 10 times over at a later date, although it may come from a totally different person.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — What makes you such an outstanding leader today is not only that you are very competent, but that you'll display respect for those in your charge. In return, they'll want to perform up to your standards.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — Should you feel restricted today and not be able to act like the blithe spirit you want to be, remember that tomorrow is another day. Do what you have to do and get it over with.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — If you get an opportunity to socialize a bit today, select close pals with whom you share common, compassionate concerns. People who are indifferent might make you feel uneasy.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — Carry out your objectives today in quiet, unobtrusive ways and your chances for success will be enhanced. If you appear too eager or aggressive, you could be tripped up.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Don't allow yourself to be pressured today into giving a report or making a decision before you're ready. If you believe you need time to dwell on things a bit longer, do so.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — Business conditions may be a bit more pleasant today than usual. People in general are in a more compassionate mood and will readily put themselves out for others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — When dealing with others today, kindness and gentleness are more apt to forge stronger links than aggressive, pushy behavior. Keep this in mind if you want something from another.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — This could be a typical Monday with co-workers getting off to a slow start. Be patient with them and yourself if you experience limited drive and enthusiasm while on the job today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Persons who already love you will be even more enamored today because of the obvious concern and consideration for their well-being and security that you so openly display.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — Don't allow infringing developments to demand your attention today if your real priorities are centered on domestic matters. Place your emphasis where it needs to be.

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GLIDER ROCKER W/MATCHING OTTOMAN — Choice of Colors Reg. $199.95 — SALE $99

8 PC. LIVINGROOM GROUP — Includes sofa, loveseat, chair, 3 tables, 2 lamps. Reg. $899.95 — SALE $588

DECORATOR WING BACK CHAIRS — Choice of colors. Reg. $199.95 — SALE $148

3PC GLASS TOP COFFEE AND END TABLES SET — Choice of colors Reg. $99.95 — SALE $47

4 DRAWER CHEST — Nice wood grain finish - hurry for these. Reg. $69.95 — SALE $44

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5 PC CONVERSATION PIT GROUP — Includes 2 sofas, loveseat and 2 ottomans, nice cover. Reg. $899.95 — SALE $548

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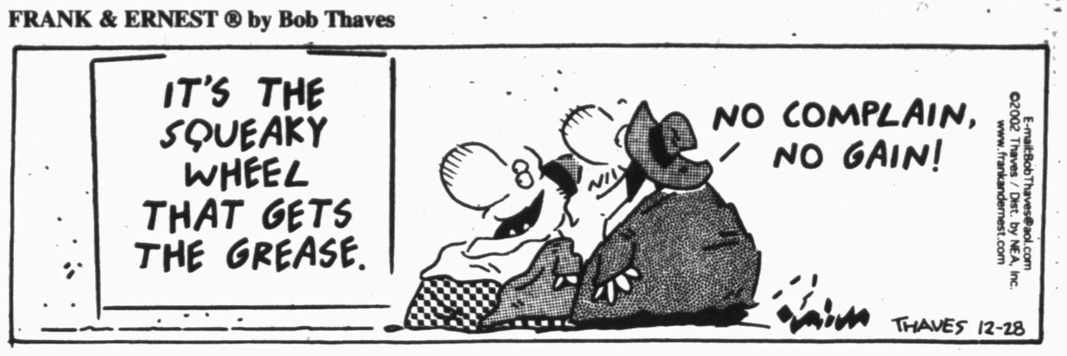
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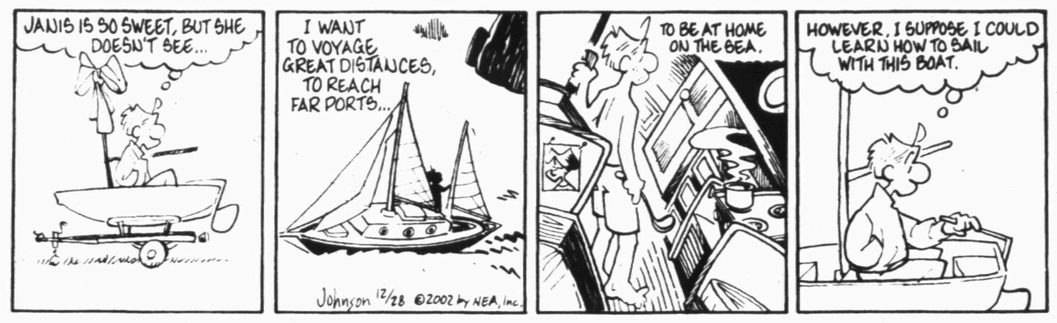
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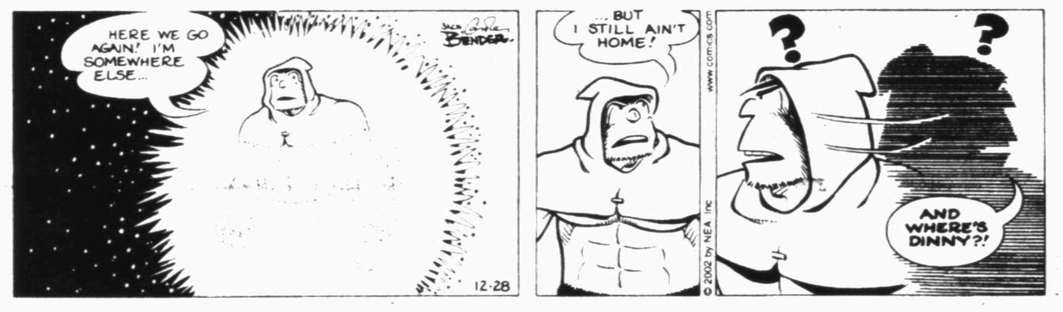
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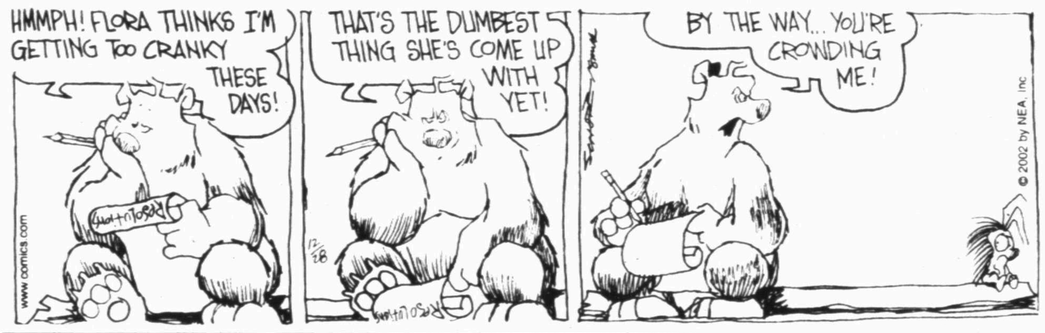
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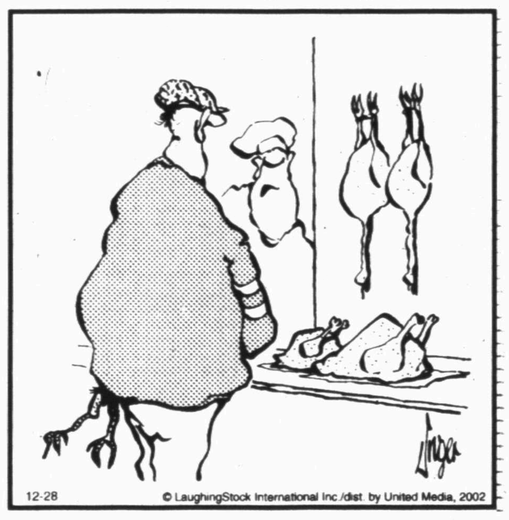
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THE GRIZZWELLS ® by Bill Schorr



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NEA Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1 Vacillate
5 Pick over
9 Surcharge
12 Eros, in Rome
13 Director — Preminger
14 Aries mo.
15 Ship's trail
16 Rorem and Beatty
17 Hush-hush org.
18 Postpone
20 Deep black
22 Plus
23 Big Ten team
24 Actor — Hawke
27 Saucers' mates
31 TD passers
34 Ireland
35 Run-in
36 Important periods
38 Pike's discovery
40 Whimper
41 Barbie —
42 Lost color
44 Road show grp.
46 Skulk about
49 Pageant winner
52 First-aid device
54 Web addr.
55 Diva's rendition
58 Cougar's home
59 Birthday number
60 Crown wearer
61 Sundance Kid's girl
62 Holiday mo.
63 Writer — Ferber
64 Talk hoarsely

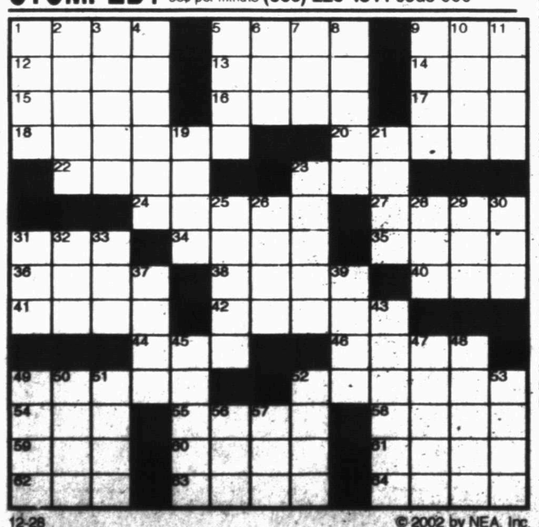
DOWN

1 Swerves
2 Old cattle town
3 Hayseed
4 Mom's threat (2 wds.)
5 Retina cell
6 All-purpose vehicle
7 British inc.
8 Comes in second
9 Burrito cousin
10 Neat as — —
11 Cavity detector (hyph.)
19 Go to the polls
21 Tampa Bay eleven
23 Actor Ryan —
25 Zoo heavyweight
26 Territory
28 Mdse. bars
29 Common level
30 Dirty place
31 Theorem ender
32 Slangy pal
33 Baseball's — Maglie
37 Fishtail
39 Seaweed
43 Not as bright
45 Python or cobra
47 Lasso
48 Makes a sweater
49 Campus hangout
50 Encourage
51 TVA supply
52 Epic
53 Capture
56 Disposed of
57 Hotel

Answer to Previous Puzzle

V	A	T	S			F	L	O		D	O	T
I	D	A	H	O		L	A	M		O	N	O
A	S	T	E	R		A	P	E		D	U	O
			L	I	C	K		G	H	O	S	T
	V	A	L	O	R		S	A	O			
P	A	D		L	U	S	H		N	A	D	A
O	P	E		E	S	A	U		K	N	O	T
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S	R	T	A		D	I	E	T		U	R	N
			I	R	E		Y	U	M	M	Y	
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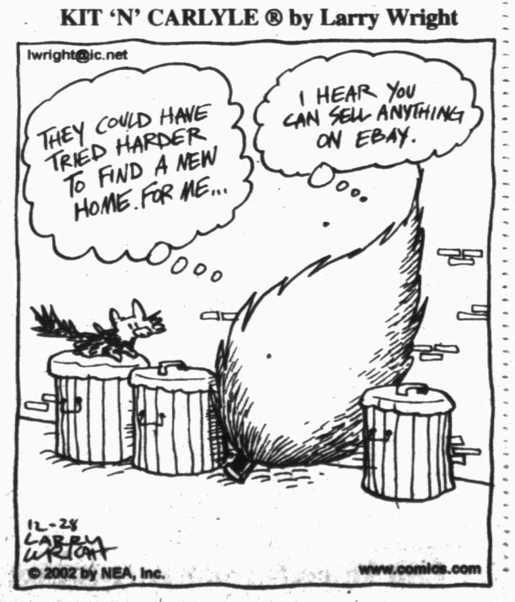
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New home sales up 5.7 percent

WASHINGTON (AP) — New-home sales jumped 5.7 percent in November to the highest monthly level on record as house hunters — motivated by some of the lowest mortgage rates seen in decades — turned into home buyers.

The Commerce Department reported Friday that sales of new single-family homes climbed to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.07 million in November, representing a 5.7 percent increase from October's level.

November's performance suprised analysts who were forecasting sales to go down.

On Wall Street, the home sales report failed to cheer investors. The Dow Jones industrial average was down 49 points and the Nasdaq was off 7 points in morning trading.

New-home sales dropped by 4 percent in October to a seasonally adjusted rate of 1.01 million, but even with the decline sales were at a brisk level.

The housing market is one of the bright spots of this year's uneven economic recovery, due largely to low mortgage rates.

In November, the average interest rate on a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage was 6.07 percent, down from 6.66 percent for the same month a year ago. This week, rates on 30-year mortgages dropped to a new low of 5.93 percent, Freddie Mac, the mortgage giant reported Thursday.

Low mortgage rates this year have been feeding a flurry of home mortgage refinancing activity. The extra monthly cash consumers are saving by refinancing their mortgages at lower interest rates is helping to support consumer spending, which has been the main force keeping the economy going this year.

"Applications for refinancing, while off their peaks, remains high," Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said in a speech last week. "Moreover, simply processing the backlog of earlier applications will take some time, and this factor alone suggests continued significant refinancing originations and cash-outs into the early months of 2003," he added.

Another factor motivating home buyers: Solid appreciation in housing values. That offers people an attractive investment, especially given the turbulent stock market, economists say.

All these positive factors supporting consumer spending are helping to offset some negative ones, including a stagnant job market.

Keeping a close eye on the economic recovery, the Federal Reserve earlier this month decided to hold a key interest rate steady at a 41-year low of 1.25 percent. Economists believe the Fed will keep rates at that low level at its next meeting in late January.

By keeping rates low, Fed policy-makers hope to keep consumers spending and induce businesses to boost investment, forces that would help economic growth.

By region, new-home sales surged by 41.2 percent in November from the previous month to a seasonally adjusted rate of 257,000 in the Midwest. In the South, sales rose 2.4 percent to a pace of 475,000. But in the Northeast, sales plunged 26.7 percent to a rate of 44,000 and in the West they dipped by 3.9 percent to a pace of 293,000.

The average price of a new home in November was $218,900, representing a 5.8 percent increase from the average price for the same month last year.

But November's average home price was down from the previous month. November's average new-home price of $218,900 marked a 2.9 percent decline from October's average price of $225,500.

The economy — knocked down by last year's recession — has been slowly getting back on its feet this year. But economic growth has been characterized by a seesaw pattern.

While consumers have been keeping the economy alive, businesses — worried about profits and economic uncertainties, including a war with Iraq — have been reluctant to make big investments, a key factor restraining the recovery.

Unexpected December events show how political winds shift

WASHINGTON (AP) — All during the past year, Democrats scrambled without success to regain their footing against the Republicans and their popular president with political momentum fueled by the public's anxiety about terrorism.

With the 2004 presidential race looming, Al Gore appeared to be moving toward another run for the office in a possible rematch with President Bush.

Then unexpected events in December offered a reminder of how quickly the political winds can shift.

Republicans, backed by the president and his wartime campaign themes, had just surged to historic midterm election victories Nov. 5. The GOP gained ground in the Republican-controlled House and narrowly reclaimed control of the Senate.

Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., was preparing to reassume his role as Senate majority leader and Republicans were ready to flex their newfound political muscle.

Then Lott made his now infamous tribute to Strom Thurmond on Dec. 5 as the South Carolina senator celebrated his 100th birthday. Lott said if Thurmond had been elected in 1948 the nation would have been a lot better off. Thurmond ran for president on the segregationist platform of the "Dixiecrats."

A storm of protest from both conservatives and liberals grew over Lott's comments and his continuous apologies failed to stem the tide. Just more than two weeks after Thurmond's party, Lott stepped down and Tennessee Sen. Bill Frist, a favorite of the Bush administration, moved quickly to fill the gap. Now Republicans are looking to repair the damage.

"Lott's situation reminds us just how fragile political success can be," said political analyst Norm Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute.

Soon after the Republican gains in the elections, Congress passed the Bush administration's proposal for the new Department of Homeland Security — a change that could dramatically alter federal government in the coming years.

While Republicans were having their way much of the year, Democrats got a glimmer of hope in early December when they rallied to hold onto Sen. Mary Landrieu's seat in a Louisiana runoff election.

Now Democrats have to assess their political strengths and weaknesses after getting steamrolled in the general election.

"Democrats have to figure out whether the last election was a one-shot setback or whether it suggested deeper problems within their party," said Robert Shapiro, a political scientist at Columbia University.

The Democrats have the added burden of competing under new campaign finance laws passed this year.

Free legal help is offered to inmates

HOUSTON (AP) — For many Texas prison inmates, a University of Houston legal aid program is their last hope for freedom.

About 1,800 inmates are seeking assistance from the professors and students who make up the school's Innocence Network, the state's only such organization.

A last-ditch legal defense for Bud Sawyer Jr., now serving a life sentence for capital murder, is being mapped by one of the third-year law students working for the network at the UH Law Center.

Sawyer contends that he was defending himself when he fatally shot two men who he claimed were drug dealers near his northeast Harris county home in 1992. But sheriff's investigators had found no weapons or narcotics at the scene and the trial jury didn't believe Sawyer's story.

Kevin McAlpine, a law student leading the effort to free Sawyer, said most of those who appeal to the network are exactly where they should be — behind bars.

"The vast majority of the cases we get and screen are rejected," he told the Houston Chronicle in Friday's editions. "Something there has to be new and seems credible."

McAlpine said researchers found a witness who backed up Sawyer's claim that the victims were armed the night of the shooting. The conviction was overturned and a new trial was ordered, largely based on the man's testimony.

But the trial judge's order was thrown out by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals on largely procedural grounds because the same new evidence was brought forward in successive writs, including one filed by Sawyer himself, McAlpine said.

He said Texas inmates are allowed only one opportunity to produce newly discovered proof of innocence.

"It's incredible that he's not out yet," he said. "It is frustrating to many people. It is frustrating to me at some times."

McAlpine said he wants to continue working on behalf of Sawyer even after he graduates and starts his new job as a corporate lawyer.

"If you can bring freedom back to a person," he said, "that's the absolutely biggest gift you can have."

The Innocence Network originated from a 2000 meeting of the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association. Although UH was supposed to join with other state law schools to create a network of innocence projects, the other universities later dropped out.

Every semester, at least one new volunteer signs up with the Innocence Network expecting to quickly track down that crucial piece of proof guaranteed to clear an inmate.

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DEC 29 2002

CHAMBER CHATTER

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm"

Executive Board: President-Darren Jackson, Vice President-Jeffrey Martin, President Elect-Michael Thornton, Secretary/Treasurer-Paula McWilliams, Past President- Jack Whitworth

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Hey Snyder...



I hope Santa was good to you and yours! We wait all year for the holidays, then all you hear is "I'm so glad they're over!" Well, it's not only the holidays that are over, but the year itself. Soon it will be 2003 and all the happenings of 2002 will just be a matter for the family albums and the memory books. Again, we are all hearing "I'm so glad this year's over"!

Why is it that we run so fast and we work so hard at life in general that we don't enjoy anything anymore? We just rush through it, get it over with and move on to the next thing. When I was a little girl, I used to hear "stop and smell the roses", "haste make waste" Blessed are they that run around in circles for they shall be called big wheels", "the hurrier you go the behinder you get." I could go on and on. Basically I think my elders were all saying slow down and enjoy your life because some of us just exist in a flurry of hurry and never really live our appointed time here on earth.

I'm changing my theory for 2003, or I'm going to try to change. My new year's resolution is a weird one. No more wishing for more money, I've eaten black-eyed peas and cabbage every January 1 and trust me, it just ain't gonna happen. I've always proclaimed the same resolution to lose weight, exercise more, do a better job at work, keep my house better, cook more, complain less, do more for others and on and on with the "be a good and pretty girl this next year." Nope, I'm throwing all those out. I am resolving to try to make myself happy. Not depend on others, but to do the things that make me feel better everyday. I want to laugh more, to not worry so much about everything, see my friends and family more, not take everything so seriously - lighten up, chill out, relax and enjoy what's left of this life that I'm rushing and stumbling through. If I'm happier, I won't eat out of stress, I'll have more energy from not worrying so I'll feel like exercising more, I'll enjoy work and home more 'cause I'm not going to work so hard at working, but I still don't know about cooking all that much!! I did that three times a day the first half of my life and gave up cooking and ironing when everyone left home! (I don't even feel guilty about it!)

So if you want to see a movie, go shopping, need a shoulder for support, or come by and see and smell our iris and roses, I'm your girl. However, if I should break my resolution and return to my tired, grouchy self, please forgive me, for I am weak!

Happy New Year!
Love, Donna



CHANGES

The old year's out, the New Year's in
Not much is left to say
Except we breezed through Thanksgiving
And raced through Christmas Day

On New Year's Day we'll watch ball games
And eat our cabbage and peas
And make resolutions that we won't keep
Traditions - all of these

Soon the spring will come again
The snow will melt away
The sunshine will turn from warm to hot
Then summer to harvest days.

Then we'll find we're "here" once more
Halloween, Thanksgiving and then
We'll all get out our Christmas trees
And decorate once again!

It spins so fast this world of ours,
Going faster and faster each year.
I'm aging right - before my eyes
And I can't even see in the mirror!

Spring, then summer, winter, and fall
They pass before we know it
The years go by in a blur it seems,
And my face and my body show it!

I'm not real sure where time has gone
Or how much more I'll see,
But I'm glad I survived two thousand and two
And can't wait for two thousand and three!

Happy New Year!

NEW TWIST TO ANNUAL CHAMBER AWARDS BANQUET

The date for this year's annual chamber awards banquet is Saturday, January 18, 2003. It will be at the Martha Ann Woman's Club and will be really different this year. If you loved to read about Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, Becky Thatcher and Aunt Polly and all the characters that Mark Twain so wonderfully brought to life when you were a child, you'll love traveling down memory lane with us, as an adult. Noted actor Donald Cowin will bring his one-man Broadway show to the MWAC stage, "Meet Mark Twain". I have been working on trying to bring this here for some time but couldn't find the time or money to do it. We decided to have "Mark" be the banquet, and have no other speaker or entertainment. It will all take place in Aunt Polly's Parlor, and we have some surprises for you there. The food will be southern (of course) and just plain good as Aunt Polly would have prepared it for you. We'll eat at 6:30 p.m., Donald will start the show about 7:00 p.m. There will be a 20-minute intermission where the awards for our outstanding citizens will be presented and we'll be served cobbler, ice cream and coffee, then the second half should be over by about 8:30ish. Short, beautiful (wait 'till you see the parlor) very entertaining, delicious and our friends honored for their hard work. What could be better, or more "un-boring"! The play is hilarious and has received rave reviews everywhere I've called. I can't wait!

Tickets are $15.00 (Donald is expensive) and are on sale here at the chamber office. Seating is limited so please get your tickets as early as possible. Would you like to help decorate? Please call us at 573-3558!

Psst!

We hate to mention it, but chamber dues are due for 2003. It's necessary to bring it up because our combined dues are the backbone of our budget each year, and without them, we have no operating cash. Your dues are all combined to help us attract tourism, the retail side of economic development, advertise Snyder, maintain and purchase signs, make brochures and buy maps for our visitors, put on festivals and events, maintain the chamber offices, pay salaries, utilities, postage, the Christmas decorations and on and on.

If you are already a chamber member, we sincerely thank you for your help all year, and if you aren't and would like to help us help Snyder, please call us at 915-573-3558.

Your membership in our chamber, (your paid membership in our chamber) is what keeps our chamber open and our business community alive. Please help us help you!

Support your chamber member businesses, they support our community!

January 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Happy New Year's	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 West Texas Barrel Racing Scurry Co Coliseum	13	14	15	16	17 Goldcoat Luncheon 12:00 noon	18 Chamber Annual Awards Banquet 6:30 p.m. MAWC
19	20 Martin Luther King, Jr Day	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Chamber Board Meeting 11:30 p.m.	28	29	30	31	

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