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WT-Int. Crude - $32.79
WTIC Posted - $29.50
Natural Gas - $6.55

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

WEDNESDAY

Dec. 31, 2003
Vol. 55 No. 210
10 Pages 50¢

Home of Bronc Darnell

Clinic nurse practitioner leaving here

Will work within prison system at Colorado City

Cogdell Memorial Hospital's rural health clinic nurse practitioner Christine Heady has resigned to take a position at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice facilities in Colorado City.

Christine Heady

While working at the prison units, she will actually be an employee of the Texas Tech Health Sciences Center.

"I will really miss Snyder," said Heady. "I love my job. But the (hospital) district did not pass and with the unsure future, I decided to make a change."

Heady has been the nurse practitioner since last December.

Heady's profession has carried her through similar hospital financial quandaries in the past.

"I saw situations similar to the one here at Cogdell when I worked at Mitchell County Hospital. I know how unsure that can be," said Heady.

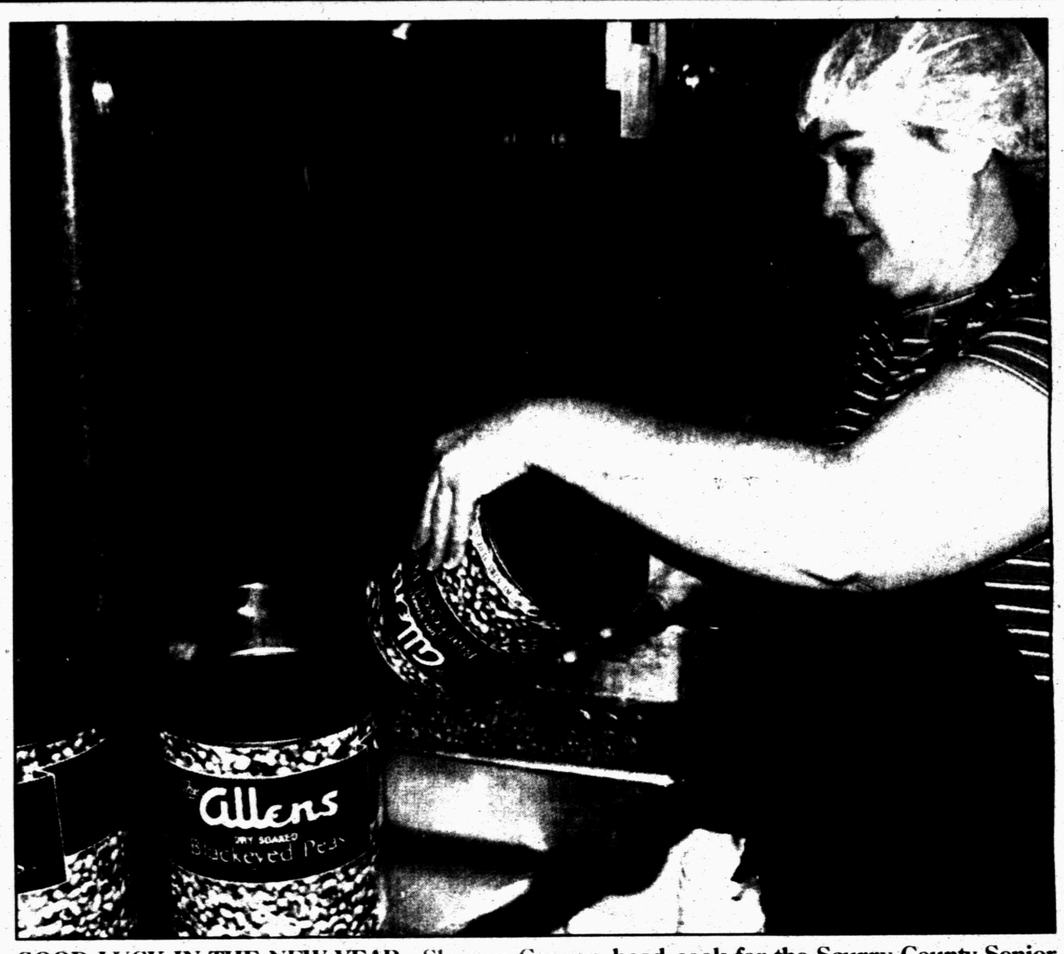
"She has made a decision that is best for her and her family. It's a decision that is in her best interest," rural health clinic administrator Nick Blythe said.

Heady and her family live near Roscoe.

The hospital is wasting no time in trying to find a replacement.

"We're recruiting now to find a replacement. We've started the process and we've already gotten some calls," said Blythe.

Blythe added that he hopes to have the position filled before the end of January.



GOOD LUCK IN THE NEW YEAR—Sherrye Cooper, head cook for the Scurry County Senior Citizens Center, includes black-eyed peas as part of the traditional New Year's meal served today at the center. (SDN Staff Photo)

THE SDN COLUMN

MY TURN

by Shirley A. Gorman

Where will it end?

I recently read something in an advice column that seems to blame watching TV for Americans' expanding waistlines.

Supposedly, people are so distracted by the Boob Tube that we loose track of how much we are eating. The answer was in reply to a letter complaining that too many restaurants have TVs, which entice families to watch rather than have a conversation.

The letter writer wanted to know what could be done to remove the TVs. The columnist's answer echoed my thoughts: Pick a restaurant that doesn't have a television in every room. However, then she shifted gears and took the cheap shot at TV Land.

A few weeks ago, Peter Jennings hosted an ABC network special that spent an hour pointing fingers at the government, farmers, food makers and advertisers, etc. for what else — overweight Americans.

Granted it's a lot easier to place blame anywhere but on ourselves. In reality, no one forces us to eat too much or the things we shouldn't.

I can see it now. The lawsuits are going to start flying again. (Remember when McDonald's was sued?) Only this time, fast food restaurants may not be the only target. Why not sue the government for paying subsidies to farmers who grow more food than the nation needs.

Who is next? Maybe the farmers for growing a surplus of corn that is turned into corn syrup (sugar) and added to just about all processed food.

Food companies could be next. How dare they produce such delicious tasting snacks, desserts and other food! Why leave the advertising industry out? Sue them for producing mouth-watering commercials that promote the very foods we shouldn't eat, or at least not eat to excess. And the list goes on.

Then Jennings casually dismissed personal choice responsibility as if it didn't matter at all. Supposedly, people are so weak-willed that we can't resist food temptations. To be sure a weight problem does exist in America.

More and more evidence is pointing to Americans getting fatter. It's also true that the corporate giants that produce processed food could certainly make them healthier. Many are laden with fat, sugar and sodium.

And as Jennings pointed out, if fat is taken out usually more sugar is added.

According to the TV report, Americans have actually grown fatter since fat free foods hit the markets.

One thing Jennings said that I agree with is that advertisers should not target young children with food ads. But more government regulations are not the answer.

I am not making light of people who struggle with their weight. (I do too.) While it is very easy to say eat less, exercise more, avoid fatty food, it is very hard to do so. It's also extremely difficult to follow a healthy diet all of the time.

To be sure, temptation is everywhere. But when we eat fattening foods or too much of any food we need only blame ourselves. No one forces us to consume high-calorie food, to supersize a meal or choose "all you can eat" restaurants. We do have a choice. My New Year's resolutions will include making better decisions about food.

New Year's Day prompts closings

New Year's holiday will prompt the closing of all Snyder financial institutions, but all will be open for business as usual on Friday.

There will be no home delivery of mail and mail will not be put in postal boxes on Thursday.

Scurry County courthouse will be closed Thursday and Friday as wil! the county library, while city employees will be off New Year's Day only.

The Snyder chamber of commerce will closed Thursday, but will be open on Friday.

Public schools in the county will remain closed until Monday in Ira and Hermleigh, while Snyder students go back to class Tuesday after a long Christmas vacation.

Cleanup funds are being used locally

AUSTIN — The Texas Railroad Commission has authorized a $272,240 payout from the Oil Field Cleanup Fund to clean up the Texas Tank & Oil Company (TTOC) Snyder Area Reclamation Plant.

TTOC is located approximately 11 miles west of Snyder and includes 24 storage tanks.

The area surrounding the tanks, estimated to be 125 feet by 150 feet, is covered by a thick layer of spilled sludge seeping into the soil at a depth of 1.5 to 3.5 feet. The volume of sludge and contaminated soil is estimated to be 1,769 cubic yards.

"The action is a continuation of work we have prioritized with monies from the Oil Field Cleanup Fund to clean up contaminated property and restore it to its original condition," said Chairman Victor Carrillo.

"These plugging contracts contribute to the Texas economy by providing jobs, while also eliminating the environmental threat to Texas lands and groundwater," said Commissioner Charles Matthews.

"Using state funds from industry violations and established fees, the success of the Oil Field Cleanup Fund is right on track, and we plan to continue extending its benefit in the future," said Commissioner Michael Williams.

More than $29,000 has already been spent on the TTOC site since April 2002. In addition, the operators of the site, who have remained delinquent since July 1, 1988, are being sought in the San Antonio area.

The Oil Field Cleanup Fund was established in 1983, granting statutory authority over the operation to the Texas Railroad Commission. To date, the commission has committed $93 million to plug over 21,000 abandoned wells. Funding for the program comes from regulatory fees, permit fees and bond fees paid by the oil and gas industry.

An abandoned site becomes a candidate for state cleanup when the responsible party fails or refuses to take action, or is unknown, deceased or bankrupt. Cleanup prioritization is based on public health, safety, and the protection of the environment.

Cogdell Hospital top story as 2003 is ending

The final quarter of 2003 focused on changes and proposed changes at Cogdell Memorial Hospital.

In mid-November, Covenant Health Systems terminated its 15-year contract with the local hospital, just hours before the hospital board was expected to do the same.

On a split vote, the hospital board accepted the termination of the contract with Dink Foree, Bill Voss and Terry Williams in favor, and Carl Williams, Bo Robinson and Charles Church voting against.

With a three-three tie, County Judge Rod Waller broke the deadlock to end the association with Covenant.

As the contract terminated, so did the tenure of hospital CEO George Parsley as he cleaned out his office and never made another appearance before the board.

The board then appointed a search committee for a new CEO and named Director of Nurses Cheryl Chance as the acting administrator. The board also contracted with a search firm for the CEO position as well as for a chief financial officer.

The December election to establish a hospital district in Scurry County met an overwhelming defeat as 1,172 persons opposed the formation of another taxing entity while 626 voted for the proposal.

The financial health of the hospital continues to be a topic of discussion as a new year approaches.

While there are differing opinions on how to get more money into the hospital's coffers, there seems to little disagreement that the non-payment of bills by patients is a major factor contributing to the hospital's financial woes.

October

Early October saw the intergovernmental contract become a "done deal." The document, essentially the same as the past 10 years, expires Oct. 5, 2004. The city will continue fire protection while the county will provide emergency dispatching, jail services and ambulance service. However, the city will be contributing $50,000 to Scurry County for upkeep and maintenance of Snyder EMS ambulances.

Western Texas College drama department presented the play *The Yellow Jacket*.

Members of the Snyder Chamber of Commerce board began the review of numerous applicants to fill the position of director left open by the untimely death of Donna Fowler.

Ira homecoming queen was Miss Amanda Calley.

Snyder High School homecoming queen was Kelsi Johnson.

At least a dozen apartments in Western Crest Apartments were damaged when water and mud poured into the apartments after a thunderstorm dumped more than 1.75 inches of rain.

A rock monument dedicated to the memory of chamber executive director Donna Fowler was erected at the Scurry County Coliseum.

The 50th annual White Buffalo Festival kicked off at the Scurry County Coliseum with booths and exhibits, plus activities at the Heritage Village on the coliseum grounds.

"Back to the '50s" was the theme of the event with 1950s dance contests, a car show and a style show. The event also included a quilt display, horseshoe pitching, domino tournament, antique farm equipment and a car show.

Ricky Hunter was named Snyder High School varsity golf coach. He replaced Matt Glenn who moved to Southlake Carroll school district near Ft. Worth.

See YEAR-END, Page 7

Drive safely urges DPS

Let the confetti fly, wear your funny hats and welcome the New Year with good cheer, but resolve to drive responsibly this New Year's holiday.

This is the message from the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Anyone planning to consume alcoholic beverages should have someone else — who hasn't been drinking — drive them home, urges the DPS.

Starting midnight on New Years Day, Operation Holiday goes into effect.

Extra DPS troopers will be on the lookout for speeders, seat belt violators, reckless drivers and drunk drivers from Thursday through Sunday to reduce the number of traffic accidents and traffic fatalities.

"If you choose to celebrate the new year, please drive sober. If you plan to drink, please designate a driver. We want all Texans to be around to enjoy 2004," said Col. Thomas A. Davis Jr., director of the DPS.

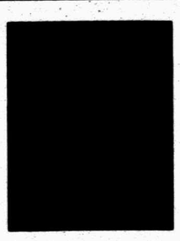
While making New Year's resolutions, Col. Davis suggests adding "Improve Driving Habits" to your list.

- Make sure everyone is buckled up.
- Drive sober.
- Use your turn signals.
- Do not tailgate.
- Obey the speed limit.
- Do not speed up, block lanes, slam or tap on brakes.
- Do not retaliate, gesture or make eye contact.

ASK US

Q—When is the last day to sell fireworks over the New Year's holiday?
A—Midnight Thursday.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



Jim Underwood...

...is a life-long resident of Snyder, graduating from SHS in 1982. His is the son of Betta and Hazel Underwood and the father of Charles Underwood, age seven. Jim enjoys bowling, walking and singing in the Trinity Methodist Church Choir.

TODAY'S THOUGHT

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.
—Eleanor Roosevelt

DEC 31 2003

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events

WHAT'S UP?

ONGOINGS

Turkey shoot

The Scurry County Rodeo Association will host a turkey shoot from 10 a.m. until dark Thursday at the rodeo grounds. Proceeds will benefit SCRA. Call L.J. Mueller at 573-3712 for more information.

Fajita lunch

The Ira junior class will host a fajita lunch from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Saturday in the ag barn prior to the Ira livestock show. Cost is $6 per plate.

Bible study tapes

Bible videos air each week on Channel 2. To be shown at 7 p.m. Monday is "God Has Spoken of Mercy," followed by "Where is My Honor?"

Lions meetings cancelled

Snyder Lions Club will resume regular meetings Tuesday at noon at the Martha Ann Woman's Club.

Stanfield Parent Council

The Stanfield Paent Council will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the teachers' lounge.

First Baptist support group

First Baptist Church sponsors a support group for persons facing difficulties — including cancer, divorce, grief, etc. It meets on the first floor Adult 6 Department at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

LVN testing dates

LVN testing dates are Jan. 20 and Jan. 27. To reserve a time, you must contact the WTC counseling office at 573-8511, ext. 313. Limited seating is available.

Doodle Bug writers club

Members of the Doodle Bug writers club invite all writers to meet at 1 p.m. every other Tuesday at the Golden Village Terrace community room. For more information call 574-1817, 573-7369, or 573-5819.

Windbreak trees

The Upper Colorado Soil and Water Conversation District is taking orders through Jan. 31 for windbreak trees. Large trees available are Oaks, Pines, Desert Willows, Golden Raintree, Texas Redbud and Chinese Pistache and more. To place orders, call 573-6317.

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.

Corps removed from Halliburton contract

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Defense Department is removing the Army Corps of Engineers from overseeing oil imports into Iraq, acting just weeks after Pentagon auditors said Halliburton — Vice President Dick Cheney's former firm — may have overcharged taxpayers under the Corps' supervision.

The Defense Energy Support Center, which buys fuel for the military throughout the world, will supervise the replacement of Houston-based Halliburton and the award of a new contract for the imports, the center said Tuesday.

"We're taking over the mission," said the center's spokeswoman, Lynette Ebberts. She would not comment on whether the audit prompted the change, which was ordered Dec. 23.

Democratic lawmakers have been highly critical of the prices charged the U.S. government by Halliburton's KBR subsidiary, which has been importing refined petroleum products into Iraq under a mission awarded without competitive bids. Cheney headed Halliburton before running for vice president.

Earlier this month, the Defense Department's auditing agency supported the Democrats' allegations, finding the company may have charged up to $61 million too much for delivering gasoline to Iraqi citizens.

President Bush tried to calm the controversy, saying Halliburton should repay the government if it overcharged for fuel, which was imported from Iraq's neighboring countries.

Halliburton has said it expected to be cleared by the Defense Department. The company said its pricing resulted from a contract with a Kuwaiti firm, the only company approved as a supplier by the Corps.

Halliburton got its contract to rebuild Iraq's dilapidated oil industry as an outgrowth of a contract with the Army to provide emergency logistical help for situations such as the Iraq war. The Army Corps of Engineers opened the oil rebuilding process to competitive bidding earlier this year and was preparing to award up to $2 billion in replacement contracts.

Those contracts will still be awarded for the rebuilding of Iraq's oil industry, but will no longer include oil imports, the Corps said.

Richard J. Connelly, director of the support center, said the existing contract would remain in place for now, so that fuel deliveries will not be interrupted.

Corps spokesman Robert Faletti said, "I don't believe the report had anything to do with the transfer."

The support center said it would award contracts under competitive bidding, a process that could take two to three months, but would consider a short-term contract until the bids are awarded.

Singer Britney Spears will make second appearance at rock festival

LISBON, Portugal (AP) — Britney Spears will make her second appearance at the Rock in Rio music festival — but this time in the Portuguese capital instead of Brazil.

The 22-year-old pop singer is set to perform June 5 at the 2004 festival, being held at Bela Vista Park in Lisbon. She was among the acts at 2001's Rock in Rio, held in Rio de Janeiro.

Dates for the festival are May 29-30 and June 3-6. Sting, Alejandro Sanz, Metallica and Guns N' Roses also will perform.

Spears will promote her latest album, "In the Zone," with a tour of the United States and Canada beginning March 2 in San Diego, according to her Web site. Other stops include Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami and New York City.

On the Net:
http://www.britneyspears.com

World Almanac

Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2003

Today is the 365th day of 2003 and the 10th day of winter.

TODAY'S HISTORY: In 1862, Union forces held off two rebel attacks at the Battle of Murfreesboro, Tenn.

In 1879, Thomas Edison staged the first public demonstration of the electric light bulb.

In 1939, the movie "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," starring Charles Laughton, was released.

In 1946, U.S. President Harry Truman officially declared the end of World War II.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: Henri Matisse (1869-1954), artist; George C. Marshall (1880-1959), U.S. military commander, secretary of state; Anthony Hopkins (1937-), actor, is 66; John Denver (1943-1997), singer, songwriter; Donna Summer (1948-), singer, is 55.

TODAY'S SPORTS: In 1967, the Green Bay Packers defeated the Dallas Cowboys, 21-17, in subzero weather; the game became known as the "Ice Bowl."

TODAY'S QUOTE: "I don't paint things. I only paint the difference between things." — Henri Matisse

TODAY'S FACT: The first record album to win a Grammy was Henry Mancini's "The Music" from the TV series "Peter Gunn" (1958).

TODAY'S NUMBER: 3,987 — length in miles of the border between Canada and the lower 48 U.S. states.

TODAY'S MOON: Between first quarter (Dec. 30) and full moon (Jan. 7)

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events

LOTTO TEXAS™
TEXAS LOTTERY
RESULTS

Tuesday's Lottery Numbers

Mega Millions

ATLANTA (AP) — A single player has won the grand prize from the latest Mega Millions lotto drawing.

Lottery officials said the winning ticket from Tuesday night's drawing — worth $155 million — was sold in Ohio.

In addition to the grand prize winner, 27 players matched all five numbers but not the Mega Ball number. They will receive second prizes of $175,000 each.

Another 104 players matched four numbers, plus the Mega Ball number — good for third prizes of $5,000 each.

The winning numbers from Tuesday night's drawing were: 12,18,21,32 and 46. The Mega Ball number was 49.

Cash Five

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

Winning numbers drawn: 3-15-25-32-34.

Number matching five of five: 1.

Prize per winner: $42,695.

Winning tickets sold in: Bonham.

Matching four of five: 111. Prize: $174.

Matching three of five: 3,850. Prize: $12.

Matching two of five: 40,732. Prize: $2.

Next Cash 5 drawing: Wednesday night.

Texas Two Step

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Texas Two Step drawing Tuesday night:

Winning numbers drawn: 10-13-23-26. Bonus Ball: 17.

Number matching four of four, plus Bonus Ball: 0. Prize: $300,000.

Number matching four of four: 13. Prize: $914.

Number matching three of four, plus Bonus Ball: 39. Prize: $37.

Number matching three of four: 1,028. Prize: $19.

Number matching two of four, plus Bonus Ball: 918. Prize: $14.

Number matching one of four, plus Bonus Ball: 5,559. Prize: $7.

Number matching Bonus Ball alone: 9,006. Prize: $5.

Estimated jackpot for Friday night drawing: $350,000.

Pick 3

(Day) 8-6-4

(Night) 1-8-2

San Antonio captain killed in Iraq Sunday

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Army Capt. Ernesto M. Blanco picked up a guitar for the first time at the young age of eight months. When a family friend saw footage on a cable channel of the soldier playing a guitar in Iraq on Christmas Day, they were comforted to know he was doing what he loved.

Blanco, 28 of San Antonio was killed Sunday while conducting a support mission in Qaryat Ash Shababi in Iraq, the military announced Tuesday. He died when an explosive device struck the vehicle in which he was riding.

"He played the guitar and sang beautifully," his sister Carmen Blanco-Pendergraff told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "When he would play everyone would just stop. I'm glad to know he got to play in his last days."

Blanco joined the Army in April 1999 and became part of the 82nd Airborne Division in March 2001 after graduating from Texas A&M University with a degree in animal science. He won a Bronze Star and his Combat Infantryman Badge while deployed to Afghanistan last year.

Those who served with Blanco said he was a well-respected officer who got the job done.

"You could not ask for a better leader," Sgt. 1st Class Naamon J. Grimmett told The Fayetteville (N.C.) Observer on Tuesday. Grimmett served with Blanco in Iraq. "His soldiers looked up to him. Everybody liked to work with him."

His sister called him her best friend. She said he had a strong faith in God and did mission work in Mexico and volunteered at church camps.

"Ernie was an incredible guy," she said. "He was happy. He laughed a lot. He would walk into a room and light it up. He was the glue that held everyone together."

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

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Vision test for elderly drivers among new 2004 Florida laws

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Florida drivers over age 80 must pass a vision test to renew their licenses under a new law taking effect in 2004.

Starting Jan. 1, the state's more than 500,000 elderly drivers will be required to either take the test in person or have a form signed by their eye doctor saying they've passed.

All drivers who renew in person already get a vision test. But most renew by mail, which they can do every six years up to three times, meaning they can go 18 years without the test.

Elderly drivers will still be able to renew by mail or online, but can only do so with the doctor's note.

More than 20 states have special requirements for older drivers. New Hampshire and Illinois require road tests for those 75 and older, while in Nevada drivers 70 and older who renew licenses by mail must include a medical report.

The senior citizens lobby AARP came out in support of the change last year, as long as the measure included a study of how to make the roads safer for the elderly, which it does. That study is due to be finished early next year.

Another new state law taking effect Jan. 1 exempts about a half million investors from state taxes on stock, bond and mutual fund holdings. About 514,000 Floridians who pay the "intangibles tax" on their securities holdings will be dropped from the rolls Thursday.

On the Net:
Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles: www.hsmv.state.fl.us

Researchers testing idea of training dogs to sniff weeds

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Someday soon, man's best friend could also be one of his biggest allies in the fight against noxious weeds.

That's the hope of researchers like Kim Goodwin, who are studying whether dogs can be trained to detect the prolific — and problematic — spotted knapweed the same way they can be trained to sniff out drugs and bombs.

Goodwin, a weed prevention coordinator at Montana State University at Bozeman, said she got the idea for putting dogs to work by seeing how dogs have been used at airports, mail facilities and ports of entry to search for everything from illegal drugs and bombs to prohibited agricultural products.

"I thought maybe dogs could do the same thing across landscapes because we have a problem with invasive plants spreading," she said.

Noxious weeds such as spotted knapweed can affect both agriculture and tourism. The weed is a problem throughout Western rangeland, and infests some 5 million acres in Montana alone. Dave Burch, the state's weed coordinator, estimated spotted knapweed costs the state's economy $42 million a year.

Right now, ranchers and land managers can fan out over a pasture to look for the weed, but it takes a lot of time and they often aren't very successful. Boredom and fatigue can set in and for each plant that's found, many others — particularly newer starts — are not, researchers say.

They believe a dog trained to focus on a certain scent could have far more success in detecting spotted knapweed early and alerting land managers to its exact location.

Enter a dog named Knapweed Nightmare. Nightmare, as trainer Hal Steiner calls her, was being trained as a drug detection dog for law enforcement when Goodwin contacted Steiner with her idea.

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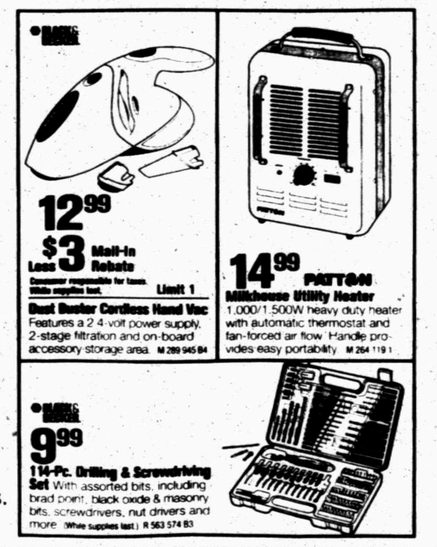
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Changes eyed to boost confidence in U.S. beef

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Bush administration is taking major steps to boost confidence in the U.S. beef supply at home and abroad, where more than 30 countries have banned American beef products since mad cow disease first surfaced in Washington state a week ago.

The changes announced Tuesday include a ban on meat from cows that can't walk or stand on their own and a promise to speed creation of a nationwide animal tracking system. Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman said consumers shouldn't see an increase in prices as a result.

A spokesman for the meatpacking industry, however, said beef prices could increase "pennies per pound." The projected cost for the tracking system that would allow rapid response to a disease outbreak is more than $500 million for the first six years.

The regulations are supported by consumer and animal welfare advocates and include faster testing of cattle at higher risk of mad cow disease because of age or the presence of neurological problems. Meat will not be processed until test results are back.

Veneman said small intestines from cows will no longer be allowed into the U.S. food supply, nor head and spinal tissue from cattle older than 30 months — an age chosen because the disease generally has an incubation period of at least three years, officials said. The Bush administration also is ordering changes in slaughterhouse techniques to prevent meat from being accidentally contaminated with brain or spinal cord tissue that can spread bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease.

"Sound science continues to be our guide," Veneman said, adding that the food supply was safe even before she announced tougher regulations.

"We are increasing the testing," she said today on NBC's "Today" show.

"What we do is, we test the highest risk animals. We test from high-risk populations. You have to remember that most of the cattle that are slaughtered and put into the food supply in this country come from animals that are less than two years old and are virtually no-risk animals for this disease."

Mad cow disease is a concern because humans who eat brain or spinal matter from an infected cow can develop a brain-wasting illness, variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. During a mad cow outbreak in the 1980s in Britain, 143 people died of it.

The first U.S. case of mad cow disease was found in a Washington state Holstein slaughtered Dec. 9.

The Food and Drug Administration said for now it will not prohibit the use of the high-risk cattle products in pet foods and feed for chickens and pigs, saying there is no scientific evidence to support such a ban. There has been a ban on using cattle products in feed for cattle, sheep and goats since August 1997.

Many of the changes were implemented by Canada in May, when a single case of mad cow surfaced in Alberta.

USDA had been considering some of the measures before the Washington state case. A coalition of congressional Republicans and farm state Democrats had blocked Congress from including the ban on meat from downed animals in a $373 billion catchall spending bill that has passed the House and awaits a vote in the Senate.

Democratic presidential candidates have seized on the mad cow emergency to criticize the Bush administration for policies they said have left the nation more vulnerable to such problems.

Several Democratic lawmakers said they would push for a statutory ban on downed animals, notwithstanding the new regulation announced by Veneman. Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., said his bill to create a national tracking system would help overcome opposition from meatpackers,

Dan Murphy, spokesman for the American Meat Institute, the meatpackers' trade association, said his group generally supported the announced changes, although he called them "aggressive and extraordinary compared to international standards."

Terry Stokes, chief executive officer of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, said his group also agreed with USDA's actions. "As USDA reiterated, the beef supply is safe, and these steps taken today are being done out of an abundance of caution," he said.

Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota said he would press legislation to mandate country-of-origin labeling on meat products. Such a measure would have made clear that the diseased Holstein, which officials believe was born in Canada, did not originate in the United States, Daschle said.

Under the new U.S. regulations, the sick cow slaughtered in Washington state earlier this month would not have been allowed to enter the food chain. The cow was sent to meatpacking plants almost two weeks before test results showed that it had mad cow disease.

The meat from that cow was allowed to be sold for human consumption after its brain and spinal column were removed and a federal inspector saw no indication of neurological disease. Veneman estimated 150,000 to 200,000 downed animals are among more than 35 million cattle that are sent to slaughter each year.

Saying it was a just a precaution, USDA ordered a recall of more than 10,000 pounds of meat from 20 cows slaughtered with the Holstein on Dec. 9. The recalled meat was distributed to eight states and Guam, although officials said 80 percent of it went to Oregon and Washington.

No mad cow threat likely for dogs, cats

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Ron Hayes, who owns six cats and two dogs, said he hasn't changed their diet since learning about the country's first confirmed case of mad cow disease.

"It's called mad cow disease, not mad dog disease, right?" he asked, but then checked to see if his pet foods contained beef ingredients. He spotted beef tallow on a bag of dry food.

"I'll have to think about it now," he said.

Federal regulators and experts say there's still no reason to worry about pets getting sick from pet food and no evidence to suggest any tainted meat has made its way into the pet food supply.

Experts say the chances of cats in the United States contracting the disease are slim, though not impossible. There's never been a reported case of a dog getting it.

"There is no evidence that dogs have ever gotten this disease," said Alfonso Torres, associate dean at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine. "There's no evidence that cats will contract the disease under normal circumstances."

Since 1997, the United States has banned the practice of feeding cattle, sheep and goats any food that contains brain and spinal cord material. Eating contaminated feed is the only known way the disease spreads among livestock.

The Food and Drug Administration, which regulates animal feed and pet food, says it plans to extend that ban to food for dogs, cats, pigs and poultry in 2007.

Mad cow has been found in a small number of cats — about 100 — in the United Kingdom, as well as a handful in other European countries. Larger zoo felines that fed directly off infected carcasses also died from the disease, Torres said.

Officials in the United Kingdom and elsewhere have said they suspect the cats got the disease by eating cat food tainted with infected meat. That suspicion is bolstered by evidence that British cats contracted the disease at about the same time, and in the same places.

"Your gut tells you yes, and the reports tell you yes, because they're linked temporally and geographically," said Dr. Niels Pedersen, a specialist in feline infectious diseases at the University of California at Davis.

In the United States, pet food is closely inspected for quality and safety, Pedersen said, in part because some of it ends up eaten by humans.

"It would be highly, highly unlikely that nervous tissue would end up even in pet food," he said. "It's one of those products that is as vigorously inspected and quality-controlled as canned tuna."

In a statement released Tuesday, Stephen Sundlof, director of the Center for Veterinary Medicine at the Food and Drug Administration, said some animals declared unfit for people can be used in pet food.

"But they must be processed in such a way that they are deemed safe for the pets. This generally means that the pet food must be heat-treated or the animal-derived parts must be rendered to destroy any pathogens," he said.

Astro-graph

By Bernice Bede Osol

Your Birthday

Thursday, Jan. 1, 2004

What you have learned about yourself in past years will serve you well in the year ahead. You will put your lessons to work for you in both your social and work world with great success.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — It isn't that you won't want to socialize today; you simply may desire a more laid-back involvement. Select companions with whom you can hang out in a relaxed atmosphere.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — A family matter that has weighed heavily on your mind may resolve itself today, but not by chance. You'll take advantage of an opportune time to bring it to a successful conclusion.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — You might not be in the mood, yet you could feel obligated to integrate yourself today in some kind of group expression. Once you get involved, however, it'll turn out to be a delightful day.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — It's not always the lure of more money that motivates us, but the pride of achievement. As you lay out your plans for the future today, they may have more to do with what you can do than what you can get.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Your judgment is generally quite good, so don't have any misgivings about past decisions. As you move forward today, trust your common sense and have faith in your viewpoints.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — In all your dealings today, both personal and commercial, don't waste valuable time beating around the bush. Nothing will be gained by circumventing the facts. Get right to the point.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Place friendship above personal opinions or desires today if you find that a compromise is called for concerning a tricky matter you're discussing with another. Give this person the benefit of the doubt.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — Try to get any small projects or little tasks out of the way early today so that you can relax and enjoy the rest of the day. Don't let sluggish helpers bog down your efficiency.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — There's nothing wrong with your ability to grasp tough concepts today, but what could get you off track is allowing emotion to cause you to overlook significant details. Keep your focus intact.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — Any important changes you decide to get your teeth into today need to have your total dedication. Half measure will not suffice; for satisfactory results, you must go all the way.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Resolutions you make today will not withstand the test of time unless your intent is steadfast and based upon intensity of purpose. Then nothing will stand in the way of success.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — Even though this may be a day off for you from work, chances are you'll use some of your time to be productive. You won't be satisfied unless you have something worthwhile to show for it.

Trying to patch up a broken romance? The Astro-Graph Matchmaker wheel can help you understand what to do to make the relationship work. Mail $2.75 to Matchmaker, P.O. Box 167, Wickliffe, OH 44092-0167. Visit www.bernice4u.com for more advice.

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Today's chuckle

Rats could be nesting in sewer system

FRONT ROYAL, Va. (AP) — Two residents discovered dead rats in their toilets — and town officials say a nest in the sewer line could be the problem.

On Monday, Lyndon Flood found a dead rat she described as "half the size of a cat" in her toilet.

"I went in there to use the toilet. ... I can hardly talk about it," she said. "Could you imagine having a rat in your toilet while you're getting ready to go to the bathroom?"

Betty Lamb said her daughter-in-law found a dead rat in the toilet last Wednesday.

"She thought it was a joke we pulled on her," she said.

George Shadman, Front Royal's director of public works, said sewer rats appear occasionally in the system.

But two complaints from people living in the same neighborhood within a week made Shadman realize there might be a nest.

The town was planning to have the sewer line flushed with water using a high-pressure machine, he said.

New Year's Eve
Dance 8-12
American Mix
Karaoke
American Legion
1800 Ave. R
Members & Guests

NEW YEAR'S EVE DANCE
with CONJUNTO MI GUSTO
Wed., Dec. 31st 8:00 pm - 12:00 midnight
$8.00 per person (before 9 pm)
Ring in the New Year at the Snyder VFW
573-5338

NEW YEARS'S EVE PARTY
SNYDER COUNTRY CLUB
DANCE TO HIWAY 208
8:00 - MIDNIGHT
For Reservations Call:
573-0165
$20.00 Couple $15.00 Single

ALL STORES CLOSED NEW YEAR'S DAY!
BEALLS
3210 College Ave.
New Year's Sale & Clearance
1/2 OFF!
FIND GREAT SAVINGS STOREWIDE!
1/2 OFF ALL OUTERWEAR FOR THE FAMILY
1/2 OFF ALL MISSES FALL SWEATERS
1/2 OFF JUNIORS SWEATERS, JEANS & PANTS
1/2 OFF LADIES BOOTS & CASUAL SHOES
1/2 OFF ENTIRE STOCK KIDS SWEATERS
1/2 OFF MEN'S SUN RIVER SHIRTS & PANTS
70% OFF ENTIRE STOCK HOLIDAY JEWELRY
VIP OPEN A NEW ACCOUNT - GET 10% OFF ALL DAY
PLUS 250 BONUS POINTS TOWARDS VIP STATUS
Just a sample of the savings you will find. Interim markdowns may have been taken.
Entire stocks only where indicated. Selection varies. For the store nearest you, call toll-free 1-877-737-8243.

DEC 31 2003

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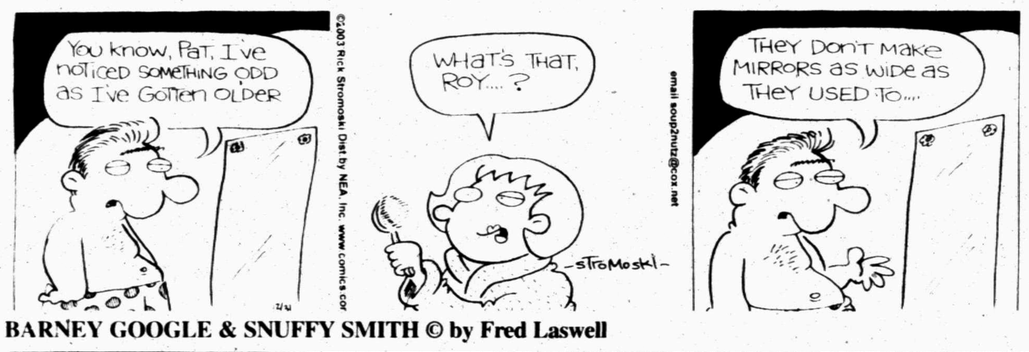
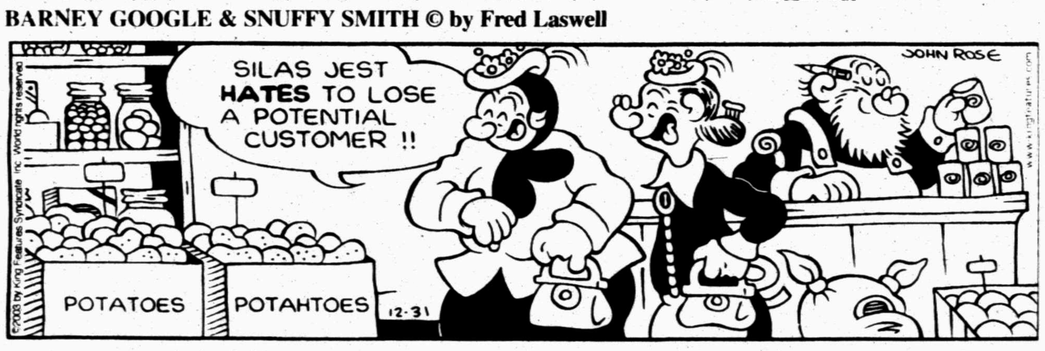
SOUP TO NUTZ ® by Rick Stromoski



BARNEY GOOGLE & SNUFFY SMITH © by Fred Laswell



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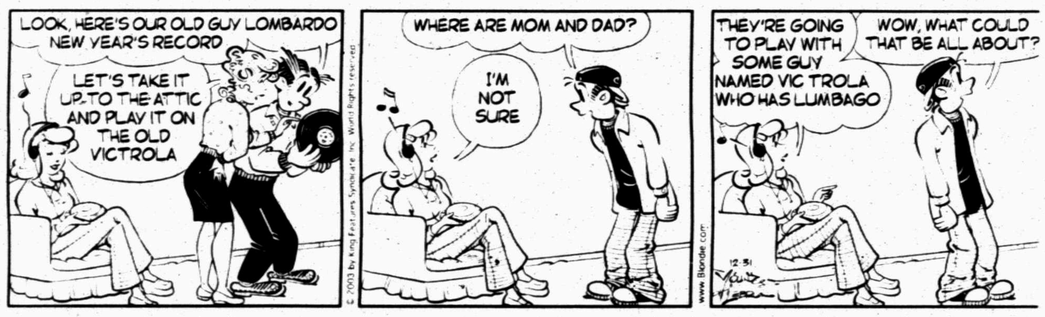
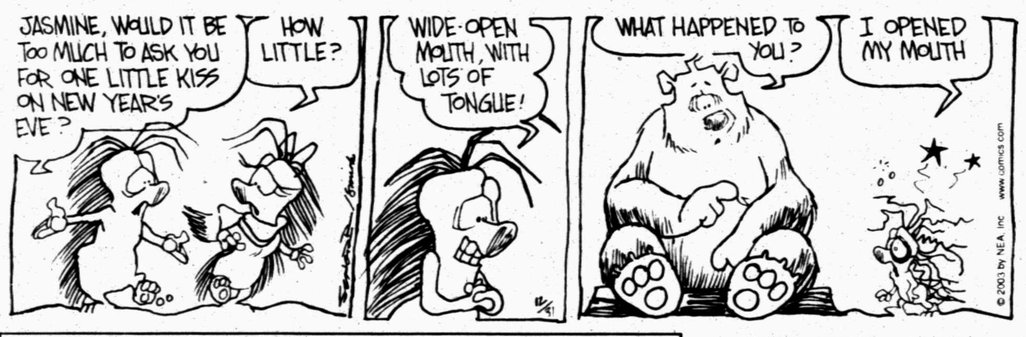


THE GRIZZWELLS ® by Bill Schorr



NEA Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1 Ex-frosh
5 Floor
10 Speaker's platform
12 Less cloudy
13 Fled to wed
14 Fervent aspirations
15 Mademoiselle's father
16 Droop
18 Furtive
19 Antitoxin
21 Deceive by trickery
25 Rimes
29 Want
31 Necessitate
33 Ski race
34 Deepen, as a canal
35 Old firearm
37 Cornhusker city
38 Do a classroom chore
40 Heir, often
43 Barracks dwellers
44 Loose garment
48 Get in the way
50 Barters
52 Thundered
53 Mild protests (hyph.)
54 Visibly happy
55 For the guys

DOWN

1 Food fish
2 Hound's track
3 Snowman accessory
4 Color
5 Down in the dumps
6 Makes a bow
7 Out loud
8 Depend on
9 Cen. fractions
10 Vim and vigor
11 Consumer gds.
12 Guessed
17 Woof!
19 Pet
20 Marilyn — of "Bus Stop"
21 Bank offerings
22 Rudder
23 Jacob's twin
24 Is not well
26 Wineglass part
27 Mock fanfare (hyph.)
28 Show relief
30 Became evident
32 Meadow
36 Ice skater — Babilonia
39 Fast jets
40 Pollution
41 Translucent gem
42 "Quo Vadis?" role
44 Hourly fee
45 Norse Zeus
46 Gazzara and Jonson
47 Feminine ending
48 401(k) cousin
49 Beads on grass
51 Crater edge

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

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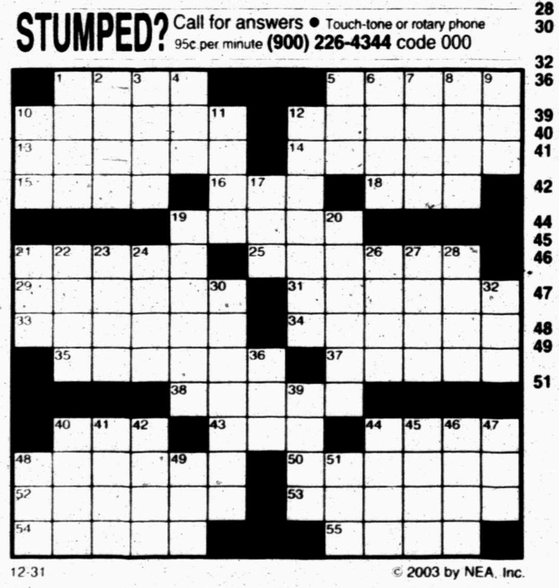

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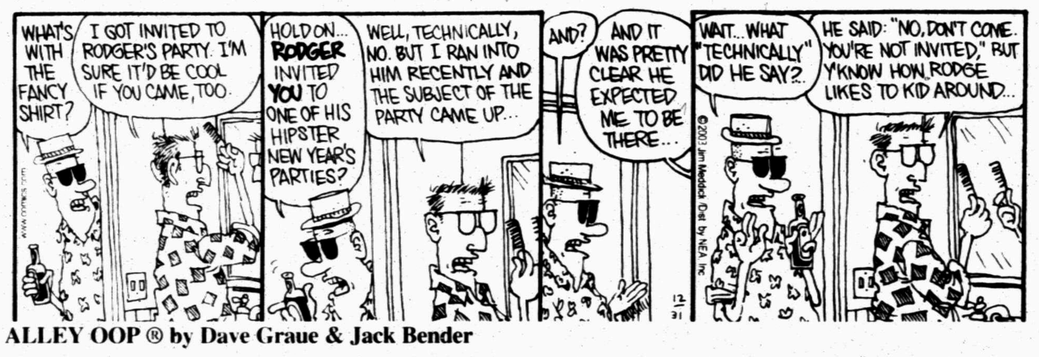

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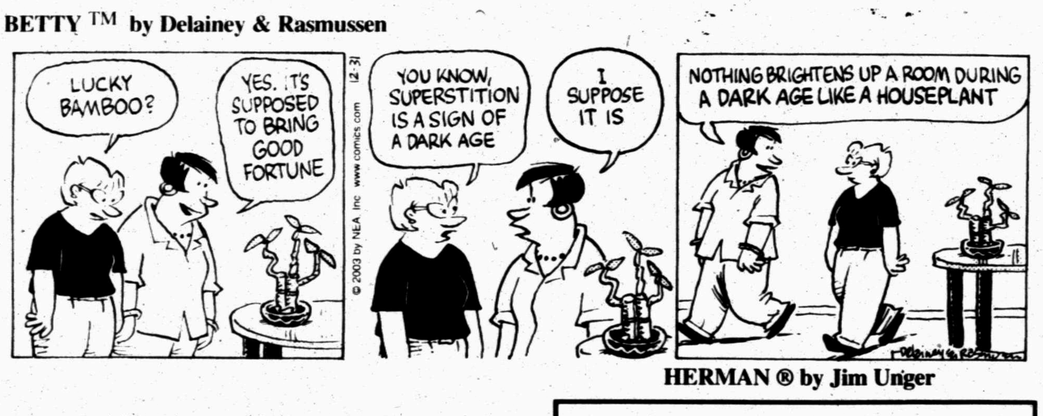


HERMAN ® by Jim Unger

Snyder Daily News Comics

DENNIS THE MENACE ® by Hank Ketcham

"Did Grandpa give you permission to take that off his bad leg?"

KIT 'N' CARLYLE ® by Larry Wright

Best Available Copy

SPORTS

At Post Tournament...

SHS guns for dual titles tonight

POST — The Snyder boys and girls basketball teams both reached the championship game at the Post Tournament Tuesday, with the boys stopping Lubbock Christian and the girls rolling past Brownfield.

The Tigers got 29 points from Lee Scott — including 10 in the final period — in claiming a narrow, 59-55 win over Lubbock Christian to move on to the championship tilt against Post.

After taking a brief lead in the third quarter, the Tigers trailed, 42-38, heading into the fourth.

Head coach Bud Birks said the third quarter was the turning point of the game.

"We fell down by five, and we ran our offense and got good shots. That changed the momentum of the game," he said. "We got out ahead (in the fourth) and played smarter."

The Tigers also got help from their inside players, as Tucker Early and Zack Garcia combined for 12 points. Early scored all six of his points in the fourth.

"Our big kids played better, and we got the ball in to them," Birks said. "When you are conscious of getting the ball inside, you get better shots outside."

Garret Pinson added eight points, and Isaac Ramon drained six for Snyder.

The Tigers also benefited from an improved performance from the free-throw line, going 11 of 16 from the charity stripe.

The Tigers will take on tournament host Post at 7:30 tonight.

Post topped Petersburg, 47-45, in the semifinal contest.

The Lady Tigers took a 12-point lead into the second quarter, pushing the score to 35-20 at the half, in a 53-38 win over Brownfield.

Jordan Stansell led all players with 13 points and 10 boards, and Teddi Crenwelge added 10 as the Lady Tigers improved to 14-2. It was the team's second-double-digit victory over the Lady Cubs this season.

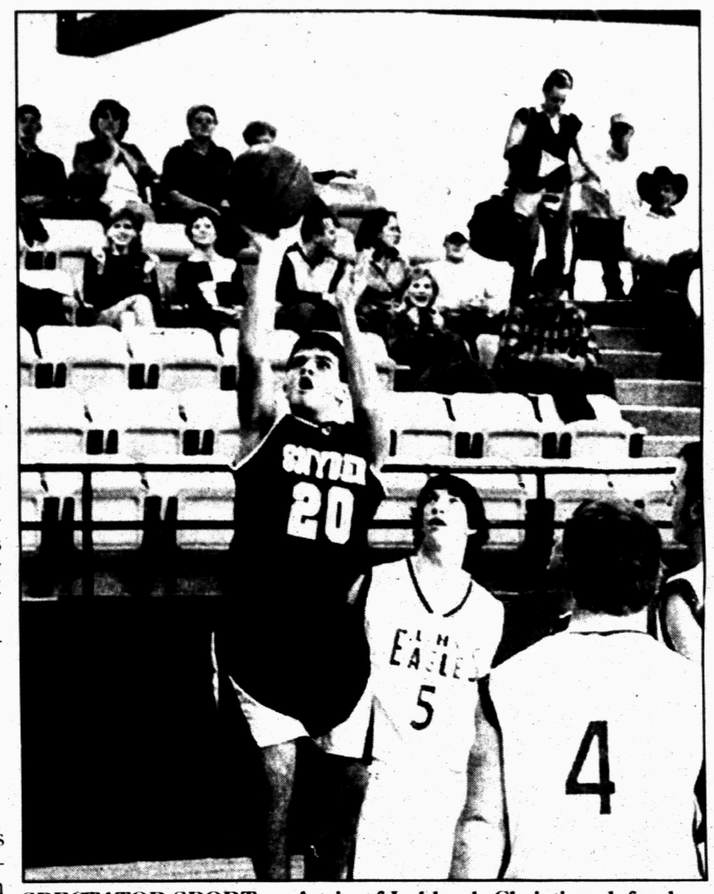
"We played well early on, but in the second half we struggled a bit," head coach Mike Martin said. "We got up by 25 and we lost our intensity."

Sirena Medrano contributed nine points and nine rebounds, while Erin Burleson connected for six points and hauled in seven boards. Terann Ragland and Crenwelge also grabbed seven rebounds apiece.

The Lady Tigers will square off with Petersburg at 6 tonight in the championship game.

"They are very good and will start a very experienced team," Martin said, adding the Petersburg's starting five consists solely of seniors. "They are very quick, and their press is probably going to give us trouble."

Petersburg advanced by beating Post, 42-29.



SPECTATOR SPORT — A trio of Lubbock Christian defenders watch as Austin Hatfield puts up a shot during Snyder's 59-55 victory. The Tigers play Post at 7:30 tonight in the tournament championship game. (Contributed Photo by Ronny Collins)

Symons reveals knee injury

HOUSTON (AP) — B.J. Symons' trip from the NCAA record book to the pros will take a secretly planned detour through the operating room.

There had been rumors and hints that the injury he suffered to his left knee while leaping in celebration of a touchdown toss on Oct. 11 was bad. Neither he nor Texas Tech ever revealed how bad until after he threw for 497 yards and four touchdowns Tuesday to beat Navy in the Houston Bowl.

He told reporters he will undergo surgery next Tuesday to reconstruct the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee. It's an injury often considered a season-ender, but he pressed on for seven more games en route to a Division I-A record 5,833-yard season.

"He's had a tremendous year," Tech coach Mike Leach said. "He did the equivalent of breaking the home run record, and he did it against the toughest defenses in the country. He not only broke it, but he put it out of reach."

Time will tell, but Symons did obliterate Ty Detmer's 13-year-old record of 5,188.

And Symons, who patiently waited until his senior season to get his chance, did it practically on one leg.

"I knew I was only going to have one season, but I wanted to make the most of every opportunity that I had," he said, looking ahead to April's NFL draft. "I feel like I've got a lot of football left in me."

Both Tech and Navy finished 8-5, though that was a much bigger accomplishment for the Midshipmen, who are at a perennial recruiting disadvantage with their tough entry standards, strict regimens and the five-year armed services commitment after graduation.

Not to mention that the Mids won just three games in the previous three years before coach Paul Johnson rejuvenated the program. It was only Navy's second bowl appearance since 1981, which also had been the last year the Mids won the Commander-In-Chief's Trophy for best record against the other service academies until they swept Army and Air Force this season.

"As I told our guys in the locker room after the game, I'm proud of them," Johnson said. "Even with what I saw on the field, I'd rather be the coach of my team than the other team after watching them."

Cougars stun fifth-ranked Longhorns in Holiday Bowl

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Even the defense came up big for Washington State in the Holiday Bowl.

The No. 15 Cougars scored three touchdowns in the third quarter to build a 16-point lead, then came up with a huge defensive stand late in the fourth quarter to beat No. 5 Texas 28-20 on Tuesday night.

The Holiday Bowl has a history of big offensive plays and wild finishes. That's what the Cougars' D helped provide.

Linebacker Will Derting said the Cougars were pumped up because the Longhorns dissed them at a banquet Monday night.

"They said we have an OK defense and you kind of take that personally," Derting said. "It got us fired up."

With the Longhorns trailing by eight, senior receiver Roy Williams caught a 45-yard pass from Chance Mock to give Texas the ball at the WSU 11 with 2:31 to play.

After Mock threw an incompletion, WSU blitzed hard and forced Mock deep into the pocket. D.D. Acholonu hit Mock and forced a fumble that was recovered by Derting at the 36-yard line with 2:16 to play.

"They were coming from everywhere," Chance said. "We knew coming in that's how they were going to play."

Texas got the ball back one more time, but Mock was sacked at midfield by Acholonu as time expired.

Washington State (10-3) won 10 games for the third straight year. At times, Texas (10-3) looked nothing like the highest-ranked team not in the BCS. The Longhorns saw their six-game winning streak end, and with it a chance to post three straight 11-win seasons for the first time in school history.

The Cougars came up big on special teams, too. Punter Kyle Basler was named defensive MVP after pinning the Longhorns inside their 5-yard line four times.

"This win is huge for our program, to beat the No. 5 team," first-year Washington State coach Bill Doba said.

The Cougars scored on three big plays in the third quarter to take the lead for good.

NCAA Bowl Schedule

Tuesday, Dec. 30

Houston Bowl
$1 million
Texas Tech 38, Navy 14

Holiday Bowl
At San Diego
$2 million
Washington State 28, Texas 20

Silicon Valley Classic
At San Jose, Calif.
$750,000
Fresno State 17, UCLA 9

Today

Music City Bowl
At Nashville, Tenn.
$950,000
Wisconsin (7-5) vs. Auburn (7-5), 11 a.m. (ESPN)

Sun Bowl
At El Paso, Texas
$1.45 million
Minnesota (9-3) vs. Oregon (8-4), 1 p.m. (CBS)

Liberty Bowl
At Memphis, Tenn.
$1.35 million
Utah (9-2) vs. Southern Mississippi (9-3), 2:30 p.m. (ESPN)

Independence Bowl
At Shreveport, La.
$1.2 million
Missouri (8-4) vs. Arkansas (8-4), 6:30 p.m. (ESPN)

San Francisco Bowl
$825,000
Colorado State (7-5) vs. Boston College (7-5), 9:30 p.m. (ESPN2)

Thursday, Jan. 1

Outback Bowl
At Tampa, Fla.
$2.65 million
Iowa (9-3) vs. Florida (8-4), 10 a.m. (ESPN)

Gator Bowl
At Jacksonville, Fla.
$1.825 million
Maryland (9-3) vs. West Virginia (8-4), 11:30 a.m. (NBC)

Capital One Bowl
At Orlando, Fla.
$5.1 million
Purdue (9-3) vs. Georgia (10-3), noon (ABC)

Rose Bowl
At Pasadena, Calif.
$14-17 million
Michigan (10-2) vs. Southern Cal (11-1), 3:30 p.m. (ABC)

Orange Bowl
At Miami
$14-17 million
Florida State (10-2) vs. Miami (10-2), 7:30 p.m. (ABC)

Spurrier quits Redskins

WASHINGTON (AP) — Caught off guard by Steve Spurrier's resignation, Washington Redskins owner Dan Snyder is looking for his fifth coach in five years.

At least this time he can't be accused of being impatient. He was ready to have Spurrier return for a third season until the coach called Tuesday morning to say that a 12-20 record was too much to take.

"It was totally unexpected," said Karl Swanson, Snyder's spokesman.

If so, Snyder might be one of very few people to feel that way. Spurrier's departure had been rumored for weeks, and in his final days his walk, talk and overall behavior were indicative of someone who wasn't happy in his job.

"All of the losing can wear you down," Spurrier said in his resignation statement.

So Snyder must find a new face to join the parade of Norv Turner, Terry Robiskie, Marty Schottenheimer and Spurrier, his four head coaches since he bought the team in 1999. Two former NFL coaches, Dennis Green and Jim Fassel, head a list of possible candidates for an owner who has always preferred high-profile names over little-known up-and-comers.

Whoever takes the job will find a team in need of an attitude overhaul. Spurrier's reign was one of confusion, mixed messages and lack of discipline. His Fun 'n' Gun offense didn't translate from college to the NFL, and he overestimated the standard of professionalism among NFL players.

"This is a very demanding job," Spurrier said. "It's a long grind and I feel that after 20 years as a head coach, there are other things that I need to do."

Spurrier quit three days after the Redskins finished 5-11 by losing 10 of their last 12 games. The five other coaching departures this month have all been firings: Dave McGinnis (Cardinals), Dick Jauron (Bears), Gregg Williams (Bills), Dan Reeves (Falcons) and Fassel (Giants).

Spurrier walked away from the final three years of a five-year, $25 million contract, the richest ever given an NFL coach. He will be paid some money to cover personal expenses over the next few months, but his compensation will not be "an amount anywhere near approaching his contract," Swanson said.

Sports Briefs

Ravens earn AP awards

Jamal Lewis rushed past the 2,000-yard mark, took the Baltimore Ravens to their first division title and won The Associated Press NFL Offensive Player of the Year award.

Lewis rushed for 2,066 yards, second-most in NFL history, and 14 touchdowns, and easily outdistanced San Diego's LaDainian Tomlinson for the honor.

Lewis also set an NFL single-game mark with 295 yards rushing against Cleveland in the second game of the season, then ran for 205 against the Browns in Game 15.

Although he didn't start until the season finale, Terrell Suggs was so impressive for the Baltimore Ravens that he earned The Associated Press' NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year award.

Terrell Suggs, an outside linebacker with a pass-rushing burst reminiscent of Lawrence Taylor, earned The Associated Press' NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year award.

U.S. bans ephedra

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Bush administration is banning the sale of ephedra early next year and urged consumers to immediately stop using the herbal stimulant linked to the death of Baltimore Orioles pitcher Steve Bechler.

Ephedra has been blamed for 155 deaths and dozens of heart attacks and strokes, and the NFL, NCAA and International Olympic Committee banned its use. Major league baseball did not.

The government's first ban on a dietary supplement comes eight years after the Food and Drug Administration began receiving reports that ephedra could be dangerous.

Seven American Olympians flunk drug tests

Sprint champion Kelli White was among seven American athletes — six in track and field and one in cycling — identified by the U.S. Olympic Committee as having flunked drug tests this summer.

White and five others tested positive for the banned stimulant modafinil. Hammer thrower John McEwen tested positive for modafinil and the newly discovered steroid THG, and cyclist Adham Sbeih tested positive for the endurance-boosting hormone EPO.

The USOC announced the test results after the substances were found in two urine tests from each of the athletes, and following a 30-day review of the tests by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency.

All seven athletes are appealing their test results, the USOC said in a news release from its base in Colorado Springs, Colo., and any suspensions or other sanctions would come only after those appeals are exhausted.

National Basketball Association

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New Jersey	16	14	.533	—
Boston	16	16	.500	1
Philadelphia	14	17	.452	2½
New York	14	19	.424	3½
Miami	13	19	.406	4
Washington	8	21	.276	7½
Orlando	8	24	.250	9

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	23	10	.697	—
New Orleans	19	12	.613	3
Detroit	18	13	.581	4
Toronto	16	14	.533	5½
Milwaukee	15	16	.484	7
Cleveland	10	22	.313	12½
Chicago	9	22	.290	13
Atlanta	9	24	.273	14

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	22	10	.688	—
Minnesota	20	10	.667	1
Denver	19	12	.613	2½
Dallas	18	12	.600	3
Utah	17	14	.548	4½
Houston	16	14	.533	5
Memphis	15	17	.469	7

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Lakers	21	7	.750	—
Sacramento	21	8	.724	½
Portland	15	14	.517	6½
Seattle	15	14	.517	6½
Golden State	14	15	.483	7½
L.A. Clippers	12	15	.444	8½
Phoenix	12	20	.375	11

Tuesday's Games

Indiana 92, Cleveland 89
Atlanta 83, Washington 73
New York 102, Miami 73
Seattle 105, Memphis 99
Minnesota 98, Chicago 93
Dallas 101, Milwaukee 92
Toronto 81, Denver 74

Today's Games

New Orleans at Boston, 1 p.m.
Portland at Detroit, 3 p.m.
Golden State at New Jersey, 6 p.m.
Denver at L.A. Clippers, 8:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Houston, 9 p.m.

Sports Calendar

TODAY

Basketball: Snyder varsity boys vs. Post, championship, 7:30 p.m.

Snyder varsity girls vs. Petersburg, championship, 6 p.m.

FRIDAY

Basketball: Ira varsity girls at Westbrook, 6:30 p.m.

Ira varsity boys at Westbrook, 8 p.m.

Ira JV boys at Westbrook, 5 p.m.

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Analyst fired for role in faulty DNA tests

HOUSTON (AP) — A DNA analyst whose labwork helped convict a teenager of rape, has been fired.

Christy Kim, a 21-year veteran of the Houston Police Department, was suspended indefinitely Monday, the Houston Chronicle reported. The news comes nine months after Josiah Sutton's release from prison for a 1998 rape.

Kim testified during Sutton's trial that evidence from the crime scene was an exact match with Sutton's DNA. Sutton, who was 17 at the time he was convicted, was found guilty largely because of the weight of DNA evidence. He was released when new tests excluded him as a suspect.

Kim, who filed an appeal Tuesday, is the first from the department to be fired since DNA testing was suspended last year. Two high-ranking department supervisors resigned in June.

"It is about time," said William Thompson, a University of California-Irvine professor who helped expose some of the Houston lab's errors. "Slap-on-the-wrist suspensions are not going to solve problems at that lab."

Kim has said that poor management and departmental flaws, which left analysts unaware of the latest technology, are to blame for problems with testing.

"Ms. Kim is just a bench worker who could not have controlled any of the things she is charged with," her lawyer, Fred Keys, said in Tuesday's online edition of the Houston-Chronicle. "They were begging for help, and they didn't get it."

Keys could not be reached by The Associated Press today night.

Kim testified during Sutton's trial that evidence from the crime scene was an exact match with Sutton's DNA. Retests in March by a private lab discredited Kim's work.

A review of her analysis found that she could have excluded Sutton as a suspect at the time of the trial, Thompson said.

Sutton's case is among 400 that are being retested after the Houston Police Department closed the DNA division of its crime lab. Private labs already have analyzed evidence from about 120 cases and found problems of insufficient samples and statistical discrepancies in 23 cases. Sutton is the only defendant who has been released from prison.

Keys said Kim has grounds for appeal.

"The way DNA was analyzed at the time is different than the type of tests they use now, and the way she did those calculations, that was lab policy at the time," Keys said."It would be like trying to get a carpenter to build you a house and telling him he couldn't have a hammer or nails."

Keys said Kim was among six crime lab employees who had reported problems to former Police Chief C.O. Bradford in 1999.

"They took their concerns to the highest level," he said. "What more could they have done?"

Thompson, who has reviewed Kim's work, said DNA technology has improved since Sutton's case was analyzed, but said those changes don't account for the faulty results.

"It has nothing to do with the technology," he said. "She was simply using the wrong calculations, and it is apparent just from looking at her lab work, without even conducting new tests. To suggest that changes in technology account for her errors is simply wrong."

Iraqi state TV videotaped Lynch, Piestewa

NEW YORK (AP) — Iraqi state television took graphic footage of badly injured prisoners of war Jessica Lynch and Lori Piestewa, who may have died shortly afterward, following the ambush of the soldiers' convoy, NBC reported.

The video, aired Tuesday on "NBC Nightly News," shows the two Army privates — and best friends — at the hospital where they were taken following the March 23 ambush of the 507th Maintenance Co.

The tape was never aired in Iraq, NBC reported.

Piestewa, her face swollen and bruised and her head loosely bandaged, is shown as someone positions her feet, and then her head, for the camera shot. Her lip is shown curling back in an apparent grimace.

Lynch, 20, of Palestine, W.Va., is also shown bandaged, her lip cut.

Neither appears awake or alert.

"We had no idea that anyone had taped her or where this tape came from," Percy Piestewa, Lori's mother, told the Arizona Republic.

Piestewa told the newspaper that the family did not know Lori had been hospitalized with Lynch.

Telephone messages left with two spokespeople for Lynch's family were not immediately returned.

Iraqi doctors have previously said the women were brought to a private clinic following the ambush, and that Piestewa, a 23-year-old mother of two from Tuba City, Ariz., died half an hour later of severe head injuries.

Lynch was rescued by U.S. forces April 1, while five other soldiers were found about two weeks later elsewhere in Iraq. But 11 of their colleagues died during and after the ambush in Nasiriyah.

Piestewa was the first U.S. female service member to die in the war.

The identities of Lynch and Piestewa were verified for NBC by Spc. Shoshana Johnson, one of the rescued soldiers.

"It was a little shocking to see Lori, but it also gave me a little peace to know that they tried, they did their best for her," Johnson, 30, of El Paso, Texas, told the network. "I mean, it was obvious they tried to bandage her up and give her medical care."

NBC told the Army it had obtained the tape before airing it so the families of the soldiers could be told first, according to MSNBC.com.

Truckers can drive more but rest longer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Truck drivers will be able to stay on the road for up to 11 straight hours but will have to take at least 10 hours off before they can again get behind the wheel of their rigs, according to new federal regulations taking effect Sunday.

The government said Tuesday that the new rules will make the roads safer because truckers will have to rest for two more hours between driving shifts. The Transportation Department estimates the change will reduce deaths associated with truck driver fatigue from 440 to 335 a year.

"The new safety rule gives us the means to save hundreds of lives, protect billions in commerce and safeguard our roads and highways for years to come," Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta said in a prepared statement.

Some safety groups and the truckers' union disagreed, saying that allowing a trucker an extra, 11th, hour behind the wheel — compared with the 10 hours maximum now permitted — will result in more, not fewer, dangerously fatigued truckers on the road.

"When these drivers are already behind the wheel of a heavy piece of machinery for 10 hours, it's only going to increase their fatigue if you increase the hours — even if they have an extra hour of rest," said Rob Black, spokesman for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

Public Citizen, a consumer group, sued earlier this year to overturn the new regulations before they were put in effect. The case is pending in federal court.

"It does nothing positive, it does a lot of negative, and it's a big waste of four years of effort," said Joan Claybrook, Public Citizen's president.

Claybrook said the government succumbed to lobbying by the trucking industry. The American Trucking Associations supports the new rules.

"We think these rules are good," said John Willard, a spokesman for the trucking associations. "The new rules will help us improve our highway safety record, and help our bottom line because insurance rates will go down."

Year 2003 review concludes

Continued from Page 1

Hunter had previously served as JV golf coach.

October also saw the Snyder Daily News publish the special 50 Years of Progress edition. The special edition highlighted the events of Snyder and Scurry County over the last 50 years.

Construction continued on College Ave. at the Deep Creek bridge as the work spread from 25th to 30th streets.

Hermleigh ISD board of trustees approved a $6,000 budget amendment for a campus beautification project.

Influenza, most commonly known as the "flu bug" hit Texas hard this season. Cogdell Memorial Hospital was nearly full to capacity with patients who were experiencing flu-like symptoms.

The hospital district election was on the minds of commissioners court when they chose Dec. 6 as the election day.

The chamber of commerce board requests for hotel motel funds. Company G requested $500 dollars, Snyder Chamber requested $2,200 to present the play *Cinderella* and Scurry County Museum requested $1,000 to bring and exhibit to Snyder.

A report of men with a shotgun at McDonald's on College Ave. resulted in a chase that lasted some 17 miles. On North Ennis Creek Rd., the driver lost control of his vehicle and was involved in a collision with a Snyder patrol unit. Matthew Russell was charged with evading arrest and aggravated assault on a police officer. His 27-year-old companion was charged with public intoxication.

Hermleigh basketball coach and English teacher Rebecca Ponder resigned abruptly from her duties. In a meeting, the board of trustees voted to recognize, but not accept, Ponder's resignation.

The 142nd Infantry, 36th Division Company G of the National Guard held its final reunion at the Willow Park Inn. The group was organized in Snyder in 1924.

WTC sponsored the Fall Fest in the gymnasium. The event drew children from all over Snyder and Scurry County to raise money for the United Way.

November

Northside Baptist Church celebrated 50 years of radio ministry on KSNY radio station.

A Potato Specialty truck from Lubbock overturned, spilling potatoes, onions, lettuce and tomatoes over U.S. 84 near Hermleigh. The driver, Pablo Chavez of Lubbock, was not injured.

The Scurry County Junior Livestock Association sponsored the Best of Texas livestock show at Scurry County Coliseum. The show attracted goat, lamb, pig and steer participants from all over the state.

Hermleigh ISD trustees voted to change the Hermleigh Cardinals football team from six-man an 11-man team.

Snyder City Council discussed a city-owned animal shelter and the idea of more stringent animal control for city pet owners.

With the passage of the normal first freeze date with unusually warm temperatures, Scurry County cotton growers got off to a slow harvest this season. The late freeze did not stop the harvest however, with 11,354 bales of cotton ginned by December.

A number of Scurry County residents shared with SDN their memories of where they were when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

The Snyder Tigers grid team enjoyed their most successful season in 13 years by going all the way to the Class 3A quarterfinals. It was the second time in the school's history to advance that far in the playoffs. The team's winning streak was halted by a loss to Abilene Wylie.

The chamber of commerce search for a new executive director came to an end with the hiring of Vicki Shroyer.

December

Dec. 3 marked the beginning of the filing period for the March primary elections.

Scurry County Library started the "Food for Fines" drive. People who owed library fines could have them forgiven by donating canned food to be given to the Food Cupboard.

The annual lighted Christmas parade was moved to Towle Park because of construction on College Avenue and The Ritz Theatre and the Snyder Chamber of Commerce presented two performances of *Cinderella*.

Scurry County voters overwhelmingly rejected the formation of a hospital district in a Dec. 6 election. The district was defeated by nearly a two-to-one margin with 626 votes for and 1, 172 votes against.

Scurry County Rodeo Association President L.J. Mueller vowed to bring the Scurry County rodeo back to Snyder in 2004.

Snyder ISD trustees voted to contract with the law firms of Perry and Kellogg from San Antonio and Bill Helwig from Denver City to pursue possible underpayment of ad valorem taxes by a number of oil companies during 1987 and 1998.

The Wagon Wheel Ranch hosted the TLC channel show, *A Wedding Story*. The wedding of Joel Terry and Kimberly Smith of Post was selected out of thousands of couples to be featured.

Scurry County Coliseum got approval to update the existing air conditioning system in the building. This prompted the decision to no longer allow livestock-oriented events in the main coliseum with the exception of the WTC rodeo and the ranch rodeo.

Patterson-UTI Energy was recognized as a recipient of an award from the West Central Workforce Center at the chamber of commerce Christmas open house.

Cogdell Memorial Hospital's Interim CFO Ron Hunt reported to the hospital board that bad debt was a big problem for the hospital. He explained that bad debt expense is 15 percent of net revenue and should be less. He advised hospital management to increase efforts to collect these debts.

Snyder retail merchants saw strong sales during the Christmas shopping season. While pre-holiday sales were good, post-Christmas sales were also extremely positive.

The Towle Park renovation contract was approved by commissioners court with KDC-Turner and Associates in Midland. The park improvements will ultimately total $1,148,000.

Wind turbines of the Brazos Wind Ranch began the process of providing electricity. Each turbine can provide enough energy for approximately 350 homes.

Bridge

By Phillip Alder

North 12-31-03
♠ 10 9 8
♥ A K Q J 6 5 2
♦ K J
♣ 6

West
♠ Q 6 3
♥ 7 4
♦ 10 9 2
♣ Q 9 7 5 3

East
♠ J 7 4
♥ 10 9 8 3
♦ A Q 8 6 5
♣ 4

South
♠ A K 5 2
♥ —
♦ 7 4 3
♣ A K J 10 8 2

Dealer: West
Vulnerable: East-West

South	West	North	East
	Pass	4♣	Pass
6♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: ??

Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2003

Into each holiday some pain must fall

By Phillip Alder

You have, I hope, been enjoying the holiday period, with fun and laughter — and more to come tonight. But nothing is perfect. Look only at the West hand. After you pass as dealer, your left-hand opponent opens four clubs. This is Namyats. (Where does that name come from?) It shows a strong four-heart opening bid with an excellent suit. Your right-hand opponent, standing not on ceremony, jumps to six hearts. What would you lead?

Namyats — which is Stayman backwards — distinguishes between a serious major-suit pre-empt (you open four clubs or four diamonds) and one with more hope than expectation (you open four hearts or four spades). A natural four-of-a-minor opening is not really needed; for one thing, you have just sailed straight past three no-trump.

Now look at the full deal. Yes, South's bid is imaginative or crazy, according to result.

If you lead a diamond, you defeat the contract quickly.

A spade start beats it more slowly. Declarer will capture your partner's jack with his ace, take the club ace, and ruff a club in the dummy. But East will overruff and cash the diamond ace.

A heart attack is a disaster. Declarer draws trumps, cashes his ace and king of clubs, exposing the bad break, then ruffs out your club queen. He takes two spades, seven hearts and three clubs.

What did the expert sitting West select? His fourth-highest club — which allowed dummy's six to win the first trick! Now South collected an overtrick! Note that leading a higher club — the seven, nine or queen — would have been successful.

Next year, may all your leads be successful.

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Markets

Midday Stocks

NEW YORK (AP)

	High	Low	Last	
AMR Corp	13.01	12.80	12.85	—.05
AT&T Corp	20.21	20.00	20.17	+.14
Albertsons	22.72	22.44	22.65	+.19
Alltel	46.65	45.99	46.21	—.44
AmEl Pw	30.52	30.31	30.48	—.03
AndarkPtr	51.60	51.07	51.26	+.02
ATMOS Egy	24.99	24.68	24.76	—.23
Aviall	16.41	15.90	15.94	—.46
BP PLC	49.48	49.18	49.44	+.36
BakerHughes	32.75	32.10	32.23	—.33
Bank of Amer	80.49	80.17	80.28	—.22
BellSouth	28.28	28.02	28.21	+.05
BurlNoSFe	32.40	32.15	32.29	+.04
Caterpillar	84.42	83.44	83.46	—.61
CenterPoint	9.68	9.62	9.63	—.04
ChevronTex	86.99	86.33	86.75	+.69
Citigroup	48.64	48.23	48.32	—.11
CocaCola	50.81	50.45	50.70	+.18
ColgatePal	50.19	49.91	50.04	+.13
CmclMetals	31.68	30.95	31.06	—.47
ConocoPhill	66.01	65.41	65.92	+.54
Cooper Inds	58.20	57.70	57.88	+.19
DaimlrChry	46.30	45.88	46.23	+.23
DeltaAirLines	11.95	11.76	11.83	—.03
Dillards Inc	16.57	16.18	16.35	—.11
DowChem	41.21	40.90	41.13	+.07
DuPont	45.98	45.64	45.85	+.09
EastmanChem	39.43	39.10	39.33	+.33
EstKodak	25.74	25.00	25.71	+.37
EDS Corp	24.71	24.54	24.60	+.04
Entergy	57.20	56.98	57.08	—.06
ExxonMobil	41.13	40.86	40.94	+.26
FootLocker	23.67	23.53	23.56	+.09
GenDynam	90.20	89.56	89.70	—.41
GenlElec	30.77	30.60	30.62	—.10
GenMills	45.83	45.56	45.65	+.09
GenMotors	53.60	53.05	53.23	—.32
GaPacific	30.95	30.45	30.63	—.24
Goodrich	30.00	29.75	29.75	—.16
Goodyear	7.92	7.85	7.87	—.01
GtAtlPac	8.41	8.30	8.40	—.06
Halliburtn	26.19	25.84	25.90	—.32
Hanson PLC	36.55	36.46	36.46	+.26
HarteHanks	21.98	21.64	21.75	—.10
HomeDepot	35.48	35.16	35.29	—.00
HoneywellIntl	33.13	32.93	33.11	+.10
IBM	92.93	92.25	92.54	—.09
IntlPaper	43.32	43.01	43.05	—.06
JohnsonJn	51.60	51.21	51.36	—.01
KinderMorg	59.17	58.71	59.06	+.08
Kroger Co	18.52	18.38	18.49	+.08
LockheedM	51.19	50.50	51.16	+.46
Lowes Cos	55.44	55.00	55.23	+.28
Lubys	3.72	3.55	3.66	+.11
LucentTech	2.90	2.84	2.84	—.03
MarathonOil	33.50	33.29	33.33	—.04
MayDeptStr	29.00	28.60	28.95	+.29
Medtronic	48.90	48.34	48.34	—.57
Motorola	14.04	13.90	13.95	+.04
NCR Corp	39.05	38.56	38.64	—.34
Navistar	48.65	47.69	47.70	—.76
PNM Rescs	28.45	27.99	28.07	—.29
Penney JC	26.23	25.91	26.07	+.15
PepBoys	22.99	22.56	22.58	—.42
PepsiCo	46.77	46.48	46.58	—.04
PhelpDodge	78.00	76.11	76.51	—.70
PilgrimsPride	17.50	16.63	16.85	—.47
Praxair s	38.24	37.74	37.92	—.10
ProctGamb	99.90	99.47	99.77	+.10
RadioShack	31.15	30.65	30.78	—.17
RoyalDut	52.66	52.53	52.58	+.34
SBC Comm	26.15	25.91	26.03	—.03
SaraLee	21.74	21.57	21.72	+.13
Scripps EW	94.22	94.10	94.14	+.14
SearsRoeb	45.80	45.06	45.32	—.22
SherwinW	34.30	34.13	34.27	+.06
SouthernCo	30.35	30.22	30.30	+.03
SwstAirl	16.18	16.01	16.08	+.02
SprintFON	16.38	16.18	16.32	+.06
SprintPCS	5.68	5.54	5.59	+.04
Sunoco Inc	51.87	51.23	51.28	—.71
TXU Corp	23.67	23.50	23.56	—.08
TempleInland	62.86	62.44	62.64	+.29
TexInd	37.30	36.75	36.81	—.63
TexasInst	29.60	29.11	29.17	—.30
Textron	57.35	56.77	56.97	—.28
TimeWarner	18.00	17.75	17.87	—.03
TrinityInds	31.90	31.20	31.27	—.49
TylerTech	10.00	9.81	9.83	—.17
UnionPacif	69.42	69.07	69.40	+.15
USSteel	35.35	34.66	34.68	—.82
UnitedTech	95.30	94.64	94.95	+.35
Unocal	36.93	36.63	36.69	—.14
VerizonComm	35.12	34.94	35.07	+.07
WalMart	53.17	52.80	52.95	+.17
WellsFargo	59.18	58.87	59.12	+.18
WstnGasRs	47.75	47.43	47.49	+.04
WinnDixie	9.92	9.80	9.86	+.07
Xerox Cp	13.68	13.51	13.56	—.09
YumBrands	34.44	34.00	34.05	—.38

DEC 31 2003

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Scurry County Country

Diversified

By Greg Gruben, County Extension Agent

What's Your Feral Hog I.Q.?

Got feral hogs on your hunting lease? If not, they're probably heading your way. With a population of almost two million and rising, there only seems to be two kinds of land in Texas – that with feral hogs, and those that are about to have them! Take this quiz and test your I.Q. on this critter some hate and some love, but no doubt one that's here to stay:

1. Hogs were first brought into what is now the United States by: **a)** Hernando de Soto in 1539; **b)** Christopher Columbus in 1492; **c)** A disillusioned wildlife biologist in 1937.

2. Feral hogs, Russian boars and their crosses exist in how many states? **a)** 12; **b)** 22; **c)** 31.

3. The feral hog is classified as a game animal in: **a)** Texas; **b)** California; **c)** New Mexico.

4. Feral hogs are carriers of swine brucellosis and pseudorabies. **a)** True **b)** False.

5. Average feral hog litter size is: **a)** 4-6; **b)** 8-10; **c)** 12-14.

6. Feral hogs and javelinas are closely related. **a)** True; **b)** False.

7. Legal control methods for feral hogs in Texas include: **a)** hunting; **b)** trapping; **c)** toxicants; **d)** catch dogs

8. What is a hog shield? a) a particular hog family's coat of arms; **b)** a thick brush hideaway for hogs; **c)** a tough shoulder hide

9. Should I stock feral hogs on my property?

a) absolutely; **b)** absolutely not; **c)** only if you want to win the admiration of surrounding landowners.

10. What are some good baits to attract feral hogs to traps? **a)** soured corn; **b)** horse and mule feed; **c)** raspberry flavored jello; **d)** all of the above.

Answers: 1. a. 2. b. 3. c. 4. a. 5. a. 6. b. 7. a,b,d. 8. c. 9. b. 10. d.

Scurrying Around Snyder

Beth Dannheim, CEA- Family and Consumer Sciences, 2605 Avenue M, Snyder, Texas 79549

The Power of One Dietary Change in Losing Weight

What do 10 pounds of fat look like? For a rough estimate, imagine 40 sticks of butter or margarine or 10 1-pound cans of vegetable shortening.

Looks like a lot...yet how many of us add this much weight in a year without realizing it until our pants fit a little tighter or our belt runs out of notches?

It takes an excess of about 3,500 calories to gain a pound. Break that into smaller bites and 100 extra calories a day can put on about 10 pounds a year. The GOOD NEWS is LOSING 10 pounds can be as easy as eating 100 calories LESS each day for a year.

Sometimes, we're too hard on ourselves when we're trying to lose weight. We eat some pretty awful-tasting foods, forgo getting together with friends if food is involved, or take the joy out of eating through a monotonous and limited "diet". While people have lost hundreds of pounds through some of these methods, it's often the same 10 pounds over and over again!

ONE dietary change may be all it takes. Here are some simple changes, involving just ONE food; each will decrease your daily intake by about 100 calories. The amounts of calories saved are approximate; check Nutrition Facts labels on specific foods for exact amounts.

As a general rule, the "Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2000" recommend a gradual weight loss of no more than ½ to 2 pounds per week. The Guidelines also recommend losing weight under the guidance of a healthcare provider, especially for obese children and older adults, the Guidelines advise. If you'd like to lose more than 10 pounds over the next year, try two or more of the following changes daily.

It's difficult to obtain adequate nutrients if you consume less than 1,200 calories per day; supervision by your physician is especially important when dropping below this level. It's beneficial for most people to increase their activity level and eat less.

Single Dietary Changes Equal to About 100 Calories

1. Modify Your Milk

Instead of drinking two cups of whole milk, switch to two cups of 1% lowfat milk or skim milk. The nutrients are comparable.

2. Modify Your Mayo

Switch from two tablespoons of regular mayonnaise to two tablespoons of low-fat mayonnaise.

3. Rethink Your Drink

Substitute a 12-ounce can of a diet soft drink at 0 calorie for a similar amount of a regular soft drink at 150 calories. (Or, drink a cold glass of water, perhaps with a slice of lemon!) This strategy also may help you eat less in other ways.

According to Dr. Barbara Rolls, Pennsylvania State University nutrition professor and author of *Volumetrics: Feel Full on Fewer Calories:*

"Various liquids are processed by different mechanisms in the body. The hunger and thirst mechanisms are quite separate. A soft drink will trigger thirst mechanisms, not hunger mechanisms, and add calories without satisfying hunger. You may end up consuming more total calories than if you didn't take the drink."

4. Downsize Your Drink

If you've been drinking a 20-ounce container of a regular soft drink, switch to a 12-ounce container size/

5. "Dress," Don't "Drown" Your Salad

Pam Anderson *(How to Cook Without a Book, Broadway Books, 2000)* advises about 1 tablespoon of oil and a teaspoon of vinegar for each 1 ½ cup portion of salad.

In *How to Make Salad* (Boston Common Press, 1998), the test kitchen staff for *Cook's Illustrated* magazine advise a fourth cup of vinaigrette should be enough to dress 2 quarts (8 cups) of loosely packed salad, an amount they suggest for 4 servings. That means each 2-cup serving of salad greens should have about one tablespoon of dressing on it.

NOTE: *Dressing slides off damp salad greens and collects in the bottom of the salad bowl. You'll get more flavor with less dressing throughout your salad if salad greens are washed and thoroughly dried. If you're using bagged lettuce that's prewashed and labeled "ready to eat", it should be dry enough as is. If you need to wash salad greens, the easiest way to dry them is in a salad spinner. Pack lightly to avoid overcrowding and bruising the greens. After spinning, pat off any remaining moisture with clean paper towels. If you don't have a spinner, dry greens thoroughly with clean paper towels.*

If you've been using 3 (or more!) tablespoons of dressing per two cups of salad, try cutting back to 1 ½ tablespoons of dressing or less. Or experiment with some of the reduced calorie versions – even then, your salad will taste best if "dressed", not "drowned".

6. Size up Your Cereal Bowl

A study reported in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition* (June, 2001) found the amount of cereal eaten by adults was approximately twice the serving size listed on the box. That's not necessarily bad, but may be one place calories are sneaking into meals. Check the portion size you're pouring in relation to the size cited on the box; decide if you're pouring more calories than desired. Try eating from a smaller bowl to aid in portion control.

7. Watch Your Bread and Spread

Limit the amount of bread (or rolls) and spread eaten before the main course to one serving when dining out. You always can eat more later if you're still hungry!

8. Count Your Cookies

A single medium-sized cookie easily can have about 100 calories. Often we pop two or more into our mouths before we realize it. If you feel you're not getting enough "crunch" by limiting yourself to one cookie, try eating an apple instead — the calories are similar.

9. Top Your Potato with Fewer Calories

It's easy to slather a couple of tablespoons of butter or margarine (200 calories/2 tablespoons) on a baked potato. Try switching to sour cream; you can have as much as a fourth cup for 100 calories. For even fewer calories, use one of the light or fat-free sour creams. Or, substitute yogurt for sour cream.

10. Lessen Your Liquor

If you drink alcohol, limit your daily consumption to one drink for women and two drinks for men as recommended by the Dietary Guidelines. A typical 5-oz. glass of wine has 100 calories; a 12 oz. serving of beer, 150 calories; and 1 ½ ounces of distilled spirits, 100 calories.

11. Be Size-Wise with Fast Food

Try one or more of these strategies the next time you visit your favorite fast food restaurant and you easily can save 100 or more calories:

— Skip the mayonnaise when ordering your favorite fast food burger. If you're not very hungry, perhaps a "small," "regular," "junior," or whatever term is used by the restaurant for its smallest burger, may be enough for you.

— Order the smallest size of fries or split them with a friend.

— Instead of fries, consider a side salad with a fat-free or reduced calorie dressing. It's still important to check the calories on the salad dressing.

Many salad dressings come in packets; a reduced calorie dressing still may contain around 100 or more calories per packet. Refer back to tip number 5 – your salad might taste just fine without using the whole packet.

— Order a diet soft drink or plain water. See tips 3 and 4 for more about this.

Most fast food places offer nutrition information, including calories, at their restaurant. Many also provide nutrition information on their company Web site.

At your next opportunity, total the calories you obtain from your favorite fast food meal. For many adults and children (age 2 and older), a calorie range somewhere between 1,600 to 2,200 is sufficient. It's easy to consume one-half or more of your daily caloric needs at one fast food meal, especially if you're supersizing portions!

12. Practice Portion Control with Popcorn

Popping microwave popcorn can be a daily occurrence in many workplaces and homes. It's easy to eat half a bag or more at a sitting. While even TWO cups of the more buttery popcorn may weigh in at 100 calories or less, the entire package might yield 10 or more cups, or possibly over 500 calories! To gauge how many cups of corn you're consuming, one cup is about equal in size to a baseball or to your fist.

Microwave popcorn can be a great snack. If you'd like more than a few cups, experiment with some of the lower-fat versions.

Putting The Power of One Dietary Change Into Practice

Think through the foods you eat on a regular basis. Are there small changes, like those mentioned in this article, you could implement? Perhaps these have given you ideas for other changes that might work for you. To obtain an approximate idea of the calories and nutrients in additional foods, search the USDA National Nutrient Database at or check the Nutrition Facts labels on foods.

Sunflower storage said tight at North Dakota crushing plants

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota's two sunflower processing plants have run out of storage space for the first time in recent memory, but not because of a large crop in the state this year.

Officials say heavy deliveries to the Cargill crushing plant at Fargo and the Archer Daniels Midland plant in Enderlin are largely due to a pileup of small grains and other oilseed crops on farms last fall.

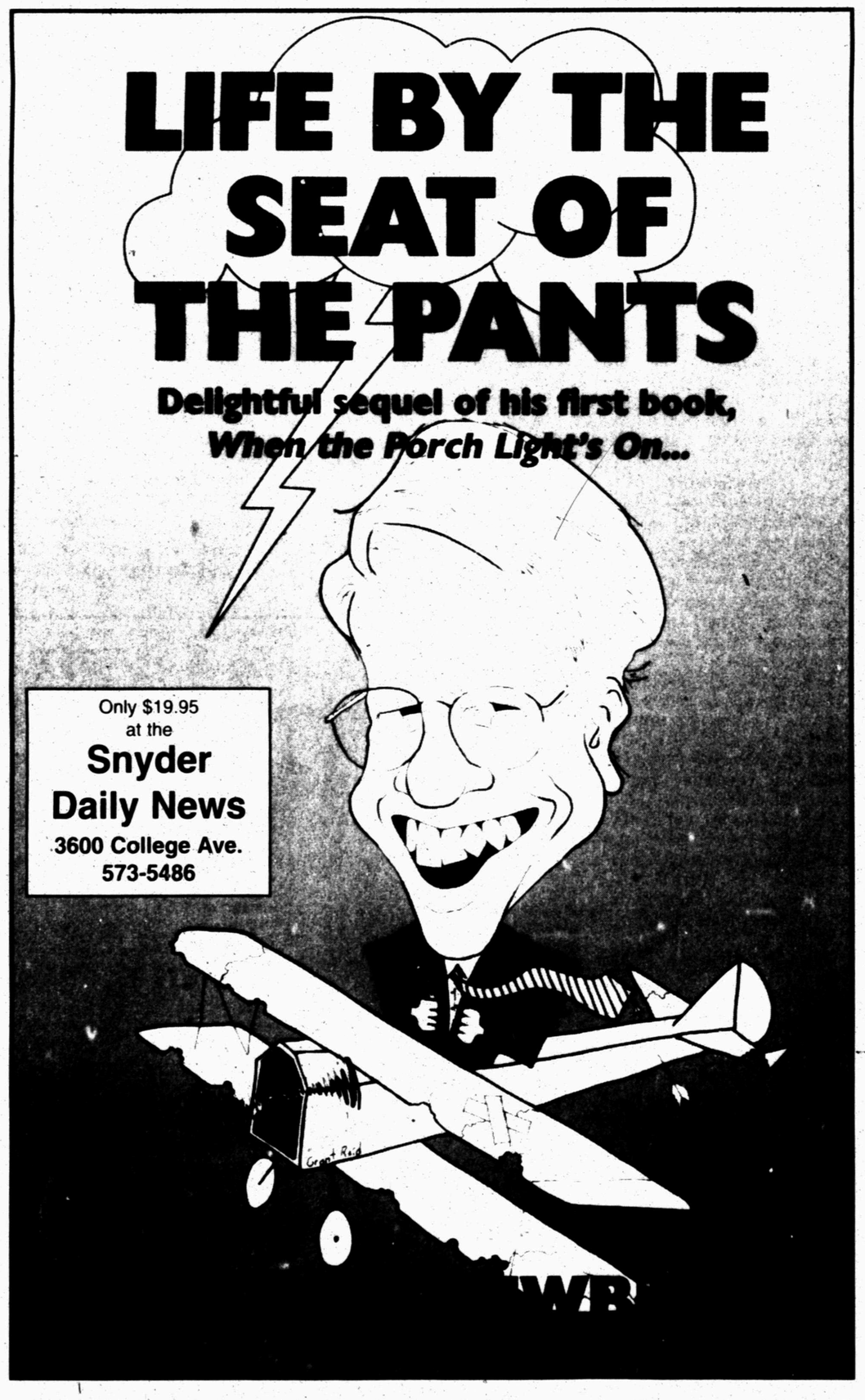
"With the large small grain crop we had, a lot of storage space was taken up early from those crops," said John Sandbakken, international marketing director for the Bismarck-based National Sunflower Association. "When the sunflower crop came in, a lot of people were looking to sell ... and the price was good at harvest."

Roger Watchorn, merchandising manager for the Cargill plant, said the plant has bought more sunflowers this harvest season than it has in several years.

"At this point, we're full. We just can't take any more," he said. "We haven't seen this heavy of deliveries in the last five, six years."

The Enderlin plant is accepting deliveries only from farmers with whom it contracted, Sandbakken said.

Plant officials referred questions to ADM headquarters in Decatur, Ill.



Mad cow scare could spur move to high-tech tracking of livestock

By Brian Bergstein
AP Technology Writer

If there's a bright side to the U.S. mad cow scare, it's that it could speed the nation's move to a centralized system that electronically tracks animals as they move from fields to feed lots to food stores.

Efforts to create a centralized database, which exist in some countries, have been slowed so far by disputes over who would maintain the database and who would bear its cost.

Such a database could let agricultural officials determine within hours where a sick animal came from and where it went — a crucial step in a disease outbreak or a terrorist assault on the food supply.

Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman said Tuesday that the government would speed development of the system, but offered no details.

For now, inspectors often must rely on paper records or a hodgepodge of data maintained by meat producers and breeders. After the recent mad cow discovery in Washington state, officials needed several days to determine where its meat had been sold, and encountered discrepancies in U.S. and Canadian records.

"It's very difficult and probably not possible for them to go to a particular animal and say that animal came from that particular farm," said Leon Thacker, a veterinary pathologist at Purdue University.

Technology stands ready to automate the process.

Radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags on cattle ears can maintain reams of data about an animal's existence, including its breeding, age, weight and medical history. The tags can be automatically read, sending their data directly to a computer database, by sensors placed at feed lots, slaughterhouses and other points along the chain of livestock ownership.

One company, Optibrand Ltd., further tightens the process with retinal scans of cattle to confirm their identity. Optibrand's scans are performed with readers that have global-positioning chips to record the animal's location.

Optibrand, based in Fort Collins, Colo., announced a five-year deal Tuesday to supply its technology to Swift & Co., a leading meat producer. Swift spokesman Jim Herlihy said the company will use the retinal scans in its feedlots and encourage its suppliers to embrace them as well, to make the entire life of livestock more easily traced.

Another approach is offered by Digital Angel Corp., which makes implantable chips that are used to identify lost dogs and cats and also in some cattle herds. Digital Angel, based in South St. Paul, Minn., touts the fact that the chips are unlikely to be lost or damaged.

RFID tags also are considered sturdier and less susceptible to fraud than the plastic, numeric ear tags commonly used now to identify livestock. And because the radio tags or other electronic means can produce detailed information about particular animals, they can help producers of organic or other high-quality beef prove that their meat is worth a higher price.

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2nd Front Page

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

Unprecedented security set for New Year

NEW YORK (AP) — Revelers can expect hovering helicopters and bomb-sniffing dogs with their champagne and confetti as cities hunker down for their most heavily guarded New Year's Eve in memory.

From Times Square to the Las Vegas Strip and California's Rose Parade, police were rolling out unprecedented security measures triggered by a hike in the national terrorism alert to orange, its second-highest level.

In New York, workers sealed manhole covers and removed mailboxes to guard against any potential bomb attack in Times Square. More than 750,000 revelers were expected to gather under the guard of counter-sniper teams and seven police helicopters.

Armed helicopters were also to prowl the Las Vegas Strip, where 300,000 people were anticipated.

"I think the level of security this time around within the United States is absolutely unprecedented," Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge said on CBS's "The Early Show."

New York police were focusing more heavily than last year on hotels, landmarks and ferry terminals as a result of their analysis of anti-American "chatter" culled from the Internet and other sources, police Commissioner Ray Kelly said.

"We think it's prudent for us to do that," he said.

Partygoers headed to New York were warned to expect long delays at bridges and tunnels. Every vehicle on affected routes is subject to a random stop and search, New Jersey officials said. State troopers will be riding the rails to assist transit police on trains going in and out of New York.

Officials nationwide said there were no specific threats to traditional gatherings and urged people to go forward with celebrations.

Still, FBI and other federal agents have been sweeping the Las Vegas area for weapons or threats, said Ellen Knowlton, FBI special agent in charge in Las Vegas.

The Strip has 74,344 hotel rooms and 18 of the nation's 20 largest hotels.

Nearly the entire Las Vegas police force of about 2,000 officers was to be on duty, plus about 600 jail officers. Authorities also were relying on help from about 4,000 hotel security guards.

On Monday, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Transportation Security Administration said airspace over the Strip would be restricted.

Thousands of local officers and federal agents were to fan out through Pasadena, Calif., where revelers gather along the 51/2-mile Rose Parade route and attend the Rose Bowl football game. Video surveillance cameras were to capture images of spectators lining the streets.

Flights over the Rose Bowl were to be limited to police and military aircraft; everyone working in the stadium, from hot dog vendors to television camera crews, was being required to wear photo ID.

Still, terrorism concerns did not dim the enjoyment of visitors Tuesday.

Jobless claims fall to lowest level in a year

WASHINGTON (AP) — New claims for jobless benefits fell last week to the lowest level since President Bush took office in January 2001, a sign that America's businesses are feeling more confident that the economic recovery is genuine.

The Labor Department reported today that new applications filed for unemployment insurance dropped by a seasonally adjusted 15,000 to 339,000 for the week ending Dec. 27. Last week's drop marked the third week in a row that claims went down and left claims at their lowest level since Jan. 20, 2001 — Bush's inauguration day.

The latest snapshot of the labor market suggested that businesses may be feeling less inclined to hand out pink slips to workers as the economy shows signs of gaining traction.

The report was better than economists were expecting. They were forecasting a smaller decline that would have pushed claims down to a level of around 350,000.

Claims have been below 400,000 for 13 consecutive weeks, something economists view as a sign that the fragile labor market may be turning a crucial corner.

The more stable four-week moving average of claims, which smooths out week to week fluctuations, decreased last week by 6,500 to 355,750, the lowest level since Feb. 10, 2001.

New claims hit a high this year of 459,000 in the middle of April and have slowly declined, a development cited by Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan and other economists who say the pace of layoffs is stabilizing.

The labor market has displayed other signs of improvement in recent months. The nation's unemployment rate currently stands at 5.9 percent — down from a high this summer of 6.4 percent.

But job growth has been slow.

Since Bush took office, the economy has lost 2.3 million jobs, a development that Democrats hope to use against the president as he seeks re-election in 2004. The Bush administration contends that stronger economic growth will eventually lead to more meaningful job creation on a sustained basis.

The uncertain job climate is on Americans' minds.

Consumer confidence dipped in December amid anxiety about the job market, the Conference Board reported Tuesday. The board's consumer confidence index slipped to 91.3 in December, following a surge in November to a revised figure of 92.5, its highest level in more than a year.

Economists believe the labor market will be the last part of the economy to recover even as the economy expands solidly.

The economy grew at a breakneck 8.2 percent annual rate in the third quarter, the best performance in nearly two decades. Analysts believe the economy slowed to a rate in the range of around 4 percent or 5 percent in the current quarter, which would still mark a solid showing.

Dem presidential hopefuls nix naming of federal prosecutor

WASHINGTON (AP) — While some Democrats applauded the decision, several presidential hopefuls attacked the appointment of a federal prosecutor to take over the politically sensitive investigation into whether a Bush administration official leaked a CIA operative's name.

Attorney General John Ashcroft removed himself Tuesday from the inquiry into who leaked the name to a newspaper columnist. U.S. Attorney Patrick J. Fitzgerald of Chicago, a career prosecutor, will lead the probe.

Deputy Attorney General James Comey announced that Ashcroft had stepped aside to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest after reviewing evidence recently developed in the inquiry. He would not discuss the evidence.

Democrats have been calling for Ashcroft to step down, but the critics were divided over the decision to keep the investigation in-house with a promise of independence for Fitzgerald.

Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota called the announcement "as welcome as it is overdue."

"For the sake of America's national security, I hope the administration will give the new counsel its full cooperation and the resources needed to quickly get to the bottom of this urgent matter and swiftly bring to justice the person or persons responsible," he said.

Sen. Jay Rockefeller, senior Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee, said Ashcroft made the right decision.

"Our intelligence agents need to know that we understand the sacrifices they make and that we will come to their defense when someone puts them at risk," said Rockefeller, D-W.Va.

But the Democratic presidential contenders made clear that the decision will be a campaign issue.

"The public will not likely trust the results of an investigation headed by a political appointee, especially when the special counsel is constrained by Department of Justice regulations that severely curtail the prosecutor's autonomy," said Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut.

Two-vehicle mishap investigated locally

Accident

An two-vehicle mishap was reported at 7:58 p.m. Tuesday. The mishap involved a 1972 Kenworth 18-wheeler driven by James Eldon Thomas II, 24, of Headley, Tex. and a 1987 Toyota driven by Andrea Diann Clardy, 24, 1914 Coleman, Apt. 1 in Snyder. Clardy was admitted to Cogdell Memorial Hospital for observation.

A caller reported at 7:02 p.m. Tuesday that a woman had been injured at the Tigermart at 3611 College Ave. Roxy Norvell, 2416 Gilmore Ave was pumping gas into her Ford Ranger when the vehicle began to move causing her to be injured. Gilmore was admitted to Cogdell Memorial Hospital for observation.

Arrests

Two subjects were arrested last night.

A 25-year-old man was taken into custody on U.S. 84 near the Snyder city limits at 4:40 p.m. Tuesday for driving while license suspended and automatic license revocation.

Officers arrested a 24-year-old man in the 1300 block of 26th at 4:45 p.m. Tuesday on a warrant from Taylor County for theft of service by check.

Burglary

Officers were contacted at 4:45 p.m. Tuesday to report a burglary at 3120 Ave. T. The homeowner said that a television had been stolen.

A caller reported at 7:43 a.m. Tuesday his vehicle had been broken into at 1408 Ave. K. and a wallet had been taken.

Criminal mischief

Deputies responded to a report at Hwy. 350 and Blockline Road at 8:47 a.m. Tuesday of criminal mischief to a pumpjack.

An alarm was reported at 11:51 p.m. Tuesday at Timely Pawn on College Ave. Officers discovered that the alarm was sounded as a result of criminal mischief.

Obituaries

Ruben Flores

1959-2003

Ruben Flores of Snyder died Monday, Dec. 29, in a Lubbock hospital.

Funeral service for Mr. Flores, 44, is set for 2 p.m. Thursday in the Aspermont First Baptist Church with Ross Dela Santos officiating. Burial will follow in the Aspermont Cemetery.

Born in Stamford, he attended school in Aspermont and married Nikki Ramirez on Oct. 21, 1978.

He was preceded in death by his mother, San Juana Flores on Aug. 21, 1979.

Survivors include his wife, Nikki Flores of Snyder; two daughters, Marta Flores, and Crystal Flores, both of Snyder, and Virginia Gutierrez of Lubbock; his father, Raymond Flores of Peacock; three brothers, Juan Flores of Aspermont, Renaldo Flores of Midland and Felipe Medina of Milwaukee; and two sisters, Rosa Ramirez and Mary Ann Ramirez, both of Midland.

Linda Garza

1970-2003

PATTERSON, Calif. — Linda Bernal Garza, a native of Snyder, died in an automobile accident Saturday, Dec. 27, in Stockton, Calif.

Funeral Mass for Mrs. Garza, 33, will be held at 2:30 p.m. Friday in the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Patterson. Burial will follow in the Patterson District Cemetery.

Born Nov. 27, 1970 in Snyder, she moved to Patterson with her family seven years later. She currently resided in Stockton, Calif.

Survivors include her husband, Jesse Garza of Stockton; two sons, Jesse Jr. and Joey Garza, both of the home; two daughters, Erika and Aliza Garza, both of the home; her mother, Melinda Bernal of Newman, Calif.; two brothers, Lupe Bernal Jr. and Rudy Bernal, both of Newman, Calif.; one sister, Francis Rodriquez of Modesta, Calif.; an aunt, Mary Bernal of Hermleigh; two uncles, Juan Bernal of Sweetwater and Roalio Bernal of Quanah; and numerous cousins.

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Today's Weather

Local 3-Day Forecast

Thu 1/1	Fri 1/2	Sat 1/3
70/47	71/41	67/29
A few showers early with mostly cloudy conditions later in the day.	Windy with plenty of sun. Highs in the low 70s and lows in the low 40s.	Abundant sunshine. Highs in the upper 60s and lows in the upper 20s.
Sunrise 7:46 AM Sunset 5:49 PM	Sunrise 7:46 AM Sunset 5:49 PM	Sunrise 7:46 AM Sunset 5:50 PM

–Come Rain or Shine–
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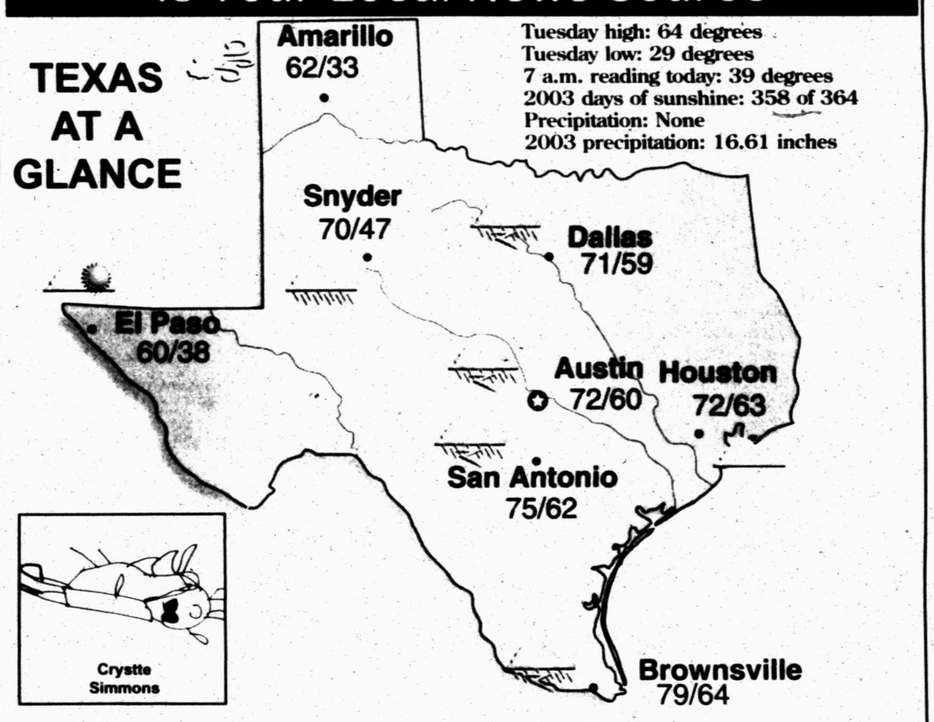

Tuesday high: 64 degrees
Tuesday low: 29 degrees
7 a.m. reading today: 39 degrees
2003 days of sunshine: 358 of 364
Precipitation: None
2003 precipitation: 16.61 inches

Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	72	53	rain	El Paso	60	38	pt sunny	Midland	71	45	pt sunny
Amarillo	62	33	windy	Fort Stockton	79	47	pt sunny	Raymondville	79	61	rain
Austin	72	60	t-storm	Gainesville	68	54	t-storm	Rosenberg	72	63	t-storm
Beaumont	71	62	cloudy	Greenville	68	58	t-storm	San Antonio	75	62	t-storm
Brownsville	79	64	t-storm	Houston	72	63	cloudy	San Marcos	73	60	t-storm
Brownwood	70	57	t-storm	Kingsville	79	62	rain	Sulphur Springs	68	59	t-storm
Corpus Christi	77	63	rain	Livingston	70	59	t-storm	Sweetwater	72	51	rain
Corsicana	67	61	t-storm	Longview	70	60	t-storm	Tyler	66	60	t-storm
Dallas	71	59	t-storm	Lubbock	69	41	windy	Weatherford	70	54	t-storm
Del Rio	78	57	rain	Lufkin	70	61	t-storm	Wichita Falls	70	48	rain

National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	64	41	sunny	Houston	72	63	cloudy	Phoenix	65	47	pt sunny
Boston	47	28	sunny	Los Angeles	64	49	pt sunny	San Francisco	54	45	rain
Chicago	44	42	rain	Miami	78	67	pt sunny	Seattle	38	30	mixed
Dallas	71	59	t-storm	Minneapolis	36	24	cloudy	St. Louis	59	50	rain
Denver	50	32	pt sunny	New York	50	34	sunny	Washington, DC	55	37	mst sunny

Moon Phases

First	New	First	Full
Dec 30	Jan 21	Jan 29	Feb 6

UV Index

Thu 1/1	Fri 1/2	Sat 1/3
3 Low	3 Low	3 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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DEC 31 2003

Best Available Copy

Dear Abby

By Abigail Van Buren

On line bargain hunter pays premium for painful scam

DEAR ABBY: The price of the laptop computer I purchased on the Internet seemed too good to be true. That should have been my first clue. However, the seller seemed pleasant, had an excellent rating and great reviews.

Via e-mail, he said he was a reseller of computers and he had an excess of this model. According to him, the money would be safe in escrow through Western Union and he was affiliated with Safe Trading, a well-known online security company. I had 10 days to return the computer and get my money back if I wasn't completely satisfied. Otherwise, after 10 days, he would collect his money from escrow.

He was selling from Spain, but only once did I question him about possible problems. What an expert he was at saying the things I wanted to hear about his online accolades and e-mail references. I even apologized for implying that he might be capable of wrongdoing.

Well, my money is gone. The escrow and good reviews were fake. The issue is "being investigated."

Recovery will be difficult or impossible because the $1,000 was wired from my bank by me. This scammer was an expert, and I trusted him. — **SADDER BUT WISER**

DEAR WISER: This may seem pessimistic, but if it seems too good to be true, it probably IS too good to be true. I'm printing your warning so others will not be so easily taken advantage of. Caveat emptor — let the buyer beware.

**

DEAR ABBY: I recently moved to America from Germany because of a four-year, long-distance relationship with my now live-in boyfriend, "Warren."

Things were great when we lived apart. We'd spend months together when I had time off from the university.

Now that I live in his homeland, he spends most of his money gambling on the horses. It has reached the point that he can't afford to pay rent because of his gambling.

I am looking for work. He is gone all night at the races or betting online. It is starting to ruin our relationship. I realize now I came here for a stranger. I have threatened to go back to Germany if he does not change. I told Warren it was the horses or me. Was I wrong to issue an ultimatum? — **ME OR THE HORSES**

DEAR ME OR THE HORSES: You were right to draw the line. The "rush" some people get from gambling is the same as the rush addicts get from drugs — and it can be just as addictive. If Warren is unwilling to get help for his gambling addiction, your wisest move would be to cut your losses, tell him auf Wiedersehen and return home.

**

DEAR ABBY: I am a 25-year-old professional who works at an upscale retail company. I am very soft-spoken.

When people talk to me on the phone, they often address me as "sweetie" or "honey." It is incredibly demeaning.

How can I politely get co-workers and clients to treat me like an adult and not call me little-girl names? — **FED UP WITH SOUNDING YOUNG**

DEAR FED UP: Rather than trying to correct them, consider consulting a speech therapist. Lowering the register of your telephone voice and speaking in a more authoritative tone should solve your problem.

**

CONFIDENTIAL TO MY READERS: A word to the wise. If you plan to toast the New Year tonight, please appoint a designated driver. And on this night especially, designated drivers should remember to drive defensively. To one and all — a happy, healthy New Year.

**

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

**

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS, and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

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Guard troops will get turn to serve in Iraq

EDINBURGH, Ind. (AP) — There were tears and hugs and so much sobbing among Spc. Marcus Welch's family that he said it was "like I was dead."

But this was no funeral — just the going-away ceremony for the National Guard's 512th Engineer Battalion, which will be among the first units to leave in the next wave of troops heading for Iraq.

From January to May, the roughly 123,000 U.S. troops in Iraq will be replaced with about 110,000 new fighters, many from Guard units such as the 512th.

"This is unexpected. I had my life planned, but I'm ready to do what I've got to do," said Welch, 24, a clothing designer, as he underwent training at Camp Atterbury, about 30 miles south of Indianapolis.

The 512th, a headquarters unit of the Ohio Army National Guard that oversees construction projects, has been through such preparation before. Their bags were packed in February to go to Turkey for the planned invasion of northern Iraq.

Then Turkey decided not to allow American troops on its soil, so the unit unpacked. Then the call came again.

The 512th, based in Cincinnati, came together for a farewell ceremony. Soon after, they left for Camp Atterbury for vaccines, weapons training and cultural lessons.

Welch wishes they could have departed on a different note.

"I don't want my last memory to be of everybody crying," he said.

Sgt. B.J. Hubbard, 33, was pregnant in February with her fifth child and not eligible to deploy. This time she's packed too. Her infant daughter, Avi, is just 4 months old.

In black marker on a pair of blue pajamas, she's printed the name of her husband and five children. Across the top she wrote "J.I.L.O.A" — Jesus is Lord of all.

"At night, I can still have my family near me," she said.

The pants are signed in black marker by the kids, ages 4 months to 16. One message says, "Mommy, can I have a dog?" Another says, "I love my Mommy."

Hubbard's husband is in the Naval Reserves. Some members of his unit were activated, but because of Hubbard's deployment, her husband did not have to go overseas — at least for now.

Her 16-year-old daughter is envious and wants to go to Iraq. She says she'll join the military when she turns 17. The 5-year-old is confused, Hubbard said.

"I told her there was a bad man named Saddam Hussein, and I needed to go over and make sure he don't hurt any more kids," Hubbard said.

When the 5-year-old heard Saddam was captured, she wanted to know if Hubbard was still leaving.

Hubbard told her, "We still have to make sure the mommies and babies are OK."

For Spc. Charissa Hayden, 2003 was a year of goodbyes. Her family threw her a going-away party. Then she said goodbye in February to her boyfriend, Spc. Mark Richard, a 101st Airborne Division soldier who left to fight in Iraq.

But her deployment was canceled when Turkey refused to let in U.S. troops. She continued attending classes at the University of Cincinnati, and worried about Richard.

Now, she'll be in Iraq — and he'll be home.

"It wasn't good timing at all," said Hayden, 20. "This is definitely not something I would've expected."

Richard was able to talk his commander into letting him come home for two weeks. During their four days together, the couple shied away from talking about what he had seen. The 101st has lost 57 soldiers in Iraq — more than any other division.

Hayden said this wasn't what she'd bargained for when she joined the Guard to pay for school. "I signed up before Sept. 11. Everything was so peaceful. I thought I'd be cleaning up after floods or something."

Lt. Col. Mike Ernst's daughter, Crystal Zizzo, was so distraught her dad was going to miss her spring wedding in Arizona, she wrote a letter to President Bush asking him to delay Ernst's deployment. She received a form letter back.

Dr. Gott

By Peter Gott, M.D.

Doctors are like auto mechanics

DEAR DR. GOTT: As a retired mechanic, I don't understand why the knee joint can't be resurfaced and reconditioned. A complete prosthetic replacement seems too radical to me. Why can't space-age materials be brought into play?

DEAR READER: Actually, they are. Resurfacing and reconditioning operations are now commonplace. Arthroscopic procedures have been refined as "Band-Aid" surgery. Knee cartilage can be repaired without the necessity of a joint replacement.

You raise an interesting point. Although I've written many times before about the similarities between doctors and automobile mechanics, we're still decades behind you guys. For a malfunctioning car computer, you can slip in a new one. Hoses and belts are easily replaced. Tires can be changed. Bodywork is kid stuff.

In short, you can repair or replace any automotive component, leaving a satisfied customer with a functioning vehicle.

We can't.

Sure, we can put in a pacemaker, transplant a kidney, check the oil (cholesterol), monitor coolant pressure (hypertension), smooth out a few rough spots on the old hood (plastic surgery), but we aren't able to keep the heap running indefinitely.

I envy you. As I get older, I'd certainly like to have my brain cleaned, my joints reconditioned, my heart and lungs rebuilt — I won't bore you with the other stuff. As a retiree, you know what I mean. Thanks for writing.

DEAR DR. GOTT: My sister recently ruptured a brain aneurysm. Is she likely to have another one? Am I at risk as a family member?

DEAR READER: Aneurysms (weakened portions of arterial walls) can occur anywhere in the body, most commonly in the abdomen and the brain.

As time passes, an aneurysm usually enlarges. Eventually, blood may leak through the arterial wall — or the aneurysm can rupture. When this occurs in the brain, it causes a hemorrhagic stroke that is serious and may lead to profound disability, even death.

No one knows why some people develop aneurysms and others do not. The tendency may be inherited. Uncontrolled high blood pressure, also, is often associated with aneurysms. If a hypertensive patient suffers a hemorrhagic stroke, doctors must aggressively treat the hypertension with drugs to avoid a similar future event.

Also, some non-hypertensive people appear to have a tendency to form aneurysms; this places them at added risk.

Once an aneurysm has ruptured, doctors routinely perform certain tests — such as Magnetic Resonance Angiography (MRA) scanning — to see if other aneurysms are present. If your sister had this testing, she would know if she is at risk for another stroke. Otherwise, a recurrent hemorrhage is impossible to predict.

I do not believe that you and other family members are necessarily at risk.

The important consideration is that your sister have physical therapy (to help her return to normal) and treatment for any predisposing condition, such as the hypertension I mentioned.

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

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

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