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THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

MONDAY

Dec. 29, 2003
Vol. 55 No. 209
10 Pages 50¢

Home of Carol Miller

DEC 29 2003

Winding it up...

STUDYING THE BARGAINS — Blake Cain eyes some after-Christmas bargains that his mother, Alisa, has found. Most Snyder businesses reported good holiday sales this year. (SDN Staff Photo)

Holiday business...

Sales top forecasts

By Annie Rowe
SDN Staff Writer

Snyder retailers had their Christmas wishes answered during the recent gift-giving season as business was above average for most.

Nationally, retailers reported that sales had been slow. However in Snyder holiday retail activity did not reflect that trend.

"We had an outstanding Christmas Eve," said Stephanie Daniels, assistant manager of Bealls. "We had people everywhere. It was a very eventful sales period."

This year's sales forecast was unpredictable, but retailers kept their hopes up.

"We were busy all through the holiday shopping period. We just didn't know what to expect, but in the end we were very pleased." Daniels said.

"The day after Christmas we had another sale and the turn out was much larger than expected," said Daniels. "It's been just wonderful."

Wal-Mart in Snyder saw a better-than-expected shopping turnout.

"Our sales have been really good. The day after Christmas was fabulous," said Laura Averette, assistant manager. "We did not have as many returns as we thought we would, and we've had lots of people shopping."

Retailers have not seen any sign of slowing down thus far for the post-Christmas sales.

Jennifer Sawyer, manager of Hackfeld's Quality Clothing, feels that sales were steadily on the upswing and the activity has been good for Snyder.

"I think that shoppers really stayed close to home this year and that is always good for our community. We've really appreciated how many local people shopped with us this season. Overall, this year was a wonderful, wonderful sales year. This month in particular was great for us."

Area retailers are hopeful that the improved sales forecast will continue through 2004.

Towle Park renovation contract is approved

By Annie Rowe
SDN Staff Writer

A major step was taken this morning toward the completion of the Towle Park restoration project during a meeting this Scurry County commissioners court.

The court voted unanimously to accept a contract with KDC — Turner and Associates, a design firm based in Midland, to begin the park restoration design. The design budget is $1,148,000.

Scott Crenwelge, parks and recreation director, initially recommended the firm to commissioners in October.

"The first major step is over," said Crenwelge. "We'll be able to begin to immediately submit plans to the state for approval."

The firm has been the principal designers for a number of construction projects, including the Memorial Gardens in Odessa, Mitchell County Sports Complex and various parks and new playgrounds in Lubbock.

In other business, commissioners tabled an action to pursue litigation against a number of oil companies for possible underpayment of ad valorem taxes by the companies who operated in Scurry County from 1987 and 1998.

Scurry County could possibly share in the repayment with Snyder ISD whose trustees recently voted unanimously to pursue the action.

Additionally, the court adopted a resolution asking the state to stop unfunded mandates.

A number of line item transfers were approved. Also okayed were budget amendments: commissioners court, $300 for medical insurance; county judge office, $3,750 for legal expenses; district clerk, $350 for medical insurance; justice of peace, $11,600 for medical insurance; maintenance department, $6,065 for medical insurance; sheriff's department, $34,115 for general payroll, social security, retirement and jail food.

Airport, $60 for social security; MHMR, $4 for general payroll; parks department, $5,900 for medical insurance; precinct 2, $740 for insurance; county attorney, $3,350 for law books; and juvenile probation, $181.20 for communications and computer lease.

Cable TV rates are going up on February 1

Beginning Feb. 1, Cox Communications will raise its basic rate from $7.60 to $8.75 per month for Snyder residential customers.

Expanded basic service will increase from $30.13 to $31.24 monthly.

Converter rental charges for both analog and digital services will increase from $3.70 to $3.99 per month, and the Channel Guide Magazine will be $2.50, up from the present $1.99 per month.

Installation charges also will change.

Unwired home installation costs will increase from $45 to $49.99, while pre-wired installation will drop from $45 to $31.

Additional outlet installation will increase from $14.95 to $18.99.

None of the prices include sales tax.

The company says increased programming costs have forced the company to increase its rates.

Year in review...

War in Iraq on minds of Snyder folks

Every daily newspaper in the world was giving a blow-by-blow account of American troops on the road to Baghdad during the spring of 2003. But life went on in small town America. Here's the second quarter events that were occurring in Snyder and Scurry County in April, May and June.

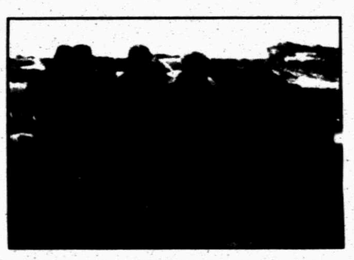
APRIL

Hermleigh ISD trustees were on the verge of naming the lone finalist for the school's superintendent's post the first of April as interim superintendent James Bible reported more than 40 applications had been received for the position. The vacancy occurred when long-time educator Jerry Church retired at the end of 2002.

The board did name Marvin Beaty as its lone finalist and a contract agreement was reached. At the time, Beaty was serving as the principal at Little Elm High School near Denton.

An informational meeting held by the Texas Department of Transportation on future transportation projects in Scurry County did not attract much interest.,

The war in Iraq became more personal as two area soldiers died in the war. One was a Sweetwater High School graduate and the other soldier was a Coahoma High graduate.



FATAL ACCIDENT — Three persons died in this accident in 2003. (SDN Staff Photo)

Snyder High School's one-act play topped regional honors in Midland as Tanner Beard was named best actor.

The first wind farm in Scurry County was announced this month as Cielo Wind Power stated they were to build some 80 turbines in the area of Fluvanna. The wind farm was constructed this year and is quite evident as motorists travel Hwy. 84 north.

Snyder city council members continued to hash over the expired interlocal agreement with Scurry County during regular and called meetings.

A Good Sam trailer rally at the Scurry County Coliseum brought visitors to Snyder and gave some businesses a shot in the arm financially.

The Price Daniel Unit was affected by state job cuts and especially within the prison system as the recreation specialist position at the facility was eliminated.

A lawsuit filed against the local school district by a former student, Haley Elkins, was discussed at the April school board meeting. The suit, saying Elkin's civil rights had been violated when she was not allowed to participate in varsity drama as a one-act play participant, was settled by allowing a ceremonial brick at Worsham Auditorium to be decorated as was the tradition with students.

There was no monetary settlement.

Fran Walker won a 2003 Ford Focus donated by Wilson Motors as a fundraiser for Western Texas College.

SHS's one-act play advanced to the state meet for the 31st time in school history.

WTC trustees agreed to the conditions of a half-million dollar loan from West Texas State Bank to allow for completion of the school's sports complex. Work continues on the facility as the year comes to an end.

Easter weekend in Scurry County was marred by several accidents including one on U.S. 180 and FM 1673 that killed a Levelland woman and two brothers from Salado.

Kurt McMillan and Amber Russell were honored at WTC as the top students.

Snyder Wheels Car Club held its annual show this month and crowds continue to grow for the event. On the same weekend, the annual May Day festivities were held at Scurry County Coliseum.

MAY

The Scurry County commissioners court designated 43 sections in the northern portion of the county as a reinvestment zone in order to grant a tax abatement to the Cielo Wind Farm project.

In the lone school board election in the county, Tim Dacus

See EVENTS, Page 7

Leap year brings in new laws

AUSTIN (AP) — New college tuition rates and a 24-hour waiting period for women seeking abortions represent significant changes in Texas policy in 2004.

After months of planning, the new laws take effect Thursday, rather than September, like most Texas laws.

The Republican-led Legislature loosened its grip on tuition-setting power to allow universities to set their own rates to offset $558 million in state cuts to higher education. Supporters appreciated the flexibility in raising more funds, while opponents said higher rates will make it more difficult for middle-class students to afford a college education.

"It's horrible news for students," said Rep. Garnet Coleman, D-Houston.

He said the idea that college students leave home, drive to school in a BMW and live in a condo their parents bought is a fallacy. He said many students work to pay their way through school, and higher tuition will only delay their graduations.

Supporters, however, say without state funds, schools have no choice but to raise rates to cover their costs.

At the University of Texas at Austin, the largest campus in the country with about 50,000 students, tuition will rise 13.2 percent this spring and 29.3 percent in the fall, based on an average of a 15-hour course load. That means students will pay about $3,075 for the spring semester and $3,510 in the fall.

Students will get some help in meeting the rising costs.

The state mandated that when universities raise tuition, they set aside 15 percent for financial aid and 5 percent for a new program to reward students for finishing college quickly.

The B-On-Time program, which also starts in January, provides zero-interest loans then forgives them if a student finishes in four years — or the usual time it takes to get the degree — while keeping at least a "B" average.

On the social front, the "Woman's Right to Know Act" requires the 24-hour waiting period before a woman can get an abortion to start Thursday.

Women are supposed to be offered state-approved materials regarding fetal development, with color photos, and risks associated with abortion and full-term pregnancy.

It also requires that any abortion after the 15th week of pregnancy be performed at an ambulatory surgical center, or a hospital licensed to perform the procedure.

Also taking effect Thursday is a ban on operating motor vehicles in most Texas riverbeds and new rules regarding credit scoring for insurance.

For several months, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department game wardens have been notifying people they encounter on or near rivers of the change.

Game wardens, sheriff's deputies and other officers will enforce the class C misdemeanor that can bring fines of $500 or higher. Repeat offenders could face higher fines and jail time.

Consumers will also be allowed to avoid some problems with negative credit scores when buying insurance.

ASK US

Q—When do the Christmas holidays end for public school students?

A—Hermleigh and Ira will go back to school Monday, while Snyder students are out until Tuesday, Jan. 6.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Joey Torres...

...is the 18-year-old son of Arthur and Sylvia Torres and has lived in Snyder all of his life. He has one brother, Eric, 17, and a sister, Gabrielle, 6. Joey is a 2003 graduate of Snyder High School. His favorite hobby is serving the Lord and attending church at First Assembly of God.

TODAY'S THOUGHT

Never mistake motion for action.
—Ernest Hemingway

Best Available Copy

events

WHAT'S UP?

ONGOINGS

Bible study tapes

Bible videos air each week on Channel 2. To be shown at 7 this evening is "God Has Spoken of Judgment," followed by "Handling Aright the Word of God."

Farewell party for Marilyn Chauncey

There will be a farewell party for Marilyn Chauncey from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Tuesday at the State Farm Insurance office at 1707 30th St., Suite B. Refreshments will be served.

Lions meetings cancelled

Snyder Lions Club will not meet Tuesday, but will start meeting again Tuesday, Jan. 6, at noon at the Martha Ann Woman's Club.

First Baptist support group

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

LVN testing dates

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

Doodle Bug writers club

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

Windbreak trees

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

Cancer treatment transportation

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

Police shootings spur need for more training

HOUSTON (AP) — The recent shooting deaths of two teenagers by Houston police officers highlights the need to intensify training in the use of force, law enforcement experts and senior members of the department said.

Jose Vargas Jr., 15, was killed on Halloween night and Eli Escobar Jr., 14, was shot to death less than a month later. Both officers may have made mistakes that can be associated with insufficient training, said David Klinger, a professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis who is an expert on police shootings.

For example, Klinger said, officers without enough training often place their fingers on the trigger too quickly, which can lead to accidental firings.

Master Police Officer Jim Conley defended Houston's training efforts, saying the department requires officers to attend 40 hours of training a year, twice as much as the state mandates.

But most Houston police officers receive little regular tactical firearms training beyond an annual visit to a firing range, police union President Hans Marticiuc told the Houston Chronicle for a today story.

The firing range establishes only minimal competency, several police officers said. Targets move in predictable ways, officers are not allowed to move while shooting, and a standard number of shots are fired.

Frank Miller, a former Houston police officer who did tactical training for narcotics officers before his retirement a year ago, said patrol officers deserve some of the same additional tactical training that the department's elite units get.

"These guys need it, they need more of it," Miller said. "More money needs to be spent. But tactical training proposals just get cut. It's always 'next year,' and next year never comes."

In the incidents that led to the deaths of the two teenagers, some experts have suggested that less force — or different tactics altogether — should have been used. According to personnel files, neither officer appears to have had use-of-force training for at least three years, the newspaper reported.

Officer R.K. Butler was working an off-duty security job at a movie theater when he saw Vargas driving a truck and became suspicious, investigators said.

Butler chased Vargas in his own car until the teen was stopped by traffic. The officer walked up to the truck and put his gun in the driver's side window, police said. The door frame struck Butler's arm when Vargas accelerated, police said, and the gun went off.

Escobar was killed while fighting with officers Arthur Carbonneau and Ronald Olivo outside a friend's apartment in northwest Houston, police said.

The two officers, who were looking for a suspect in an earlier assault, were trying to subdue Escobar and handcuff him because he had not followed their commands, police said.

An attorney with the Houston Police Officers' Union has said Carbonneau's gun fired accidentally after Escobar kicked the officer's hand.

Survivors seek visas in America

DALLAS (AP) — Statements from a federal judge and prosecutors may help two dozen illegal immigrants who survived a deadly smuggling trip gain permanent legal residency in this country.

Two men died of heat exhaustion in July 2002 as they rode from El Paso to North Texas in an unventilated tractor-trailer rig with more than 40 other illegal immigrants.

The two men who were driving the rig — Troy Phillip Dock and Jason Steven Sprague — were sentenced last month to more than 33 years in prison. Most of the immigrants testified against the men during their sentencing hearing.

Judge Leonard Davis said in a sentencing order that the immigrants were "vulnerable victims" who couldn't fend for themselves.

"Although they had entered this country illegally, the aliens were desperate to the point that they had little control over their own fate and were at the mercy of those to whom they had entrusted their passage," the judge wrote.

El Paso attorneys Enrique Moreno and Francisco "Paco" DomDinguez, who represent the immigrants, said the judge's order would be significant as their clients pursue "U" visas, created to protect victims of trafficking, among other crimes.

"The judge's order is important because you are getting it from an impartial source," Moreno told The Dallas Morning News. "His declaration of them as 'victims' is very important because it is one of the elements we must show in the petition."

The final decision to grant the visas will depend on immigration officials. Key in the review process, however, will be a recommendation from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Texas, which has said that the immigrants were crucial to prosecuting several smugglers.

Nearly all the immigrants were given work permits so they could stay in the country to testify against the smugglers. Their current permits are valid through August.

Some groups that advocate better enforcement of immigration laws oppose the efforts to get visas for the immigrants. Dan Stein, executive director of the Federation for American Immigration Reform, said it could set a bad precedent.

"These visas were created to encourage people to come forward to help in the prosecution of smugglers, not because you feel sorry for them because they got involved in a criminal act and got into a bad situation," said Stein, whose group favors strict limits on immigration.

"The people involved here were assuming risk, and they were, in a sense, co-conspirators of the smuggling operation," he added.

Jackson said he was 'manhandled'

NEW YORK (AP) — Michael Jackson says he is still in pain from being put in police handcuffs last month and tells CBS's "60 Minutes" that authorities "manhandled" him.

The pop star said he suffered a dislocated shoulder from the way he was cuffed and handled during his arrest on child molestation charges.

"It's hurting me very badly," Jackson said in an interview broadcast Sunday. "I'm in pain all the time."

Representatives of the Santa Barbara County sheriff's department did not return a call seeking comment Sunday. District Attorney Thomas Sneddon has said Jackson was treated fairly while in custody.

Jackson denied the molestation charges against him in a partial transcript of the interview released Friday, and said he still believes it's acceptable to have children sleep in his bed.

On Sunday, CBS released the full transcript of Jackson's Christmas night interview with Ed Bradley.

Jackson, 45, is charged with seven counts of performing lewd or lascivious acts upon a child under 14 and two counts of administering an intoxicating agent. After surrendering to Santa Barbara, Calif., authorities Nov. 20, he was set free on $3 million bail.

The pop star said authorities sought to belittle him when he was taken into custody.

"They were supposed to go in, and just check fingerprints, and do the whole thing that they do when they take somebody in," he said.

Innovative program teaches troubled kids to train dogs

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Elvis is having a little trouble with the refrigerator door today.

The 6-month-old golden retriever keeps at it, though, tugging on a towel tied to the handle until he finally gets the door ajar. Once inside he grabs a plastic cereal bowl in his teeth from one of the shelves and deposits it on a desk across the room. Next, he opens a drawer to hunt for a spoon.

Jessica Glenn, a 17-year-old with a pair of rings through her bottom lip and one in her eyebrow, praises Elvis lavishly. But she knows there is much work left to do before the gangly pup is ready to be placed with a wheelchair-bound person who might depend on him for such tasks as opening doors, flipping light switches and unloading the clothes dryer.

Glenn is a student at Dorothy Thomas Exceptional Center, a place for chronic truants and others who can't seem to get along at traditional schools. She's found her niche — and perhaps her calling — in the school's unique Kids and Canines program, in which troubled teens spend part of their day training and caring for service dogs.

"I didn't like talking to people," said Glenn, sitting in a wheelchair she uses during the school day so Elvis can get used to it. "I was really quiet. I skipped (school) for like two months straight. They put me in a smaller classroom, and it didn't work. I stopped coming."

Three years later she's one of the top trainers in Kids and Canines and helps teach other students. Her furry, lovable charges have helped instill in her new confidence, patience and persistence. She hopes to turn it into a career.

The heart of the program is 53-year-old special-education teacher Jennifer Wise, who started Kids and Canines in 1998 with a grant from the state's Department of Juvenile Justice.

Fifty or 60 youths have since participated in what is the only program of its kind in the nation operating within a public school. It's a registered nonprofit organization now, financed by grants, donations and corporate sponsorships.

Last month, Wise was recognized as one of the nation's most innovative teachers with an Education's Unsung Heroes Award from the financial services company ING. With the honor came a $27,000 grant she'll use to buy a van to tote students, dogs and wheelchairs.

The teen trainers take on a group of six dogs at a time, bought from specialty breeders at about 8 weeks old. Each dog is assigned two trainers at school and goes home at night with volunteer "puppy raisers" in the community.

Training is intense, and there's not much time or tolerance for acting up.

"The kids who are in here have to make commitments to the program," Wise said. "They need to agree to be here every day. They need to agree to follow the rules. It's like a job. I hire them."

She's been forced to fire some, but most embrace the responsibility like they do the silky necks of the rambunctious, slobbery puppies.

"It's not a quick fix, by any means," Wise said. "The kids who stick with it for the duration of the training of their dog do really begin to make changes everywhere in their lives... Their parents notice the differences, their teachers notice differences. They just become better people."

Kari Tolbert, 17, had refused to go to school for about a year until she was placed in the program about three years ago.

"I hated being around a lot of people," she said. "I had bad anxiety. I still do, but not as bad. Being with the dogs and going out in public helped a lot. I've learned patience, a lot. And responsibility."

Dogs are trained at the school for two years. The first ones "graduated" in 2000, and about 20 have been placed with disabled people or are providing therapy in such places as a children's home and rape crisis center.

Bonnie Bergin, founder of the Assistance Dog Institute, gives Wise all the credit.

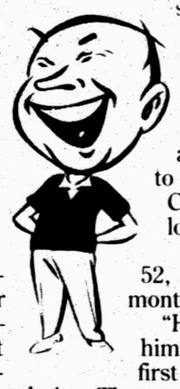
"She is an absolutely dynamite teacher," Bergin said. "She really loves her kids and believes in them, and that's what I think is making it such a resounding success."

Today's chuckle

The 'Clauses' tie knot on Christmas Eve

AKRON, Ohio (AP) — The "Clauses" tied the knot on Christmas Eve.

David Johnston and Leisa Russell got married dressed as Santa and Mrs. Claus, saying they wanted their marriage to last "as long as the myth of Santa Claus."



Each of the 26 wedding guests donned a Santa hat for the ceremony in the gazebo of Shadyside Park.

Minister Brett Barnhill said he had never presided over a costumed wedding, but felt the couple had a beautiful sentiment behind their plans.

"True marriage is the joining of two hearts in love," Barnhill said during the ceremony. "Without love, we have and are nothing."

The couple sealed their vows with a kiss, after which some of the guests sang "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus."

Russell, 45, of Uniontown, said the couple's wedding attire was a good way to express their faith as Christians and their love for each other.

Russell met Johnston, 52, of Akron, just three months ago.

"He asked me to marry him about five times. The first time I said, 'Someday.' The second time I said, 'Two to five years.' Then I said, 'I think next year would be doable,' and finally I said, 'Christmas Eve,'" Russell said.

Oil Patch News

Scurry County

Henderson & Erickson Inc. will drill the No. 5 Eiland in the Diamond M field, three miles northeast of Knapp. The re-entry project is planned for a depth of 3,503 feet, and location is in Section 178, Block97, H&TC survey.

Kent County

Gaea Services Inc. will drill the No. 4-B Wallace, a 6,900-foot wildcat located nine miles southwest of Jayton. Location is in Section 38, Block 98, H&TC survey.

events

LOTTO TEXAS™ TEXAS LOTTERY

RESULTS

Saturday's Lottery Numbers Lotto Texas

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

Winning numbers drawn: 9-13-15-37-39 (numerical order). Bonus Ball: 31.

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

Number matching five of five: 3. Prize: $12,547.

Number matching four of five, plus Bonus Ball: 14. Prize: $2,440.

Number matching four of five: 643. Prize: $114.

Number matching three of five, plus Bonus Ball: 573. Prize: $113.

Number matching three of five: 26,636. Prize: $5.

Number matching two of five, plus Bonus Ball: 7,586. Prize: $5.

Number matching one of five, plus Bonus Ball: 35,228. Prize: $3.

Estimated jackpot for Wednesday night drawing: $35 million.

Cash Five

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

Winning numbers drawn: 2-3-29-22-4.

Number matching five of five: 1.

Prize per winner: $39,666.

Winning ticket sold in: Trophy Club.

Matching four of five: 117. Prize: $152.

Matching three of five: 4,194. Prize: $10.

Matching two of five: 40,495. Prize: $2.

Next Cash 5 drawing: Monday night.

Pick 3
(Day) 2-4-0
(Night) 8-5-8

World Almanac

Monday, Dec. 29, 2003

Today is the 363rd day of 2003 and the eighth day of winter.

TODAY'S HISTORY: In 1170, Thomas A. Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, was murdered in his cathedral.

In 1845, Texas was admitted to the union as the 28th state.

In 1940, London was hit by its worst air raid in World War II, as bombs set off hundreds of fires.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: Charles Goodyear (1800-1860), inventor of vulcanized rubber; Andrew Johnson (1808-1875), 17th U.S. president; William Gladstone (1809-1898), British prime minister; Mary Tyler Moore (1936-), actress, is 67; Jon Voight (1938-), actor, is 65; Ted Danson (1947-), actor, is 56; Jude Law (1972-), actor, is 31.

TODAY'S SPORTS: In 1978, Ohio State football coach Woody Hayes punched a player on the opposing team during a game. He was fired the next day.

TODAY'S QUOTE: "National injustice is the surest road to national downfall." — William Gladstone

TODAY'S FACT: The first soccer World Cup was held in Uruguay in 1930.

TODAY'S NUMBER: 136 — highest weather temperature (in Fahrenheit) ever recorded under standard conditions (El Azizia, Libya, Sept. 13, 1922).

TODAY'S MOON: Between new moon (Dec. 23) and first quarter (Dec. 30)

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Dear Abby

By Abigail Van Buren

Woman wonders if new friend is prince of light or darkness

DEAR ABBY: I was physically and emotionally abused by my parents. Mother left home when I was 11. When I was in my early 20s, I was attacked and raped by a stranger. I have been through many abusive relationships and several failed marriages. My last two boyfriends were sexually abusive. Now I'm afraid of men, and especially afraid of sex.

About a month ago, I met a man who seemed nice. He gave me his number. A week later when I lost my job, I called him to see if he knew of any openings. He invited me over to look at my resume, and I went.

We began a deep friendship. I told him things about my past that gave me low self-esteem. He told me he had studied counseling and asked if he could work with me. I agreed.

His help has brought back many painful memories, and we are dealing with them together. He says things to improve my self-esteem. He believes in me and wants me to have a better future. He even hinted he'd like to be part of that future. His tenderness is incredible, and I find myself melting into his arms.

Now for the bad part: He told me that he spent 25 years in prison. Although he is no longer the same person who committed those crimes, he was incarcerated once for rape and two years later for sexual assault. He now has erectile dysfunction, so I know he couldn't do it again, even if he wanted to.

I am starting to care for him a lot, but at the same time I'm scared of him. I don't believe he would ever harm me, but ever since he told me the truth, I've been having nightmares about someone chasing me and trying to hurt me.

Should I stop seeing him? He does everything he can to reassure me that he won't hurt me, and I want to believe him. Please help. —

SCARED IN FLORIDA

DEAR SCARED: Your subconscious may be warning you. A synonym for "chased" is "pursued," and in a sense, this man is pursuing you. He is not a licensed therapist. He is a serial perpetrator of sex crimes. Sexual assaults are sometimes less about sex than they are about control. In other words, rape is not always physical; it can also be emotional.

Although you may be infatuated, you have only known this man for a month. That's not long enough to make rational judgments. You may have placed yourself in the hands of a skilled manipulator as well as a sexual deviate. Do NOT allow an amateur to doodle with the strudel in your noodle. If you want to conquer your problems, consult a qualified, licensed therapist.

P.S. Did he help you find a job, or were you lured to his dwelling to be seduced? Only you can answer that.

**

DEAR ABBY: My cousin, "Debbie," will be married next October. We have never been close. She was supposed to be in my wedding, but she never showed up for the fitting, so I replaced her with a friend.

My dilemma: She told me my husband is not invited to her wedding because the dinner is $100 a plate and no spouses or boyfriends are allowed.

What do you think I should do? — **INSULTED IN OHIO**

DEAR INSULTED: Politely inform cousin Debbie that you will be unable to attend her wedding, and send a small token gift instead. She is obviously ignorant of the fact that a married couple, unlike boyfriends and girlfriends, are officially one unit, and that it is a breach of etiquette to invite one and exclude the other.

**

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

**

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Missing pregnant woman found dead

HOLDENVILLE, Okla. (AP) — A missing pregnant woman was found dead in a field with her abdomen cut open and the fetus removed, and a 37-year-old woman was in custody after bringing a dead fetus to a hospital.

A hunter found the body of Carolyn Simpson, 21, of Okemah in a field near Lamar, about 100 miles southeast of Oklahoma City, on Friday. She had been shot in the head, said Tommy Graham, an Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation regional inspector.

Simpson was six months pregnant when she was last seen Dec. 22 at a tribal casino in Okemah where she worked. One day after Simpson's disappearance, Effie Goodson brought a dead fetus that had reached six months' gestation to a hospital about 30 miles from Okemah, saying she was the mother, authorities said.

Traffic wreck kills six and injures three

BENBROOK (AP) — Six people died and three were injured after a car struck another on rain-slickened Loop 820, knocking it into an oncoming lane and into the path of a sport utility vehicle.

Four people in a 1996 Lincoln and two people in a Mitsubishi Montero Sport were killed in the wreck late Saturday night, Benbrook Fire Capt. George Barnhart said Sunday.

An eastbound Chrysler sedan clipped the Lincoln, sending it across the median and into westbound traffic where it collided with the westbound SUV, police said.

Benbrook police Lt. David Martin said a blood sample was taken from the driver of the Chrysler, who was hospitalized after the accident. Investigators will need to reconstruct the accident and wait for analysis of the blood sample to determine the official cause of the accident and whether any charges would be filed, The Dallas Morning News reported in its online edition Sunday night.

There have been no arrests, a Benbrook police officer said.

Donald and Barbara Garlets were killed as they rode in the SUV. They were being driven home from Crowley to Weatherford by their son-in-law, Michael Williams, 43, family members said.

Robert and Martha White of Frisco and Dale and Tami Melton of Flower Mound, all of whom were riding in the Lincoln, were killed as they returned from a music show in Granbury, family members and authorities said. The group was celebrating the Meltons' 41st wedding anniversary, said their son-in-law, John Elliott.

Robert White, 64, designed luxury homes. He and Dale Melton, 61, met when they both worked for a Dallas construction company, said Bart Hennagir, another son-in-law of the Meltons'. Robert White later left the company to start his own business.

Tami Melton, 59, was a child birth instructor at a Lewisville hospital, Hennagir said.

"They were some of the most wonderful people you'd ever meet," Hennagir said. "They had hearts of gold. We're in shock, to say the least."

Williams, the Garletses and their 14-year-old granddaughter, Alicia Griggs, were riding in the SUV, said Williams' daughter, Stephanie Wywias.

Williams and Griggs were in stable condition Sunday night at Harris Methodist Fort Worth hospital. Williams fractured three vertebrae, broke a rib and has lacerations to his head and arms. Wywias said Griggs has a large cut on her face.

Another of the Garletses' son-in-law, Tom Kreipe, told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram that the couple were on their way home from Indiana where they were visiting their son.

Donald Garlets, 69, was retired from his job as an engineer for the federal government. Barbara Garlets, 61, was a homemaker who had just left a part-time job at a First Eye Care outlet.

Shortly before the accident Williams dropped his wife, Cathy, and a daughter off at the home in Crowley. Wywias said they tried to persuade the Garletses to spend the night, "but they wanted to go on."

Wywias also said her father remembered little of the accident.

The only person in the Chrysler was the driver. Police have not released his name.

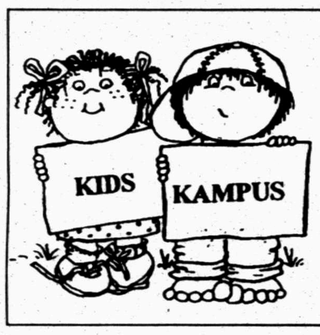
Benbrook is located about 10 miles southwest of Fort Worth.

Man, four children die in crash

DRAPER, Utah (AP) — A motor home carrying 10 people — all believed to be members of a Washington family — went out of control and fell off an interstate overpass Sunday, killing a man and four young children, authorities said.

Two women and an 8-year-old boy were flown to area hospitals in critical condition, Utah Highway Patrol Trooper Anthony Carrubba said.

Two other children — a 14-year-old boy and another 8-year-old boy — had less serious injuries.



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with padded seats. 24 & 30"
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Closeout Price
$47 While they last

Beautiful Sofa & Loveseat
Ashley Traditional
Rich decorative cover
Reg. $1499.95 Closeout Price
$688 While they last

5 PC BEDROOM
Country style, dresser-hutch-mirror-chest-nightstand bookcase headboard
Reg. $699.95
SALE $398

All Leather Ashley Club Chair
Rich hunter green
Reg. $349.95
Closeout Price
SALE $147

5 Pc. Glass Top Dinette Table
and 4 Sturdy Chairs.
Reg. $169.95
SALE $88

1 Sealy Queen Size Posture Premier Set
Closeout Price
Reg. $599.95
SALE $337

Decorative Cheval Mirrors
Choice of oak or cherry finish.Reg. $59.95
SALE $28

All Lamps on Sale
Choice of styles and colors
SALE $17 & Up

1 Only Black Leather Chair & 1/2
Great value by Ashley
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Sturdy metal frame-sofa by day-sleeps 2 people by night- Includes pad
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In rich plaid cover - 1 only - Closeout
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Complete with pads and bedding. Reg. $149.95
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With Queen Anne legs - choice of colors
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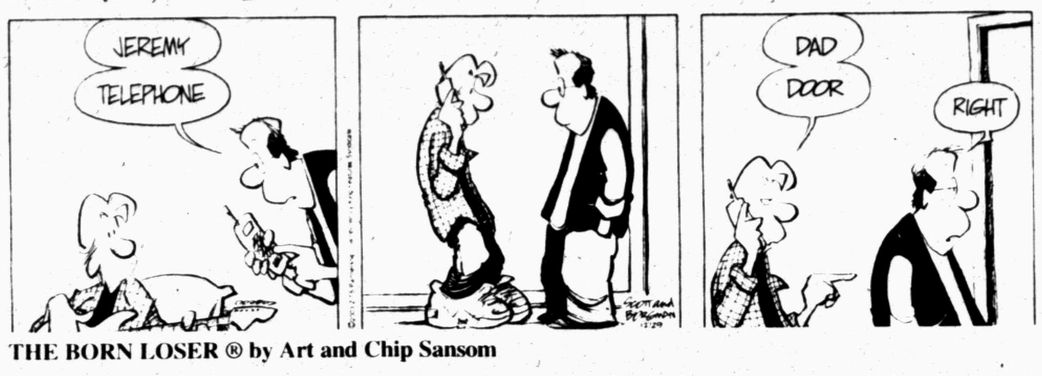

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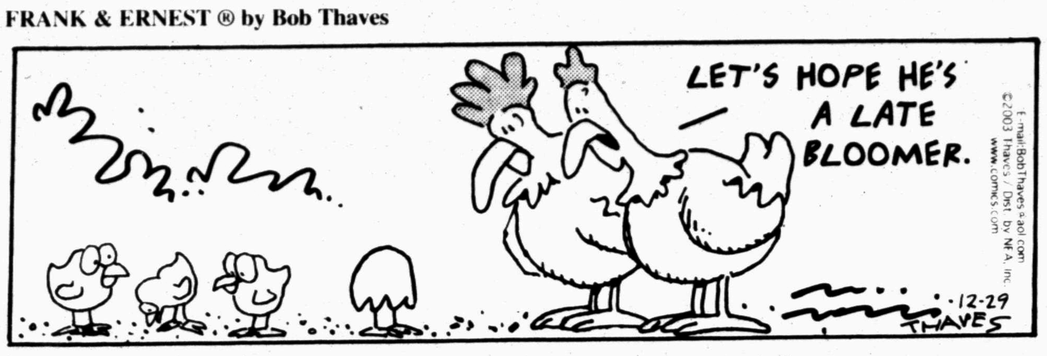

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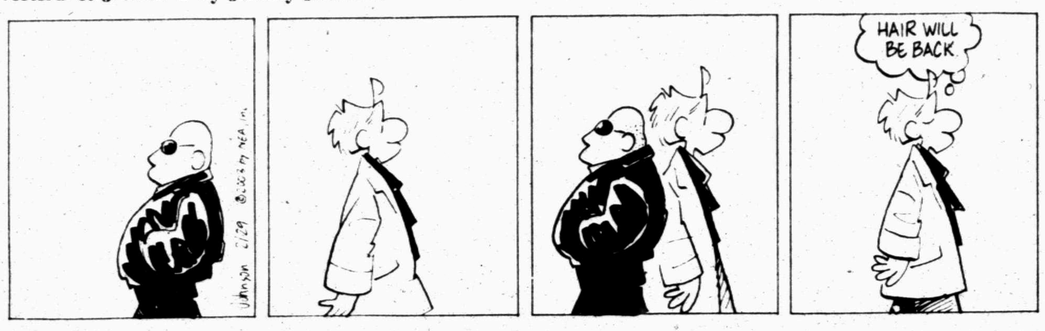

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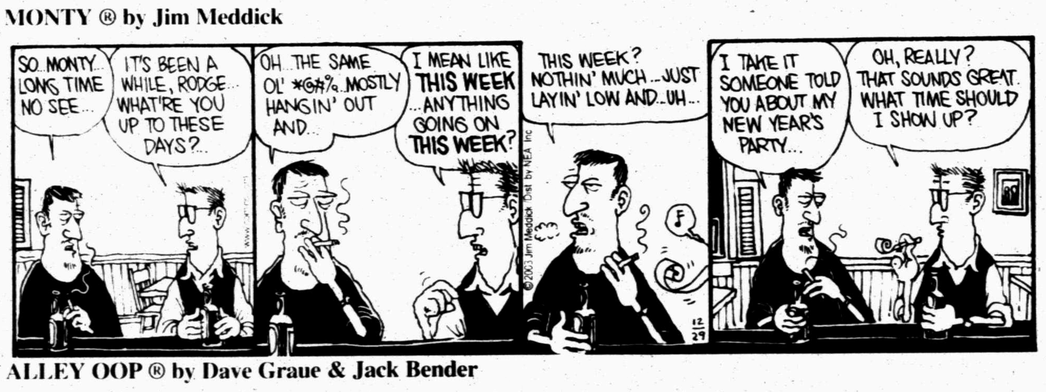

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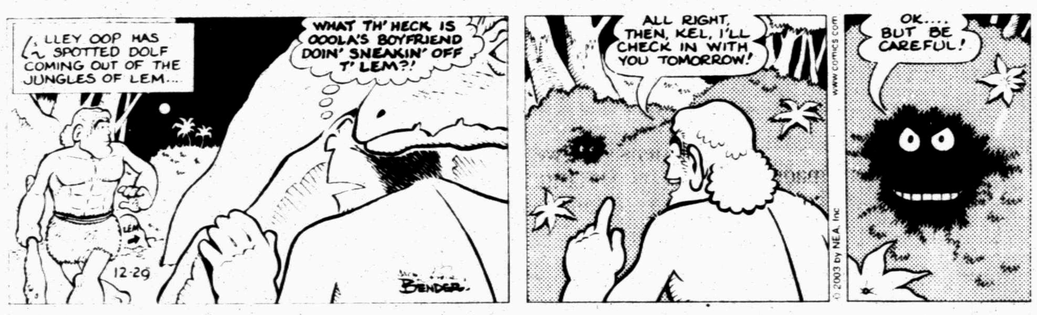

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HERMAN ® by Jim Unger

"If I didn't love you, I wouldn't eat your cooking, would I?"

KIT 'N' CARLYLE ® by Larry Wright

NEA Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1 Big Island port
5 Haze
8 CPR pro
11 Ellipse
12 Cobblers' tools
14 Moo — gai pan
15 Take care of
16 Platoon
17 Fish eggs
18 Sows
20 Hay machines
22 Hardened
23 Chapeau's place
24 Amps' cousins
27 Blissful spot
29 Technique
30 Evangelists
34 Pond dwellers
37 Sign
38 To be, to Brutus
39 Thick with cattails
41 Gallivant
43 Wine, in Paris
44 Arctic bovine
46 Montana neighbor
49 Yale alum
50 Beaks
52 Silo companion
54 Kicker's stand
55 Food plan
56 Sleek sled
57 Miscalculate
58 Give — — whirl
59 If not

DOWN

1 Sweltering
2 Folksinger Burl —
3 Freeway strip
4 First born
5 Gounod opera
6 Possess
7 Smooth-tongued
8 White-plumed wader
9 007 player
10 Boot parts
13 Says explicitly
19 — Moines, Iowa
21 Helped a borrower
24 Tank
25 Mouths, in zoology
26 Corporate abbr.
27 Rapier
28 Hairstyles
30 Pacino and Unser
31 Kind of detector
32 Conclude
33 Pilot's place
35 High mountain
36 "Paper Roses" singer
39 Disposed of
40 Make possible
41 Governer
42 Basket-maker's twig
43 Landscape
44 Dole out
45 Roman 12
47 Lug
48 Special-interest grps.
51 Poker stake
53 Society-column word

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

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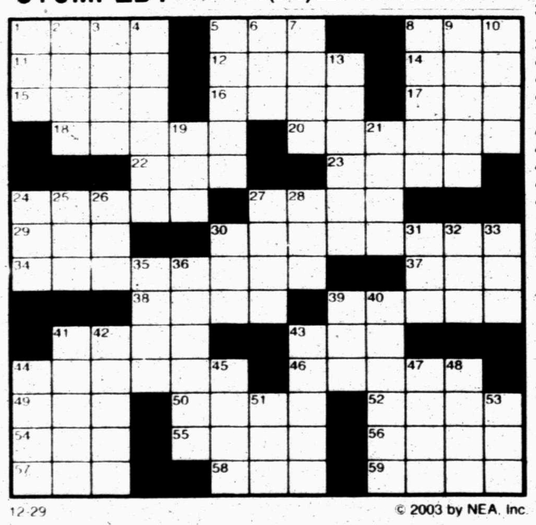

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SPORTS

Green Bay, Seattle, Baltimore in...

Miracle play knocks Vikes from playoffs

By The Associated Press

Green Bay, Seattle and Baltimore were the last teams to make it into the NFL playoffs. The Packers have a miracle play from the downtrodden Arizona Cardinals to thank.

"I've never heard a crowd cheer that loud for a 2-minute warning before," Green Bay linebacker Nick Barnett said of the noise at Lambeau Field after fans heard that a 28-yard desperation pass from Josh McCown to Nathan Poole gave Arizona an 18-17 victory over Minnesota, knocked the Vikings out of playoff contention and put the Packers in.

It was also a day for setting records and chasing others.

Baltimore's Jamal Lewis became the fifth to rush for over 2,000 yards in a season, but fell 39 yards short of Eric Dickerson's single-season record of 2,105. Priest Holmes of the Chiefs got his mark — scoring his 26th and 27th touchdowns of the season to break Emmitt Smith's record for rushing TDs and Marshall Faulk's for overall TDs.

The first round of the playoffs begins next Saturday with Tennessee at Baltimore and Dallas at Carolina. On Sunday, Seattle is at Green Bay and Denver at Indianapolis.

The playoffs won't include Minnesota, which had a horrible day.

The Vikings started the season with six wins but finished 3-7, losing along the way to the Giants, Raiders, Chargers and Cardinals — four teams that finished 4-12, the worst record in the league.

Seattle (10-6) made the playoffs with a 24-17 win Saturday over San Francisco, then got in on Sunday — the official way was by beating Dallas in a "strength of victory" tiebreaker although the Vikings loss would have put them in anyway.

The Ravens (10-6) got in as AFC North champions when Cincinnati lost 22-14 to Cleveland, then won 13-10 in overtime at night.

The Packers won the NFC North by combining their 31-3 win over Denver with Minnesota loss in Arizona.

In the day's decisive game, Minnesota led 17-6 with two minutes left. Arizona (4-12) cut the lead to 17-12 on McCown's fourth-down 2-yard pass to Steve Bush with 1:54 to play.

Damien Anderson recovered the onside kick for Arizona, and a 30-yard pass-interference call against Walker put the Cardinals in scoring position.

Packers 31, Broncos 3

Ahman Green reeled off a 98-yard touchdown run and Brett Favre completed a hard week in which he buried his father to lead the Packers.

The Packers (10-6) had little hope of playing into January only minutes earlier. They celebrated wildly on the sideline after their crowd, listening on radios, broke into frenzied elation over the fourth-down pass in Arizona.

Denver (10-6) rested starters for its playoff game next Sunday in Indianapolis.

Green set a franchise record with 218 yards rushing and ran for two scores, giving him 20 and breaking Jim Taylor's record of 19 set in 1962.

Browns 22, Bengals 14

Rookie Lee Suggs ran for 186 yards and two touchdowns as Cleveland knocked the Bengals from playoff contention.

That allowed the Baltimore Ravens to clinch the AFC North title several hours before playing Pittsburgh in the final regular-season game.

Lions 30, Rams 20

Joey Harrington threw three touchdown passes as the Lions (5-11) knocked St. Louis from the top spot in the NFC with 20 points in a span of 15:31 in the second half.

The top-seeded team now is Philadelphia, also 12-4, but with a better conference record after beating Washington on Saturday night.

Colts 20, Texans 17

Mike Vanderjagt kicked his NFL-record 41st consecutive field goal, a 43-yarder as time expired, giving the Colts the AFC South title. Vanderjagt went 37-for-37 this season.

The Colts (12-4) trailed 17-3 before rallying. Peyton Manning's 5-yard TD pass to Brandon Stokely tied it following an interception by Donald Strickland.

Chiefs 31, Bears 3

Holmes scored twice, erasing NFL records by Smith and Faulk.

The Chiefs (13-3) were already locked into the No. 2 seed and guaranteed a first-round bye in the AFC playoffs. The Bears finished 7-9.

Titans 33, Buccaneers 13

Steve McNair stayed on the sideline, resting his aching legs for the playoffs as Neil O'Donnell threw two touchdown passes to Derrick Mason in his first start since Sept. 23, 2001.

Gary Anderson kicked four field goals for the Titans (12-4) as Tampa Bay (7-9) became the first Super Bowl champion to finish with a losing record.

Dolphins 23, Jets 21

Olindo Mare kicked a 22-yard field goal with 3 seconds left to give the Dolphins the win.

Miami (10-6) became the first team since Philadelphia and San Francisco in 1991 to win 10 games and miss the playoffs. Their disappointing season has left coach Dave Wannstedt's job in jeopardy.

Falcons 21, Jaguars 14

Michael Vick threw two touchdown passes, including a 44-yarder to Peerless Price on the Falcons' first fleaflicker of the season.

Fred Taylor rushed for 121 yards for the Jaguars (5-11).

Panthers 37, Giants 24

Jake Delhomme threw two touchdown passes as former Giants assistant John Fox and his Panthers won in coach Jim Fassel's final game after seven seasons in New York.

The loss was the eighth straight for the Giants (4-12).

Chargers 21, Raiders 14

LaDainian Tomlinson rushed 31 times for a career-high 243 yards and two touchdowns to close an otherwise miserable season for the Chargers (4-12).

Tomlinson has four career 200-yard games, tying him for second place all-time with Jim Brown, Earl Campbell and Barry Sanders. The record is six, by O.J. Simpson.

Lady Raiders stay perfect despite lethargic effort

SAN DIEGO (AP) — When Texas Tech was struggling, the third-ranked Lady Raiders relied on Jametra Clark.

Clark provided a big lift for the lethargic Lady Raiders, scoring a career-high 18 points and keying a huge advantage at the free throw line in a 65-53 win over Maryland on Sunday night in the Surf-N-Slam Classic.

Texas Tech struggled through one of its worst games of the season. But Clark helped save the Lady Raiders, in part, by leading a first-half run that gave them a lead they never gave up.

Texas Tech (12-0), which extended its school record for consecutive wins to start a season, will play host San Diego in the championship game on Tuesday night. The Toreros defeated Georgetown 65-58.

The Lady Raiders made 23 of 25 free throws to overcome a season-low in field goal shooting (32.8 percent) and 19 turnovers, which tied a season high. Maryland made just five of nine free throws.

Clark, a 52.6 percent free throw shooter coming in, made 12 of 13 free throws.

"I've really been working after practice to get better on my free throw shooting and I think it paid off," Clark said.

The Lady Raiders also had a 48-33 rebounding edge, including 19 offensive boards.

"I think we won that game at the free throw line and on the boards," Texas Tech coach Marsha Sharp said. "I was disappointed, though, in how we executed our offense and reacted to the physical nature of the game."

Freshman Kalika France scored 18 points to lead Maryland (7-3), which shot only 37.7 percent from the field and 5-for-9 from the foul line.

"We were able to play for 40 minutes with a team that doesn't have any weaknesses," Maryland coach Brenda Frese said. "But offensively we struggled trying to hit our stride."

Terrapins freshman Shay Doron, the team's leading scorer, was held to eight points on 3-for-13 shooting.

Clark was instrumental in an 11-0 run that turned a 16-12 deficit into a 23-16 lead with 6:42 left in the first half. The 6-foot-1 sophomore scored seven points in the spurt and the Lady Raiders never trailed again.

Natalie Ritchie scored 11 points for Texas Tech, including a pair of 3-pointers in the final six minutes that helped hold off the Terrapins.

"We didn't play great, but we did what we had to do to win," Ritchie said.

Maryland fell to 0-3 this season against ranked teams.

Sports Calendar

TODAY

Basketball: Snyder varsity boys and girls at Post Tournament

TUESDAY

Basketball: Snyder varsity boys and girls at Post Tournament

WEDNESDAY

Basketball: Snyder varsity boys and girls at Post Tournament

Cowboys cough up fifth seed

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The New Orleans Saints' disappointing season ended with a strong effort.

Donte' Stallworth's 76-yard touchdown reception in a 13-7 victory over the Cowboys on Sunday might have put a damper on Dallas' stellar season, but it was a high point for New Orleans.

New Orleans (8-8) is waiting for next year for the third straight season; the Saints have not made the playoffs since 2000. The built-up frustration led owner Tom Benson to criticize his coaching staff last week, calling them underachievers.

After three straight 5-11 seasons, Dallas (10-6) already had clinched its first playoff spot since 1999 in Bill Parcells' first year as coach. But the loss dropped the Cowboys to the sixth seed in the NFC.

The real winners were the Seattle Seahawks, who reached the postseason when Dallas lost. The Seahawks sneaked into the No. 5 seed in the NFC.

Benson told his coaching staff Tuesday during an emotional meeting that he was extremely disappointed with the season and wanted them to finish on a strong note.

After Sunday's victory, Benson hugged coach Jim Haslett on the sidelines.

"It could have been better, but we ended on a high note," Benson said. "Now we have to get ready for next year."

Although the Cowboys limited McAllister to 49 yards rushing, they couldn't hold New Orleans completely in check. Dallas' defense, which led the league by allowing only 251 total yards per game, gave up 291 to the Saints.

Aaron Brooks completed 15 of 32 passes for 243 yards and the long touchdown to Stallworth.

"That's not the way you want to go into the playoffs," Dallas cornerback Mario Edwards said.

The Saints pressured Quincy Carter, sacking him three times and intercepting him three more times. Jay Bellamy's second pick of the day stopped the Cowboys at the New Orleans 27 with 1:33 left.

"Somebody had to step up and make a play," Bellamy said. "It just so happened to be me. I tried to seal the deal and that's what happened."

After John Carney's 24-yard field goal in the first quarter for the Saints, Dallas took a 7-3 lead on Richie Anderson's 3-yard TD reception in the second.

The lead lasted only 27 seconds before Brooks hit Stallworth with a 76-yard touchdown pass. Stallworth, who missed five games this season and most of a sixth with injuries, caught the ball in traffic and outran everyone, giving New Orleans a 10-7 lead at halftime.

Unlike teammate Joe Horn, Stallworth didn't pull a cell phone out after the TD. But he was talking to Cowboys cornerback Terence Newman as he crossed the goal line, then flipped Newman the football, earning a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on the ensuing kickoff.

Newman wanted no part of Stallworth's souvenir and tossed it back at him.

"He was talking a little out there," Newman said. "Joe Horn was talking from the sideline, egging him on."

Bears fire Jauron

LAKE FOREST, Ill. (AP) — Dick Jauron was fired as coach of the Chicago Bears on Monday after his fourth losing season in five years with the team.

A posting on the team's official Web site read: "The Bears have scheduled a press conference for 1 p.m. today to announce the firing of head coach Dick Jauron."

The Bears closed a 7-9 season with a 31-3 loss at the Kansas City Chiefs on Sunday.

Jauron, who had a year left on his contract, leaves Chicago with a 35-46 record, including 0-1 in the playoffs.

SHS cagers open Post tourney

The Snyder boys and girls varsity basketball teams opened the Post Tournament this afternoon, with both clubs taking on Anton in the first round.

Lubbock Christian and Brownfield kicked off the girls tournament at 9 a.m. Should the Lady Tigers top Anton, they will play the winner of that game at 3 p.m. Tuesday.

The boys tourney got underway at 10:30 today, with Lubbock Christian against the Post junior varsity. The Tigers will play the winner of that game should they top Anton today. Snyder and Anton were scheduled to start at 4:30 p.m.

National Basketball Association

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	Pct	GB
New Jersey	16	13	.552	—
Boston	15	16	.484	2
Philadelphia	14	16	.467	2½
Miami	12	18	.400	4½
New York	12	19	.387	5
Washington	8	20	.286	7½
Orlando	8	23	.258	9
Central Division	**W**	**L**	**Pct**	**GB**
Indiana	21	10	.677	—
New Orleans	19	11	.633	1½
Detroit	17	13	.567	3½
Toronto	15	14	.517	5
Milwaukee	15	15	.500	5½
Cleveland	10	21	.323	11
Chicago	9	20	.310	11
Atlanta	8	24	.250	13½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	22	10	.688	—
Minnesota	19	10	.655	1½
Denver	19	11	.633	2
Dallas	17	12	.586	3½
Houston	16	13	.552	4½
Utah	16	14	.533	5
Memphis	15	15	.500	6
Pacific Division	**W**	**L**	**Pct**	**GB**
L.A. Lakers	21	7	.750	—
Sacramento	21	8	.724	½
Golden State	14	14	.500	7
Portland	14	14	.500	7
Seattle	13	14	.481	7½
L.A. Clippers	12	14	.462	8
Phoenix	11	20	.355	11½

Sunday's Games

Toronto 94, L.A. Clippers 88
Sacramento 98, Utah 89
San Antonio 89, Milwaukee 74
Cleveland 86, Portland 74
Phoenix 100, Philadelphia 92
Denver 103, Golden State 79
L.A. Lakers 105, Boston 82

Today's Games

Memphis at Indiana, 6 p.m.
New York at Orlando, 6 p.m.
New Orleans at Detroit, 6:30 p.m.
Portland at New Jersey, 6:30 p.m.
Miami at Chicago, 7:30 p.m.
Seattle at Houston, 7:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Utah, 8 p.m.
Phoenix at L.A. Clippers, 9:30 p.m.
Boston at Golden State, 9:30 p.m.

National Hockey League

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	T	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Philadelphia	18	6	8	4	48	101	77
New Jersey	19	6	8	1	47	85	56
N.Y. Islanders	17	15	2	1	37	101	93
N.Y. Rangers	13	13	5	3	34	93	90
Pittsburgh	8	19	5	3	24	73	126
Northeast Division	**W**	**L**	**T**	**OL**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Toronto	21	7	6	3	51	106	88
Ottawa	17	10	5	3	42	110	76
Boston	13	10	9	4	39	88	92
Montreal	16	15	4	2	38	85	87
Buffalo	14	18	3	1	32	79	97
Southeast Division	**W**	**L**	**T**	**OL**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Atlanta	19	15	3	1	42	114	113
Tampa Bay	15	12	5	1	36	77	73
Florida	12	16	7	2	33	78	99
Carolina	11	14	8	2	32	64	80
Washington	11	21	3	1	26	94	113

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division	W	L	T	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Detroit	22	12	4	1	49	126	90
St. Louis	20	8	4	1	45	86	70
Nashville	16	13	4	2	38	86	88
Chicago	9	18	7	3	28	70	101
Columbus	9	19	4	3	25	72	99
Northwest Division	**W**	**L**	**T**	**OL**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Vancouver	19	9	6	2	46	104	82
Calgary	19	10	2	3	43	80	68
Colorado	17	9	7	1	42	99	77
Minnesota	14	14	8	0	36	79	76
Edmonton	13	17	6	0	32	92	103
Pacific Division	**W**	**L**	**T**	**OL**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Los Angeles	16	12	5	3	40	99	92
San Jose	13	9	11	3	40	88	83
Dallas	17	16	4	0	38	76	81
Phoenix	11	12	11	1	34	86	102
Anaheim	11	15	4	5	31	72	91

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

Sunday's Games

Ottawa 5, Atlanta 2
Chicago 3, Detroit 0.
Calgary 2, Edmonton 1

Today's Games

Boston at Washington, 6 p.m.
Buffalo at Carolina, 6 p.m.
St. Louis at Columbus, 6 p.m.
New Jersey at N.Y. Islanders, 6 p.m.
Anaheim at Tampa Bay, 6 p.m.
Chicago at Pittsburgh, 6:30 p.m.
Montreal at Atlanta, 6:30 p.m.
Toronto at Florida, 6:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Dallas, 7:30 p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Phoenix, 8 p.m.
Vancouver at Colorado, 8 p.m.
Minnesota at Calgary, 8 p.m.
Nashville at San Jose, 9:30 p.m.

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)

Saturday, Jan. 10

NFC Divisional Playoff, 3:30 p.m. (FOX)
AFC Divisional Playoff, 7:15 p.m. (CBS)

Sunday, Jan. 11

AFC Divisional Playoff, noon (CBS)
NFC Divisional Playoff, 3:45 p.m. (FOX)

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Shuttle disaster, soldier deaths top news

By Bobby Ross Jr.
Associated Press Writer

From the seven astronauts who perished in the space shuttle Columbia to the dozens of Texas soldiers who died in Iraq, 2003 was, in many ways, a heart-wrenching year for the Lone Star State.

Spirits lifted in December when the Fort Hood-based 4th Infantry uncovered Saddam Hussein at a safe-house near his hometown of Tikrit, pulling one of the world's most wanted fugitives out of a narrow, earthen hiding hole.

It was two Fort Hood soldiers and five from Fort Bliss who were captured March 23 in an attack near Nasiriyah that left nine comrades dead. The members of the 507th Maintenance Company survived three harrowing weeks of captivity and Pfc. Jessica Lynch was rescued separately in a daring commando raid April 1.

Among 2003's other top state headlines: the legislative fight over how to redraw congressional voting districts; the deaths of 19 immigrants in a botched smuggling attempt; the slaying of a Baylor University basketball player; the striking down of a Texas law that banned homosexual sex; and the successful separation of conjoined Egyptian twins.

"The Columbia is lost," President Bush said Feb. 1, confirming the nation's worst fears after the shuttle fell to pieces, raining debris over hundreds of miles of dense East Texas woods.

The shuttle catastrophe occurred 39 miles above the Earth, in the last 16 minutes of the 16-day mission as the spaceship reentered the atmosphere and glided in for a landing in Florida. In its horror and in its backdrop of a crystal blue sky, the day echoed one almost exactly 17 years before, when the Challenger exploded.

The loss of seven explorers — shuttle commander Rick Husband, Michael Anderson, David Brown, Kalpana Chawla, Laurel Clark, William McCool and Ilan Ramon — brought a new round of grief to a nation still in mourning after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Hundreds of volunteers, mostly in Nacogdoches, Lufkin and Hemphill, worked long hours to retrieve shuttle debris. Law enforcement officers and the National Guard protected the largest pieces of debris for the crash investigation.

Investigators concluded that NASA's overconfident management and inattention to safety doomed Columbia every bit as much as the chunk of foam that struck the shuttle with deadly force. Without drastic changes, they said, another disaster is likely.

The nation's attention then turned to the war with Iraq, with Texas' two largest military installations — Fort Bliss at El Paso and Fort Hood at Killeen — pressed into action.

Another 20,000 troops from Fort Hood are training to ship out in 2004 to replace those deployed in Iraq. In all, 22 Texan soldiers have been killed, according to military reports. One of the latest, Pfc. Ray Joseph Hutchinson, a 20-year-old Rifleman from Houston, was killed Dec. 7 when he drove a Humvee over an explosive device that was detonated by remote control.

"He would want to be remembered as a member of the infantry and a soldier doing his job for the country and nothing more," said his older brother, Lee Hutchinson.

Meanwhile, a political fight brewed at home over congressional redistricting.

A federal trial that started in December followed months of partisan fighting and two out-of-state boycotts — House Democrats fled to Ardmore, Okla., in May and their Senate counterparts to Albuquerque, N.M., in the summer — so there wouldn't be enough lawmakers in Austin to vote on the Republican-drawn map. Finally, a map passed in a third special session when Democratic Sen. John Whitmire of Houston defected and returned to the Capitol, giving lawmakers the quorum they needed to do business.

The question now before a three-judge federal panel is whether the map is unfair to Hispanics and blacks, as Democrats and minority groups argue, and violates the federal Voting Rights Act.

While acknowledging that Republican legislators drew districts for political gain, the state's attorneys say race was not a predominant factor in drawing the map.

The crux of the fight: Democrats want to keep the existing districts that give them a 17-15 advantage in the Texas congressional delegation. The GOP, on the other hand, sees an opportunity to gain seven additional seats and complete control of Texas politics. Republicans already hold both U.S. Senate seats, the governorship and a majority in the state Senate and House.

Among other top headlines:

— Seventeen people were found dead May 14 when authorities opened up a sweltering, airless trailer that had been abandoned at a South Texas truck stop with more than 100 illegal immigrants locked inside. Two more victims died later in one of the nation's deadliest smuggling attempts.

— The summer slaying of 21-year-old Baylor basketball player Patrick Dennehy and the arrest of former player Carlton Dotson on charges of murdering Dennehy were just the beginning of a months-long scandal at the world's largest Baptist university. Ensuing disclosures of major NCAA violations in the basketball program disgraced former coach Dave Bliss and put Baylor under an intense media spotlight.

— In the most important legal advance ever for gay people in the United States, the U.S. Supreme Court voted 6-3 in June to strike down a Texas law that made homosexual sex a crime. What gay men and women do in the privacy of their bedrooms is their business and not the government's, the court said in the ruling that struck down bans on what some states called deviate sex acts.

— Ahmed and Mohamed Ibrahim, 2-year-old Egyptian twins joined at the tops of their heads, were separated Oct. 12 in Dallas. Both are doing well after a marathon surgery that took a day and more than a year of planning, but they face a long recovery.

Readers keep up with local events

Continued from Page 1

and Alan Culp were re-elected to the Hermleigh board, while Jim Lionberger unseated incumbent trustee Joe Roemisch.

The Snyder City Council continued to work on its interlocal agreement with Scurry County and the fire suppression part of the agreement being singled out for discussion. The city had proposed leaving out fire suppression as part of the equation in figuring shared services with the county, but civic leader Roy Baze suggested all shared services be looked at in a total package.

The first rabid skunk of the year was confirmed by animal control officer Hope Carrillo.

Snyder High School lost its drama instructor as Brad Vincent announced he was moving to New York City to accept a position with New York University and to pursue his doctorate degree.

WTC's fundraiser, Dennis Noblett, resigned his position at the community college. Noblett did not announce his future plans.

Snyder High School golf teams made an impact in Austin and across the state as both the boys and girls teams brought home the gold.

SISD trustees extended administrator's contracts as they normally did in May, but two contracts were not approved until later as new Supt. Ronny Collins continued to review his staff. The contracts of Karen Waller and Missy Jones were eventually renewed.

Longtime WTC educator Robert Adams retired from the staff after teaching here for more than 20 years.

The economic benefits of the wind farm near Fluvanna was felt in May as Cielo Wind Power held a job fair.

The city of Snyder received a whooping 54.93 percent in its state sales tax rebate for May and much of the increase was contributed to the work at Kinder Morgan.

Terrel Culp was named the valedictorian at Hermleigh High School and was joined by Misty McClure at the salutatorian.

At Ira ISD, Celigh Sterling took top honors and Candace Sanchez was named the salutatorian.

County commissioners approved a 10-year tax abatement with Cielo Wind Farms that calls for the company to pay the county $800,000 over 10 years. The payments will be $60,000 for five years and $100,000 for the remaining five years.

The certified values for taxing entities were released and the total topped $1 billion. Scurry County's values shot up over 27 percent.

SHS trustees voted to begin making improvements to the high school's outdated heating and cooling system with funds coming from maintenance tax notes and reserves.

The school district also announced its two top grads for 2003 as Kellie Dodson was named valedictorian and Lilli Valdez was named salutatorian. The two joined 162 classmates in making the Class of 2003 that graduated May 30.

JUNE

This month was the forerunner of things to come at Cogdell Hospital.

At the June 2 meeting of the Scurry County commissioners court, hospital administration asked the county for an additional $750,000 in tax subsidy.

Carl Williams, board chairman, said charity care was a big factor in the hospital needing additional funding. No action was taken this date on the request, but Cogdell Hospital remained in the news through year-end.

The much-discussed interlocal agreement between the city and county was on the city's June agenda and the big news was that the city officially terminated the old agreement. Neither the city or county could agree if the old contract was still in force, so the city took formal action and gave the county 90 days notice.

As the city began its summer mosquito-spraying program, residents around Lake Thomas received almost five inches of rain during the first week of June. The lake did not receive much runoff as most of the water traveled downstream to Lake Spence in Robert Lee.

Unsettled weather continued the next few days as high winds hit inside Snyder city limits. One of the city's buildings, a pipe storage facility, sustained some wind damage as parts of it were blown across 37th Street into Winston Park.

Landes' Storage also lost some roofs.

Preliminary Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) were released for Snyder, Hermleigh and Ira schools and all students exceeded state norms.

The annual West Texas Western Swing Music Festival got underway at Scurry County Coliseum and the sounds of *Faded Love* could be heard all over the community as hundreds of Western Swing fans poured into town.

The festival was a labor of love for Snyder Chamber of Commerce executive director Donna Fowler. As it turned out, it would be the last for Donna as she died in July.

The Snyder City Council began work on the 2003-2004 budget in mid-month. It was later adopted in August with slight increases in utility rates for customers.

The annual Winston Field Fly-In Breakfast was held and had its largest number of airplanes land since its inception. The event is sponsored yearly by the chamber of commerce and the Scurry County Pilot's Association.

Work was well underway at Snyder High School and West Elementary on heating and cooling updates for the campuses. Work was being funded by maintenance tax notes and district reserves.

After 67 straight years of riding and roping, the Scurry County Rodeo was cancelled for 2003. The group has reorganized and a rodeo is expected to be held in Snyder in 2004.

Cogdell Hospital board of managers learned from the Texas Department of Health that the fourth floor of the facility would have to be licensed as an assisted-living facility. The hospital made changes to the floor to comply with state rules and regulations, but is still waiting on its license.

Another good rain fell in parts of the county toward the end of the month as 3.5 inches was recorded at the Price Daniel Unit.

With a new superintendent at the helm, changes were made in the administrative setup for the Snyder ISD.

A former SHS coach, Rod Cottrell, was named the district's executive director for curriculum and instruction by Supt. Ronny Collins.

Kinder Morgan took over operations at the Snyder Gas Plant as part of its massive CO2 project at SACROC.

A number of stolen saddles were recovered by the Scurry County Sheriff's Department as Deputy Kevin Roemisch led the investigation.

Dr. Gott

By Peter Gott, M.D.

Frank discussions may improve intimacy

DEAR DR. GOTT: My wife is 83 and I am 79. We've had a reasonably good marriage for more than 30 years. For the past year or two, her attitude about intimacy has drastically changed; she no longer encourages touching or any show of affection. While I believe that such activity is necessary for love and companionship, she calls it "dirty old man behavior." Is her attitude consistent with her age or should I suspect a distraction of her interest to someone else?

DEAR READER: While an extramarital interest is a possibility, it is remote. I suspect that your wife avoids intimacy with you for personal reasons that could range from health issues and halitosis to anger and a fear of the aging process. I suggest that you sit down with her one evening over a glass of wine and ask for an adult discussion. You need to share your feelings and resentments in a non-emotional manner. Using this strategy, you should be able to learn the reason for her change in attitude. Also, you can express your concerns and, perhaps, arrive at a compromise that will suit you both.

As a general rule, my elderly patients are more interested in emotional closeness than they are in physical intimacy. Sex and snuggling have lost their aura. However, touching and hugging are ordinarily welcomed. See what your wife has to say. Her revelations could well provide a stronger foundation for your marriage and they would, at the very least, give you some answers to your discomfort.

DEAR DR. GOTT: What additional measures can one take to reduce high blood pressure if standard guidelines are being followed and the BP remains high? Does time-release niacin help or is aspirin better therapy?

DEAR READER: I think you're confused. Niacin therapy is used to lower serum cholesterol levels. It is not appropriate treatment for hypertension. Nor is aspirin, which is suggested for patients with histories of heart disease and vascular disorders. And I'm not sure I understand what "standard guidelines" are.

I gather from your brief note that you have what is called "sustained" hypertension. I'm also assuming your hypertension didn't respond to weight loss, dietary salt restriction and exercise. Your next step is to work with your family doctor to choose a medicine that will bring your blood pressure down.

The drug that's right for you depends on your age, size and degree of hypertension. Many people with borderline high blood pressure (in the 150/90 range) respond to a mild diuretic, such as hydrochlorothiazide, with or without other drugs, including beta-blockers, calcium-channel blockers and ACE inhibitors. The dosages and combinations can be monitored by your physician. Blood pressures in the dangerously high range (above 200/100) need aggressive therapy under close supervision. Again, your physician is the logical resource to guide you and monitor your response to treatment.

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

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

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Markets

Midday Stocks

NEW YORK (AP)

	High	Low	Last	
AMR Corp	12.95	12.75	12.82	+ .02
AT&T Corp	19.88	19.75	19.78	+ .26
Albertsons	22.51	22.27	22.34	—.07
Alltel	45.64	45.25	45.58	+ .33
AmEl Pw	30.15	29.93	29.98	—.04
AndarkPtr	50.59	50.14	50.51	+ .26
ATMOS Egy	25.00	24.77	24.98	+ .17
Aviall	15.88	15.65	15.88	+ .24
BP PLC	48.91	48.65	48.66	—.11
BakerHughes	32.36	31.94	31.94	—.09
Bank of Amer	79.90	79.61	79.82	+ .23
BellSouth	27.90	27.60	27.80	+ .16
BurlNoSFe	32.15	31.90	31.98	+ .13
Caterpillar	84.61	83.90	84.24	+ .53
CenterPoint	9.70	9.55	9.67	+ .06
ChevronTex	84.34	83.15	84.25	+ .40
Citigroup	48.25	47.95	48.10	+ .24
CocaCola	50.07	49.77	49.87	—.09
ColgatePal	49.81	49.15	49.67	+ .37
CmclMetals	31.80	30.30	31.77	+ 1.59
ConocoPhill	64.65	64.12	64.25	—.13
Cooper Inds	57.32	57.00	57.14	—.13
DaimlrChry	46.59	46.06	46.47	+ .56
DeltaAirLines	11.98	11.69	11.83	+ .23
Dillards Inc	16.32	16.00	16.30	+ .26
DowChem	41.45	40.91	41.15	—.15
DuPont	45.67	45.22	45.35	—.11
EastmanChem	39.21	38.82	39.16	+ .22
EstKodak	25.11	24.93	25.00	+ .15
EDS Corp	24.36	24.04	24.30	+ .20
Entergy	56.66	56.22	56.36	+ .01
ExxonMobil	40.42	40.09	40.26	+ .21
FootLocker	23.20	22.95	23.14	+ .11
GenDynam	90.10	89.45	89.52	—.30
GenElec	30.81	30.63	30.63	+ .11
GenMills	45.38	45.20	45.25	+ .11
GenMotors	53.65	53.12	53.15	+ .18
GaPacific	30.23	30.05	30.17	+ .09
Goodrich	30.00	29.67	29.73	+ .09
Goodyear	7.94	7.76	7.90	+ .10
GtAtlPac	8.13	7.85	7.90	+ .15
Halliburtn	26.70	26.20	26.22	—.02
Hanson PLC	36.45	36.26	36.28	+ .09
HarteHanks	21.90	21.52	21.85	+ .25
HomeDepot	35.27	34.87	35.16	+ .28
HoneywellIntl	33.12	32.66	32.90	+ .09
IBM	93.71	93.03	93.50	+ .60
IntlPaper	42.59	42.37	42.49	+ .26
JohnsonJn	50.96	50.74	50.93	+ .31
KinderMorg	59.15	58.35	58.82	—.01
Kroger Co	18.36	18.18	18.23	+ .09
LockheedM	50.83	50.28	50.62	—.06
Lowes Cos	54.93	54.61	54.70	—.16
Lubys	3.59	3.47	3.51	+ .01
LucentTech	2.93	2.82	2.89	+ .05
MarathonOil	32.95	32.76	32.90	+ .23
MayDeptStr	28.74	28.45	28.71	+ .20
Medtronic	48.30	48.00	48.26	+ .25
Motorola	13.99	13.81	13.98	+ .22
NCR Corp	39.40	38.95	39.18	+ .33
Navistar	48.61	48.20	48.47	+ .36
PNM Rescs	28.09	27.90	28.03	+ .13
Penney JC	26.00	25.67	25.96	+ .25
PepBoys	22.92	22.75	22.82	+ .28
PepsiCo	46.61	46.25	46.33	—.14
PhelpDodge	78.85	78.09	78.15	+ .15
PilgrimsPride	18.75	17.48	17.69	—.44
Praxair s	37.89	37.53	37.68	+ .06
ProctGamb	98.50	98.05	98.27	+ .03
RadioShack	31.58	30.72	31.40	+ .84
RoyalDut	51.64	51.49	51.52	+ .34
SBC Comm	25.57	25.20	25.53	+ .32
SaraLee	21.42	21.05	21.38	+ .42
Scripps EW	94.16	93.87	94.01	+ .07
SearsRoeb	45.84	44.65	45.81	+ 1.24
SherwinW	34.15	33.89	33.92	—.19
SouthernCo	30.24	30.00	30.08	+ .09
SwstAirl	16.25	15.80	15.85	
SprintFON	16.09	15.88	16.05	+ .20
SprintPCS	5.41	5.29	5.37	+ .05
Sunoco Inc	51.84	51.30	51.69	+ .32
TXU Corp	23.79	23.61	23.63	+ .03
TempleInland	61.92	61.64	61.79	+ .12
Texind	37.80	36.50	37.49	+ 1.04
TexasInst	29.31	28.85	29.09	+ .26
Textron	57.42	57.00	57.22	+ .46
TimeWarner	17.88	17.70	17.77	—.07
TrinityInds	31.65	30.91	31.36	+ .41
TylerTech	9.98	9.85	9.92	—.01
UnionPacif	68.84	68.60	68.71	
USSteel	37.05	35.08	36.68	+ .96
UnitedTech	95.00	94.58	94.76	+ .10
Unocal	36.39	36.19	36.33	+ .04
VerizonComm	34.20	33.89	34.20	+ .29
WalMart	52.85	52.41	52.44	—.08
WellsFargo	58.50	58.27	58.50	+ .13
WstnGasRs	47.54	47.29	47.39	+ .20
WinnDixie	9.73	9.30	9.69	+ .37
Xerox Cp	13.83	13.39	13.69	+ .09
YumBrands	33.90	33.60	33.81	+ .17

Clear the streets!
Stay off the sidewalks!
Temi gets her license today!
Love you,
Mom, Dad & Jacki

DEC 29 2003

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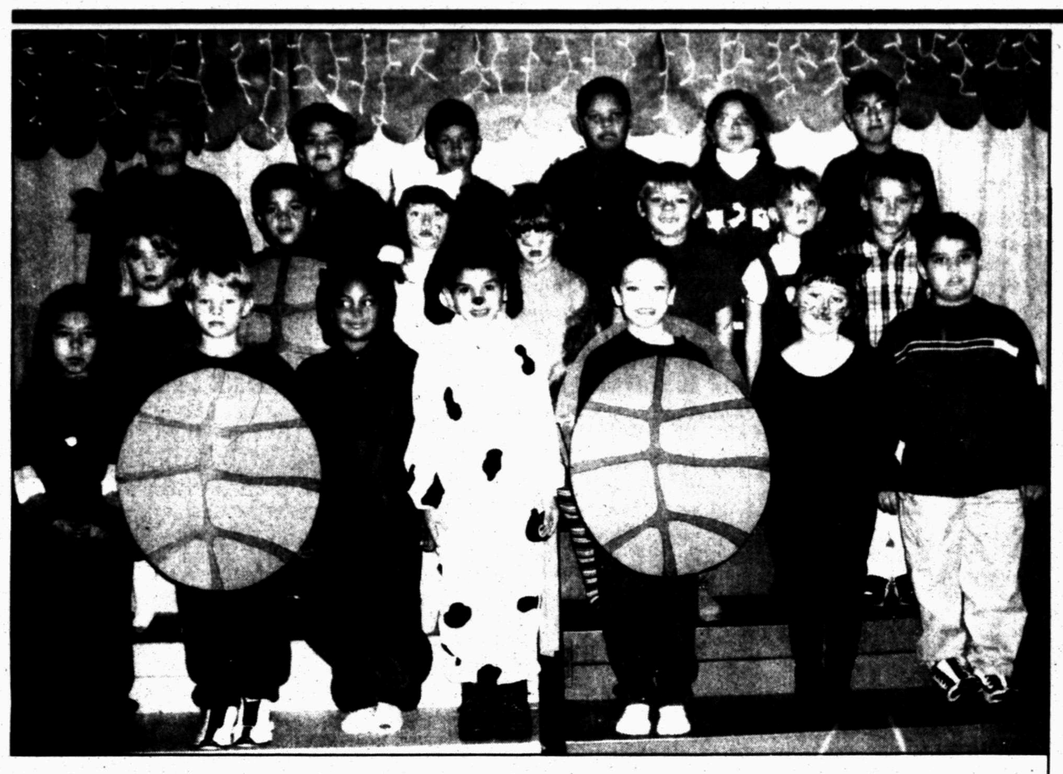

THIS IS CHRISTMAS — Stanfield second graders in Carolyn Martin's and Elvira Gonzales' classes presented *This Is Christmas*. Reba Bailey is the music teacher. Jill Porter also assisted with the production. Mrs. Martin's students (top photo) top row from left, Nick Perez, Ezequiel Silva, Christopher Esquibel, Devin Gonzales, Julie Segura and Anthony Castillo. Middle row from left, Cristen Pyburn, Joe Mireles, Tessa Holladay, Savannah Marricle, Brandon Sutton, Ashley Lindsey and Brent Thompson. Bottom row from left, Alexis Payne, Austin Palacios, Jeannie Dean, Josue Nieto, Tyler Williams, Makayla Moore and Nathan Gutierrez. Mrs. Gonzales' class (bottom photo) are top row from left, Rebecca Murillo, Mario Garcia, Daniel Ruiz, Priscilla DeLuna and Israel Garcia. Middle row, Michelle Martinez, Flor Garcia, Danny Soberon and Karina Rivas. Bottom row from left Lucio Solano, Estefany Olivarez, Nayely Cabrera and Janissa Olivarez. (Staff Photos by Shirley A. Gorman)

Bridge

By Phillip Alder

	North 12-29-03 ♠ K J 9 8 ♥ K Q 6 ♦ K 8 4 ♣ 9 6 4	
West ♠ 10 7 ♥ 10 9 7 4 ♦ Q 10 9 2 ♣ Q 8 2		East ♠ 6 2 ♥ 5 2 ♦ J 7 6 5 3 ♣ K 7 5 3
	South ♠ A Q 5 4 3 ♥ A J 8 3 ♦ A ♣ A J 10	

Dealer: South
Vulnerable: Neither

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
5 ♣	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
5 NT	Pass	6 ♣	Pass
7 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: ♠ 7

Monday, Dec. 29, 2003

With inscrutability and audacity

By Phillip Alder

I have often recommended that if you seem to be in a hopeless contract, do not concede — fight on. Part of this plan, though, is not giving away that you are in trouble. When the dummy is tabled, do not shake your head, or wail loudly, or criticize partner's bidding. Instead, ooze confidence from every pore.

One of the most inscrutable players is Scotsman Irving Gordon, who has lived in England for many years and is known by friends as Haggis. His demeanor — or lack of it — really helped on this deal.

How would you try to make seven — yes, seven — spades against a trump lead?

North should have responded three spades. His sequence promised game values (a slight overbid) with four spades (accurate) and a good diamond suit (a big overbid). Five clubs and five hearts indicated controls in those suits, five notrump asked about trumps, and six clubs showed the ace or king of spades.

With only 12 tricks on view, Gordon imperturbably drew trumps, cashed his hearts, discarding a club from the dummy, and ran the rest of his trumps, abandoning dummy's diamond king.

With one spade to go, dummy, East and West each had three diamonds and two clubs; declarer held that trump, the diamond ace and his three clubs.

On the final spade, both West and East, thinking they had to retain three diamonds, discarded a club. The club ace dropped the king and queen — suddenly declarer's hand was high!

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Survivor remembers avalanche

PROVO, Utah (AP) — J.D. Settle was panicked — buried by an avalanche, he frantically dug himself out only to be slammed by another wave of snow that left him trapped up to his neck in Provo Canyon.

"What it looked like when it comes off that horn is just pure white coming at you. There's nothing but white," Settle said.

Two days later, he joined rescuers searching for his three friends who perished in that same avalanche.

The body of Mike Hebert, 19, of Orem, was found in four feet of snow in Provo Canyon on Sunday afternoon. He was identified by his driver's license and cell phone, which were with the body, Utah County Sheriff Jim Tracy said. Hebert's relatives were at the scene and were notified shortly after the discovery.

Officials said a snow storm that hit the area Sunday night and early today would prevent the search for Adam Merz, 18, of Orem and Rod Newberry, 20, of Pleasant Grove, from resuming today.

Settle, Hebert, Merz and Newberry were among five snowboarding friends swept away Friday by the avalanche, in a remote area with no avalanche control about 25 miles northeast of Provo and a mile north of Sundance ski resort.

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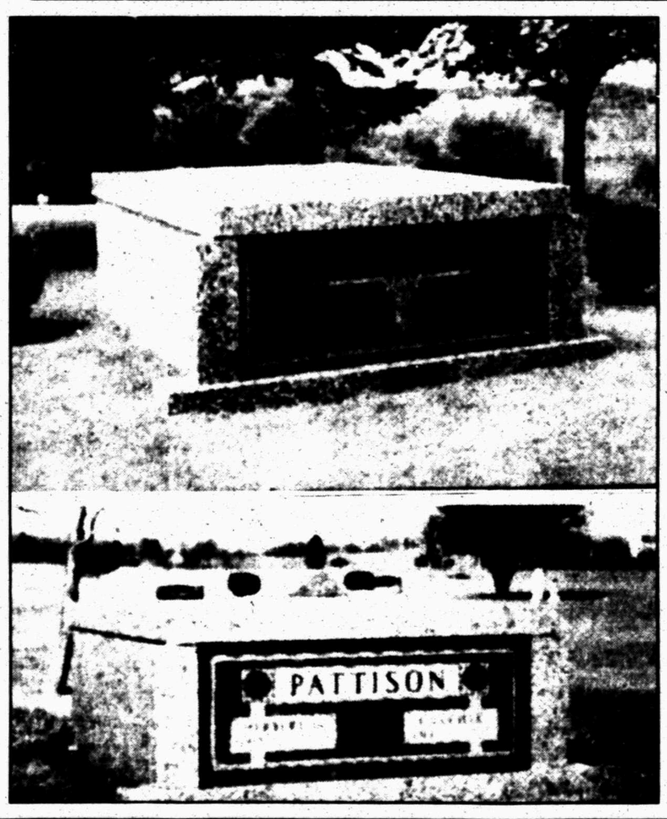
Spotlight



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Hillside Memorial Gardens, located on the Colorado City Highway, has been serving Snyder and the Scurry County area for many years.

Hillside Memorial Gardens is a perpetual care cemetery governed by the State Banking Department. The one price you pay for perpetual care is the only one you ever have to pay.

Lots at Hillside Memorial Gardens are reasonably priced and they offer a Pre-Need Financial Plan of only 20 percent down and small monthly payments without interest or carrying charges.

Granite and bronze memorials are available at Hillside Monument Works and Greg Graves goes to great lengths to see that the finished product is one that reflects the individualism of the loved one for whom it is created.

W.C. and Greg Graves realize they provide an important service to the community and work hard to maintain the trust and confidence of the people. Give them a call at 573-5251 and they will be happy to counsel with you concerning your present or future needs.

Best Available Copy

Scientists study why Europe's probe to Mars remains silent

LONDON (AP) — Scientists trying to find Europe's Beagle 2 Mars probe ruled out weather problems and a faulty onboard clock for its five-day silence, but considered a new possibility today — a crater that may be blocking its signal.

A new, detailed picture of the area of Mars where the Beagle 2 is believed to have landed revealed a crater a little more than a half-mile wide. It is possible — although unlikely — that the Beagle may be unable to communicate because it landed inside, chief Beagle scientist Colin Pillinger said at a news conference.

"This would be an incredibly unlucky situation," Pillinger said.

Several attempts to contact the Beagle 2 so far have failed five days after it was to descend to Mars. NASA's Mars Odyssey orbiter has passed four times over the spot where scientists hope Beagle landed, without picking up a signal. Pillinger did not reveal the results of another overflight that happened at 2:40 a.m. EST on today, while he was speaking.

A British radio telescope at Jodrell Bank Observatory struck out again early today after sweeping the planet's surface for the craft's call sign, composed by the British band Blur.

The 143-pound probe, which has a robotic arm to take soil and rock samples, was supposed to unfold its solar panels and transmit a signal confirming its arrival within hours of landing on Christmas Day. An "analysis and recovery think tank" at Britain's space center considered several reasons for its silence.

They discounted two possible theories. One was that the weather may have played a role, and the other was that the lander's internal clock wasn't working, mission manager Mark Sims said.

The vessel is programmed to transmit its signal when its orbiter or telescopes on earth are in position to receive it. If the clock had been damaged, the Beagle could have been "talking" and staying quiet at the wrong times.

Sims said, however, a problem with the clock's software was still possible. The team planned to send the clock a reset command Wednesday.

The European Space Agency will get a better idea about the Beagle 2 when the its mother ship, Mars Express, enters a lower orbit around Mars and tries to contact it on Jan. 4. Mars Express, which carried Beagle into space, is orbiting the planet as high as 117,00 miles above its equator.

"They are keeping up their spirits," Peter Barratt, spokesman for the British government's physics and astronomy research agency, said Sunday. "The big crunch will be when Mars Express comes into the frame. That was always the prime chance for communication. But if we get negative responses after a few tries, we will start to become concerned."

On Tuesday, European Space Agency scientists at mission control in Darmstadt, Germany, will fire Mars Express' engine to shift its orbit. They hope to move it over one of the Martian poles — where it will survey the entire planet with its high-resolution camera and a radar that can look for underground water.

Scientists hope to gradually reduce the polar orbit and say that by Jan. 4, it should pass as low as 125-155 miles above the surface, enabling it to take close-up pictures and listen for Beagle.

If the Beagle fails to transmit its call sign, Wells said a radio telescope at Stanford University in California could help determine if it survived the descent to Mars. It would scan the planet's surface for low levels of radiation emitted by the probe.

Efforts to get a lander on Mars have proven difficult. Of 34 unmanned American, Soviet and Russian missions to Mars since 1960, two-thirds have ended in failure. Beagle 2 would be only the fourth successful Mars landing if all goes well.

Good Samaritan hoodwinked by thief gets a late Christmas

PLEASANT HILL, N.M. (AP) — Christmas has come to Delbert Sours' family after all.

A man involved in a Christmas Eve traffic accident near Sours' farmhouse had driven off in Sours' pickup truck as the good Samaritan helped two other men injured in the single-vehicle wreck.

Among the items in the truck was a Christmas present Sours had stashed away for his wife.

State police located Sours' truck Friday abandoned in the parking lot of a Clovis motel.

"We're all really happy," Sours said. "We were just hoping to get the vehicle back. We didn't expect to find anything in it."

All of Sours' tools, his wife's diamond earrings for Christmas and his cell phone were inside.

He left his wife's Christmas present hidden in the cab of the truck so she wouldn't find it, he said on Christmas Day, comparing the theft to "the Grinch who stole Christmas."

The cell phone proved to be the key ingredient in tracking down the stolen truck. State police traced signals emitted by the cell phone to pinpoint the truck's location to a certain area of Clovis.

The two men injured in the accident, one critically and the other with a broken leg, remained hospitalized in Lubbock over the weekend.

Determining the trio's identities has proved challenging, state police Officer Al Quintero said. One of the men hospitalized refuses to identify himself while the other is too injured to communicate.

Astro-graph

By Bernice Bede Osol

Your Birthday

Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2003

New insight into the world around you is in the offing in the year ahead. What you uncover will contribute to your happiness and could involve anything from learning about a new technology to seeing someone in a new light

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — A new discovery may be dropped into your lap today that will give you the answer for something you have been seeking. This encounter will turn out to be a lucky break.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — You may not want to spend your day in your usual routine today, and you shouldn't if that's the way you feel. Try to find a way to do something exciting and/or unusual.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — Even if in the company of people you see every day and know quite well, there is a possibility that a startling new idea may surface and open up a whole new avenue to something magnificent.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — Be hopeful regarding the outcome of events today. With your clever mind and able talents you won't have any trouble making anything you tackle the success you imagined it could be.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Follow your intellectual evaluation of important matters today, because your thinking is likely to be far superior to that of those who may endeavor to advise you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — You could be surprisingly lucky today in the success of any project you're working on at this time, especially when you team up with another who is as competent as you are in the subject.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Instead of dodging a difficult dilemma today, you're apt to meet it head on. You'll realize your greatest asset is to compassionately use the facts as they exist, regardless of their harshness.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — A commercial situation that requires some clever reworking could work out astoundingly well for you today. You won't have to settle for something that looked like it would be second rate.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — You'll keep a cool head when last-minute changes are foisted upon you today concerning a social event. This will make the new plans turn out to be more fun than the original ones.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — Attitude is everything today, and your happy-go-lucky one will handle what could have been a disaster at work and turn it into a success that you can take pride in — and even boast about.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Sometimes it's necessary to take a calculated risk, provided the odds are in your favor. Chances are you could find yourself in just such a situation today and will do the right thing.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — It might have been impossible yesterday for you to please anybody, but today no matter what pops up, you possess the knack to say and do all the right things that'll soften even the hardest of hearts.

Know where to look for romance and you'll find it. The Astro-Graph Matchmaker wheel instantly reveals which signs are romantically perfect for you. Mail $2.75 to Matchmaker, c/o this newspaper, P.O. Box 167, Wickliffe, OH 44092-0167. Visit www.bernice4u.com for more advice.

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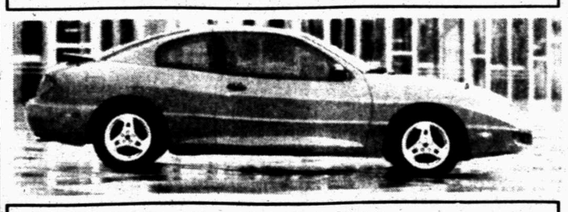
100 Point Inspection

2003 Chevy Cavalier, 4 Door A8197
$10,095 or $199.99* mo.
Red, auto, A/C, 4 cyl., 10K miles
GM CERTIFIED

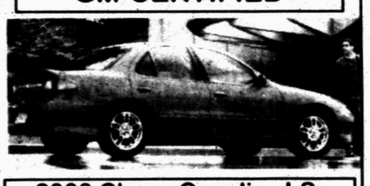
2003 Pontiac Grand Am SE, 4 Door A7880
$11,095 or $219.99* mo.
Silver, auto, bucketseats, 14K miles
GM CERTIFIED



2003 Pontiac Sunfire, 2 Door A2447
$10,750 or $212.99* mo.
Green, sunroof, CD, auto, 13K miles
GM CERTIFIED

2003 Chevy Cavalier, 2 Door A2332
$10,750 or $212.99* mo.
Black, CD, auto, must see
GM CERTIFIED

2003 GMC Sonoma
A8877
$10,095 or
$199.99* mo.
Pewter, auto, A/C, 4 cyl, 14K miles
GM CERTIFIED



2003 Chevy Cavalier LS, 4 Door
A7437
$11,095 or
$219.99* mo.
Pewter, auto, loaded, 18K miles
GM CERTIFIED

2001 Chevy Malibu
A4247
$8,500 or
$168.99* mo.
Bronze Mist, 26K miles, loaded
GM CERTIFIED

2001 Chevy Prism A5414
$8,500 or
$168.99* mo.
Bronze Mist, automatic, 12K miles
GM CERTIFIED

* WAC 6.9% 60 mo. TTL down * Must qualify for certified program

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1999 GMC 4x4 Reg. Cab C5974A $7,500
2001 Chevy Suburban LS C6107A $18,850
1999 Chevy Suburban C6127A, 58K $13,000
2000 Chevy Reg. Cab TxOk. C6134A, auto $10,500
2001 Ford F150 4x4 C6318A $9,750
2002 Chevy 1500 ExCab TC6547A, 23K $16,850
2001 Chevy Suburban C6278A, 63K $18,850
2001 Ford Expedition C6450B Eddie Bauer 4x4 $23,500
2001 Chevy Blazer A7092 2 dr. sport $8,900
1993 Ford F150 ExCab TC6624B $4,500
1989 Ford F250 P1569C Long Bed Supercab $2,750
2000 Chevy Suburban 4x4 TC6655A $18,000
1987 Chevy Suburban TC6625A $1,850
1999 Chevy 2500 Reg. Cab TC6600A $5,000
2001 Mitsubishi Montero Sport C6604A, 44K $12,000

CARS

1996 Cadillac Deville C6126A, 88K $6,100
2001 Chevy Impala LS A6654 ..... $12,850
1994 GEO Prism TC6369A, Chrome Wheels $4,500
1996 Cadillac Deville TC6625B, 76K $6,600

East Traffic Circle • Snyder, Texas (325) 573-5456 or 1-800-573-5459

2nd Front Page

THE SNYDER DAILY NEWS

Obituaries

Jean Howell

1937-2003

Graveside service for Margaret Jean Howell, retired owner of The Beauty Pub in Snyder, is set for 2 p.m. Tuesday in the Double Maintain Cemetery in Peacock. Roland Burns will officiate and arrangements are under the direction of Wright Colonial Funeral Home.

Mrs. Howell, 66, died early today in Cogdell Memorial Hospital.

Born Jan. 26, 1937 in Hamlin, Mrs. Howell was a hair dresser for 30 years and owned the Beauty Pub until 1998.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Jim and Julia Perry Williams; and three brothers, Raymond, Alvin and Otis Perry.

Survivors include three sons and two daughters-in-law, Ricky Howell and Mike and Toni Howell, all of Snyder, and Robert and Kim Stoneman of Bertram; a daughter, Angela Elledge of Snyder; a sister, Lorene Pitcock of Lubbock; five grandchildren, Sam Elledge and wife Victoria of San Antonio, Derek Howell of Merkel, Jacob Thomas and Sam Thomas, both of Bertram, and Crystal Babb and husband Jake of Snyder; three great-granddaughters, Jasmine Elledge, Taylor Babb and Andrea Elledge, all of Snyder; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be held from 6 to 8 this evening at Wright Colonial Funeral Home.

Jose Madera

1916-2003

Jose G. Madera, longtime Snyder resident, died Saturday, Dec. 27, in Cogdell Memorial Hospital.

Rosary for Mr. Madera, 87, is set for 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Bell-Cypert-Seale Funeral Home Chapel with Deacon Frank Ortegon officiating.

Jose Medera

Funeral service is set for 2 p.m. Wednesday in Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church with Fr. Roy Badilles officiating. Burial will follow in Hillside Memorial Gardens under the direction of Bell-Cypert-Seale Funeral Home.

Born Nov. 17, 1916 in Minillas, Jalisco Mexico, he married Guadalupe Bonilla in 1957 in Coleman. She preceded him in death.

A member of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mr. Madera was groundskeeper at Snyder County Club for 16 years.

Survivors include a daughter, Rebecca Fernandez of Chicago; two brothers, Antonio Madera of Mexico and Alejandro Madera of Snyder; a nephew and his wife, Ricardo and Erma Madera of Snyder; two great-nephews, Ricardo and Omar Madera, both of Snyder; two great-nieces, Erma and Brijida Madera, both of Snyder; and two grandchildren.

Margaret Linville

1918-2003

ABILENE — Margaret P. Linville, a former Snyder resident, died Friday, Dec. 26, in Hendrick Medical Center.

Graveside service for Mrs. Linville, 85, was set for 10 a.m. today in Waco Memorial Park. Arrangements were under the direction of Elliott-Hamil Funeral Home.

Mrs. Linville

Born Oct. 27, 1918 in Levi, Texas, she had lived in Lorena for 32 years before moving to Snyder in 1957. After the death of her husband, Alpha Linville, she moved to Abilene.

A member of the First Baptist Church in Snyder until her illness in 1999, she was retired from S&H Green Stamp Corporation.

Survivors include four daughters, Carolyn Rogers of Abilene, Paulette Gaddis of Tyler, Josephine Ivey of Florida and Charlotte Holloway of New Mexico; two brothers, Edward Vorderkunz of Waco and George Vorderkunz of Euless; a sister, Ruth Holmes of Killeen; five grandchildren, Elizabeth Holloway of Snyder, Cindy Robinson of Abilene, Angela Abbote of Wisconsin, Alisa Weatherry and B. J. Ivey, both of Florida; and three great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the American Heart Association or to the American Diabetes Association.

Frank Bagley

1924-2003

ODESSA — Richard Franklin "Frank" Bagley, the father of Carolyn Warren of Snyder, died Saturday, Dec. 27, in the VA Hospital in Big Spring after a lengthy illness.

Frank Bagley

Funeral service for Mr. Bagley, 79, is set for 2 p.m. Tuesday in St. Luke's United Methodist Church with the Rev. Kevin Bushart officiating. A Masonic graveside service will follow at Sunset Memorial Gardens. Arrangements are under the direction of Hubbard-Kelly Funeral Home.

Born Sept. 12, 1924 in Odessa to Dick and Lois (Murchison) Bagley, he was a 1942 graduate of Odessa High School and served three years in the U.S. Navy. He married Blanche McAlister on Sept. 15, 1947 in Lubbock.

A rancher and oilman, Mr. Bagley was manager of Bagley Enterprises and was a member of the Texas and New Mexico Farm Bureau and was past-president of the Odessa Business Bible Class.

A member of the York Rite Bodies, he was a 33rd degree Scottish Rite Mason in El Paso, a member of the H.A. McFarland Masonic Lodge No. 1338 and past member of El Maida Shrine in El Paso and DeMolay.

Mr. Bagley served as past master of all four Scottish Rite bodies and was active in DeMolays where he served as its district governor and was awarded the Legion of Honor. He also served on the board of trustees of Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children from 1982 until his death.

Survivors include his wife, Blanche Bagley of Odessa; another daughter and son-in-law, Beverly and Jim McClatchy of Midland; a son-in-law, Wade Warren of Snyder; two brothers, Bud Bagley of Corona, N.M., and George Bagley of Dimmitt; a sister, Allene Sultemeier of Albuquerque, N.M.; five grandchildren, Leslie Ann Hargrove and husband Rafe of Austin, Shannon Warren of Austin, Jason Warren and wife Shelley of Dallas, Kelly McClatchy and wife Heather of Midland, and Tyler Warren and wife Kristen of San Angelo; three great-grandchildren, Kaitlyn and Dylan Hargrove of Austin and Ashlyn McClatchy of Midland.

Grandsons and Jim Bates will serve as pallbearers.

Mary Womack

1914-2003

BROWNWOOD — Mary Lois Womack, the grandmother of Robert Lehrer of Snyder, died Saturday, Dec. 27, in Brownwood Regional Medical Center.

Funeral service for Mrs. Womack, 89, was set for 3 p.m. today in the First Baptist Church with Dr. Bill Heston and Dallas Huston officiating. Burial was to follow in Eastlawn Memorial Park under the direction of Davis-Morris Funeral Home.

Born Aug. 26, 1914 in Grayson County, she married Thomas Lloyd Womack on April 8, 1933 in Dallas.

A 1955 graduate of Howard Payne University, she earned her master's degree in 1957. Mrs. Womack was a teacher in Brownwood, Early, Zephyr and San Angelo.

A resident of Brownwood since 1934, Mrs. Womack was a longtime member of the First Baptist Church.

Survivors include her husband, Lloyd Womack of Brownwood; a daughter, Mitzi Lehrer of Brownwood; a son, Tom Womack of San Angelo; eight other grandchildren; and 16 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, four sisters, five brothers and a son-in-law, Wayne Lehrer.

The family suggests memorials to Howard Payne University.

Linda Garza

1970-2003

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

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

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

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

Rufus Scott

1945-2003

Rufus Scott died Friday, Dec. 26, in Snyder and services for Mr. Scott, 58, are pending at Bell-Cypert-Seale Funeral Home.

Trace of TNT is found

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A terminal at San Antonio International Airport was evacuated for about 30 minutes Monday after a piece of checked baggage tested positive for the explosive TNT, officials said.

The baggage was a box containing a computer, said Lara Uselding, a San Antonio airport spokeswoman. The investigation found nothing suspicious, Uselding said.

2 arrests made over weekend in city, county

• Arrests

Two arrests were made in Snyder and Scurry County over the weekend. A 28-year-old man was taken into custody at 11:40 p.m. Saturday for misdemeanor DWI on CR 208, two miles from Dunn.

At 2:31 a.m. Sunday a 21-year-old man was arrested in the 1000 block of 25th for misdemeanor DWI.

• Burglary

A homeowner reported at 6:05 p.m. Sunday from 1167 N. Business 84 the burglary of several Xbox games.

At 9 p.m. Sunday a caller reported that a VCR/DVD player had been stolen from a residence at 2512 27th.

• Theft

A caller reported Saturday at 1:44 p.m. that a utility trailer parked at 6733 CR 465 had been stolen.

An officer was requested to 607 34th at 10:06 a.m. Sunday to report an assortment of CDs stolen from a vehicle while parked in the United parking lot.

• Minor accident

A minor accident was reported at 7:44 p.m. Sunday at CR 395, south of CR 3116, where a single vehicle had struck a utility pole. The accident, with no injuries, remains under investigation by DPS troopers.

• Criminal mischief

A report of graffiti painted on the back outside wall and inside floor of the Cinema I & II in the Snyder Shopping Center on College Ave. was called in at 9:21 a.m. Saturday.

A homeowner reported at 3:25 p.m. Sunday finding the back door forced open and some windows broken out at her residence at 2709 Ave. F.

A caller reported at 11:15 a.m. Saturday that a windshield in a minivan at Dupree Motors at 2301 25th had been broken.

• Disturbance

A loud disturbance was reported at 12:29 a.m. today at the Fieldcrest Apartments, 700 E. 37th. The caller said that a number of subjects were involved in the argument, but when officers arrived the subjects retreated to an apartment and would not answer the door.

• Loud music

A caller reported loud music in the area of 22nd and Ave. L at 11:07 a.m. Sunday. An officer made contact with the person playing the music and advised them to lower the volume.

Today's Weather

Local 3-Day Forecast

Tue 12/30	Wed 12/31	Thu 1/1
58/35	**62/45**	**62/41**
Sunny along with a few clouds. High 58F. Winds SSW at 15 to 25 mph.	Times of sun and clouds. Highs in the low 60s and lows in the mid 40s.	Showers. Highs in the low 60s and lows in the low 40s.
Sunrise 7:45 AM / Sunset 5:47 PM	Sunrise 7:46 AM / Sunset 5:48 PM	Sunrise 7:46 AM / Sunset 5:49 PM

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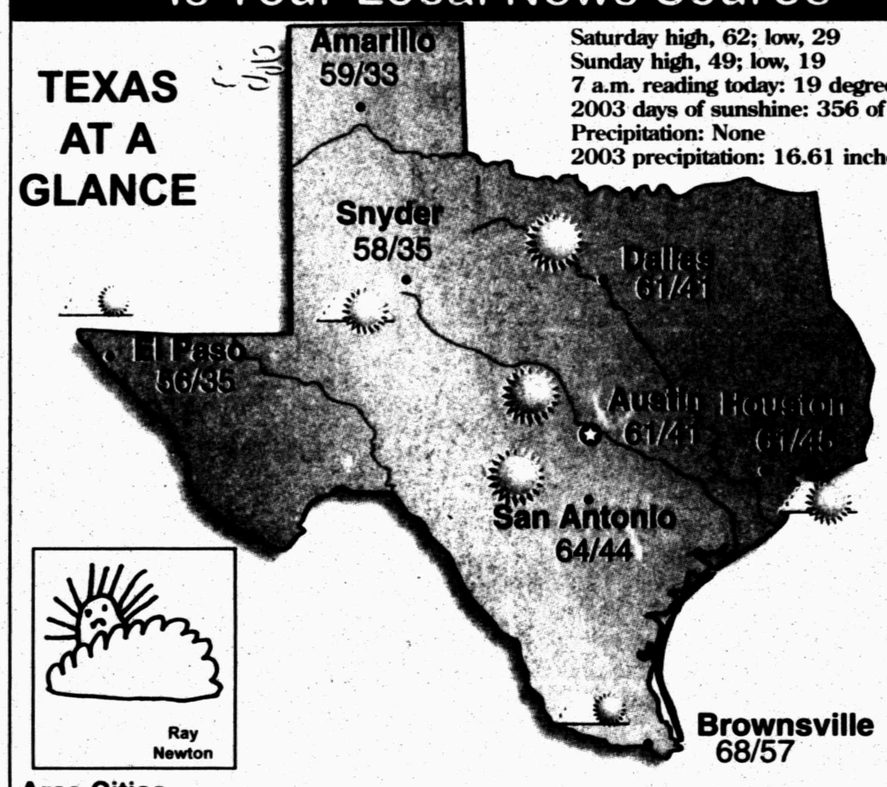
TEXAS AT A GLANCE

Saturday high, 62; low, 29
Sunday high, 49; low, 19
7 a.m. reading today: 19 degrees
2003 days of sunshine: 356 of 362 days
Precipitation: None
2003 precipitation: 16.61 inches



Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	60	39	windy	El Paso	56	35	pt sunny	Midland	58	34	mst sunny
Amarillo	59	33	windy	Fort Stockton	62	37	mst sunny	Raymondville	67	54	pt sunny
Austin	61	41	sunny	Gainesville	59	36	sunny	Rosenberg	61	45	mst sunny
Beaumont	60	43	mst sunny	Greenville	59	37	sunny	San Antonio	64	44	sunny
Brownsville	68	57	pt sunny	Houston	61	45	mst sunny	San Marcos	62	41	sunny
Brownwood	62	39	sunny	Kingsville	67	55	pt sunny	Sulphur Springs	59	37	sunny
Corpus Christi	65	54	mst sunny	Livingston	59	38	sunny	Sweetwater	60	38	mst sunny
Corsicana	61	40	sunny	Longview	59	36	sunny	Tyler	59	37	sunny
Dallas	61	41	sunny	Lubbock	59	31	pt sunny	Weatherford	60	36	sunny
Del Rio	61	41	mst sunny	Lufkin	60	37	sunny	Wichita Falls	62	37	windy

National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	55	29	pt sunny	Houston	61	45	mst sunny	Phoenix	64	48	cloudy
Boston	50	33	rain	Los Angeles	58	50	rain	San Francisco	55	42	pt sunny
Chicago	39	33	mst sunny	Miami	77	64	pt sunny	Seattle	38	32	pt sunny
Dallas	61	41	sunny	Minneapolis	27	25	pt sunny	St. Louis	49	36	sunny
Denver	48	28	pt sunny	New York	51	34	rain	Washington, DC	50	31	rain

Moon Phases

New	First	New	First
Dec 23	Dec 30	Jan 21	Jan 29

UV Index

Tue 12/30	Wed 12/31	Thu 1/1
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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