



Sheriff's office investigating stabbing, wreck

Herald Staff Report

COAHOMA — Howard County sheriff's deputies are investigating a stabbing and traffic accident that occurred here late Monday night. Deputies and Emergency

Medical Service personnel were dispatched to the 100 block of South Fifth Street in Coahoma at around 10:45 p.m. Monday following a report that a person had been stabbed. Two persons sought in connection with the incident led

sheriff's deputies on a high-speed chase — with reported speeds in excess of 90 MPH — before crashing at the intersection of Old Colorado City Highway and Old Gail Highway about 11:20 p.m. Following the accident, one

person was transported to Scenic Mountain Medical Center, while the other was taken to a Lubbock-area hospital, official records state. Sheriff's deputies were busy early today checking the accident scene for evidence.

Howard County Sheriff's Office officials were unavailable for comment today.

Names and conditions of persons involved in Monday night's incidents were unknown as of press time today.

Group to study pre-trial bonding service

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

Howard County commissioners agreed to appoint a committee to look into the possibility of creating a county-run pre-trial bonding service, which most officials are hopeful will alleviate the overcrowding problem at the county jail.

Commissioner Gary Simer, who was appointed as the chairman of the committee, said cost will be one of the main focuses for the group, as will

"I've heard from some members of the community that they were curious because they were thinking we were going to be bonding all kinds of folks who otherwise would not have been bonded out, in terms of heinous crimes... That's certainly not the case."



Moore

the impact the service could have on commercial bondsmen in the area.

"We'll be looking into what it costs to run this

operation, which we already have the money for," said Simer. "The sheriff has money allotted for housing prisoners and he won't need all of that

once this program starts. So actually, it won't cost the county anything.

"As far as the (commercial) bonding people go, once we start this program there will be more people to bond out, so it should be a plus for them, too."

While Simer claims the service would actually help local bonding companies, not everyone at the meeting agreed.

Jason Seay, a bondsman with Big Spring-based

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Bondsmen skeptical, say it may drive them out of business

By THOMAS JENKINS
Staff Writer

While the creation of a pre-trial bonding service has county officials eyeing the measure as a possible solution to overcrowding at the Howard County Jail, local bondsmen are watching the proceedings with a great deal of unease.

The proposed program, which is currently being studied by a panel of county officials, would allow prisoners who have been passed over by commercial bondsmen the chance to bond-out after an as-of-yet undetermined waiting period at a lower percentage rate than that charged by most bail bond companies.

The Midland program, which the Howard County model is currently being based on, charges 3 percent of the set bond, while most commercial bondsmen charge 10 percent.

Robert G. "Bob" Smith, owner of A-Bob's Bail Bonds in Big Spring, said the program represents something totally different to the mom and pop operations in the area.

"I think it's certainly a slap in the face of free enterprise," said Smith. "We're not trying to get into the county's business, and more or less, they are trying to get into our business."

Smith said the impact the program could have on his and other local bonding companies depends directly on how long the county service waits before processing would-be customers.

"I've talked with people about how the program would run, and when they talked with the people from Midland they said they waited 48 hours before they actually approached people in the jail," said Smith. "One of the people involved in this right now has even

"I think it's certainly a slap in the face of free enterprise. We're not trying to get into the county's business, and more or less, they are trying to get into our business."

Smith

said they were willing to wait 72 hours before they approach them.

"If they're willing to wait 72 hours, I really don't know how much it will effect us. It will come, but I don't see too many sitting in jail three days just so they can save 7 percent on what they would pay on their bond."

However, should the county decide to go with a shorter waiting period, Smith said the end-result is very clear.

"If they do it on a 24-hour basis, they will put every local bail bondsman out of business," said Smith firmly. "Every one of them."

Jason Seay, a bondsman with Big Spring-based B&M Bail Bonds, said the creation of the pre-trial bonding service could also affect who is — and isn't — eligible for getting out of jail.

"It changes who is eligible for the bonding service just in the felony part of it," said Seay. "When a person is out on felony probation and they revoke that probation, they're thrown right back into jail and they're not able to bond out unless the judge sets a bond. And most judges won't set a bond on a charge like that. We've never had the chance to deal with any of those bonds."

See SKEPTICAL, Page 3A

Officials pitch nuclear reactor proposal for West Texas

□ Another forum is set for 7 p.m. today near Midland.

ANDREWS (AP) — The University of Texas-Permian Basin and a California nuclear technology company sought to win public support Monday for a proposed nuclear reactor in West Texas.

Officials said the project would include a high-temperature test nuclear reactor and high-temperature labs for testing other methods of producing fuels, hydrogen and electricity.

Texas-Permian Basin President David Watts said the university supports the project as a research facility. He told a crowd of about 150 people at an informational meeting that he became a proponent of the project after being convinced that it would be safe.

"This reactor promises to take Texas, and more particularly West Texas, into a new frontier of energy production," Watts said.

Mike Campbell, vice president of energy for San Diego-based General Atomics, also stressed the reactor's safety. Nuclear materials would be held in containers that can withstand temperatures

See REACTOR, Page 3A



KRT photo/Chuck Kennedy

Samuel Alito, President George W. Bush's nominee for Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and his wife Martha, listen to his introduction before he is sworn in before the Senate Judiciary Committee Monday in Washington, DC.

Alito says he would approach abortion issue with open mind

By JESSE J. HOLLAND

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito said today he would deal with the issue of abortion

with an open mind as a justice, though he defended his 1991 judicial vote saying women seeking abortions must notify their husbands.

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SPIN CYCLE IS ROUGH

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) — A man had to be rescued after becoming wedged in a washing machine while playing a game with his children Tuesday.

A fire officer pulled Robin Toom, 38, out of the machine after Toom became trapped while playing hide-and-seek.

"I just hopped in there and couldn't even get the lid down and the kids came in and said, 'Ha, ha! We found you,'" Toom said.

Toom waited for an hour with his knees pressed to his chest before being rescued by local fire squad member Dave Dillon, the *Daily Telegraph* reported.

Toom said he planned to change the rules of hide-and-seek for his children.

OFFICERS SEIZE \$95,000

HIDALGO (AP) — A 42-year-old Eagle Pass resident was arrested after Customs officers seized almost \$95,000 from the vehicle he was driving to Mexico, U.S. Customs and Border Protection reported Monday.

The seizure occurred Friday at the Hidalgo International Bridge.

At the bridge, Benjamin Vargas-Betanacio denied having more than \$10,000 in cash, claiming only \$500. But officers noticed oddities in the engine area of the vehicle he was driving and discovered bundles of cash totaling \$94,520.

Vargas-Betanacio has been charged with bulk cash smuggling.

BANQUET TICKETS READY

Tickets for the Big Spring area Chamber of Commerce banquet are on sale now.

The banquet is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 2 at Dorothy Garrett Coliseum. Tickets are \$22 per person before Jan. 23 and \$27 per person from Jan. 23-28.

No tickets or reservations will be accepted after Jan. 28. Tickets will not be available at the door.

Guest speaker will be Pat McGaughey of McGaughey Enterprises Inc. on "Maximizing Your Chamber Membership." RSVP or pick up tickets at the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce, 215 W. Third, or call 263-7641.

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.

Susanne Reed
Publisher

John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

Bill McClellan
News Editor

OUR VIEWS

Don't pass up opportunity to register to vote

It's time to think about registering to vote for the March 7 primaries, if you haven't already done so. The last day to register is Feb. 6. That sounds like a long time away, but it's less than a month.

The right to vote gives us the opportunity to choose who we want to serve as our voice in the local, state and federal levels of government.

This is an important election. In addition to the county judge's race, there are two contested county commissioners races, a peace justice race — bids for governor, lieutenant governor, comptroller, ag commissioner and more. Howard County will also be going to the polls to select party nominees for the Texas House and U.S. House.

Voter registration is simple and free. It takes only a couple of minutes.

To be eligible to vote, residents must be 18 years of age and a U.S. citizen. You do not need to have resided in Howard County for a specific length of time before registering here.

Anyone who has moved since they last obtained a voter registration card should also register.

Please, take the time to register to vote. Today, you might have no interest in the election; you may have no desire to vote. But something may happen that causes you to decide to exercise your right. If you haven't registered, it will be too late. You can even register through the mail. For more information, call Sandra Bloom, Howard County election administrator, at 264-2273.

From our point of view, voting is an important process in which all U.S. citizens should participate. It's their voice. The *Herald* encourages you to register if you haven't, study the candidates and their platforms, and vote.

HOW TO CONTACT US

The Herald is always interested in our readers' opinions. In order that we might better serve your needs, we offer several ways in which you may contact us:

- In person at 710 Scurry St.
- By telephone at 263-7331
- By fax at 264-7205
- By e-mail Managing Editor John A. Moseley at editor@bigspringherald.com or News Editor Bill McClellan at newsdesk@bigspringherald.com.
- By mail at P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721

LETTER POLICIES

- The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.
- Limit your letters to no more than 300 words.
 - Sign your letter.
 - Provide a daytime telephone number, as well as a street address for verification purposes.
 - We reserve the right to edit for style and clarity.
 - We reserve the right to limit publication to one letter per 30-day period per author.
 - Letters that are unsigned or do not include a telephone number or address will not be considered.
 - Letters should be submitted to Editor, Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, 79721. They can also be e-mailed to editor@bigspringherald.com

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

The artifices of impeachment

The Left — from The Nation's Katrina vanden Heuvel to Newsweek's Jonathan Alter — has pulled out the impeachment card and is brandishing it as the weapon that will drive George W. Bush from the White House. This could be more than talk. Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer is consulting with legal eagles as she explores the idea.



DEBRA SAUNDERS

I must say, I am tickled at their efforts. I supported impeaching the perjury-prone President Clinton, but preferred censure to removing him from office. I also saw the damage to Republicans who pushed to chase Clinton out of office.

But the Bush-haters won't heed history, not when they see an opportunity to relive the glory days of Watergate: Republicans evil; Democrats uncorrupted; reporters respected. As Alter wrote after the story broke that President Bush authorized the National Security Agency to eavesdrop on international calls in efforts to uncover possible agents of al Qaeda, "Similar abuse of power was part of the impeachment charge brought against Richard Nixon in 1974."

Angry leftists are so hysterical that they cannot distinguish between government agents eavesdropping on a president's political enemies, and the data mining of international phone calls in an earnest effort to thwart another Sept. 11 terrorist attack. They don't see that Bush, rather than trying to hide his role in the effort, signed off on the program

more than 30 times.

Warrantless wiretaps? Victoria Toensing, a former deputy assistant attorney general in the Reagan administration, called CNN recently to note that the Clinton administration authorized the warrantless search of the house of CIA employee Aldrich Ames.

But the Dems didn't talk of impeachment then.

George Washington University law professor Jonathan Turley offers the best argument for impeachment — not because he is persuasive, but because he is consistent. Turley said he supported the impeachment, conviction and removal of Clinton, and is advocating likewise for Bush, as the Bush wiretaps constitute "a clear and undeniable crime." (He ignores lawyers and judges who see the issue either as far from settled, or come down in Bush's favor.)

Turley added that what the Bushies did "wasn't necessary." The administration could have won warrants from the Federal Intelligence Surveillance Act court. Out of tens of thousands of eavesdropping requests since 1979, Alter reported, FISA rejected only four.

Toensing countered that it was necessary. FISA's turnaround rate is low because government lawyers don't push for warrants unless they know they'll win.

Don't forget that the feds wouldn't even ask for a warrant to tap the laptop computer of Zacarias Moussaoui, the French citizen who later pleaded guilty to conspiring with the Sept. 11 hijackers. Turley says they should have sought a warrant. Toensing says officials knew they would lose because they could not establish Moussaoui was an "agent of a foreign power."

Turley also argues that if Bush had problems with the FISA law, then he should have gone to Congress to change it. But to do so, Toensing noted, officials would have had to reveal their surveillance methods.

Turley's best argument: If the president can circumvent FISA, then "he can circumvent any federal law."

Are we at war? I asked him. "That's a good question." Then, after deriding Congress for passing war resolutions — not declarations of war — Turley said, "As a constitutional matter, no."

As a practical matter, though, the answer is yes — as any soldier in Iraq or Afghanistan can tell you. I respect Turley, but in the real world, it makes sense to monitor international communications to prevent another attack — in America or against Americans abroad.

Instead, Washington delivers lowball partisan politics. Too many Democrats support Bush when polls support Bush — the war, the Patriot Act — then turn on his policies when they think they can get away with it. They don't think about the impact on U.S. soldiers on foreign soil.

This whole NSA story reinforces the fact that Bush is willing to be unpopular, risk the White House even, to get the job done, while too many of his Democratic critics will walk over anyone to stand up for their lack of principles.

E-mail Debra J. Saunders at dsaunders@sfchronicle.com. To find out more about Debra J. Saunders, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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We just can't control the news

This is the time of year when we predict the future: who will win and who will lose, who will get to the top of the mountain, and who will never be heard from again. Will the market go up or down? Will Katie Couric go to CBS or not? Will Bush get more or less popular? I haven't got a clue about the future, at least about what matters.

Here is what I do know: Today's paper always wraps tomorrow's fish. Nothing we say now has anything to do with what most of us will spend the next year thinking about.

That is so for at least four reasons.

First and most important, what counts most for all of us has very little to do with anything we can control. Every wish I make for the New Year is for a healthy and safe year for my family. Who doesn't wish for that?

But can we control it? Yes, of course, we do have some control, in terms of what we eat and how much we exercise. It took me 20 years and actually writing a diet book before I finally "got" the idea that I could use my head to take care of myself the same way I used it at work to accomplish other goals — that I didn't have to stop for a donut in the middle of the Superwoman routine. Even so, in an increasingly dangerous world, where I feel like every time

I pick up the phone I hear from someone who has been diagnosed with cancer, it is difficult to feel much control. So it remains true that the predictions that matter most for all of us are ones that no one, not even our doctors, can make with certainty.

Second, secrets are only interesting until you learn them. That sounds like an oxymoron, but it makes most predictions predictably obsolete.

Consider Katie Couric. Most media predictions this year center on whether she will (about 40 percent say yes) or won't (about 60 percent say no) leave the "Today" show for CBS. At some point,

she will or she won't. If the majority is right, the whole issue will simply disappear the day she decides, as if it never existed. And if she does go to CBS, people will start kicking her the day she does.

There was intense interest in who would replace Peter Jennings until the replacements were actually named, and then the intense interest evaporated. The most classic example of this phenomenon occurs every four years, when the press goes wild with anticipation over who will be selected as the vice presidential nominee, only to ignore that person completely as

soon as they are named.

Third, time frames have changed. A year is now a lifetime. Can you remember what you thought of Bush a year ago? A year ago, he was preparing for his second inauguration, which certainly seems like a lifetime ago, politically speaking. But that also means that a year from now, he — and we — could be in a very different place than we are today.

Fourth, and perhaps most important, no one can predict which stories will capture the country this year because "importance" in policy terms doesn't necessarily determine importance in terms of coverage and attention. In an increasingly competitive media community, with more and more outlets spewing less and less accurate information, the collision between news and entertainment makes Natalee Holloway bigger news on some days than the war in Iraq. You can accept that or condemn that, but it's what we want.

So, what can I predict? That in our hearts, we will worry about our families and hopefully do better at taking care of ourselves, which is the one thing we can do — while on television and in the papers, we will read what's there, laugh at the worst, curse the darkness, and hope for the best. Happy New Year.

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News briefs

Former Bartlett mayor sentenced
GEORGETOWN (AP) — Former Bartlett Mayor Bobby Hill will spend five straight weekends in jail and was ordered to pay back more than \$7,600 to the city for stealing money and services from the city.

Hill was sentenced Monday to 20 days in jail. He pleaded guilty in November to misdemeanor charges of abusing his power while in office. He resigned at that time.

"I realize that my actions were an abuse of the office to which you, the citizens, so graciously elected me," Hill said in a letter of apology he read to the court while lawyer Marc Ranc put a hand on his back, the *Austin American-Statesman* reported. "I ask for your forgiveness."

As part of the sentence, the letter will be published as an advertisement in two local newspapers.

Investigators said Hill wrote bad checks, then told a city employee to falsify the books and not deposit the checks until instructed by him.

Teens arrested after ambulance stolen

GRAND PRAIRIE (AP) — A 17-year-old was arraigned on theft charges and a 16-year-old was turned over to juvenile authorities Monday after they were caught running from an ambulance that had been stolen outside a Grand Prairie home.

The ambulance's crew was inside the home tending to a patient in a non-emergency case, said Cynthia Wentworth, a spokeswoman for American Medical Response, which owns the ambulance.

When they came outside early Monday, the ambulance was gone.

Officials used a global positioning device to track the ambulance, which was spotted about 18 miles away in Grapevine.

The two teenagers tried to run, but they didn't get very far, police said.

"One couldn't run very well because his pants were too low," Sgt. Todd Dearing, a Grapevine police spokesman, said. "He was having to hold his pants up with one hand."

Dedrick Tarrant, 17, was taken to Grapevine jail where he was held on a charge of theft between \$100,000 and \$200,000, a second-degree felony, and evading arrest, a state jail felony. Bail totaled \$20,000.

The 16-year-old faces similar charges, Dearing said.

Dearing said he didn't know why the ambulance was taken. He said one teen told police he was having a hard time finding the home of relatives in Grapevine.

5 killed in East Texas mobile home fire

HARLETON (AP) — Five people were killed, including four children, when flames swept through a mobile home overnight near this small East Texas town.

Three of the dead were found in the charred ruins of a bedroom after the 11 p.m. fire Monday, said Harrison County Justice of the Peace Melba Oney. She identified the three as Laura Patton, 75, and two of her grandchildren, Demarcus King, 4, and Destiny Graham, 11.

Two other children died at hospitals a short time later, Oney said. She identified them as Te'Sherman Davidson, 12, and Nathan Brown, 4.

C.J. Brown, 3, was taken to Longview Regional Medical Center, then airlifted to the LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport, La., Oney said. He's listed in stable condition, a hospital spokeswoman said today.

Oney said Patton was baby-sitting the Brown children, while the others were part of her extended family. Two others suffered minor injuries, Clara Tucker, Te'Sherman Davidson's grandmother, and Kim Graham, mother of Demarcus King and Destiny Graham, Oney said.

No word yet on what caused the rural fire, which happened about 20 miles northeast of Longview and northwest of Marshall.

Management contract vote expected on faith-based prison

SAN ANGELO (AP) — Tom Green County officials are expected to vote today on a management contract with a Dallas-based group to operate a faith-based prison in this West Texas city. The contract would allow Corrections

Concepts Inc. to negotiate inmate contracts for the prison. The company is to operate the facility.

County commissioners have delayed the vote at least twice, most recently Dec. 14 when the court tabled the motion because county officials wanted their Dallas-based attorney, John Sheedy, at the meeting to answer questions commissioners might have, the *San Angelo Standard-Times* reported. Sheedy's name is on the agenda for today.

At the Dec. 14 meeting, commissioners approved a location for the prison on a 200-acre city-owned plot.

Corrections Concepts also is negotiating a construction contract with the Concho Valley Community Facilities Corp., which the county formed to issue bonds to build the prison.

Habilitation House would take volunteer inmates with one or two years remaining on their sentences. Inmates could work and earn wages in the facility and receive addiction counseling.

The prison has had supporters on both sides of the issue. Opponents point to safety and water use concerns, and that the prison will bring no positive economic benefit. They also fear taxpayers will have to pay if the prison fails.

Supporters say the prison could influence inmates' lives through religion, and that areas around a prison are no less safe than anywhere else. They also say it will create needed jobs in San Angelo.

Iran removes seals from nuclear equipment, resumes research, bringing international outcry

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran removed U.N. seals on uranium enrichment equipment and resumed nuclear research Tuesday, defying demands it maintain a two-year freeze on its nuclear program and sparking an outcry from the United States and Europe.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said Iran plans to enrich uranium as part of its experiments with the nuclear fuel cycle. An IAEA statement issued in Vienna, Austria, said Iran told the agency the scale of its enrichment work would be limited.

U.S. officials denounced Iran's move, calling it a step toward creating material for nuclear bombs. Germany's foreign minister raised doubts over the future of European-led negotiations on Iran's nuclear program, questioning whether there remains any

basis for more talks.

Britain warned that the international community was "running out of patience" with Tehran, and Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said Iran had breached IAEA resolutions.

"There was no good reason why Iran should have taken this step if its intentions are truly peaceful and it wanted to resolve longstanding international concerns," Straw said.

The latest move came as Iran has been taking a more confrontational line with the West.

Hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has angered Europe and the United States in recent months with anti-Israeli remarks, first calling for the Jewish state to be "wiped off the map" and then calling the Nazi Holocaust a "myth."

The United States accuses Iran of

seeking to develop nuclear weapons, a charge denied by Iran, which contends its program aims only to produce energy. France, Germany and Britain have been leading long-troubled negotiations with Iran aimed at ensuring its program is peaceful.

The seals were removed Tuesday from equipment at the nuclear plant at Natanz, the center of Iran's uranium enrichment program.

However, Iran stressed it was not resuming enrichment, a key process that can produce either material for a nuclear weapon or fuel for a reactor. Instead, it said it was restarting research activities at the plant.

"What we resume is merely in the field of research, not more than that," the deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Mohammad Saeedi, told a news conference.

Doctors: Sharon shows improvement, moves hand

JERUSALEM (AP) — Prime Minister Ariel Sharon showed "slight improvement" in his recovery from a massive stroke by moving his left hand today, but doctors said they still cannot assess his abilities to think and reason as they gradually reduce the anesthesia keeping him in a coma.

Doctors also said Sharon's life was not in immediate danger.

One of Sharon's sons spoke to him; and the 77-year-old leader's blood pressure increased.

Sharon is recovering from a cerebral hemorrhage and widespread bleeding in the right side of his brain that he suffered Wednesday.

As doctors began decreasing Sharon's dose of sedatives to remove him from an induced coma Monday, he moved his right hand and right leg slightly in response to pain stimulation. Today, the movement on Sharon's right side increased, and he also moved his left hand, said Dr. Shlomo Mor-Yosef, the director of Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem.

"These are neurological changes that show slight improvement in Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's brain functioning," he said. Movement on Sharon's left side could be very significant because that part of the body is controlled by the right side of the brain.

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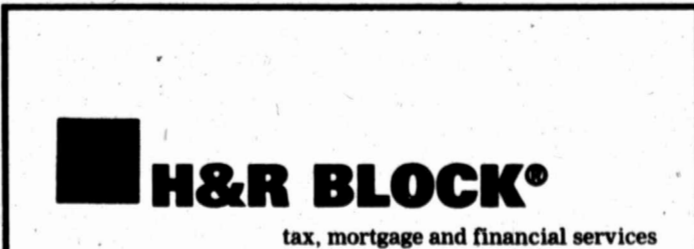
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Christy's Quill

Dashing through the sunshine in a mid-sized minivan, we made a trip to see my family over the holidays.



CHRISTY ALTON

As per our marital contract, I took next to nothing for three persons and my husband took everything but the kitchen sink. I lost count after 16 bags.

Perched in the front seat amidst the piles, I whined and groaned and rued the day we decided to drive. The kids sat peacefully in the back, baggage notwithstanding and watched countless movies with the very God-given headphones.

The luggage arrangements were even more precarious on the trek home, as we'd accumulated numerous Christmas packages. More whining, more griping from the front seat. More promises to fly in the future. (The airports aren't generous when it comes to carry on pieces. Two per person.)

We had a little "incident" on the way home. I left my wedding ring

in the hotel bathroom. We'd been gone from the inn for over an hour.

The good news was that we'd only made a city block. By the time we'd cooled our heels at the hamburger hut, gassed up the guzzler, and filled up the coffee mug, I noticed my empty hand.

It was one of the only times I was glad that it takes the Altons more than an hour to make the block. I was so happy to see my beautiful wedding band.

Unpacking brought more vows to use the overpriced airline services. I brought in my three bags and helped with the other 16 or so.

It took me several days to recover from the two-day stint in the vehicle. I finally unloaded my three suitcases Tuesday night.

My van's back to normal. Only crayons, soda cups and cracker crumbs adorn it.

The only piece of luggage in it now is my all-purpose, overstuffed, solo purse.

Christy Alton is married to her park ranger, Ron and they have two children.

She works as a substitute teacher and also attends college classes.

On Christmas Eve, over an hour and a half was spent just trying to get close to a roadrunner in a furniture store.

The owner of the furniture store had called during the morning. She was concerned that the bird might be hurt and it would starve if she could not get it to leave the building. She had left the front door open, but the bird refused to leave.

When we arrived, the paisano was looking out one of the windows. The moment it saw us, it jumped to the floor and was lost in the myriad of sofas, tables, chairs, desks and end tables.

Using a net would be impossible.

If we were fortunate enough to grab the bird, our opportunity would be lost if we caught it by the tail. We would have had nothing but a handful of feathers.

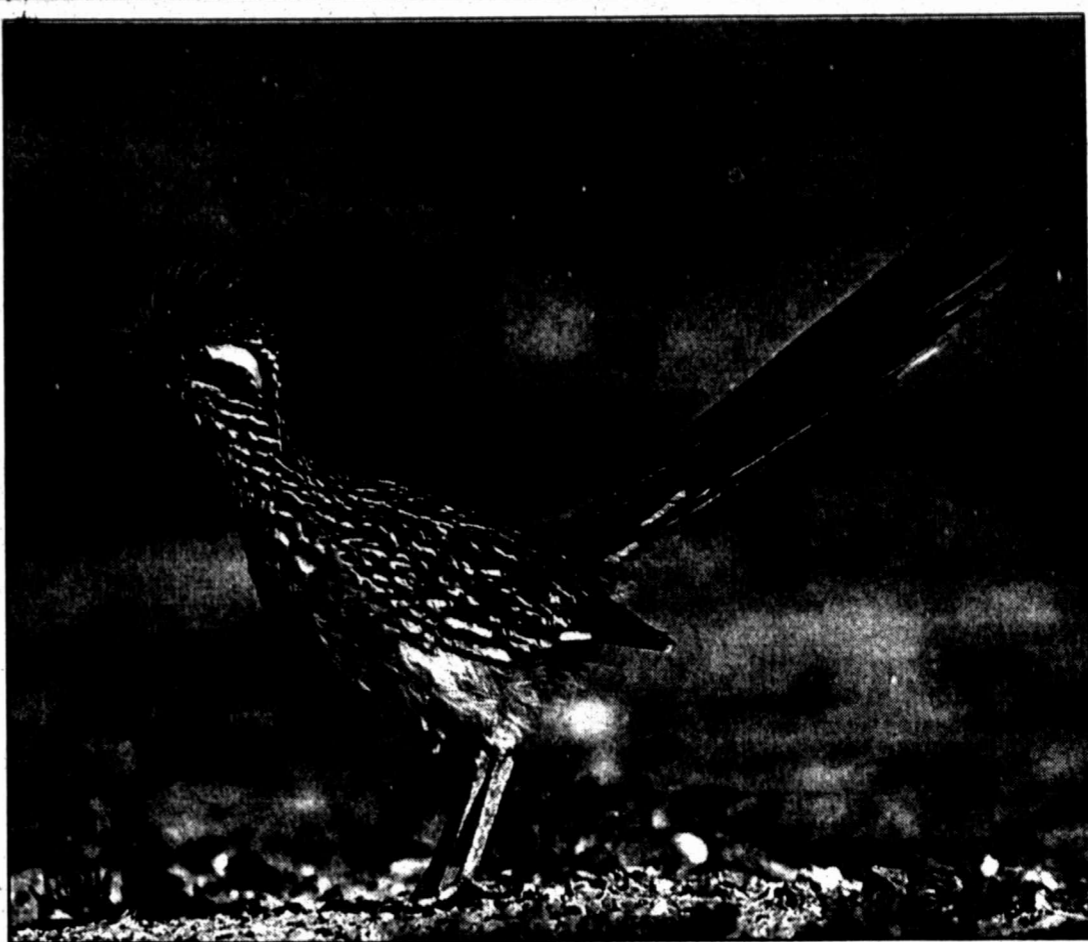
Nature has provided this specie with the ability to donate its tail in lieu of capture, either by man or lesser predators.

The bird had a definite advantage in that it went under, over and through furniture at a record clip.

Capable of speeds up to 12 to 15 miles per hour, the roadrunner made us think we might just spend Christmas in that store.

Even with the front door open, the bird would turn and run to the back of the store.

Although we could see the bird, and noticed a limp, we were never close



A roadrunner similar to the species native to West Texas

Courtesy photo

enough to detect exactly what might be wrong with it, except it seemed to love all that furniture.

As we tired of climbing over and around so many items, and made every effort not to break anything, the bird seemed to gain momentum.

Finally, Art suggested that since the bird did not prefer the front of the store, we could try to usher the bird toward the office at the back of the store.

If it went in, we could shut the door and have

the bird contained. Fortunately, his idea worked. I squeezed through a slightly-opened door, which Art closed behind me.

The roadrunner was hiding on a lower shelf of a bookcase.

Slowly, I crept toward the bird. Down on hands and knees, I took a deep breath, and grabbed at a creature that hardly seemed winded.

Coming out of the office with the captured bird, we noticed it only had one foot.

It had been leading us on one heck of a chase through all that furniture with one foot and a stub.

Where the other foot had been was toughened, scarred skin that had healed over the bottom of the leg.

Ron Alton offered a release site in the State Park, and all of us were amazed to see how rapidly the roadrunner disappeared.

Bebe McCasland is federally and state licensed to rehabilitate wild birds.

Abilene's Children's Performing Arts series season opens January 22

Abilene - The first production of Abilene's Children's Performing Arts Series is set for 2 p.m. Jan. 22 in the historic Paramount Theatre downtown.

Straight from New York City's Theatreworks, USA, Jim West's "Dinosaurs" is a colossal show inspired by everyone's favorite prehistoric creatures.

Fossil, the dinosaur detective, mixes fun and facts and din-puppet antics - all set to a rich musical score that includes classics by Mozart, Beethoven, Mahler, Stravinsky and Prokofiev.

Tickets to the show are \$7 for open seating and can be purchased by calling the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council at (325) 677-1161.

A limited number will be available at the door.

The next show in the 2006 season will come from the Kennedy Center's Imagination Celebration Tour.

It will be a live production of the beloved children's book, "Alexander,

Who's Not, Not, Not, Not, Not, NOT Going to Move!"

The story tells the tale and lesson of a young boy dismayed by his father's job in a new city.

The show will take place in the Paramount Theatre Feb. 19 at 2 p.m.

Next in the season is a live musical production of the classic "Wizard of Oz."

Performed by a troupe from the national American Family Theatre organization, this rendition brings in all of the characters that children and adults have grown to love throughout the years.

It will be at the Paramount Theatre at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 2.

Season tickets for the Children's Performing Arts Series also are still available and include reserved seating for all four shows of the season.

Season tickets can be purchased by calling the Cultural Affairs Council but also will be available at the door before "Dinosaurs."

Policies for life!
The Big Spring Herald accepts submissions for publication in the Friday and weekend editions.

Friday's Church and Club News should be concise and may not be written in first person. All submissions should contain a contact name and telephone number.

Wedding, 50th anniversary, engagement, quinceañera and birth announcements, Who's Who and In the Military, with or without photos are also published free of charge within three months of the event in the weekend edition at no charge.

All submissions are due by noon on Wednesday for Friday or weekend publication and will be edited for content, style and space.

The Herald is not responsible for any misspellings of handwritten submissions.

Call 263-7331 or submit articles to life@bigspringherald.com.

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IN BRIEF

Football banquet
The Big Spring ISD football banquet will be held Thursday at the high school cafeteria.
The public is invited to attend and tickets may be purchased in advance from Kay Cook at the ATC by calling 264-3662 or from Gene or Lana Piercefield at 816-1134. The cost is \$10.

Chicano Golf Association sets first meeting of year

The Chicano Golf Association has set an organizational meeting for Thursday at 7:30 p.m. at the Big Spring Bowl-A-Rama meeting room.

All members are encouraged to attend. For more information, contact Billy Pineda at 264-7116.

Lady Steer Booster meeting announced

The Lady Steer Booster Club will meet Monday, Jan. 16, in the Athletic Training Center (ATC) at 6 p.m.

All parents of girls involved in volleyball, basketball, softball, track, cheerleading and trainers are encouraged to attend. For more information, contact Carol Policky at 267-3800.

Vick arrested for brandishing firearms

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Former Virginia Tech quarterback Marcus Vick was charged with pulling a gun on three teenagers during an altercation in a restaurant parking lot.

Vick surrendered after three warrants were issued for his arrest Sunday. He could be sentenced to up to three years in jail and fined \$7,500.

On Friday, Virginia Tech kicked Vick off the team, citing numerous legal problems and his unsportsmanlike conduct in the Gator Bowl, where he was caught on tape stomping on the left calf of Louisville's Elvis Dumervil.

He also received a speeding ticket and another for driving on a suspended license in Hampton Dec. 17 while under a "zero tolerance" policy from Virginia Tech.

Saturday, Vick announced he had decided to turn pro.

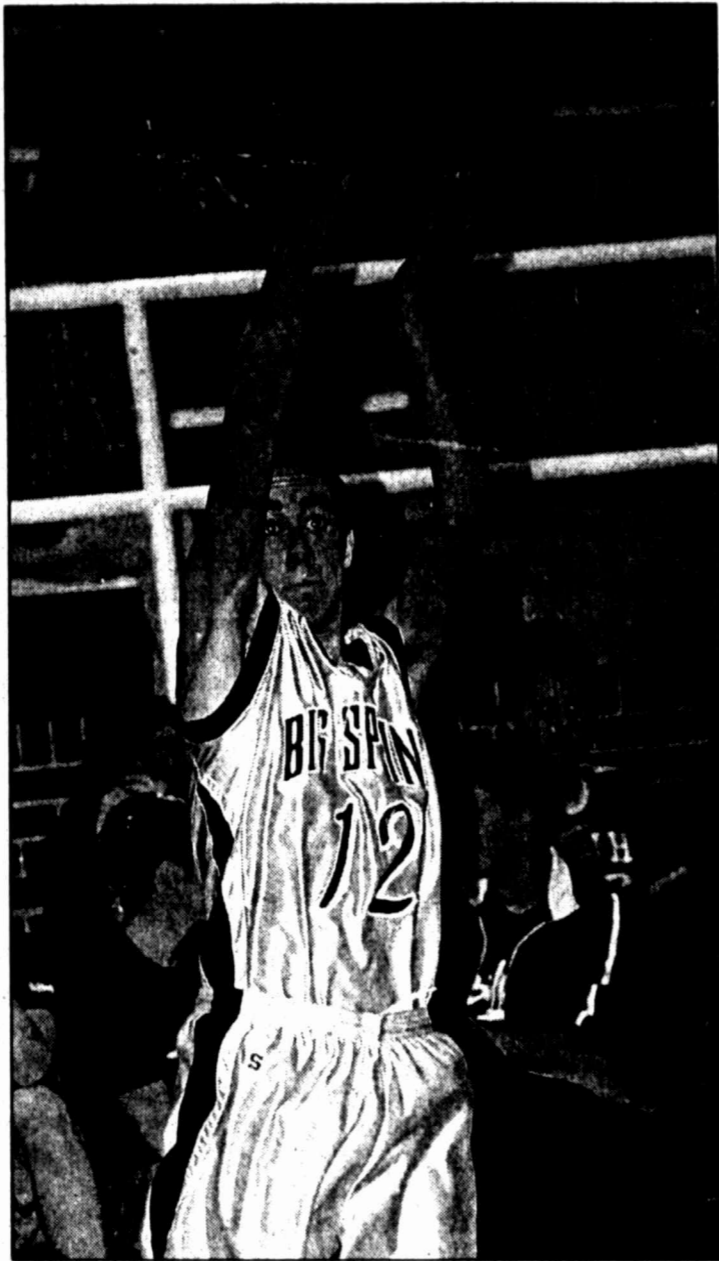
Rockets' McGrady to miss two games

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston Rockets star Tracy McGrady will miss the next two games and be re-evaluated Friday after a recurrence of back spasms.

Washington's Taylor fined for spitting

ASHBURN, Va. (AP) — Washington Redskins safety Sean Taylor was fined \$7,000 by the NFL for spitting in the face of Tampa Bay Buccaneers running back Michael Pittman on Saturday.

Garden City, Grady seek control of District 7-A



HERALD photo/Troy Hyde
Big Spring junior Scott Fankhauser puts up a jumper from the corner last Tuesday against Merkel. The Steers will host Sweetwater tonight at 7:30 p.m.

Steers host Sweetwater, B.S. girls travel to Andrews

By TROY HYDE

Garden City and Grady's basketball programs will try to take control of District 7-A tonight when the two rivals on the hardwood collide in Grady for the first of two district meetings this season.

All four teams opened the district season with wins Friday.

The Bearkats (11-4) and Lady Kats dominated Dawson, while the Grady girls easily defeated Borden County and the Grady boys edged Borden County by one point.

The Garden City boys were led by Cory Multer's 14 points against Dawson, but had a balanced attack on offense as Taylor Niehues, Colton Schwartz and Alex Halfmann also

scored well for the Bearkats. The Lady Kats, who enter tonight's game with a 15-6 record, were led by Erin Hirt's 22 points and also feature the inside presence of K'Lann Niehues and Lauren Plagens.

The Wildcats (10-8) are led by sophomore Justin Tubb, who led Grady with 17 points in its win against Borden County. The Grady girls are led by Kenzie Madison and Taylor Wodlfork. The Lady Kats enter the game with an 11-8 record overall.

Tonight's game will take place in Grady beginning at 6:30 p.m. The boys' game will begin at around 8 p.m. The two rivals split in competition last year.

Both Forsan basketball teams open district play tonight at home against rival McCamey. The Lady Buffs will tipoff at 6:30 p.m., while the boys will begin at around 8 p.m.

The Big Spring girl's basketball team will travel to Andrews tonight to take on the arch rival Lady Mustangs in District 4-4A action at 7:30 p.m., while the Steers host Sweetwater at the same time in Big Spring. The Big Spring boys are coming off a win against Lubbock Cooper, while

the Lady Steers lost a close game to Lake View to open district play last Friday.

The Howard College women's basketball team closes out its nonconference schedule tonight at the Dorothy Garrett Coliseum against third-ranked Trinity Valley Community College, which has 12 of the top 50 players in the nation on its squad, according to Howard head coach Earl Diddle. The Hawk women, who are led by sophomore Latoya Fairley, tipoff at 6 p.m.

Coahoma's girl's basketball squad hosts Stamford tonight at 7:30 p.m. The boy's team does not play and will open district play Friday on the road against rival Stanton.

The Bulldogettes and Stamford both got wins Friday to open district play.

Tonight's area basketball lineup

- B.S. boys vs. Sweetwater, 7:30 p.m.
- B.S. girls @ Andrews, 7:30 p.m.
- Garden City @ Grady, 6:30 p.m./8 p.m.
- Forsan vs. McCamey, 6:30 p.m./8 p.m.
- Howard women vs. Trinity Valley Community College, 6 p.m.
- Coahoma girls vs. Stamford, 7:30 p.m.
- Sands vs. Dawson, 6:30 p.m./8 p.m.

Longhorns roll past Iowa State in Ames

By LUKE MEREDITH

Associated Press Writer
AMES, Iowa — With Daniel Gibson dominating on both ends of the floor, Texas once again looks like a national title contender.

Kenton Paulino scored a career-high 20 points and Gibson scored 19 while helping hold Iowa State's Curtis Stinson to a season-low seven points as No. 8 Texas blew out Iowa State 78-58 Monday night to extend its winning streak to five games.

Texas (13-2, 2-0 Big 12) has won each game during this stretch by double digits — including a 69-58 victory at No. 5 Memphis — and has moved back into the Top 10 for the first time since early December.

Gibson, who scored 18 in the win over Memphis, scored 17 points in the second half as Texas blew open a 34-32 game. His play on both ends of the floor prompted Longhorns coach Rick Barnes to declare that Gibson played his best game of the year.

"If you knew how hard he worked, you just knew it was just a matter of time before he had a game like he had tonight," Barnes said.

Gibson's scoring numbers are down slightly from last season, when he was named the Big 12 Freshman of the Year. But Texas coach Rick Barnes said the Longhorns have asked Gibson to play a much larger role on defense this season, often putting him on the opponent's best perimeter player.

Gibson took it upon himself to shut down Stinson, a preseason first team All-Big 12 pick who has scored at will in almost every game he's played this season.

"I don't think I've put together an offensive and a defensive game like I

did tonight," Gibson said. "Whenever there's a challenge put in front of me, I'm ready and willing to step up and guard anybody."

The Longhorns broke the game open with a 14-4 run early in the second half. Paulino hit a 3-pointer to put Texas up by nine, and LaMarcus Aldridge converted a 3-point play to give the Longhorns a 48-36 lead with 15:00 left. Paulino finished with six 3-pointers.

"We made too many mistakes tonight not getting out to their shooters. Texas was able to capitalize," said Iowa State coach Wayne Morgan. "We had to pick our poison on whether to stop the inside game or give up their shots outside."

Iowa State (11-4, 1-1) briefly got within 49-40, but Gibson made consecutive 3-pointers to push the Longhorns' lead to 68-49 with 5:50 left.

Texas kept the Cyclones at bay in the second half by pounding them on the boards, outrebounding Iowa State 23-8.

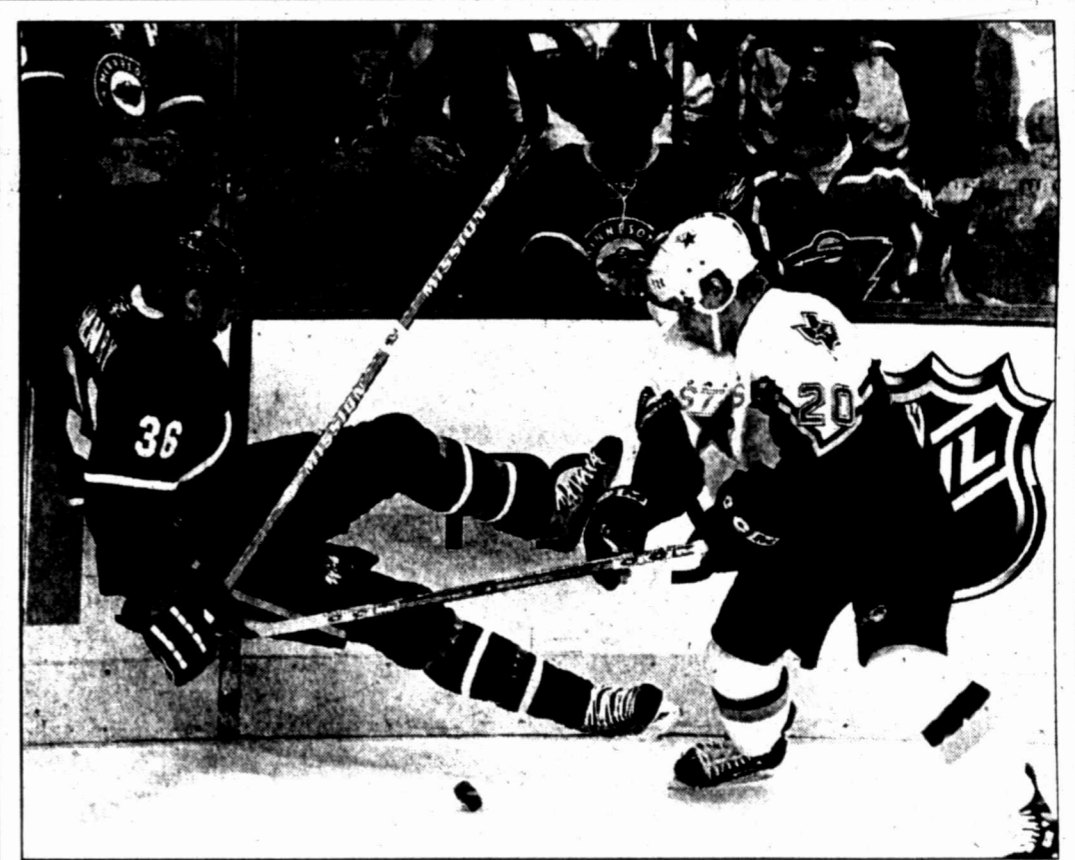
Paulino took advantage of constant open looks and broke his career high for points for the second straight game. He made five 3-pointers in the first half, and keyed a 17-6 run that put the Longhorns ahead to stay late in the first half.

Paulino tied the game at 20 with a 3-pointer, then capped the spurt with back-to-back threes late in the first half to give Texas a 34-26 lead.

"He's like a silent assassin. People really don't think about (Paulino) as being one of scorers, but he steps up and does what he does. He knocks down shots," said P.J. Tucker.

Rahshon Clark led the Cyclones with 18 points. Will Blalock added 17.

Texas is now 2-5 all-time at Hilton Coliseum.



KRT photo/Chris Polydoroff, St. Paul Pioneer Press
Minnesota Wild's Alex Henry, left, is upended by Dallas Stars' Antti Miettinen during second period action. The Stars defeated the Wild, 2-1, at the Xcel Energy Center in Saint Paul, Minn., Monday.

Mavs win on Stackhouse jumper

Dallas takes down Celtics in Boston

BOSTON (AP) — Dallas had one too many shooters for the Boston Celtics to cover.

Jerry Stackhouse made a baseline jumper with 0.1 seconds left to lift the Mavericks over the Celtics 104-102 Monday night.

Jason Terry hit seven 3-pointers and finished with 30 points, and Dirk Nowitzki scored 26 as the Mavericks won their third straight game. They improved to 13-5 on the road, best in the Western Conference.

On the game-winning play, the original plan was for Terry or Nowitzki, but it was Stackhouse who got open.

Stackhouse got the ball in front of the Celtics bench and drove the right baseline before pulling up and nailing a 12-footer over Ricky Davis.

"Obviously, I've hit a quite a few shots in this

league," Stackhouse said with a smile.

Stackhouse finished 20 points and Keith Van Horn had 12.

"It was for JT if we could get him the ball because of the game he was having, or we would have liked Dirk to take the shot," Stackhouse said. "At that point, it's just a matter of whoever gets the ball."

Stackhouse missed the first 26 games of the season with a sore right knee before returning on Dec. 23.

Paul Pierce led the Celtics with 32 points, tying it with a 3-pointer with 6.5 seconds to play. The Celtics erased a 12-point deficit in the closing 5:50.

"They have a number of guys who can step up," Pierce said. "That's why they're one of the better teams in the NBA."

Van Horn hit two 3s, Nowitzki one and Terry another during a 14-4 run that made it 96-84.

The Celtics answered

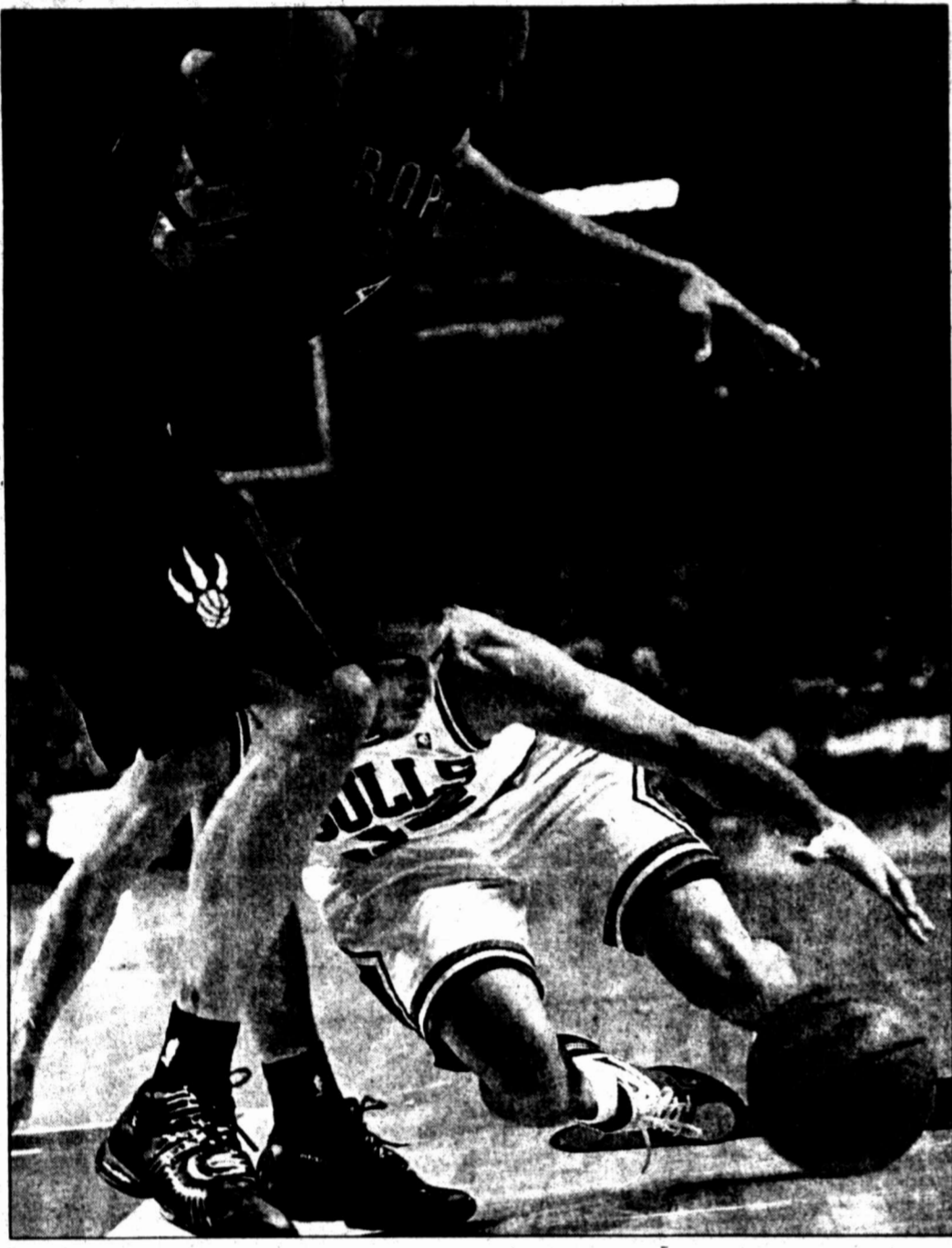
with a 15-4 surge, closing to 100-99 on Pierce's driving dunk with 1:35 to go. Mark Blount missed a jumper with just over a minute left that would have given Boston the lead, and Josh Howard grabbed the rebound. Howard also got an offensive rebound before Nowitzki hit a fallaway over Pierce, making it 102-99 with 16 seconds to play.

Pierce then nailed his 3, setting the stage for Stackhouse.

"I was right there," Davis said. "He made a great shot. I pressured him, but he made a great pull-up."

Led by three from Terry, five of Dallas' eight baskets in the third quarter were 3-pointers as the Mavericks took a 79-74 lead.

The Mavericks took their first lead since early in the second quarter at 68-65 when Terry nailed his sixth 3-pointer of the game with 5:51 left in the third period.



Chicago Bulls' Kirk Hinrich falls while trying to dribble past Toronto Raptors' Aaron Williams. The Bulls defeated the Raptors 113-104 at the United Center in Chicago, Ill., Monday.

Chiefs make it official, hire Edwards to be next coach

By DOUG TUCKER
AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Herman Edwards, Mo. — Herman Edwards, ready to take charge of the good and the bad, the talented and the mediocre, and the lazy and the energetic as the new coach of the Kansas City Chiefs.

"I can coach anything you give me — good players, great players. That's my job as a coach," he said.

Edwards' spirited introduction to Kansas City on Monday seemed at times to be part news conference and part old-fashioned evangelical crusade. His voice seeming to bounce off the walls, the 10th head coach in franchise history refused to take any questions about the intrigue that led to his departure from

the New York Jets.

But he was full of platitudes and coaching homilies, and promised to conduct himself with integrity while squeezing the very best out of everybody who fell under his scrutiny.

Sitting in the back of the room was quarterback Trent Green, who has led the most prolific offense in the NFL the past five years. Green and other members of the NFL's only 10-win team not in the playoffs had campaigned for offensive coordinator Al Saunders, who was the first to be interviewed by Chiefs president Carl Peterson.

But listening to his new coach's passion sparked a positive response.

"I thought he was very impressive," Green said. "I thought he handled the questions very well. Obviously, he sent out a

very profound message and I'm excited about it."

The hiring even makes NFL history because 17 years ago Edwards served a minority internship with Kansas City. Now he becomes the first alumnus of the league's minority fellowship program to become head coach of the team he interned with.

He signed a four-year contract with the Chiefs after getting released from the final two years of his deal with the New York Jets, who got a fourth-round draft pick in return.

His hiring, expected for more than a week, concludes intense, behind-the-scenes wrangling between the Jets and Chiefs general manager Carl Peterson, who has been Edwards' friend and mentor since he tried to recruit him to UCLA more than 30 years ago.

Colts land four on All-Pro team

By MICHAEL MAROT
AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS — Bob Sanders helped change the image of the Indianapolis Colts' defense with a few big hits.

The sports writers and broadcasters rewarded him Monday by making him among the Colts' league-high four players on this year's Associated Press All-Pro team.

"Knowing the way I play and the attitude I have for this game, I felt like I was the guy who should take it to another level," Sanders said. "It has to do with being physical"

Joining Sanders, a safety, on the first team were quarterback Peyton Manning, center Jeff Saturday and defensive end Dwight Freeney. Seattle also had four players named to the first

team.

Receiver Marvin Harrison and linebacker Cato June were both second-team selections.

For the high-scoring Colts, it was an unusually balanced mix, and Sanders was the biggest surprise. The second-year player from Iowa, whose rookie season was limited by injuries, made the kind of impact coach Tony Dungy expected when the Colts took him in the second round of the 2004 draft.

He finished with 118 tackles — second on the team — had one interception, forced one fumble and recovered a fumble. It was enough to earn 22 of 50 votes, second to Pittsburgh safety Troy Polamalu who had 37.

Manning, a two-time MVP who finished second in this year's MVP and offensive player of the

year balloting, was named the top quarterback for the third straight year.

Freeney earned his second straight selection to the All-Pro team.

Saturday was honored for the first time in his seven-year career.

During the offseason, Dungy said he wanted the Colts to be more physical on defense this year, and Sanders seemed to take the plea personally. With Sanders healthy, the addition of defensive tackle Corey Simon and the emergence of June and Gary Brackett, Indy jumped from the No. 29 defense to No. 11.

"We've been healthier this year, which allowed us to practice more, and the guys carried it out," Dungy said. "Bob Sanders has certainly been the ring leader, but it's not just him."

Texas to celebrate title Sunday

• State Rep. asks UT to retire VV's jersey

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas will honor its national championship football team with a celebration Sunday at Royal Memorial Stadium.

Longhorn players and coaches as well as the band, cheerleaders, and other spirit groups will participate.

Texas won its first outright national championship since 1969 with the Longhorns' 41-38 Rose

Bowl victory over Southern California.

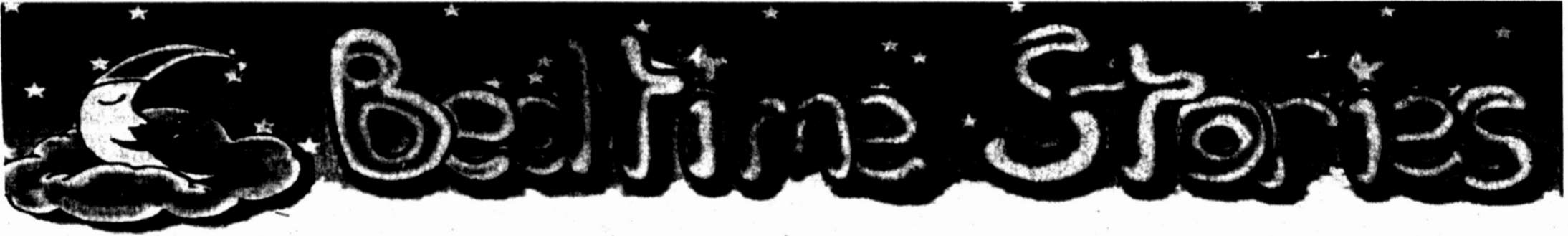
The stadium gates will open at 3:30 p.m., with the program to start at 5 p.m. Season highlights will run on the scoreboard Jumbotron. The University Tower will be lighted orange with the No. 1 on all four sides at 6 p.m.

Also on Monday, state Rep. Corbin Van Arsdale, R-Tomball, asked the school to retire quarterback Vince Young's No. 10 jersey. Young was 30-2

as a starter in his career and scored three touchdowns against USC, including the game-winner with 19 seconds left.

Young announced Sunday he would enter the NFL draft and would not return to Texas for his senior season.

Texas has previously retired only two football jerseys — Earl Campbell's No. 20 and Ricky Williams' No. 34. They are the only two Texas players to win the Heisman Trophy.



DICKIE, THE CARPENTER AND THE HOUSE THAT FELL

When he was a very young boy, all he ever wanted to do was be a carpenter. Do you know what a carpenter does? Does he build homes, like yours and mine? Yes, that's right! A carpenter can build homes and doghouses, birdhouses, and even toys! Would you like to be a carpenter when you grow up? This little boy's name was Dickie.

When he was only five years old, he made a little wagon.



It was a very pretty wagon, too. His neighbors loved to push and pull the wagon everywhere they went. Sometimes, one of Dickie's friends would even ride in the wagon, while Dickie pushed him up and down the hills. They would go fast. They would go slow. Dickie loved to be pushed in the wagon, too. Do you have a wagon? Have you ever ridden in your wagon? Have you ever pushed one of your friends in your wagon? That is fun, isn't it?

As Dickie grew older and

bigger, he would build many different things. When he was twelve, he built a doghouse for his little puppy. The little puppy was very happy to have his own house. He wagged his tail every time he went into his new house. When he wagged his tail, he was telling Dickie, "Thank You" for building this nice doghouse just for him.

When Dickie was eighteen years old, he had become a man, and he still loved to build things. He was learning how to build things better and better as each year passed by. He was now a carpenter! And, that made him very happy! His next door neighbor was one of his



friends he grew up with and pushed many times in the little wagon he made many years ago. His friend still remembers the little wagon too, and all the times they had pushed and pulled that wagon up and down the hills, shouting with glee! His friend needed a new

porch because the one he had for so many years was getting old and not safe anymore. Do you think Dickie could build a new porch? Of

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course he can, for Dickie is now a carpenter!

Dickie had another friend who now lived way over on the other side of town. Her name was Kimberly. Kimberly was also one of Dickie's friends who had ridden the little wagon up and down those hills, and loving every minute of it! Dickie really liked Kimberly too, because she was so nice. Kimberly liked Dickie also, because he was nice, too!



It was on one of those beautiful mornings, when the sun was shining brightly, and the birds were chirping, and the flowers had awoken

from their long winter sleep, that Kimberly called Dickie. She had a very sad sound in her voice. Dickie asked what was wrong? Why did she sound so sad? It was then that Kimberly told Dickie that her house had fallen down! "Can you help me," she asked, crying? "I have no money to pay you, but I will someday. Will you help me? I must have my home fixed!"

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Do you think Dickie should help his friend? Do you think Dickie will help his friend? Of course he will! That is what friends do! They help each other! Dickie gathered all the tools he thought he might need, and ran over to Kimberly's house as fast as he could go.

When he saw Kimberly's house, he wondered why it didn't fall a very long time before this. The poor little house was in terrible shape. Its roof was falling down. Its windows were sagging! Its front porch was a front porch no more. Dickie had

the biggest job ahead of him that he had ever seen! It was going to take a lot of hard work and a very long time to fix this house! Can Dickie do it? Don't forget, he is now a carpenter! This was going to be a big test for him! He will finally see if all the things he had learned all through the years will help him.



He started on the roof. He worked and worked on that roof. Then one day, he saw that the roof was going to be okay. It even looked very good!

Then he started working on the walls! Day after day, week after week he worked, and then the walls started looking much better. Better than before!

Then, he worked on the floors. They looked better and better with each passing day! And finally, he started working on the brand new porch. It was a much different porch than the old one. It was much more beautiful! It seemed to reach all the

way around the little house, as if it was trying to hug it!

Dickie and Kimberly walked out into the street, turned around, and looked at the little house. It was so different! It was so much better than ever before! But, it still needed something! "I know," said Dickie, "Let's paint it!" This would be all the little house would need for a very long time.

So, paint it, they did! And after the painting was all done, and the paint had dried, they both walked back into the street, turned around and looked at this house again. It was magnificent! It was now the prettiest house on the block! Kimberly was so proud of her new home. Dickie was so proud that he could help his childhood friend. Dickie was so glad now, that all he ever wanted to do was become a carpenter. And, what a nice carpenter he was!

Dickie is building a new house right now for a little old lady, but he told me to tell you, "Good Night"



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TUESDAY

Table with 24 columns (WFAA, KMD, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, KTLT, KWES, WTBS, KMLM, KOCV, DISC, AMC, SPIKE, TNT, BET, DISN, ESPN2, ESPN, SCIFI) and 12 rows (6-12 PM) listing various TV programs and their channels.

DENNIS THE MENACE



"I THINK THAT WAS MARGARET'S SPECIALTY... A TRIPLE KLUTZ!"

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Instead of buttons, let's give him a zipper and Velcro!"

HAGAR



BLONDIE



BC



WIZARD OF ID



AGNES



HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BETLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, Jan. 10, the 10th day of 2006. There are 355 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On Jan. 10, 1776, Thomas Paine published his influential pamphlet, "Common Sense." On this date: In 1861, Florida seceded from the Union. In 1863, London's Metropolitan, the world's first underground passenger railway, opened to the public. In 1870, John D. Rockefeller incorporated Standard Oil. In 1920, the League of Nations was established as the Treaty of Versailles went into effect. In 1946, the first manmade contact with the moon was made as radar signals were bounced off the lunar surface. In 1946, the first General Assembly of the United Nations convened in London.

In 1957, Harold Macmillan became prime minister of Britain, following the resignation of Anthony Eden. In 1971, "Masterpiece Theatre" premiered on PBS with host Alistair Cooke introducing a drama series, "The First Churchills." In 1984, the United States and the Vatican established full diplomatic relations for the first time in more than a century. One year ago: CBS issued a damning, independent review of mistakes related to a "60 Minutes Wednesday" report on President Bush's National Guard service and fired three news executives and a producer for their "myopic zeal" in rushing it to air. Today's Birthdays: Jazz musician Max Roach is 82. Opera singer Sherrill Milnes is 71. Blues artist Eddy Clearwater is 71. Rock singer-musician Ronnie Hawkins is 71. Baseball Hall-of-Famer Willie McCovey is 68. Singer Scott McKenzie is 67. Movie director Walter Hill is 64. Singer Frank Sinatra Jr. is 62. Singer Rod Stewart is 61. Rock singer-musician Donald Fagen (Steely Dan) is 58. Actor William Sanderson is 58. Boxer George Foreman is 57. Singer Pat Benatar is 53. Singer Shawn Colvin is 48. Rock singer-musician Curt Kirkwood (Meat Puppets) is 47. Actor Evan Handler is 45. Rock singer Brad Roberts (Crash Test Dummies) is 42. Actress Trini Alvarado is 39. Rock musician Matt Roberts (3 Doors Down) is 28. Rapper Chris Smith (Kris Kross) is 27.

Thought for Today: "History must speak for itself. A historian is content if he has been able to shed more light." - William L. Shirer, American author and journalist (1904-1993). © 2005 The Associated Press.

Answer to previous puzzle. A grid of words: CRAB, RETAR, GNAT, HERE, ALICE, LACE, EVER, NICHE, OPEN, SUNGLASSES, BASS, TEASLET, DELE, GARB, ATSEA, CLAP, BURN, CROWD, LIMOS, BIO, KOREA, ARESO, SEED, TERM, WANTS, FLEA, PAPA, TIME, STRIPS, ORES, ALIVE, STABLE, NEST, TONER, EVIL, DATE, STILT, DENS.

Newsday Crossword

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Clues include: 1. ___ fide (genuine), 5. Enjoy bubble gum, 9. Makes a sketch, 14. Brother of Cain, 15. Where you live, 16. Bouquet flowers, 17. Highway, 18. Take a crack ___ (try), 19. Keats or Shelley, 20. Balance-sheet total, 22. HS juniors' exams, 23. "Electric" fish, 24. Fruit-filled dessert, 25. Walked casually, 29. 100-yard dash, e.g., 34. Merchandise, 35. Mouse catcher, 36. Zhivago's love, 37. ___ now (so far), 38. Angry, 39. Nest-egg accts., 40. Does not exist, 41. Raucous noises, 42. Ben Franklin's bill, 43. Student's reading, 45. Gave one's autograph, 46. Completely, 47. Nightclub performance, 48. Pet protection org., 51. Obligated, so to speak, 57. Takes a glance, 58. Part of an ear, 59. Otherwise, 60. Grown-up, 61. U.S. Pacific island, 62. Depend, 63. Fills completely, 64. Penny-___ poker, 65. Ghost sounds, 9. "Change the subject!", 10. Twilight Zone creator, 11. Where Romeo is, 12. Toward sunset, 13. Former fast fliers: Abbr., 21. Takes a glance at, 24. Vatican leader, 25. Be patient for, 26. En ___, (as a group), 27. Borough north of Manhattan, 28. Football position, 29. Candid, 30. Meal for a mare, 31. Composer, 32. Fruit box, 33. Made simpler, 35. Threesome, 38. Object of worship, 42. Refer to, 44. Explosions, 45. Devious plan, 47. Facing the pitcher, 48. Regretful word, 49. Carbonated drink, 50. Sulk, 51. Gymnast Korbut, 52. Person, place, or thing, 53. Basil or rosemary, 54. Margarine, 55. Norway's largest city, 56. Locksmith's creations.

THIS son is a leaping, king gos- wherever rigue she ye a well- the hard w days. It ing ahead e such a aybe you ay across April 19). with an se another Take a your best - first to others. de is emi- 0-May 20). ets in the ne some- he planets press you. t have to magic to 1-June 21). ou a curve, is simply r attention n. Gemini, well, and tcome can tion. 22-July 22). e mistake s for weak- ke! You're u seem - colleagues -Aug. 22). ers that can meone you with. Take stacles in hange. For expressing 3-Sept. 22). annoyed by walk around smile. But ght become u see how fferent with 23-Oct. 23). ult relation- a rainbow s. Rainbows at least they ometimes a you need to 24-Nov. 21). re a person ough with what you rson could' s needed is ry clear in (Nov. 22- e is a state of nding. Your d are noble. mystery that affection - will unfold ts. Dec. 22-Jan. it your busi- ying speed, professional knowing the rest of the roach their same profes- Jan. 20-Feb. sociated with e in a growth arabie meas- an take full ringing your playfulness d yourself. 19-March 20). and go. It is nember their much clarity nce. You are x, and be ASTROLOGI- TS: Wonders year, mostly open to being give up the past because is more inter- and impres- your life. ruary show a aracter influ- d. It is lucky his person or t-term invest- es situation. w places in ould move to tions to your in the spring. brings new too, so your will have to to handle the causes you to ore creatively. anges you are iness require tional skills. hen you sur- with beauty in in you needs in provide this rtance to nur- ationship. By ou'll probably ur friendships of your life, cherished and nts. Romance year when it solid platonic the most pas-

Wacky Facts

* Grasshopper Glacier, in Montana's Custer National Forest, gets its name from the millions of grasshoppers trapped in its ice.
* Record low temperatures of minus 90 F have been recorded in the region of Siberia.
— World Almanac for Kids

KID NEWS

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Chatter Box

"I was at the skating rink and I grabbed a girl by the arm because she refused to skate with me. I wanted to hold hands, but she ran off and left me hanging!"
— Usher, on an embarrassing dating episode, in Twist magazine.

In The News

This writer's a 'Hoot'

For author Carl Hiaasen, finding the characters and plots for his outrageously fun stories is no problem. Hiaasen, who wrote the bestseller "Hoot," lives in Florida and takes his writing cues from the people and places around him. Hiaasen not only writes kid's books, he also writes a non-fiction column **TIME FOR KIDS** for a newspaper and hilarious novels for grown-ups.

Hiaasen talked to Time For Kids about his most recent book, "Flush," the Florida wilderness and turning "Hoot" into a movie.

TFK: The kids in "Hoot" and "Flush" help change their communities and protect the environment. What do you hope kids learn from characters like Noah and Roy?

Hiaasen: If there's any message to these books, it's that everybody can make a difference if they make a stand. From the many letters I've received, it's plain that kids care so much about Roy and Noah because Roy and Noah care enough about their world to take action — and to take on the establishment. It's an example that too few grownups provide.

TFK: Where do you get your ideas for your characters and the situations they get into?

Hiaasen: The situations come from real-life events I know about or read about in the newspaper. South Florida is teeming with weird and interesting stories, and wild characters, too. I get bits and pieces of the characters from people I know, or have met, but most of their DNA comes out of my own warped imagination.

TFK: Like Noah in "Flush," did you spend a lot of time outdoors when you were growing up? If so, how did that influence your writing?

Hiaasen: The best part of my childhood was spent exploring the woods and swamps on the fringe of the Everglades. It had a huge influence on my writing because it gave me a passion for wild places, and something that I knew was worth fighting for.

TFK: How can kids get involved in protecting the environment?

Hiaasen: I always tell people who want to protect the places they care about — rivers, forests, estuaries, whatever — to stay alert, stay involved and, most importantly, show up at the meetings to let the politicians know that you care, and you're not alone. And even if you lose a few battles, don't quit fighting. The stakes are too high. Once these places are gone, ruined by pollution and development, we'll never get them back.

TFK: What do you like best about writing books for kids?

Hiaasen: I love the reactions I get from kids who read my books. ... The letters from kids knock me out — they're funny, perceptive, thoughtful and very candid.

TFK: What advice do you have for young writers?

Hiaasen: Anybody who wants to be a writer ought to first be a reader. Reading not only inspires you to write, it will teach you more about the craft than any teacher or college professor. ...

TFK: What do you think of "Hoot" being made into a movie?

Hiaasen: So far, I'm optimistic about the film version of "Hoot." They finished shooting a few weeks ago here in Florida, and the stuff I've seen is very funny, and true to the spirit of the novel. I'm keeping my fingers crossed. — Jill Egan



Carl Hiaasen



Carl Hiaasen

weather is close or occurring. Warnings are issued for heavy accumulations of snow, freezing rain and sleet.

A "winter weather advisory" is issued for accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle and sleet that will cause significant problems. Extreme caution should be used in these instances.

What's the difference between snow, sleet, freezing rain and more?

Here are the precipitation definitions, according to USA Today's Weather Book:

SNOW: falling ice composed of crystals in complex hexagonal forms; it forms mainly when water vapor turns directly to ice without going through the liquid stage, a process called sublimation.

SNOW FLURRIES: light showers of snow that do not cover large areas and do not fall steadily for long periods of time.

SLEET: drops of rain or drizzle that freeze into ice as they fall; they usually are smaller than 3/16 inch in diameter.

FREEZING RAIN OR DRIZZLE: falling rain or drizzle that cools below 32 degrees but does not turn to ice in the air; when the drops hit anything, they instantly turn into ice.

SOURCES: WWW.NOAA.GOV; USA TODAY'S WEATHER BOOK; NATIONAL SNOW AND ICE DATA CENTER (HTTP://NSIDC.ORG)

When the weather outside is frightful, you'll know the difference between snow, sleet and frozen rain

there is some type of moisture and some way to lift or cool the air.

What's the difference between winter weather watches, warnings and advisories?

The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service uses the weather terms to let us know what kind of weather conditions are heading our way.

A "winter storm watch" is like a storm-preparation alert. If you hear a forecaster issue a watch, this means there is a possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, freezing rain or sleet. A watch typically is announced 12 to 48 hours before the start of a winter storm.

If a "watch" is upgraded to a "winter storm warning," that means the wintry

By KARALEE MILLER
Knight Ridder Newspapers

As the cold weather moves in, some wintry questions have us heated.

But when a chilly blast of sleet, snow and ice moves in, schools close. Office workers end the day early. Ice scrapers and mittens whiz off store shelves.

With plenty more arctic air this winter, we decided to stop flaking out and once and for all find the answers to some of our wintry-weather wonders.

Why is snow white?

The answer lies in the sun. Visible sunlight is white. Although most natural materials absorb, and gain their color from, sunlight, snow reflects most of the sun's rays. Snow, however, does absorb some sunlight, which gives it a white appearance.

Is it safe to eat snow?

If you're starving, or just curious, clean snow (NOTE: clean!) is OK to chow. However, remember that snow in urban areas can end up with pollutants that you should not ingest. So, even though it may look enticing, wouldn't you rather head inside for a PB&J instead?

Can it ever be too cold to snow?

No matter how low the temperature gets outside, snow can still fall, as long as



Winter wondering

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