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THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

WEEKEND

Jan. 3-4, 2004
Vol. 55 No. 213
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Home of Billy Evans

Filing period ends...

Precinct 3 commissioner race develops

Both present Scurry County Commissioners whose terms expire this year have drawn opponents for the November general election.

Incumbent Precinct 1 commissioner Ralph Trevey, a Democrat, is being challenged by Republican Terry Williams, and as the filing period ended Friday, a race developed in Precinct 3.

Susie White, medical records receptionist at Cogdell Memorial Hospital, filed for the Democratic nominee for Precinct 3 commissioner and will challenge incumbent Howard Limmer in November.

Limmer filed earlier for re-election with the Republican Party.

White, 52, is making her first run at public office.

She is a native of Scurry County and has lived in Ira for all but three years of her life. She graduated from Ira High School in 1969 and from Southwest Business College as a court reporter. She also has taken several courses from Western Texas College.



Susie White

She also was the office manager for Wagon Wheel Guest Ranch for some six years.

She and her husband, Doug, have two children. Rodney White lives in Amarillo while Ronal White resides in Saginaw.

"I am very excited about being a candidate for Scurry County Precinct 3 commissioner," said White. "I have been a part of Scurry County my whole life and with my past experiences of working in many different areas of the county, I feel I am qualified to work for the people."

In all, three persons filed the last week of the filing period that began in December.

Two filings occurred Monday when two deputy clerks in the courthouse announced that they would seek to replace Diana Williamson as county tax-assessor collector. Mrs. Williamson did not seek re-election after one term in office.

Magali Bernal, a chief deputy county clerk, and Jana Young, a deputy in the tax office, each filed Monday afternoon as candidates on the Republican ballot.

Incumbents filing and not drawing opponents on the Republican primary ballot are District Judge Ernie Armstrong, District Attorney Dana Cooley and County Attorney Mike Hartman.

Sheriff Darren Jackson, a Democrat, also did not draw an opponent.

2004 Candidates

Precinct 1 Commissioner
- Ralph Trevey (I)(D)
- Terry Williams (R)

Precinct 3 Commissioner
- Howard Limmer (I) (R)
- Susie White (D)

Tax assessor-collector
- Megali Bernal (R)
- Jana Young (R)

District Judge
- Ernie Armstrong (I) (R)

District Attorney
- Dana Cooley (I) (R)

County Attorney
- Mike Hartman (I) (R)

Sheriff
- Darren Jackson (I) (D)

Persons may register to vote in the county clerk's office during normal business hours.

Wintertime activity???



JUST LIKE SUMMER—Hermelando Aguirre and Juan Ruiz enjoy the summer-like temperatures as they toss a basketball in 76 degree weather. (SDN Staff Photo)

Holidays ending

Winter vacation time is wonderful, but it doesn't last forever.

The Scurry County Courthouse will re-open Monday with regular business hours.

The Scurry County Library also will re-open Monday at its regularly scheduled time.

Ira and Hermleigh schools begin classes on Monday.

Snyder ISD students will report to class on Tuesday but teachers and staff will have a work day on Monday.

Students at Western Texas College will enjoy their leisure time for an additional week.

The 2004 spring semester will begin on Jan. 12 when evening classes are scheduled to meet.

Students enrolled in day classes will report on Jan. 13 for the spring semester.

THE SDN COLUMN

By Roy McQueen

The feller on Deep Creek says, "Best-seller lists are misleading. Those are the books sold, but not necessarily books read."

Now that the holiday season is history, the tube is filled with commercials about fitness — stuff like diet food, diet supplements, diet pills and yuk, exercise.

We have a newspaper friend who has given up on losing weight, and he sent us the following ways to make your bathroom scales fib.

—Weigh yourself with your clothes on, after dinner. Then weigh in the morning without clothes and before breakfast. It will make you feel good about the weight you've shed overnight.

—Never step on the scales with wet hair.

—When weighing, remove everything — including glasses. In this case, blurred vision is an asset.

—Use cheap scales only, never the medical kind. Professional scales are always at least five pounds heavier.

—Always go to the bathroom first. Trim your nails, if possible.

—Stand with arms raised, making pressure on the scale lighter.

—Don't eat or drink in the morning until after you've weighed in, completely naked of course.

—Weigh yourself after a haircut. For some it could be good for at least a pound less. For others, hair may not be a factor.

—Exhale with all your might before stepping onto the scale. Surely air weighs something.

—Start out with just one foot on the scale, then holding onto the towel rack, slowly edge your foot and slowly let off the rack. This will take time, but well worth it. You are guaranteed to weigh less — and you can count it as exercise

Left over story from Christmas:

Two grandsons were visiting over the holidays and were saying their prayers at bedtime.

The younger kid started loudly, shouting his prayers, "God, have Santa bring me a Nintendo and a new bike."

The older one wanted to know why his kid brother was yelling. "Neither God or Santa is deaf."

"No," agreed the youngster, "but Grandpa almost is."

Cogdell Hospital's OB ward stays busy

By Annie Rowe
SDN Staff Writer

There were many notable events that happened in Scurry County in 2003 with some being obvious and some not so obvious.

With all the work with Kinder Morgan at SACROC, the community enjoyed a mini-boom in the oilfield.

Cogdell Memorial Hospital had its troubles, but it also was the site of a baby boom as 2003 saw the largest number of babies born at the facility in the last five years.

"I'm not sure why this is happening," said Dr. Robert Rakov, M.D., a family practitioner with Covenant Family Healthcare Center. "It really bucks a trend."

Rakov, who came to Snyder in 1998 from Seattle, Wash., delivered 90 of the 150 babies. He is pleased to see the trend of mothers giving birth locally as opposed to going to Lubbock to have their babies.

"The availability of modern birthing methods for mothers is one of the things that is given a lot of consideration. One of the things I can attribute it to is the availability of the epidural for childbirth to minimize the pain," said Dr. Rakov.

The epidural injection is a method to relieve pain by injecting medication into the spinal canal.

Until a few years ago, the availability of the epidural injection was limited in Snyder. Therefore, many expectant mothers traveled elsewhere to give birth and have use of the epidural method for their labor.

"Deliveries have increased every year," said Rakov. "When I came here in 1998, we had a 20 percent epidural rate. That was below the national average. Most expectant mothers were going to Lubbock. We're now up to a 63 percent epidural rate."

Rakov also believes the steady incline can be credited to mothers in Scurry County learning that the procedure is available.

"I think the word is getting out that the epidural method is an excellent method. There are some old misconceptions that are no longer true. There is nothing detrimental to the outcome except that it takes the pain away," said Dr. Rakov.

Cogdell Memorial Hospital began a remodeling project in the late 90s that included the OB ward. The appearance of the labor and delivery area, along with the birthing rooms has made the facility much more inviting.

"We remodeled the obstetric ward in 1997," said Cheryl Chance, director of nurses and acting hospital administrator. "Since that time, the OB ward and the nursery is much more family-friendly. We have a wonderful staff working in there."

Chance also believes that families are comfortable with the opportunity to visit those that they are close to such as relatives and friends.

"I think that having a baby locally as opposed to going to another town is so much better for the families. They can have relatives stop by and more of their friends can come and see the new baby," said Chance.

The final opinion of the hospital and the maternity ward lies with the families who utilize it.

Olivia and Chase Nobles of Snyder are the parents of the 150th baby of 2003. Taryn Taylar Rhealyn Nobles was born Dec. 31. Along with being proud of their new addition, they are pleased with the care they received while staying at Cogdell.

"We are very happy with the decision to have the baby here in Snyder. They have taken great care of us and we really appreciate it. Another reason for choosing to have the baby here was definitely Dr. Rakov. He is a wonderful doctor," said Chase Nobles.

If Mother Nature's trend continues, Cogdell Memorial Hospital will be ready for the babies' arrival.

"I don't think it will slow down," said Rakov. "I have learned that if we have an ice storm, there will be a lot more babies born nine months later, so keep an eye on the weather."



ONE OF MANY — Chase and Olivia Nobles and Natalye Nobles are the proud parents and sister of Taryn Taylar Rhealyn Nobles, the 150th baby born at Cogdell Memorial Hospital last year. (SDN Staff Photo)

ASK US

Q—Was Friday's 76 degrees a record high for January?

A—No, the record high of 86 degrees was recorded in 1943.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



Verna Foree...

...has lived in Snyder her entire life, except for a time when her husband, the late Earl Foree, worked in the oil business. She has two children, daughter Jane Goode of Pampa and son Charles Foree of Lexington, Ky. Verna enjoys working as a volunteer for various organizations and playing bridge.

TODAY'S THOUGHT

Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain, and most fools do.

—Dale Carnegie

JAN 04 2004

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events

WHAT'S UP?

ONGOINGS

Grand jury

The Scurry County grand jury is expected to consider at least 10 felony cases when it convenes at 9 a.m. Monday in 132nd District Court.

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?"

VFW Ladies Auxiliary to meet

VFW Ladies Auxiliary Post 8231 will meet at 7 p.m. Monday at the post home.

Lions meet Tuesday

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

Project Linus

Blankets and quilts are being accepted by Project Linus with the blankets to be given to children in crisis. Anyone interested in becoming a blanketeer can meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday at First Christian Church. Blanket and quilt construction will be discussed and all items made will be donated on Blanket Day, Feb. 1. For additional information, call Marsha Cribbs at 573-7117.

Hermleigh boosters

Hermleigh boosters club will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday in the school gym.

Drama booster club meeting

The SHS drama booster club will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the foyer of Worsham Auditorium.

Stanfield Parent Council

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

Scurry Masonic Lodge

Scurry Masonic Lodge #706 will meet at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at Scurry County Masonic Hall.

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. Thursday.

Snyder Chapter Council

Snyder Chapter Council will meet at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 12, at Scurry Masonic Hall.

SHS band boosters

Snyder High School band boosters will meet at 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 12, at the band hall.

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

Windbreak trees

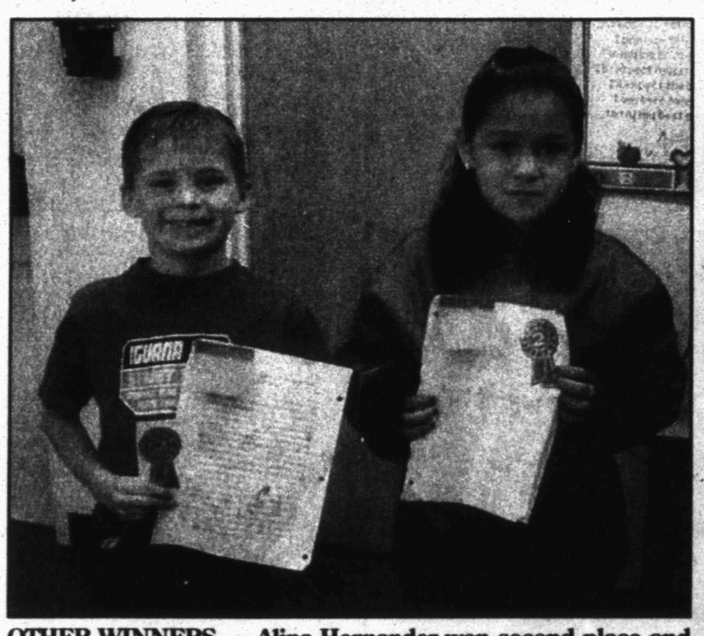
The Upper Colorado Soil and Water Conversation District is taking orders through Jan. 31 for windbreak trees. Large trees available are Oaks, Pines, Desert Willows, Golden Raintree, Texas Redbud and Chinese Pistache and more. To place orders, call 573-6317.

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.



FIRST PLACE — Jordan Gainer and Ashley Martinez give Andee Leal, the first place award and $5 for writing the best story in the writing contest. The name of her story was "If I were a Pilgrim." All attend Stanfield Elementary. (Contributed Photo)



OTHER WINNERS — Alina Hernandez won second place and Ryan Houghton third place in Stanfield's story writing contest. (Contributed Photo)

Johnson wins subscription

William Johnson of 308 20th Street is the winner of a free year's subscription to the Snyder Daily News.

Each month a drawing is held from the names of those who have subscribed or renewed for six months or more.

Brady Reed on college honor roll

Brady Reed, who attends Paris Junior College in Paris, has been named to the Dean's Honor Roll for the fall 2003 semester.

To qualify he had to earn at least a 3.5 grade point average on 15 or more college credit hours with no grade lower than C. Reed took 17 hours.

He is the son of Mel and Sheryll Reed and the brother of Wendy Reed.

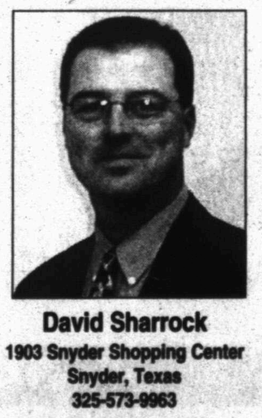
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The state flower of Colorado is the Rocky Mountain columbine.

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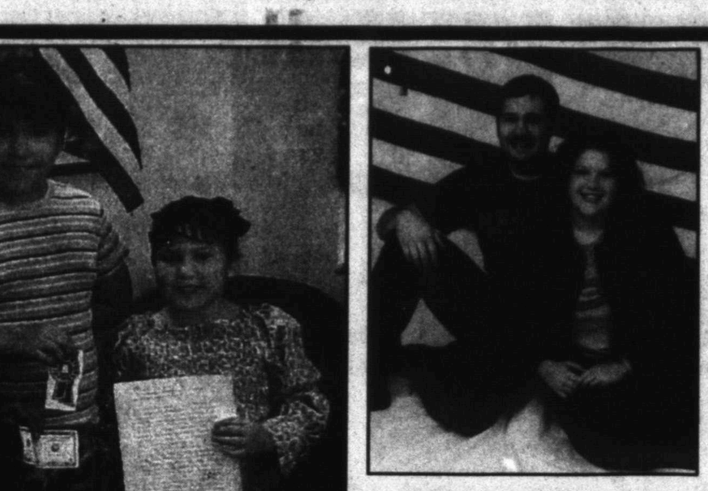


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William Kaleb Herrley and Renae Michelle Hall

Three earn degrees at Texas A&M

Three Snyder residents received degrees in December.

William Kaleb Herrley earned a bachelor of business administration in marketing from Texas A&M University Corpus Christi.

Renae Michelle Hall earned a bachelor of business administration in accounting from the same university. Renae graduated magna cum laude and plans to begin working on her master's degree.

Todd Thomas Hall received a bachelor of arts in history with a minor in Hispanic studies from Texas A&M University. He was a member of the A&M Corps of Cadets and performed in the school band.

Hall is presently interning as a youth pastor in The Woodlands. He also plans to attend a seminary.

Herrley is the son of Keith and Karen Herrley of Snyder. Grandparents are Dillard Herrley, Bobbye Greene and Jack Greene, all of Snyder; and the late Johnie Herrley.

Parents of Todd and Renae Hall are Troy and Amy Hall of Snyder. Grandparents are Neilda Word of Snyder; C.M. Word of Colorado City and the late Preston and Helen Hall.



Todd Thomas Hall



2003 GRADUATE — Alice Sifuentes graduated from Angelo State University in San Angelo with a bachelor of arts degree in education. She is the daughter of Juan and Rosa Sifuentes of Snyder. (Contributed Photo)



Bernice Ornelas

Ornelas earns recognition

Bernice Ornelas of Snyder has been awarded a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) in recognition of outstanding work with young children. The credential was awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition in Washington D.C. which represents the early childhood profession.

Bernice has been a teacher with the infants at Scurry Community Services since May 2002. She has two children, Josie Brooke, 2, and Madison, two months.

She is the daughter of Esther Quintana of Snyder and the late Ramon Ornelas. She is pursuing her associate degree in early childhood education at Western Texas College.

As part of the CDA assessment process, every candidate must complete 120 hours of professional training and be observed working with young children and their families by an early childhood professional.



Megan Fletcher

Megan Fletcher in Who's Who

Megan Fletcher, a senior at Snyder High School, is being recognized in *Who's Who Among American High School Students*.

She maintains a 3.7 GPA at SHS and is active in Student Council, National Honor Society and softball.

Fletcher is the daughter of Curtis and K'Ann Fletcher.

Grandparents are Don and Amelia Ray of Snyder; Peggy and Lee Williams of Trinity; and Bill and Sharon Fletcher of Electra.

Skateboarder joins milk advertisements

BRIDGEWATER, Conn. (AP) — Sixteen-year-old Tony Wimperis has joined the ranks of famous actors, singers and athletes who have donned a signature milk mustache.

A "Got Milk?" ad featuring the Bridgewater skateboarder hit the newsstands in the February issue of TransWorld Skateboarding magazine.

Wimperis is the third boarder to be featured in a "Got Milk?" campaign. Pros Tony Hawk and Bob Burnquist are the other two.

During the photo shoot, Wimperis said he got his mustache "touched up," about 150 times as photographers snapped pictures until they got the perfect shot.

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RESULTS

Friday's Lottery Numbers

Mega Millions

ATLANTA (AP) — The jackpot in the multistate Mega Millions lottery drawing grew to $12 million Saturday.

None of the tickets sold for Friday's $10 million drawing matched all five lotto numbers and the Mega Ball. The next drawing will be Tuesday.

Three players matched all five numbers but not the Mega Ball number. They will receive second prizes of $175,000 each.

The winning numbers from Friday night's drawing were: 7, 8, 36, 44 and 48. The Mega Ball number was 9.

Texas Two Step

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

Winning numbers drawn: 9-10-17-26 (numerical order). Bonus Ball: 34.

Number matching four of four, plus Bonus Ball: 0. Prize: $375,000 (estimate).

Number matching four of four: 9. Prize: $1,464.

Number matching three of four, plus Bonus Ball: 28. Prize: $58.

Number matching three of four: 1,241. Prize: $17.

Number matching two of four, plus Bonus Ball: 706. Prize: $20.

Number matching one of four, plus Bonus Ball: 4,198. Prize: $7.

Number matching Bonus Ball alone: 7,215. Prize: $5.

Estimated jackpot for Tuesday night drawing: $475,000.

Cash Five

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

Winning numbers drawn: 6-19-13-7-27.

Number matching five of five: 1.

Prize per winner: $44,023.

Winning tickets sold in: Weslaco.

Matching four of five: 191. Prize: $104.

Matching three of five: 5,416. Prize: $9.

Matching two of five: 51,404. Prize: $2.

Next Cash 5 drawing: Saturday night.

Pick 3
(Day) 3-9-6
(Night) 7-0-6

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Remains may belong to missing girl

FORT WORTH (AP) — The Tarrant County medical examiner on Friday said he suspects that skeletal remains found in rugged terrain are those of a 6-year-old girl abducted near her grandparents' home nearly five years ago.

Along with part of a skull and bone fragments, authorities found a pair of pink Barbie tennis shoes similar to those Opal Jo Jennings was wearing when she disappeared, said Dr. Nizam Peerwani.

"We are absolutely not sure these are Opal Jennings' (remains). We suspect they are," Peerwani said.

Positive identification will be made through DNA testing at an Illinois lab, Peerwani said. Results may take up to six weeks.

Medical examiners determined that the child was between ages 5 and 7. They could not determine the gender, but the size 13 shoes and other items found nearby led them to believe it is Opal.

The bone fragments' weathered condition indicates the child could have died in 1999, Peerwani said. Enough remains have not been found to determine a cause of death. Nor were the child's teeth found, which would help in identification, Peerwani said.

A search for additional bones was to continue Friday and Saturday. The spot is less than 10 miles from where Opal was playing with other children when she was abducted from the vacant lot beside her grandparents' home in Saginaw, northwest of Fort Worth.

"I just want it to be over with. I just want to bury her," her mother, Leola Sanderford, said Friday afternoon, bursting into tears.

The family only had a glimmer of hope that Opal would be found alive.

"We pretty much felt that she was gone ... but it's never going to be closure," said Clay Sanderford, Opal's great-uncle. "I don't understand that word. I can call it acceptance."

Richard Lee Franks of Fort Worth was convicted of aggravated kidnapping in 2000, three months after his first trial ended with a hung jury. Franks, who was not charged with murder, was sentenced to life in prison — the maximum penalty — because he had a 1991 conviction of indecency with a child in nearby Wise County.

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Texas Rep. Ralph Hall switches to GOP

AUSTIN (AP) — After nearly a quarter-century as one of the most conservative Democrats in Congress, Texas Rep. Ralph Hall switched parties to become a Republican and said he expects support from the White House.

"I've known (President Bush) since he was a young boy. He's a Godly man. He's a Texan and he was the governor and he's our friend," Hall told The Associated Press Friday.

Bush praised Hall's decision, welcoming him to the Republican Party.

"Ralph is a close friend of the Bush family. He is a well-respected leader of the highest integrity, and a tireless advocate for the people of Texas," Bush said.

Hall, 80, made the move Friday, the final day for candidates to file to get their names on the ballot for Texas' March 9 primary.

Hall's switch follows a GOP-led drive — bitterly contested by Democrats — to remake Texas' congressional districts more to their liking. Party strategists contend they can gain five or more seats through a mid-decade redistricting, a change that could greatly strengthen their grip on power in the House.

Democrats and some minority groups objected to the plan, saying it violates minority rights, and challenged it in court. A three-judge federal panel was evaluating the districts and expected to rule soon.

Before Hall's move, the House had 228 Republicans, 205 Democrats, 1 Democrat-leaning independent and 1 vacancy.

Hall said he would have resigned if the old redistricting map had been overturned, but when no ruling came from the court, he decided to run as a Republican.

"I think I can get re-elected much easier if I run as a Republican," Hall said.

He told The Associated Press that he's always said that if being a Democrat hurt his district, he would switch or resign. He said GOP leaders had recently refused to place money for his district in a spending bill and "the only reason I was given was I was a Democrat."

He also said he did not agree with "all these guys running against the president."

House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, R-Texas, said Democrats are "reaping what they've sown."

"Their leaders have lined up behind Howard Dean's brand of angry, intolerant politics. They've made their message clear: 'moderates need not apply' and that's a sad trend for a once-great party," DeLay said.

Rep. Martin Frost, Texas' most senior Democrat, declined comment late Friday. Texas Democratic Party Chairman Charles Soechting said he was disappointed but would wait to hear from Hall before commenting further.

Hall was first elected to the House in 1980 and has long been one of the most conservative Democrats in Congress. Speculation that he might switch parties first surfaced in 1995, when the GOP gained control of the House for the first time in 40 years.

He said then he wouldn't, arguing that it would be better to try and move the Democratic party toward the middle.

Hall's defection has historic overtones. His district in Texas includes territory once represented in Congress by the late Sam Rayburn, who served as a Democratic speaker for much of the time between 1940 and 1961.

Third Washington herd quarantined

Some cattle linked to mad cow to be killed

YAKIMA, Wash. (AP) — A third farm has been quarantined after authorities located a cow from the same Canadian herd as the sick Holstein, and — with dozens of cattle from the herd still missing — more farms may be isolated in the days to come.

At least some cows quarantined since the discovery last month of a Holstein with mad cow disease will be destroyed, either because of possible exposure to the infection or to quell public fear, Dr. Ron DeHaven, the Agriculture Department's chief veterinarian, said Friday.

"It would be safe to assume that ... some or all those animals will need to be sacrificed," DeHaven said of the quarantined cattle. A decision on the first cows to be killed will be made soon, he said.

Results of DNA testing that should determine conclusively whether the original sick cow was born in Alberta, Canada, in April 1997 are expected next week, DeHaven said.

The herd put under quarantine in the last day or two is at a dairy farm in Mattawa, near Yakima, where investigators traced one of 80 cows that entered the United States with the diseased Holstein in late 2001.

Another nine cows and a calf born last month to the sick cow are on the Mabton, Wash., dairy farm that was the Holstein's final home. Another calf is on a farm at Sunnyside, Wash., also near Yakima, that raises bull calves.

Mike Louisell, spokesman for the state Department of Agriculture, said the number of farms to be quarantined in Washington could grow as the search for other cattle from the Canadian herd continues.

However, many people in the cattle industry appeared unfazed.

"They're not going to quarantine everybody," said John Top, co-owner of the Toppenish Livestock Commission about 25 miles southeast of Yakima. "They're going to sit tight on a few farms as they trace these cows, but I would expect by the end of next week they'll know where all those cows are."

"We don't know where that investigation is going to end up or how many dairies, whether it's one more or five more or ten," said Patti Brumbach, executive director of the Washington State Beef Commission. "I have confidence that consumers will continue to look at this rationally and that this is a continuation of the investigation."

The search for the rest of the herd's cattle is still in the early stages and it is too soon to say if more quarantines will be warranted, Agriculture Department spokeswoman Julie Quick said.

The quarantined farms officially have been placed on hold by the state, which means animals can't leave or arrive at the farms. The dairy farms can continue to operate, selling milk, which is not considered at risk of transmitting the disease.

Investigators are trying to find cows from the same herd because the most likely source of infection was contaminated feed that the Holstein ate as a calf, DeHaven said. She was born before August 1997, when cow parts were prohibited from cattle feed in the United States and Canada.

Both countries limited the contents of feed to reduce the chances of infecting cattle through the food chain.

American officials have stressed that the diseased cow's age and the date of the feed ban suggest the infection occurred in Canada. This idea, if proven, would underline the effectiveness of the ban and, what is more important, would allow U.S. authorities to place the root of the problem north of the border, in Canada.

SOS Cuerta purchases American Rice, Houston-based company

HOUSTON (AP) — The world's largest producer of olive oil has purchased Houston-based American Rice, one of the nation's largest rice millers and marketers of branded rice, in a $41-million deal.

SOS Cuerta, a leading marketer of branded biscuits, rice and edible oils in Spain and Portugal bought the company.

The merger was completed Wednesday when more than the required number of shares, 75 percent, were voted in favor of the merger at a meeting in New York. The price per share of American Rice stock is $8.31 in cash, plus possible added amounts.

American Rice's Adolphus brand has been on Houston store shelves since 1938. It is the No. 1 seller in Houston, said C. Bronson Schultz, the company's vice president and chief executive officer, in Saturday's editions of the Houston Chronicle.

SOS Cuerta considerde buying American Rice a couple of years ago, but decided not to buy.

American Rice was formed in 1969. But the Blue Ribbon cooperative of farmers that it bought dates to decades before that. In 1993 it the company merged with Comet, and in August of 1998 it filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The company emerged from bankruptcy in October of 1999.

In the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, American Rice reported unaudited revenues of $138.7 million and a net loss of $2.2 million. The company had revenues of $126.9 million and a $1.7 million profit in the previous year.

Senior Center News

The Scurry County Senior Center provides activities, services, and meals for senior citizens in the community.

Participants should be 60 years of age or older, the spouse of a senior citizen or the guest of a senior citizen.

Meals are provided Monday-Friday at noon. Senior citizens are asked to donate $2.50 per meal and guests are required to pay $4 per meal.

Daily, 110 people are served for the congregate meal and 150 through the meals-on-wheels program. Daily eight volunteers are needed to serve the congregate meal and 15 volunteers are needed to deliver the meals-on-wheels.

Volunteers also provide other services at the center and throughout the community.

Volunteers help organize many of the activities and support other organizations such as hospital auxiliary, library, prison, schools, food cupboard and other agencies.

Volunteers are reminded to record hours at the center or thought the agency where you volunteer. All hours for the year May 2003-February 2004 must be recorded by the end of February to receive credit at the March banquet.

Monday

Seniors interested in playing party bridge should be at the center by 9:30 a.m. Skip-Bo begins at 10 a.m. in the eighty-eight room.

Tuesday

Eighty-eight play begins at 10 a.m. Seniors can enjoy the Aubrey Wilson County Band from 11 a.m. to noon. The Senior Booster Club will meet at noon for the meal and business. The club's activities include promoting the fellowship and well being for senior citizens, providing two social activities a year for the membership, supporting senior center projects when possible, hosting fundraisers as needed and participating in community projects selected by a vote of the membership of senior citizens, supporting the center, and supporting community projects selected by a vote of the members. The membership encouraged all seniors and senior volunteer to join them.

Wednesday

Join us for games all day beginning with Ladies Pool at 9 a.m. Skip-Bo at 10 a.m. and Pinochle at 1 p.m.

Thursday

The fabric painting class meets from 9 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. in the bridge room. The Senior Center Sunshine Choir will practice at 11:30 a.m. Eighty-eight also beings at 9:30 a.m. All senior citizens are encouraged to attend a special program in the dining room called "Auto Theft Prevention."

Saturday

The Community Sing begins at 6 p.m. in the dining room of the center, located at 2603 Ave. M.

Senior Menu

Monday
Swiss Steak
Broccoli/Rice Almondine
Green Beans
Tossed Salad
Brownie
Tuesday
Chili Con Carne,
Cheese Sticks
Sliced Onion
Fruit Cocktail
Peanut Butter Cookie
Cornbread
Wednesday
Pork Chop w/Gravy
Whole Kernel Corn
Fried Okra
Tomato Wedges
Apple Cobbler
Thursday
Oven fried-chicken w/cream gravy
Mashed Potatoes
Savory Peas
Tossed Salad
Red Applesauce
Friday
Fried Fish
Pinto Beans
Crinkle Cut Fries
Cole Slaw
Chocolate Cake w/White Frosting

Moderately Confused



Pope John XXIII died in 1963 at the age of 81, ending a reign marked by inno9vative reforms in the Roman CAtholic Church.

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Security tightened along Houston Channel

HOUSTON — An increased terror alert has prompted the U.S. Coast Guard to boost security along the Houston Ship Channel.

The increased security has slowed traffic along the channel, officials said. The Department of Homeland Security raised its terror alert to orange, the second highest on the five-color scale on Dec. 21.

About 700 vessels traverse the channel daily, making it a likely target for terrorists.

"We look at different factors and decide based on those factors," Coast Guard spokesman Andrew Kendrick said in Saturday's editions of the Houston Chronicle. "There is some randomness also."

The scrutiny has not gone unnoticed by the Houston Pilots group, which is responsible for taking vessels through the ship channel, which is known internationally as difficult to navigate.

"We are working very closely with the Coast Guard on the ships that they want to board," said Capt. Mike Morris, the new president of the group.

Shortly after the 2001 terrorist attacks all vessels planning to enter the Houston Ship Channel have been required to notify the Coast Guard at least 96 hours in advance.

Although much of the national focus has been on aviation,

Much of the security focus nationally has been on aviation, Homeland Security chief Tom Ridge said this week that seaports remained areas of focus.

The Port of Houston recently canceled public tours of its tour boat, the Sam Houston, because of the heightened security.

The Port of Houston Authority also has tightened its procedures at port facilities since a Houston Chronicle reporter did a story about gaining access to sensitive areas after showing only a driver's license at the front gate.

The reporter and others were not questioned as they drove past ships and warehouses, equipment and bridge supports.

Port officials responded by cutting off access to lower level areas of port property. Only essential personnel will be allowed to enter.

The port authority is has received about $13 million in federal grants for a master security plan it is developing and implementing.

Dulles Airport security director suspended

WASHINGTON (AP) — The head of security at Washington Dulles International Airport was placed on administrative leave because of his arrest on drunken driving charges as the airport was on a heightened state of alert early New Year's Day for terrorist activity, the Transportation Security Administration said Friday.

Charles Brady, acting federal security director at Dulles, was pulled over Thursday morning, hours after a British Airways jetliner was detained at the airport because of intelligence information.

Airport spokeswoman Tara Hamilton said a Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority police officer took Brady into custody after he saw him driving erratically. It was unclear whether Brady was supposed to have been on duty when he was arrested.

The Transportation Security Administration named Adm. James Schear acting federal security director at Dulles during an investigation of Brady's arrest, agency spokesman Darrin Kayser said.

Brady was arrested when the nation was at a heightened alert level because of terrorism concerns that also disrupted more than a half-dozen New Year's holiday flights, including three British Airways flights between Dulles and London.

Intelligence indicated al-Qaida operatives had been showing interest in using commercial planes to stage an attack and pointed to possible strikes on cities that included Washington. The capital was protected by surface-to-air missile systems during the holidays.

Jennifer Marty, TSA spokeswoman, said Brady and other federal security directors at the nation's airports were notified on New Year's Eve that they should plan to stay at work until 2 a.m. because the agency was conducting emergency drills. Brady was pulled over at 1 a.m. EST and taken to the Fairfax County Detention Center, where he spent the night before being released Thursday afternoon.

The federal security director position is relatively new. Not long after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, the Transportation Security Administration quickly hired 158 federal security directors to oversee security at 429 commercial airports.

Audit finds deficiencies in abuse response

By The Associated Press

An upcoming report on whether Roman Catholic bishops are implementing their new mandatory discipline plan for sexually abusive priests will say most dioceses are complying, but "there is still a lot that needs to be done," the official overseeing the audit said Friday.

Kathleen McChesney, a former top FBI agent and head of the bishops' Office of Child and Youth Protection, said the sheer size of some of the largest dioceses slowed their progress, while others lacked the personnel or financing for quick compliance.

The plan not only dictates how bishops should respond to abuse claims, but also requires them to take steps to prevent molestation, such as conducting background checks on all clergy and lay workers in the diocese and training them to identify abuse. The largest archdioceses employ more than a thousand priests alone, McChesney said.

"Considering it's only been about a year since people have been working on it, there's been a lot of progress, but nobody is going to tell you that it's all been done," McChesney said, in a phone interview with The Associated Press. "What you're going to find is that most of them are (complying), but there is still a lot that needs to be done."

The report, which is scheduled to be released Tuesday in Washington, is based on audits of all 195 U.S. dioceses conducted by the Gavin Group, a Boston consulting firm led by former FBI official Bill Gavin.

The bishops commissioned the review, which will be conducted annually, as part of the new policy they adopted at the height of the abuse crisis in June 2002 in Dallas.

The plan mandates that guilty priests be barred from public ministry — from celebrating Mass to working in a church soup kitchen — although they would technically remain priests. Bishops can also ask the Vatican to force perpetrators from the priesthood — a process that can take years.

McChesney said the auditors did find "a few" abusive priests still in ministry, but the clergymen were removed as soon as the breach was discovered. "It was very, very rare," she said. "Where we learned of it, we addressed it."

The auditors — mostly former FBI agents or investigators — traveled the country from June to October in small teams, interviewing bishops, diocesan personnel, victims, abusive priests, prosecutors and lay people.

Whatever happened to...

Shari Cotton, daughter of Nada Cotton of Snyder and the late Bruce Cotton, is a 1979 graduate of Snyder High School and now resides in Krum.



Shari Cotton
1979



Shari Cotton
2004

While in high school, Shari participated in band, basketball and summer girls' softball.

She attended WTC and then Texas Tech University for a year. She moved to Denton in August 1986 to work at the Pioneer Golf Course at Texas Women's University. Shari became manager of the Golf Shop in September 1995.

She managed the Women's Golf League for four years, also giving golf instructions until it became the only public golf course in Denton.

Shari continues to work with local athletic groups also giving individual instruction.

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

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

Name _____

Year graduated _____

Parent's name _____

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

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

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Married to _____

Now live in _____

Children _____

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Professional work or accomplishment _____

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Anything additional _____

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Current picture?

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

Sheriff runs for re-election despite being investigated

DALLAS (AP) — Despite an ongoing investigation into his relationship with a jail commissary vendor, Sheriff Jim Bowles will face off against three Republican opponents in the March primary.

By the filing deadline Friday four Democrats also filed for their primary race.

Bowles' decision to run came despite advice from some that urged him not to run.

Dallas County Republican Party Chairman Nate Crain said he advised Bowles, an 18-year department veteran, to resign.

"I do not see how he can run an effective campaign and how he can provide information to the voters so that they can make a decision with this ongoing investigation," Crain said in The Dallas Morning News. "I don't think it's in his best interest or the party's best interest."

The Republican contenders are Dallas County's security and emergency management coordinator, Danny Chandler, and sheriff's Deputies Leonard Bueber and Larry Locke.

The Democrats on the ballot are law enforcement veterans Sam Allen, Jim Foster, Charles Munoz and Lupe Valdez.

Bowles' relationship with jail commissary vendor Jack Madera is the subject of county and FBI investigations.

Records revealed that Madera paid for meals and business travel for the sheriff and others in his administration over several years. Madera was awarded the jail commissary contract despite the fact that he was not the lowest bidder. The FBI also is investigating the sheriff's relationship with Madera.

Bowles has said he reimbursed Madera for the payments, but he has not shown any receipts to prove his claim. He could not be reached by the newspaper for comment Friday.

Bowles could not be reached by the newspaper Friday. Bowles' campaign consultant, C.P. Henry, declined to comment to the newspaper.

Susan Hays, chairman of the Dallas County Democratic Party, said the number of Democrats seeking their party's nomination is a sign the party is gaining in popularity in Dallas County.

"I'd like to see a Democratic candidate come in and sweep out the office and bring back a level of trust and integrity," she said.

But, Crain said the Republican candidates will do well. He noted that Republican candidates won in 28 of 29 contested races in the 2002 election.

"We're not taking anything for granted," he said. "We're going to aggressively campaign for every vote. We have strong candidates who will voice a strong message."

The investigation of the sheriff was probably a factor in the number of filings, said political consultant Pat Cotton, who is not working with any candidates in the race.

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Financial Focus

Time for New Year's (Financial) Resolutions

Now that it's almost 2004, it's time to make some New Year's resolutions. What are yours? Lose weight? Volunteer more? Quit smoking? Spend more time with your family?

All these are worthwhile goals. But, while you're in the resolution-making frame of mind, don't forget your financial resolutions. Here are some to think about:

•**Cut your debt load** — If you feel overburdened by debt, you're not alone. At the beginning of 2003, American households owed, on average, nearly $9,000 on all credit cards, according to Cardweb.com, a Web site that provides credit card information to consumers. This figure is up 173 percent over the past decade. You'll find it very hard to achieve your financial goals if you're overburdened by debt. Set a realistic goal for whittling down the amount you owe. And avoid taking on unnecessary new debts through more credit card purchases.

•**Increase your retirement savings** — Put in as much as you can afford to your IRA and your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. These tax-advantaged accounts are great ways to help boost your retirement savings.

•**Put bonuses and salary increases to work** — Consider investing your bonuses and salary increases. If you don't really need the additional money to meet your basic needs, you can put it to work helping you build your investment portfolio.

•**Avoid tapping into your investments** — Try to build an "emergency" cash cushion of about three to six months' worth of living expenses. Once you've established this fund, you won't need to tap into your investments to pay for major car repairs, new appliances or any other unexpected costs. And by letting your investments have the opporutunity to grow as long as possible, you can accelerate your progress toward your long-term financial goals.

•**Diversify your portfolio** — By spreading out your dollars over a wide range of assets - stocks, bonds, government securities, etc. - you can help cushion the impact of a downturn that may affect just one particular area. And by owning many different investments, you give yourself a better chance to succeed.

•**Keep emotions out of investing** — There's plenty of evidence that fear and greed drive the market. Don't be ruled by your emotions. If a stock is falling, you don't have to join the selling stampede — especially if the company has good prospects. Conversely, don't chase after "hot stocks" — they may already be cooling off by the time you buy.

•**Protect your family** — Go over your insurance coverage to ensure it is sufficient to help your family meet their needs should something happen to you.

•**Check your beneficiary designations** — If you've gone through any significant changes in your life — divorce, remarriage, stepchildren, etc. — then you'll want to make absolutely sure your beneficiary designations on all your financial documents are up to date and correct.

•**Boost college savings** — If you have a child, it's never too soon to start saving for college. Consider opening a 529 plan or a Coverdell Education Savings Account.

•**Rebalance as needed** — As your needs, goals and personal situation evolve over time, you'll want to adjust your portfolio. Your investment professional can help you make the appropriate changes.

By following through on these resolutions, you can make great strides toward improving your financial situation in 2004 — and in all the years to follow.

Jackpot winners celebrate at burger joint

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — So where do two of America's newest multimillion-dollar lottery winners eat lunch to celebrate? Try the Steak n Shake.

Norman and Deanna Shue went to the burger joint Thursday after finding out they had won half of Wednesday's $221.5 million Powerball jackpot. They wanted to claim the prize but couldn't because state offices were closed for New Year's Day.

The construction project manager from Concord, N.C., and his computer-programmer wife can take $110.75 million over 30 years or an immediate lump sum of $60.1 million, before taxes.

The holder of the other winning ticket, sold in York, Pa., had not come forward as of midday Friday.

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(Contributed Pho



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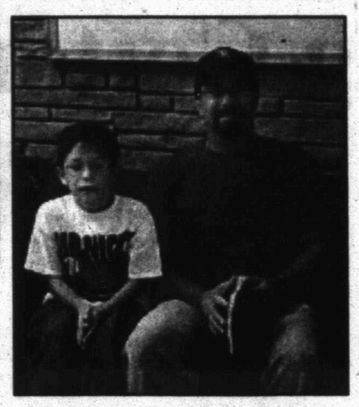
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Stanfield Elementary Do-Dads



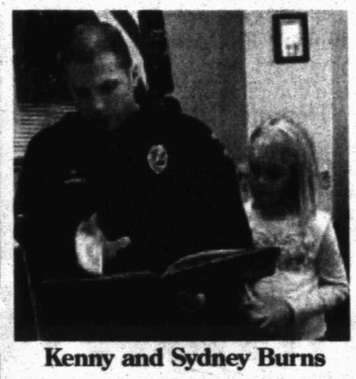
Every Monday morning a different Stanfield dad reads a short story or poem over the public address system. Cory Chester is pictured with his children, Leia and Brandon. (Contributed Photos)



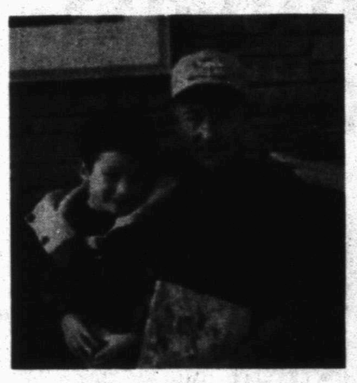
Cliff and Brennan Redman



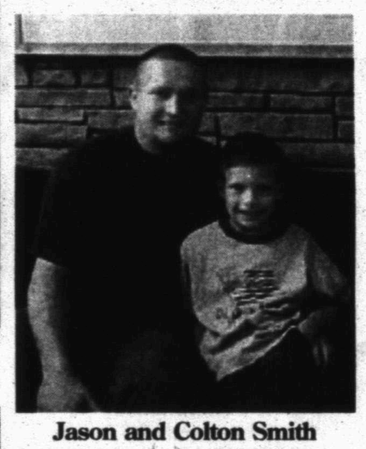
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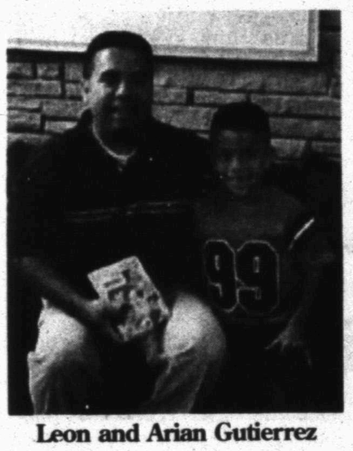
Kenny and Sydney Burns



Walter and Brett Banks



Jason and Colton Smith



Leon and Arian Gutierrez



Bryan and Morgan Scott



On Nutrition by Ed Blonz, Ph.D.

Low-carb diet is no miracle plan

DEAR DR. BLONZ: Like many of my friends, I was considering going on a low-carbohydrate diet because I had thought it would be a good way to lose some weight. My issue is that there is a lot of pasta in our home and I enjoy it. I realize that the two are mutually exclusive, but want your take on pasta. Where does it stand in relation to other carbohydrate-containing foods? It will cause some grief in the family, but I am ready to go and am hoping that you might convince me that I can have my pasta and eat it, too. — **M.R., West Orange, N.J.**

DEAR M.R.: Pasta is typically made from semolina, a coarse flour that comes from the milling of whole kernels of durum wheat. Semolina flour is relatively high in gluten, a type of protein, and it tends to absorb less water than other flours. This characteristic is what gives pasta and pizza dough its chewy texture when cooked. Semolina is the same grain that is used in couscous.

The carbohydrate content of semolina is in the same range as other wheat flours, about 100 grams per cup of flour. There are approximately 45 carbohydrate grams in a cup of cooked pasta, which would tend to limit its presence in diets where carbohydrates are unwelcome.

Your pasta dilemma goes to the heart of a low-carbohydrate approach, which is that it is painted in such broad strokes. The real issues are not merely carbohydrates, but which carbohydrates, what type of meal they are being served with, what's going on with the rest of the diet, and where one stands with other lifestyle factors that influence overall health. All this needs to be considered before you turn thumbs-down on pasta — along with an entire nutrient category — in the hope that it will solve your problems. A regular intake of sugary cookies or cups of soda will never be mistaken for steps toward better health. The same can be said for a low-carbohydrate menu that opens the door for unbridled consumption of anything as long as it is carbohydrate free. If you're wedded to a low-carbohydrate ideal, you can put together a healthful diet, but it takes some work. And there is always the fact that going off the diet usually means immediately regaining the weight you lost.

The flip side to all this is that it is easier, more flavorful and a lot more intuitive to work toward a progressive style of eating all food groups. You learn basic lessons of weight loss involving a caloric balance between diet and lifestyle and are then free to apply them to any cuisine. If there is a downside it is that there is no quick drop in weight. I understand that rapid weight loss can be a powerful inducement for those frustrated with frequent unsuccessful attempts at dieting. Irrespective of the fact that it's mostly water weight (and not body fat) that's lost, it can help you stay with a plan.

The bottom line is that I encourage you to step toward health with your eyes open and facing forward, not always looking down at the scale. You asked about pasta. If you decide to stick with it, I encourage you to think about pasta-based dishes that contain fresh flavorful vegetables, seafood or other healthful combinations, all eaten as a part of meals that are made with wholesome ingredients. Think big-picture about what you are eating rather than getting hung up on carbohydrate-bashing as a mystical end in itself.

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

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

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Founder of street gang elected mayor of Hartford, Connecticut

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — Eddie Perez was not a typical gang leader. He was scrawny, read books and went to school. A Puerto Rican boy growing up in Hartford's mostly black North End, he founded the Ghetto Brothers in the early 1970s. And though he was younger than the rest of his crew, they followed him.

In those days, he was known on the street as "The Professor." These days, he is Mayor Perez.

After two years as a City Hall figurehead, a charter revision that took effect Thursday gave Perez, 47, sweeping new authority to run one of the oldest cities in America.

Raised by a single mother on welfare, Perez is now the most powerful mayor in Hartford history. He will be officially sworn in Monday for a second term.

Perez says he will orchestrate a Hartford renaissance. His new authority comes at a difficult time: Taxes, crime and unemployment are up; revenue, home ownership and the city's population are down.

But Perez is confident. He's lived the city's problems. He ran with a gang, lived in poverty and moved between burnt-out apartments.

"It's one of the best assets he has," said Hernan LaFontaine, a former school superintendent and Perez ally who is about to become City Council president. "You're in survival mode when you're a young person growing up like that. You're always on the lookout. How can you keep moving? How can you get ahead? He's got regular street smarts."

Perez's family left Corozal, Puerto Rico, and arrived in Hartford in 1969. He was 12, the second-oldest of nine children. His mother could afford only the worst apartments in the worst neighborhoods, Perez said. He remembers stepping over an overdose victim while playing in an abandoned lot.

"It wasn't uncommon for us to have to move in the middle of winter because of a mechanical failure to the heating system where we were living," he said.

He attended five different elementary schools and moved a dozen times during high school. A year or two after arriving in Hartford, Perez formed the Ghetto Brothers with his brother and two friends. They wore bright yellow and purple jackets and staked the North End as their turf.

"Most of my peers, a lot of my eighth-grade class, died of gang violence, drug overdoses," he said. "Between 18 and 26, I went to a lot of funerals.

"Still when I lecture at prisons, I see old friends. Ninety percent of the people I grew up with didn't succeed."

Perez left the gang in 1976. He spent his free time playing basketball at a local church and got involved with its youth group. He started a civic group in his neighborhood. Working out of a broken stall in a self-serve car wash, he organized tenants and annoyed landlords.

He pestered one insurance company into making a $20,000 donation, then leveraged that to get matching money from another. He earned a reputation as a strong community organizer.

"At 21 years old, I could produce 400 people like that," he said, snapping his fingers.

Trinity College hired Perez as city liaison. He did not have a degree, but spent years negotiating with community members on behalf of the college.

The buzz about Eddie Perez becoming mayor begin in 1995, when Trinity put him in charge of the $175 million Learning Corridor, an effort to build new schools and businesses on 15 desolate city acres.

He went door-to-door, persuading owners to sell their land and business leaders to invest.

"I poured concrete on land I didn't own for the foundation of the school," Perez confesses. "Is that winging it? I call it a calculated risk. I knew if I didn't pour then, I'd lose $1 million in construction delays. I had a handshake agreement on the land."

It worked out, and so did the Learning Corridor. When then-Mayor Mike Peters decided not to run for re-election, Perez ran and won.

Though technically powerless under the city's charter, Perez upended Hartford politics. When fellow Democrats in the City Council challenged him, he aligned himself with a Republican and a Green Party member and took control of the council.

He ran the school superintendent out of town, even though he had no authority to fire him. He laid off 220 city workers and raised taxes to close a $48 million budget deficit, even though he was not the budget chief. With murders and drug violence on the rise, he pushed out the city's police chief.

Ban on American beef roils some shippers; others find opportunities

By The Associated Press

Pancost Trucking had been profitably hauling about eight containers full of beef each week from Colorado to West Coast ports, but that all changed when mad cow disease was discovered in Washington state.

The trucker's two biggest customers have all but halted exports now that dozens of countries are banning American beef, costing the mom-and-pop company thousands of dollars in lost shipments and forcing owner Jerry Schaefer to find other work for his 20 drivers.

"We've been having to run over to Nebraska to get potatoes," Schaefer said. "And we're hauling more pork out of Kansas."

Though 90 percent of U.S. beef is sold at home, the overnight collapse of the export business has hit the shipping and trucking industry hard.

Experts said it is too early to determine the financial impact, but some negative effects can already be seen. Cattle trade between barns and feedlots has slowed, the value of slaughter-ready animals has declined and some meat processors have scaled back production enough to send workers home.

Moreover, some $200 million worth of meat remains in limbo, either at sea, at port or in refrigerated facilities here and abroad, industry officials say.

In the past week, SCS Refrigerated Services of Portland, Ore., received a surge of inquiries from meat producers and shippers looking to store more than 10 million pounds of meat.

"It's what we call opportunity business," said president and CEO Hugh Carr. "But it's not the kind of opportunity business we welcome because it's a terribly unfortunate situation."

More than 30 countries banned American beef after a cow slaughtered Dec. 9 in Washington was confirmed last week as the first case of mad cow disease in the United States. Mad cow disease is a concern because humans who eat brain or spinal matter from an infected cow can develop a potentially fatal brain-wasting illness.

Despite assurances by U.S. officials that the nation's beef is safe, the fate of nearly 2,000 containers of beef and beef products that were exported — prior to the Dec. 23 warning about a suspected case of the disease — is unclear.

Unless the trade bans are lifted or shipments can be redirected to other markets, U.S. Meat Export Federation spokeswoman Lynn Heinze said the meat could very well be sent back to where it came from — the least preferable option.



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SPORTS

Ole Miss edges OSU in thrilling Cotton Bowl

DALLAS (AP) — Eli Manning and Rashaun Woods decided against entering the NFL draft last spring. Both wanted the chance for another big college season.

They both accomplished just that, though only Manning ended his career with a win in the Cotton Bowl.

Manning also got the offensive MVP trophy, leading No. 16 Mississippi to a 31-28 win over No. 21 Oklahoma State despite a record-setting performance by Woods.

"Everything about this year has been great. It's been a great run ... it's been a fun ride," said Manning, who completed 22 of 31 passes for 259 yards and two touchdowns. "It has to end sometime. We picked a great way to end it."

Manning also had a 1-yard TD run with 12:32 left, capping a 97-yard drive that also ended a streak of 24 straight points by Ole Miss (10-3) which provided just enough to overcome a Woods-led comeback.

Oklahoma State's career receiving leader set Cotton Bowl records with 11 catches for 223 yards.

Five of those catches and 131 yards came after Manning's scoring run. But the Cowboys (9-4) never got the ball back after Woods' leaping 17-yard TD catch over a defender with 4:38 left.

"It was one of those games where we felt like we just ran out of time," Oklahoma State coach Les Miles said.

The Rebels won their first January game since the 1970 Sugar Bowl when Manning's father, Archie, threw a TD and ran for another one in a 27-22 win over Arkansas. Ole Miss finished its first 10-win season since 1971.

"When I came to Ole Miss, everyone expected me to bring the program back to its glory days," said Manning, who broke his own record with 3,600 yards passing this season. "I didn't want to put that kind of pressure on myself."

Still, he finished with a school-record 10,119 yards, becoming only the fifth Southeastern Conference passer with 10,000 yards. That is 1,082 less than the SEC record held by older brother Peyton Manning, the Indianapolis Colts' quarterback and the NFL's co-MVP who played at Tennessee from 1994-97.

Since that Sugar Bowl win, Ole Miss had played in January only two other times. They lost in the Gator Bowl twice, to Auburn in Archie Manning's final game in 1971 and to Michigan in 1991.

"This raises the bar for us," coach David Cutcliffe said.

Woods' TD catch came just four minutes after Vernand Morency's second touchdown run. On that 72-yard drive, he caught two passes for 63 yards — both on plays when cornerback Travis Johnson was called for pass interference and still couldn't prevent the Woods from holding on.

"My job is to go out there and make plays for my team," said Woods, who had a 17-yard catch on another flagged play. "As far as how they played me, that doesn't concern me. I'm just here to make plays."

Woods finished with three straight 1,000-yard season. He had 293 career receptions for 4,414 yards and 42 touchdowns.

Oklahoma State's Josh Fields set a Cotton Bowl record with 307 yards on 21-for-33 passing. The junior's 55th career TD pass broke the school record held by offensive coordinator Mike Gundy (1986-89).

On the long drive that provided the game-winning margin, Manning converted third-and-13 and third-and-12 plays with passes of more than 20 yards.

"I just sat there watching him, thinking Eli Manning is a bad boy," said Woods, meaning that as a compliment.

Tremaine Turner ran 20 times for 133 yards, including a game-clinching 25-yard run on third-and-5 from midfield with 2:43 left after the Cowboys' two quick TDs. Oklahoma State, also called for pass interference on a third-and-10 during the drive, was out of timeouts.

Turner caught a 16-yard pass for Manning's first TD, and his 2-yard TD run opened the second-half scoring.

After Jon Holland intercepted Manning's pass on the final play of the first quarter and returned it to the Ole Miss 44, Tatum Bell scored on a 3-yard run for a 14-7 lead.

Ole Miss then scored on four straight series, and Oklahoma State didn't score again until the fourth quarter.

After the Cowboys tied the game at 14 on Morency's 4-yard TD run, Fields was sacked on fourth-and-4 from the Ole Miss 30. The Rebels then set up Jonathan Nichols' 34-yard field goal to end the half and put Ole Miss ahead to stay.



AIR APPARENT — Mississippi's Eli Manning drops back to pass against Oklahoma State in the SBC Cotton Bowl Friday. Ole Miss held on for a 31-28 victory. Manning is expected to be one of the first players chosen in the 2004 NFL draft. (AP Photo)

Nutt declines $2 million offer from Nebraska

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. (AP) — Houston Nutt rejected Nebraska's $2 million coaching offer, saying strong family ties and a job left undone kept him at Arkansas.

"I could not take my family, myself, and get on that plane," Nutt said at a news conference Saturday. "My heart was here."

Nutt, teary at times, said he was flattered at Nebraska's offer, but that it was best for him to remain in his home state.

"For six long years we've poured our heart into this program and we feel that our work isn't finished," Nutt said.

Nebraska fired coach Frank Solich in November after a 9-3 regular season. Nebraska offered Nutt the job Friday, but Arkansas made a counteroffer.

"They're going to take care of me. There are some things still being worked out," Nutt said.

At Arkansas, Nutt has won nine games in the regular season twice, in 1998 and 2002.

Arkansas athletic director Frank Broyles called Nutt "the best man for the job anywhere in America," and his decision to stay was reason for celebration.

"He's not only a great football coach, he's a great ambassador," Nutt said.

Money wasn't the only factor, even though he would have more than doubled his salary, Nutt said.

"They don't know my heart," Nutt said. "They don't know what I see. They don't know my vision. They weren't born and raised in Little Rock, Arkansas."

Coyotes dominate Stars

DALLAS (AP) — Brian Boucher picked a good time to string together consecutive shutouts.

Playing for just the 10th time this season on his 27th birthday, Boucher made 35 saves to post his second consecutive shutout in the Phoenix Coyotes' 6-0 victory Friday night over the Dallas Stars.

"It's nice to contribute any way you can," he said. "It's a nice feeling. So when I get in, I certainly want to do my part. I got an opportunity and I'm trying to play."

Boucher had gone 85 games between shutouts before beating Los Angeles 4-0 Wednesday night. He made 21 saves in that victory.

"We had some chances to score, but he came up with some big, big saves," Stars forward Rob DiMaio said.

Meanwhile, Dallas received sub-par play from its goaltenders.

Stars coach Dave Tippett intended to give regular starter Marty Turco a rare night off, but instead pulled backup Ron Tugnutt late in the first period after he gave up two goals on seven shots. Turco didn't fare much better, finishing with 15 saves on 19 shots and giving up two questionable goals.

The Coyotes pulled within one point of the Stars in the Pacific Division and were a step ahead of them all game long.

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NFL Playoffs

Wild-card Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 3
Tennessee at Baltimore, 3:30 p.m. (ABC)
Dallas at Carolina, 7 p.m. (ABC)
Sunday, Jan. 4
Seattle at Green Bay, noon (FOX)
Denver at Indianapolis, 3:30 p.m. (CBS)

OSU downs Wildcats; Clemson shocks Vols

By The Associated Press

TEMPE, Ariz. (AP) — Craig Krenzel matched his career high with four touchdown passes — two apiece to Michael Jenkins and Santonio Holmes — and No. 7 Ohio State held off No. 8 Kansas State 35-28 in the Fiesta Bowl on Friday night.

Star quarterback Ell Roberson started for Kansas State (11-4) despite being accused of sexual assault by a woman early Thursday. He was awful early in Kansas State's first Bowl Championship Series game, but nearly brought his team back from deficits of 21-0 and 35-14.

After a 3-for-13 start, Roberson completed 20 of 52 passes for 294 yards and one interception. He ran for 32 yards.

Krenzel finished his career 24-3 as a starter at Ohio State (11-2). He is the second player to win consecutive MVP awards in the 33-year history of the Fiesta Bowl. Curt Warner of Penn State did it in the 1980-81 seasons.

Ohio State, with the top-ranked rushing defense in the country, held All-American Darren Sproles to a season-low 38 yards on 13 carries.

Peach Bowl
Clemson 27,
No. 6 Tennessee 14

ATLANTA (AP) — Chad Jasmin ran for a career-high 130 yards and a touchdown, helping Clemson upset Tennessee.

Kyle Browning and Duane Coleman added TD runs, leading the Tigers (9-4) to their fourth straight victory. Browning scored from 8 yards out on a "fumblerooskie."

The Volunteers (10-3) lost the Peach Bowl for the second straight season, although the score was a bit closer than the 30-3 rout by Maryland a year ago. In this one, they committed 10 penalties, including two for pass interference, two for unsportsmanlike conduct and two for roughing quarterback Charlie Whitehurst.

Aaron Hunt kicked two field goals for Clemson, which gave the Atlantic Coast Conference its third straight Peach Bowl victory.

Casey Clausen, a four-year starter playing in his final game for the Volunteers, threw for 384 yards and two touchdowns. But Tennessee got little from its running game, finishing with 38 yards on 26 carries.

Sugar Bowl victor will split national title

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Stephen Peterman spotted the crystal football from far across the Superdome field. As he walked toward the trophy, he became wary.

"I ain't touching it," the LSU offensive lineman said Friday. "Rub it like a genie? Has anybody ever touched it and lost? Not me. It's a jinx. You can't touch it — it's not ours yet."

Even if No. 2 LSU beats No. 3 Oklahoma on Sunday night, there's virtually no way the Tigers can call themselves undisputed champions.

Like it or not, the Sugar Bowl is headed for Splitsville. The winner automatically receives the USA Today/ESPN coaches' crown — and college football gets more questions about which team truly was tops this season.

Southern California complicated the mix by winning the Rose Bowl, beating Michigan 28-14 Thursday. The victory all but assured the No. 1 Trojans the championship in The Associated Press poll.

"Everybody wants to sit here and say they got screwed, but they actually got the easier road to hoe," Oklahoma defensive tackle Dusty Dvoracek said. "They got to stay at home, play the lesser team.

"I rooted for Michigan, I won't deny it. But it doesn't matter. It's going to be an ongoing debate."

Still, the specter of a shared title is sure to take some of the shine off the Sugar.

"You can't really say you're the best if you haven't been through the battle," LSU receiver Michael Clayton said. "There's no better way to determine who's the best than to square off and have a game. I think the world would really enjoy something like that."

And for now, that's not happening. Despite cries from critics of the Bowl Championship Series, there's no playoff in sight.

National Hockey League

EASTERN CONFERENCE	W	L	T	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Atlantic Division							
Philadelphia	20	6	9	4	53	112	82
New Jersey	19	7	9	1	48	88	61
N.Y. Islanders	19	16	2	1	41	110	96
N.Y. Rangers	15	14	5	3	38	103	99
Pittsburgh	9	21	5	3	26	77	135
Northeast Division							
Toronto	21	8	7	3	52	112	95
Ottawa	19	10	5	3	46	114	76
Boston	15	11	9	4	43	94	98
Montreal	17	15	5	2	41	88	89
Buffalo	16	19	3	1	36	92	102
Southeast Division							
Atlanta	19	16	3	2	43	120	121
Tampa Bay	15	14	6	1	37	79	79
Florida	12	17	9	2	35	85	107
Carolina	12	16	8	2	34	68	88
Washington	11	23	4	1	27	98	125
WESTERN CONFERENCE							
Central Division							
Detroit	24	12	4	1	53	136	96
St. Louis	22	9	4	1	49	96	83
Nashville	17	14	4	2	40	91	95
Chicago	10	19	7	4	31	75	107
Columbus	10	21	4	3	27	76	103
Northwest Division							
Vancouver	21	10	6	2	50	113	91
Colorado	19	10	7	1	46	107	83
Calgary	19	11	3	3	44	83	72
Minnesota	14	15	10	0	38	84	82
Edmonton	14	17	7	0	35	96	106
Pacific Division							
San Jose	15	10	11	3	44	95	87
Los Angeles	16	13	5	4	41	101	99
Dallas	17	17	6	0	40	79	90
Phoenix	13	12	11	2	39	98	105
Anaheim	13	16	4	5	35	79	97

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

Friday's Games
Columbus 2, Tampa Bay 0
Philadelphia 2, Florida 1
Detroit 4, Carolina 1
Buffalo 5, Anaheim 2
Phoenix 6, Dallas 0
Edmonton 2, Minnesota 1
Chicago 2, San Jose 1
Colorado 4, Vancouver 2

Saturday's Games
N.Y. Rangers at Pittsburgh, noon
Atlanta at Montreal, 1 p.m.
N.Y. Islanders at Boston, 6 p.m.
Washington at Ottawa, 6 p.m.
Buffalo at Toronto, 6 p.m.
Anaheim at Detroit, 6:30 p.m.
Columbus at Florida, 6:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Tampa Bay, 6:30 p.m.
San Jose at St. Louis, 7 p.m.
New Jersey at Nashville, 7:30 p.m.
Vancouver at Calgary, 9 p.m.
Dallas at Los Angeles, 9:30 p.m.
Sunday's Games
Phoenix at Carolina, 12:30 p.m.
Washington at Montreal, 4 p.m.
Edmonton at Chicago, 6 p.m.
Minnesota at Colorado, 8 p.m.

NCAA Bowl Schedule

Friday
Cotton Bowl
At Dallas
$3 million
Mississippi 31, Oklahoma State 28

Peach Bowl
At Atlanta
$2.1 million
Clemson 27, Tennessee 14

Fiesta Bowl
At Tempe, Ariz.
$14-17 million
Ohio State 35, Kansas State 28

Saturday
Humanitarian Bowl
At Boise, Idaho
$750,000
Tulsa (8-4) vs. Georgia Tech (6-6), 11 a.m. (ESPN)

Sunday
Sugar Bowl
At New Orleans
$14-17 million
Oklahoma (12-1) vs. LSU (12-1), 7 p.m. (ABC)

Saturday, Jan. 10
East-West Shrine Classic
At San Francisco
East vs. West, 1 p.m., (ESPN)

Saturday, Jan. 17
Hula Bowl
At Wailuku, Hawaii
North vs. South, 7 p.m. (ESPN2)

Saturday, Jan. 24
Senior Bowl
At Mobile, Ala.
North vs. South, 4 p.m. (ESPN)

Saturday, Jan. 31
Gridiron Classic
At The Villages, Fla.
North vs. South, 11 a.m. (ESPN)

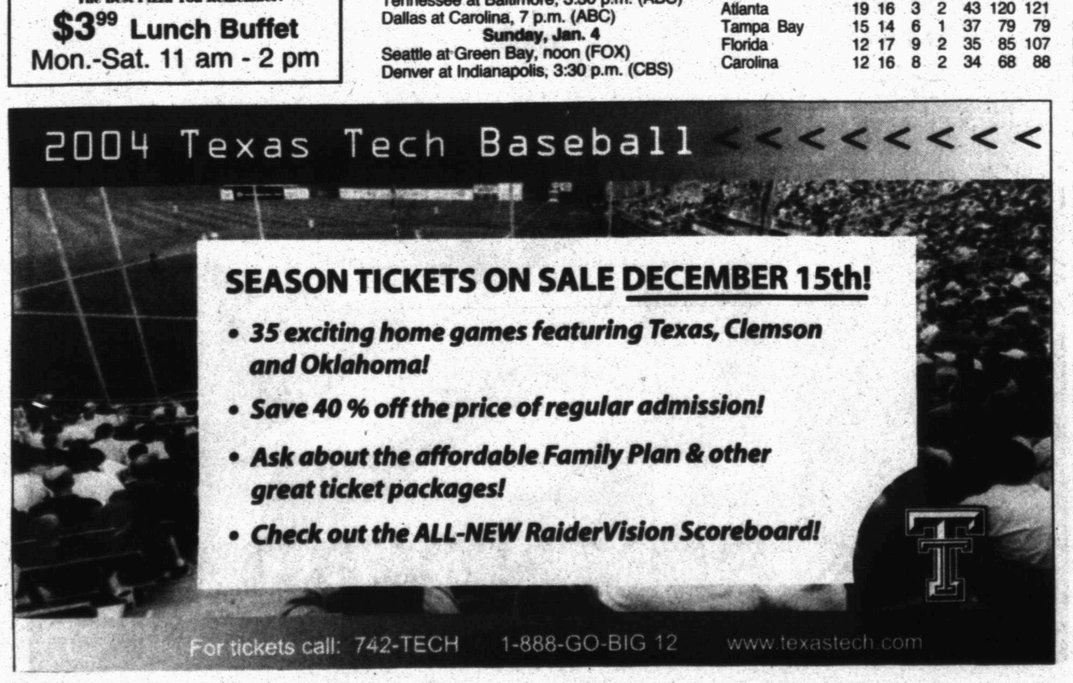
National Basketball Association

EASTERN CONFERENCE	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlantic Division				
New Jersey	18	14	.563	—
Boston	16	18	.471	3
Philadelphia	14	18	.438	4
Miami	14	19	.424	4½
New York	14	20	.412	5
Washington	9	21	.300	8
Orlando	8	25	.242	10½
Central Division				
Indiana	24	10	.706	—
New Orleans	21	12	.636	2½
Detroit	20	13	.606	3½
Toronto	16	15	.516	6½
Milwaukee	16	16	.500	7
Chicago	10	22	.313	13
Cleveland	10	23	.303	13½
Atlanta	9	25	.265	15
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Midwest Division				
San Antonio	22	10	.688	—
Minnesota	21	10	.677	½
Denver	20	13	.606	2½
Dallas	18	13	.581	3½
Houston	17	14	.548	4½
Utah	17	15	.531	5
Memphis	16	17	.485	6½
Pacific Division				
L.A. Lakers	21	8	.724	—
Sacramento	21	8	.724	—
Seattle	16	14	.533	5½
Portland	15	16	.484	7
L.A. Clippers	13	15	.464	7½
Golden State	14	17	.452	8
Phoenix	12	21	.364	11

Friday's Games
New Orleans 86, Toronto 74
Washington 97, Golden State 79
Indiana 103, Boston 90
Miami 112, Orlando 101
Chicago 104, New York 99
New Jersey 97, Cleveland 82
Memphis 100, Utah 88
Detroit 93, Phoenix 81
Minnesota 93, Atlanta 75
Milwaukee 109, Dallas 101
Denver 106, Portland 96
Seattle 111, L.A. Lakers 109

Saturday's Games
Philadelphia at San Antonio, 12:30 p.m.
Sacramento at L.A. Clippers, 2:30 p.m.
Golden State at Detroit, 6:30 p.m.
Orlando at Memphis, 7 p.m.
New Orleans at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Utah at Houston, 7:30 p.m.
Boston at Chicago, 7:30 p.m.
Minnesota at Dallas, 7:30 p.m.
Atlanta at Denver, 9 p.m.

Sunday's Games
Phoenix at Toronto, noon
Milwaukee at Washington, 1 p.m.
New Jersey at New York, 6 p.m.
Seattle at Sacramento, 8 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at L.A. Clippers, 8:30 p.m.



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SPORTS

14th straight win...

Lady Tigers top Lubbock Cooper

The Lady Tigers are doing such a good job of learning how to win, they may be forgetting how to lose.

Snyder (16-2) won its 14th consecutive game Friday, rolling over Lubbock Cooper, 53-35, behind 20 points from Sirena Medrano.

Lubbock Cooper (10-6) kept things tight throughout the contest, before a fourth-quarter eruption by Snyder that ballooned the lead from six to 18 points in a span of three minutes.

Snyder outscored Cooper, 22-10, in the fourth quarter.

"It was one of those games that is really close and then blows up," head coach Mike Martin said. "We hit our free throws and came up with big shots."

The Lady Tigers made 14 of 21 free throw attempts in the game.

Jordan Stansell connected for 18 points, while Terann Ragland added 10 for the Lady Tigers.

The Lady Tigers have one more test before the start of district play when they travel to Midland to take on the Greenwood Lady Rangers at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday.

"We would like to keep it going if we can," Martin said of the winning streak. "We have played a bunch of games on the road, and we are road-tested pretty well, I think. We just need to make sure we aren't looking past this game and finish up non-conference on a good note."

The Lady Tigers open the district schedule at home at 6:30 Friday evening against Denver City.

Cowboys venture to Carolina, look to restore playoff luster

IRVING (AP) — Darren Woodson still remembers many details from the day the Dallas Cowboys began their nosedive from Super Bowl powerhouse to the dregs of the NFL.

It was Jan. 5, 1997, and the Cowboys were playing at Carolina — yes, the same place their rebound season will continue Saturday night.

Dallas was the reigning Super Bowl champions, having won three of the last four titles. The Cowboys had reached the NFC championship game all four years and needed only a victory over the second-year Panthers to make it five in a row.

They came into the game on a roll, having pounded Minnesota 40-15 in the first round. Dallas looked as good in that game as it had the entire 10-6 season, a rocky campaign marred by off-field woes.

Things got off to bad start at Ericsson Stadium when Michael Irvin was hurt early. Deion Sanders went down, too. The offense was able to drive deep into Carolina territory, but had to settle for field goals. Then, down by a touchdown late in the fourth quarter, Troy Aikman ended the last real threat by throwing an interception.

The Panthers won 26-17. And the Cowboys haven't won a playoff game since.

"It was basically one of the turning points for our organization, as far as being one of the elite teams and then falling," Woodson said. "We had a pretty good team. We were going through some things that season and they basically capped the season off for us."

The team's fortunes changed drastically starting the next year.

Dallas went 6-10 and coach Barry Switzer was fired. Chan Gailey replaced him and got the Cowboys into the playoffs in 1998 and '99, but lost in the first round both times by a combined 47-17. Dave Campo never came close to the postseason during his three seasons in charge.

Now Bill Parcells has taken over and 10-6 never felt so good.

"It would be monumental for us to win a playoff game on the road," Parcells said Thursday. "That would be a big, big step for this franchise."

The Cowboys have beaten the Panthers in four of the five meetings since that playoff game, which was their first matchup. Their most recent was just six weeks ago.

Every game in the series has been decided by 10 points or less. The cumulative score: Dallas 118, Carolina 108.

Parcells expects more of the same.

"It'll come down to, I hate to say this, just who plays the best within their ability," he said.

Belichick named top coach

By The Associated Press

Bill Belichick owns three Super Bowl titles and Saturday, after his best coaching job, he won The Associated Press NFL Coach of the Year.

In a year of masterful coaching throughout the league, Belichick led the New England Patriots to the NFL's best record, 14-2. The Patriots, fighting off injuries almost from the outset of the schedule, won their final 12 games, setting franchise records for winning streak and victories in one year.

They did so in great part because of Belichick's brilliance as a game-planner, motivator and in-game strategist.

And they did so with a variety of starting lineups, unusual for a championship-caliber team.

"We have had a number of different people," Belichick said. "It has been that kind of team.

"Again, I am not caught up on the big starter thing. ... I think all of the players have been active at one time or another. They have contributed in one way or another. So it has been a lot of different mixes through the course of the year from game-to-game, and from one part of the season, and so I guess that part of it has been maybe a trademark of this season."

Another trademark in 2003 was the strong coaching in many cities. Although seven head coaches either were fired or resigned, there was admirable work done by Marvin Lewis in Cincinnati, Bill Parcells in Dallas, Andy Reid in Philadelphia, John Fox in Carolina, Tony Dungy in Indianapolis, Brian Billick in Baltimore and Dick Vermeil in Kansas City.

Belichick, with 35½ votes from a nationwide panel of 50 sports writers and broadcasters who cover the NFL, easily beat Lewis, who received seven votes. Parcells was next at 6½ and Reid received one.

There was no indication at the beginning of the season that Belichick would be coach of the year or that the Patriots would be dominant. In a stunningly controversial move, Belichick cut starting safety Lawyer Milloy, who was picked up by Buffalo. The Bills then promptly spanked the Patriots 31-0 in the opener.

Lady Bulldogs escape Westbrook with OT win

The Lady Bulldogs got one step closer to .500 Friday, getting clutch shots from Brittany Dickerhoff and Shae Allen in overtime to push past Westbrook, 59-57.

Dickerhoff scored all four of her points in the extra frame, and Allen added a pair of free throws to help give the Lady Bulldogs the victory.

After jumping out to an 11-5 lead, Ira (6-7) had a letdown in defensive intensity in the second quarter, as Westbrook put up 22 and took a 27-21 lead into halftime.

"We sometimes lose focus and make mental mistakes," head coach Brent Parr said. "We know we can score, but we are trying to get our defensive intensity up and not give up a lot of points."

The game saw numerous lead changes in the fourth quarter and in overtime, before Ira took the lead then did not allow Westbrook to move the ball up the court as time expired.

Kelbi Pitner and Lindsey Wilson once again had big offensive performances on Parr's post-oriented offense, with Pitner tallying a game-high 26 and Wilson dropping in 19.

Amanda Calley added three points, and Kate Wall hit a free throw in overtime while contributing two points.

But it was the play of his guards late against Westbrook's zone defense that helped ice the win, Parr said.

"We are getting more aggressive and drawing the defense or drawing the foul," he said. "When teams play zone, guards have to step up and make shots. Late in the game, the girls stepped up."

Ira will battle Roby at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, before getting the district schedule underway at 6:30 Friday evening in Grady.

Late Cooper rally stops Tigers

The Snyder Tigers played well Friday, but could not get past Lubbock Cooper as they fell to the Pirates, 49-36. The contest was much closer than the final score.

Snyder (6-12) trailed by two points midway through the fourth quarter, but could not overcome its own errant shooting to take control of the game.

"We played a lot better," head coach Bud Birks said. "We had open looks and we missed some shots, and we had to chase and foul at the end."

After a disappointing conclusion to the Post Tournament, the Tigers responded Friday with their best defensive effort of the season, according to Birks.

"I think it was the best defense we've played," he said. "We really worked hard and caused their offense problems."

The Tigers fell behind early, 12-5, but rallied back to outscore Cooper, 22-17, over the middle two quarters.

Lee Scott led Snyder with 12 points, while Isaac Ramon drained a pair of three-point shots to knock in eight points before fouling out.

Garrett Pinson had six points off two three-point shots, while Lico Castillo added four.

The Tigers have a week off before their next contest, and Birks said the team will have plenty of work to do in that time.

"We are going to keep working on those things that will make us a better team," he said. "We have got to get it inside a little better. Defensively, we are going to put things in this week to use in district."

The Tigers will take the court at 8 p.m. Friday against Clyde. They have another pre-district game Jan. 13 at Greenwood, before the beginning of district play Jan. 16 at Sweetwater.

"We have to tighten our game up," Birks said. "We have two weeks to try and get it better."

Bulldogs blast Westbrook

The Ira Bulldogs are finally getting all their pieces in place.

Wes Kellner and Joel Lollar got their first action of the season Friday, and Jake Barnes continued his torrid offense with 29 points as the Bulldogs crushed Westbrook, 70-56.

Kellner hit for 14 in his first game of the season, while Jess Wall put in 11 for the Bulldogs.

Ira (4-6) had not played since beating Stanton on Dec. 19, and the down time allowed both Kellner and Lollar to recuperate from football injuries and hit the hardwood at close to full strength.

"The lay off was good for us," head coach Randy Jones said. "We came out with more confidence and intensity, and played really good defense. It was a couple of weeks of getting healthy, and now is a good time to get started again."

The Bulldogs beat a Westbrook club that connected for more three-point shots than the two-point variety, something Jones said he had never seen before.

Westbrook hit 11 from behind the arc — eight in the second half — while hitting nine from two-point range.

Ira took advantage of Westbrook's indifference to the interior, pushing the ball into Barnes and taking command in a 23-12 second quarter that gave the club a 16-point halftime edge.

The Bulldogs next play at 8 Tuesday at Roby, marking the 11th consecutive road game for the Bulldogs, who have yet to suit up at home.

"(Westbrook) was our second in a row, and we hope to be on a three game winning streak when district starts," Jones said. "These road games are going to be good for us in the long run. You play a lot on the road, you learn to win on the road in some hostile environments."

Ira begins its district schedule Friday at Grady.

Sports Briefs

Lady Raiders host Pepperdine

The Texas Tech Lady Raiders, ranked second in the nation, will host Pepperdine at 2 p.m. Sunday at United Spirit Arena.

Baseball/softball booster clubs

The SHS baseball and softball booster clubs will meet at 6 p.m. Monday in the film room.

Football booster club

The SHS football booster club will meet at 7 p.m. Monday in the film room.

Volleyball tournament

There will be an indoor volleyball tournament Jan. 24 at the Scurry County Boys and Girls Club. Call Luis at 573-7321 for more information.

Football banquet

The Snyder Tigers football awards banquet will be held Jan. 10 at 6 p.m. at the First Baptist Church Family Life Center. Cost is $8 per person and food will be served at 6, and the awards ceremony will begin at 7.

Winslow will enter NFL draft

MIAMI (AP) — All-American tight end Kellen Winslow Jr. will forgo his senior season at Miami and enter the NFL draft.

Winslow, the son of Hall of Fame tight end Kellen Winslow, caught five passes for 48 yards in Miami's victory against rival Florida State in the Orange Bowl on Thursday night.

He is the third Miami underclassman to declare for the draft.

Lewis, Schottenheimer to Senior Bowl

CINCINNATI (AP) — Marvin Lewis and the Cincinnati Bengals' coaching staff will direct the North squad in the Senior Bowl on Jan. 24 in Mobile, Ala.

The NFL said Wednesday that Marty Schottenheimer and his San Diego Chargers' staff will coach the South team.

Area Sports Calendar

TUESDAY

Basketball: Snyder varsity girls at Midland Greenwood, 6:30
Ira varsity girls and boys at Roby, 6:30 p.m.
Hermleigh varsity girls and boys at Loraine, 6:30 p.m.

THURSDAY

Basketball: Snyder freshmen boys vs. Sweetwater, 6:30 p.m.
SJHS boys vs. Sweetwater, 5 p.m.
SJHS girls at Sweetwater, 5 p.m.

FRIDAY

Basketball: Snyder varsity girls vs. Denver City, district, 6:30 p.m.
Snyder varsity boys vs. Clyde, 8 p.m.
Ira varsity girls and boys at Grady, district opener, 6:30 p.m.
Snyder JV boys vs. Clyde, 5 p.m.
Snyder JV girls vs. Denver City, 5 p.m.

Snyder Bowling Leagues

Men's Commercial League

Team	W	L
Culligan	149	106
Timely Pawn	145.5	109.5
Robert Early's Weld	139	116
WTP Energy	135	120
The Shack	134.5	120.5
Good Guys	134	121
Circle M Welding	131	124
BJ Services	123.5	131.5
Anadarko	121	134
Ghost	65.5	189.5

High series: Cory Maxfield, scratch, 604; Roger Pavlik, handicap, 613.
High game: Barney Tate, scratch, 235; Larry Bufkin, handicap, 252.

Jack-N-Jill

Team	W	L
Outcasts	38	18
Team 10	36	20
Snyder Brick & Tile	34	22
Turkey Hunters	31	25
Team 8	30	26
JB's	29	27
Timely Finance	27.5	28.5
WTP Energy	27	29
Moments Captured	25	31
Snyder Iron & Metal	24.5	31.5
Snyder Lanes	22	34
Phantom Team	9	47

High series: Scratch: Jeff Smith, 626, Dana Stone, 524; **Handicap:** Cory Maxfield, 667, Dana Stone, 656.
High game: Scratch: Cory Maxfield, 245, Dana Stone, 213; **Handicap:** Cory Maxfield, 270, Dana Stone, 257.



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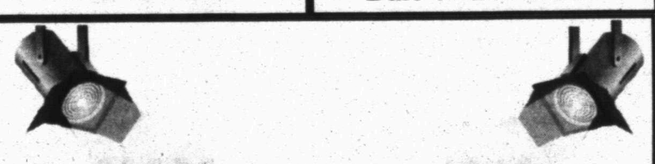
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1. Mitchell County Hospital Nursing Staff needed: LVN 7 am to 7 pm; LVN 7 pm to 7 am; CRNA 7 pm to 7 am; and RN 7 pm to 7 am.
2. Wallace Medical Prison Unit in Colorado City is taking applications for three LVNs for the 3 pm to 11 pm shift.
For further information contact Sandra Sullivan, Human Resources at (325) 728-3431 ext. 290 for more information.

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3773 Dalton 3-1¾-1cp, den, dining..$35T
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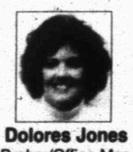
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2101 41st 3-1-1cp, near Elem. school .$30's
208 35th Neat 2-1, dining.....$23T
Round Top Acres Wonderful family home! 3-2, game room, small office, 5 acres $100's
3501 Houston - 3-1¾-1, fenced, storage bldg., close to Jr. High & West Elem. .....$50's
New Listing 2104 41st 4-1-1.....Call
3115 Ave. T w Contract Pending.....$26T
208 Chestnut on 4 lots, 3-2 Very cute $55T
3750 Sunset - 3-1½-2.....$53.5T
2411 27th - **Extra nice older home** - 3 or 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, carport.....$50's
2801 34th 3-1¾-2.....A Steal at $78T
2901 Westridge - **Wonderful Area & Great Home** - 3-2, 2 LA's, 2 car garage ....$100's
4507 Galveston - **You will love this!** - 3-2-2, with pool.....Call for more details
109 34th - **First Home!** - 3-1.....$20's
Charming 3110 Ave. U 3-2-cp $49,500
4003 Midland - Nearly new 4-2-2, open concept $90's
3606 Hill Ave. 3-2-1.....$44,900
3002 37th - **Updated & Cute,** brick 2-1 .$51T
Hermleigh 3 bedroom house w/4 apts $100T
835 Dunn - H Contract Pending ng, den $25T
Like New! 4-2 doublewide.....$39.5T
New Listing! 2700 42nd 2-2 corner lot, beautiful yard Contract Pending $47.5T

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3311 College - Building & 2 lots $40T
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N. College - 1 plus acres Excellent bldg. site $70T
1601 College - Shop w/office, fenced $30's
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5109 College Comm. Lot 2 acres ..$90's
College Ave. Frontage, over 7 acres ..Call
S. College - Excellent bldg. site, 1.61 A's $80T
Golf Land - Great buy & extra income ..$50's
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3201 Houston - **Walk to school** - **Immaculate** 3-2-2.....$90's
2803 El Paso - **Open Concept** - Updated 4-2 plus office.....$100's
2609 37th 3-3-2, 3 LA's, hobby room REDUCED
513 34th Updated 2-1, Great rental prop. $17T
One of a kind! Custom, 2605 33rd ...Call
2274 McMullan - Mobile home site, has well $5T
1815 Garden Lane - Four lots, shop with loading area and income property $10T
1626 Pecan Farm Rd. - Pecan Farm/Approx. 800 trees, 15 acres, MH, equipment, truck $100T
3749 Avondale - Updated & Nice 3-1¾, storage $30's
C-City 1640 Austin 3-1-cp $9.9T

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Gary Brewer Rd. 3-2-cp, 1 acre, fresh paint, ...REDUCED $72T
Country Charm Contract Pending ..$68T
Hermleigh - 80 A's, 3-2-2, 22 out buildings $100's

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C-City - 3-2-2, 1 acre, extra lot for MH ..$60's
C-City - Beautiful 2-story, 3-2-2, balcony, landscaped, formal living & den ....$100's

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Prime Location 2567 Blockline Rd. 4 acre tract.....$15T
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Large Family Home -- 2807 Westridge 6 bdrms, 4 baths, 4-car garage Reduced $175T
2609 37th 3-3-2.....$107.5T
New! 3001 Beaumont 3-2-2, 2 LA's $97.5T
4517 Galveston 3-2-2-2LA's $102.5T
3201 Houston 3-2-2, lrg den ..Red. $92T
2904 34th 2-2½, 2 living areas ...$89.5T
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One year after rape scandal...

Air Force Academy cadets under pressure

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. (AP) — A year after the rape scandal at the Air Force Academy broke, some cadets say the atmosphere is so poisonous that they are afraid a simple request for a date or a sip of alcohol could end their careers.

And some cadets warn that the once-punishing training regimen has been relaxed so much that the Air Force's effectiveness could suffer. Yet, some freshmen say they are pleased they no longer are treated "like dirt."

In recent interviews with The Associated Press, a dozen cadets, from freshmen to seniors, described their struggles since female cadets began complaining they were reprimanded or ostracized after they reported being raped.

The cadets gathered in two separate groups in a lecture hall. Academy officials arranged for volunteers to participate but left the room before questioning began.

The sweeping changes imposed last year to curb assaults, drinking and other problems have cadets walking a tightrope.

"A lot of guys are afraid to even ask a girl out because she will take it wrong," said freshman Paul Zielinski of Erie, Pa.

Janelle Hyde of Palm Desert, Calif., said she cannot go anywhere alone with a male upperclassman, while fellow freshman Katherine Smith of Paris, Texas, complained: "Some guys say, 'I won't date her because she will call rape.'"

In a statement, the academy's new superintendent, Lt. Gen. John Rosa, acknowledged there have been growing pains with the new policies, which were prompted by at least 142 assaults — many of them involving alcohol — between 1993 and 2002.

"I would hope that our young men are not afraid to approach our young women, but it's understandable, given all the attention given to gender issues here, that some might be overly cautious in their contacts," he said.

In January 2002, cadets began contacting members of Congress with complaints of assault and indifference from commanders. A year later, cadets began going public, touching off several investigations. The Air Force ultimately installed four new leaders and drew up the new policies.

Among other things, the academy issued sterner warnings about sexual assault, harassment, fraternization and supplying alcohol to underage cadets. It also ordered cadets to keep the doors to their rooms open all the way whenever they have a visitor, and for the first time said cadets may not enter the room of a student of the opposite sex without knocking, announcing themselves and waiting for the door to be opened.

"If there was ever a time in the history of that school for overzealousness to set things right this is the time," said retired Maj. Gen. Josiah Bunting, who served on an independent commission that investigated the school.

Former cadet Kira Mountjoy-Pepka, who left school after she said she was sexually assaulted and punished for reporting it, said cadets are being unfairly blamed for the failures of previous leaders.

"They are refusing to address the real issue — crimes committed by officers after we reported the sexual assaults," she said. "Instead, they are making the lives of cadets miserable."

In the fallout from the scandal, the academy has tried to make the place more humane for freshmen. They are no longer screamed at by their superiors, and the grueling physical training was eased in hopes of giving new cadets a chance to better absorb information on military law, sexual assault, gender sensitivity and other issues.

Some changes, including the removal of the academy's famous sign that said "Bring Me Men," are seen as cosmetic, even silly, by cadets. One campus joke is that the sign will be replaced with one saying: "Bring Me Mom."

"Most of the upperclassmen are frustrated with all the change," said senior Monessa Catuncan of Dallas. "We will be known as 'the last class with training'" — a twist on a crude slogan adopted by the last all-male class.

How effective is Treasury Department agency?

Senators examine blocking terror money

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Treasury Department agency charged with stopping the flow of terrorist money is under scrutiny from key lawmakers after twice failing to freeze the assets of people identified as terrorist financiers by U.S. allies.

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, and Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., sent a letter just before Christmas citing widespread concerns about sloppy record keeping and lax enforcement inside Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control.

"Other nations rightly look to the United States for leadership and information in the war on terrorism. We should not be playing catch-up," the two senators wrote OFAC.

Though an internal investigation in 2002 recommended OFAC make changes to ensure it has the legal authority to make sure banks are blocking the assets of sanctioned terrorists, the agency hasn't taken steps to do so, according to the letter obtained by The Associated Press.

"This leaves OFAC in a position of not knowing what it does not know," the two senators wrote. "While many financial institutions report their own violations when they are detected, we do not have the luxury of assuming that all financial institutions do this."

"The dangers of terrorism financing operating unhindered are too great to take a passive approach," the letter said.

Treasury Department spokeswoman Tara Bradshaw said Wednesday she was unfamiliar with the lawmakers' complaint, and OFAC Director Richard Newcomb was out of town and unavailable for comment.

OFAC plays a key role in the war on terrorism. It is charged with freezing the bank accounts and other financial assets of countries, companies and individuals who are deemed enemies of the United States — everyone from Saddam Hussein to Osama bin Laden.

Based on orders from Congress and the president or just raw intelligence, OFAC names people to a "specially designated nationals" list that requires all financial institutions to block their money. It is one of the most powerful tools for choking off terrorist finances.

The office has been run for years by Newcomb, a career official who has served both Republican and Democratic presidents. The agency, however, has had its share of controversy.

In 2002, the Treasury inspector general issued a report questioning OFAC's effectiveness in the war on terror.

Some concerns cited by Grassley and Baucus stem from that report, but the two lawmakers also questioned why OFAC had failed to block the assets of several people designated by allies as terrorist financiers and publicly reported by the news media.

In one case, AP reported that the United Nations and European Union in 2001, before the Sept. 11 suicide hijackings, had ordered their members to freeze the assets of several high-ranking al-Qaida leaders, including bin Laden's brother-in-law and a security coordinator. OFAC did not.

More recently, a money laundering newsletter divulged that three people listed in a December 2002 U.N. report as terrorist financiers weren't blacklisted by OFAC, even though some of the financiers' groups were blocked.

"While the U.N. report identified these persons as being involved in terrorist financing, OFAC apparently had not," Grassley and Baucus complained to Newcomb.

"Moreover, OFAC had enough information to accuse the organizations of aiding terrorist financing but somehow failed to also identify these persons as aiding terrorist financing, despite their clear links to the groups," they added.

The lawmakers also raised concerns about sloppy OFAC record keeping about people and financial transactions that have been blocked, and with special licenses for people who are given exemptions from certain financial sanctions.

"Inaccurate information is not only inefficient, but impairs OFAC's ability to aid other agencies," the lawmakers said.

Iran government pledges...

Quake-razed historic citadel to be rebuilt

BAM, Iran (AP) — The citadel that defined the Iranian city of Bam was renovated, added to and rebuilt over hundreds of years. After it was almost completely destroyed in an earthquake a week ago, Iran is promising to restore it once again.

The earthquake, which killed more than 30,000 people on Dec. 26, ruined the Arg-e-Bam, or Citadel of Bam, one of Iran's architectural jewels and the world's largest mud-brick fortress. What new rulers, armies and the ravages of weather could not do over 2,200 years, the magnitude 6.6 temblor did in just seconds.

Most of the 30 circular guard towers have crumbled into piles of dirt. The bathhouses, gymnasiums and a Zoroastrian temple that survived for centuries are gone.

The site is said to have had a citadel city since 250 B.C., but it has been rebuilt through the centuries. Most of the structures seen by modern-day tourists were thought to range in age from a few hundreds years to perhaps 1,000 years. Much of the fortress was built under the Safavids, the dynasty that ruled Iran from the late 1400s to the 1720s.

Even as aftershocks sent more of its walls crashing down, Iran's government vowed to rebuild it.

"The citadel was almost as precious as the lives lost in the earthquake," Fakoor Pass, director of cultural heritage for Kerman province where Bam is located, told The Associated Press on Friday. Officials are "100 percent sure we will" rebuild it, Pass added.

The citadel, which covered about 2½square miles, was made up of a looming fortress on a rocky hill top and the ancient town, encircled by walls standing about 80 feet tall in some spots. Along the walls were the circular watchtowers, with slits for archers, and gates with peaked archways.

The structures were all built of sun-baked bricks and straw — which under the quake's punishment were reduced to dirt that avalanched down the hill's slopes.

Now the distinctive square tower that stood as the highest part of the fortress has disappeared. Many of the watchtowers are circular stumps with dirt cascaded down the sides. Upper parts of the walls have toppled as if hit by a barrage of cannon fire. Most of the ancient town's buildings lie flattened.

The interior of the fortress once housed bathhouses, schools, two mosques and a temple for followers of Zoroastrianism, the religion that dominated Iran before the coming of Islam.

Three people were in the fortress when the quake struck: Two guards were crushed at their watchposts at the main entrance, and Pass helped rescue the citadel's custodian, who survived seven hours under the ruins before being dug out.

With most of Bam's surviving population sheltering through freezing nights in tents next to the ruins of their homes — and hundreds. perhaps thousands more corpses still buried in the rubble of modern-day Bam — rebuilding antiquity might seem the least of the town's worries.

But Iranian President Mohammad Khatami vowed to restore the citadel to its former glory, saying last week that a committee of foreign experts would determine how best to rebuild it.

Texas families visit soldiers on video conference

FORT HOOD (AP) — A giant TV screen in an Army post conference room was the closest Laura Wieghat had come to her husband in the nine months since he deployed to Iraq.

She and her three bouncing daughters were among the 10 families who got to visit with soldiers with the 4th Infantry Division through a video conference.

"You got some butterflies in your stomach, you get excited, nervous. I couldn't eat this morning," Wieghat, 23, said as she balanced a toddler on her hip. "It's just amazing to see how everyone could put this together."

The video conference was also attended by Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi, U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, and U.S. Rep. Chet Edwards, D-Waco.

Wieghat said the visit provided reassurance for her daughters, ages 6, 4 and 2, who have been asking when their father would come home. Their father, Spc. Jack Wieghat, spoke to his family from Tikrit, near the rural area where the Fort Hood-based 4th Infantry captured Saddam Hussein in a safehouse.

"He just kept saying 'I love you' and that's all really we said. I really didn't know what to say," Wieghat said. "He's ready to come home. He's been ready to come home since he first went up there."

The families were chosen because their soldiers, for different reasons, had not been granted their two-week R&R leave since deployment.

"I think I'd have walked from Washington to see the faces on those little children," Edwards said. "I wish I had been Norman Rockwell. To see the pure beam of joy in a child's face to see dad for the first time on video conference just can't even be put into words, but it humbles me and inspires me."

The officials visited the Army post after touring the Waco Veterans Hospital, which the VA recommended closing to streamline services and shift them closer to where veterans live.

Wieghat said she was glad to meet the officials and know that they cared, but she wasn't as focused on their statements as she was on her husband's.

"I wasn't paying attention. I was just mostly excited to know I'm seeing my husband and the kids are seeing their daddy," she said.

News Briefs

Police search for brick-throwing juveniles

HOUSTON (AP) — Police are searching for a group of juveniles who threw bricks and pieces of concrete from a freeway overpass, damaging at least seven vehicles.

The windshield on Elroy Davila's 18-wheeler was smashed Thursday night as he drove on northbound Texas 288 at U.S. 59. He said he saw other vehicles that also had been struck when he pulled his rig to the side of the road.

"These kids are trying to prove to their friends that they can be macho," Davila told the Houston Chronicle. "They just want to do their little adventure and laugh about it."

Houston police said there were no reported injuries from the falling debris.

Davila said Houston's traffic-clogged freeways are well-known among long-haul truckers such as himself.

"It's a major pain in the keister driving through it, (but) I didn't expect this," said Davila, who was hauling dishwasher parts from Brownsville to Illinois when the incident happened.

Bodies of 2 men found in trunk identified

DONNA (AP) — Hidalgo County authorities have identified two McAllen brothers whose bodies were found in the trunk of a car.

The bodies of Gerardo Calderon, 32, and Eduardo Calderon, 21, were found Wednesday in a car abandoned in a field about eight miles north of Donna, the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Department said Friday.

An autopsy was planned to determine the cause of their deaths, investigator Gustavo Acosta said. He said the autopsy results likely would be released Saturday or Monday.

Authorities were questioning several people and trying to establish who last saw the victims alive, he said. Neighbors first saw the car parked in the field early Wednesday morning, but no one called police until that evening.

The department had not named any suspects in the murders, Acosta said.

Donna is located about 40 miles west of Brownsville and 15 miles north of the Mexican border.

Enron whistleblower endorses Clark

LITTLE ROCK (AP) — The woman who blew the whistle on Enron Corp.'s accounting problems endorsed Wesley Clark for president Friday, saying she believes he has the integrity to run the country.

In a telephone conference call, Sherron Watkins of Houston said she first saw Clark speak at a conference over the summer and was impressed with his vision and composure. She said she began supporting him during a national "Draft Clark" campaign before he announced as a candidate for the Democratic nomination.

"He really floored me with his long-term vision for America and how he handled the question-and-answer session with his answers on the war on Iraq and the war on terrorism," she said.

A former Enron vice president, Watkins warned company chairman Kenneth Lay in 2001 that the firm could collapse as a result of extensive false accounting. She resigned after the company filed for bankruptcy and was named one of Time magazine's Persons of the Year for 2002.

"My Enron experience has brought home to me just how important the tone at the top is," she said.

Watkins said she believes President Bush has misled the public, "blurring the line" between the war in Iraq and efforts against terrorism. She said she supports Clark because "he's got integrity, he's not going to mislead the American people and he has a longterm vision."

As a retired Army general, Watkins said, Clark has the credentials to combat terrorism and the diplomatic skills to ease tensions between the U.S. and allies who opposed the war in Iraq.

"I think Wes Clark is just the person to help rebuild and restore the damage that has been done by the way we bullied our way into the war," she said.

On the campaign trail, Clark has opposed the war in Iraq and criticized Bush for his management of the situation.

Because of scandals at corporations like Enron and Worldcom, Clark has said, he would increase efforts to hold corporate America responsible for misconduct. But he said he would do so without writing new rules and regulations.

Clark spokesman Matt Bennett said Watkin's name was recognized by a campaign worker reviewing donor lists, and the campaign solicited her endorsement.

"Her brave stance on behalf of what's right against the special interests at Enron is what made her a national figure and what makes her such a valuable endorsement for General Clark," he said.

Bill White sworn in as Houston mayor

HOUSTON (AP) — Bill White, sworn in as Houston's 60th mayor on Friday, asked residents for their help in taking the "city forward and up to the next level."

"We will flourish or not, not based on who's mayor ... but based on the efforts of citizens who are volunteers in the community. That's what makes Houston great," White said during his inauguration, held at Miller Outdoor Theatre and attended by several hundred people. City council members were also sworn in Friday.

He asked residents to do two things to improve the city: become involved with community organizations and make an effort to become friends with people from different backgrounds. He cited Houston's diversity as one of its many strengths.

"If you do those two things and we have a city government as good as the people, there is no holding Houston back from being the greatest city in the history of the world," he said.

White, whose wife Andrea was by his side when he was sworn in, said he would make the city's neighborhoods better by working to provide them with the types of parks, libraries and health clinics that improve the quality of life.

Mary Delany, who attended Friday's inauguration, said she would do her part to improve Houston by continuing to volunteer at her church and with the Boy and Girl Scouts.

"If citizens continue to do their part of the job, we will take control of our neighborhoods," said Delany, 80, a retired food service worker with the Houston Independent School District.

Delany said she hopes White eases the city's street construction woes.

During his 20-minute speech, White also said Houston does have problems, like air pollution and flooding, that don't have quick fixes.

"These issues don't mean we're a bad city," he said. "They're a consequence of our success."

White, 49, succeeds Lee Brown, who was barred by term limits from seeking a fourth two-year term.

White spent nearly $9 million — including $2.2 million of his own wealth — in what became the city's most expensive mayoral race. It was his first run for public office.

White beat former city councilman Orlando Sanchez during a runoff election last month.

During the campaign, White promised to use his management experience as head of an engineering and real estate conglomerate to get control of taxes and spending and make government more efficient.

White, state Democratic party chairman from 1995 to 1998, served as a deputy energy secretary in the Clinton administration.

Brown, who attended White's inauguration, said he is proud of his accomplishments as mayor, including the creation of a light rail line, which began operating on Thursday. White arrived to his inauguration aboard a light rail car.

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2nd Front Page

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

Mars rover nears expected landing

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — A NASA spacecraft was closing in on Mars, carrying a six-wheeled vehicle that is to roam the Red Planet's rocky surface in search of geologic evidence that Mars was once suitable for life.

The spacecraft cradling the Spirit rover was scheduled to land Saturday night on Mars, alighting in an ancient crater just south of the planet's equator.

At the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, members of the mission braced themselves for the unmanned spacecraft's anticipated landing on Mars' ruddy surface.

"We have done everything we know to do to ensure these missions will be a success," said JPL director Charles Elachi, adding there were no guarantees. A safe landing, other members of the mission said, would depend on Mars.

"One gust of wind or one pointy rock means we could have a bad night," said Steve Squyres, the mission's main scientist.

Previously, one in three attempts to land spacecraft on Mars have failed.

"It's an incredibly difficult place to land. Some have called it the 'death planet' for good reason," said Ed Weiler, NASA's associate administrator for space science.

NASA could hear from Spirit within 10 minutes of landing, but spotty communications could also delay confirmation and transmission of the rover's first pictures for up to 24 hours.

"It could be a long wait," Squyres said.

If NASA does not hear from it by late Sunday, "We are in serious trouble," project manager Pete Theisinger said.

The $820 million project also includes a twin rover, Opportunity, which is set to arrive on Mars on Jan. 24.

The camera- and instrument-laden rovers were designed to spend 90 days analyzing Martian rocks and soil for clues that could reveal whether the Red Planet was ever a warmer, wetter place capable of sustaining life.

Today, Mars is a dry and cold world. But ancient river channels and other water-carved features spied from orbit suggest that Mars may have had a more hospitable past.

"We see these intriguing hints Mars may have been a different place long ago," Squyres said.

The rovers were not designed to look for life. Instead, NASA built them to prospect for evidence that liquid water — a necessary ingredient for life — once persisted on the surface of the planet. A direct search for life on Mars is at least a decade away, NASA scientists said.

Together, the twin robots were launched in the most intensive scientific assault on another planetary body since the Apollo missions to the moon, said Orlando Figueroa, director of NASA's Mars exploration program.

NASA launched the 384-pound Spirit and its twin in hopes they would become the fourth and fifth U.S. spacecraft to survive landing on Mars. Twenty other spacecraft from various nations have failed.

NASA's last attempt at landing on Mars, in 1999, failed when a software glitch sent the Polar Lander crashing to the ground. Since then, the space agency has increased oversight of its missions.

Bush cool to North Korea visit by U.S.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Bush administration, pressing for the irreversible and verifiable elimination of North Korea's nuclear program, distanced itself Friday from planned visits there by congressional aides and private scientists.

White House spokeswoman Claire Buchan said that a six-nation effort to address the issue — which began last August — is the appropriate forum for such an undertaking.

The American experts have been dealing with the North Koreans as separate groups but apparently will be traveling to the communist state in the same time frame and may join together for the proposed tour of the nuclear facility at Yongbyon.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is sending Republican staff member Keith Luse and a Democratic colleague, Frank Jannuzi. Both are East Asia experts and work respectively for committee chairman Richard Lugar, R-Ind., and Joseph Biden of Delaware, the panel's ranking Democrat.

A second group planning a trip consists of John Lewis of Stanford University; Sig Hecker of the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, a nuclear weapons research center; and Jack Pritchard, a former State Department official who left the government last summer.

The six-nation effort to halt the nuclear program began with a meeting in Beijing. Efforts to reconvene the discussions last month fell through. Participants, aside from the United States and North Korea, are South Korea, China, Japan and Russia.

The United States is hoping that North Korea can be persuaded to disarm through security guarantees as well as economic benefits.

Asked about the plans of the two groups to visit Pyongyang, State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said they are not acting on behalf of the administration.

"Any efforts that complicate prospects or undertakings to reconvene six- party talks and to achieve forward movement in dismantling North Korea's nuclear program aren't helpful," Ereli said.

Asked whether the administration opposes the visit, he said, "We neither facilitate nor oppose."

There has been nó outside access to the nuclear facility at Yongbyon since U.N. inspectors were expelled at the end of 2002.

The North says it has completed reprocessing 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods at Yongbyon. If true, that would yield enough plutonium for half a dozen atomic bombs. North Korea is believed to already have one or two nuclear bombs.

In addition to the plutonium bomb project at Yongbyon, North Korea also has acknowledged a separate effort to produce a uranium bomb.

Terror threat means uncertainty over flight schedules continues

WASHINGTON (AP) — Facing another week of uncertainty over the terrorist threat from the air, international airlines and foreign governments greeted increased security with a combination of skepticism and support as flight cancellations and delays spread.

"The decision to operate next Monday's flight to Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) will be kept under review throughout the weekend," British Airways says on its Web site.

Airlines have canceled seven flights since Wednesday, with Mexico City and London the points of origin and Los Angeles, Washington Dulles International Airport and Riyadh, the destinations. Dulles was the takeoff point for the hijacked flight that destroyed part of the Pentagon in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

But British Airways' afternoon flight from London's Heathrow Airport to Dulles was approved to make its regular service after the government said it was safe, and it was reported by U.S. officials to have taken off on schedule. The plane was delayed for final security checks at Heathrow, however, but officials said it eventually would make the flight. The airline had been forced to cancel the flight on Thursday and Friday because of security concerns.

"The Department for Transport has confirmed to us that they are satisfied that it is safe for the aircraft to go," said an airline spokeswoman, on the condition of anonymity.

South Korea's national police agency responded sympathetically to American requests for international cooperation, saying it would deploy armed officers on individual U.S.-bound flights if warranted based on information about a terrorist threat to any specific flight.

Aeromexico canceled two flights from Mexico City to Los Angeles because of U.S. security concerns and a third turned around after takeoff because Mexico thought the airline hadn't screened passengers properly.

Authorities on the ground "said that we didn't search coats and sweaters worn by customers," said Fernando Ceballos, Aeromexico's assistant director of airports. "We didn't agree with that, but we ordered the plane back anyway."

In France, a police official said six cases of mistaken identity were behind the pre-Christmas grounding of six Air France flights between Paris and Los Angeles over terrorism fears. The names of six passengers sounded similar to those of terrorist suspects provided by the FBI, prompting the French government to ground the planes, the official said.

Two arrested Friday in Snyder

Arrests

A 21-year-old man was taken into custody at 11:38 p.m. Friday on a warrant for failure to appear and bail jumping.

A juvenile was placed into custody in the 2000 block of 35th at 6:55 p.m. Friday for possession of marijuana under 2 oz., and evading arrest.

Theft

A theft was reported to authorities at 2 p.m. Friday. An unknown amount of money had been stolen from a residence at 1212 Ave. L. An offense report for Class B theft was submitted.

Disturbance

A caller reported a fight involving several juveniles in the Snyder Shopping Center at 8:43 p.m. Friday.

Criminal mischief

An officer was requested at the Texas Savings Bank ATM in the 4000 block of College Friday morning. The machine first appeared to have been tampered with, but the problem was later confirmed as a mechanical failure.

A DPS trooper patrolling on Hwy. 350, three miles south of Snyder at 2 p.m. Friday reported a vehicle parked on the side of the road that had been vandalized.

A caller reported at 12:32 a.m. today that someone had broken a window out of a car parked in the 1000 block of 13th.

A resident of the 4000 block of College Ave. reported at 12:48 a.m. Saturday that his vehicle was severely scratched while parked at the American Legion.

Found property

A caller reported Friday from Lake J.B. Thomas that he had found a Scurry County road sign. He advised that he would return the sign to the sheriff's department.

Obituaries

John Harding

1981-2004

BIG SPRING — John Harding of Borden County died Thursday, Jan. 1, in Borden County from injuries received in an automobile accident.

Service for Mr. Harding, 22, is set for 2 p.m. Monday in the First Baptist Church in Big Spring. The Rev. Randy Hardman, pastor of the Gail First Baptist Church, and the Rev. Kevin Parker, pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church, will officiate. Interment will follow in Trinity Memorial Park under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home.

Born on Sept. 8, 1981 in Colorado City, he graduated from Borden County High School in 2000 and was a member of the 1997 state champion football team. Mr. Harding had attended Howard College and was attending Texas Tech University. He attended the First Baptist Church in Gail.

His grandfather, Dalton Carr; his grandparents, Pat and Vergie Harding; and an uncle, Randy Carr, preceded him in death.

Survivors include his parents, Joe and Rhonda Harding of Vincent; his sister, Sarah Harding of Vincent; his brother, Clay Harding of Vincent; his maternal grandmother, Emma Carr of Big Spring; his uncles, Rodney Carr and Rich Carr, both of Big Spring; his uncle and aunt, Freddy and Judy Brown of Big Spring; his aunt, Billie Harding of Vincent; and his cousins, Emily Carr and Brian Brown.

Family visitation will be from 3-4 p.m. Sunday at the funeral home.

The family suggests memorials to First Baptist Church Youth Fund, Box 297 in Gail, 79738.

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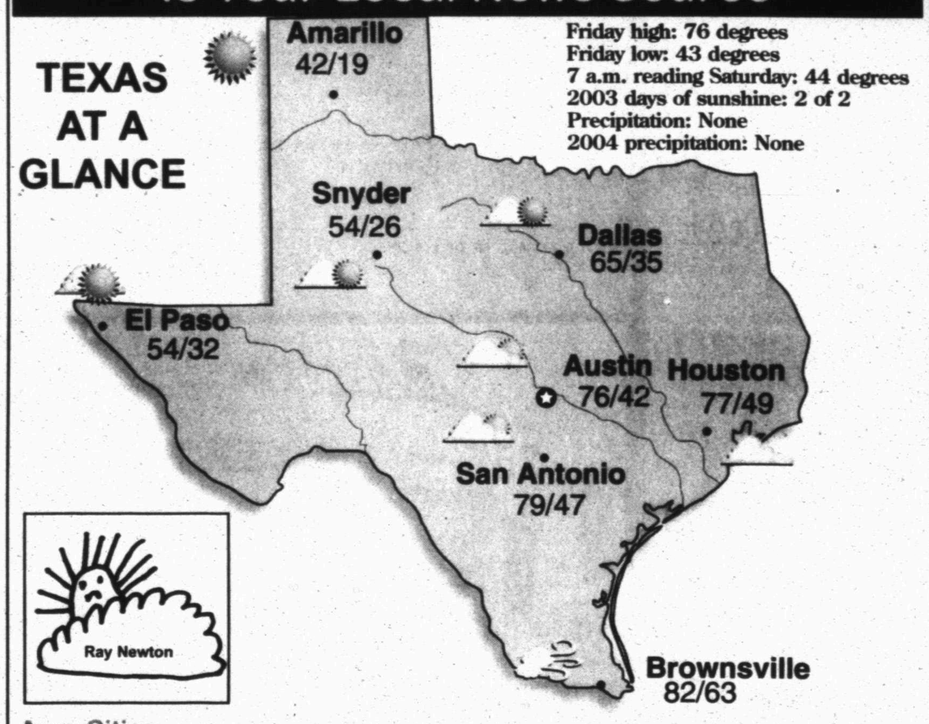
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Today's Weather

Local 3-Day Forecast

Sun 1/4	Mon 1/5	Tue 1/6
54/26	50/27	60/41
Partly cloudy. High 54F. Winds NW at 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly sunny. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the upper 20s.	Fair. Highs in the low 60s and lows in the low 40s.
Sunrise 7:46 AM Sunset 5:51 PM	Sunrise 7:47 AM Sunset 5:52 PM	Sunrise 7:47 AM Sunset 5:52 PM

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Friday high: 76 degrees
Friday low: 43 degrees
7 a.m. reading Saturday: 44 degrees
2003 days of sunshine: 2 of 2
Precipitation: None
2004 precipitation: None

Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	58	31	mst sunny	El Paso	54	32	mst sunny	Midland	55	28	mst sunny
Amarillo	42	19	sunny	Fort Stockton	60	34	pt sunny	Raymondville	83	59	pt sunny
Austin	76	42	cloudy	Gainesville	60	29	pt sunny	Rosenberg	77	49	cloudy
Beaumont	76	48	cloudy	Greenville	67	31	cloudy	San Antonio	79	47	cloudy
Brownsville	82	63	windy	Houston	77	49	cloudy	San Marcos	78	43	cloudy
Brownwood	66	34	pt sunny	Kingsville	83	54	cloudy	Sulphur Springs	68	33	cloudy
Corpus Christi	79	54	cloudy	Livingston	76	42	cloudy	Sweetwater	57	30	pt sunny
Corsicana	72	36	cloudy	Longview	72	36	rain	Tyler	71	35	cloudy
Dallas	65	35	pt sunny	Lubbock	49	22	mst sunny	Weatherford	62	30	pt sunny
Del Rio	74	47	pt sunny	Lufkin	76	41	cloudy	Wichita Falls	55	25	pt sunny

National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	70	54	cloudy	Houston	77	49	cloudy	Phoenix	58	38	pt sunny
Boston	47	38	rain	Los Angeles	61	42	sunny	San Francisco	49	39	pt sunny
Chicago	33	21	snow	Miami	79	67	pt sunny	Seattle	27	16	mst sunny
Dallas	65	35	pt sunny	Minneapolis	14	-3	sn shower	St. Louis	47	22	rain
Denver	31	7	sunny	New York	51	47	rain	Washington, DC	64	57	rain

Moon Phases

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

UV Index

Sun 1/4	Mon 1/5	Tue 1/6
3	3	3
Low	Low	Low

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

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JAN 04 2004

Best Available Copy

All die in charter jet crash

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) — A charter airliner carrying 141 people — mostly French tourists — crashed into the Red Sea shortly after takeoff Saturday, officials said. No survivors were reported and at least one body was pulled from the water.

The Boeing 737 jet took off from the resort of Sharm el-Sheikh shortly before 5 a.m. and quickly disappeared from radar about seven miles south of the airport, airport officials said on customary condition of anonymity.

The plane, which was headed to Cairo for a crew change before continuing to Paris, made no distress call, airport officials said.

The crash occurred amid a week of heightened concerns about terrorist threats from the air that have led to increased security and canceled flights around the world. But an initial statement from Egypt's Aviation Ministry called the crash an "accident" that may have been caused by a mechanical problem.

The ministry said no one was believed to have survived.

Rescue teams recovered one body after finding the wreckage of the jet close to the coast, with suitcases and other debris floating in the water, according to the Egyptian news agency MENA.

They were searching survivors but none had been found, an official was quoted as saying by MENA.

Officials said 135 passengers, including 129 French and six Egyptians, as well as six crew members were aboard the jet operated by the private Egyptian company Air Flash.

Engineers from the national carrier EgyptAir were assisting in investigating the cause of the crash. Officials at Air Flash could not immediately be reached for comment.

A man at the French Embassy in Cairo said he had no immediate comment.

The weather was clear in Sharm el-Sheikh and other flights were taking off without incident, officials said.

The Boeing 737 had arrived early Saturday from Italy, dropping off passengers in Sharm el-Sheikh. The new passengers then boarded for the flight to Paris via Cairo. Air Flash is a small carrier that had just two Boeing 737s, according to airport officials.

Two brothers reunited after more than 20 years apart

CLEVELAND (AP) — Two brothers who hadn't seen each other in more than 20 years were reunited on New Year's Eve — at a hospital.

Joe and George Ipser grew up in Cleveland. Joe joined the Army and fought in World War II. George, nine years younger, served in the Korean War.

Each brother married, had children and earned a living driving trucks. Joe moved to Tennessee, George to Las Vegas.

As time passed, they lost track of each other. There was no falling out; they say they just drifted apart.

In the 1990s, Joe moved back to Cleveland, settling in the same neighborhood where he grew up. George returned to Cleveland in 2002.

The brothers' lives could have intersected at any time.

They had their hair cut by the same barber. They sought medical treatment at the same clinic. And George listed his name and number in the phone book.

Then on Wednesday, George arrived at Louis Stokes VA Medical Center about 12:45 p.m. His back was killing him and he was worried about his kidneys.

Joe checked in about a half-hour later. His heart was beating too fast and he felt woozy.

The brothers lay three beds apart in a 12-bed acute-care ward.

Once staff members figured out the men must be brothers, they gently approached each about the other.

Evidence of Arctic hunters discovered

WASHINGTON (AP) — A people who may have been ancestors of the first Americans lived in Arctic Siberia, enduring one of the most unforgiving environments on Earth at the height of the Ice Age, according to researchers who discovered the oldest evidence yet of humans living near the frigid gateway to the New World.

Russian scientists uncovered a 30,000-year-old site where ancient hunters lived on the Yana River in Siberia, some 300 miles north of the Arctic Circle and not far from the Bering land bridge that then connected Asia with North America.

"Although a direct connection remains tenuous, the Yana ... site indicates that humans extended deep into the Arctic during colder (Ice Age) times," the authors wrote in a study appearing this week in the journal Science.

The researchers found stone tools, ivory weapons and the butchered bones of mammoths, bison, bear, lion and hare, all animals that would have been available to hunters during that Ice Age period.

Using a dating technique that measures the ratios of carbon, the researchers determined the artifacts were deposited at the site about 30,000 years before the present. That would be about twice as old as Monte Verde in Chile, the most ancient human life known in the American continents.

Donald K. Grayson, a paleoanthropologist at the University of Washington in Seattle, said the discovery is very significant because it is so much earlier than any other proven evidence of people living in the frigid lands of Siberia that formed the gateway to the Americas.

"Until this site was reported, the earliest site in Bering land bridge area was dated at about 11,000 years ago," said Grayson. "Every other site that had been thought to have been early enough to have something to do with peopling of the New World has been shown not to be so."

At the time of the Yana occupation, much of the high latitudes on the Earth were in the grip of an ice age that sent glaciers creeping over much of what is now Europe, Canada and the northern United States.

But the Yana River area was ice free, a dry flood plain without glaciers. It was home to mammoth, horse, musk ox and other animals that provided food for the human hunters who braved Arctic blasts to live there.

"Abundant game means lots of food," Julie Brigham-Grette of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, said in Science. "It was not stark tundra as one might imagine."

Among the artifacts found at the Yana site were weapons that resembled some found at a Clovis, N.M. site dated around 11,000 years old. But Grayson and others said the evidence is weak linking those implements to the tool and weapon techniques used by the Clovis people. Similar artifacts have also been found in Europe and western Asia, Grayson said.

"The similarities (in the tools and weapons) are not enough to prove they were ancestral to the Clovis people in the New World," said Grayson.

Some experts, however, still hold out hope that the new discovery provides important new clues about the ancient migration from Asia to the Americas.

Finding evidence of human habitation at the Yana site "makes it plausible that the first peopling of the Americas occurred prior to the last glacial maximum," Daniel Mann of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, said in Science. The last glacial maximum was 20,000 to 25,000 years ago.

Grayson and others, however, said more evidence is needed before it becomes widely accepted that it was people from the Yana site who migrated to the New World.

Steve Irwin criticized for taking infant son to crocodile feeding

BRISBANE, Australia (AP) — "Crocodile hunter" Steve Irwin's latest stunt — hand feeding a large crocodile while holding his infant son — drew fire from viewers Saturday, a visit by police and the promise of a government investigation.

Before a crowd of onlookers at his reptile park in Beerwah, north of Brisbane, Irwin on Friday cradled his month-old son, Robert, under one arm and dangled a piece of chicken from the other hand in front of a 13-foot crocodile.

The croc quickly snapped up the meat.

"Good boy, Bob," Irwin said once the crocodile's jaws snapped shut, according to the tabloid Herald Sun.

The moment was also captured by Channel 7 and Channel 10, with viewers later jamming phone lines to express outrage at Irwin's actions, media reports said.

The stunt drew comparisons with singer Michael Jackson handling of his infant son in Berlin in November 2002.

The newspaper The Australian called Irwin's "a bizarre act at his Sunshine Coast zoo that mirrored Michael Jackson's dangling of his newborn over a balcony."

Irwin defended his actions, saying the tot was never in danger.

"I was in complete control of the crocodile. Robert was tucked right in my arm," said Irwin, the Herald Sun reported on Saturday.

His American wife, Terri, who handed the baby over to Irwin in the enclosure and giggled at the spectacle, agreed.

"It was a wonderful sensory experience for him (the baby). He dug it," she said.

Police officers went to the zoo to tell Irwin that people were objecting to the incident, but said he had not committed any criminal offense, local media reported Saturday.

Today's chuckle

5 boys find check for thousands in snow

ASPEN, Colo. (AP) — In a resort town that caters to some of the nation's biggest spenders, even the stuff in the lost-and-found department can be eye-popping.



Five boys found a check for $23,901 in the snow and turned it over to police on Wednesday.

"The boys came in their ski gear and said they had found a large check, and we expected it to be for a few hundred dollars," police spokeswoman Kathy Tolle said. "They handed it over, and it was for $23,000."

The check was written by an Aspen investment group on a local bank. Both were notified of the find, Tolle said.

Police also took the boys' phone numbers, in case a reward is forthcoming.

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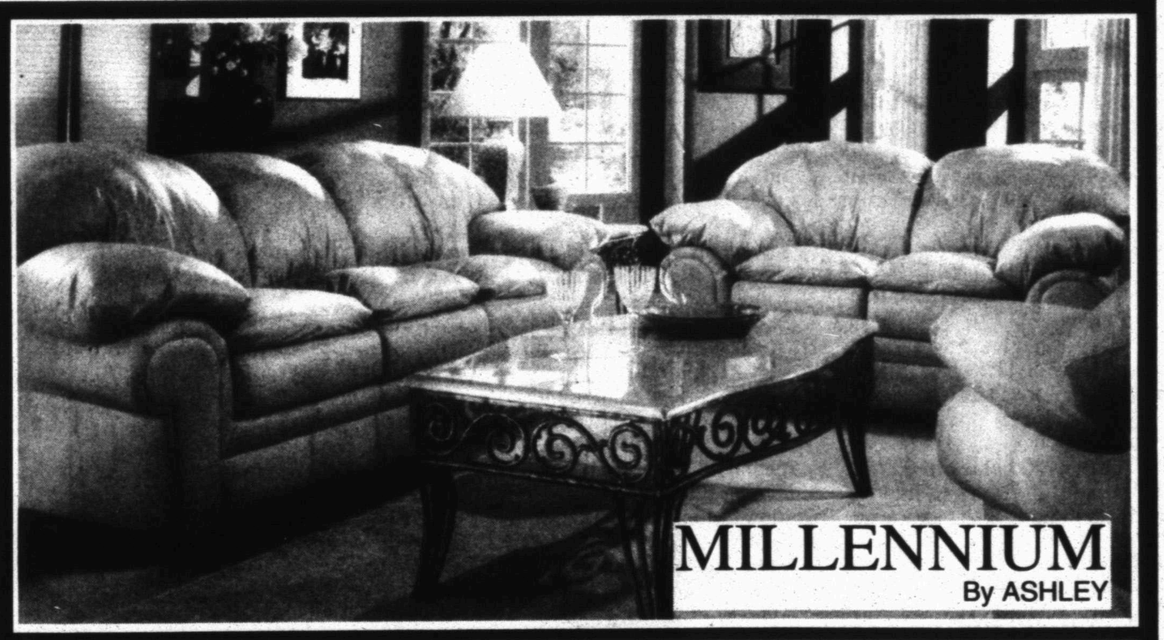
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Gutierrez recalls how principal helped him

By Shirley A. Gorman
SDN News Editor

If not for a caring teacher and principal, Sid Gutierrez might not be where he is today.

Sid, 17, a senior at Snyder High School is poised to graduate in May and has hopes of playing football in college.

But seven years ago the then fifth grader at Northeast Elementary was more interested in playing with his friends than he was in studying.

His teacher Lorie Brown told Lee Presswood, then Northeast principal, that Sid was capable of making better grades.

Presswood made a deal with the young boy: Make the A-B Honor Roll and you can be "Principal for a Day." That was the beginning of a relationship that has served Sid well.

On his special day, Sid reported for duty wearing a suit and tie. He liked the job so well that he asked Presswood if he could get to be principal again if he continued to be an A-B student. Though Sid only served one day as principal, Presswood gave him the boost he needed to continue to do well academically as he advanced through Snyder schools.

Sid had played pee wee football and after he entered junior high, he became even more interested in football and later weightlifting to improve his over-all conditioning.

Several coaches encouraged him through the years, especially Buster Mabrey who "pushed me to the limit. He showed me how far I could go to achieve my goals."

Other coaches who also encouraged Sid include Joe Granato, Derek Price, Chad Rogers and Armando Martinez.

Sid has continued to make the A-B Honor Roll and maintain good behavior to remain eligible to participate in sports.



VOLUNTEERS AT EAST — Sid Gutierrez well remembers the principal who helped him realize the importance of getting good grades. The SHS senior volunteers a few class periods a week at East Elementary where he helps Dale Neves' students with their reading. From left are Neves, fifth graders, Zerick Gutierrez and John Muniz, Gutierrez and Lee Presswood, East principal. (SDN Photo By Shirley A. Gorman)

He won awards as an offensive center last school year and as a left tackle this year. He also served as team captain.

Sid said the leadership role has helped him to become more aware of the influence his behavior has over people. That has renewed his desire to maintain good behavior as well as grades.

Throughout the years, Presswood followed Sid's progress and this year their paths crossed again.

Since Sid has enough credits to graduate, he qualifies for the student work program, which allows him to volunteer at an elementary School.

Sid was assigned to Dale Neves' class at East, where Presswood is now principal. Among other things, he helps students practice their reading and to learn to pronounce consonants and vowels correctly.

Sid and Neves have known each other for years. She was a room mother the year he was at Northeast and Sid and her daughter, Katie, are friends.

Two good friends who help keep "me on the right track are (senior) Clayton Floyd and (junior) Kelsey Shaw," Sid said.

Future plans include becoming a teacher and coach. As he continues to work toward his goals, Sid's greatest supporter continues to be his mother, Linda Arizmendi. He also has two sisters, Amber, 11; and Amanda, 10.

Pakistan's president wins vote of confidence on 5-year term

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — Pervez Musharraf, a staunch U.S. ally in the war on terror, has won a vote of confidence empowering him to finish out his five-year term as Pakistani president. Supporters hope the move will boost his prestige ahead of a summit meeting with India.

Musharraf's backers praised the parliament vote as the final step on the general's journey from dictator to democrat, while opponents said the proceedings — which will keep him in power as president until 2007 — amounted to a fig-leaf obscuring his continued military rule.

Thursday's balloting in both houses of parliament and the nation's four provincial assemblies followed a surprise deal last month with a coalition of hardline Islamic parties that agreed to support Musharraf's claim to the presidency in return for a promise that he step down as army chief by the end of 2004.

Musharraf won the vote easily because of a walkout by several key opposition groups. Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said the vote was an important boost ahead of a regional summit that will bring Pakistani and Indian leaders together for their first face-to-face meetings since relations between the two rivals began to thaw in April.

The seven-nation summit begins in the capital on Sunday.

"Now Musharraf can greet the summit delegates as the elected president of Pakistan," Ahmed told The Associated Press. When asked if Thursday's confidence vote meant the end of a dictatorship begun after Musharraf seized power by force in a 1999 coup, Ahmed said: "Yes, you could say that."

But Thursday's drama did little to end the debate swirling around the general, who has become one of the United States' staunchest allies in the war on terrorism even as he has sidelined his country's other political heavyweights. Two former prime ministers, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, live in exile.

During voting in the lower house, opposition lawmakers from Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party and Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League banged on their desks, shouting "No, No, No! Go, Musharraf, Go!"

Lawmakers from both parties walked out of proceedings at assemblies throughout the country.

Ahsan Iqbal, the chief coordinator of the Pakistan Muslim League, called the vote a "mockery of democracy."

"Musharraf has staged another drama to get his illegal presidency validated," he told AP. "It is a total fraud. We don't accept these results. We do not accept him as president."

Even lawmakers from the Islamic coalition — called the Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal, or MMA — remained on the sidelines, neither supporting nor opposing the general in the confidence vote.

The holdouts made for some strange numbers.

The 100-member Senate voted 56-1 in favor of Musharraf, while the 342-member lower house voted 191-0 for the general. Provincial voting followed the same lines, with the large number of abstentions most notable in the North West Frontier Province, a deeply religious area bordering Afghanistan where the Islamic coalition holds sway.

Musharraf won the North West Frontier Province vote unanimously, but only 30 of the province's 124 lawmakers in the assembly took part.

Had Musharraf lost the confidence vote, he would have been forced to resign, though that was never considered a possibility after his supporters reached a deal with the Islamic coalition, a marriage of convenience for the strongly pro-American leader and the virulently anti-American religious bloc.

Under the deal, Pakistan's 1973 constitution was amended this week to give Musharraf extraordinary powers — including the right to dissolve parliament and sack the prime minister by decree.

In return, Musharraf agreed to the religious coalition's main demand: that he leave the army post, which is the source of most of his power, by Dec. 31, 2004.

Before the deal, opposition lawmakers had paralyzed parliament for months, shouting down speakers and banging on their desks.

Libya seeks reward for allowing inspections

NEW YORK (AP) — Libya's prime minister said his country wants to be rewarded for opening up to nuclear inspections, and stressed that the United States must lift sanctions by May 12 or his government won't have to pay $6 million to each family of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing victims, according to an interview published Friday.

Prime Minister Shukri Ghanim told The New York Times that Libya wants to be paid for turning over nuclear materials. Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi pledged in mid-December to give up his unconventional weapons programs and to open weapons sites to inspectors.

Ghanim told the Times that the North African country wants to "accelerate to the maximum" the dismantling of its unconventional weapons programs so that Libya could be declared free of the weapons in the next few months.

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Recipe

CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

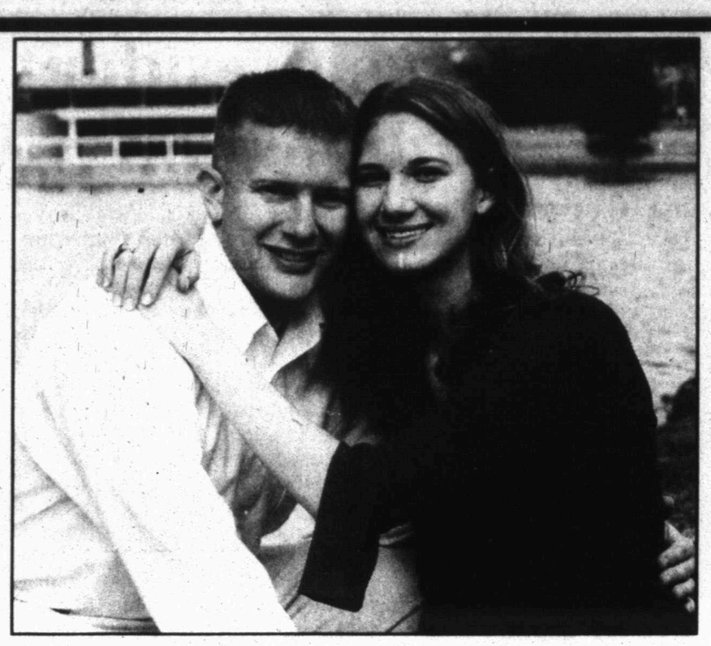
6 cups chicken broth, homemade or canned
2 carrots, thinly sliced
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
1 cup broken vermicelli or angel hair pasta
2 cups diced cooked chicken breast
1/3 cup minced fresh dill

1. In a medium saucepan, bring the broth to a boil over medium heat. Add the carrots, salt and pepper. Cover and cook until the carrots are tender, about 5 minutes.

2. Add the noodles to the boiling broth and cook, covered, until the noodles are tender.

3. Add the chicken and dill to the boiling soup and cook just until the chicken is heated through, about 1 minute. Makes 4 servings.

Per serving: 211 calories, 2.8 grams total fat (0.8 gram saturated), 60 mg cholesterol, 2 grams dietary fiber, 15 grams carbohydrate, 28 grams protein, 886 mg sodium. Good source of beta carotene, niacin, selenium, vitamin B6.



JANUARY WEDDING PLANNED — Troy and Amy Hall of Snyder announce the upcoming marriage of their son, Todd Thomas Hall, to Jennifer Marie Hall, the daughter of Eric and Marian Hall of Allen. Todd's grandparents are Neilda Word of Snyder, C.M. Word of Colorado City, and the late Helen Hall and Preston Hall. The couple will marry at 2 p.m. on Jan. 24 in the Parkway Baptist Church in College Station.

Community Calendar

MONDAY

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

Rock and Roll Quilting Club; Hermleigh Community Center; everyone is invited for free quilting lessons, and special projects are to help someone in need; call 863-2383 for more information; 8 a.m. to noon.

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

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

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

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

TUESDAY

Gateway Family Services parenting discussion group, focuses on a variety of parenting issues and special challenges; no charge; call 573-1822 for more information; 10:30 a.m.

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

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

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

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

TOPS TX56 (take off pounds sensibly); weigh-in and meeting 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.; Trinity United Methodist Church. For more information call Phillis Leatherwood at 573-6105.

WEDNESDAY

NA Just For Today, open meeting; Park Club; for information, call 573-1438; 8 p.m.

THURSDAY

Snyder Palette Club; airport terminal bldg.; Ben Sum, program; LaVerne Lee, hostess; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

LLL Club; fellowship hall of First Baptist Church; 9:30 a.m.

Horseshoe Pitching For Fun; horseshoe courts located at the coliseum; everybody welcome, for further information call 573-9762.

Deep Creek Cloggers lesson; at the coliseum annex; 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

AA Big Book Study; closed meeting; contact numbers are 574-1292 or 573-1141; 7 p.m.

FRIDAY

Free blood pressure clinics; Senior Citizens Center; 9:30 to 11 a.m.

Blood pressures will be taken at Cogdell Hospital Home Health Services, 1800 Cogdell Blvd., Suite B; 1-2 p.m.

ABCL Open Pairs Duplicate Bridge; Snyder Country Club; 1:30 p.m.

Cornelius-Dodson House; open by appointment, call 573-0538 or 573-0770.

Scurry County AA closed meeting; Park Club at Winston Park; for information call 574-1292 or 573-9458; 8 p.m.

Al-Anon open meeting; Park Club; 573-3733, 573-2101 or 573-1141; 8 p.m.

SATURDAY

Defensive Driving Course; Texas Savings Bank community room; no reservations necessary, cost $30, for more information call 573-2850; 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

NA-Just For Today open meeting; Park Club; for information call 573-1438; 7 p.m.

SUNDAY

Scurry County AA open meeting; Park Club in Winston Park; for information call 574-1292 or 573-9458; 10 a.m.

Bridge

By Phillip Alder

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

Dealer: South
Vulnerable: East-West

South	West	North	East
2 ♦	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: ♥ A

Saturday, Jan. 3, 2004

The best play was very complicated

By Phillip Alder

Geir Helgemo, the Danish superstar, won last year's International Bridge Press Association award for the best piece of declarer-play. Unfortunately, the deal is far too complicated for this column. It needs more column inches and a second, intermediate hand diagram. (The same can be said about the second- and third-place finishers in the voting. But if you would like to read about all of these deals, go to the home page of my Web site, www.phillipalderbridge.com. There, you will see a link to my descriptions of them.)

I also liked this candidate. Unfortunately, the theme has been seen before, so it couldn't compete with that trio of masterpieces.

You are South, the declarer in five diamonds. West starts the defense with the ace and king of hearts. Do you see any chance to make your "impossible" contract?

This deal occurred during a Danish Club Team Championship.

South's opening bid was multicolored. His rebid announced that he held a strong two-bid in diamonds.

The declarer was Thorvald Aagaard. At trick two, he calmly discarded the club four!

Now the spotlight was on West. If he had shifted to a spade, there would have been no story. But thinking declarer was weak in clubs, he led his jack.

South won with the club ace, drew two rounds of trumps, cashed his club king, led the diamond three to dummy's five, and ruffed a club high in hand. Back to dummy by overtaking the diamond six with the seven, Aagaard discarded his two spade losers on the nine and eight of clubs.

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Bridge Scores

Monte West directed bridge at the Snyder Country Club.

Friday, Dec. 19

1. Anita Talbott, Suzy Reed.
2. Jane Hinton, Charles Blakley.
3. Margaret Presswood, Pat Floyd.

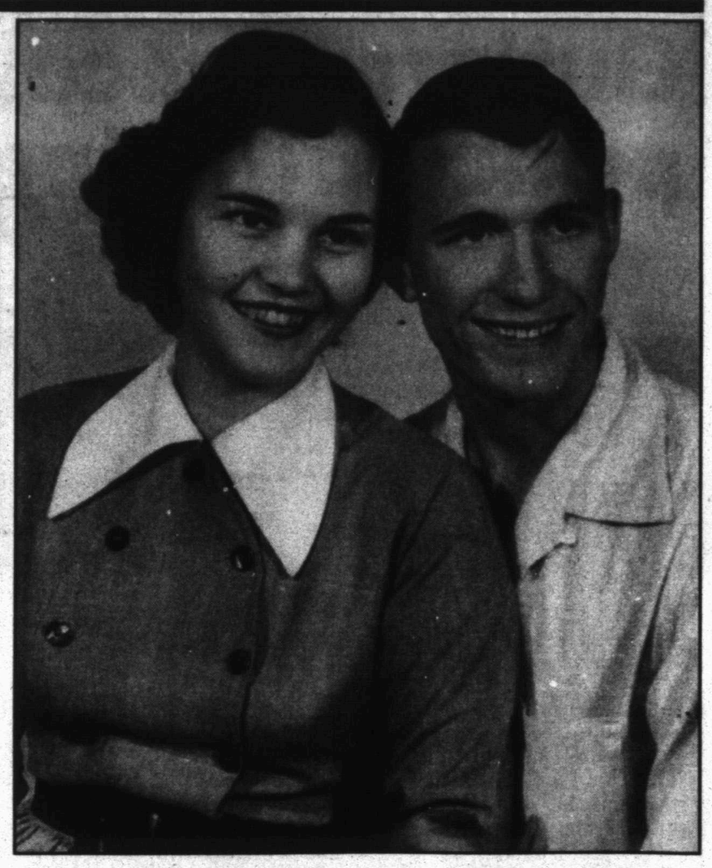
Tuesday, Dec. 30

1. Pat Floyd, Robbie Floyd.
2. Linda West, Monte West.
3. Dorothy Rosson, Patsy Williams

Births

Taryn Taylar Rhea Lyn Nobles was born to Chase and Olivia Nobles of Snyder at 6:24 p.m. on Dec. 31, 2003 in Cogdell Memorial Hospital. She weighed five pounds, two ounces.

Taryn's grandparents are Kim and Val Nobles of Post.





Hoyle Dean and Pauline Strickland
(Contributed Photos)

Stricklands honored on 50th wedding anniversary

Hoyle Dean and Pauline Strickland of Snyder married Jan. 9, 1954 in La Grange and celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Saturday, Dec. 27.

Hoyle Dean and Pauline were honored with a family dinner at the home of their son and daughter-in-law, Mark and Angie Strickland. Also attending were their three daughters and spouses, Vickie and Ronnie Boley of Big Spring; Sharon and Bart Haley of Lindale; and Teresa and Randy Gressett of Munday.

The couple have six grandchildren, Jake Strickland, Jonathan Gressett, Pam Boley and Michelle, Laura and Jennifer Haley.

Living most of their life in Snyder, the Strickland's owned and operated Strickland's TV Service where they worked together for over 25 years.

Library News & Views

Scurry County Library staff wishes everyone a very meaningful new year. As each year rolls around, many people take stock in their lives and decide to make changes. Let the Scurry County Library staff help you with those changes.

Are you going to start the year with healthier eating? Come to the library, proceed to the 641.5 section, and look through the many cookbooks we have to offer. There are cookbooks to help diabetics, cookbooks to help those who have high cholesterol, and cookbooks to help with those with heart problems. Even if you do not have an immediate need, learn how you can eat better to avoid future problems.

Are you going to make changes in how you raise your child? Look in the child rearing and psychology section for some help. Do you wonder how to get your child away from the television, and get them outside for some exercise? Is your child one of the overweight children who never go outside? We have a book to help you. Have you failed in nutritional education with your child? Do you want to wean your elementary school child off of french fries and burgers, and interest them in vegetables so they can avoid future health problems? Come check out a book about kid's cooking, or child rearing.

Is this the year you learn a new hobby? Our craft and hobby section is full of interesting helps to get you started. Perhaps you received a digital camera during the holidays and you are interested in photography. We have updated our photography section, so come look in that section.

No matter your need, the Scurry County Library has the book to get you started on your mission.

Come see us soon at the Scurry County Library. Happy New Year.

Bridal Registry

Christina Holder and Mark Cave
Paige Bell and Jim Culp
Shannon Hall and Sam Robinson
Becky Eaton and Mark Cypert
KK McClain and Andrew Vinson
Natalie Hill and Beau Blair
Jamie Burleson and Kyle Mittendorf
Jennifer Hall and Todd Hall

Infant Registry

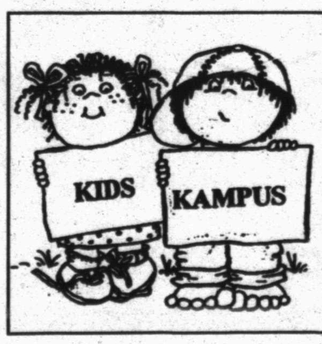
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Lifestyles



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Dolan of Color
Claire Pollard
Gail, Laura Ba
Ramsey of Col
Bowlin, Sterlin

Screenw

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Alfred Hitchcock
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CHRISTMAS RECITAL HELD — "It's All About Christmas" was the theme for piano students' performances on Dec. 6 in the First Baptist Church sanctuary. Instructor is Lynn Baldwin. In the top photo are (from left), bottom row, Logan Hopper, Megan McWilliams, Scott Bankhead of Roscoe, Sara McWilliams, Averey Wright, Conner Smith; second row, Jacob Kemp, Kobie Benham, Autumn Posey, Kagan Posey, all of Rotan; top row, Alyssa Black and Madison Black of Roscoe. In the middle photo are, bottom row, Brooke Hall of Muleshoe, Sydney and Jordan Wright; middle row, Kailea Shaw, Heather Posey of Rotan; top row, Austin Owens, Catherine Dolan of Colorado City; Kelsey Shaw, Madison Feaster of Roscoe; bottom photo, bottom row, Claire Pollard of Cedar Park, Courtney Pollard, Karissa Medina, Alix Rieser, Kate Wallace of Gail, Laura Bankhead of Roscoe; top row, Joni Clay of Colorado City, Fran Leighton and Carl Ramsey of Colorado City. Not pictured are Emily Jones, Glyn Wright, Devin Davidson, Brett Bowlin, Sterling Milhollon, Justin Haggard and Amanda Kerr. (Contributed Photo)

Screenwriter reaches agreement to remake movie

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Screenwriter Robert Towne has struck a deal to develop a remake of the Alfred Hitchcock classic "The 39 Steps."

Towne, who wrote "Chinatown" and "Mission: Impossible 3," will write and direct the thriller for Carlton International Media, Daily Variety reported on its Web site Thursday.

"There is only a handful of individuals in our business with the talent, experience and insight to whom we would entrust a project of this magnitude, and Robert Towne is one of them," said Stephen Davis, Carlton America's president and chief executive officer.

Hitchcock's version of the spy film was made in 1935 and starred Robert Donat and Madeleine Carroll.

School Menus

Snyder

All meals are served with milk pouch; breakfast offers a choice of juice, cereal and toast.

All SCHOOLS

BREAKFAST

Monday
Holiday
Tuesday
Biscuit & Sausage
Wednesday
Egg & Cheese Taco
Thursday
French Toast Sticks
Friday
Sausage in a Biscuit

LUNCH

Tuesday
Beef Enchiladas
Barbecue Chicken
Refried Beans
Santa Fe Rice
Chilled Peaches
Wednesday
All American Chili Dog
Chef Salad
French Fries
Golden Kernel Corn
Applesauce
Thursday
Spaghetti & Meat Sauce
Chicken Pot Pie
Broccoli
Mashed Potatoes
Chocolate Fluff
Friday
Pepperoni Pizza
Bean & Rice Burrito
Buffalo French Fries
Carrot Sticks
Applesauce

SNYDER JR. HIGH SCHOOL

Tuesday
Beef Enchiladas
Barbecued Chicken
Pepperoni Pizza
"Fighting Tiger"
Cheeseburger
Lettuce & Pickles
Refried Beans
Santa Fe Rice
Chilled Peaches
Wednesday
All American Chili Dog
Spaghetti & Meat Sauce
Pepperoni Pizza
Cheeseburger
Lettuce & Pickles
French Fries
Golden Kernel Corn
Fresh Fruit
Thursday
Chicken Pot Pie
Chef Salad
Pepperoni Pizza
Cheeseburger
Lettuce & Pickle
Broccoli
Mashed Potatoes
Chocolate Fluff
Friday
Pepperoni Pizza
Bean & Rice Burrito
Cheeseburger
Lettuce & Pickles
Buffalo French Fries
Carrot Sticks
Cowboy Peach Cobbler

HIGH SCHOOL

Tuesday
Beef Enchiladas
Barbecued Chicken
Hamburger
Beef Burrito
Pepperoni Pizza
Salad Bar
Refried Beans
Santa Fe Rice
Chilled Peaches
Wednesday
All American Chili Dog
Spaghetti & Meat Sauce
Hamburger
Beef Burrito
Pepperoni Pizza
Salad Bar
French Fries
Golden Kernel Corn
Applesauce
Thursday
Chicken Pot Pie
Chef Salad
Hamburger
Beef Burrito
Pepperoni Pizza
Salad Bar
Broccoli
Mashed Potatoes
Chocolate Fluff
Friday
Pepperoni Pizza
Bean & Rice Burrito
Hamburger
Beef Burrito
Salad Bar
Buffalo French Fries
Carrot Sticks
Cowboy Peach Cobbler

Ira

All meals are served with choice of milk. Juice is offered for breakfast.

BREAKFAST

Monday
Biscuit & Gravy
Sausage
Tuesday
Pancake
Sausage
Wednesday
Cinnamon Rolls
Thursday
Oatmeal or Cream of Wheat
Toast
Friday
Breakfast Burritos

LUNCH

Monday
Steak Fingers/Chicken Patti
Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
Peas
Hot Rolls
Fruit
Tuesday
Hamburger Macaroni/Peanut Butter Sandwich
Corn on the Cobb
Ranch Style Beans
Bread
Plain Cake Chocolate Icing
Wednesday
Pigs-n-Blanket/Cheese Bun
Tater Tots
Pork 'n Beans
Fruit
Thursday
Chicken Enchilada/Beef and Beans Burrito
Salad
Refried Beans
Crackers
Spice Cake
Friday
Turkey, Tuna or Ham Sandwich
Lettuce & Tomatoes
Chips
Apples

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Mesha Pate & B.K. Box
Lila King & Dale Beard
Julie Priddy & Caleb Wilson
Shana Lynn Blackard & Jody Rae Holt
Becky Eaton & Mark Cypert
Kimberly McClain & Andrew Vinson
Jessica Emrich & Nathan Zalman
Infant Registry
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Texas had another year of high-profile court cases

FORT WORTH (AP) — Texas made national headlines again in 2003 with court cases ranging from the acquittal of a cross-dressing millionaire charged with murder to a man pleading guilty to flying himself across the country in a cargo crate.

Perhaps one of the most significant legal decisions, however, was the release and pardon of the Tulia drug defendants. The mostly black men and women were wrongly jailed in 1999 following questionable undercover operations led by former officer Tom Coleman, who is white.

Gov. Rick Perry signed a bill clearing the way for the defendants' release in June while their cases were reviewed by the state's highest criminal appellate court. Two months later, Perry pardoned 35 of the 46 people. Coleman awaits trial on perjury charges; a date has not been set.

West Texas was the site of another legal case that grabbed national attention.

Thomas C. Butler, a Texas Tech University researcher, was convicted of 47 of 69 charges related to his work with potentially deadly plague bacteria, but found innocent of the more serious charges — lying to the FBI, smuggling plague samples into the United States and illegally transporting samples.

Butler reported 30 vials of bacteria missing and possibly stolen in January, creating a bioterrorism scare. He later admitted that he accidentally destroyed the samples. His sentencing is set for February.

In another stunning acquittal, New York real estate heir Robert Durst was found innocent of murder in the death of his neighbor, whose dismembered body was found in Galveston Bay.

Durst moved to Galveston in 2000 disguised as a mute woman to escape New York media scrutiny after an investigation reopened into the 1982 disappearance of his first wife. During his November trial, Durst testified that Morris Black was shot during a struggle for a gun after the elderly man illegally entered his apartment in 2001.

After disposing of Black's remains, Durst fled to New Orleans but returned to Texas where he was arrested. He posted bond and became a fugitive for six weeks before his capture in Pennsylvania. Although he was acquitted of murder, Durst remains jailed on a $2 billion bond on a bond jumping charge.

2003 marked another year of tragic crimes in which parents were charged in the deaths of children.

A Brownsville man was sentenced to death in November for killing his common-law wife's three children, two of whom he fathered. John Allen Rubio admitted to suffocating, stabbing and decapitating the youngsters — ages 3, 1 and 2 months — in March, saying they were possessed by the devil.

In Tyler, a woman was accused of stoning two of her three children with large rocks on Mother's Day weekend. Deanna Laney's 8- and 6-year-old sons died, and her 14-month-old son suffered a fractured skull. Laney, who reportedly told police that God ordered her to kill her sons, remains jailed on capital murder and injury to a child charges. A trial date has not been set.

From murder to political legal battles, Democrats and Republicans continue to fight over congressional redistricting in federal court, following three special sessions and two boycotts by Democrats who believe the GOP-drawn map is unfair to minority and rural voters. Republicans contend the map reflects the conservative voting trends of Texans.

Former Texas Attorney General Dan Morales pleaded guilty to tax and mail fraud and was sentenced to four years in prison after a five-year investigation into the handling of legal fees from the state's $17 billion tobacco industry settlement. Morales was attorney general from 1991-99. During the October sentencing hearing, Morales expressed "sincere regrets and remorse" but said most accusations about his public misdeeds were untrue.

Among the more bizarre cases, a Fort Worth woman was sentenced in June to 50 years in prison for hitting a man, driving home with his body lodged in the windshield and parking in her garage, where he died. Chante Mallard said her judgment was impaired from a night of drinking and taking drugs.

Record number of people participate in Gulf swim

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND (AP) — Organizers cited warm weather for the record number of people who showed up New Year's Day for the Whiting Polar Bear Club's annual swim in the Gulf of Mexico.

More than 100 people participated in the swim.

Many people said the 65-degree water and 77-degree air temperatures made the swim an easy one. Many also said they prefer cooler temperatures for more of a challenge.

Blain Campbell, the event's co-founder, said that unlike dips in northern states in near-freezing water, the island's event is more about having fun than braving the elements.

"Most of the time, (the weather) is beautiful here," said Campbell, 54, in the Valley Morning Star.

But some years the temperature with wind chill has been as cold as 38 degrees, and the water temperature as low as 50 degrees, Campbell said.

Thursday's weather was the warmest since the event started, swimmers said.

The event drew three times as many people as last year, Campbell said.

In addition to their swim, participants received a club membership badge.

Campbell said the city's publicity of the event also likely drew more people.

Rhonda Rae Haas and Michael Haas of Austin learned of the swim online before heading out for their Island vacation.

For the swim, Haas wore her "wedding gown," a plaid bikini she was married in on New Year's Day on the Island a few years earlier.

She said the dip was a unique way to celebrate New Year's Day and her wedding anniversary.

Rick Biggins of Edinburg said South Padre's swim didn't require as much alcohol as other polar dives, such as the ones he participated in while living in Ainsworth, Neb.

Following one dip in 34-degree water, he and other swimmers had to emerge into 19-degree air, he said. They warmed up by taking Tequila shots around a bonfire, he said.

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World Almanac

Saturday, Jan. 3, 2004

Today is the third day of 2004 and the 13th day of winter.

TODAY'S HISTORY: In 1777, George Washington defeated the British at Princeton, N.J.

In 1924, archaeologist Howard Carter discovered the sarcophagus containing the body of Tutankhamen (King Tut).

In 1959, Alaska entered the union as the 49th state.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: John Paul Jones (1747-1792), U.S. naval officer; Lucretia Mott (1793-1880), women's rights pioneer; J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973), author; Victor Borge (1909-2000) comedian/pianist; Mel Gibson (1956-), actor, is 48.

TODAY'S SPORTS: In 1983, Dallas Cowboys running back Tony Dorsett set an NFL record by running 99 yards from scrimmage for a touchdown.

TODAY'S QUOTE: "Santa Claus has the right idea: visit people once a year." — Victor Borge

TODAY'S FACT: Franklin D. Roosevelt had the first presidential plane. It was called the "Sacred Cow."

TODAY'S NUMBER: 16 — The number of states in the Federal Republic of Germany.

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

Sunday, Jan. 4, 2004

Today is the fourth day of 2004 and the 14th day of winter.

TODAY'S HISTORY: In 1896, Utah entered the Union as the 45th state.

In 1920, the Negro National League, the first black professional baseball league, was established.

In 1999, the euro debuted as the common currency of 11 European nations.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: Louis Braille (1809-1852), inventor of the Braille alphabet; Jane Wyman (1914-), actress, is 90; Floyd Patterson (1935-), boxer, is 69; Dyan Cannon (1937-), actress, is 67; Michael Stipe (1960-), rock singer, is 44; Julia Ormond (1965-), actress, is 39.

TODAY'S SPORTS: In 1999, the University of Tennessee defeated Florida State in the Fiesta Bowl, 23-16, to win the national college football championship.

TODAY'S QUOTE: "It's easy to do anything in victory. It's in defeat that a man reveals himself." — Floyd Patterson

TODAY'S FACT: In 2003, scientists measuring the temperature of cosmic microwave background radiation deduced that the universe is about 13.7 billion years old.

TODAY'S NUMBER: 17,000 — Number of buildings destroyed in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.

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

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Manufacturing sector expanded robustly during December 2003

NEW YORK (AP) — The nation's manufacturing sector expanded strongly in December, its most robust month in two decades, in a sign that the economic recovery continues to gain ground.

The Institute for Supply Management reported Friday that its manufacturing index jumped to 66.2 from 62.8 in November.

The new figure was the highest since December 1983 for a sector that was one of the hardest hit in the economic downturn. The reading, which marks the sixth consecutive month of expansion in manufacturing, was significantly higher than the 61 forecast by analysts.

An index reading above 50 indicates expansion; one below 50 indicates that manufacturing activity is contracting. From March through June, the manufacturing index was below 50.

Stocks extended their day's advance following the release of the report.

In midday trading, the Dow Jones industrial average was up 55.34, or 0.5 percent, at 10,509.26. Broader stock indicators were also up. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 5.12, or 0.5 percent, to 1,117.04, while the Nasdaq composite index advanced 17.33, or 0.9 percent, to 2,020.70.

Economists said the index shows the beleaguered factory sector is now firmly in recovery mode, helped along by low interest rates and a falling dollar that make U.S.-produced goods cheaper overseas.

"Manufacturing is really the last piece of the puzzle that is falling in place to produce broad-based, sustained economic growth," said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist with Wells Fargo & Co. in Minneapolis.

The momentum is particularly evident in new orders to factories, said Norbert J. Ore, chairman of the institute's manufacturing business survey committee. A component index tracking new orders reached its highest level since 1950, rising to 77.6 in December from 73.7 in November, he said.

"The strength in December's data provides significant encouragement for prospects in the first quarter of 2004," Ore said.

Public Records

Marriage License

Carlos A. Soltero-Nunez and Janet Rios, both of Snyder.

Jose Adolfo Caballero of Odessa and Rebeca Lujan Ellis of Snyder.

Ronald Mark Cypert of Snyder and Becky Danita Eaton of Grapevine.

Nathan Guy Kelley and Laura Lee Davis, both of Snyder.

Kyle Evan Millendorf and Jamie Leigh Burleson, both of Franklin, Tenn.

Action in District Court

In the marriage of Cynthia Renee Fritz and Kevin Wayne Fritz, divorce granted.

American State Bank vs. Ruth Ann Kerry, default judgment for plaintiff.

Deed Records

Jimmy Lynn Wadleigh to West Texas State Bank, Lot 1 and the north 130 feet of Lot 2 in Block 55 of the Blankenship Addition.

Guadalupe and Julia Romero to Tobias and Hortensia Murillo, Lot 7 in Block 23 of the Boothe-land West Addition.

Dorothy Ann Craig to Robert McCarter, a 50x150 tract out of Lot 3, Block 63 of the Grayum and Nelson Heights Addition.

Howard L. and Delores M. Jones to Lupe S. and Teresa N. Martinez, Lot 11 in Block 4 of the 1st Replat of the Noble Heights Addition.

Lupe S. and Teresa N. Martinez to Lisa Jane A. Martinez, Lot 11 in Block 4 of the 1st Replat of the Noble Heights Addition.

Mikel and Anette Grady to Emanuel Tobias and Olga Cabrera, the east one-half of Block 47 of the Blankenship Addition.

Johnna Babb to Saul Esparza, a 0.919-acre tract in the west one-half of the southwest one-quarter of Section 250, Block 97, H&TC survey.

Thomas Burdine Bennett to Amos W. Keith III, Lot 9 in Block 6 of the Original Town of Snyder.

T.L. and Karen Joseph Henderson to Rock Park LTD, 202.035 acres in the north part of Section 231, Block 3, H&TC survey.

Joni Mandrell to Joyce J. Smith, Lot 23 in Block H of the Replat of the Towle Place Addition.

Tina McKinney and John Hult to Swartz and Brough Inc., Lot 33 in Block E of the Replat of the Highland Park Addition.

Kathy J. Scott to Roger L. and Doris J. Lollar, a 0.303-acre tract in Tract 46 of the Dallas Trust and Savings Bank subdivision of the Grimes Ranch Lands in Section 13, Block 1, J.P. Smith survey.

Farmsource Inc. to FI Enterprises, Lots 1-3 in Block 6; Lots 1-13 in Block 7; Lots 1-26 in Block 9, all in the replat of Block 5-A, Block 6, parts of Block 7, Blocks 8-A and 8-B of the 1st Replat of the Parkway Addition, Section 2.

Janet Elizabeth Crooks to Morris Dean and Karen Head, tract one being 159.05 acres in the north one-half of the southwest one-quarter of the southwest one-half of the northwest one-quarter of Section 290, Block 97, H&TC survey; tract two being 160 acres in the northwest one-quarter of Section 299, Block 97, H&TC survey; tract three being 160.2 acres in the northwest one-quarter of Section 299, Block 97, H&TC survey.

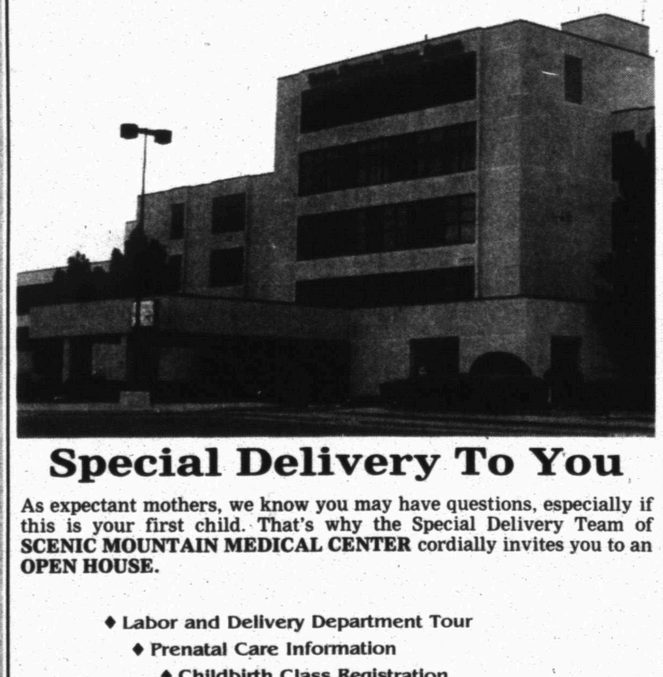
Karmen Dosser, attorney-in-fact for Martha Ann Grubb, to James E. and Edna L. Merrell, the west one-half of Lot 4 in Block 24 of the Blankenship Addition.

Mildred Jean Smith Hopkins and Sharon Sue Smith West to Kathy Thomas, Lot 2 and the north 100 feet of Lot 3 in Block 29 of the Original Town of Snyder.

Bill W. Murphy, attorney-in-fact for Estell Murphy, to Kenneth Gene and Anita Kay Kornegay, Lot 9 in Block 2 of the Colonial Hill East Addition.

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Husband's

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DEAR ABBY: My
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Best Available Copy

Dear Abby

By Abigail Van Buren



Husband's abusive taunts wear on wife's self-esteem

DEAR ABBY: I married "Jerry" five years ago. I am 37 and he's 26. From the beginning, Jerry has said hurtful things from time to time, like, "Our marriage is over," "I want a divorce," etc. He also refuses to do household repairs. (He moved into my house.)

When Jerry doesn't get his way, he accuses me of being selfish. He wants us to buy a new house. Abby, I am terrified of going further into debt with him. We've been to marriage counseling. We were told the worst thing we could do is to buy another house together. We would only move our problems to a new location.

Yesterday was the last straw. He said, "You may look young, but you're old. No one is ever going to want you for anything except what they can get out of you!"

I have not confided this to a single soul. I'm too ashamed that the man I married could think something so cruel — let alone say it.

Jerry always apologizes, but I can't seem to get past this. When I think about what he said, I start to cry. (He can't understand why I'm not able to "get over it" and jump into bed.)

Abby, I look a decade younger than my actual age. May I add, Jerry is no Mr. Universe, although he seems to think he is. What do you think of this situation, and most of all — me? — **CRUSHED IN THE ROCKIES**

DEAR CRUSHED: You are married to a verbal abuser. He uses insults and deprecation the way other abusers use their fists. If you continue to accept this treatment, your self-esteem will eventually dwindle to zero — which is his goal.

You've tried counseling. It hasn't worked. Now it's time to ask yourself, "Are you better off with him or without him?" The answer is obvious to me.

**

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have worked long and hard on our yard to make it a beautiful, peaceful retreat. Last year, we had it landscaped and added a lovely pond with koi fish and a small waterfall. We both work and time is limited, so we enjoy it mostly in the mornings with our coffee.

The problem is since we added the pond, our yard has become a "public park"! Almost every day we go outside and find people in our yard — even strangers — asking questions about the cost of the renovation.

We finally put up a fence, but folks have climbed it to look at the waterfall they could hear from the front walk. How can we stop this? I want to put up a sign that says, "If you weren't invited, you're not welcome."

The clincher came yesterday, when I went out early with my coffee to find a neighbor occupying my lawn chair with HER coffee! She said she was glad we had put in the pond because she had always wanted one — and now she can come and meditate at ours. — **HAD ENOUGH IN SOUTH FLORIDA**

DEAR HAD ENOUGH: It's time to speak clearly. If you're feeling generous, designate one day a month for your nervy neighbor to meditate beside your pond (before you PRE-meditate murdering her), and tell her that the rest of the time you and your husband need your privacy.

If you're not feeling generous, post the sign. There may be repercussions, but the option of having visitors should be yours.

**

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

DEAR ABBY: I am 15. I have been in a relationship with "Adam" for four years, but things just don't seem the same. I met him when I was 11 and we have been together ever since. I waited until my 14th birthday to give him my virginity and we were in love way before that. He is the only guy I have ever loved.

It seems like we fight all the time. He has never hit me or anything, but he has shaken me, and I'm wondering if he would ever hit me in the future. Do you think we should stay together? I want to, but at the same time I don't.

I never thought I'd say that, but I'm sure it means something. What should I do? — **TENNESSEE TEEN**

DEAR TEEN: Let me explain something to you. Abusive behavior does not spring from the egg, fully formed like a chicken. It starts out small and grows like a vine until it weighs down and smothers the victim. I'll bet Adam didn't start out by shaking you. It probably started with nasty comments, then yelling — and now this. Will it continue to escalate? Very likely, unless Adam learns that it is unacceptable behavior and is willing to find acceptable ways of displaying his anger.

The preteen and teen years are supposed to be a time of growth and learning, both intellectually and socially. You have limited yourself to one person for too long, and on some level, I think you already know that. Tell Adam you no longer want an exclusive relationship, that you intend to concentrate on your studies and see other people. Then do it. If he doesn't like it, get your parents involved. I'm sure they will set him straight in a hurry.

**

DEAR ABBY: I am a college student in a small town. Eight months ago, I met a wonderful young man, and we were planning to be married until I told him about my past.

My stepfather molested me. It was long ago, and I have since forgiven him and my mother. (Mother is still married to him.)

My boyfriend, however, cannot forgive them. He tried to convince my mother to leave my stepfather. She refused, and now my boyfriend and my mother no longer speak.

He says things will never work out because of this rift he has with my family. I am willing to do whatever it takes to make the relationship work, but he says he can't be around my family, and it isn't fair to ask me to give them up.

Was I wrong to expect him to support my decision to forgive them? — **DESPERATE IN TEXAS**

DEAR DESPERATE: Your boyfriend's inability to forgive your mother is rooted in his caring for you. When you marry someone, in a sense you also marry that person's family. Your family is so dysfunctional that it may have scared this young man off. His fears might be allayed if you're willing to cut your ties to your mother, but it's no guarantee.

That your mother stayed married to the abuser who molested you speaks volumes. That you opted to "forgive" them both was a personal choice you made — but that doesn't change the fact that your mother's husband is a child molester. What makes you think he wouldn't be a danger to your children in the future? Think about it.

**

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

**

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $10 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

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Scandal helps force mayor of Milwaukee to resign position

MILWAUKEE (AP) — In a tenure spanning nearly 16 years, John Norquist saw glory and disgrace as Milwaukee's mayor.

Widely credited for sparking an urban renaissance in a blue-collar town blighted by flight to the suburbs, Norquist also was humiliated by a sex scandal involving an aide that curtailed his political career.

Last week, the nation's longest-serving mayor of a city of more than 500,000 left office four months shy of finishing his fourth term — saying he has no regrets about quitting.

"I don't think I was likely to run for another term anyway," said Norquist, who was first elected to a political office in 1974 at age 25. "I will have been in political office for 29 years. ... I think it's probably enough."

Norquist, 54, leaves behind a new convention center, a building boom of condos and apartments, demolition of an unsightly freeway spur and a tourism-attracting promenade along the Milwaukee River.

The married father of two will also be remembered for an extramarital affair with a former aide who later accused him of sexual harassment. The headlines left his reputation in tatters.

Norquist is taking a job as president and chief executive officer at the Congress for the New Urbanism in Chicago.

Common Council President Marvin Pratt takes over as mayor until voters elect a new one in April. Pratt, who will be the city's first black mayor, is among at least 17 people vying for Milwaukee's top job.

The former aide, Marilyn Figueroa, accused Norquist of harassment in a December 2000 equal rights claim against the city. She said the mayor relentlessly pursued her; Norquist said they had a consensual sexual relationship and denies he harassed her.

The two settled in April 2002 for $375,000, which he agreed to pay using campaign funds and his own money.

Norquist made great strides in the way this city looks and thinks about architecture, promoting his ideas of new urbanism, selecting people who care about design for planning committees and streamlining the process for developers to get permits.

At 6-foot-7, with wavy blond hair and a goatee, the soft-spoken Norquist said he is proud of making quality design a serious issue, citing a new bridge connecting the north and south sides and the removal of a dam to help revitalize the Milwaukee River.

There's also been the a $122 million addition to the Milwaukee Art Museum by world-renowned architect Santiago Calatrava.

"He brought a degree of understanding and enthusiasm for good physical development in the city that is unusual in a politician," said Bob Greenstreet, chairman of the City of Milwaukee Plan Commission and dean of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's School of Architecture and Urban Planning.

36 journalists killed in 2003; 13 in Iraq

NEW YORK (AP) — Thirteen journalists were killed last year covering the war in Iraq, the highest death toll for the media in a single country since 1995, a watchdog group said Friday.

In all, 36 journalists were killed worldwide last year, up from 19 in 2002, the Committee to Protect Journalists said.

Iraq was the main reason for the increase.

"Iraq is a dangerous place for many of the people who are there now," said Ann Cooper, the organization's executive director.

"It's still a huge story," she said. "It's particularly a huge story for American media. There are probably hundreds of journalists there at any given time, and they're at great risk."

CPJ said it was particularly troubled by the deaths of four journalists in Iraq killed as a result of U.S. military action. It has called on the Pentagon for a public accounting.

The count only includes journalists killed as a direct result of their work; the list does not include six other reporters who died from illness or accidents while covering the war.

The group is also investigating the cases of four missing journalists, and 12 journalist deaths that may have been work-related.

Conflict in the Middle East also claimed the lives of two journalists in Israel and the occupied territories.

Five journalists were killed in the Philippines, four in Colombia, two in Brazil, and one each in Cambodia, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ivory Coast, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, and Somalia.

The death toll in Iraq was the highest for a single country since 24 journalists were killed in Algeria eight years ago.

Afghan, U.N officials try to salvage constitutional talks

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — U.N. and American officials held crisis talks Friday with Afghan leaders in efforts to mend an ethnic split that threatened negotiations on the country's new constitution.

A nearly three-week-old grand council, or loya jirga, ground to a halt Thursday after more than a third of the 502 delegates boycotted the start of voting on the charter.

The deadlock has reopened factional divides left over from more than two decades of fighting, clouding the chances that national elections next summer can produce a government strong enough to hold the impoverished country together as it tries to rebuild.

The loya jirga was not scheduled to resume in full session until Saturday.

U.N. Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi and council leaders held separate meetings with supporters of U.S.-backed President Hamid Karzai's drive for a dominant central government, and opponents seeking a stronger parliament and more regionalism.

U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad sat in on at least one meeting, said Abdul Shukur Waqif Hakimi, a holdout delegate from Kabul.

The dissenters, mainly from the Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara minorities from the north who helped U.S. forces defeat the Taliban two years ago, are fighting most passionately for greater recognition of their languages.

They are ranged against a bloc of Pashtuns, Karzai's ethnic kinsmen from the south, who are reluctant to make concessions that could compromise their role as the country's traditional rulers.

Ashmat Ghani, a prominent Pashtun delegate, said a group of Karzai supporters was trying to agree to a compromise.

"This country is divided tribally, whatever anyone tells you," Ghani said by telephone as he took a break from a separate meeting with Brahimi and council chairman Sibghatullah Mujaddedi's deputy.

"When an Afghan feels provoked, even if you ask him to go to heaven with you he will say no," Ghani said. "I think it will take maybe two more days to reach a deal."

Karzai seems to have rallied a clear majority behind his core demand for a presidential system that he says would provide strong leadership for a country racked by internal conflict.

Still, observers suggest that influential religious conservatives could use the spat to further their own agendas.

Rights groups worry that Karzai may give too much away to veteran faction leaders like Burhanuddin Rabbani, an ethnic Tajik who was president during Afghan-istan's ruinous 1992-96 civil war, and Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, a deeply conservative Islamist.

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#406 ***11th Anniversary Game*** ($10)
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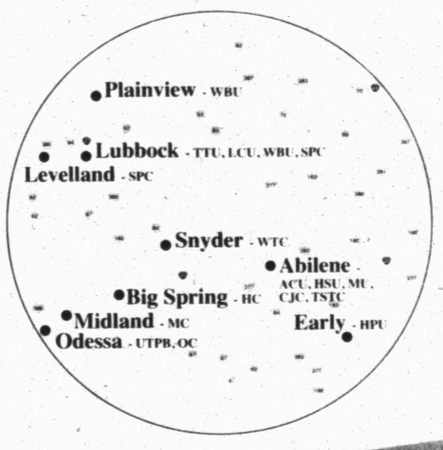
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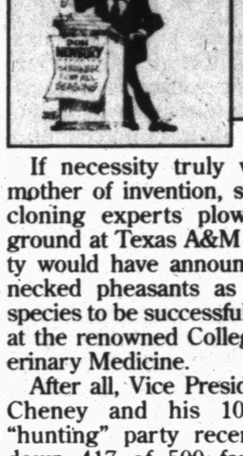
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A speaker for all seasons

By Dr. Don Newbury

If necessity truly were the mother of invention, surely the cloning experts plowing new ground at Texas A&M University would have announced ring-necked pheasants as the fifth species to be successfully cloned at the renowned College of Veterinary Medicine.

After all, Vice President Dick Cheney and his 10-member "hunting" party recently shot down 417 of 500 farm-raised pheasants released after shotguns were shouldered and trigger fingers at itching peak

The VP was said to have brought down 70 birds, but relax. Sponsors assure us that the pheasants had "sporting chances." That's close to the same thing they're saying about "sitting duck" incumbent democrats running for congressional seats in newly-mapped districts.

Anyway, at this rate, we're bound to need bunches of new pheasants — and fast. But perhaps new birds will have to wait.

* * * * *

Aggie scientists have instead announced their newest successful clone in Dewey, believed to be the first-ever cloned white-tailed deer. Timing was everything, what with "Christmasy" fables of Rudolph and his gang — not to mention hunting season — at full bore. (Pun intended.)

Dewey? Sounds more like a Disney deal, perhaps one of Uncle Huey's triplet nephews, or maybe a first name for the Rice Owl.

* * * * *

Catch this scene—an Aggie football coach breathlessly calling the cloning office (dial one if you want a football player cloned, etc.) "No," the receptionist responds, "We do not clone football players. Besides, there are ethical considerations. Don't you think that if we cloned a UT player he would want to remain a Longhorn, and an OU player would want to remain a Sooner?"

* * * * *

Almost certainly, new bumper stickers will come off the press soon. "A&M—the BUCK starts here," or perhaps, "A&M—famous for making FAST BUCKS." If they can make enough bucks, maybe the tide on increasing tuition will be stemmed.

Grumbles are destined to become roars on that topic. Meanwhile, with the scientists' meticulous timing, maybe they will be consulted concerning when — or whether — to order Francione bobble-head dolls.

* * * * *

Continuing with non-people themes on the cusp of the new year, did you notice that Keiko, the killer whale, died a few weeks ago? Keiko ("Lucky One" in Japanese), having endeared himself to the world as star of "Free Willy," became the cause celebre when more than $20 million was raised to free him from a Mexico City aquarium.

Ultimately released to the sea, he continued to prefer human company to that of fellow denizens of the deep. He seemed always to wind up back in a Norwegian bay, performing for countless applauding cruise ship audiences marveling at the antics of the 26-year-old performer.

His burial became paradoxical. Some people choose burial at sea; this six-ton celebrity was "buried at land." Fans and supporters of Keiko, determined not to cause a media frenzy, arranged for a quiet burial in the snow-bound pasture during the deep darkness of a Nordic winter, a short distance from where he died of pneumonia. Only seven people—including his team and the machine operator who dug the massive grave — were present.

* * * * *

Lest this be viewed as yet another essay devoid of value, let it be concluded in an instructive manner: In the event you are combing classified ads to find a good low-mileage vehicle this winter, try to purchase an exercise bicycle some well-intentioned person bought last winter. Offer less than the listed price; it's a buyer's market.

Happy New Year!

* * * * *

Dr. Newbury, a former president of Western Texas College, is an author/columnist/speaker in the Metroplex. More information is available on his website, www.speakerdoc.com He invites comments by e-mail, newbury@speakerdoc.com or by phone, 817-447-3872.

Letters to the editor

Misses Snyder

Dear Editor:

Happy New Year to our relatives and friends in Ira, Snyder, Hermleigh and surrounding areas.

As most of you know due to health reasons, we moved to Ballinger last October to be near our daughter Jean, and her husband, Ed Morris. She is an RN and had retired to take care of us, so it just made sense for us to move near them.

I had lived in Scurry County for 81 years and we had spent 62 years of our married life there, so it was very difficult to make the change, but we knew it was what we needed to do.

Ballinger is a neat little town and the people are very friendly. Ave. B Church of Christ has welcomed us with open arms. We feel very comfortable and secure here — and for our anniversary, our children had the Snyder Daily News sent to us, so we can keep up with all of you — even if it is 3 or 4 days late.

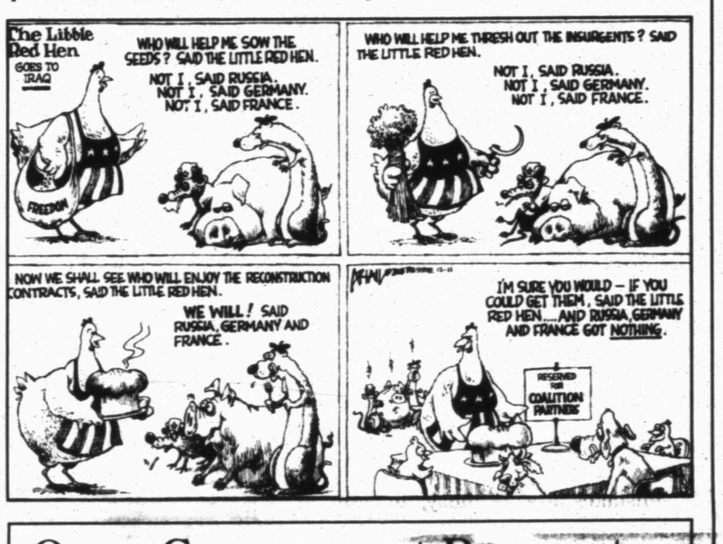
We would be very happy to have all of you stop by if you are down this way. We are just off Highway 158, between the Methodist church and the Bearcat Stadium, at 1400 N. 7th St.

We miss you, but you will always be in our hearts and our memories. Scurry County will always be home to us.

The best to all of you in 2004.

Doris and J.L. Byars





Open Government Barometer

Number of Executive Sessions held by public entities in 2003.

Snyder ISD	11
Hermleigh ISD	7
Ira ISD	7
City of Snyder	5
DCOS	4
Cogdell Hospital	3
WTC	1
Scurry County	0

NEWSPAPERS: LIGHTING FREEDOM'S WAY

A primer for political wannabes

By Joe Klock, Sr.

Once the season to be jolly and ethnically hypersensitive has passed, the attention of us Americans will turn, somewhat reluctantly, to a critical election year.

It will be critical in the medical sense of the word, since the health of government at all levels will be threatened no matter who we send to the seats of power, from the White House to the whorehouses of local leadership.

If that sounds cynical, test it against the palpable reality that, although we have government of the people (and a cancerous growth thereof), government by the people is increasingly limited to individuals in narrow classes - specifically, office holders, an entrenched bureaucracy, those responsible for their holdings and entrenchment, and those in the trading pit of influence peddling.

Government for the people is in third place, both grammatically, as above, and in regrettable truth. We, the remaining people (dare I say hapless schlimazels?) get to cast but a single vote each, except in certain well-organized precincts, for those who will wave and wield the batons of power between this year's polling and our next Hobsonian choices.

Cynical again? Then tell me, if you can do so with a straight face, that among the millions of citizens eligible for the job, George and Al were above the eightieth percentile in qualifications last time around.

Presently, those qualifications are limited to attaining the (physical) age of 35, having been born in the USA, residing here for a minimum of 14 years and having the ability to make spontaneously, and ignore subsequently, an unlimited number of promises. The eligibility requirements for lesser offices are much less stringent, except for the last of these, which is always mandatory.

Other personal assets necessary to successful attainment of public office are numerous, but seldom brought to light, illumination being the bane of both vampires and politicians, if you'll forgive that possible redundancy.

Herewith a few of those helpful traits, for those in search of the only known way to acquire, without necessarily meriting, the lifelong title of "Honorable":

- A ready, steady smile during all public appearances, except when placing wreaths, attending religious services, articulating policy, thoughtful pauses before canned responses, and verbally assaulting either political opponents or enemies who threaten the safety of the nation (these, of course, being interchangeable terms).

- An instinct for homing in on red-light districts, these being clusters of active television cameras. Expert practitioners of this art, such as the Irrev. Al Sharpton, are said to be able to discern approaching TV crews beyond the visible horizon.

- Willingness to lick the hands that feed you - i.e., the Daddy and Mommy Warbuckses whose dead presidents (hip code for $$$) fuel your campaign to provide better government (hip code for getting in at all costs). These loyal largessists usually ask nothing in return except your attentive ear, unswerving obeisance and a share of the pork power under your control. Hey, that's little enough, isn't it, in exchange for giving birth and lending sustenance to your very political life?

- Eagerness to have your past life exposed to public view, including every time you ever peed up an alley or stuffed your training bra. (Sidelight: One of natures paradoxes is that the rhinoceros, with its impervious hide, has no apparent interest in politics.)

- Resolute refusal to admit mistakes or misstatements. Although you are as prone to both faults as the rest of us, you must always defend your facade of impeccability. Aiding you in this effort are such weapons of mass distraction as "I was taken out of context," and "that is not the real issue," and "I have already answered that accusation," and "my opponent has done worse (and/or the same) things," and "I'm sure that when all the facts are presented, I will be found not guilty," and "I have no present recollection of that matter."

Failed defenses, to be strictly avoided, include "I am not a crook," and "I did not have you-know-what with you-know who," and (worst of all), "You've got me dead to rights, and I'm sorry for being such a horse's ass."

All that said, the situation is not totally black; there are hints of gray.

Not too long ago, approximately half the population of a large Western state qualified and vied for the office of governor, proving incontrovertibly that only in America can the bland and bombastic, as well as the blind, lead the blind - and only the blatantly incompetent can be voted out.

The reign of Gray Davis was terminated, even though he appeared to follow the guidelines listed above. His successor, although barred by his foreign birth from the highest office in the land, appeared to win a second prize without the shackles of political debt. Ve shall see, ja?

Joe Klock, Sr. is a freelance writer in Key Largo, FL. E-mail joeklock@aol.com or call (305) 451-0079

EDITORIAL COMMENT

The Dallas Morning News

Mad cow disease

The discovery that the mad cow found in Washington state came from Canada has caused the U.S. beef industry to breathe a wholly unwarranted sigh of relief. This crisis isn't over, and the American people shouldn't fool themselves into thinking it is.

Nobody can say for sure that the "downer" Holstein that sparked the current scare was the only one of her kind. It was a fluke that bovine spongiform encephalophathy was discovered in this cow's tissue, and that fortunate find came only after her meat had been processed. Some experts believe the only reason BSE, or mad cow disease, hasn't been found here yet is that the government hardly has been looking for it.

The meatpacking industry has long fought congressional attempts to tighten regulation in response to the mad cow disaster overseas. Last summer, Congress narrowly defeated a ban on using sick or injured cattle for meat, with Republican and Democratic members of Congress from farm states blocking passage. Too expensive, they said.

That's some bargain they struck. A single cow found to have slipped through the system has caused almost all of America's $3 billion annual beef export market to evaporate in a single week.

Weigh that loss against the relatively paltry $300 million a comprehensive inspection regimen like some European countries have would cost here. And think about the scope of the catastrophe if American consumers, who eat 90 percent of U.S. beef, lose confidence in its safety.

The industry points to the 1997 federal ban on feeding animal proteins to cattle a ban the industry fought as a successful anti-BSE measure. But two years ago, the General Accounting Office discovered that the government had no way to enforce the ban or even to determine which firms were complying with it.

Moreover, there are loopholes in the law, including the appalling fact that it remains legal for factory farms to turn calves into vampires, feeding them the blood of slaughtered cattle which can't be guaranteed to be BSE-free as a "milk replacer." No wonder neurologist Stanley Prusiner, who won the Nobel Prize for discovering what causes BSE, believes that mad cow is more present in the U.S. beef supply than we know.

This isn't a time for consumer panic. But more important, it isn't a time to kid ourselves that the health and regulatory status quo is acceptable. To do so would be there's no better word for it mad.

San Antonio Express-News

Libya

Quirky, unpredictable and dangerous, Libya's longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi always seemed to be a character out of a quirky and violent Quentin Tarantino movie.

The big difference, of course, is that movie characters don't sanction the actual murder of innocent people, as Gadhafi did with the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 in 1988 and other international acts of terror.

Once among the most fervid of Mideast dictators, Gadhafi now seems to be auditioning for a new role on the world stage. After nine months of negotiations with the United States and Britain, he agreed last week to surrender Libya's weapons of mass destruction and permit international inspections.

It's a welcome development and is the result of several factors, including tough economic sanctions imposed by the U.N. Security Council and the United States and consequent economic difficulties for the North African nation. Saddam Hussein's ignominious demise was probably a factor, as well.

Gadhafi has actually been working for almost a decade to shed his reputation as an international pariah. He has acknowledged his country's complicity in the Pan Am bombing and is paying compensation to victims' families. He also has offered to assist the United States and other Western nations in their struggle against international terrorism.

President Bush promised last week that "leaders who abandon the pursuit of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them will find an open path to better relations with the United States and other free nations."

Those "better relations" should include the lifting of sanctions against Libya if it lives up to its end of the deal. The United Nations lifted its sanctions a couple of months ago.

The Libyan approach a combination of sustained economic sanctions, concerted international pressure and diplomatic engagement could be a model for other troublesome nations. North Korea and Iran could be ripe for a sequel.

El Paso Times

Texas population boom

It's no epiphany that Texas needs to better prepare for the fast population growth that's taking place annually. Sharp focus especially must be placed on boosting educational opportunities and achievement.

A recent U.S. Census Bureau report estimates that the Lone Star State's population grew by 380,975 people during the past fiscal year (ended in July).

That's a phenomenal growth rate for one year — the second-fastest rate in the nation (California is first).

Immigrants accounted for 35.4 percent of the growth. And figures from the state demographer's office further show that 90 percent of the immigrants are from Mexico and Latin America. Interestingly, population growth from international immigration is eight times greater than growth resulting from migration from other states in this country.

The state demographer, Steve Murdock, who is a sociology professor at Texas A&M University, is exactly right when he points out that the continued influx of immigrants into Texas means an ongoing strain on the state's economy and education system.

That Murdock's assessment puts some on the defensive is expected, as immigration issues are always emotional. People should understand that Murdock isn't opining in a personal or xenophobic sense. He's doing what demographers do, and that is to use current population statistics and trends to estimate population growth, and then project impacts on the state.

Texas needs to carefully scrutinize and plan for population growth and other social trends — and it needs to be able to do so with blunt honesty.

The facts are that some of the immigrants in this state are not here legally and many are poor and undereducated. That impacts a state in many ways — just as the labor of many of these immigrants (both legal and undocumented) affects Texas businesses and companies in positive ways.

State statistics show that poor Latino children lag in educational performance and achievement. That must change, and it's going to have to be a change that is constant in progress to keep up with the brisk population growth.

"As we have pointed out in the past, that kind of growth could lead to a poorer and less-well-educated state," Murdock said. "By 2040, the average Texas household could be $6,500 poorer in 2000 constant dollars than in 2000 if we don't change the educational and income differentials between Hispanics and other groups."

Best Available Copy

3 members of missionary family killed

KEENE (AP) — Flags from the United States and the Republic of Palau flew Friday over the rose-covered caskets of three members of a missionary family who were beaten and stabbed to death in the Pacific region.

Ruimar DePaiva, 42, his wife, Margareth, 37, and their 11-year-old son, Larrison, were killed Dec. 22 at their home in Airai state during an apparent burglary, according to a court affidavit.

Hernan DePaiva lovingly remembered his brother, sister-in-law and nephew for their devotion to missionary work.

"They gave their lives as missionaries to the people of Palau," Hernan DePaiva told more than 100 mourners at Keene Seventh-Day Adventist Church. "They gave themselves to the Lord."

The DePaivas' bodies were flown to Texas this week for the services in Keene, about 25 miles south of Fort Worth. The family was not from Texas, but Ruimar DePaiva's aunt, Noemi Freeman of Burleson, has lived in the area for 40 years. Freeman, who has a son buried in Keene, made the arrangements.

"They've lived all over the world," Freeman said of the slain missionaries.

The missionaries' 10-year-old daughter, Michelle, was found later on a secluded road by two local residents. She attended Friday's service.

The girl told police that she was kidnapped, assaulted and placed blindfolded in the trunk of a car before the attacker choked her and left her at the side of the road, according to the affidavit.

Surangel Samuel Whipps Sr., a senator from Palau, a chain of more than 200 islands, eight of which are inhabited, spoke at the service and apologized on behalf of the republic. After learning of the crime last week, Palau President Tommy Remengesau called it a "shocking tragedy, a heinous crime that has never been experienced in the republic before."

Astro-graph

By Bernice Bede Osol



Your Birthday

Sunday, Jan. 4, 2004

In the year ahead, chances are you may choose to work a bit harder than you have in the past in order to get what you want. Your efforts will pay off handsomely,with your rewards being greater than last year's.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Because you'll take great pride in yourself today, regardless of the nature of the chores at hand, you'll not only do a good job, but will derive great personal satisfaction in work well done.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — Nothing will deter you today once you make up your mind. Your determined attitude regarding the outcome of events finds answers for problems that might have appeared unsolvable.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — Take the time today to repair little things around the house that have needed tending to for some time. Once they are completed, you'll feel refreshed and ready to get on with the new year.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — Use your down time today to get caught up on mental tasks, such as making a list of resolutions and writing thank-you notes. Your recreational time can then truly be used for relaxation.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — If you haven't done so already, it's a good day to put away the last of your holiday gifts. It will reinforce feelings of good will that you've garnered from the thoughtfulness of others.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — This may not be a day of simply staying home and doing nothing. Chances are you're going to find two ways to take sparse opportunities and enlarge on them in some manner.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — A personal ambition of yours can be fulfilled today once you decide to energetically dedicate yourself to the task of achieving it. Your feelings of self-gratification will be enormous.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — Circumstances favor you today regarding anything that has to do with social relationships, so why not satisfy your restless nature by mixing with friends who you find intriguing?

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — Even if today isn't a day of work for you, it could be a good idea to formulize in your mind matters that relate to your career or finances. What you envision can become reality.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — If a respected pal offers you a bit of advice today, listen attentively to what she or he has to say. Chances are you'll find this friend's suggestions exceptionally helpful and much appreciated.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Today could mark the beginning of favorable changes where a joint venture is concerned. If you have anything going on that involves another, solidify it now while the aspects favor you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — Relationships should work out quite favorably for you today, especially those that involve love and devotion. Thinking togetherness and acting as one will cement lasting bonds.

Capricorn, treat yourself to a birthday gift. Send for your Astro-Graph year ahead predictions by mailing $2 to Astro-Graph, c/o this newspaper, P.O. Box 167, Wickliffe, OH 44092-0167. Be sure to state your zodiac sign. Visit www.bernice4u.com for more advice.

Monday, Jan. 5, 2004

If you manage your affairs with the prudence and wisdom that experience has taught you to use, the year ahead will be a most successful one for you both socially and businesswise. Growth in each area is indicated.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Should you make any mistakes at work today, do your best to correct them immediately. If you attempt to sweep them under the rug, it'll cause you far greater problems than already exist.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — Some days aren't great for socializing, and today could be one of them for you. If things start to get boring in this area, excuse yourself and look for productive ways to spend your time.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — Strive to fulfill your objectives today, but don't do so in ways that would cause others to question your means or behavior. Jealous associates could be just waiting to trip you up.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — Although you might be tempted today to put someone who deserves it in his or her place, be above it all and hold your tongue. Nothing is ever gained by causing further dispute.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Be aware that financial involvement might be trickier than usual today. You could be tripped up by something so small that you're not likely to notice it unless you're extremely alert.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — We all have differing opinions from time to time and today a meeting of the minds between you and your mate could be rather difficult to achieve. It doesn't mean that this person doesn't love you.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — You may not be up to par when it comes to your reasoning powers today, so when it comes to important considerations, you might want to postpone making any or yield to a wiser head.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — It's never wise to speak negatively about one friend to another and today will be no exception. Your chances of being quoted are a sure bet, and it's very likely they'll even be exaggerated.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — Take care not to take any bows today before something you are working on is completed. If the final product doesn't meet your onlooker's standards, you could look like a phony.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — Someone whose loyalty you thought you enjoyed could disappoint you today by siding with another and taking a position contrary to yours. Don't overreact; instead, let the issue drop.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Unless you're extremely mentally alert today, you are apt to make a major mistake concerning a material matter. Bring in a second head for advice when it comes to any large outlay.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — This could be one of those days when you could completely lack faith in a judgment call that is made in good faith on your behalf. Be careful about what you put a halt to.

Major changes are ahead for Capricorn in the coming year. Send for your Astro-Graph predictions today. Mail $2 to Astro-Graph, c/o this newspaper, P.O. Box 167, Wickliffe, OH 44092-0167. Be sure to state your zodiac sign. Visit www.bernice4u.com for more advice.

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Unemployment expected to drop

NEW YORK (AP) — Companies are expected to step up hiring in 2004 after a year in which household spending boosted the economy more than business investment, according to a group of economists surveyed by The Wall Street Journal.

The 54 economists surveyed for the Journal's 2004 economic-forecast report said they thought the unemployment rate could fall to 5.5 percent by November.

Hiring fueled by increasing corporate profits and economic growth could lead to as many as 1.5 million new jobs, the Journal said.

Though they did not predict a boom, the respondents said they expected the recovery to continue, with strong growth in the first part of the year expected to slow toward the year's end.

"The economy will be producing a message that employment is growing at a pretty good pace, but not booming," Richard Rippe, chief economist at Prudential Equity Group Inc., told the Journal.

Real gross product was expected to grow at an annual rate of 4.5 percent in the first quarter, 4.3 percent in the second quarter and 4 percent in the second half of the year, the economists said.

Half of the respondents said they thought the Dow Jones Industrial Average could exceed 11000 by year end, and 93 percent said they had increased the amount they had personally invested in the stock market in the past year.

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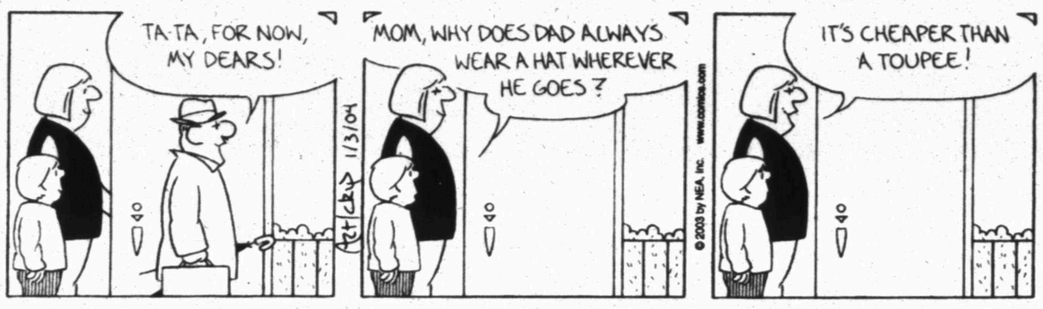
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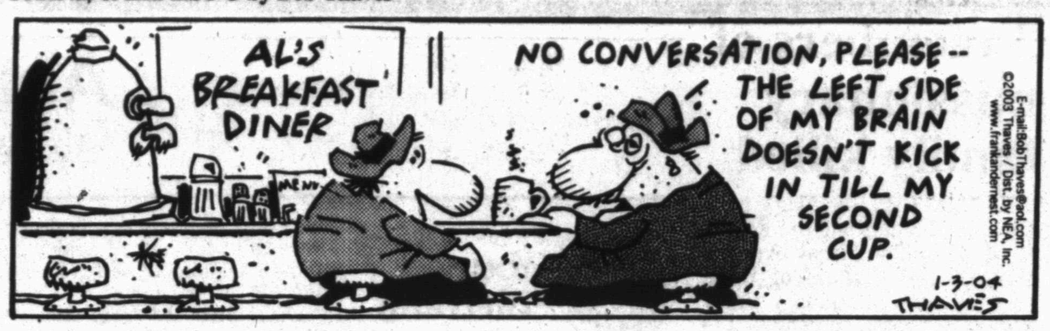
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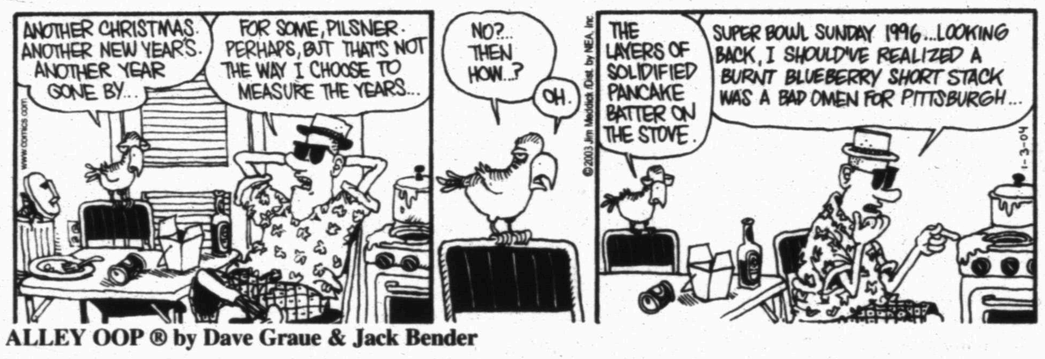
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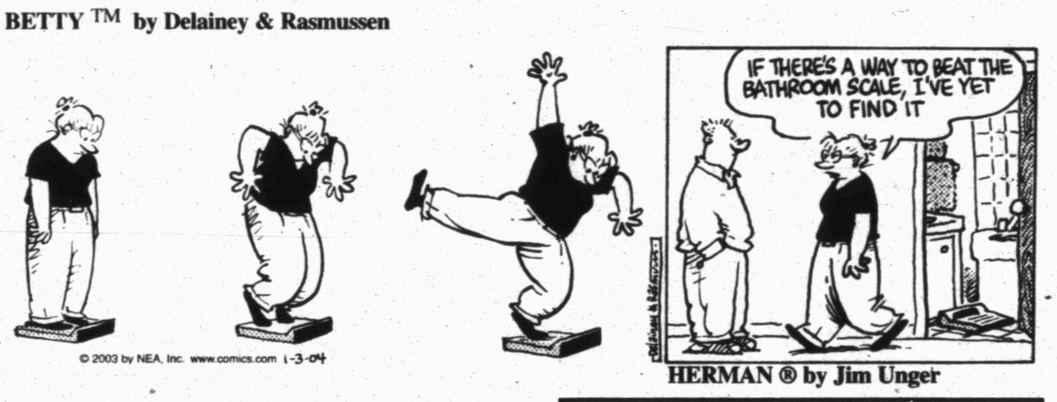
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NEA Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1 Campus square
5 Austen novel
9 Exercise place
12 Reverse
13 Mete out
14 Crony
15 Mouse target?
16 Pats on
17 Jacket feature
18 Talk — (be frank)
20 Pig sounds
22 Swarm with
23 Choose
24 Traffic sign
27 Pocket money
31 Delts' neighbors
34 Regretted
35 Go on foot
36 Math course
38 Stop short
40 Faint
41 Long dress
42 Flirtation
44 Opie's aunt
46 Holliday's friend
49 Defiant reply
52 Evergreens
54 Ms. Hagen
55 Bruins sch.
58 Detroit gridder
59 Nebr. neighbor
60 Growing medium
61 Mediterranean landmark
62 Riviera summer
63 Drags
64 Short distance

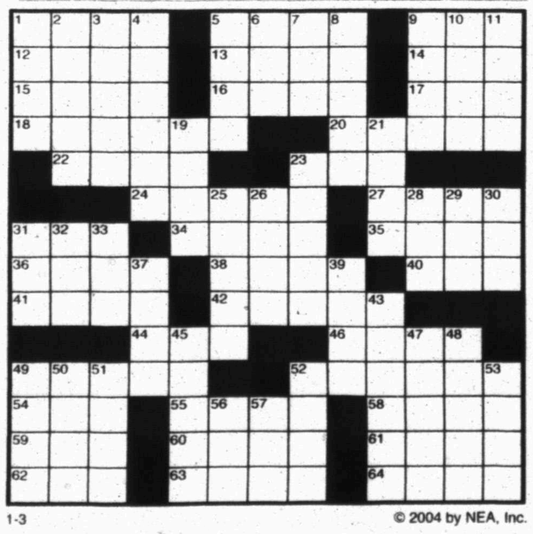
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11 Mendicant's cry
19 Arab ruler
21 Have poison ivy
23 Strangely
25 Ragtime's — Blake
26 Main role in a movie
28 Facilitate
29 Kind of jump
30 Garment edge
31 Modern-day teller
32 Lingerie buy
33 Ice-hockey team
37 Sarcastic remark
39 MOMA artist
43 Kitchen utensils
45 Blow, as a volcano
47 Singer Bonnie —
48 Liable
49 Microwave
50 Coup d'—
51 Wind indicator
52 Household pets
53 Crackle's colleague
56 Business VIP
57 Regulation

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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Snyder Daily News Comics

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"IT SURE LOOKS LIKE A HOT CHOCOLATE DAY."



"I sold half the business!"

KIT 'N' CARLYLE ® by Larry Wright

Best Available Copy

Dr. Gott

By Peter Gott, M.D.



Aspirin can be harmful

DEAR DR. GOTT: What are the risks of aspirin therapy? Can the medicine cause ulcers in large dosage? What advantage does enteric-coated aspirin have?

DEAR READER: Aspirin affects the chemistry of the stomach lining, reducing a natural barrier that protects us from gastric acid. Although the effects are more pronounced with high-dose regular aspirin (above 2,400 milligrams a day), side effects, primarily gastric irritation and bleeding, can occur with lower dosages, as well as with buffered aspirin, enteric-coated aspirin, liquid aspirin or rectal aspirin. With continued use, the stomach becomes increasingly irritated, often leading to heartburn and indigestion, although these warning symptoms do not always occur.

The gastric lining frequently bleeds. Eventually, an ulcer may form and the bleeding may escalate. Many authorities have reported that intestinal bleeding from aspirin and ibuprofen are a major cause of intestinal hemorrhage in this country.

As with any drug, the consumer must weigh the risks against the benefits. A few aspirin taken for a day or so for a cold pose no hazard. Nor does the practice of taking a daily 81-milligram "baby aspirin." (This is an oxymoron, like "military intelligence." Young children should not be given aspirin because of possible toxic effects. So, while there are products named "baby aspirin," no aspirin should be given to babies.) However, several daily aspirin tablets for weeks or months may put some patients at risk for the complications I mentioned. Not everybody, you understand, but some.

As many people have discovered, the gastric irritation can be ameliorated (but not altogether prevented) by taking the aspirin tablets with a full meal. Again, it's a question of the risk/benefit ratio. The good to be gained by taking any drug should outweigh the potential harm

As an aside, patients are often put off by the informational sheets handed out by pharmacists when prescriptions are filled. The lists of side effects are frightening and extensive. What these sources of information fail to provide is the INCIDENCE of side effects, which is usually quite low — in the range of less than 1 percent of users. Therefore, it becomes vital that consumers view the "big picture" of the risk/benefit ratio. While this may seem to be a daunting exercise, your physician can help put it into perspective. Every substance — even plain tap water — can be dangerous if consumed to excess. But this doesn't mean that we should avoid it. Your doctor can help you decide.

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

DEAR DR. GOTT: My 79-year-old husband is in good health, but has leg cramps. His appetite is excellent, his diet is prudent, his activity on our ranch is never-ending, and his weight is stable (and normal). He has no serious illnesses. His current medications are Prinivil, Bumex, Aldactone, Zocor and Coumadin. Why would he have low blood pressure and cramps?

DEAR READER: I have to take issue with you. Judging from his medications, your husband does have serious illnesses. (If he didn't, he wouldn't need to take powerful drugs.)

Prinivil, Bumex and Aldactone are used to treat hypertension and/or problems with fluid retention, such as congestive heart failure. Zocor is for high cholesterol. Coumadin is an anticoagulant used in special circumstances, such as atrial fibrillation (irregular pulse) or stroke.

Therefore, I have to conclude that your husband is suffering from at least three serious ailments — unless, of course, his doctor is inappropriately treating him, a line of reasoning I choose not to follow.

If his blood pressure is low, as your letter stated, one or more of his anti-hypertension drugs should be modified or discontinued. This is the responsibility of his physician, whom you should telephone. Have ready the home blood pressure readings to support your allegation of over-treatment.

Second, diuretic therapy can lead to a loss of potassium from the body, even though one of his medications (Aldactone) should counteract this. Low potassium can lead to leg cramps — and, more ominously, cardiac irregularities that can be fatal. Therefore, when you call your husband's physician, request a blood potassium level. I'm betting that the combination of medication and a physically active lifestyle on your Texas ranch may have caused a low potassium level that can, fortunately, be corrected by supplements of the mineral.

Third, find out why he is on Coumadin. The daily activities of a rancher certainly place him at risk for injuries and bleeding. Therefore, the use of an anticoagulant in such an instance may be inappropriate; the risks may outweigh the benefits. I cannot judge this based on the information you supply, but you and your husband certainly need to resolve this issue. If he meanders on horseback around the spread, OK. If he rides bulls or breaks mustangs, not OK.

I am convinced that your husband's doctor will welcome your comments and take seriously your concerns. Remember that under the new federal privacy act, the doctor cannot discuss or share your husband's medical information with you, unless he has signed a release form. So, if the doctor gives you a hard time on the phone, bear with him; he's only following the law.

In summary, your husband has at least three serious medical conditions that I cannot define because of insufficient information. He appears to be over-medicated and needs to have his potassium level checked. A three-way consultation with his physician would be appropriate.

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

DEAR DR. GOTT: Seven years ago, I was diagnosed with right bundle branch block. Please explain this and indicate whether I should see a cardiologist.

DEAR READER: Electrical impulses reach the cardiac muscle through two major nerves: the right bundle and the left bundle.

On occasion, the electrocardiogram reveals slowing of the electrical current through these nerves, resulting in either right or left bundle branch block.

RBBB is fairly common and does not, like LBBB, denote heart disease. It usually is an incidental finding on the electrocardiogram, causes no symptoms and requires no treatment. However, RBBB can sometimes be related to certain disorders, such as sarcoidosis (a type of inflammation affecting many organs, including the heart), but this relation is rare.

Although you are probably safe ignoring your RBBB, you should confirm its benign significance with a cardiologist, who will probably order a stress test (if you are over 50) to make certain that your cardiac muscle is healthy.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I recently read about the dangers of taking chromium. I've been on this supplement for two years and have developed a dull ache in my armpit. When I stopped the chromium, the pain disappeared. Could I be experiencing the consequences of chromium poisoning?

DEAR READER: You needn't worry, because chromium poisoning from dietary supplements does not ordinarily occur in humans. It has been reported in laboratory animals, though, who were fed the equivalent of 1,000 times the usual human intake of 50 micrograms daily.

Chromium is plentiful in foods, such as meat, cheese, whole grains, eggs and fruit. Toxicity can result from chronic industrial exposure (or excessive dietary supplements), causing liver damage and kidney disease.

I do not know the cause of your symptom, but if it disappeared after you stopped the chromium supplement, I suggest that you simply rely on a balanced diet to meet your nutritional needs.

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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Haiti's bicentennial marred by clashes

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — A celebration marking the 200th anniversary of Haiti's independence from France turned into a scene of internal strife, with bloody clashes breaking out between police and protesters.

The demonstrations, in spots across the country, underscored the growing unrest under President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

More than 15,000 Aristide supporters rallied outside the National Palace as the president clasped hands with guests including South African President Thabo Mbeki and actor Danny Glover. The surge of support came as more than 5,000 government opponents massed in the capital's streets and faced off with police and government partisans.

Police fired tear gas and warning shots as crowds ran for cover, coughing from clouds of the stinging gas. Some demonstrators fell to the ground in protest, shouting: "Freedom!" At least two protesters were wounded by bullets and six were hit by rocks.

"Today is a day for celebrating freedom," said Rodney William, 33, a business owner. "But for us, that means freedom from slavery and freedom from Aristide."

Haiti was born after the world's first successful slave rebellion. The bicentennial was a bittersweet remembrance for a country that triumphed over slavery and colonialism two centuries ago only to become the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, struggling to neutralize nagging political and economic troubles.

Aristide, like many leaders before him, spoke of the future Thursday instead of the past. His beleaguered administration has been rendered ineffective with a lingering political impasse and shaky international support. He is barred from running for a third term.

"It was 1804 that was the stinging bee but 2004 is sure to be the year of honey," Aristide said as he rallied a crowd of supporters.

Protesters burned tire barricades in the streets and the crackle of gunfire was heard in Port-au-Prince as darkness descended Thursday night. Demonstrations also were held in a few provincial towns.

Tensions have increased in Haiti since Aristide's Lavalas Family party swept 2000 legislative elections that some observers said were flawed. The contested seats were eventually vacated by senators, but the opposition has refused to participate in new elections unless security is improved and Aristide steps down. Since mid-September, violent anti-government protests have killed at least 41.

Aristide has refused to cave to opposition demands but faces fading support. Defying threats of violence Thursday, he spoke in the capital and then headed to Gonaives where the declaration of independence was signed Jan. 1, 1804.

"The time has come ... to demand respect for the constitution, respect for everybody without distinction," Aristide told about 2,000 supporters in Gonaives' central square.

But the decaying city was bare of fanfare for the historic day.

"The people are afraid. A ghost town is celebrating the bicentennial with Aristide," said Rosanne Dalzon, 30.

A group of prisoners broke through a wall at the National Penitentiary and escaped Thursday in Port-au-Prince as riot police tried to push back anti-government protesters. It was unclear how many inmates got away but three were captured.

The government spent $15 million on the bicentennial celebrations, including galas, fireworks and the dedication of a monument to Haiti's forefathers.

Haiti's independence leader, Toussaint Louverture, was captured and imprisoned on the French-Swiss border, where he died. But on Nov. 18, 1803, French troops surrendered to forces led by Jean-Jacques Dessalines. Independence became official when Haitians presented a declaration in a New Year's Day ceremony at Gonaives' central square.

Southwest Airlines stars in reality show on TV

DALLAS (AP) — The star of the next reality television show isn't a model, an actor or a beach-dwelling survivor; it's an airline.

The show follows employees of Southwest Airlines as they deal with weather delays, blackouts and passengers who are running late or too drunk or too smelly to board the plane. There are unhappy travelers and a few shouting matches.

"Airline" begins Monday night on the A&E Network, which plans to air 18 half-hour episodes. A&E executives believe it will make compelling television that travelers can easily grasp.

"When you go to cocktail parties, there is always somebody talking about the long delay on their last flight. Everyone in the room wants to share their travel stories — the love-hate relationship we have with air travel," said Nancy Dubuc, vice president of documentary programming at A&E. "It's that common connection."

A&E officials said they approached all the largest U.S. carriers with the idea for the show, modeled on a program of the same name that has aired in the United Kingdom for more than six years.

A&E wanted an airline with international routes, which Southwest lacks, but other carriers turned the network down. Colleen Barrett, president and chief operating officer of low-cost Southwest, said yes.

"What possessed me?" Barrett said when asked to explain her decision. "When I was first approached I said, 'You've got to be kidding me.' "

Southwest's publicity people, however, were excited about the idea. Barrett agreed to look at tapes of the U.K. show — she pronounced it "OK" — and talked to officials at easyJet, the London-based budget carrier featured in the program.

"The easyJet people told me they felt (the show) literally put them on the map," Barrett said. "I started thinking ... it's basically 18 hours of free publicity. You can't buy that kind of PR."

Along with constant shots of Southwest planes and people, the show includes frequent praise for Southwest's customer service — delivered matter-of-factly by the narrator.

At the same time, many of the scenes show unhappy travelers complaining about one thing or another. A few vow never to fly Southwest again, and the show's overall tone doesn't exactly glorify air travel.

A&E and Dallas-based Southwest said the airline didn't pay or receive money for taking part in the show and had no control over content. Southwest, however, was allowed to request a voice-over narration to give "context" to explain treatment of specific customer complaints.

Barrett called the decision to cooperate "a gamble." She acknowledged wishing that the producers had not included a scene that highlighted the airline's policy of requiring very fat passengers to buy two seats.

"There's not another carrier out there that doesn't have the same policy," Barrett said. "But that's real life. We have a pretty darn good reputation as far as customer service satisfaction, so I thought we could handle it."

Barrett said the program might even make passengers behave better by showing them the stress that airline employees face every day.

The producers — the U.S. division of Granada plc, which also produces the U.K. original — spent six months shooting video at Los Angeles International Airport and Chicago's Midway Airport.

A&E solicited story ideas from Southwest customers. In one episode, a passenger let cameras follow him as he proposed to his girlfriend in mid-flight.

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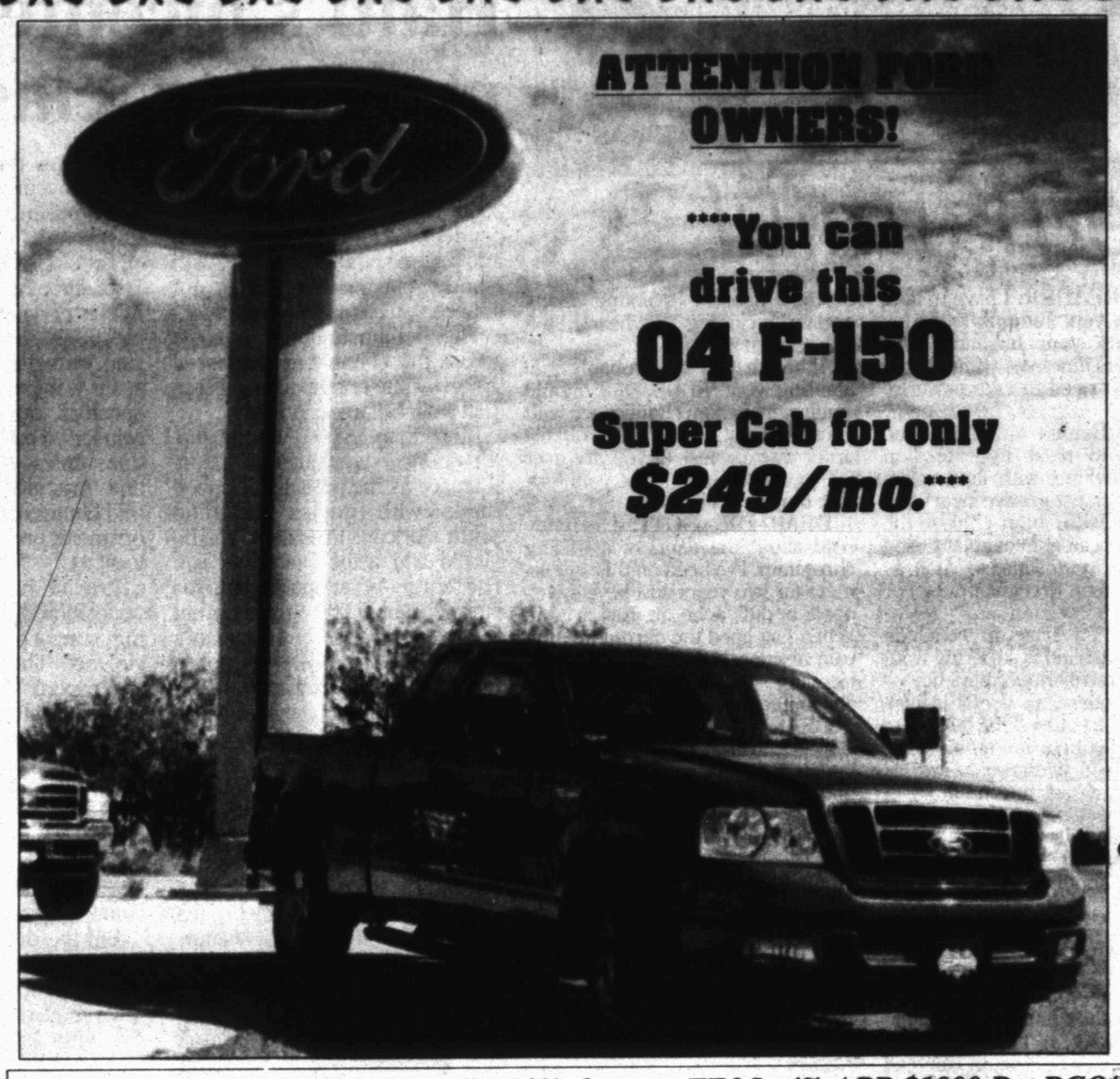
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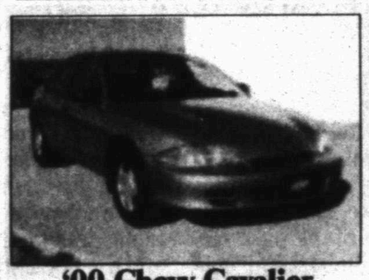
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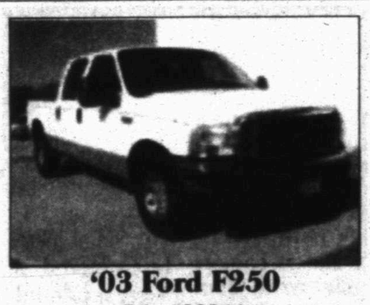
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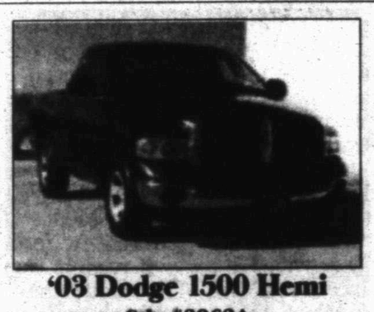
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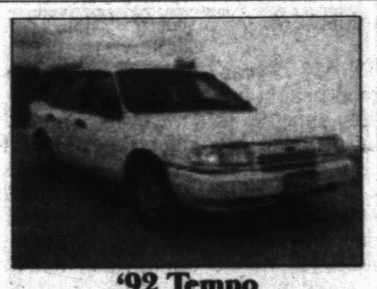
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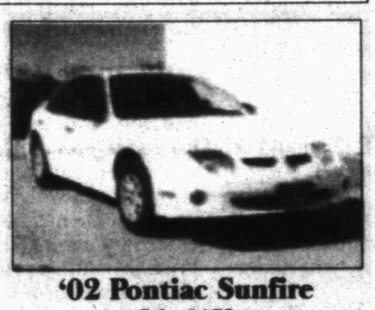
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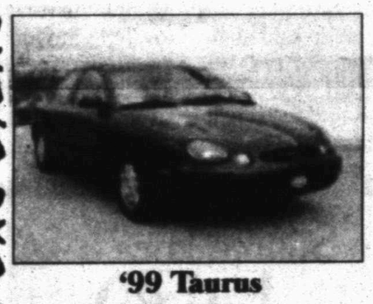
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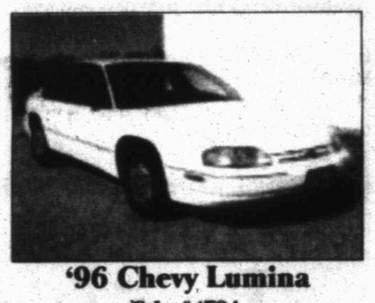
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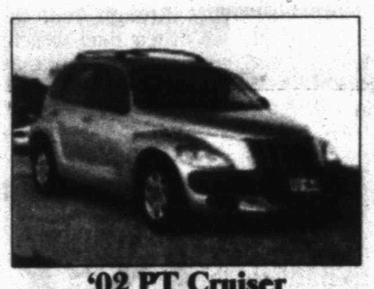
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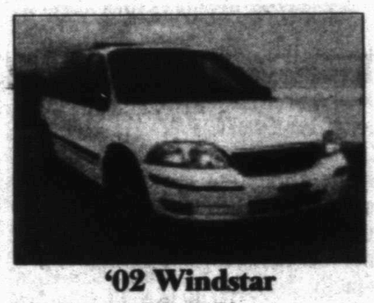
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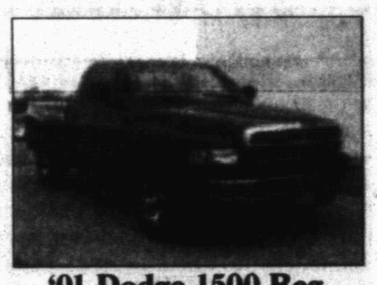
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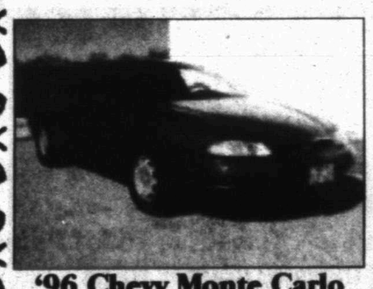
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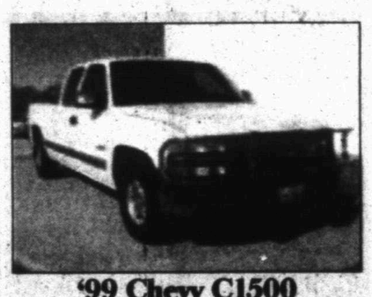
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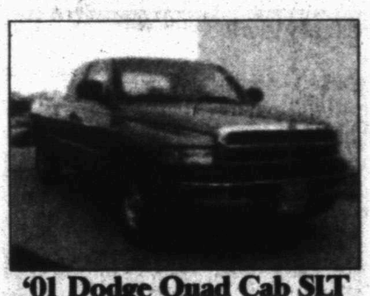
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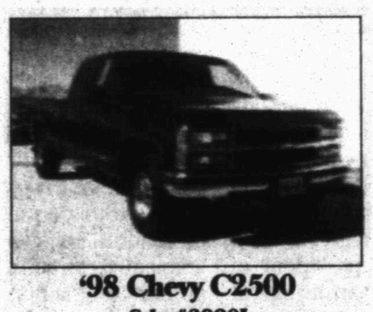
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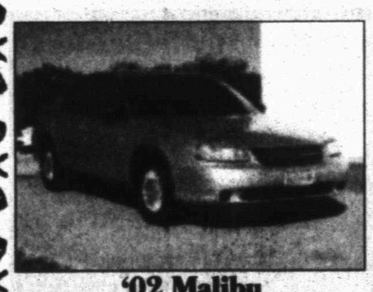
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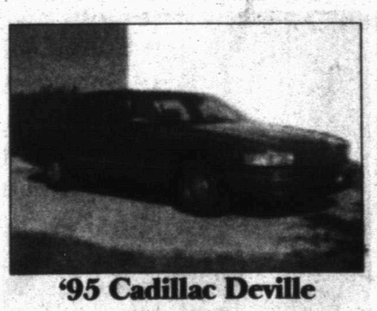
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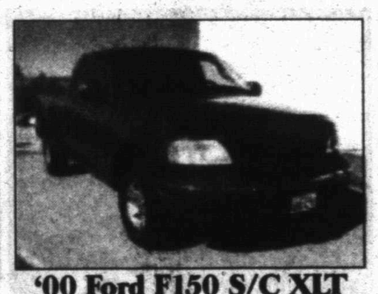
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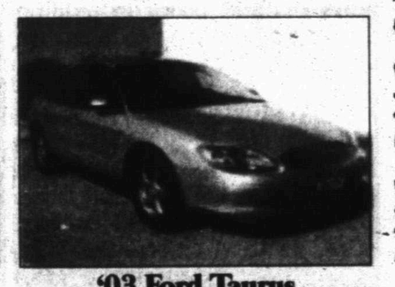
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