



Former high school track star shot to death

Lamesa man charged with murder in early morning Christmas Eve shooting of Tory Mitchell

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

A Lamesa man and a Big Spring woman remain in police custody today following the shooting death of a former Big Spring High School track star during the early morning hours of Christmas Eve.

Tory Mitchell, 26, was pro-

nounced dead by Justice of the Peace Benny Green at a residence in the 2600 block of Fairchild at shortly after midnight Sunday morning.

According to Sgt. Tony Everett, public information officer for the Big Spring Police Department, Mitchell was shot multiple times.

"At 12:05 a.m. patrol officers

were dispatched to a residence in the 2600 block of Fairchild in reference to a shooting," said Everett. "Officers were advised that one subject had been shot and the suspect had left the scene in a small, red Ford. While en route to the call, a police officer saw a vehicle matching the description. He stopped and detained the two

occupants of the vehicle."

Michael Harbert, 23, of Lamesa, and Felicia Aldridge, 20, of Big Spring, were arrested, according to Everett.

"Harbert was found to be in possession of a handgun that is believed to be the murder weapon," said Everett. "Harbert was charged with murder, possession of marijua-

na and interfering with a police officer's duties. Aldridge is charged with three counts of possession of a controlled substance.

"Bond was set for Harbert at \$200,000 for the murder charge and \$1,500 for each of the lesser charges. Aldridge's bond was

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Volunteers make Christmas bright for BSSH patients

By VALERIE AVERY

Special to the Herald

Big Spring State Hospital patients took just minutes to unwrap presents Christmas morning that were a year in the making.

Volunteers hosted fund-raisers, operated The Chalet Resale Shop and solicited donations through a Christmas appeal letter to generate donations for this year's Christmas celebration.

"It has been a year-long undertaking, but one that was very satisfying," said Billie Christie-Morgan, Big Spring State Hospital director of community relations. "It has taken a year to bring volunteers, the community and the hospital together to celebrate this holiday."

The state provides basic care for the 200 patients at the state-owned and operated psychiatric hospital. But volunteers, through many of their



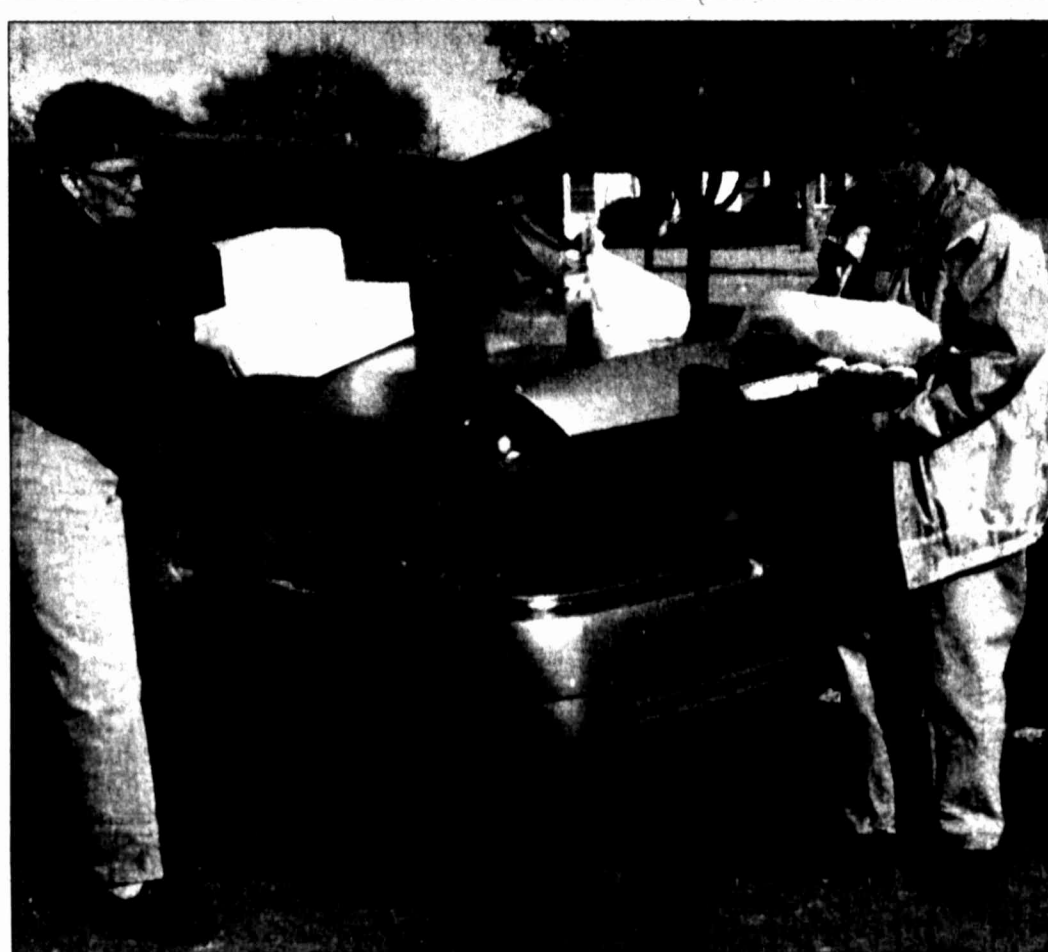
Christie-Morgan

ventures, pay for the little extras needed for the patients.

"We've long recognized that many of our patients do better in treatment when someone reaches out to them, whether it's by offering a cookie or cake at a birthday party, hosting a holiday celebration or rewarding them with gifts," said Ed Moughon, Big Spring State Hospital superintendent.

Volunteers purchased jogging suits and other gifts, including snacks and personal grooming items.

"Our volunteers have really expanded the program from previous years," Christie-Morgan said. "We always wanted to make sure they opened two gifts on Christmas morning, but now we



Judy Osborn and Eadie Falkner, members of the 14th Street and Main Church of Christ, deliver desserts for the hospital's annual Christmas party earlier this month. Many organizations, churches and volunteers worked months to make the party happen for the 200 patients at Big Spring State Hospital.

have lots of other goodies packed in there as well."

"The staff tells us that it is a really big deal to our patients. Many of them

are alone on the holiday and giving them these gifts just brightens up their normal routine. It shows them that there

are many people who don't know them who care about them as well."

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Tax-Aide program seeks help

By THOMAS JENKINS

Staff Writer

While most area residents are concentrating on making it through yet another holiday season, local officials with AARP are thinking about something very different.

AARP is preparing to get its annual Tax-Aide program under way and is in need of volunteers to help prepare tax forms.

Local AARP spokesperson Gloria Hopkins said the program is designed to help people who might not otherwise be able to file a tax return.

"The AARP program provides free federal tax preparation assistance to people who cannot afford professional tax help, such as seniors, people with disabilities, those that don't speak English and people with low-to-moderate income," said Hopkins, who serves as the local site coordinator for the effort.

Hopkins said the program is a necessity for many area residents who can't afford to have their taxes prepared by a professional, and the heart and soul of the operation is its volunteers.

"AARP volunteers explain many special tax credits and deductions and how people may claim them on their tax returns," she said. "These volunteers help people complete their returns, right down to any refunds that may be due them."

"Being a volunteer is very easy. You don't have to be a number whiz or have any experience in accounting. You just need to be computer-literate and have a basic understanding of the tax forms and how to fill them out. Everything else is going to be covered in the training classes."

Hopkins said training

See TAX-AIDE, Page 3A



James Brown, despite being 73, was planning to perform on New Year's Eve. The "Godfather of Soul" died Christmas morning of heart failure.

'Godfather of Soul' dies of heart failure

By HARRY R. WEBER

Associated Press Writer

ATLANTA — James Brown, the undeniable "Godfather of Soul," told friends from his hospital bed that he was looking forward to performing on New Year's Eve, even though he was ill with pneumonia. His heart gave out a few hours later, on Christmas morning.

The pompadoured dynamo whose classic singles include "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag" and "I Got You (I Feel Good)" died Monday of

"This is a guy who literally changed the music industry. He put everybody on a different beat, a different style of music. He pioneered it."

heart failure, said his agent, Frank Copsidas of Intrigue Music. He was 73.

"People already know his history, but I would like for them to know he

was a man who preached love from the stage," said friend Charles Bobbit, who was with Brown at the hospital. "His thing was 'I never saw a person that I didn't love.' He was a true humanitarian who loved his country."

The entertainer with the rough-edged voice and flashy footwork also had diabetes and prostate cancer that was in remission, Bobbit said. Brown initially seemed fine at the hospital, Copsidas said. Three days before his death, he had participated

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THAT'S LOTS OF SLICES

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — It's no secret that Willis Welch loves pecan pie — someone has left one on his doorstep before Christmas for the past 25 years.

The identity of his Secret Santa remains a mystery, but it appears the 82-year-old Welch has more than one: The handwriting or typing on the Merry Christmas note has differed each year. Some years, a voice on the telephone has told him to look on his front porch for his pie. Welch said many of his friends know he's addicted to pecan pie and anticipate his gift arriving each year. This year's pie arrived early on Christmas Eve and Welch said he had a piece for breakfast.

EDITOR DIES IN FIRE

AUSTIN (AP) — The editor of Texas Highways magazine was killed in a fire authorities think he started in his home. Jack Lowry had been the publication's editor since 1992.

The fire that killed Lowry broke out in a closet around 8:30 p.m. Friday. Investigators say Lowry intentionally set the blaze with newspapers.

Lowry was taken to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead. His wife, Dawn Lowry, escaped the fire uninjured.

Associate Editor Nora McKey described him as a soft-spoken leader known for hiring good people. "We admired him so much," McKey said. "He was the best."

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD ...

BERGEN, Norway (AP) — At first, Vidar Aarhus thought it was just an annoying local Christmas Eve tradition.

But after hearing the Salhus Church bells ring for five hours straight, he decided to make some telephone calls.

"I was worried that my children wouldn't be able to sleep," Aarhus said. "It was pretty late. After talking to a few friends I knew something was wrong."

Aarhus, who lives just 100 yards from Salhus Church, moved with his family to Bergen six months ago. The church's priest, Arvid Andreas Fosse, apologized after the bells came to a standstill, saying they weren't supposed to ring so long.

Obituaries

Bessie R. Trevino

Bessie R. Trevino, 92, of Round Rock, former resident of Big Spring, died Saturday, Dec. 23, 2006, in Round Rock. Funeral services will be held 2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2006, at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church with Father James Plagens officiating. Interment will follow at Mt. Olive Memorial Park.

Rosary services will be held Tuesday, Dec. 26, 2006, at 7 p.m. at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel.

She was born April 5, 1914, in Big Spring, and married Jose Trevino. He preceded her in death.

Bessie was a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

Survivors include three sons, Rafael Trevino of Dallas, Joe Trevino Jr. and George Trevino; four daughters, Joann Trevino and Mary Ann Trevino, all of Greeley, Colo., K. Anaya of Round Rock, and W.T. Goodman of Temple; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She was also preceded in death by two sons.

The family suggests memorials be made to Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 508 N. Alyesford, Big Spring 79720.

Arrangements under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring. Online condolences can be made at: www.npwelch.com

Howard Moore

Howard Moore, 77, of Big Spring, died Saturday, Dec. 23, 2006, in a local hospital. His services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Elmer Bolte

Elmer Bolte, 85, of Big Spring, died Saturday, Dec. 23, 2006, in a Snyder hospital. His services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Tory Mitchell

Tory Mitchell, 26, died Sunday, Dec. 24, 2006. Funeral Services are pending with Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Mary Gray

Mary Gray, 73, of Coahoma, died Monday, Dec. 25, 2006, in Conroe. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Aida C. Gonzalez

Aida C. Gonzalez, 88, of Big Spring, died Tuesday, Dec. 26, 2006, at her residence. Her services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Weather

Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 30s. South winds around 10 mph.

Wednesday...Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 60s. Southwest winds 10 to 20 mph.

Wednesday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 40s. South winds 15 to 20 mph.

Thursday...Partly cloudy with a slight chance of rain. Highs around 60. South winds 15 to 20 mph.

Thursday night...Mostly cloudy. Lows in the mid 30s.

Friday...Mostly cloudy. Highs in the lower 50s.

Friday night...Mostly cloudy. Lows in the upper 20s.

Support Groups

TUESDAY

• The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) support group meets from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Howard County Library, 500 S. Main. Anyone who has a mental illness or has a friend or family with mental illness is invited to participate. Call Felicia Talley at 268-3835 for more information.

• Al-Anon, 615 Settles for family members and friends of alcoholics meets at 8 p.m.

• Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. and closed discussion meeting 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

• RSD (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, a chronic pain disease), a new support and informative group meets at 213 Circle. Call Lucy at 264-1213 for more information.

• Dual Recovery Anonymous (DRA), 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Howard County Library Basement Community Room. DRA is a 12-step meeting for those who have a desire to stop drinking and/or using drugs and also have a mental or emotional illness.

All meetings are non-smoking and coffee is not available.

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Police blotter

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity between 10 a.m. Saturday and 7 a.m. today:

• **FELICIA ALDRIDGE**, 20, of 1900 Martin Luther King Boulevard, was arrested Sunday on charges of possession of a controlled substance (three counts).

• **MICHAEL HARBERT**, 23, of Lamesa, was arrested Sunday on charges of murder, possession of marijuana - two ounces or less and a local citation.

• **JEROME EDWARD MITCHELL**, 25, of 1213 Ridgeroad, was arrested Sunday on a local warrant.

• **BYRON PAYNE**, 20, of 1509 Stadium, was arrested Monday on a charge of public intoxication.

• **UNAUTHORIZED USE OF A MOTOR VEHICLE** was reported in the 1400 block of U.S. Highway 87.

• **THEFT** was reported:

- in the 200 block of FM 700.

- in the 1100 block of Lamesa.

• **POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE** was reported:

- in the 400 block of Sunset.

- in the 400 block of Fourth Street.

• **POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA - TWO OUNCES OR LESS** was reported in the 400 block of Sunset.

• **MURDER INTENTIONALLY CAUSING DEATH** was reported in the 2600 block of Fairchild.

• **CRIMINAL MISCHIEF** was reported in the 2600 block of Crestline.

Lottery

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

Winning numbers drawn: 34-3-11-1. Bonus Ball: 13.

Number matching four of four, plus Bonus Ball: 1.

Prize: \$225,000.

...

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

Winning numbers drawn: 24-30-28-29-26.

Number matching five of five: 0.

...

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Monday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 4-4-9

• **SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH** is giving away 19 10-inch particleboard pews. Pews must be picked up by early January. If interested, please call 432-263-3382 or 432-263-1444.

• **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.

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. Open birthday night, no smoking meeting the last Saturday of each month at 8 p.m.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Big Spring Herald, P.O. Box 1431, Big Spring, TX 79721. Periodicals postage paid at Big Spring, Texas.
USPS 1431-48 USPS 0055-940 ISSN 0746-6811
BY THE MONTH HOME DELIVERY: \$8.65 monthly; \$93.42 yearly (includes 10% discount). MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$12.50 monthly (includes 10% discount). MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$13.25 elsewhere.

Bulletin Board

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

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 27

• Optimist Club meets at 7 a.m. in the Howard College Cactus Room.

• Senior Circle meets at 10:30 a.m. at Scenic Mountain Medical Center for Sit and Be Fit Chair Aerobics. Those 50 years and older are invited to attend. Call 268-4721.

• Downtown Lions Club meets at noon at the Howard College Cactus Room.

• Duplicate Bridge Club meets at 1 p.m. in the Big Spring Country Club.

• Eagles Lodge Ladies Auxiliary meets at 7 p.m. in the Eagles Lodge, 703 W. Third.

THURSDAY, DEC. 28

• Gideon International Big Spring Camp U42060 meets at 7 a.m. in Herman's Restaurant.

• Coffee Club meets at 10 a.m. in Gale's Sweet Shoppe.

• Kiwanis Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room. Call 267-6479.

• Staked Plains Lodge No. 598 meets at 6:30 p.m. at 221 Main. Meal served. Meeting at 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, DEC. 29

• AMBUCS meet at noon in La Posada Restaurant.

• Greater Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Big Spring Country Club.

• Spring City Senior Citizen's Center country and western dance from 7:30 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. featuring Monroe Casey and the Prowlers. All area senior citizens are invited.

SATURDAY, DEC. 30

• Eagles Lodge Dance at 8:30 p.m. at 703 W. Third.

Take Note

• **NEW LIFE MINISTRIES** Church of God In Christ is holding a soup kitchen every second and fourth Tuesday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at 204 N.W. 10th. The meal is free.

Call 264-0771 for more information.

• **THE PET PATROL** helps locate lost pets and owners of found pets. To volunteer or for more information, call Melanie Gambrell at 267-PETS (7387).

• **HOME HOSPICE HAS COOKBOOKS** with nearly 500 recipes on sale for \$18 with proceeds to benefit Hospice House. Recipes submitted by volunteers, coordinators and owners of Home Hospice. Call Sherry Hodnett at 264-7599 for more information.

• **ODYSSEY HOSPICE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS** to work in the office and perform patient services. For more information or to volunteer, call 263-5999.

• **THE MOBILE MEALS PROGRAM** that delivers meals to the elderly and homebound needs volunteers to deliver meals. If you can spare one hour per week to deliver eight or 10 meals, you are needed. About 85 to 90 meals are prepared, packaged and delivered to recipients within the city limits of Big Spring.

If you can volunteer, please call 263-4016 before 3 p.m.

• **LEGAL AID OF NORTHWEST TEXAS** is accepting appointments from 2 p.m. until 5 p.m. the first and third Wednesday of each month. Individuals seeking legal advice for matters concerning family law, divorce, custody and child support issues, social security cases, employment and housing may contact the office to schedule an appointment. Criminal cases are not accepted. Anyone recently served with legal documents should call the office immediately at 800-926-5630 or 432-686-0647.

• **BIG SPRING AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES** are in critical need of foster families. Foster parents are the caretakers for the children in the community who have been abused or neglected. For more information on becoming foster parents or adoptive families, call the Children's Protective Services office at 263-9669.

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HERALD photo
Tory Mitchell, center, competes in the 400 meter relay during a previous Class 5-4A track meet. Mitchell was found dead at a home in the 2600 block of Fairchild early Sunday morning following a shooting that yielded two arrests.

SOUL

Continued from Page 1A

in his annual toy giveaway in Augusta, and he was looking forward to his New Year's Eve show.

"Last night, he said 'I'm going to be there. I'm the hardest working man in show business,'" Copsidas said Monday. He said Brown planned to perform during a two-week tour in Canada after hitting Times Square.

Brown was himself to the end, at one point saying, "I'm going away tonight," Bobbit said at a news conference later Monday.

"I didn't want to believe him," he said.

A short time later, Brown sighed quietly three times, closed his eyes and died, Bobbit said.

One of the major musical influences of the past 50 years, Brown was to rhythm and dance music what Bob Dylan was to lyrics. From Mick Jagger to Michael Jackson, David Bowie to Public Enemy, his rapid-footed dancing, hard-charging beats and heartfelt yet often unintelligible vocals changed the musical landscape.

He was one of the first artists inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, along with Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry and other founding fathers.

"He was an innovator, he was an emancipator, he was an originator. Rap music, all that stuff came from James Brown," Little Richard, a longtime friend of Brown's, told MSNBC.

"James Brown changed music," said Rev. Al Sharpton, who toured with Brown in the 1970s

and imitates his hairstyle to this day.

"He made soul music a world music," Sharpton said. "What James Brown was to music in terms of soul and hip-hop, rap, all of that, is what Bach was to classical music. This is a guy who literally changed the music industry. He put everybody on a different beat, a different style of music. He pioneered it."

Sharpton will officiate at Brown's funeral service, details of which were still incomplete, Copsidas said.

Brown won a Grammy for lifetime achievement in 1992, as well as Grammys in 1965 for "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag" (best R&B recording) and for "Living in America" in 1987 (best R&B vocal performance, male.)

He even had a brief but memorable role on the big screen as a manic preacher in the 1980's movie "The Blues Brothers."

Brown, who lived in Beech Island, S.C., near the Georgia line, had a turbulent personal life that included charges of abusing drugs and alcohol. After a widely publicized, drug-fueled confrontation with police in 1988 that ended in an interstate car chase, Brown spent 15 months in a South Carolina prison and 10 months in a work release program.

From the 1950s, when Brown had his first R&B hit, "Please, Please, Please" in 1956, through the mid-1970s, Brown went on a frenzy of cross-country tours, concerts and new songs. He earned the nickname "The Hardest Working Man in Show Business" and often tried to prove it to his fans, said Jay Ross, his

lawyer of 15 years.

Brown's stage act was as memorable, and as imitated, as his records, with his twirls and spins and flowing cape, his repeated faints to the floor at the end.

"He was dramatic to the end — dying on Christmas Day," said the Rev. Jesse Jackson, a friend of Brown's since 1955. "Almost a dramatic, poetic moment. He'll be all over the news all over the world today. He would have it no other way."

His "Live at The Apollo" in 1962 is widely considered one of the greatest concert records ever. He often talked of a 1964 concert in which organizers made the mistake of having the Rolling Stones, not him, close the bill, remembering Mick Jagger waiting offstage, nervously chain smoking, as he pulled off his matchless show.

"To this day, there has been no one near as funky. No one's coming even close," rapper Chuck D of Public Enemy once told the AP.

Brown routinely lost two or three pounds each time he performed and kept his furious concert schedule in his later years even as he fought prostate cancer, Ross said.

With his tight pants, eye makeup and outrageous hair, Brown set the stage for younger stars such as Michael Jackson and Prince. And the early rap generation overwhelmingly sampled his music and voice as they laid the foundation of hip-hop culture.

"Disco is James Brown, hip-hop is James Brown, rap is James Brown; you know what I'm saying? You hear all the rappers, 90 percent of their music

is me," Brown told The AP in 2003.

Born in poverty in Barnwell, S.C., in 1933, Brown was abandoned as a 4 year old to the care of relatives and friends. He grew up on the streets of Augusta, Ga., in an "ill-repute area," as he once called it, learning how to hustle to survive.

By the eighth grade in 1949, Brown had served 3 1/2 years in reform school for breaking into cars. While there, he met Bobby Byrd, whose family took Brown into their home. Byrd also took Brown into his group, the Gospel Starlighters. Soon they changed their name to the Famous Flames and their style to hard R&B.

In January 1956, King Records of Cincinnati signed the group, and four months later "Please, Please, Please" was in the R&B Top Ten.

Brown is survived by his fourth wife, Tomi Rae Hynie, one of his backup singers, and at least four children — two daughters and sons Daryl and James Brown II, Copsidas said.

MURDER

Continued from Page 2A

set at \$2,500 for each of the three charges. The case is being investigated by Det. George Oliver."

Mitchell earned double gold at the Texas University Interscholastic League (UIL) 4A.

State Track Meet in back-to-back years in the late 1990s for the 100 meter and 200 meter dashes, earning a track scholarship to the University



Harbert
of Miami in 1999. Everrett said an autopsy is expected to be performed on Mitchell's body in Lubbock this week. Funeral services are pending with Myers and Smith Funeral Home.

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

TAX-AIDE

Continued from Page 1A

classes for the tax laws will be Jan. 16-26, and will cover both tax law and the software volunteers will use to prepare the tax forms.

"It's going to be very important that our volunteers be computer-literate this year," said Hopkins. "Next year we're hoping to eliminate the paper forms completely and just utilize the software. However, if someone

wants to help and isn't comfortable operating a computer, we also have work for them, including a receptionist and greeter position. Our volunteers are important to us, in all positions they fill."

Hopkins said she expects several former volunteers to return in January, but the need for new volunteers is never-ending.

"The people we have coming back this year have been a part of the program for a number of years, so they really know their way around the sys-

tem," she said. "But we're definitely in need of more. The more volunteers we have for the program, the faster we can get people in and out with their taxes."

Hopkins said tax-help will be available at the Senior Center every Monday from 8 a.m. until noon beginning Jan. 29. The AARP program will wrap-up for the year April 9.

Electronic filing will be available.

For more information on the program, contact Hopkins at 267-6733.

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

BSSH

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Volunteers and Alon USA wrap the presents and deliver them to the units along with Plant Maintenance employees.

"It takes all of us working together," Christie-Morgan said.

Earlier this month, vol-

unteers and employees hosted a Christmas party for the patients during the Carol of Lights celebration. Hot chocolate, desserts and sandwiches were served by members of area churches and organizations.

The Ackerly and Friends band performed for the patients and Santa and Mrs. Claus made an appearance.

"Everything just clicks

during this season," Christie-Morgan said. "Everyone is very busy in their personal lives, but I am constantly amazed at how they will put those things aside just to help our patients."

Shirley Bodin, Dorothy Sheppard were co-chairs of the Christmas celebration and Suzanne Markwell assisted with the buying of gifts.

MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL

24th & Johnson 267-8288

Tory Mitchell, 26, died Sunday. Funeral Services are pending.

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ERAGON (PG) 1:30 4:30 7:20 9:50

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM (PG) 1:10 4:10 7:10 10:10

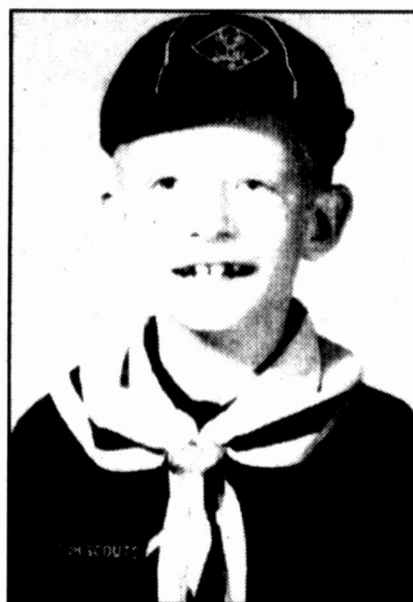
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EDITORIAL

"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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John A. Moseley
Managing Editor

Bill McClellan
News Editor

OTHER VIEWS

The Bush administration is trying again to stifle the public's say in decisions about logging and mining in the national forests.

A new rule says the government doesn't have to fully consider how forest management plans affect the environment.

The rule eliminates environmental impact statements from the management plans required every 15 years. The Forest Service says those plans have no impact on the environment because they just represent planning, not action.

That's hogwash. Now decisions will be made about timber harvesting, off-road vehicles, drilling and mining without the formal process of environmental impact statements and public comments.

The government can more easily ignore air and water concerns, endangered species and damage to wildlife habitat. It will be easier for timber and drilling companies to do what they want.

The Kansas City (Mo.) Star

President Bush is right to be taking more time to determine a new strategy for fighting and winning the war in Iraq so as to ensure getting it right to the greatest extent possible.

The alternative of a premature withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq, as advocated by some, would be to admit defeat that would embolden our enemies, destabilize the entire region, provide a new sanctuary for terrorists and seriously endanger our national security.

That is a risk that President Bush, our commander in chief, rightly continues to be unwilling to take.

... Stabilizing Baghdad is essential to bringing stability to the new Iraqi government, defeating the al-Qaida terrorists and outside elements (such as from Iran) who are encouraging and fueling the sectarian bloodbath, and to enhancing the economic rebuilding of the country.

... Stability would also boost our efforts to more fully train Iraqi Army and police units toward the ultimate goal of their fully taking over security for the country.

... For the sake of our national security, our focus must be on victory, not withdrawal and defeat.

The Chronicle, Centralia, Wash.

History ought to judge Iran President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as harshly as he judges history. The state conference he just held to "debunk" the Holocaust is not only outrageous, it's a transparent effort to curry favor with extremists and undermine the legitimacy of the state of Israel.

To make those arguments, he brought in such credible historians, if you'll pardon the sarcasm, as former Louisiana Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke.

... There is abundant scholarly material and evidence including witnesses, both Jewish and German — to the murder of 6 million Jews. But since taking office in August of last year, Ahmadinejad has made it clear he is dedicated to the obliteration of the state of Israel, even more so than his predecessors. Denying the Holocaust undercuts the rationale for Israel's establishment after World War II. Ahmadinejad may actually believe that nonsense, but apparently he also thinks that by debunking the Holocaust he can change established relationships and the terms of political debate in the Middle East. It's an attempt to roll the clock back and spur the neighbors into action.

... Ahmadinejad has placed himself, and his country, in that company. The only thing he has debunked is his own credibility.

The Buffalo (N.Y.) News

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

Lessons from the Cold War

While there are, of course, enormous differences between the big picture war on terror and the Cold War and the smaller picture war in Iraq and the Vietnam War, there are also uncanny parallels that might enhance our understanding of today's global conflict.

In the Sixties and Seventies, liberals and conservatives disagreed on whether Vietnam was in a civil war or a victim of the Communists' plan for global expansion. The left seemed all too eager to ignore that both the Soviet and Chinese communists were funding and fomenting North Vietnam's aggression, just as the left today wants to ignore Iran's and Syria's similar sponsorship of terrorism and ethnic strife in Iraq.

Indeed, liberals argued that there was no monolithic communist movement — given the competing communist power centers of the Soviet Union and China — and dismissed fears born of the domino theory: that if South Vietnam were to fall, other nations would do likewise. Much of the left today tells us that because there is so much internecine conflict among Muslims, mainly between Sunni and Shia, that we shouldn't fear their pursuit of a global caliphate. Liberals today view the Iraq war in a vacuum, denying it is part of the global war on terror and downplaying the likely devastating consequences for Iraq, the Iraqi people and the war on terror if we prematurely withdraw from Iraq.

We lost very few battles in Vietnam, yet the left and the media convinced the American people we were losing the war, which eventually eroded our will. We have lost few, if any battles in

Iraq, but the conventional wisdom emanating from the left and the mainstream media is that we are losing the war. Consequently, America's will to persevere has been severely compromised.

Cold War liberals pooh poohed Nikita Khrushchev's "We will bury you" threats to the United States, and ridiculed conservatives as fearing that communists were "behind every rock." Today's liberals also seem unwilling to take Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at his word that he is committed to exterminating ("burying") Israel. Bill Clinton and John Kerry, to name a few of today's libs, have made fun of conservatives for believing there are terrorists behind every rock.

Cold War liberals habitually apologized for Soviet Communist aggression and their obsessive pursuit of nuclear weapons. They maintained there was moral equivalence between the United States and the Soviets in the arms race and insisted the Soviet regime was not inherently evil, but merely protecting its interests — from U.S. imperialism. If we would just freeze our nukes, then disarm, the Soviets would follow. Today's terrorist apologists insist that Muslim extremists have legitimate grievances, including the alleged dispossession of Palestinians from "their" land and American "imperialism" in Iraq. If Israel would just give back the land and we would withdraw from Iraq, the terrorists' thirst for bloodshed would be quenched.

The left today — like yesterday — can't get its head around the idea that we are in a global war, and that is primarily because it has difficulty making the crucial moral distinctions that are essential to our clarity of vision.

Its inability or refusal to see Islamic extremism as evil prevents it from understanding that the terrorists' hostility against us, Israel and any other nation that chooses to obstruct their hegemon-

ic designs cannot be appeased and that they must be defeated.

The left's blindness to this evil keeps it from grasping that we are not the antagonists in Iraq or the initiators of a "war of choice," but justifiably removed Saddam Hussein from power and are now morally justified in trying to help the Iraqis establish self-rule. The liberals' blindness also led them to sympathize with misguided European and United Nations' critics of the U.S. intervention in Iraq.

When the left finally succeeded in de-funding our defense of South Vietnam, a bloodbath ensued, despite John Kerry's and the left's arrogantly cynical dismissal of predictions it would occur. The left has never been held accountable for that, partly because it distorted and rewrote history, and as a result it has far more credibility than it deserves today in advocating a similar withdrawal from Iraq and in denying the abject evil of Muslim extremists.

To glean the proper lessons from these parallels we must compare the approach of the left toward our enemies — best personified in Jimmy Carter's defeatism and malaise (which still persists today) — to the triumphalism of Reagan conservatism.

Had America accepted the Jimmy Carter worldview, we might still be fighting the Cold War. Until we reject that worldview today and understand the nature of our enemy and the global context of the war, we will be hard-pressed to turn the corner in the war on terror.

To find out more about David Limbaugh, please visit his Web site at www.davidlimbaugh.com. And to read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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Diana's legacy: No one is immune

There was no international conspiracy. The driver was drunk and speeding. The passengers were not wearing their seat belts. The result was that they died.

It could have happened in your town or mine, in any country in the world. Sadly, it does, every day. Drunk drivers are dangerous. Seat belts save lives. Not wearing one can kill you.

Even if you're a princess.

The long-awaited report on the death of Princess Diana will not satisfy those looking for someone to blame, some big-picture conspiracy, some ending with the drama of the story. Mohammed al-Fayed, the father of Diana's companion that night, Dodi Fayed, and the owner of the famous Harrods department store in London, has summarily rejected it as a cover-up.

But a cover-up of what? Of human weakness? Of carelessness or foolishness? Of the failure to appreciate that no one is immune from the impact of tons of metal crashing into metal, and that the human body is vulnerable in these circumstances?

Former London police chief Lord John Stevens spent three years investigating the death of Princess Diana and issued an 800-page report of his findings. But the bottom line was not very complicated.

ed. Lord Stevens concluded, as is so often the case, that the death of one of the world's most famous women was exactly what it appeared to be: a traffic accident that didn't have to happen, and certainly didn't have to produce death.

Oh, yes, there were the headlines about our own National Security Agency intercepting Diana's communications. Is there anyone of importance whose phone conversations they don't intercept? But there was nothing to connect those communications with the accident that August night nearly 10 years ago. People can speculate all they want about what's in those files, but the sad truth is that, since virtually every one Diana ever spoke to found a way to make a buck by repeating what she said, the mystery is likely to be more interesting than the truth. And it doesn't change the facts of physics, or the facts of life.

Her boys have grown into handsome men. But their mother did not get to see that. She got into a car with a drunk driver and did not put on her seat belt. The issue isn't blame. She said. The issue is whether the rest of us will learn from it. Who hasn't climbed into the car, just that once, and said: Why bother? Especially if you're in the back seat, and someone else is driving, and you're out having a good time. Just this once.

There is no such thing as just this once.

So much about Diana was magical and special. But not everything. Her life was royal; but her death, painfully common. Dr. Katrina Firlik, in her fascinating memoir "Another Day in the Frontal Lobe" about her training as a neurosurgeon, writes of all the nights she was awoken to deal with catastrophic injuries that could have been avoided if the patient had been wearing a seat belt. Air bags, she writes, are just not enough. Accidents don't have to kill — or create challenges for a neurosurgeon in training.

Princess Diana was not pregnant. She was not engaged. She was just a woman in the back seat of a speeding car, with none of the protection a seat belt would have provided. There is a lesson in that for all of us. It may be mundane, but it is no less important because of that.

I hope you had a Merry Christmas. Remember Diana, the beautiful and vibrant princess who didn't have to die, the loving mother who did not get to see her children grow up. Drink responsibly. Drive safely. Buckle up. No one is immune.

To find out more about Susan Estrich and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com.

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SUSAN
ESTRICH

Eat for Life: Red and green salad with cranberry vinaigrette

By JILL WENDHOLT SILVA
McClatchy Newspapers

If standing under the mistletoe is the closest you get to a leafy green in winter, it's time to rethink your position.

A study in the September edition of the Journal of the American Dietetic Association found that people who eat a serving of salad every day have a much higher likelihood of meeting the recommended dietary allowance for vitamin C, according to researchers at UCLA and Louisiana State University.

This Red and Green Salad With Cranberry Vinaigrette features a festive combination of red grapefruit and avocado. An avocado has 20 milligrams of vitamin C, which boosts the immune system, and fresh grapefruit has 48 milligrams. The recommended dietary allowance is 75 milligrams for women and 90 milligrams for men.

Other colorful nutrition benefits from a red and green salad:

Avocados were once considered a dieter's dilemma because of their high calorie count, but new research has given them the green light. Avocados are not only delicious but also contain good amounts of potassium, vitamin A, niacin, fiber and phytonutrients.

Red or pink grapefruit is high in vitamin A, as well as the phytochemical lycopene.

Beets contain potassium, fiber, folate and phytochemicals, including anthocyanins, which give them their deep, earthy ruby color.

To preserve the anthocyanins, it's best to roast, bake or microwave whole beets in their skins; peeled or cut up they lose the pigments.

Cooking tips: Instead of roasting the beet in the oven, you can use a slow cooker.

Trim and peel beet; toss in 2 teaspoons olive oil.

Place beet in slow cooker. Cover slow cooker and cook on high setting 3 to 3-1/2 hours or until beet is tender; remove and allow to cool.

When working with beets, you may want to use rubber gloves since the juice can stain.

Red and Green Salad with Cranberry Vinaigrette

Makes 4 servings
1 beet, trimmed
1 red or pink grapefruit
1 ripe avocado
1 large head red-tipped leaf lettuce or other greens, torn into bite-size pieces
2 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 tablespoon honey
1/4 cup cranberry juice cocktail
Salt and pepper, to taste
2 teaspoons minced shallot

Wrap beet in aluminum foil, place in baking dish and bake at 400 degrees 60 to 70 minutes or until tender. Cool, peel and thinly slice.

Peel grapefruit, removing all white pith. Cut along the sides of each dividing membrane, cutting to the core; remove sections over a dish to catch juice. Set aside grapefruit sections.

Peel, pit and thinly slice avocado. Place avocado slices in collected grapefruit juice and toss gently to coat; drain.

Arrange lettuce on 4 salad plates. Top lettuce with alternating slices of beets, grapefruit and avocados.

Whisk together vinegar, oil, honey and cranberry juice cocktail; season with salt and pepper. Stir

in shallots.

Drizzle each salad lightly with vinaigrette just before serving.

Per serving: 174 calories (51 percent from fat), 10 grams total fat (2 grams saturated), no cholesterol, 19 grams carbohydrates, 2 grams protein, 24 milligrams sodium, 3 grams dietary fiber.

Recipe developed by professional home economists Kathryn Moore and Roxanne Wyss



Vitamin C from the avocado and fresh grapefruit help boost the immune system.

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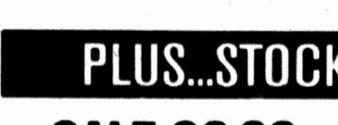
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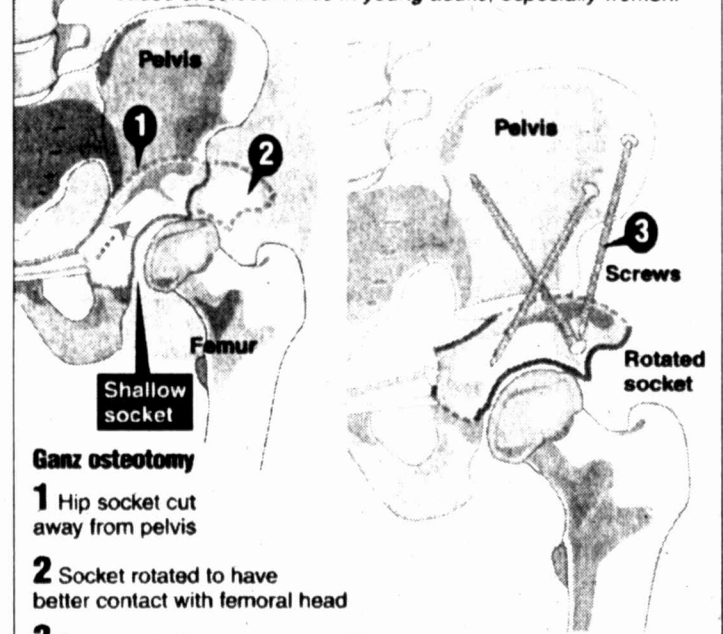
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Women's Health

Repairing hip dysplasia

A new procedure restores shallow hip sockets, the leading cause of osteoarthritis in young adults, especially women.



Ganz osteotomy

- 1 Hip socket cut away from pelvis
- 2 Socket rotated to have better contact with femoral head
- 3 Screws hold bone in place

Hip dysplasia

- Causes pain, osteoarthritis for young adults, if left untreated
- Five times more common in women
- Most diagnosed in adulthood

Source: New York University Hospital for Joint Diseases, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital
Graphic: T.G. Tao, Judy Trumble © 2006 MCT



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SUN. 12 PM - 6 PM

Bird poop: Mysterious fate of the sandhill cranes

In my neighborhood, it is not uncommon to see someone still in pajamas and robe scurrying to retrieve the morning paper. A rush back to their front porch hopefully is achieved before being seen by the rest of us. As I hurried to do the same, a welcoming bugle greeted me. Above, 22 sandhill cranes announced their presence. Leisuredly, they flew over our home toward the northwest and breakfast.



BEBE
MCCASLAND

Back inside with a cup of coffee, I remembered another December day. Cloudy, with the threat of rain, that morning promised gusty winds from the south. As we headed west from Big Spring around noon, we checked the lake where the Interstate crosses the railroad tracks. No birds were seen on the water or shoreline. About eight miles west lay "red lake" to the north. Across from it was a salt lake south of the railroad tracks. On it were some 250 sandhill cranes.

Water from abundant rains during late fall had attracted the birds to a safe haven. Although unusual for us to see the cranes in this location, we did think they were rather late in leaving for their morning flight to seek food.

On our return to Big Spring we noticed the cranes were still standing in the lake. As we slowed to get a better look at the birds, we were troubled by what we saw. Motionless, the cranes, heads were bowed as if too heavy for them to lift. Stopping on the shoulder of the Interstate, we backed into the grass and slowly made our way to a better view. Unbelievable was our seeing so many birds that seemed frozen

in that lake. The stillness was eerie.

Their trumpeting sounds had been hushed. These long legged, long necked cranes appeared as if their wings were locked to their sides. Necks bent, they were not the alert, cautious birds we knew. Something was dreadfully wrong.

Once home, with the help of the sheriff's office, we located our local game warden. He was at least two hours away, but related our description of the cranes to a fellow officer. Several minutes passed while the two wardens discussed the situation. "Let me call you back. We've got a bad connection," was said before the line went dead.

While waiting for a call, we discussed the magnitude of a possible rescue. So many cranes, the location, and what we might be combating had us puzzled about whether we could handle it. Help from South Plains in Lubbock would be required, plus an area to house that many birds. The phone rang. The wardens were on their way to Big Spring and would go directly to the lake. As the connection started to fade, I heard our warden say, "Peanuts." "Peanuts?" I asked. "Tell you when we get closer," was the last thing we heard as static increased.

After several hours, the warden finally called. At the lake, the other officer knew from experience that nothing could be done to save the sandhills. During the early years of his career, he had been in the Texas Panhandle when tens of thousands of cranes had met the same fate. Acres of dead birds had alerted Parks & Wildlife to a different threat to wildlife. Biologists confirmed both the culprit and the outcome.

A rainy fall, high humidity, warm temperatures, and decaying organic material from the harvesting of peanuts had created an environment in which mold grew on the debris left in the



Courtesy photo
With a wingspan of six to seven feet, sandhill cranes fly to their feeding grounds during the morning. Area lakes, with their shallow water, offer protection from predators at night.

fields. Hungry cranes had feasted on a toxic, lethal concoction produced under the extremes in nature.

The avian botulism attacked the nervous sys-

tem. A spreading paralysis of the muscles would first be noted in the bird's inability to fly. Following would be paralysis of the legs, and then the neck muscles. Since the crane

would be unable to hold its head erect, the word to describe the disease was aptly named, "limberneck." Ultimately, the crane would die of respiratory failure.

When the phone rang the next day, the game warden told of their search for peanut crops within a given distance from the lake.

My reply was brief. "Peanuts, in our area?" Since sandhills can easily fly 40 miles a day in search of food, the wardens mapped an area and started looking. In two counties, Glasscock and Howard, they found peanut crops that had not been properly plowed

after the harvest. Through education, the farmers would know of the dangers in leaving the remains on the ground.

Since that December morning, the yearly visits of sandhill cranes to our area have increased my appreciation of the dangers they face in reaching their winter home. From Canada, Siberia, or perhaps Alaska, these beautiful gray birds have chosen our area for eons. Our fields offer roots, seeds, grains, mice, and insects to the tall, left-overs of the dinosaur age. Their spring dances of jumping six to eight feet in the air with partially spread wings, then bowing, assure me that the following fall as I reach for my morning paper, maybe once again I'll hear their bugling song.

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

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Luck Is the Name of the Game

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH	
♦ A J 5	
♥ A 6 2	
♠ 7	
♣ Q 9 8 7 4 3	

WEST	
♦ K 9 6 3	
♥ J 9 4 3	
♠ K J 8 6 2	
♣ —	

EAST	
♦ 10 8 7 2	
♥ 10 7 5	
♠ A 10 9 5 3	
♣ 6	

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	6 ♦	Pass
6 ♦	Pass	6 NT	Pass

Opening lead — three of spades.

Hands that have been mishandled sometimes produce sensational results. For example, consider this deal from a team-of-four match.

South's opening notrump bid at the first table was certainly off the beaten track, since he had two doubletons, a six-card suit and no true stoppers in spades or diamonds.

North's six-club response was optimistic in the extreme, but in the

actual case the club slam would have succeeded with the aid of a spade finesse — had South seen fit to pass that response.

But South misinterpreted the six-club bid — it seemed unlikely to him that partner could have a genuine club suit. Since he and his partner had agreed to play transfer bids, he mistakenly decided that North was asking him to bid the next higher-ranking suit. Accordingly, he bid six diamonds.

Realizing that South had misunderstood the six-club bid, North retreated to six notrump. West led a spade, and declarer had no option but to play low from dummy. After winning with the queen and cashing his clubs and hearts, declarer took a second spade finesse and so brought the slam home for a score of 1,440 points.

At the second table, South became declarer at three notrump, rather than six, and West had no trouble finding the normal lead of his fourth-best diamond. East-West quickly collected five diamond tricks, so South went down one for a loss of 100 points.

The moral thus seems to be that it's easier to make six notrump than three!

Tomorrow: Actions speak louder than words.
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► News in brief

Schools to field test exams

FORT WORTH (AP) — As public schools prepare for statewide testing, some school officials say the preparatory field tests used to develop the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills can be a distraction.

More than 1,100 public and charter schools will field test one or more state tests between Jan. 22 and Feb. 2, according to the Texas Education Agency.

The results of the field tests don't count, and teachers and students won't get any results. Instead, the field tests will be used to help analyze the fairness of questions for future TAKS tests, officials said.

Schools assigned to participate in the field tests, which take place before February's real TAKS testing, can't opt out. Each test can take a full day.

Cathy Friar, executive director for special programs and state assessments for the Carroll school district, said the field testing interrupts instruction. But on the positive side, students can benefit from taking a practice test.

Man denies role in death of teen found in cane field

EDINBURG (AP) — A South Texas murder suspect has denied any role in the death of a 16-year-old girl whose burned body was found in a sugar cane field.

Border Patrol agents caught Samuel Villarreal, 38, near Brownsville this weekend as he was swimming across the Rio Grande from Mexico with his 13-year-old daughter. He was handed over to the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office, and on Sunday he was arraigned on a first-degree murder charge.

"I didn't do it," Villarreal said after his hearing. "I don't know what to think."

Villarreal is accused in the death of Aida Mae Rodriguez. Her body was found last month in a cane field near Donna with a cracked skull, two bullet holes in the back of her head and burns on about half her body.

Hours earlier, her infant daughter, Brigitte Mae, was discovered unclothed but unharmed on the side of a road north of Weslaco, about 20 miles from the body.

Texas says goodbye to dry year

LUBBOCK (AP) — Texans are about to bid farewell to a dry, hot year that had the nation's No. 2 agriculture state reeling from the worst single-year losses for crops and livestock.

The drought, now in about its 20th month, also sparked deadly wildfires and dropped lake levels to their lowest point for this time of year since 1978.

As much as 20 percent of the state remains in exceptional drought and a similar percentage is enduring extreme drought, Texas Cooperative Extension drought specialist Travis Miller said.

The forecast through April could improve conditions. A weak to moderate El Nino weather pattern shows increased chances for above normal rainfall statewide.

The first 11 months of 2006 rank as the 31st driest January-through-November stretch since 1895.

Lonely Katrina evacuee welcomes wrong-number calls

LUMBERTON (AP) — Wrong-number calls typically elicit a perfunctory, if mildly annoyed, correction to the caller followed quickly by a click.

But for Udonna "Jeannie" Pelham, the interruptions

are a welcome reprieve from the loneliness she and her elderly father have felt since Hurricane Katrina forced them from their home in Slidell, La., to this town of about 8,700 near the Louisiana border.

The phonebook mistakenly lists Pelham's home phone number as Kwik Kar Lube and Tune, an oil changing garage. But rather than hanging up on the usually free Kwik Kar calls she's gotten each day since March, Pelham sometimes turns the mistake into 15-minute conversations about the challenges of making friends in a new town or of losing a loved one.

"They are just the most wonderful conversations," said Pelham, 57, who lives with her 85-year-old father.

And the phone calls made Pelham feel needed.

Schwarzenegger returns to California for surgery

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger will need crutches, screws to secure his thigh bone and several weeks of recovery after undergoing surgery on his broken leg, his surgeon said.

The 59-year-old governor, actor and former bodybuilder was scheduled for surgery Tuesday morning in Los Angeles to repair his fractured right femur, which he broke while skiing with his family in Sun Valley, Idaho, during the weekend.

"As is standard for this type of surgery, the governor will be kept for observation for three days," said Dr. Kevin Ehrhart, the orthopedic surgeon performing the surgery.

Ehrhart, who repaired former President Reagan's broken hip in 2001, said Schwarzenegger's recovery would take about eight weeks and cables and screws would be used to secure his upper right thigh bone.

Tuesday's forecast calls for sales

NEW YORK (AP) — The nation's retailers ushered in the post-Christmas shopping season on Tuesday by slashing prices even more on holiday items and stocking up on fresh merchandise.

With the 2006 pre-Christmas season turning out to be challenging, the nation's merchants were

hoping that shoppers, armed with gift cards, would spend freely, snapping up discounted items as well as picking up full-priced merchandise, to boost business in December and in the fourth-quarter.

Federated Department Stores Inc.'s Macy's opened its doors at 7 a.m. and offered discounts ranging from 50 percent to 75 percent. Toys "R" Us Inc.

offered 50 percent discounts on selected toys. The toy seller is also showcasing hot toys from 2007 in its stores.

Merchants "are going to use all 31 days in December," said Marshal Cohen, chief analyst at NPD Group Inc., a market research company in Port Washington, N.Y.

At Carousel Mall in Syracuse, N.Y., there were more mall walkers than

shoppers when J.C. Penney opened its doors at 6 a.m. Pat Dunn of Syracuse, who was browsing around the housewares section looking for sale items, said her trek was an annual affair. And, she said, she wasn't about to let the cold rain falling outside deter her.

"Everything is so marked up. This is the best time to shop," Dunn said. "This is for next year."

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Borden County Independent School District (I.S.D.) in Gail, Texas, is presently accepting transfer students for the spring semester of 2007.

The Borden County I.S.D. is a "Recognized District," as named by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the 2005-2006 school year. This past year, the district also received ten (10) Gold Star Performance awards from the TEA for high percentages of "Commended" students on all five TAKS testing areas, completion of the Recommended/Distinguished Achievement graduation planes, college readiness in both mathematics and language arts, student attendance, and completion of advanced academic courses.

The Borden County I.S.D. also has a rich tradition in the following:

- Maintaining a high-qualified faculty and staff
- Offering concurrent college credit for juniors and seniors (27 on-site college hours available)
- Promoting high college and post-secondary attendance rates at various universities.
- Successful and competitive University Interscholastic League academic teams.
- Successful and competitive University Interscholastic League athletic programs (six-man football, cross-country, basketball, track, tennis, golf, baseball, & softball)
- Active FFA chapter with successful and competitive leadership/judging teams
- Providing a safe and drug-free school environment

Please contact Mr. Jimmy Thomas, Borden County I.S.D. Superintendent, at (806) 756-4313 or (806) 756-4316 if you are interested in transferring your child for the spring semester of 2007.

su | do | ku

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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

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	6			9	8
		6	1		4
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IN BRIEF

**Class 5A Division I
state championship**

Southlake Carroll 43,
Austin Westlake 29.

The Dragons finished
the season 16-0 and have
claimed their third
straight title. They are
an impressive 79-1 over
the past five years.
See Page 2B

**Hawaii QB breaks
touchdown record**

Containing Colt
Brennan for a half is
impressive — an entire
game is almost impossi-
ble.

Brennan broke the
NCAA single-season
record for touchdown
passes, throwing five in
the second half to lead
Hawaii to a 41-24 victory
over Arizona State on
Sunday night in the
Hawaii Bowl.

"It feels awesome,"
said Brennan, who fin-
ished the season with 58
TD passes. "Tonight
really made it special: at
home, at a bowl game. It
means so much
tonight."

Brennan, 33-of-42 for
559 yards, threw a 7-
yard scoring pass to
Ryan Grice-Mullen on
the Warriors' second
series of the second half
to break the previous
mark of 54 set by
Houston's David
Klingler in 1990, also
against the Sun Devils.

**Rockets lose star
center for six weeks**

Yao Ming will miss at
least six weeks after
fracturing the bone
under his right knee in
Houston's game against
the Los Angeles
Clippers on Saturday
night.

Yao was leaping for a
blocked shot as Chuck
Hayes and Tim Thomas
hit the floor beneath
him. Yao's knee
appeared to get caught
under Thomas' body
and Yao immediately
grabbed his knee and
screamed in pain.

Yao was taken to
Memorial Hermann
Hospital in Houston,
where an MRI test
revealed a fracture of
Yao's right tibial
plateau, trainer Keith
Jones said.

The Rockets initially
said Yao had only suf-
fered a bone bruise.
Now, Jones said he
hopes the injury will
not require surgery.

**AP sportsman
of the year selected**

Tiger Woods was
selected AP sportsman
of the year.

Woods won the award
in voting by U.S. sports
editors over San Diego
Chargers running back
LaDainian Tomlinson,
with Swiss tennis great
Roger Federer a distant
third. The 31-year-old
Woods won for the
fourth time in his
career, tying the record
set by Lance
Armstrong, who won
the last four years.

Woods received 260
points from sports edi-
tors around the country.
Tomlinson, who already
has set an NFL record of
11 touchdowns with one
game left in the season,
was second with 100
points. Federer, who
won the Grand Slam
and lost in the French
Open, finished with 10
points.

Cowboys gift wrap division title

By JAIME ARON
AP Sports Writer

IRVING — The
Philadelphia Eagles were
supposed to get buried by
December road games
against all three division
foes, especially with
retread backup Jeff
Garcia running the
offense.

Turns out, that chal-
lenge was exactly what
they needed to grab con-
trol of the NFC East.

After close calls in
Washington and New
York, Garcia and the
Philadelphia defense
made it a clean sweep
with a surprisingly easy
23-7 victory over the
Dallas Cowboys on
Monday.

Garcia led the Eagles (9-
6) to scores on four of
their first five drives and
the defense forced Tony
Romo and the Cowboys
into easily their least-pro-
ductive game of the sea-
son. The victory — actu-
ally Philadelphia's fourth
straight — clinched a
wild-card berth and
moved it into first place
in the division with one
game left in the season.

"We took a situation
where things weren't
looking good, with some
major hurdles to over-
come, and we found a
way to win," said Garcia,
who improved to 4-1 since
replacing an injured
Donovan McNabb. "It's
this playoff mentality
we've had over the past
month that's carried us."

Philadelphia coach

Andy Reid laughed about
how easy it's been since
his club was 5-6 after los-
ing Garcia's first start.

"We thought it would be
a cakewalk," he said with
a wry smile. "Every one
of those games has been
huge. The guys have
buckled down against
some good teams. Our
players knew what was
ahead of them. Everybody
really pulled closer
together."

The Eagles can win the
division for the fifth time
in six years by beating
Atlanta at home Sunday.
Philadelphia also could
clinch if Dallas loses its
finale to Detroit.

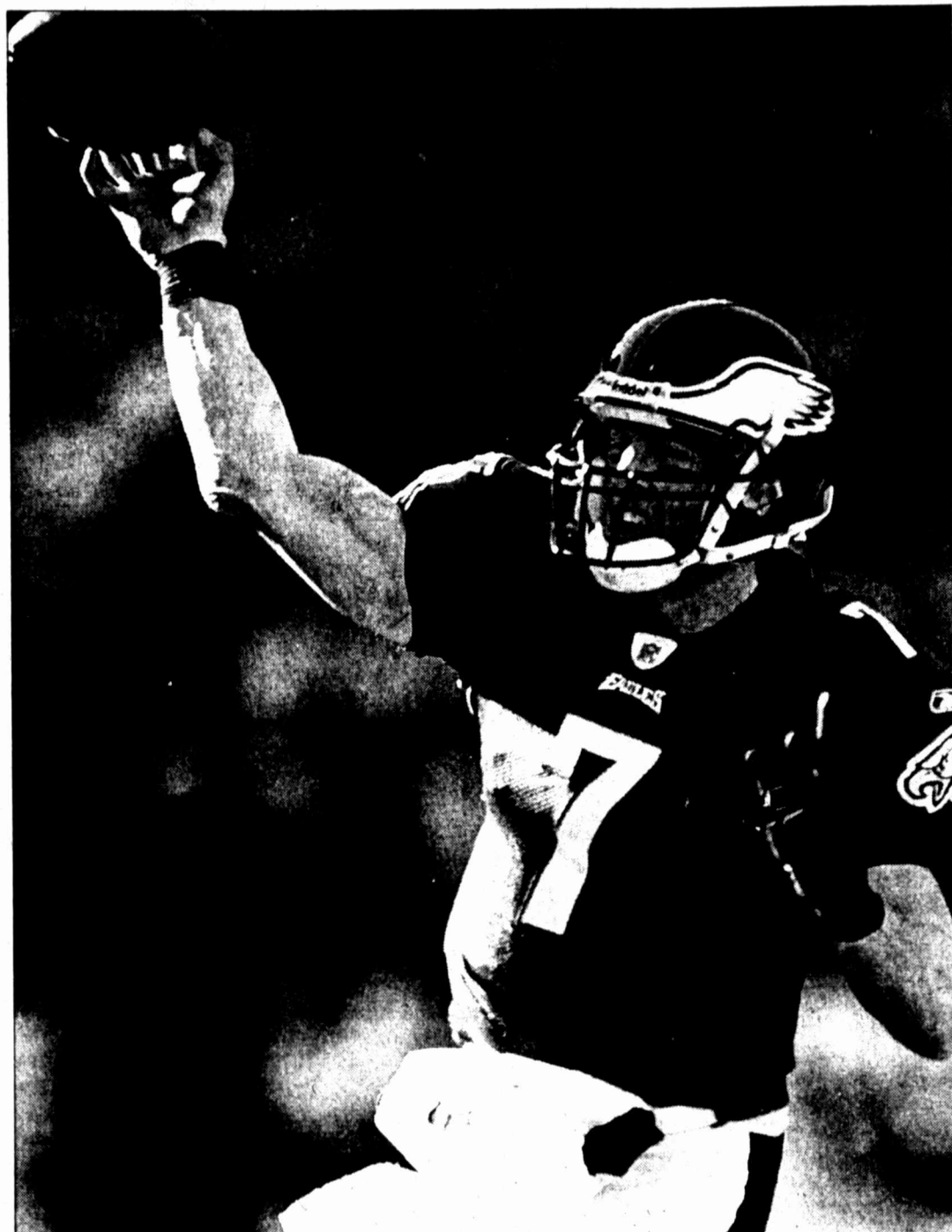
The only way the
Cowboys (9-6) can win the
NFC East is by beating
the Lions and by the
Falcons knocking off the
Eagles. Dallas no longer
has a shot at the confer-
ence's No. 2 seed and a
first-round bye; this game
clinched that for New
Orleans.

The NFC East winner
will host the lower-seeded
wild-card team, while the
division runner-up will
play at Seattle.

Garcia was 15-of-23 for
238 yards with a touch-
down and an intercep-
tion, and ran for 43 yards.
Brian Westbrook ran for
122 yards and Correll
Buckhalter had 38 yards
and a touchdown.

Garcia set the tone with
four third-down conver-
sions on the opening
series, then a 25-yard

See **BOYS**, Page 2B



MCT photo/Harry E. Walker
Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Jeff Garcia (7) is shown launching a pass downfield earlier this season. Garcia led the Eagles to a 23-7 thumping of the Dallas Cowboys on Christmas evening, in Irving.

Cotton bid shows Nebraska
makes progress under Callahan

By ERIC OLSON

AP Sports Writer

LINCOLN, Neb. — Two
years after failing to qual-
ify for a bowl, Nebraska
is playing in January
again.

That's the key indicator
of progress under third-
year coach Bill Callahan,
fullback Dane Todd says.

The 22nd-ranked
Cornhuskers (9-4) were
scheduled to fly Tuesday
to Dallas, where they'll
play No. 10 Auburn (10-2)
in next Monday's Cotton
Bowl.

"We didn't go anywhere
two years ago, and now
we're going to a very nice
bowl game, so that's obvi-
ous progress," Todd said.
"No one can deny that."

Nebraska was a regular
participant in New Year's
bowl games under Tom
Osborne, but the Huskers

haven't played in January
since losing to Miami in
the national champi-
onship Rose Bowl game
after the 2001 season.

Callahan, who replaced
the fired Frank Solich in
2004, lost four of the last
five games his first sea-
son to finish 5-6 and end
Nebraska's NCAA-record
35-year bowl streak.

Last year the Huskers
returned to the postsea-
son with a 32-28 Alamo
Bowl victory over
Michigan, giving them
three straight wins to end
the year.

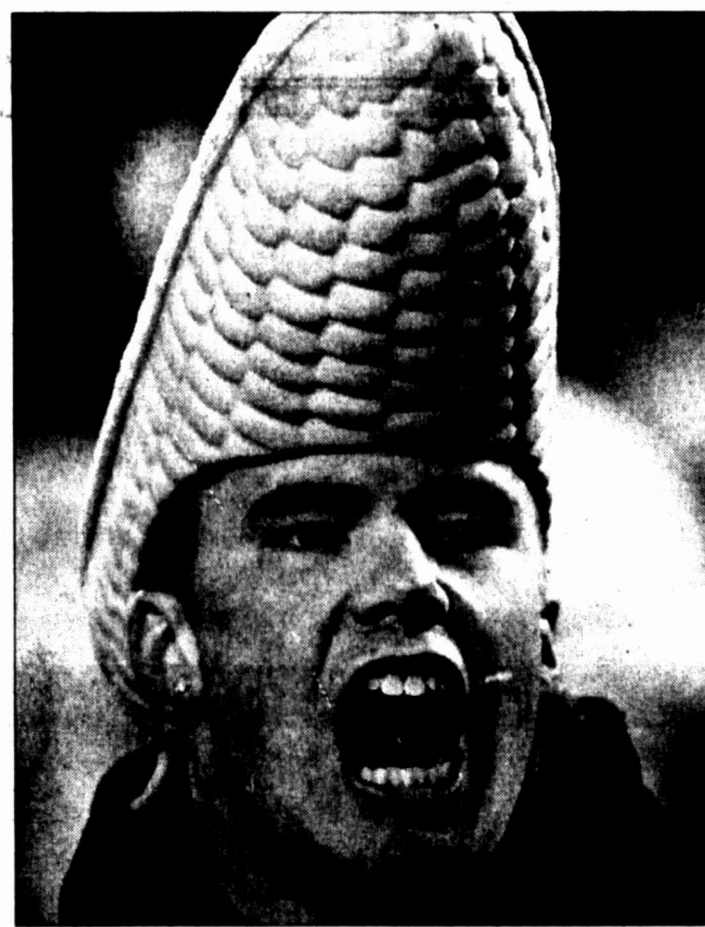
This season Nebraska
swept through the Big 12
North and was invited to
the Cotton Bowl after los-
ing 21-7 to Oklahoma in
the conference champi-
onship game.

In the era of the Bowl
Championship Series, the
71-year-old Cotton is

regarded as a second-tier
bowl. But officials with
the tradition-rich game
are studying ways to get
into the BCS mix when
the series' contract
expires in 2010.

"It used to carry a lot
more significance when
there were just a couple
Jan. 1 games," Todd said.
"Now that there are so
many games Jan. 1 and
later, the day itself isn't
significant. But the bowl
game is significant. The
Cotton Bowl is a great
game to go to, and we're
excited about it."

The Huskers will have
their fourth opportunity
of the season to beat a
Top 10 opponent. They
haven't knocked off a
team of that stature since
Oklahoma in 2001. This
year they lost to Southern
California, Texas and
Oklahoma.



MCT photo/John Sleezer/Kansas City Star
Brandon Ball of Scottsbluff, Neb. showed his support for the Nebraska Cornhuskers during their Big 12 Championship game this season.

Heat scorch L.A. Lakers
in NBA Christmas special

By TIM REYNOLDS

AP Sports Writer

MIAMI — Shaquille O'Neal
pulled Dwyane Wade aside for a
quick pregame word, something
the Miami Heat superstars often
share.

O'Neal's message, as usual,
was simple.

"I told him just go out and
play your game and mix it up,"
O'Neal said. "And he did that.
That's why he's the best."

Wade had 40 points and 11
assists, dominating long stretch-
es of the game and leading the
Heat to a 101-85 win over the Los
Angeles Lakers on Monday —
giving Miami its third straight
Christmas Day win in the series
between the teams.

Wade made 12 of 20 shots from
the floor, 15 of 16 from the line,
added four steals, four rebounds
and four blocks, plus got a huge

ovation from a sellout Miami
crowd when leaving with 57.9
seconds remaining.

"Makes it great, man, makes it
great," Wade said. "To be play-
ing on Christmas is great. ...
And we can go home and con-
tinue enjoying Christmas Day
knowing that you played an
unbelievable game, knowing
that your team played well and
that you got a win. Ain't too
many things better than that."

The other star guard in the
Heat-Lakers battle simply never
got rolling.

Kobe Bryant — who entered the
game as the sixth-leading scorer in
the league at 27.8 points — missed
his first six shots, finished 4-of-17
from the floor and with 16 points,
one over his season-low.

"You have to let it go," Bryant
said.

See **HEAT**, Page 2B



MCT photo/Charles Trainor Jr./Miami Herald
Miami Heat's Dwyane Wade slam dunks the ball as the Heat continue to try and get back into championship form. Wade dropped 40 points on Kobe Bryant and the Lakers on Monday.

Southlake Carroll claims 5A state championship

SAN ANTONIO — Todd Dodge will leave Southlake Carroll a state champion. His son made sure of it.

Three second-half touchdown passes by Carroll quarterback Riley Dodge, the winning coach's son, gave the Dragons a 43-29 come-from-behind victory over Austin Westlake in the Class 5A Division I state championship on Saturday night.

The elder Dodge, who has accepted the head coaching job at North Texas, watched the Dragons (16-0) win their 48th straight, their third straight state title and their fourth in the past five years.

"Since he was 3 years old we've been talking about winning the state

championship with him as my starting quarterback," Dodge said. "It was everything to me."

Dodge finished with a 98-11 record after seven seasons in Southlake. The Dragons went 79-1 the past five years.

Riley Dodge completed 16-of-26 passes for 303 yards and one interception. His three TD passes came in the second half when Carroll rallied from a 15-7 deficit.

"I've been waiting since I was a little kid to win a state championship," he said. "To finish out in my dad's final game, it's unbelievable."

It was the seventh state title for the Carroll program, which ties a Texas high school record. Brownwood, Plano and

Celina also have won seven titles.

Westlake (12-3) was trying for its second state title.

"I don't think anybody in the state gave us a chance to win, let alone be within 30 points," Westlake coach Derek Long said. "A stop on a big play and the score might have been different."

Dodge had a pair of TD passes to Blake Tomlin of 30 and 33 yards and a 29-yarder to Anthony Ford that put the Dragons ahead 36-29 with 7:39 left in the game. Dodge vomited before taking the snap on the pass to Ford.

"I was cramping a lot toward the end of the third quarter," Dodge said. "I got some fluids in,

but I got water-logged."

Dragons running back Tre' Newton added three rushing touchdowns and 125 yards on 13 carries. His 3-yard TD run with 3:37 to go gave Carroll the 43-29 lead.

Westlake had a 12-0 second quarter lead before leading 15-7 at halftime behind quarterback Nick Foles, who has committed to attend Arizona State next year.

Foles completed 24-of-43 passes for 299 yards without an interception.

The Dragons tied the game with an 85-yard drive to start the second half. Tomlin caught a 30-yard TD pass from Dodge, and Dodge completed a pass to Chris Brainard for the 2-point conversion 1:59 into the second half.

Westlake went three-and-out on the next drive and Carroll gained possession on the Chaps' 49 after the punt.

Dodge and Tomlin connected again just two plays later on a 33-yard TD pass, and the Dragons had their first lead, 22-15.

In those two drives, the Dragons gained 134 yards compared to the 124 they had in the first half. They ended the game with 463 yards of total offense compared to 441 for Westlake despite having possession of the ball 15 minutes less than the Chaps.

But Westlake came back out and tied it on the next drive. It took 18 plays, 80 yards and 8:12 before Bron Hager scored on a 5-yard run.

On the next play from

Carroll regained the lead on a 74-yard TD run by Newton. He broke several tackles along the way before finally making it to the end zone where he was congratulated by his father, former Dallas Cowboys offensive lineman Nate Newton. The Dragons had a 29-22 lead with 14 seconds left in the third quarter.

Westlake answered again on the next drive to force a tie for the third time in the game. Foles completed three straight passes — including a 43-yarder to Andy Spears that put the ball on the 1 — before Hager scored on the next play with 9:20 left in the game.

BOYS

Continued from 1B

touchdown pass to barely covered Matt Schobel. After the defense made three straight goal-line stands against Marion Barber, the NFC touchdowns rushing leader, Garcia moved Philadelphia from its 4-yard line to the Dallas 2, setting up the first of three straight field goals by David Akers.

Garcia was able to work fast or slow. His quickie drive start-

ed at the Eagles 35 with 29 seconds left until halftime and ended with Akers' second field goal; the drawn-out one burned exactly 7 minutes off the clock in the fourth quarter, leaving Dallas only 6:47 to try mounting a comeback.

When Romo's next pass was picked off, fans began hurrying to the exits. Romo-mentum was dead, or at least not worth waiting for on a chilly Christmas evening.

"I saw us take control of the game," Garcia said. "It wasn't about them, it was about us."

The Cowboys never led and hardly threatened, setting a season-low for points by 10 and yards by 119. It also was their second straight falling-on-their-face performance in a high-profile home game. Dallas was stomped 42-17 by New Orleans in a game for the second-best record in the NFC.

"We were noncompetitive," coach Bill Parcells said, adding he told the team the same thing. "There's nothing good to say. We just didn't make any plays at all, either side of the ball. Just awful."

Worse yet for Dallas: T.O. is unhappy.

With a somber tone contrasting the goofy Cowboys-branded Santa hat on his head, Terrell Owens griped: "I need to be more involved in the offense" at least three times in a news conference.

He absolved Romo for it, hinting as he'd done before that the play calling is to blame. He insisted that he needs more balls early rather than late, a strange statement considering both his catches — for 23 yards, with a 14-yard touchdown —

came in the first half.

As for himself, Owens didn't see anything wrong with visiting the Eagles at their hotel Sunday night ("That's my time, you know? ... I'm not going to shy away from my friends for anybody") and had an excuse for dropping a deep pass at a pivotal time in the game.

"He bumped me way down the field," Owens said. "By the time I looked up and located the ball, it was right on me. ... I thought they were going to throw a flag."

HEAT

Continued from 1B

"It was disappointing, but we have two more games on this trip. It's a long season. We are 18-10. Now it is time to move on."

Jason Kaponi had 11 points and Dorell Wright

added 10 for the Heat, who won for the fourth time in five games.

Ronny Turiaf had 13 points and Luke Walton added 10 for the Lakers, who trailed by 14 points after the first quarter and never led.

"I told my coaches at halftime that I thought I

would stay in the locker room and watch 'A Christmas Carol' and they could go out and do the rest of this game the way we were playing out there," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said.

"I did not feel we were right from the opening tap."

This Christmas meeting lacked the hype of the previous two, where the reunions of teammates-turned-rivals Bryant and O'Neal created no shortage of interesting storylines.

But the feud between the two thawed last year, and O'Neal wasn't in this

game. The Heat center — who's appeared in only four games this season — missed his 21st consecutive contest as he continues to recover from knee surgery. Even without him, Miami has won a season-best four straight at home and is back to within a game of .500 at

13-14.

"To win this game was big," Heat forward Antoine Walker said.

"It's good for the whole team, for Dwyane and for Shaq. He told us before the game he really wanted us to win this game."

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ACUTE MYELOID LEUKEMIA by Benzene exposure and **MELANOMA, KIDNEY or BLADDER CANCER** by coal tar pitch exposure. Family members may also be exposed by dirty clothes. Call us for professional insight.

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Bedtime Stories

I AM A BABY NEW YEAR

I am the next New Year. I am just a baby now, but as the New Year gets older and older, I will grow with you.

When I was told that I would be the next New Year, I was really scared. I don't know how to be a New Year! I am so glad that my father will help me. He is called Father Time.

At first, I did not know that he would help me, but he will. I asked him in a really nice way!

As the time came closer and closer for me to go to work, I was so scared. I would not know what to do. I am just a baby and I don't know anything about how to be a New Year. I went to see my father about this. Father Time lis-

tened quietly as I explained that I knew nothing about how to do my job because I had never done this before!

Being a New Year would be a tough job, I thought! He smiled quietly at me and said, "No one knows how to do any job until he tries! Then, after awhile, he will see how everything works, and be able to tell the next person how to do it. Don't be afraid to try something just because you have never done it before! Always just try your very best and it will be okay."

"I will help you for the first few days, then you will know how to do the

work. It is already after Christmas now, and soon it will be time for you to go to work. What is the first month of the new year? Did you say "January?" That is right. It is always cold in January. I have made it cold for you so you can start the new year off just like it's supposed to be. I made the wind blow, too, and I will make the snow fall. I love to watch the little children playing in the snow."

"Then, what comes next? February! The little children are still wanting to play in the snow, so let's keep it cold and snowy for them. And, all of the trees and flowers need this time to sleep, because they worked very hard all of the last Spring and Summer so everyone could see their beauty. In March, you will need to awaken them so they can start doing their jobs too. They like to be pretty in April, May and June. Then, you will need to awaken some more of the flowers who also like to show off their beauty.

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Don't forget all of the farmers want warmer weather so they can plant their crops, so give them lots of time for that! Those little children playing in the snow must have vegetables to eat.

"Do you have a good idea as to what you must do now? I must leave you and go to work myself. After all, I am Father Time and I never stop working."

"Yes, I think I know what I must do now. I hope I can be as good a New Year as the last one was. I will try my hardest."

As Father Time walked away to get back to his work, I knew that, because of his help, I would make a nice New Year. I will make the snow fall until March, then I will awaken the flowers and trees from their Winter naps, and let them start getting ready to show

their glorious beauty. Then, a little later on, I will awaken the other flowers that like to sleep later and they can make pretty blooms in the late Summer and into the Fall. And, I will give the farmers enough warm weather during the Summer and fall so they can make their gardens grow. The little children playing in the snow will have vegetables to eat.

Then, I will make it cold again so the flowers and trees can go back to sleep after all of their hard work. Then, I will make it Christmas time again! I love doing that! Soon after that, it will be time for me to teach a baby New Year how to be a very good one. I will love that, too! I should never have been afraid to try something new, should I?

I can't wait until my first day on the new job. That will be the first day in January. And, that night, I can tell you, "Good Night"



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BUSY DENTAL Office looking for positive, people-friendly patient coordinator. 4 Days a week. Will train. Send resume to 1708 East FM 700.

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ANSWERS

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

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Rape Crisis Services/Big Spring

BY HOLIDAY MATHIS
Is it the light of the Pisces moon, the music or the general sentimentality of the season that makes you see the world through idealistic eyes?

When the choice is between cynicism and extending belief, you're better off seeing what's beautiful. Besides, there are examples of love all around you. Go slow and savor togetherness.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). It's your turn to entertain. If you're stumped for a way to dazzle 'em with brilliance, baffle 'em with whatever comes off the top of your head. You are really much more captivating than you think.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). There are no easy

fixes, but what you learn because of this could transform you into a master. Be willing to take on your task again and again until it's even better than the best you've ever achieved.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'll hear some pretty silly excuses as to why someone didn't come through for you, but you'll probably be too busy accepting the gracious generosity of others to care!

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You're no ventriloquist's dummy, but today it does feel as though someone else's words are coming out of your mouth. Realizing this brings you a step closer to what you really want to say to the world.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're attracted to somebody, but still unsure as to why. Sometimes the heart understands what the mind cannot fathom.



HOLIDAY
MATHIS

Annie's Mailbox : Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: I reside in a small, semi-rural town, and most everyone knows their neighbors. Recently, our quiet neighborhood had a very disturbing incident. One of our neighbors, "Louise," hired a cleaning company, and after they left, Louise called the sheriff. She accused the cleaning people of stealing \$20,000 worth of jewelry. I was terribly upset that someone would do such an awful thing.

The other day, I was talking to Louise's daughter, and she blatantly said her mother reports a jewelry theft every six to eight months so she can collect the insurance. She has photographs of jewelry she has never owned — just borrowed for evaluation. Then the cleaning company usually compensates her for her "loss." The company, of course, is always bonded and usually pays the money just to hush up the situation.

This is grand theft. This



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

woman collects fraudulently on insurance claims. She drives up our homeowners' insurance premiums, and on top of that, destroys the reputation of the cleaning service and probably gets the help fired. I think this is appalling. — Disgusted with My Senior Neighbor Lady

Dear Disgusted: We think it's appalling, too, and we hope her daughter is exaggerating. You also can report Louise to the

cleaning company to clear the names of the workers, but we know most neighbors are not willing to stick their noses in quite that far. Rest assured, if Louise does this on a regular basis, the police and her insurance company are onto her scheme, or soon will be.

Dear Annie: I read your column in the China Post. Lately, you've been getting lots of complaints from housewives who are fed up with their husbands' touchy-feely behavior. I'm talking about those men who can't seem to keep their hands off their wives, even in public. Please allow me to show you the other side.

For several years, I, too, had to put up with a "big bad wolf" husband. He insisted on holding my hand everywhere we went, and when we sat together he would pat my back, stroke my hair or even rest his hand on my leg. I found this annoying, manipulative and controlling. But then something terrible happened to change my way of thinking. I lost him in an automobile accident.

Now today, Annie, here I am telling myself I would give anything just to feel my husband's touch one more time. To those women who are complaining, all I have to say is, count your blessings. Things could be worse. Your man could be an abuser, completely unaffectionate, or gone forever, like mine. So as long as he isn't groping you in embarrassing places, I say you should learn to love your husband's touch. — Learned Too Late in Taipei

Dear Learned Too Late: Most women love their husbands to hold their hands or stroke their hair. Thank you for reminding us what is important. Our condolences on your loss.

Dear Annie: This is in response to "Happy Boy's Mom," whose infant son was large. I'm both a pediatrician and a mom. My son was huge for his age when he was in his early years. He was exclusively breastfed for the first nine months, so you couldn't blame fries. Kids have their own growth curves in infancy and the toddler years. They start looking like their family members in size as they get older.

Moms get more advice than they need, and it's exhausting if they try to accommodate all of it. My favorite response to unsolicited commentary worked well. I said, "Isn't he wonderful! But, of course, I'm biased, I'm

Everything will be revealed in time — but tonight is one big question mark.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There's a message you're broadcasting to everyone around you. Are you aware of what it is? Today brings deeper self-understanding. If your message isn't captivating the right audience, you can always change it!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Life isn't coming at you in some kind of haphazard fashion. It's being generated for you, by you, from emotion to emotion. A realization helps you claim dominion over your world.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Lately, people come running to you for advice. This is another one of those days. Some will be receptive to your sage wisdom. Others are merely in the habit of asking you and then pretending to listen.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Whether or not knowledge is actually power remains to be seen. It really depends on how you use it. Think big. Figure out how you can benefit many instead of just a few.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Since you love to be challenged almost as much as you love to win easy, you're in a dilemma now. Go for the big risk instead of playing it safe. Aries and Virgo people are lucky teammates.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You remember what you were taught, but you'll probably still have to shift your style to accommodate the current state of things. Adaptability is your hallmark.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). There's an opportunity that comes to you solely because someone else slipped up. Jump on this. Stock the fruit, cheeses

and drinks at home. Your unexpected visitors will be so impressed!

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Jared Leto is one of a handful of actors to successfully make the often difficult transition to eye-lined rock star. Smartly, Leto never took the easy way out, instead opting for the tried and true method of pounding the rock 'n' roll pavement with his brother and their band, 30 Seconds to Mars. Capricorns excel through challenge and hard work — and now 30 Seconds to Mars is a bona fide hit.

If you would like to write to Holiday Mathis, please go to www.creators.com and click on "Write the Author" on the Holiday Mathis page, or you may send her a postcard in the mail. To find out more about Holiday Mathis and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

them off at my house at 6:30 a.m., and I take them to school at 8:30. She picks them up at 3:00.

I found out her new beau gets off work at 6:30 a.m. and that my ex isn't getting into work until 9. Also, she's enrolled the kids in an after-school program that gets out at 5:30. I work 50-plus hours a week, then attend night classes, and I'm pretty wiped out getting up so early in the morning for my kids. Plus, we're not saving money.

I pay my ex quite a bit in child support, but I wonder if it's just the kids I'm supporting. I don't want to upset the balance we've maintained for two years, but I don't want to feel like a heel. — Confuzzled in Massachusetts

Dear Confuzzled: If taking the kids in the morning is a major hardship for you, you should renegotiate the arrangement. However, we think your major objection is that your wife wasn't honest about her reasons. We suggest you have a calm, heart-to-heart, and let her know it's not fair for you to subsidize her social life.

Dear Annie: I had to respond to the letter from "Stressed-Out Parents in Virginia," whose 35-year-old daughter was addicted to drugs.

As a recovering addict (seven years clean), I can say the parents are doing additional harm to their daughter by enabling her. As long as they continue to bail her out of trouble, she will never get herself together. Once my parents finally stopped "helping" me, I had to do things on my own.

I was 34 years old with two kids when I decided to clean up my act. The daughter must want to get sober for herself. And prayer really does help. I wish them well and hope she realizes her life can get better before it's too late. — A Walking Testimony

Dear Walking: Many readers wrote to say the same thing — that these parents are not helping by caving in. Thanks for being the Voice of Experience.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to annies-mailbox@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.



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