



Best, brainiest show their stuff at science fair

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

If you ever wondered if a dog's mouth was cleaner than a cat's, or what kind of detergent actually cleans better, the Big Spring Independent School District Science Fair was the place to be.

Science projects ranging from the serious to the somewhat silly were on display at Dora Roberts Community Center as the school district honored its best science students Wednesday.

Forty students received recognition at the event. Many of those will advance to regional science fair competition to be held March 2 in Odessa, with the winners there going to the state science fair later this year in San Antonio.

"I think the best thing I can say about the science fair is that I was totally amazed at the quality of work our students produced," said Darrell Ryan, BSISD director of

"I was totally amazed at the quality of work our students produced."



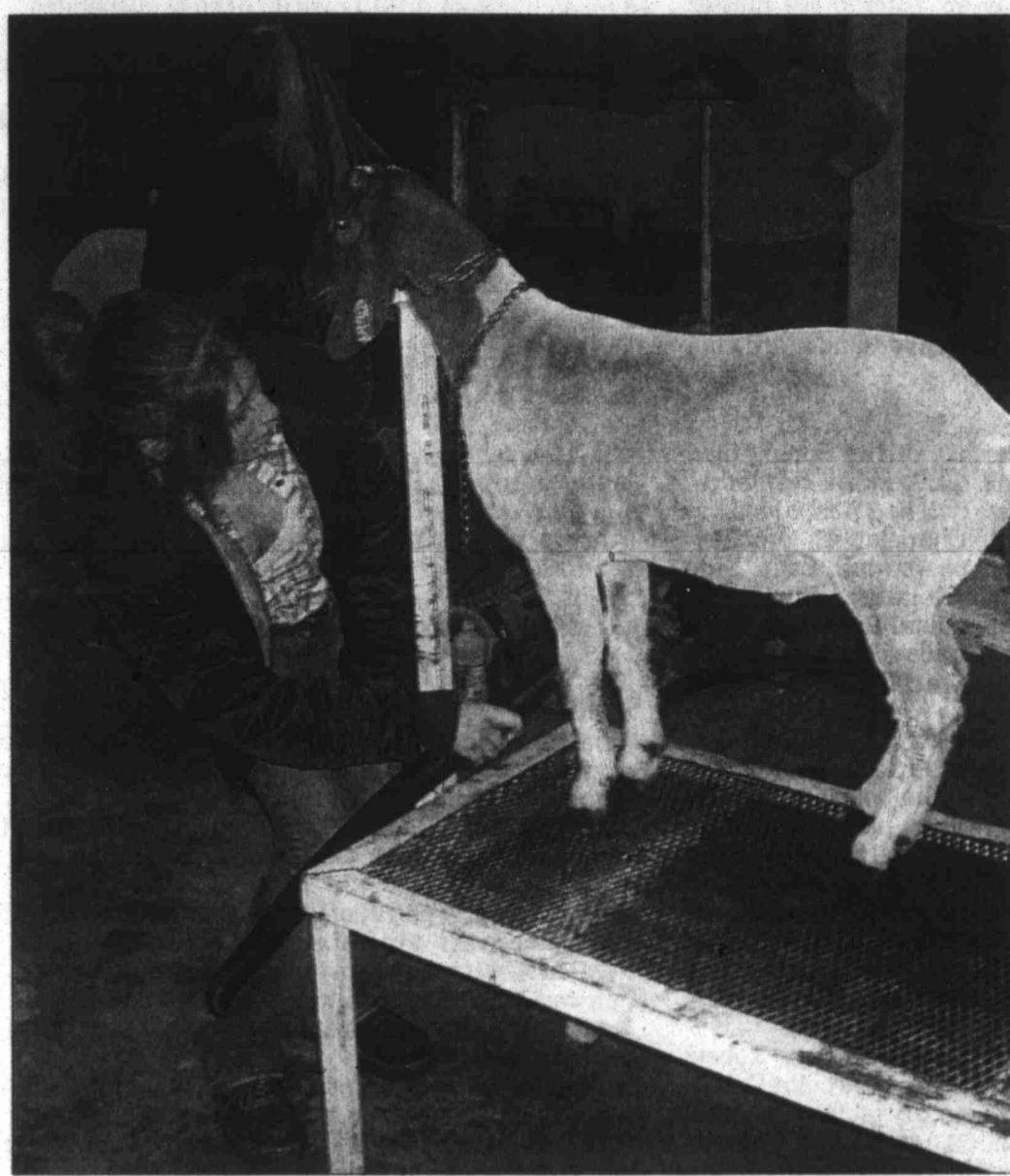
Ryan

federal programs and coordinator of the science fair.

The top elementary students were awarded free tuition at next summer's Kid's College at Howard College. Those winners were: Karla Carrasco (Bauer Magnet); Stevi Ward and Erin Pollard (Kentwood); Ashlen Eckert (Marcy); Nicholas Conner (Moss); and Dustin Garcia (Washington); and Brianna Kight (Goliad Intermediate).

Campus winners in grades 6 through 8 were awarded \$100 scholarships to Howard College.

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Mia Medina grooms her goat prior to showing it at the Howard County Junior Livestock Show Wednesday afternoon. The livestock show continues through Friday at the county fair barns.

Not your ordinary GOAT

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

It's not easy being a show goat.

It's not much fun being a goat handler, either.

The opening night of the Howard County Junior Livestock Show was dominated by goats and the people who, well, raise them.

At first blush, show goats are quite the pampered creatures. Selected soon after birth for life in the show ring, they are segregated from "regular" goats and given special feed and housing, as well as a regular grooming regimen.

When the weather turns cold, as it has this week, the goats are clad in special wraps and bathed in heat lamps so they don't catch cold.

If the objects of this attention are appreciative, they don't show it

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Texas lawmakers seek federal aid to assist Mexican drug war

WASHINGTON (AP) — A group of Texas Democrats has proposed legislation that would provide \$850 million in federal aid to Mexico to combat drug cartels and border violence.

The bill would give \$170 million annually to Mexico over a five-year period for costs such as training Mexican police and improving coordination with

American law enforcement.

"Mexico must be a partner in efforts to safeguard the border region," said Rep. Silvestre Reyes, D-El Paso, a co-sponsor of the bill filed Wednesday. "This bill will help them further their law enforcement efforts."

Reyes, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee,

said the money would help protect border cities from drug cartels and their violent turf battles along the border.

A month ago, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus asked Mexican President Felipe Calderon to boost his country's efforts to fight drug trafficking and violence along the 2,000-mile border.

Rep. Henry Cuellar, D-Laredo, said the United States and Mexico both need to step up security efforts to protect border communities.

"We will work to ensure our neighbor and partner to the south has the assistance it needs to fulfill its responsibilities," said Cuellar, a member of the House Homeland Security

Committee.

Other co-sponsors of the bill included Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Corpus Christi, Rep. Ciro Rodriguez, D-San Antonio, and Rep. Ruben Hinojosa, D-Mercedes.

The proposed money would also go to upgrading Mexico's

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Recording artists Crimson Soul will perform during The Knockout Saturday at Municipal Auditorium.

The Knockout coming Saturday

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

Ring the bell — but don't throw in the towel — as the Rock the Desert battle of the bands known as The Knockout prepares to take the stage in Big Spring Saturday.

With a shot at playing the 2007 Rock the Desert on the line, several area bands will be hoping to



Koerber

"knockout" the competition during the battle, according to Jim Koerber, president of Scars Entertainment and promoter for the show.

Scheduled to perform are A Death Foretold from Seminole;

Blank from Andrews; Epic Fire from El Paso; All Rights Reserved out of San Angelo; Midland-based Simplearth; and Abilene's In His Arms.

"We also have a local band set to compete," said Koerber. "Hit The Ground Running, which is from right here in Big Spring, will be taking the stage. They're very excited

about playing for a hometown crowd.

"We're really excited about bringing The Knockout to Big Spring. The show is a great chance for these bands to get their music out to the people, and for the people of Big Spring to see some of the up and coming

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HAPPY ALL THE TIME

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — You've heard of "Happy Hour" but how about "Happy Day?" All-day drink specials could become a reality in South Carolina.

A state House subcommittee Wednesday approved legislation that would allow bars and restaurants to choose one day a week, except Sundays, for all-day specials on liquor drinks.

Currently, businesses can sell and advertise liquor drink specials — though not less than half-price — from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. only. Breaking the law can be punished by at least three months in jail and a fine of at least \$100.

The proposal is up for debate Tuesday.

VALENTINES FOR TROOPS

Because of the wintry weather, Hangar 25 is reminding individuals that the air museum is open until 4 p.m. each day for those who want to come in after school or during the day to participate in the Valentines for Troops project.

"We are extending beyond the original time frames and will accommodate anyone who comes in to work on the project during operational hours," said Heather Wallace, Hangar 25 director.

The museum will be placing the Valentines in the mail after lunch Monday, Jan. 22. Anyone having any questions about the project or the Hangar 25 Air Museum should call 264-1999.

MAYBE JOINT CUSTODY?

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Two Malaysian farmers have agreed to DNA tests for a 3-year-old calf to determine the bovine's parentage.

Farmers Zulkifli Setapa and Isa Mohamed filed police reports in November for custody of the calf, officials said. Zulkifli claimed to have tethered the calf, along with four bulls, in a grazing field in northeastern Kelantan state when Isa stopped him, claiming the calf was his.

Blood samples from the calf and two cows said to have given birth to the calf have been taken. The calf is estimated to be worth about \$572. DNA tests, to be shared by the two men, will cost \$914.

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Obituaries

Ricky Gamble



Ricky Gamble, 48, of Big Spring died Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2007, at Midland Memorial Hospital. Funeral Services will be at 2 p.m. Saturday at Myers & Smith Chapel with burial at Trinity Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 7 p.m. until 8 p.m. Friday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

He was born June 22, 1958, in Big Spring to Pat and Prentice Gamble. He graduated from Big Spring High School and attended Howard College. He owned Rick's Auto Shop for nine years. He was an automotive master technician and was also a carpenter. He was a Baptist.

He is survived by his wife, Lesa Gamble of Big Spring; two sons, Kenneth Gamble of Flower Mound, and Kasey Huckabee of Big Spring; one daughter, Kendra Carlile of Big Spring; one granddaughter, Paige Carlile of Big Spring; father, Prentice Gamble of Big Spring; and one brother, Randy Gamble of Midland.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Pat Gamble.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at www.myersandsmith.com

Ronnie Carter



Ronnie Carter, 60, of Big Spring died Sunday, Jan. 14, 2007, at his residence. Funeral services will be 2 p.m. Friday at Myers & Smith Chapel with the Rev. Doug Shelley, pastor of East Side Baptist Church, officiating. Burial will be at Trinity Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. Thursday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

He was born Sept. 18, 1946, in Big Spring to Marcella and Robert Carter. He spent part of his early life in El Cajon, Calif., but most of his life was in Big Spring. In his early years, he worked in the oil field and in more recent years at the Water Shoppe. He served in the Army in Viet Nam. Ronnie was an avid Harley Rider and enjoyed collecting guns.

He is survived by one sister, Cheryl Click of Coahoma; one son, Danny Carter of Big Spring; one daughter, Deanna Meyer of Phoenix; and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his father, Robert Carter on Nov. 20, 1962; his mother, Marcella Carter on Feb. 1, 2004; two sisters, Gloria Ely of June 28, 1986, and Beverly Yarbar on Jan. 21, 2005; one brother, Roger Carter on July 31, 2005; and two nephews, Dusty Preas and Wesley Ely.

Pallbearers will be Jack Langley, Duke Lester, Roger Meeks, Robert Walker, Howard Walker, and Clayton Coffman. Honorary Pallbearers will be Jerry Roach, Gary Grant, Willie Lane, Edward Roach, and Randy Roach.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at www.myersandsmith.com

Local obituary

Lionicio Rodriguez Sr.



Lionicio Rodriguez Sr., 73, of Lubbock died Monday, Jan. 15, 2007. Funeral Mass will be celebrated Friday at 10 p.m. at St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church with the Rev. Jim O'Conner officiating. Burial will be at Peaceful Gardens under the direction of Calvillo Funeral Home.

Lionicio was born Oct. 9, 1933, in Stanton to Francisco Rodriguez and Sepriana Ramirez. He married Oralía Rodriguez in September 1955 in Big Spring and moved to Lubbock in 1988. He was a farmer and a Catholic.

Survivors include his wife, Oralía Rodriguez of Lubbock; four sons, Frankie of Big Spring, Lionicio Jr., Cruz, and Larry Rodriguez, all of Lubbock; four daughters, Hilda Alarcon, Rosie Morales, Martha Saiz and Lupe Rodriguez, all of Lubbock; two brothers, Victor Rodriguez of Odessa and Simon Rodriguez of Phoenix, Ariz.; a sister, Tomasa Duran of Phoenix, Ariz.; 23 grandchildren, 63 great-grandchildren and six great-great grandchildren.

Emil Zilai

Emil Zilai, 75, of Big Spring, died Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2007, in a Midland hospital. His services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Support Groups

THURSDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m.; women's meeting; 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. Non-smoking closed discussion meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

FRIDAY

• AA open discussion meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at 605 Settles. Open Big Book study meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

SATURDAY

• Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. Open podium/speakers meeting 615 Settles 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

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Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity between 8 a.m. Wednesday and 8 a.m. Thursday:

- CHRIS GUTIERREZ, 20, 1600 E. 15th, was arrested on two citations and a Howard County Sheriff's Office warrant.
- DONNY MARCEE, 51, 600 W. Interstate 20, was arrested on a charge of theft of service.
- VALENTINE TORRES JR., 28, 1707 S. Aylesford, was arrested on a charge of driving while license suspended.
- KENNETH DAVIS, 56, no address given, was arrested on a charge of public intoxication.
- JORGE LUIS GARZA, 32, 1803 Grafa, was arrested on a charge of driving while license suspended.
- ASSAULT/FAMILY VIOLENCE was reported in the 1900 block of Martin Luther King and the 700 block of Interstate 20.
- BURGLARY OF A HABITATION was reported in the 800 block of Lorilla.
- DRIVING WHILE LICENSE SUSPENDED/INVALID was reported in the 1400 block of Third.
- THEFT was reported in the 900 block of Willia.

Sheriff's report

The Howard County Sheriff's Office reported the following activity between 8 a.m. Wednesday and 8 a.m. Thursday:

- POSSIBLE BURGLARY in the 3100 block of Oasis.

Fire/EMS

The Big Spring Fire Department/Emergency Medical Service reported the following activity between 8 a.m. Wednesday and 8 a.m. Thursday:

- TRAFFIC ACCIDENT was reported at the 195 mile marker of Interstate 20. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1600 block of E. 11th. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1800 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2500 block of Dow. Service was refused.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1800 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to VAMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 500 block of W. 17th. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 600 block of Canyon. Service was refused.

Take Note

• WEST TEXAS OPPORTUNITIES INC. INVITES THE PUBLIC TO A MEETING at 10 a.m. Jan. 24 in the Howard County Library. During the meeting, those attending will learn about the types of services WTO has to offer.

• HANGAR 25 AIR MUSEUM WILL HOLD its annual meeting and Veteran of the Month reception Thursday, Jan. 25.

The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. for museum members and previous Veteran of the Month honorees.

Non-members wishing to attend the Veteran of the Month reception for Col. Harry A. Spannaus and for the unveiling of the new permanent display, the "Spannaus Office," are encouraged to arrive at 7 p.m.

• THE POWWOW COMMITTEE OF BIG SPRING is planning its 2007 Powwow and is in need of new members and volunteers.

Anyone interested in Native American dancing or just interested in helping to bring an exciting weekend event to Big Spring is encouraged to contact Robert Downing at 263-3255 or Randy McKinney at 267-4843.

• CHRIST COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP IS COLLECTING INFANT CAR SEATS AND CARRIERS. These are given to new mothers who cannot afford them.

To donate your old or new car seats and carriers, call Karen Allen at 263-3517 or leave a message at Christ Community Fellowship, 263-love. All donations are appreciated.

• ROAD TO RECOVERY, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, seeks volunteers to drive cancer patients to treatment in Midland.

This requires just a few hours commitment each month.

To volunteer, or to request a ride for treatment, call Nancy Koger at 267-7809.

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Bulletin Board

If you have items for the Bulletin board, contact the Herald news room at 263-7331 or email editor@bigspringherald.com

TODAY

- Citizen's Police Academy Alumni Association meets at 5:30 p.m. in the RSVP office at 501 Runnels.
- American Legion Post 506 meets at 6 p.m. Call 263-2084 for more information.
- Rackley-Swords 379, Vietnam Veterans of America meets at 7 p.m. in the Sparenburg Building, 309 S. Main St.
- Big Spring Masonic Lodge No. 1340 meets at 7:30 p.m. at 2101 Lancaster.

FRIDAY

- Signal Mountain Quilting Guild meets from 9 a.m. until about 3 p.m. at 1019 Nolan St. Call 267-1037 or 267-7281 for more information.
- AMBUCS meet at noon in La Posada Restaurant.
- Greater Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
- Spring City Senior Citizens Center country and western dance from 7:30 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. featuring Monroe Casey and the Prowlers. All area seniors are invited.

SATURDAY

- Howard County Junior Livestock Show buyer's barbecue at 11:30 a.m., awards reception and auction at 1 p.m.
- The American Legion Post 506 fish fry has been canceled because of weather.
- The Knockout, Christian battle of the bands, begins at 6 p.m. in the Big Spring Municipal Auditorium. Tickets are \$10, available at Cowboys Steakhouse, Bean's World Cafe and at the concert.
- Big Spring Shrine Club meets at 6:30 p.m. at Goliad and First streets for a meal with a meeting to follow.
- Eagles Lodge Dance at 8:30 p.m. at 703 W. Third.
- Big Spring Squares. Call 267-7043 or 263-6305 for more information.

SUNDAY

- The play, "A Yellow Butterfly," will be put on by the Howard College theater department at 2:30 p.m. in the Hall Center For the Arts on campus.

Weather

Tonight...Cloudy with light sleet likely. Sleet accumulation up to 1 inch. Lows in the lower 20s. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Friday...Cloudy with snow and light sleet. Colder. Moderate snow and sleet accumulations. Highs in the lower 30s. Northeast winds around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation 90 percent.

Friday night...Cloudy with snow. Moderate snow accumulations. Lows in the upper 20s. Northeast winds around 10 mph. Chance of snow 80 percent.

Saturday...Cloudy with snow and light sleet likely. Light snow accumulations. Highs in the lower 30s. East winds around 10 mph in the morning becoming light and variable. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Saturday night...Cloudy with a 30 percent chance of snow. Lows in the upper 20s.

Sunday...Mostly cloudy. Highs in the upper 30s.

Sunday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 20s.

Monday...Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of rain or snow. Highs in the lower 40s.

Monday night...Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow. Lows in the lower 20s.

Tuesday...Mostly cloudy. Highs in the upper 30s.

Lottery

Results of the Lotto Texas drawing Wednesday night: Winning numbers drawn: 5-10-14-19-29-34. Number matching six of six: none. Estimated jackpot for Saturday night drawing: \$27 million.

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Wednesday night: Winning numbers drawn: 2-8-13-28-36. Number matching five of five: none. Next Cash 5 drawing: Thursday night.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Wednesday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 4-0-9

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World news briefs

Blasts kill at least 19 people in separate attacks in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — A series of explosions and shootings rocked Baghdad on Thursday morning, killing at least 19 people and wounding dozens, police said.

Three car bombs detonated within minutes of each other near a vegetable market in the predominantly Sunni neighborhood of Dora in southern Baghdad. At least 10 people died and 30 were wounded, a police officer said.

Another bomb exploded in central Baghdad at rush hour, killing four people and wounding 11, two other police officers said. One said the death toll was expected to rise.

At least two huge explosions rang out across the area about an hour apart.

A parked car later struck a busy thoroughfare in a religiously mixed area in central Baghdad, killing four people and wounding 10, police said. The blast burned many cars and shattered the windows of nearby stores.

Rice says she heard strong encouragement for Middle East peace settlement

BERLIN (AP) — Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Thursday she heard strong encouragement from Israeli and Palestinian leaders and their neighbors for quick progress toward a Middle East peace agreement.

Before a session in which Rice was to update German leaders on her recent trip to the Middle East, Chancellor Angela Merkel said that Europe and others are eager to help.

"There is no doubt there could be a very important effect on the entire region if we are able to make progress on Middle East peace," Rice said.

"I did find the parties very desirous of making progress," she added. "I believe the whole region is looking for ways to make progress and drive toward the establishment of a Palestinian state."

At the start of her Berlin visit Wednesday, Rice said now is not the time for the United States to talk to adversary Iran and that the Bush administration is not trying to escalate a confrontation over Iraq.

Democrat-driven war resolution could expose Republican divide on Iraq

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Democrat-driven resolution on Iraq that has attracted the support of at least two Republicans threatens to expose fissures within the GOP over the unpopular war.

Republicans are deeply divided on the war in Iraq and how Congress should react to President Bush's plan to send 21,500 more troops to join the estimated 130,000 already there.

Ten Republicans met behind closed doors late Wednesday with Senate GOP Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., in a bid to generate consensus on Iraq. The senators emerged from the meeting to announce that no deal had been reached.

"This is a very fluid situation," said Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz.

The meeting came after Sens. Chuck Hagel of Nebraska and Olympia Snowe of Maine, both Republicans who have sparred with the administration on the war, announced that they would co-sponsor the resolution.

Bush administration reverses course on warrantless wiretapping program

WASHINGTON (AP) — A year after disclosure of a domestic spying program that President Bush maintained was within his authority to operate, the administration shifted its position and said it would seek the approval of an independent panel of federal judges.

The program allowed the National Security Agency — without a court-issued warrant — to monitor phone calls and e-mails between the United States and other countries when a link to terrorism was suspected. Bush secretly authorized the program shortly after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

Attorney General Alberto Gonzales told senators in a letter Wednesday that "any electronic surveillance that was occurring as part of the Terrorist Surveillance Program will now be conducted subject to the approval of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court."

Gonzales announced the change on the eve of his appearance before the Senate Judiciary Committee, his first since the committee came under control of Democrats after the November elections. Congressional intelligence committees had already been briefed on the shift.

Gonzales said Bush would not reauthorize the program once it expires. The court already has approved at least one warrant to conduct surveillance involving a person suspected of having ties to al-Qaida or an associated terror group, Justice officials said.

Pressure mounts on Israeli prime minister to resign after army chief quits over war failures

JERUSALEM (AP) — Defense Minister Amir Peretz defied calls to resign and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert ignored similar demands after the Israeli army chief of staff stepped down over the military's failure to stop Hezbollah rocket attacks from Lebanon last summer.

Public and political pressure on the two embattled leaders was noticeably building Wednesday, reinforcing the feeling that Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz was just the first to go.

A poll broadcast Wednesday evening on Channel 10 TV showed that 69 percent wanted Olmert to resign, and 85 percent hoped Peretz would quit. The Smith Research poll by telephone questioned 425 Israelis and quoted a margin of error of 4.8 percent.

"Halutz's resignation is a positive and unavoidable move," said Ophir Pines-Paz, a member of Peretz's Labor Party. "But the political leadership also has to take responsibility."

In Lebanon, Hezbollah legislator Hussein Haj Hassan called Halutz's resignation "the result of the defeat of the Israeli enemy in Lebanon." Demonstrators in Beirut, at their nightly anti-government protest, celebrated with fireworks when the announcement of Halutz's resignation was made.

Gates appears inclined to support more troops for Afghanistan

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) — Defense Secretary Robert Gates sees a rationale for sending more troops to Afghanistan, but the question he and President Bush face is how much more the military can be expected to contribute at a time when Bush is ramping up U.S. firepower in Iraq and the Persian Gulf.

Gates said that he wants to ensure that gains made against extremism in Afghanistan since the U.S. invaded to topple the Taliban regime in October 2001 are not lost as the Taliban re-emerges.

"I think it is important that we not let this success

here in Afghanistan slip away from us and that we keep the initiative," he told reporters at Bagram air base, the main U.S. military air hub in Afghanistan. "There's no reason to sit back and let the Taliban regroup."

Gates said commanders in Afghanistan had recommended a troop increase, and he suggested he was inclined to urge Bush to go ahead with it. He mentioned no numbers during the talk with reporters on Wednesday, but a senior official traveling with Gates said it would not be anything close to the 21,500 extra troops Bush is sending to Iraq. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said it likely would be one or two battalions — no more than a couple of thousand troops.

On Wednesday evening, Gates flew to Saudi Arabia, where he was driven to a royal hunting lodge outside of Riyadh, the capital, and met for more than two hours with King Abdullah and Crown Prince Sultan, who is the kingdom's defense minister, and other top officials.

SCIENCE

Continued from Page 1A

They were: Brady Weber (Goliad Intermediate); and Robin Caseveer and Jessica Womack (Big Spring Junior High).

Hannah Weber had the top high school science project and will receive a \$200 scholarship from Howard College for her efforts.

Category winners received a \$50 gift card from Alon USA. They

- Medicine and Health — first, Jessica Oliva; second, Andrew Schafer; and third, Elena Flores.
- Microbiology — first, MacKenzie Wolf; second, Cole Pittman; and third, Danielle Strickland.
- Physics, and Astronomy — first, Anna Scott; second, Lacy McMurtrey; and third, Judith Treece.
- Botany — first, Hanna Spence; second, Ashley Billings; and third, Brenda Galvan.
- Animal Sciences — first, Nichole Davidson;

- and second, Charles Anderson.
- Behavioral/Social Science — first, Jessica Womack; second, Stormy Emery; and third, Adriela Zavala.
- Chemistry — first, Brady Weber; second, Trent Thomas; and third, Jacob Acosta.
- Senior Division Chemistry — first, Hannah Weber.
- Earth Science — first, Matthew Tompkins; second, Michelle Morgan.
- Engineering — first, Jackson Watkins.
- Environmental —

- first, Robin Caseveer; second, Michael Ryan; and third, Paige Knowlton.
- Mathematical Sciences — first, Casi Holt; second, Katrina Petrowski; and third, Caleb Lewis.
- Team projects — first, Robert Barraza and Black Brorman; second, Alesha Yanez and Opal Gonzales; and third, Haley Dimidjian and Kylee Borchardt.

Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-7331, ext. 234, or by e-mail at reporter@bigspringherald.com.

GOATS

Continued from Page 1A

— goat night is easily the loudest day at a livestock show, as the cacophony of bleating is quite impressive.

Courtney Schaedel, a junior at Coahoma High School, has been exhibiting goats, lambs and pigs since the third grade, and she said selecting a goat for the show circuit is equal parts science and art.

"We raise our own goats," she said. "We look at them ... and if they are long enough and have good bone structure, we show them."

At least one public perception of goats — stubbornness — is correct, Courtney said, explaining that her least favorite chore in raising show goats is walking the creatures.

"The chain can really hurt your hand, because sometimes you literally have to drag them to

make them walk," she said. "And you have to walk them three or four times a week."

But there is a good side to raising show animals, she added.

"You have something you're responsible for, something you're taking care of," she said.

The livestock show continues today and Friday and wraps up Saturday with a buyer's barbecue at 11:00 a.m. and the auction and awards reception at 1 p.m.

Contact Staff Writer Steve Reagan at 263-7331, ext. 234, or by e-mail at reporter@bigspringherald.com.

KNOCKOUT

Continued from Page 1A

bands. It's really a win-win situation for everybody involved."

Koerber said the show will also feature special guests Crimson Soul and Road Less Traveled.

"The guys from Crimson Soul are really looking forward to performing," said Koerber. "They started out here in Big Spring, so this is their hometown. That really means a lot to them."

Tickets for the show are \$10 and are available at Cowboys Steakhouse and Bean's World Cafe. Tickets will also be available at the door, with limited seating.

"We're really hoping Big Spring and Howard County will come out and show their support," said Koerber. "Some of these bands are going to be like Crimson Soul and go on to become huge, so this is a great chance to see them while they are still

up and coming."

Koerber said the show, which is set to begin at 6 p.m. at Municipal Auditorium, represents a golden opportunity for the winners of the competition.

"We're having several rounds of The Knockout, with a winner from each of them," said Koerber. "Once we have all the finalists, we'll have one last competition to choose the winning band."

"The winning band will go on to take the stage at Rock the Desert, which will feature headline acts like Family Force Five, Kutless, Emery, Shawn McDonald and Hawk Nelson. Anyone who wants more information on Rock the Desert can find it at www.rockthedesert.com."

For more information on The Knockout series, visit www.scarsentertainment.com or www.myspace.com/scarsentertainment.

Contact Staff Writer Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail

MEXICO

Continued from Page 1A

technology to fight the drug war and training judicial officials who prosecute drug traffickers and organized crime suspects.

Cuellar said the bill would help adjust an

imbalance in U.S. aid to Latin American countries for fighting drug trafficking and cultivation. The United States provided \$69 million in aid to Mexico for that purpose in fiscal year 2006. Columbia received \$561 million and Peru \$146 million during the same period, according to the U.S. State Department.

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Ronnie Carter, 60, died Sunday. Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Friday at Myers & Smith Chapel with burial at Trinity Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. Thursday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Ricky Gamble, 48, died Wednesday. Funeral Services will be at 2 p.m. Saturday at Myers & Smith Chapel with burial at Trinity Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 7 p.m. until 8 p.m. Friday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

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EDITORIAL

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

-FIRST AMENDMENT

Opinions expressed on this page are those of the Editorial Board of the Big Spring Herald unless otherwise indicated.

Ronnie Cupstid
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News Editor

OUR VIEWS

Have some fun at annual chili cook-off

It has definitely been chili weather and Big Spring is definitely the place to be for some lip-smackin' bowls of red. Following on the heels of the successful Eagles Lodge cook-off a couple of weeks ago, we turn our attention toward the 18th annual Boss Hogg Chili Cook-off, set Saturday at the Harley Davidson Shop.

Whether you want to enjoy some friendly competition or just have an appetite for spicy food, 908 W. Third St. is the place to be this weekend.

Like the Eagles Lodge event, the Harley shop holds the event, but money raised is donated to local charities.

There are no rules, though make no beans about it, leave the frioles at home.

Chili preparation will begin at 8 a.m. Each team will cook up five pounds of their special brew and turn in a sample to the judges at noon. At that time, teams can begin serving chili to the public for \$5 a head. Chili lovers can sample as much as they want.

The entry fee is \$20 per team, not bad considering the \$150 first prize. Second gets \$75 and third will take home \$50, unless of course they want to donate it back to the pot for charity.

Meanwhile, owner Howard Walker said one of those "yet-to-be-named" bands will be cranking out the music and you can dance or just visit.

Whether you would like to enter your secret homemade chili or just enjoy some good music, good chili and a good time, make plans to make your way over to the Harley Shop Saturday. It's always a lot of fun.

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A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

No matter what we hear, Lord, we can hear the truth in Your word.

Amen

Sheehan leads delegation of hypocrites

As they traveled through Cuba, on their way to protest against the detention of al-Qaida suspects at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo last week, American peace activists displayed the hypocrisy of their cause.

To get to Guantanamo, they had to bypass about a dozen prisons where the Fidel Castro communist regime holds hundreds of Cuban dissidents — for a lot longer, under worse conditions and for committing no crime at all.

But the peace activists, led by radical war critic Cindy Sheehan, were apparently wearing horse blinders as they spent a week in Cuba and traveled from Havana to Guantanamo.

They want potential terrorists to be set free, but they have nothing to say about the inhumane conditions endured by Cubans whose only crime is to try to express themselves freely in their own country.

"I'm calling for the cycle of violence to stop now, to close this prison," Sheehan told reporters as she stood in Cuban territory, outside the U.S. base.

"What I've read happens in this prison makes me sick to my stomach," she added, reflecting exactly the feeling that her hypocrisy causes among Cuban-Americans.

To many thousands of Cuban-Americans who spend years, even decades, in Castro dungeons, Sheehan's trip to Cuba was like a kick in the stomach.

Sheehan, who became an anti-war activist after she lost a son in Iraq, is concerned about the human rights of some Muslims who want to destroy everything we stand for. And yet she ignores the pleas of people who are only seeking the freedom to protest that she obviously exploits.

It's always the same with these bleeding heart liberals: Their hearts only bleed for anyone who

hates the United States.

But this time, they went too far. Let's be clear: Standing on U.S. soil and protesting against the U.S. government is a constitutional right. But doing it on enemy territory has another name: treason!

While the peace activists were in Cuba, as guests of the Castro regime, a group of wives and mothers of Cuban political prisoners sent them a letter urging them to visit Castro's dungeons.

The group, known as the Ladies in White, asked Sheehan to help them boost the cause of seeking freedom for their imprisoned relatives.

Of course, Sheehan would not have been allowed to visit Cuban prisons. For many years, the United Nations, the Red Cross and many human rights organizations have not been allowed to inspect conditions there. But at least by asking, and getting rejected, these activists could have raised world attention to all Cuban prisons, and not just the one run by the U.S. government.

Yet one of Sheehan's leftist comrades told reporters that the group would be focusing only on Guantanamo and that the fact that the U.S. detention center happens to be within an island-prison is "very incidental."

Then Sheehan, attempting to clear her name, made things even worse. She claimed that she was not aware of the letter inviting her to Cuban prisons, which means she is either a fraud or amazingly uninformed.

Did she need to be invited? Is she so ignorant that she doesn't know there are political prisoners suffering human rights violations in Cuba? Didn't she know that Castro has been running gulags since long before most of the Guantanamo prisoners were born?

In a letter to the editor of a New York newspaper, Sheehan explained that she is concerned about human rights violations all over the world, "but especially when these violations occur from my government."

Yet most people know that compared to Castro's political prisons,



MIGUEL PEREZ

Poppies, Afghan recovery can both bloom

Once, the British Empire fought a war for the right to sell opium in China. In retrospect, history has judged that war destructive and wasteful, a shameless battle of colonizers against the colonized that in the end helped neither one.

Now, NATO is fighting a war to eradicate opium from Afghanistan.

Allegedly, the goals this time around are different. According to the British government, Afghanistan's illicit drug trade poses the "gravest threat to the long term security, development, and effective governance of Afghanistan," particularly since the Taliban is believed to be the biggest beneficiary of drug sales. Convinced that this time they are doing the morally right thing, Western governments are spending hundreds of millions of dollars bulldozing poppy fields, building up counter-narcotics squads and financing alternative crops in Afghanistan. Chemical spraying may begin as early as this spring. But in retrospect, might history not judge this war to be every bit as destructive and wasteful as the original Opium Wars?

Of course it isn't fashionable right now to argue for any legal form of opiate cultivation. But look at the evidence. At the moment, Afghanistan's opium exports account for somewhere between one-third and two-thirds of the country's gross domestic product, depending on whose statistics you believe. The biggest producers are in the southern provinces where the Taliban is at its strongest, and no wonder: Every time a poppy field is destroyed, a poor person becomes poorer — and more likely to support the Taliban against the Western forces who wrecked his crops. Yet little changes: The amount of land dedicated to poppy production grew last year by more

"Every time a poppy field is destroyed, a poor person becomes poorer — and more likely to support the Taliban against the Western forces who wrecked his crops."

than 60 percent, as *The Washington Post* reported last month.

So central is the problem that Hamid Karzai, the Afghan president, has called opium a "cancer" worse than terrorism — and crop-spraying may make things worse. Not only will it cause environmental and health damage, it will fuel the local population like a military attack, as Western planes drop poisonous chemicals from the sky.

Yet by far the most depressing aspect of the Afghan poppy crisis is that it exists at all — because it doesn't have to. To see what I mean, look at the history of Turkey, where once upon a time the drug trade also threatened the country's political and economic stability. Just like Afghanistan, Turkey had a long tradition of poppy cultivation. Just like Afghanistan, Turkey worried that poppy eradication could "bring down the government." Just like Afghanistan, Turkey — this was the era of "Midnight Express" — was identified as the main source of the heroin sold in the West. Just like in Afghanistan, a ban was tried, and it failed.

As a result, in 1974 the Turks, with American and U.N. support, tried a different tactic. They began licensing poppy-cultivation for the purpose of producing morphine, codeine and other legal opiates. Legal factories were built to replace the illegal ones. Farmers registered to grow poppies, and they paid taxes. You wouldn't necessarily know this from the latest White House drug strategy report

"Sheehan, who became an antiwar activist after she lost a son in Iraq, is concerned about the human rights of some Muslims who want to destroy everything we stand for. And yet she ignores the pleas of people who are only seeking the freedom to protest that she obviously exploits."

where many have been shot by firing squads, tortured or forced to endure decades of degradation and atrocities, Guantanamo is a luxury hotel.

As if her indifference toward Cuban dissidents wasn't enough, she then tried to minimize the repression of the Castro regime.

"It seems that these (Ladies in White) women are able to protest on a weekly basis in Cuba," she wrote.

In fact, the Ladies in White, who march SILENTLY through the streets of Havana every Sunday, are the only dissidents who are able to stage any kind of protest in Cuba without getting at least a severe beating by Castro's goons.

If they even spoke during their protests, they would be punished. And if they were as radically vociferous as Sheehan, they would be vanished from society — forced to rot in prison — which is what we should do to Americans who travel abroad to become traitors.

To find out more about Miguel Perez, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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— which devotes several pages to Afghanistan but doesn't mention Turkey — but the U.S. government still supports the Turkish program, even requiring U.S. drug companies to purchase 80 percent of what the legal documents euphemistically refer to as "narcotic raw materials" from the two traditional producers, Turkey and India.

Why not add Afghanistan to this list? The only good arguments against doing so — as opposed to the silly, politically correct "just say no" arguments — are technical: that the same weak or nonexistent bureaucracy will be no better at licensing poppy fields than it has been at destroying them, or that some of the raw material will still fall into the hands of the drug cartels.

Yet some of these issues can be resolved, by building processing factories at the local level and working within local power structures.

And even if the program succeeds in stopping only half of the drug trade, a huge chunk of Afghanistan's economy will still emerge from the gray market; the power of the drug barons will be reduced; and, most important, Western money will have been visibly spent helping Afghan farmers survive, instead of destroying their livelihoods.

The director of the Senlis Council, a group that studies the drug problem in Afghanistan, told me he reckons that the best way to "ensure more Western soldiers get killed" is to expand poppy eradication.

Besides, things really could get worse. It isn't so hard to imagine, two or three years down the line, yet another emergency presidential speech, calling for a "surge" of troops to southern Afghanistan — where impoverished villagers, having turned against the West, are joining the Taliban in droves. Before we get there, maybe it's worth letting some legal poppies bloom.

Anne Applebaum is a Washington Post columnist.

Nissan takes revamped Sentra to the Altima

By JIM MATEJA
McClatchy-Tribune
CHICAGO — Been a while.

Too long, many say. The compact Nissan Sentra sedan finally got a major remake for the 2007 model year, the first dramatic size and styling upgrade since 2000.

Hmm. Weren't there analysts who insisted Carlos Ghosn, head of Nissan, should be brought in to run General Motors because GM was slow in bringing out fresh models. Go figure!

Sentra follows the industry pattern when redesigning a car: Make it bigger. So the delay gave Nissan time to boost size without sacrificing mileage.

For 2007 Sentra is compact plus, with a 5.9-inch longer wheelbase, 2.3-inch greater overall length and 3.2-inch added width.

One reason Sentra was able to grow is that Nissan has added a new entry-level model to take its place, the Versa.

Sentra comes in base, S and SL versions. We tested the S.

The new dimensions give it a longer, wider stance for more stability on the road. And now there's ample room to stretch arms, legs and shoulders and wiggle the head in the front seat. But can't say you enjoy all that much more room in back, where knee room is tight even if the driver is of average height. If the driver is on an NBA roster, take public transportation.

Expect to fit two adults in the back seat or three kids? Two adults and one kid is a stretch.

If turned on by high-tech goodies and you don't mind spending an additional \$900, you get an electronic key fob in place of the old-fashioned key.

Just turn the plastic lever in place of the ignition slot to start the car — providing you have the fob in the car to send its magic signal.

It's also best to keep the fob on you so you don't forget to take it with when you exit.

At least for the \$900 you get a variety of other goodies, such as Bluetooth hands-free phone system and an elastic CD holder that slips into a pocket behind the driver's sun visor.

Performance is adequate. The 1.8-liter, 126-horsepower 4-cylinder has been replaced by a 2-liter, 140-h.p. 4. Rather than a 5-speed, there's now a 6-speed manual. And rather than a 4-speed automatic, there's a continuously variable automatic.

With a CVT you have an infinite number of gear ratios based on your driving habits and the amount of pressure on the pedal.

In many cars we've driven with a CVT, the operation is silent. Other than not hearing or feeling the shift points, you can't tell it's different from a traditional automatic. Can't hear or feel the shift points in the Sentra CVT either, but you certainly can hear the CVT. It was loud enough to make itself known at all times.

Ride and handling are decent, though you can hear and feel the radials as they snap over tar marks in the road. Perhaps a few dollars spent on better insulation is all that's needed to quiet the CVT and suspension. It would be worth the investment.

Handling is typical econo-car, limber enough to slip easily into the



The compact Nissan Sentra sedan finally got a major remake for the 2007 model year, the first dramatic size and styling upgrade since 2000.

parking stall on the first try, but not as agile as a sports car into and out of corners without leaning.

Narrow-profile, 16-inch radials are an obvious reason Sentra is called an economy car and not a sportster.

Of course, the 29 mpg city and 36 mpg highway rating is another clue this model isn't meant to wear racing stripes. By the way, the fuel-economy rating is 28/34 with the 6-speed so don't opt for it simply to get better mileage.

Nissan will add a couple sportier models in March, the SE-R with a 177-h.p. version of the 2-liter, and the SE-R V with a 2.5-liter 4 that achieves 200 h.p. Of course, they won't be rated at 29/36, either.

While Nissan focuses on the larger size and new sheet metal that makes Sentra look more like a midsize Altima than a Versa, kudos to the folks in charge of amenities. It's obvious they read the letters from customers and made some changes, the nicest of which is Divide 'n Hide.

Chrysler gave us cupholders, Toyota juice-box holders, Jeep a cargo floor that rolls out for easy loading/unloading and Chevy a rear seat that lifts to expose a laptop storage space. Now it's Nissan's turn to surprise and delight with Divide 'n Hide, which is part of the \$900 keyless ignition package.

Open the trunk and you see it stands very high. The rear wall comes with

four convenient grocery-bag holders. But it doesn't go all that deep against the rear seats.

If you press a lever in the wall, the wall drops to expose a large compartment behind it to store stuff between the trunk and rear seat backs. Neat, and no doubt soon to be copied.

Another nice touch is that the rear seat-bottom cushions lift and flip forward against the front seat backs so you can drop the rear seat backs flat to create a massive cargo hold in the cabin. But the headrests have to be removed first.

Credit Nissan, too, with responding to women who are asking for places to store their purses other than on the passenger seat. Open the Sentra glove box and a small space in the lid will hold a map or pair of gloves. But lower the lid and find space that seems to reach all the way to the headlamps. Might hold a small

laptop, but for sure a purse. Neat.

As evidence of attention to detail, there's a small, covered compartment in the dash left of the steering wheel for coins or parking passes; a pair of cupholders in the center console that adjust to hold small to large cups; a cell phone holder behind the cupholders; and a deep, though not wide, stowage bin under the center armrest up front.

The 2007 Sentra 2.0 S starts at \$16,450 with the CVT, \$800 less if opting for the 6-speed manual.

Side air bags, side-curtain air bags, air conditioning with air filter and power windows and locks join AM/FM radio with CD player, tilt steering and rear-window defroster as standard.

Anti-lock brakes are part of a \$600 package that includes alloy wheels, but they also come separately for \$250. An option missing was power sunroof, which runs \$750.

If you take ABS and the sunroof but pass on satellite radio at \$300, splash-guards at \$130, fog lamps at \$270, spoiler at \$210 and those alloy wheels, you have a rather complete package for less than \$20,000.

Nissan won't say what its sales target is with Sentra. Demand had steadily increased — 94,500 sales in 2003; 106,000 in 2004 and 119,000 in 2005 — before a dip to 118,000 in 2006 as consumers became aware a remake was coming and chose not to load up on the older model.

2007 NISSAN SENTRA 2.0 S

Wheelbase: 105.7 inches
Length: 179.8 inches
Engine: 2-liter, 140-h.p. 4-cylinder
Transmission: Continuously variable automatic
Fuel economy: 29 mpg city/36 mpg highway
Price as tested: \$17,950 (ASTERISK)

The sticker
\$16,450 Base (add \$615 for freight)
\$900 Convenience package with Bluetooth hands-free phone system, leather-wrapped steering wheel, sun visor CD holder, Divide 'n Hide trunk, cargo net and hooks and keyless entry/ignition
\$600 16-inch alloy wheels and ABS

Pluses:
Redesigned with larger dimensions and richer Altima look.
Very good mileage.
Decent price.
Clever Divide 'n Hide trunk.
Massive glove box.

Minuses:
Stiff seats.
Sparse rear-seat knee room.
CVT noisy.

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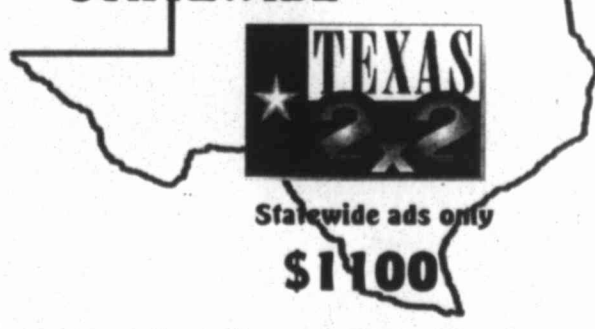
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► Texas briefs

Albuquerque man found with fetus in jar under car seat

EL PASO (AP) — A 33-year-old Albuquerque, N.M., man remained jailed Wednesday after U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents at one of the city's international bridges found a human fetus in a jar in the car he was driving. Fabricio Castillo Carrillo, a permanent U.S. resident from Mexico, was arrested by El Paso police after customs agents made the discovery Monday morning. Customs officials said Carrillo was entering the country from Ciudad Juarez when agents searched the car he was driving and found the fetus underneath a seat. Carrillo, who does not have a lawyer, is in custody at the El Paso County Jail on \$1,500 bail. He was arrested on a charge of abuse of a corpse. Police said an El Paso County Medical Examiner's official determined that the fetus was between 6 and 7 weeks old.

Convicted San Antonio cop killer put to death

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — As about two dozen San Antonio police officers stood outside holding blue glow sticks in memory of their fallen colleague Fabian Dominguez, his killer was executed. Before he died by injection Wednesday night, Johnathan Moore, 32, a self-described fascist who adopted the punk and goth lifestyle, apologized repeatedly to the officer's widow and expressed remorse for the slaying 12 years ago. He blamed the death on "fear, stupidity and immaturity." "It wasn't until I got locked up and saw the newspaper; I saw his face and smile and I realized I had killed a good man." Moore told

Jennifer Morgan, who stood quietly next to the death chamber window surrounded by comforting friends. Moore wished happiness to her and her twin daughters, who were less than a year old when their father was killed. Eight minutes later, Moore was pronounced dead, making him the second Texas prisoner executed this year and the second of five scheduled to die this month in the nation's busiest capital punishment state. Moore was condemned for gunning down Dominguez, 29, who interrupted Moore and two companions during the burglary of a house in the officer's neighborhood in January 1995. Dominguez was returning home from his overnight shift when he spotted a suspicious car in the driveway of the house and stopped to investigate. When he confronted Moore, seated in the passenger side of the car, Moore opened fire with a .25-caliber handgun. Moore also retrieved the officer's service revolver and shot him three more times in the head.

Convicted Border Patrol agents report to federal prison

EL PASO (AP) — A pair of former U.S. Border Patrol agents convicted of shooting a Mexican drug smuggler and trying to cover it up started serving their federal prison sentences Wednesday, officials said. Jose Alonso Compean and Ignacio Ramos were convicted last year for the shooting of Osvaldo Aldrete Davila. A federal judge sentenced Ramos to 11 years and one day, and Compean was given 12 years in prison. A spokesman for the U.S. Marshals Service in El Paso said the men, both married fathers, surrendered just before Judge Kathleen Cardone's deadline of 2

p.m. Wednesday. Cardone denied a request to let them remain free pending appeals.

It is unclear where the men will serve time, but it won't be in the El Paso area, according to the Marshals Service.

Attorneys for the agents didn't immediately return calls seeking comment.

Hours before the deadline, U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton issued a five-page document outlining what he called the case's "myth vs. reality."

The document covered everything from claims that the former agents "were just doing their jobs" to reports that the shooting was at night when it actually happened about 1 p.m. on Feb. 17, 2005.

Sutton devoted three paragraphs to details about Border Patrol training and testimony from another agent claiming there was no threat the day the men fired 15 shots at Aldrete, who was hit one time in the buttocks.

Sutton told The Associated Press that the document was released Wednesday to provide "the other side" of the case, which he said has been lacking in some news coverage of the agents' trial and subsequent sentencing.

"The unfortunate thing about this case is that there was a lot of misinformation put out from early on," Sutton said. He opted not to respond in the midst of the trial, he said, to avoid prosecuting the case in the press.

Sutton has been criticized by supporters of the former agents, who have claimed that they were defending themselves when they shot Aldrete, who they said was armed. Aldrete, who retreated to Mexico after the shooting, has admitted he was trying to smuggle marijuana while in the country illegally.

Texas and Oklahoma shiver in grip of latest winter storm

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A bone-rattling blast of sleet and snow kept Texas and Oklahoma residents shivering in its icy grip, while a blizzard north of Los Angeles caused big-rigs to jackknife. At least 65 storm-related deaths have been reported in nine states since Friday, including 10 in Texas and 23 in Oklahoma. The Alamo was closed Wednesday, as was a 360-mile stretch of Interstate 10 in Texas from Fort Stockton to San Antonio.

Much of the brunt of the latest Southern storms was to move east Thursday — but the reprieve may be short-lived. Another barrage was to bring up to 8 inches of snow to the Plains by late Friday.

Students who enjoyed extended weekends after Martin Luther King Jr. Day were to head back to class Thursday in San Antonio, Houston and Austin as transportation officials reopened some roadways that were closed because of icy conditions.

Snow accumulations were light by some other regions' standards — the Dallas area topped out at 3 inches — but hundreds of airline flights were canceled and tens of thousands of electricity customers lost power.

A Houston city employee was killed Wednesday when he was hit by a car and knocked over a guardrail as he and a co-worker tried to help an accident victim, said Frank Michel, spokesman for Houston Mayor Bill White. "Very tragic," Michel said. "He was attempting to be a good Samaritan and lost his life."

No place in Oklahoma has been harder hit than McAlester, where many stores were operating on generator power. At the E-Z Mart, store manager

Becky Clayton was selling out of bags of ice, soda, water and potato chips. With most restaurants and cafes closed down here, customers also made a run on her deli.

"I was ready for summer before it ever got cold," Clayton said.

Ice coated power lines throughout McAlester, and nearly 1,000 linemen, tree-trimmers and support workers from Kansas, Louisiana, Texas and Tennessee were there Wednesday to repair the damage.

Many schools across Oklahoma planned to remain closed Thursday, some through the rest of the week, prompting concerns about how that instruction time will have to be made up.

In Tulsa, Okla., the city's salt supply was running critically low, as 50 spreaders worked to clear streets near schools and hilly areas. "Everyone's in the same boat," said Dan Crossland, the city's street maintenance supervisor. "We're scrounging for resources."

The number of customers without electric power in Oklahoma dropped by about 18,000

on Wednesday, but 74,000 thousand others still were waiting for the lights to come on again.

More than 250 flights were canceled from Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport on Wednesday. Austin-Bergstrom International Airport canceled 102 flights, while San Antonio International Airport canceled 23 morning flights and Houston's two major airports experienced delays.

In addition to the fatalities in Oklahoma and Texas, the wave of storms was blamed for 11 deaths in Missouri, eight in Iowa, four each in New York and Michigan, three in Arkansas and one each in Maine and Indiana.

Elsewhere in the country, frigid conditions tested even those used to snow and ice. The entire state of Maine was no warmer than the single digits, and several communities saw dangerous wind chills. It was minus-16 degrees in Caribou.

In New Hampshire, only about 825 of the more than 50,000 homes and businesses that lost power in the ice storm remained without power Thursday,

said Martin Murray, a Public Service Company of New Hampshire spokesman.

Freezing rain and some snow showers were reported across South Carolina early Thursday morning as some school districts delayed the start of classes.

In California, a four-night cold snap wiped out as much as three-quarters of the state's citrus and harmed virtually every other winter crop.

su | do | ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9 with no repeats. That means no number is repeated in any row, column or box. Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

2	7							
			3	4		9		
		9				6	8	
4				9		2		
9	8		4	7		5	3	
	6		8					7
1	3					5		
	9		6	5				
							8	9

Contract Bridge

Creation of an Illusion

West dealer.
North-South vulnerable.
NORTH
♠ 7 4
♥ A 10 8 2
♦ A Q J
♣ J 8 5 3
WEST
♠ 5 3
♥ 6 4 3
♦ 9 7 6 2
♣ 10 9 7 2
EAST
♠ A K J 10 9 8 6
♥ K
♦ 8 5 3
♣ K 4
SOUTH
♠ Q 2
♥ Q J 9 7 5
♦ K 10 4
♣ A Q 6

The bidding:
West North East South
Pass 1♦ 4♦ 5♥
Opening lead — five of spades.

was upon taking the sure profit he could collect by doubling four spades. Had we been in his boots, we would have doubled.

West led a spade, East cashing the A-K before shifting to a diamond. Declarer won with the king and led the queen of hearts, West following low. South was sufficiently inspired to play the ace, catching East's king. Had we been in his boots, we would have finessed and gone down one.

After drawing two more rounds of trumps, declarer led a low club from dummy and finessed the queen, on which West dropped the nine. South fell for the falsecard, deciding that West had started with the 10-9 alone.

Accordingly, he crossed to dummy with a diamond and led the jack of clubs, hoping to pin East's king and West's ten on the same trick and thus make dummy's eight high. This was a fatal decision, and South went down one, eventually losing a club to the ten. Had he led the five instead of the jack, he would have made the contract.

South's play of the jack was clearly wrong. If he had first cashed his remaining diamond, he would have learned that East had started with three diamonds, a heart, seven spades (for his bid) and, hence, exactly two clubs. A low club lead from dummy was therefore bound to catch the king.

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.
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IN BRIEF

Forsan Buffaloes fall to Roscoe

The Forsan (13-5, 0-1 in district) boys lost to Roscoe 51-46 to Roscoe in the district opener.

Leading scorer for the Buffaloes were Adam Bailey with 19 points and 12 rebounds and Jeremy Robbins with 13 points and 13 rebounds.

The game had several lead changes throughout.

Forsan went cold in the second half going four minutes without scoring a bucket in the third quarter and shooting only 7-of-15 from the free throw line.

Cameron Parker and Seth Johnson each had one 3-pointer for the visiting Buffaloes.

This was the first district game of the season and the Buffaloes coaching staff said they are expecting every game in the district to be this tough.

Forsan will host Rotan this Friday night, tip-off is scheduled for 8 p.m.

Colorado City nips Coahoma Bulldogs

Coahoma dropped a 1 point game to Colorado City earlier this week, 49-48.

Leading the Bulldogs in scoring was Jason Gonzales with 14 points. Colter Morgan and Blaine Kerby each added 11 and Stephen Ewing contributed with 10 points.

The Bulldogs are now 15-8 for the season and 4-2 in district competition.

Water Valley shocks Garden City 'Kats

Garden City (8-5, 2-1 district) dropped its first district game of the season this week as the Bearkats lost 38-37 to Water Valley.

Playing on the road, the Bearkats rallied in the fourth quarter to come back from an 11 deficit, but they could not pull off the win on the road.

Taylor Niehues led the 'Kats with 12 points.

Grady Wildcats topple Sands

Grady continues to blow through its basketball schedule as they defeated Sands 59-38 this week.

The Wildcats (19-2, 4-0 in district) used a 19-10 run in the third quarter to ice the game and keep their undefeated district record in tact.

Tommylee Rivas led the Wildcats by hanging 15 points on Sands and Justin Tubb dropped 12 more.

Texas Tech women defeat Missouri

Chesley Dabbs scored 20 points to lead Texas Tech to a 63-55 victory over Missouri on Wednesday night.

Dabbs hit her first six shots from the field and finished 7-of-12 as she tied her season high. Alesha Robertson added 11 points and Patrice Edwards and Jordan Murphree had 10 each for the Lady Raiders (11-7, 2-3 Big 12). Missouri kept it close by hitting 9-pointers. The Tigers hit 9-of-19 from the 3-point arc.

Again, Manning 1 win from a Super Bowl

By EDDIE PELLIS

AP National Writer

INDIANAPOLIS — Jim Kelly or Troy Aikman. Fran Tarkenton or Terry Bradshaw. Dan Fouts or Joe Montana. Dan Marino or John Elway.

A few years from now, Peyton Manning will be forever placed into one category of the NFL's greatest quarterbacks — those who have won Super Bowls and those who haven't. He's got to get there first, though, and his next chance is coming soon.

Will the Colts-Patriots game Sunday amount to a defining moment, an all-or-nothing opportunity for Manning, who is currently The Greatest Quarterback to Never Make a Super Bowl? If he wins, maybe history will see it that way. If he doesn't — well, certainly he'll have other chances. Won't he?

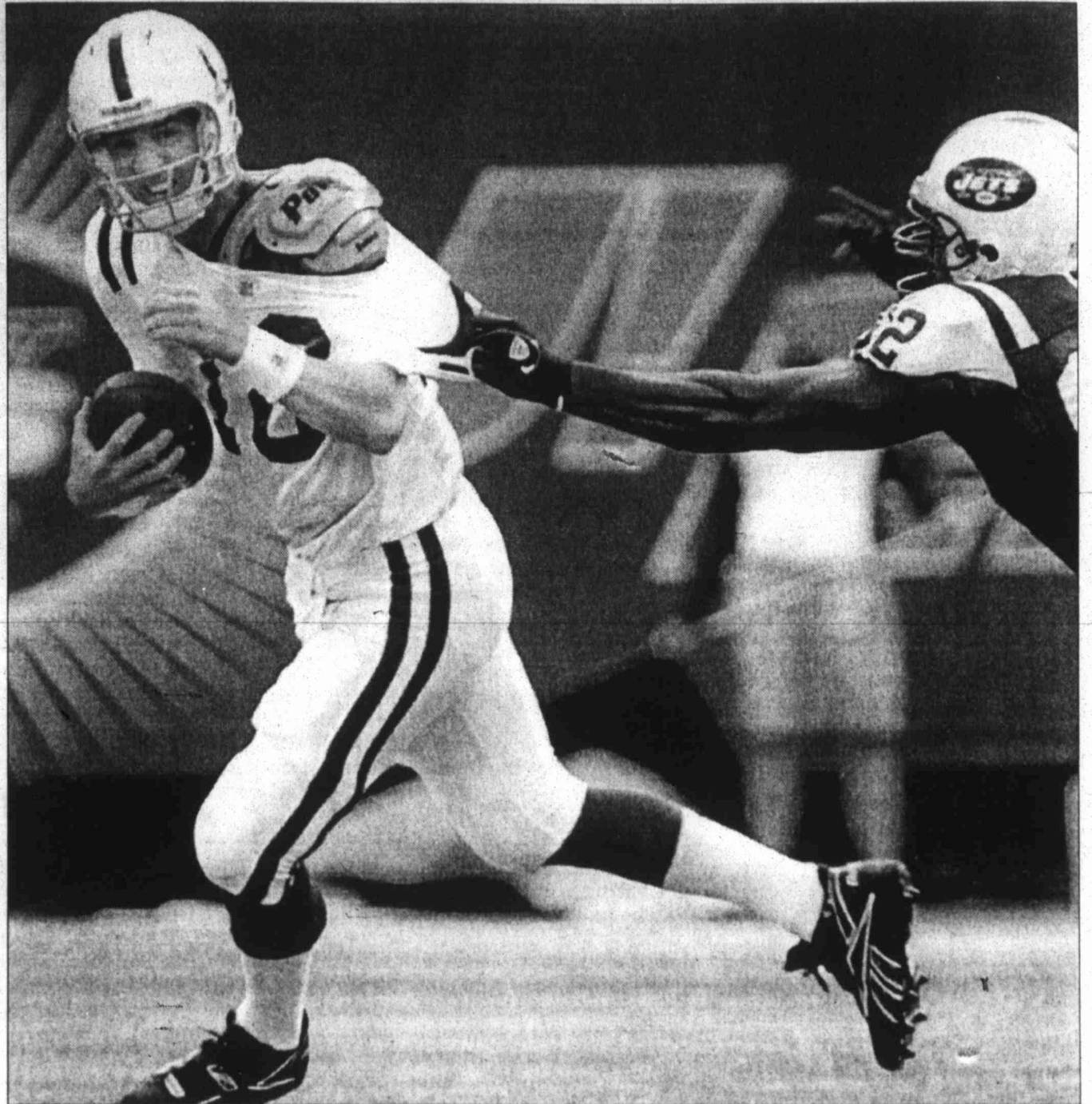
His coach and teammates hate that it always seems to come to this.

"It's totally unfair to him," tight end Dallas Clark said. "He has his job to do and he can't do anything else. It's sad, but that's why you guys do what you do. He handles it great. He's a professional."

Manning was not available for interviews Wednesday. The Colts chose to delay his availability until Friday, when he'll undoubtedly offer the candid, introspective, realistic thoughts on the subject that he has repeated many times over his nine years in the NFL.

It's a career filled with records, Pro Bowls, MVP awards. But he is 5-6 in the playoffs with an 0-2 record against New England's Tom Brady, the less-spectacular quarterback who has always been best when the stakes have been the highest. Brady is 12-1 in the playoffs with three Super Bowl rings.

Brady entered the league as a backup, a sixth-round draft pick in 2000 — the kind of player who



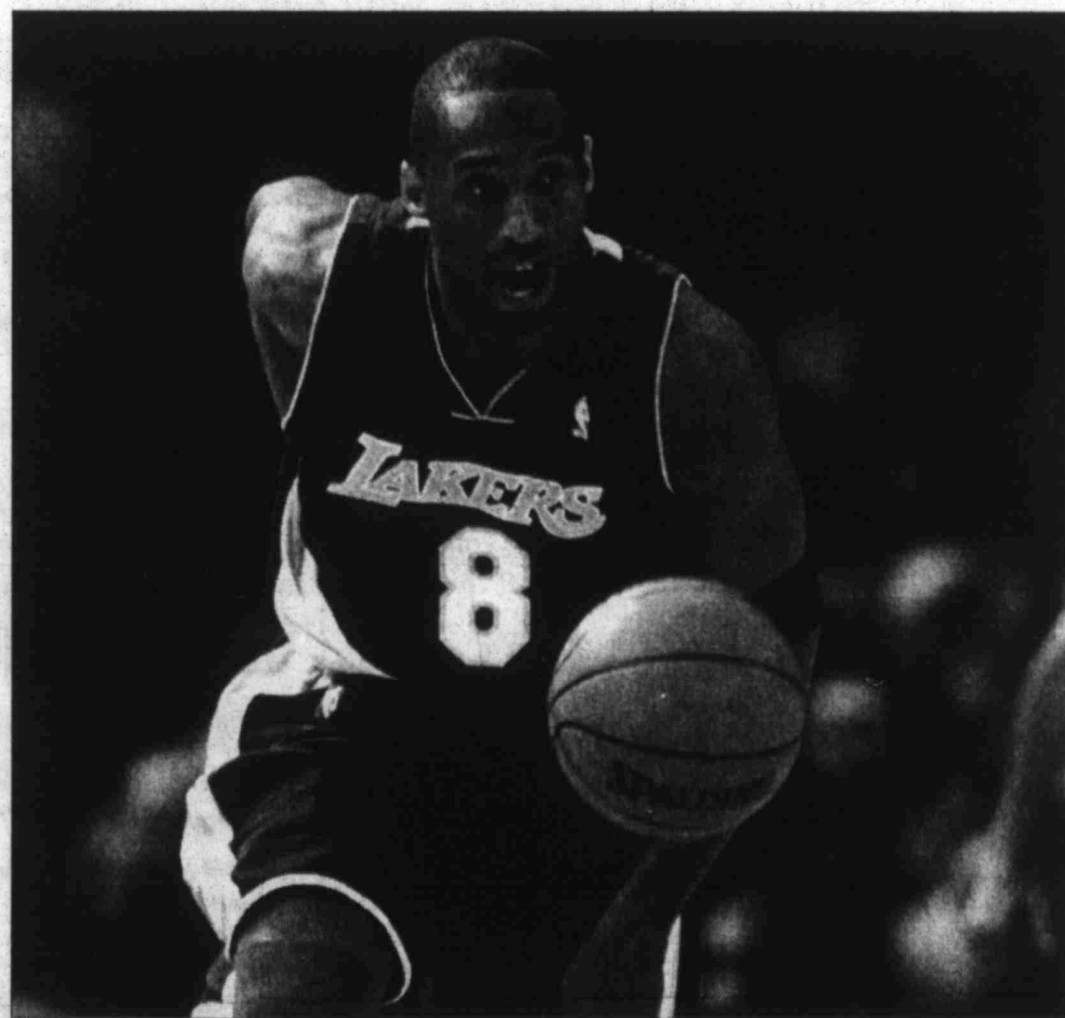
New York Jets' Shaun Ellis gets a handful of Indianapolis Colts' Peyton Manning at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J., Sunday, Oct. 1, 2006. Manning will once again lead the Colts into the AFC championship game this Sunday.

comes with no hype or expectations. Manning was the first pick of the 1998 draft — the kind of player who has "legacy" attached to his name before he takes a snap.

"I don't know that he'll be judged against Tom Brady," Colts coach Tony Dungy said. "But every quarterback will be judged against Joe Montana and Terry Bradshaw and Bart Starr

and guys who have won Super Bowls. That's the way it is. I think we have appreciation now for Dan Marino and Boomer

See QB, Page 2B



Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant heads down court during the Lakers 130-97 win over the New York Knicks earlier in the NBA season. Bryant led the Lakers with 34 points as they beat the San Antonio Spurs 100-96 Wednesday night.

Bryant leads Lakers past San Antonio Spurs

By ELIZABETH WHITE

Associated Press Writer

SAN ANTONIO — Kobe Bryant scored 34 points, including the go-ahead basket with 1:24 left, and the Los Angeles Lakers withstood a late rally to beat the San Antonio Spurs 100-96 Wednesday night.

Vladimir Radmanovic added 13 points and Maurice Evans had 11 as the Lakers took the opener of a tough back-to-back in Texas. They visit Dallas, which has the NBA's best record, on Thursday night.

Tim Duncan led the Spurs with 26 points and nine rebounds. Tony Parker contributed 25 points, Manu Ginobili had 16 and Brent Barry added 13.

The Spurs opened the fourth down 73-71 and with just four players on the court, giving them a technical foul and the Lakers another point.

Los Angeles increased its lead to double digits with a 10-2 run, capped by Brian Cook's dunk.

Ginobili brought the Spurs within one following a steal and fast-break dunk, followed by two made foul shots.

Andrew Bynum, who had six points, fouled out with 3:05 left, then Ronny Turiaf sent Ginobili to the line again. He sank both with 2:54 on the clock to give San Antonio a 91-90 lead, its first since the close of the third.

Bryant's basket made it 94-92, and the Lakers extended the lead to 96-93 with less than a minute to play. Ginobili missed a wide-open 3-point shot with a chance to tie.

Barry drained a 3 to bring San Antonio within two points with 5.3 seconds left and the Spurs fouled Bryant, who hit both to put the Lakers up

See SPURS, Page 2B

NASCAR'S Benny Parsons dies at 65

By JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

— Greg Biffle believes that without help from Benny Parsons, he never would have reached NASCAR's highest level. Michael Waltrip credits Parsons for giving him the courage to propose to his wife in Victory Lane.

Parsons was remembered Tuesday in every corner of the NASCAR garage for his generous nature, lovable personality and overwhelming popularity. The 1973 NASCAR champion died in Charlotte, N.C., of complications from lung-cancer treatment. He was 65.

"Every time I think about how lucky I am to have the job and the life I have, I think of 'BP' because he's the reason I ever got this opportunity," said Biffle, whom Parsons discovered in the mid-1990s and then convinced car owner Jack Roush to hire him sight unseen.

Diagnosed with lung cancer in July, Parsons attacked his battle with the same aggressiveness that helped him rise up from a childhood of poverty in the North Carolina foothills to a job as a Detroit cabbie, and eventually, becoming a NASCAR champion.

Parsons carried an oxygen tank around the race track, but the former smoker couldn't win this fight. Chemotherapy and radiation treatments cost Parsons the use of his left lung, and he was hospitalized Dec. 26 when doctors found a blood clot in his right lung. He was placed in an induced-coma and never recovered.

"Benny Parsons was a true champion both on the race track and in life," NASCAR chairman Brian France said. "Benny loved our sport and the people

See PARSON, Page 2B



Benny Parson was the 1973 Winston Sup. Champion.

Phoenix Suns are two-stepping their way through Texas

By CHRIS DUNCAN

AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON — The Phoenix Suns figured they'd have an easy time with the Houston Rockets, especially once they learned Tracy McGrady was out with a back injury.

But the Suns struggled most of the game and didn't secure their 11th straight victory until the final minutes.

Steve Nash had 21 points and 14 assists as Phoenix overcame an early 15-point deficit to beat the Rockets 100-91 Wednesday night.

"We weren't here mentally for the first quarter and a half and we didn't play great after that," said Nash, who also had six turnovers. "But we played good enough."

Amare Stoudemire scored 22 points and grabbed 11 rebounds for the Suns, who are 29-3 in their last 32 games. They became the second team in franchise history to have two winning streaks of more than 10 games in one season. The 1992-93 Suns had winning streaks of 14 and 11 games on their way to the NBA finals.

Rafer Alston matched a career high with 29 points to lead the depleted Rockets. McGrady, a six-time All-Star, sat out with stiffness in his lower back.

Injuries to McGrady and Yao Ming ruined last season, but the Rockets think they're better equipped to play without their two All-Stars this year.

"People's roles change," Alston said. "You might have a guy we need to set picks and rebound, but now we might need that guy to pump in 10 or 15 points.



MCT photo/Harry E. Walker
Houston Rockets Head Coach Jeff Van Gundy is guiding the Rockets without All-Stars Yao Ming and Tracy McGrady.

All of a sudden, you have to readjust your mind-set. You have to be up to the challenge."

Shane Battier and Luther Head added 16 points apiece for Houston, which dropped to 1-9 with both McGrady and Yao out of the lineup. Yao is out until at least the end of February with a broken right leg.

The Suns, the league's highest-scoring team, committed 18 turnovers and struggled to find their usual offensive rhythm against the Rockets, the league's top defensive team. Phoenix missed 14 of its first 21 shots and trailed 28-19 after the opening quarter.

"It was a combination of us not being ready and Houston playing very well," Suns guard Raja Bell said. "It was a bad combination for us."

The Suns finally took control with a 17-2 spurt in the third. The Rockets closed to 93-89 on Alston's drive with 3:55 left, but Leandro Barbosa hit a 3-pointer a minute later and Nash finished off the Rockets with a fadeaway in the lane with 1:24 to go.

The Suns were still disgusted with their performance.

"Houston played well and with a lot of energy," Bell said. "They took it right to us, even though they were undermanned. They gave us all we could handle."

The Suns missed 10 straight shots before Barbosa's 3 with 9:30 left in the first half. Head answered with his third 3-pointer to put Houston up 31-23.

Nash returned after a rest, but the Suns continued to miss shots and cough up careless turnovers.

Little-used reserve guard John Lucas hit two mid-range jumpers and a 3-pointer from the corner during an 11-2 Rockets run that extended their lead to 42-27 midway through the second quarter.

Barbosa then hit three 3-pointers in two minutes during a 16-0 Phoenix run. Stoudemire scored from the baseline to

give the Suns a 43-42 lead.

"They played at a high level and got our attention early," Phoenix coach Mike D'Antoni said.

Battier and Head hit 3-pointers in the closing minute of the half to put the Rockets up 51-48 at the break.

The Rockets led 65-60 after Alston scored on a drive, but the Suns finally hit their stride after that, sparking the 17-2 spurt. Shawn Marion blocked a shot by Battier and heaved a long pass to Barbosa for a layup, then hit a 3-pointer from the corner give the Suns a 70-65 lead.

Marion had 14 points and 14 rebounds.

Alston hit a jumper from the top of the key, but a basket by Marion and a 3-pointer by James Jones stretched the Suns' lead to 10.

Bonzi Wells, who sat out the previous 10 games with a back injury, hit a mid-range jumper and scored on a drive to help Houston cut the deficit to 79-75 by the end of the third quarter.

Bell made a pair of 3-pointers early in the fourth quarter to push the Suns' lead to six. Despite the absence of McGrady and Yao, the Rockets stayed close to the end.

Alston and Nash traded 3-pointers before Alston scored on a baseline drive to keep the Rockets within four. But Barbosa's 3-pointer with 2:39 remaining extended the lead to 96-89, sending the Rockets on their way to their sixth straight loss to the Suns in Houston.

"We just have to be able to concentrate longer, but the level of passion is what kept us in the game," Houston coach Jeff Van Gundy said.

QB

Continued from 1B

Esiason and Dan Fouts and guys who haven't won it. But at the time, we talk about how many Super Bowls you've won. As time goes by, history is a little easier on you."

Manning, of course, is hoping he won't need friendly historians to cement his legacy. A Super Bowl ring is the easiest — maybe the only — way to avoid that.

Funny thing is that he finds himself on the cusp of the Super Bowl again — Manning's second appearance in the AFC championship game — after a most un-Peyton-like run through the playoffs.

He has 438 yards in two games, fewer than he recorded in his second playoff blowout over the Broncos in 2004. He has one touchdown pass and

five interceptions. His quarterback rating is 58.3.

Yet just as he has struggled, the defense that has often derailed Indy's Super Bowl hopes has also been uncharacteristic — allowing only a single touchdown and an average of 63.5 rushing yards in two games.

"The NFL has a funny way of highlighting the quarterbacks, like it's Peyton versus Brady," defensive end Dwight Freeney said. "That's all right for the media, the fans and the game, but there's a lot more going on out there than just two quarterbacks going at it."

Still, as a defensive end — even a great defensive end — Freeney will never be held under the spotlight the way a quarterback would.

Especially a quarterback like Manning.

Nobody can stand at the line of scrimmage and dissect a defense better, and nobody has thrown

for more yards over the last nine seasons than Manning, who is essentially on pace to own every significant quarterback record in league history if he plays five or six more years without injury.

Come playoff time, he hasn't been the same.

Rushed and beaten up, he threw four interceptions in the 2003 AFC title game at New England. The next year, in the divisional playoffs, he suffered a similar fate — no touchdowns, one interception in a 20-3 loss — a terrible close to a season in which he threw an NFL-record 49 touchdowns. Last season, the Colts started 13-0 and appeared destined for the Super Bowl. Manning was good in the playoffs — 290 yards and one touchdown — but not good enough to win.

"It was as low as it can be," Manning said during training camp. "You work

so hard to get home-field these days. It's so competitive. It's a great lesson."

The Colts are playing the Patriots, which gives Manning a storybook chance against the team that has bedeviled him most.

Some might say the pressure mounts as the years pass and Manning inches closer to the end of his career than he is to the beginning.

Dungy insists that nobody in this locker room sees it that way.

"I think it's the same thing at stake for him as there is for all of us," Dungy said. "We've got a group that hasn't been to the Super Bowl. They'd like to get there. We're one step away. Everyone in the locker room wants to do that and Peyton's no different. It's not make-or-break for them and it's not make-or-break for him. We'd just like to get there and do it."

SPURS

Continued from 1B

100-96 with 4.9 remaining on the game clock.

A last-second 3-point attempt by the Spurs' Robert Horry, who had made a career of making such shots with the Houston Rockets, Los Angeles Lakers and Spurs, missed the shot.

The Spurs took a 25-19 lead into the second, but the Lakers quickly came back, tying the Spurs with 8:34 left in the period.

The teams were tied four times during the quarter, with the Spurs gaining a 53-49 lead at halftime.

Bryant had 20 points in the first half. Duncan and Parker had 15 apiece for the Spurs.

The Spurs stayed a basket or two ahead of the Lakers for the first four minutes of the third quar-

ter, until a dunk from Bynum with 7:56 left tied the score at 57.

Less than a minute later, Bryant drove past Bruce Bowen to the basket for a huge dunk over Duncan.

The Spurs took a timeout and took the lead off a basket from Parker, but Bryant dunked again, this time with 5:51 left in the quarter to put the Lakers up 61-60.

The Spurs held Bryant to just six points in the quarter, but two 3-pointers in a row at the close of the period from Radmanovic put Los Angeles up 73-71 going into the final 12 minutes.

From that point on the Lakers controlled the game and managed to steal a road win before heading to face the Mavericks, the hottest team in the NBA, in Dallas.

PARSON

Continued from 1B

that make it up and those people loved him. He will be remembered as being a great ambassador for the sport."

The 1973 NASCAR champion, Parsons was a member of NASCAR's 50 greatest drivers. He won 21 races, including the 1975 Daytona 500, and 20 poles. He was the first Cup competitor to qualify for a race faster than 200 mph, going 200.176 mph at the 1982 Winston 500 at Talladega (Ala.) Superspeedway.

He retired from racing in 1988 and entered broadcasting, where his folksy style and straight-shooting manner endeared him to fans and drivers. Sometimes referred to as "The Professor" because of his relaxed ability to deliver information, Parsons spent the past six years as an NBC and TNT commentator and continued to call races from the booth during his treatment.

"When you talked to him he brought out the human element," said Waltrip, who tested this week at Daytona International Speedway in a car that had "We Love You, BP" painted on the side.

"The cars are nuts and bolts, but he talked

through that. He was able to deliver to the people. He just tried to be passionate about what he believed and he did a great job of explaining what people were seeing."

Known throughout NASCAR as "BP," Parsons hosted a weekly radio program and kept fans updated on his condition in a blog on his Web site.

"As my radiation oncologist told me today, John Wayne lived and had a great career with one lung. There is no reason why I can't do the same."

Parsons said in a Dec. 18 entry after learning of the damage to his left lung.

"If given a choice between cancer or losing a lung I would say that I got the right end of the deal," he added.

That feisty spirit was one of Parsons' trademarks, carrying him from a poor childhood in Wilkes County, N.C., to a job driving taxis and then to the top of NASCAR. He remained popular with fans and drivers long after his retirement.

"Berny Parsons was the kindest, sweetest, most considerate person I have ever known," said Darrell Waltrip, a three-time NASCAR champion. "He was almost too nice to be a race car driver, and I say that as a compliment. In my 30 odd years of racing Benny Parsons, I

never knew of anyone being mad at Benny."

Parsons' death comes eight days after former Truck Series champion Bobby Hamilton lost his battle with cancer.

Born July 12, 1941, at a rural home that lacked running water and electricity, Parsons was raised by his great grandmother near the community called Parsonsville. He eventually moved to Detroit, where he worked at a gas station and a cab company — owned by his father.

After winning ARCA titles in 1968-69, he returned to North Carolina in Ellerbe to become a full-time racer, often listing "taxicab driver" as his occupation on entry forms.

Parsons made 526 starts from 1964 until his 1988 retirement. He ended his career with 283 top-10 finishes, led at least one lap in 192 races and finished no lower than fifth in the points from 1972 to 1980 while earning more than \$4 million.

His 1973 championship season was built on endurance and consistency: He won only one of the 28 races that season while second-place finisher Cale Yarborough won four times and David Pearson won 11. But Parsons finished the most miles that year to claim the crown.

He was inducted into

the International Motorsports Hall of Fame in 1994, and the National Motorsports Press Association's Stock Car Racing Hall of Fame in 1995.

Parsons began broadcasting in the 1980s as a pit reporter for ESPN and TBS, when he was still racing a partial schedule. He moved into the booth for good in 1989 for ESPN and won a Cable ACE Award for best sports analyst in his first season. He also created the popular ESPN segment "Buffet

Benny" on food available at race tracks.

Survivors include wife Terri, sons Kevin and Keith, a former sports

writer for The Associated Press, and two granddaughters. Parsons was preceded in death by his first wife, Connie.

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The moon is dark — her face is hidden while she decides who else she'd like to be. She's like an actress starting a new scene. And you can do the same now — go behind the black curtain of your mind and look at the personas available to you. Or maybe you'll choose not to wear a costume at all and just be your glorious self, only different.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Everyone has setbacks, but you bounce back incredibly quickly from yours. You're more willing to try something new because you know you'll recover from any stumbles that unfamiliarity may cause.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You're multigenerational. There's a 6-year-old inside of you, and also a 3-year-old, and a 72-year-old. And all these characters are battling it out today over what it really means to act your age.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're the hardest person to lead now, especially if you're the one trying to lead you. It's not that you're stubborn. You're just interested in so many different things that focus



HOLIDAY
MATHIS

Tomorrow's Horoscope

is the issue. Be firm. **CANCER** (June 22-July 22). You've used procrastination to cope with some areas of your life, but this is no longer what you want to do. You're ready to create movement in that area that has been dormant.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). If your work isn't perfect, it only shows that you're human. Embrace where you are. It's fantastic that you haven't figured out how to be right all the time. Nobody likes a know-it-all!

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Don't be afraid to show off. Your flashy style makes you a shoo-in for a cool job. Tonight, it's extremely lucky to contact a sibling, or the one who's like a sibling to you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You win a heart by outshining the competition, not by being jealous. Libra and Scorpio people warm up to you immediately. Use your influence carefully to avoid a future emotional mess.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Matters of the heart play out at a slow, poetic pace. Gentle steps in the right direction eventually get a relationship to the Promised Land. When everyone is talking tonight, be the strong silent one.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The stars highlight a goal that you've yet to make even one step toward. But what you may not

realize is that having a goal is the first step. Reward yourself for daring to dream.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Though part of your charm is that you keep pushing yourself to be better, it's also important to be satisfied with what you accomplish. Acknowledge your recent win with a personal ritual.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The stars suggest you may currently feel deprived — like you're always either working or feeling guilty about not working. Remember, you're the one in charge of making sure there's enough fun in your schedule.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You may only have two choices. Still, the right one is neither obvious nor easy. It's OK to be indecisive. If you're not sure, do nothing. Otherwise, you're just creating problems for yourself.

FORECAST 2007 — **SAGITTARIUS:** You have so much to be grateful for in life that it almost feels greedy to want more. But it's not. This is your year to consider the universe a lush and abundant place. Dare to ask for what you want without worrying whether you're worthy. You become worthy as you make yourself ready to receive. **LOVE:** You are well-matched in relationships, especially

with the new ones that come in February. Be sure not to take core relationships for granted when you get very busy in May. Make the effort to keep special people emotionally close. **CAREER:** There's a delightful twist in April that colors your work the rest of the year. If you can avoid signing contracts in June, you won't be sorry. **ADVENTURE:** The best things happen when you go where the climate is a big change from what you're used to. You love your life more because you taste other people's lives for a week in August. **FINANCE:** New streams of income have to do with taking the initiative to get educated and aligning yourself with those who seem to be having an easier time making money. The first week of April is pivotal.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: An American classic just honored by the esteemed Kennedy Center, Dolly Parton is a Capricorn who has truly reached the pinnacle of success. A songwriter with more than 600 songs-to-her credit and an inimitable performer with more than 25 No. 1 hits, Parton is the personification of the American dream — a small-town country girl who let her talent and her heart lead the way.

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Annie's Mailbox : Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: I am a 12-year-old girl with a big problem. I am African-American and proud of it, but at school I get called foul names. I've asked teachers to talk to the students, but they just say they will get to it soon.

I'm getting scared to go to school because some of the kids have threatened to attack me. I don't know how much more of this I can handle. I have even considered dropping out, but I want my education. I want to be the first in my family to go to college. Is there any way to make the pain stop hurting me? I hate the feeling of being hated. — Racism Kills the Soul

Dear Racism: Are you the only person of color in your school? No one should be threatening you — for any reason whatsoever. Talk to your parents and have them meet with the school principal about the bullying. If steps aren't taken to stop it immediately, your parents should seek legal advice.

Dear Annie: I'm a 59-year-old female baby boomer who is now approaching her elder years. I'm increasingly frustrated these days when I can't tell the shampoo bottle from the conditioner in the steamy shower, or I have to grapple with impossible push-down-and-twist bottle tops. More than once, I've nearly brushed my teeth with a look-alike tube of hair gel. I've ruined numerous blouses ripping out scratchy labels that I couldn't tolerate for another minute.

Annie, please get a message to product designers: If a multitudinous mega-generation is reaching advanced age and needs clothing in softer fabrics, and products color-coded, marked in LARGE letters with easy-to-open tops, there's got to be a money-making opportunity here



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

that's win-win.

Who would like to be the first to package toothpaste embossed with a large "T" so we can find it in a steam-filled bathroom without glasses? How about baby boom mouthwash in flip-top bottles? I'd love to see a summer sandal marketed as "Svelte, with ample toenail coverage and a low, sexy heel." Millions are about to greet the 60s in a whole new way. We could get by with a little help from friends who develop a few creative, intelligent product designs. — California Dreamer

Dear Dreamer: Wouldn't it be nice not to "Twist and Shout" when opening bottle caps? There must be thousands of older seniors thinking, "We've been asking for these same things for years." Now that boomers are hitting their 60s, designers who can come up with sharp-looking, trendy products tailored to the newly squinty-eyed, aging hippie generation will make a bundle.

Dear Annie: Here's a man's perspective to "Married to a Porn Addict," whose husband watched online porn and had private nude chats with women.

I've been happily married for over 35 years and can relate all too well. First, I don't condone what the husband has

chosen to do to relieve his sexual tension. Still, men are usually far more attuned to having sex than women. We think about it more often. We are visually excited by women.

For years, I experienced sexual frustration. My wife was more concerned with the children and housecleaning than she was with our relationship. I finally decided I had two options: Find other women or deny my feelings. For the sake of our marriage, I chose the second option.

After 30 years, I pretty much killed my sexual desire, but my wife discovered she was clinically depressed and started taking an antidepressant. She now has the kind of sex drive I always wished she had. Unfortunately, I don't have ANY.

For some men, online porn is a way to avoid cheating. This isn't just the husband's problem. The wife also has issues, and they both need professional help if their marriage is to survive. — Been There

Dear Been There: It seems a shame that you and your wife have spent 30 years like ships passing in the night. Sex drives can be rekindled. See your doctor.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, P.O. Box 118190, Chicago, IL 60611. To find out more about Annie's Mailbox, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com. © 2007 CREATORS SYNDICATE, INC.

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ANSWERS

2	7	1	9	8	6	4	3	5
6	5	8	3	2	4	7	9	1
3	4	9	7	5	1	2	6	8
4	1	7	5	3	9	8	2	6
9	8	2	4	6	7	1	5	3
5	6	3	8	1	2	9	4	7
1	3	6	2	9	8	5	7	4
6	9	4	6	7	5	3	1	2
7	2	5	1	4	3	6	8	9

THURSDAY

Table with 28 columns representing different TV channels and their respective programming for Thursday, including shows like 'The Simpsons', 'Friends', and 'ER'.

DENNIS THE MENACE



"I STUBBED THE LITTLE PIGGY THAT WENT WHEE, WHEE, WHEE ALL THE WAY HOME."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Instead of a bath, couldn't I just be dry-cleaned?"

HAGAR



BLONDIE



BC



WIZARD OF ID



AGNES



HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BEEBLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Thursday, Jan. 18, the 18th day of 2007. There are 347 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 18, 1912, English explorer Robert F. Scott and his expedition reached the South Pole, only to discover that Roald Amundsen had beaten them to it.

On this date: In 1778, English navigator Capt. James Cook reached the Hawaiian Islands, which he dubbed the "Sandwich Islands."

In 1871, William I of Prussia was proclaimed "German Emperor" (which was not the same thing as "Emperor of Germany") in Versailles, France.

In 1919, the Paris Peace Conference, held to negotiate peace treaties ending World War I, opened in Versailles, France.

Versailles, France. In 1943, a wartime ban on the sale of pre-liced bread in the U.S. — aimed at reducing bakeries' demand for metal replacement parts — went into effect.

In 1943, during World War II, the Soviets announced they'd broken through the long Nazi siege of Leningrad (it was another year before the siege was fully lifted).

In 1957, a trio of B-52's completed the first nonstop, round-the-world flight by jet planes, landing at March Air Force Base in California after more than 45 hours aloft.

In 1967, Albert DeSalvo, who claimed to be the "Boston Strangler," was convicted in Cambridge, Mass., of armed robbery, assault and sex offenses.

In 1990, a jury in Los Angeles acquitted former preschool operators Raymond Buckey and his mother, Peggy McMartin Buckey, of 52 child molestation charges.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director John Boorman is

74. Singer-songwriter Bobby Goldsboro is 66. Comedian-singer-musician Brett Hudson is 54. Actor-director Kevin Costner is 52. Country singer Mark Collie is 51. Actress Jane Horrocks is 43. Comedian Dave Attell is 42. Actor Jesse L. Martin ("Law & Order") is 38. Rapper DJ Quik is 37. Rock singer Jonathan Davis (Korn) is 36. Singer Christian Burns (BBMak) is 34. Actor Jason Segel is 27. Actress Samantha Mumba is 24.

Thought for Today: "A lean sorrow is hardest to bear." — Sara Orne Jewett, American author (1849-1909).

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Answer to previous puzzle grid with words like RAID, STUB, ELCID, etc.

Newsday Crossword

WHO KNEW? by Kevin Donovan Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS: 1 Big cheese in the kitchen, 5 Heavy blow, 9 Actress Thomas, 14 Crowd noise, 15 See-through piece, 16 Most of the planet's surface, 17 Choir member, 18 It could be gray, 19 Skilled occupation, 20 Christie, for one, 23 Possesses, 24 Sagan science series, 27 Tai, 30 Old Testament book, 34 Chimpanzee, for one, 35 Mountain chain, 37 Helm direction, 38 Prayer ending, 39 Professional pretender, 42 Mid-March day, 43 Mixed up with, 44 Office powder, 45 Min. part, 46 In dispute, 48 Give it a shot, 49 OK to consume, 51 Stroke standard, 53 Covert coverer, 60 '06 Supreme Court appointee, 62 Prima donna, 63 Cartoon explorer, 64 Cavity left by a club, 65 Prepare to publish, 66 Larger than life, 67 Played out, 68 Campbell of films, 69 Offend one's olfaction, 12 Young chap, 13 The multiplicative identity, 21 Raring to go, 22 Slicker, as a sidewalk, 25 First in a series, 26 One on the lookout, 27 Pleasure trip, 28 Ceded, with "over", 29 Less than conclusive, 31 Supermodel Campbell, 32 Rock royalty, 33 They have growth potential, 36 Some appliances, shortly, 38 In the past, 40 Provide for parties, 41 First-string players, 46 Jo's Boys author, 47 Let in on the latest, 50 Back, as a horse, 52 Bill addendum, 54 First place, 55 It rises and falls, 56 Tel, 57 Jump or skip finish, 58 Pennsylvania port, 59 Portion, as of lamb, 60 Money-makers, for mags, 61 Rude retort

Crossword grid with numbers 1-67 indicating starting positions for clues.