



Parcells opens up about his life, at least a little

Fireworks to fill 2007 legislative session

□ House Speaker Craddick's political career is under siege. See Page 5A.

By LIZ AUSTIN PETERSON
Associated Press Writer

AUSTIN — Immigration, school vouchers and harsher punishments for sex offenders are among a buffet of hot-button issues awaiting Texas lawmakers when a new legislative

session starts Tuesday. Then there are the complex tasks of balancing the budget, dealing with rising property appraisals and possibly revising the business tax enacted during a special legislative session last year to help fund schools.

Add in some rough and tumble political gamesmanship like that playing out in the race for speaker of the Texas House of

Representatives and it could make for a long and unpredictable five months in Austin.

The results of the speaker's race and the attitude of lawmakers after it's over could determine the session's success. Much will depend on whether Democrats and Republicans — not to mention moderates and hard-liners within each party — can get along.

"It's going to take legislators

willing to put partisanship and divisiveness aside to work for the greater good of this state," said Robert Black, spokesman for Republican Gov. Rick Perry.

The fireworks could begin when the biennial session starts on Tuesday. That's when House members will choose a speaker, who can control the destiny of most House proposals.

Republican Tom Craddick of

Midland has held the job since 2003 and has been criticized as being dictatorial and heavy-handed. Two fellow Republicans — Rep. Brian McCall of Plano and Rep. Jim Pitts of Waxahachie — announced plans in late December to challenge him. McCall on Thursday threw his support behind Pitts, a former

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New year, same topic

Commissioners to discuss county jail woes Monday

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

Efforts to get the Howard County Jail back up and running are shifting into overdrive.

Howard County commissioners are expected to advertise for bids for a smoke evacuation system for the jail when they

hold their regular meeting at 10 a.m. Monday in the county courthouse.

Commissioners also are expected to award a bid to install a firewater standpipe system for the jail Monday.

Once the standpipe and

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Bradon Hollingsworth grooms his hog in preparation of showing at the 70th annual Glasscock County Junior Livestock Show in the Community Center in Garden City Friday afternoon.

SAYING GOODBYE



HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins
Newly appointed Howard County Chief Deputy Mark Hall presents former chief deputy Gary Pritchett with an award of appreciation Friday afternoon for his years of service with the HCSO.

Months of hard work pay off at area junior livestock show

By STEVE REAGAN
Staff Writer

GARDEN CITY — Months and months of hard work paid off for Holly Halfmann — and her hog — at the Glasscock County 4-H Junior Livestock Show Friday.

The 10-year-old daughter of Scott and Tana Halfmann of St. Lawrence won grand champion honors in the junior hog division at the 70th annual livestock show, held at the Glasscock County Community Center.

Halfmann's reaction to winning was short and to the point. "It's cool," she said.

She was a bit more forthcoming

when asked about all the work involved in getting an animal ready to exhibit at livestock shows.

"You've to feed it and walk it, shear it, weigh it, wash it ... it's a lot of work," she said.

Scott Halfmann said the family bought the York breed hog and began preparing it for show season back in September.

Farm pigs don't have it particularly tough, but show pigs are shown especially tender care, including special food and quarters and protection from the elements.

"You have to give them special feed ... and while all the other pigs are outside, these are kept inside," he said.

"They're definitely pampered show hogs."

Holly will show her animal in several other livestock shows this year, including stops in San Angelo, San Antonio and Houston.

After that, the two will part ways. Holly will return home to St. Lawrence and her hog will likely turn up on someone's breakfast table.

Although she said admits being bothered by her hog's impending fate, her father doesn't believe that will keep her from returning to the show circuit next year.

"She's probably going to end up raising more show babies," he said.

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No green thumb? Get one beginning Tuesday at the Master Gardener class

By BILL MCCLELLAN
News Editor

Do you grow more weeds than grass? Does every plant anyone gives you die except for the plastic ones? And even they look kinda wilted?

Well even if you are great with plants but are hungry for more knowledge, you may be interested in knowing there is

a Howard County Master Gardener class being offered, starting this month.

An orientation meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Howard County Library basement. During the meeting, potential students will learn what all the course entails, along with requirements for

certification. That's right, students who complete the requirements become certified by the state of Texas.

The Master Gardener course is offered by the Texas Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M University System. Students become

See CLASS, Page 3A

BANQUET TICKETS ON SALE

Tickets are on sale now for the annual Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce Banquet, set for Thursday, Jan. 18.

Tickets are \$22 each and are available at the chamber office. Businesses interested in decorating a table for the banquet — and promoting themselves in the process — can get more information on doing that by calling 263-7641.

The deadline to purchase tickets is Jan. 15. No tickets will be available at the door, organizers say.

Local celebrity Tumbleweed Smith will be guest speaker for the banquet, which will include presentation of the Man and Woman of the Year.

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Obituaries

William 'Willie' Mendoza Jr.



William "Willie" Mendoza Jr., 63, of Big Spring died Thursday, Jan. 4, 2007, at the Veterans Administration Medical Center. Vigil services will be at 7 p.m. Sunday at Myers & Smith Chapel. Funeral Mass will be at 1 p.m. Monday at Sacred Heart Catholic Church with burial at Mount Olive Memorial Park.

Willie was born March 20, 1943, in Big Spring to Esperanza and William Mendoza Sr. He graduated from Big Spring High School in 1962, and was the first Hispanic to play football for the Big Spring Steers, and helped pave the way for Mexican American gridgers. Willie would be called "El 44", which was his number on his football jersey, by many friends for the rest of his life. He attended Howard College and served his country as a staff sergeant in the Army in Vietnam. Willie was a professional musician, starting his first band at age 18, "The Continentals," and later "The Taste of Latin." He later started the Twin City Band in Odessa. Willie played all over Texas and had played with Selena, Freddy Fender, Little Joe and Ruben Ramos. He was a partner in the BBM Recording Studio in Odessa.

Willie was a lifetime resident of Big Spring, except for 20 years in Odessa, where in addition to his music and recording he also owned the Spanish Inn Restaurant. He was a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, the Knights of Columbus and Chicano Golf Association since 1972. Willie married Belinda Rodriguez on Aug. 25, 1968, in Big Spring.

Willie is survived by his wife: Belinda Mendoza of Big Spring; two sons: Danny Mendoza of Lubbock and Daniel Mendoza of Big Spring; three daughters: Briana Mendoza, Ashley Mendoza, and Brittany Mendoza, all of Big Spring; his mother: Esperanza Mendoza of Big Spring; four brothers: Albert Mendoza of Dallas, Charlie Mendoza and his wife Beckie, Victor Mendoza and his wife Yolanda and Larry Mendoza and his wife Pat, all of Big Spring; three sisters: Lesvia Gamboa of Fort Worth, Olga Billalba and her husband Tommy, and Rosanna Everett, all of Big Spring; two sisters-in-law, whom he considered his sisters: Betty Rodriguez and Joe Robles, and Mary Lopez and her husband Joe; and several aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews.

Willie was preceded in death by his father: William Mendoza Sr. on May 18, 2000.

Pallbearers will be Willie Rangel, John De La Garza, Albert Fierro, Dickie De Leon, Bonifacio Salazar, Jr. Corrales. Honorary pallbearers will be Ray Navarette, Billy Pineda, Gilbert Reyna, John Fierro, Gus Ochotorena, Renee Gasca, Joe F. Martinez (Bro) and all members of the Chicano Golf Association.

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

Paid Obituary

Maria Davila



Maria Davila, 83, of Big Spring, died Thursday, Jan. 4, 2007, in a local hospital. Funeral services will be held at 10 a.m. Monday, Jan. 8, 2007, at the Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel with Deacon Johnny Arguello of Sacred Heart Catholic Church officiating. Interment will follow at Mount Olive Memorial Park.

She was born June 30, 1923, in Brownsville. Maria had lived in Big Spring for the past 27 years. She was a homemaker and a Catholic.

Survivors include two sisters, Maria and husband Vincente R. Solis of Big Spring and Amelia Davila of Brownsville; three brothers, Gregorio Davila of Brownsville and Guillermo Davila and Alejandro Fidel Davila, both of Matamoros, Mexico; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Maria was preceded in death by her parents, one sister, and one brother.

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

Alice Ruth Graham

Alice Ruth Graham, 79, of Midland died Jan. 4, 2007, at the Hospice Inpatient Unit at Midland Memorial Hospital. Funeral services will be held Monday, Jan. 8, 2007, at 1 p.m. at the St. Marks United Methodist Church with the Rev. Karan Young, pastor, officiating and the Rev. William McReynolds assisting. A visitation will be held Sunday from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the funeral home, 3800 N. Big Spring St. in Midland.

Alice was born Jan. 7, 1927, to Sid and Lee Ola Cross in Martin County. She married JW Graham on May 14, 1944, in Martin County.

She was a charter member of St. Mark's United Methodist Church. Alice was employed for more than eight years at Amerada-Hess as a secretary.

Survivors include her husband, JW Graham of Midland; a son, Robert and wife Janice Graham of Louisville, Ken; a daughter, Pamela Graham of San Marcos; four grandchildren; six great grandchildren; two great great grandchildren; a sister, Peggy Rose Creech of Stanton; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

She was preceded in death by her parents and two brothers, Bob and Taylor Cross.

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

Rebecca 'Becky' Cannon

Rebecca "Becky" Cannon, 59, of Big Spring died Friday, Jan. 5, 2007, at Scenic Mountain Medical Center. Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Tuesday at Myers & Smith Chapel with the Rev. Jess Colegrove officiating. Burial will be at Trinity Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. Monday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

She was born Feb. 5, 1947, in Beckley, W.Va. to Waneta and Paris Mitchem. She was an RN at the Veterans Administration Medical Center for 12 years. She owned the Water Shoppe for 11 years. She had been in Big Spring since 1982. She was a Baptist.

She is survived by one son, Lee Hancock and his wife Cristie of Big Spring; one daughter, Sonya Faye Hernandez and her husband Michael of Big Spring; one sister, Sherry Faye Adams and her husband Henry W. of Big Spring; one brother, David Mitchem and his wife Peggy of Big Spring; seven grandchildren; three nephews; and one niece.

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

David D. Thomas

David D. Thomas, 50, of Christoval died Thursday, Jan. 4, 2007. Memorial services will be held at 2 p.m. Monday, Jan. 8, 2007, at Johnson's Funeral Home Chapel in San Angelo.

David was born Oct. 10, 1956, in Wichita Falls to Donald R. and Betty Anne Thomas. He was a consultant in the Oil & Gas Industry and a resident of Christoval for two years.

David was married to Stephanie L. Shultz.

Survivors include his mother, Betty Anne Thomas of Levelland; his wife, Stephanie L. Shultz-Thomas of Christoval; son Matthew David Thomas and daughter Halee David Thomas, both of Big Spring; sister Christi Nix of Odessa; brother-in-law David Nix of Odessa; step-daughter Courtney Wilhelm of San Antonio; step-son James Shultz of Christoval; and step-son Eric Walker of Carlsbad, N.M.

Amos Shiflett

Amos Shiflett, 93, of Big Spring died Friday, Jan. 5, 2007, at his residence. Services are pending with Ellis Funeral Home in Morton.

Noe Blanco

Noe Blanco, 46, of Big Spring died Friday, Jan. 5, 2007, in Lubbock. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Police blotter

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

- ASSAULT/FAMILY VIOLENCE was reported in the 1100 block of Sycamore.
- EVADING ARREST/VEHICLE was reported in the 1300 block of Young.
- UNAUTHORIZED USE OF A VEHICLE was reported in the 1300 block of Young.
- ROBERT RUBEN SANCHEZ, 42, Colorado City, was arrested on a charge of public intoxication.
- ANASTACIO S. ESPARZA, 41, 263 Ent, was arrested on a charge of public intoxication.

Sheriff's report

The Howard County Sheriff's Office had no reported activity between 8 a.m. Friday and 8 a.m. Saturday.

Support Groups

MONDAY
• Encourager's Support Group for all widows and widowers meets the first and third Monday of the month.
For more information, call Nancy Hale at 398-5239.

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.

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SATURDAY
• Big Spring Cruisers cruise Gregg Street and at the Sonic Drive-In beginning at 6:30 p.m..
• Eagles Lodge Dance at 8:30 p.m. at 703 W. Third.
• Big Spring Squares. Call 263-6305 for more information.

MONDAY
• Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) No. 21 meets at 5 p.m. in the Dora Roberts Rehabilitation Center, 306 W. Third for weigh-in. The meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. Call 1-800-392-8677 or 263-0391 or 263-1758.
• Big Spring Band Boosters meet at 5:30 p.m. in the Big Spring High School band hall.

• Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) No. TX 1756 meets at 5:30 p.m. in the First Christian Church of Big Spring, 911 Goliad. A different program is offered every week. Enter through the south side door off 10th Street. Call 263-2786 for more information.
• Coahoma Lions Club meets at 6 p.m. in the Coahoma Community Center at 306 North Ave.

• Archeology Society for Howard and Borden counties meets at 7 p.m. in the Howard County Library Community Room in the basement. Call 270-2615 for more information.
• Prospector's Club work night begins at 7 p.m. at 606 E. Third.

• Big Spring Society of the Order of Beacients meets at 6:30 p.m. for a meal with meeting that begins at 7:30 p.m. at 221 Main.
• Big Spring Commandry meets at 7:30 p.m. at 221 Main.

TUESDAY
• Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
• The Powwow Committee of Big Spring meets at 7 p.m. at St. Paul Lutheran Church annex, 809 Scurry, or the fellowship hall at 810 Scurry. Call Robert Downing at 263-3255 for information.

WEDNESDAY
• Optimist Club meets at 7 a.m. in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
• 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.
• Senior Circle meets at 11 a.m. at Scenic Mountain Medical Center classroom for Stretch and Tone. Call 268-4721.

Weather

Sunday—Sunny. Highs in the lower 50s. Northwest winds 15 to 20 mph shifting to the northeast 10 to 20 mph in the afternoon.

Sunday night—Clear. Lows in the upper 20s. North winds around 10 mph shifting to the southwest after midnight.

Monday—Sunny. Highs in the upper 50s. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph.

Monday night—Clear. Lows around 30.
Tuesday—Sunny. Highs in the mid 50s.

Tuesday night—Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 30s.
Wednesday—Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 50s.

Wednesday night—Mostly cloudy. Lows around 40.
Thursday—Mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid 60s.

Thursday night—Mostly cloudy. Lows in the lower 40s.
Friday—Mostly cloudy. Highs in the lower 60s.

Lottery

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Cash 5 drawing Friday night:
Winning numbers drawn: 2-15-16-24-27.
Number matching five of five: 0.

AUSTIN (AP) — The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Friday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 2-9-0

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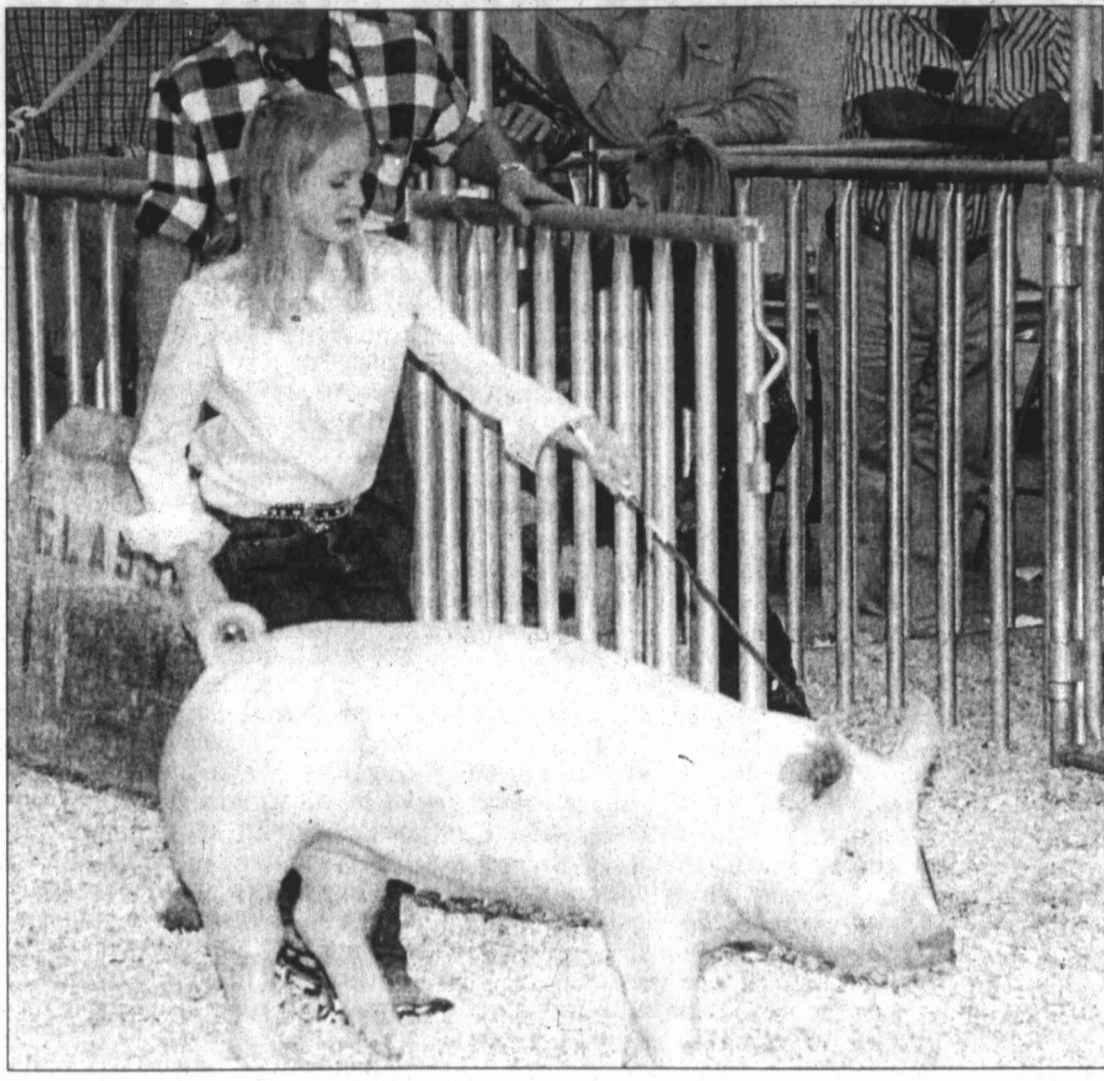
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Holly Halfmann guides her hog through its paces during the 70th annual Glasscock County Junior Livestock Show Friday in Garden City. Halfmann's hog was named grand champion in its category.

HERALD photo/
Steve Reagan

CLASS

Continued from Page 1A

knowledgeable in soils and fertility, entomology, plant diseases, landscape design, native plants, xeriscape and a lot more. Guest speakers will include doctors and Extension agents who specialize in entomology, plant pathology and horticulture.

There is a fee of \$75 which covers materials and supplies. Class days are set for Tuesdays from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

"The Master Gardeners of Howard County have many worthwhile projects each year which involve the beautification of our community," said Katie Grigg, president.

Projects in the past have included the Heart of the City Checkerboard, Hanger 25 Air Museum, the Vietnam Memorial, Lamen-Lusk-Sanchez State Veterans Home, Howard County Courthouse and several

schools in the area. "With the help of the Dora Roberts Foundation, the Master Gardeners are able to supply grants to schools for various planning and planting projects carried out by the students themselves," added Grigg.

For more information, contact Terry Sage at the extension office, 264-2236, or Grigg at (432) 661-4707.

Contact Bill McClellan at 263-7331 ext. 235 or by e-mail at newsdesk@bigspringherald.com

COUNTY

Continued from Page 1A

smoke evacuation systems are in — and they pass state muster — county officials are confident the jail will be allowed to once again house prisoners.

The jail has been closed since November by order of the state jail standards commission because of shortcomings on various "life safety" issues, such as the lack of an effective smoke evacuation system.

Since that time, prisoners have been kept

in other facilities across West Texas, a situation that is costing the county thousands of dollars a month.

However, if those life safety issues can be adequately addressed, it is likely the state will re-open the jail.

"(State officials) have told us that when we pass the smoke evacuation test, they'll hold a special meeting (of the standards commission) and rescind the closure order," County Commissioner Jerry Kilgore said. "As for the other variances, we'll just have to live with them for now."

The meeting, which will be the first

chaired by new County Judge Mark Barr, will also feature discussion regarding a possible new jail, although no details are available as yet.

In other business, commissioners will consider:

- A memorandum of agreement between the county and the Department of State Health Services.
- Personnel and payroll reports.

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

SESSION

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Craddick ally.

Craddick's supporters say his strong leadership has enabled the Legislature to solve many thorny issues, such as school finance reform. And his spokeswoman, Alexis DeLee, said he has more than enough support to win another term.

"We're still confident in our numbers," DeLee said.

This year it will take at least 75 votes in the 149-member chamber to elect a new speaker. One Houston-area seat is vacant because of a death but will be filled within the next month.

Once the speaker's race is settled, the only thing lawmakers are legally required to do is adopt a multibillion-dollar state budget. But even that won't be easy thanks to last year's massive property tax overhaul.

To meet a court order, the Legislature met in special session last spring and implemented \$13.5 billion in tax cuts for 2006-07, to be made up with new state revenue. That will cause total state spending to surge, likely surpassing the spending limit lawmakers are constitutionally required to set at the start of the session.

Even with an expected

surplus of about \$15 billion, that puts fiscally conservative Republicans in a rough spot: deciding whether to abide by the spending constraints or vote to bust the cap.

Their decision will dictate how much money they have to spend on other programs, like health care, schools and prisons. Most economists predict that the next budget cycle won't be so flush, so they'll need to stash money away to maintain the property tax cuts in future years.

Still, visions of attack ads calling them big spenders might give some lawmakers indigestion before the vote, said Dick Lavine, senior fiscal analyst for the Center for Public Policy Priorities.

"It should be easy for a legislator to explain to his constituents why he or she had to make this vote, but voters have to understand what the choices are," said Lavine, whose group advocates for low-income families.

When they're not poring over the budget, lawmakers likely will be fighting over a crackdown on illegal immigration. A variety of bills already have been filed, including one designed to challenge the automatic citizenship of babies born in the United States to illegal immigrants.

The bill by state Rep. Leo Berman would deny

state benefits to the children of illegal immigrants. It would only apply to children born after the bill took effect.

Sex offenders also face harsher punishments under legislation backed by Republican Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst, who presides over the Senate. Repeat child sex offenders could face the death penalty and anyone convicted of a sex crime against a victim under the age of 14 may face lifetime monitoring.

Other proposals call for increasing in the statute of limitations for sexual abuse cases and requiring sex offenders from other states who move to Texas to register with Texas authorities.

The perennial school voucher debate also could flare up again, with proponents pushing for programs to let students in low-performing public schools use tax money to attend a private school. One proposal would let the parents of children with autism choose the

public or private school that would best serve their child.

But following election defeats of a few high-profile voucher supporters, the issue may not go far this session.

"We don't deny it's going to be difficult," said Guenther, of the pro-voucher Texas Public Policy Foundation. "We'll continue to educate members and look at various ways to inject some form of compromise."

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10:00 AM	Water Aerobics	Water Aerobics		Water Aerobics	
11:00 AM	Water Arthritis		Water Arthritis		Water Arthritis
5:20 PM	Water Aerobics	Water Aerobics		Water Aerobics	
5:30 PM		Pilates		Spin	

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DeLay ally fights to keep powerful Texas speaker post

By KELLEY SHANNON
AP Political Writer

AUSTIN — As the powerful speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, Tom Craddick has a reputation for twisting arms,

cajoling and, some say, intimidating colleagues in a manner similar to that of his ally, former U.S. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, a.k.a. "The Hammer."

Now Craddick's own political career is under siege, largely because of what a coalition of disgruntled Republicans and emboldened Democrats say are the authoritarian, "hammer-like" methods he has used to keep lawmakers in line and voting his way on key issues.

It's the latest test for the GOP in President Bush's home state, where Republicans hold all state offices and control the Legislature, but were weakened in a November election that some saw as a nationwide referendum on Iraq and Bush's domestic policy.

Craddick, a 20-term West Texas legislator, is the target of a rare vote Tuesday to unseat an incumbent speaker, a powerful post that controls House committee assignments and which bills get voted on.

An added dash of political intrigue is that the challenger is one of Craddick's top deputies, Republican Rep. Jim Pitts, who now describes his boss as a divisive leader who alienated lawmakers on both sides of the aisle.

Craddick hasn't spoken out publicly lately, but his spokeswoman denied that he's heavy-handed or has a leadership approach resembling DeLay's.

"He's a bipartisan leader," said spokeswoman Alexis DeLee. "The people that we have that are behind us and support us are supportive of him as a leader and his leadership style."

But that's not what others say.

"I think that his style of leading the House is a Tom DeLay style," said state Rep. Jim Dunnam of Waco, leader of the House Democratic Caucus. Craddick and DeLay served together in the Texas House in the 1980s.

Dunnam said Craddick's rough tactics were evident during the rancorous 2003 congressional redistricting battles — a time when Craddick welcomed DeLay back to the Texas Capitol to push a GOP plan and House and Senate Democrats secretly fled the state to break a quorum and block the legislation in special sessions called by Republican Gov. Rick Perry. In the end, Craddick, Perry and the Republicans won, though parts of the redistricting map didn't hold up in court.



House Speaker Tom Craddick holds a press conference on Friday morning, May 16, 2003, after 51 House Democrats returned to Austin from Oklahoma. Craddick is in a fight to keep his speaker's post as the legislature gets ready to convene.

Democrat complains to DA about Craddick business interests

AUSTIN (AP) — A Democratic lawmaker asked Travis County District Attorney Ronnie Earle on Friday to open an investigation into whether Texas House Speaker Tom Craddick is using his public office for personal financial gain.

Rep. Lon Burnam of Fort Worth, a vocal critic of Craddick, wrote in a letter to Earle that an entity owned by Craddick is collecting rent from a contractor who has been paid millions of dollars for state projects.

"This type of financial arrangement — where an elected official in a position of power is deriving income from a state contractor — simple does not pass the smell test," Burnam wrote.

Earle said in a statement that his office is reviewing Burnam's letter and will "proceed appropriately according to the facts and the law."

Craddick spokeswoman Alexis DeLee questioned the timing of the complaint. In a statement, she said the allegations were "completely untrue and based on erroneous and irresponsible speculation."

Burnam has been among the House Democrats who have opposed Craddick since he took over as speaker in 2003.

Burnam said Craddick has a financial interest in a company that owns a commercial building in Austin that leases office space to Carter & Burgess, an architectural, engineering and construction management firm. Burnam, citing figures from the Texas comptroller's office, said the firm was paid more than \$23 million by the state in 2006, mostly through the Texas Department of Transportation.

There were other times when a House vote didn't go Craddick's way and he made sure the proposal was voted on again and approved, often after obvious stern persuasion of certain House members, Dunnam said.

One occasion was in 2005 when a House vote was reconsidered and changed to favor Craddick's position on capping the amount of property tax money that could be taken away from wealthy school districts.

Craddick also has strongly signaled House members about his position by choosing to vote — rather than following his usual practice of abstaining — on a particular proposal, including a private school voucher measure in 2005 that ultimately failed.

Some moderate Republicans who voted against the voucher plan later were challenged in 2006 Republican primaries by candidates backed by a wealthy Craddick supporter, San Antonio businessman and voucher advocate James Leininger.

Pitts, a Waxahachie legislator Craddick bestowed with the coveted House appropriations chairmanship two years ago, promised to reach out to all legislators "without any arm twisting or intimidation."

Another speaker challenger, Republican Rep. Brian McCall of Plano, pulled out of the race Thursday and threw his

support behind Pitts. They declined to reveal the names of Pitts' other supporters, however, saying those House members feared arm-twisting by Craddick's camp.

But what some call coercion by Craddick others say is simply strong leadership.

"Every good speaker, whether a Republican or Democrat, is the strong speaker. There are no good speakers that are weak speakers," said political consultant Bill Miller, who is close to Craddick. "Tom is adept at getting along with people of all stripes."

Craddick, 63, hails from Midland and made his fortune in the oilfield mud business. He was elected to the House in 1968, one of the few Republicans at the time.

He took over as speaker in 2003, becoming the first GOP speaker in 130 years when his party finally won control of the chamber.

Attorney Cris Feldman, a plaintiff's lawyer who represents Democrats in civil lawsuits connected to DeLay and Craddick, said both men are beholden to big-money interests. Feldman alleged that Craddick was closely tied to the operation of DeLay's Texans for a Republican Majority political committee and that his tenure as speaker has been a dark time for state government.

"It's been one of the most partisan and divisive periods in Texas legislative history, not unlike the U.S. Congress during Tom DeLay's reign as House majority

leader," he said.

Craddick's ties to DeLay attracted attention during a criminal investigation into 2002 legislative race spending by TRMPAC, the DeLay political action committee. But there were no notable repercussions then for Craddick in the GOP-controlled House.

Craddick never was charged in the criminal case. DeLay was indicted and is awaiting trial on state conspiracy and money laundering charges. He has left Congress, and his suburban Houston seat is now held by a Democrat.

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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.

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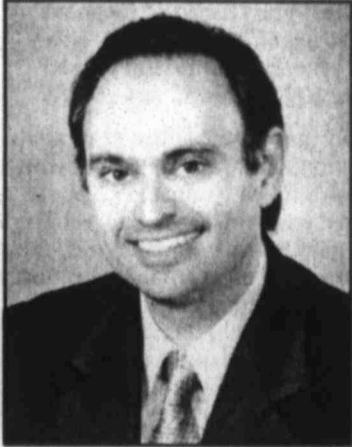
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Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9 with no repeats. That means no number is repeated in any row, column or box. Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

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

Contract Bridge

Sorry, Wrong Number

West dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♦ 3
♥ J 9 8 6
♦ Q J 9 8 6 3 2
♠ 6

WEST
♦ 9 2
♥ K 10 7 5 4 2
♦ K
♠ J 10 7 5

EAST
♦ K Q J 8 5
♥ Q 3
♦ 7
♠ Q 8 4 3 2

SOUTH
♦ A 10 7 6 4
♥ A
♦ A 10 5 4
♠ A K 9

The bidding:
West North East South
Pass Pass Pass 1♦
Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead — ten of clubs.
This deal occurred in a match between Sweden and Greece. It provides a striking example of what an enormous effect a single bid can have on the outcome of a hand.

When the North-South cards were held by a Swedish pair, the bidding went as shown. In standard bidding methods, South's opening one-spade bid was entirely normal, and while North's pass is debatable, his action was reasonable.

North had no satisfactory response to one spade. One notrump

would have been misleading with a 7-4-1-1 distribution and only four high-card points, while two diamonds would have been woefully short of the 10 points or more normally required for a response on the two level.

So South became declarer at one spade and made two for a score of 110 points (including the 50-point bonus at duplicate for making a partscore).

When a Greek pair held the North-South hands at the other table, the bidding was far more spirited:
West North East South
Pass Pass 1♦ 1NT
2♥ 3♦ Pass 6♦

Here it was East who opened the bidding with one spade. South overcalled with a notrump and did not fiddle around after West bid two hearts and North bid three diamonds. South leaped straightaway to six, which North easily made with an overtrick for a score of 1,390 points, giving the Greek team a gain of 1,280 points on the deal.

Had East not opened the bidding with one spade — which was actually a standard third-hand opening — South might very well have suffered the same fate as his Swedish counterpart, winding up in one spade, making two, instead of six diamonds, making seven.

Tomorrow: Famous Hand.
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State briefs

Teenager charged in deadly San Angelo fire

SAN ANGELO (AP) — A 15-year-old boy was charged with arson in a mobile home fire Friday that killed his older sister, and his family suspects he is also responsible for another blaze that killed a younger sibling years ago.

The teenager, whose name was not released because of his age, is being held at a Tom Green County juvenile facility and awaiting a Monday hearing.

Family members say his sister, Kelly Furlong, 24, escaped the mobile home when the fire started Friday morning but ran back inside to get a blanket for one of her children.

Family members say a fire on the same lot in 2001 killed 5-year-old Cecilia Hull, a younger sister of Furlong and the teenager. Their father, Ronald Hull, believes his 15-year-old son also set that blaze.

"I nearly went crazy with Cecilia," Martha Hull, the sibling's mother, told the *San Angelo Standard-Times*. "It's not right, not fair."

Martha and Ronald Hull said their son set building materials on fire in their front yard during the summer.

A motive for the latest fire is under investigation, San Angelo police Lt. Curtis Milbourn said. Two firefighters fighting the blaze were treated for smoke inhalation, authorities said.

Eight family members lived in the mobile home: Furlong and her husband, her parents, her two younger children and her two brothers.

"It's a disaster that shouldn't have happened," Ronald Hull said.

Siblings of boy who stabbed toddler to remain in foster care

DALLAS (AP) — Five of 11 siblings removed from their mother's custody after her 9-year-old son stabbed a toddler to death at their home were ordered to remain in foster care.

Their mother, Detress Richmond, 38, did not attend the hearing Friday to determine whether the state should temporarily retain custody of her children, *The Dallas Morning News* reported.

The children were taken from Richmond late last month after the 9-year-old boy stabbed 2-year-old Da'mya Johnson.

Da'mya's mother had left the girl and a 3-month-old

sister in Richmond's care while she went to work. But Richmond went to play bingo and left her 15-year-old daughter baby sitting.

The 9-year-old boy, who was removed from the home with his siblings, cannot face charges because of his age. No charges have been filed against Richmond.

Child Protective Services has investigated Richmond several times since the 1990s for neglect, but state investigators have said conditions were never dangerous enough to warrant removing the children.

Health officials: 2,800 may have been exposed to TB

LUBBOCK (AP) — Concerned that about 2,800 people may have been exposed to tuberculosis at a West Texas hospital, state health officials are mailing warnings encouraging testing for the disease.

The possible exposure at Lubbock's University Medical Center occurred between September and November of last year, but the hospital was not alerted until last month. Privacy laws don't allow the hospital to name who caused the possible exposure to TB.

Hospital employees are tested for TB each year, hospital spokesman Greg Bruce.

The Texas Department of State Health Services said only people who receive the letter should be tested. The agency stressed this was not an outbreak.

"There's no immediate danger," Bruce told the *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal* for Thursday editions.

TB is caused by bacteria that can attack the kidney, spine and brain, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The disease can be fatal if left untreated.

Letters are standard procedure whenever TB is reported, state health services spokesman Barry Wilson said. He noted that officials were very liberal in compiling the list of people who may have been exposed.

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The Unrelenting and Virulent Hatred of the Arabs

Will peace ever be possible under those conditions?

After almost sixty years of statehood, Israel is a lone outpost of Western civilization and its values. It is the staunchest ally of the United States in that part of the world — a bulwark of democracy. The Arab nations surrounding it are a swamp of terrorism, corruption, dictatorship, and human enslavement. But the hatred of the Arabs against Israel and against all Jews is so abiding and so virulent that peace, at least for the foreseeable future, seems unattainable and most unlikely.

What are the facts?

No "sacrifice" will overcome the hatred. There are those who still believe that the never-ending conflict between the Arabs and the Jews could be settled if the Israelis were willing to bring greater "sacrifices for peace." Such "sacrifices" would include relinquishing ever-larger portions of their tiny country (less than half the size of San Bernardino County in California) to the Palestinians, dismantling the "settlements" in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), handing the Golan Heights to Syria, and allowing the "return of the refugees," a group that has grown miraculously from about 500,000 to somewhere around 5 million — and the absorption of even a substantial fraction of which would signify the demographic end of the Jewish states.

After the bloody intifada, Israel, ill-advisedly, vacated Gaza. It was rewarded with killing and kidnapping of its soldiers and by daily barrages of Qassam rockets. In the north, after Israel had abandoned its southern Lebanon buffer zone, Hizbollah (the "Army of God") launched the second "Lebanon War." It must now be clear to even the most confirmed "doves" that nothing that Israel could do, any further "sacrifice" that Israel would be prepared to bring, would satisfy the Arabs. The sad but irrefutable conclusion is that only the complete disappearance of Israel, its annihilation, its being "wiped off the map," the excision of this "cancer" could satisfy the Arabs and most of the Muslim world.

Mortal hatred and the "Big Lie." The "Big Lie," invented by the notorious Joseph Goebbels of Nazi infamy, is a mainstay of Arab hatred and propaganda. In Egypt and Jordan (the two Arab countries technically at peace with

Israel), government-controlled news sources published that Israel had distributed drug-laced chewing gum and candy to kill children and to make women sexually corrupt. The Jews (Israelis) are being accused of having introduced foot-and-mouth disease in the Middle East. The age-old calumny of Jews using the blood of Christian and Muslim children in

order to bake their Passover matzos is alive and well in Arab publications. Translations of Adolf Hitler's "Mein Kampf" and the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" are steady best-sellers in all Arab countries. Among other malevolent fabrications, it accuses "international Jewry" of "limitless ambition, inexhaustible greed, and hatred beyond imagination."

In the controlled Arab press, Holocaust denial and accusation of the Zionists having been in cahoots with the German Nazis are regular features. Egypt's government-sponsored Al Akhbar newspaper has expressed fervent thanks to Adolf Hitler for having taken advance revenge on the "vilest criminals on the face of the earth." Still, it berated him for not having been thorough enough in his task of extermination. The Arabs do not consider Israel a normal country, but a creation of the devil, an excrescence, a malignant force of aggressors, murderers, infidels and barbarians. It should be destroyed, for the glory of God, no matter what sacrifices that might entail.

Mortal hatred against Israel and against the Jews is taught to Arab children from the very first grade. Children are encouraged to sacrifice themselves as martyrs and to become suicide bombers and human missiles, with promises that Paradise with unimaginable pleasures awaits those who sacrifice themselves in the holy cause of killing Jews.

This bottomless hatred, a hatred that pervades the Arab world in all strata of society and is incessantly fomented by Arab governments, including those supposed to be "at peace" with Israel, cannot be assuaged by negotiation or by making any further "sacrifices for peace." Nothing will suffice, except the destruction of Israel. The Arab states, having been unable in almost sixty years and in many wars to defeat and exterminate the Jews, are now feverishly arming themselves with "conventional weapons" (easily purchased from the West, including, sad to say, from the United States), and are ardently pursuing the development of weapons of mass annihilation. Just as the suicide bombers do not vacillate to sacrifice themselves, one can safely expect that, once in possession of such weapons, the Arabs will not hesitate to sacrifice millions of their own people in order to destroy Israel. Israel's only course in the face of this almost certain prospect is to assume its previous stance of unflinching deterrence and, as it once did in the destruction of the Iraqi atomic reactor at Osirak in 1981, not to be inhibited by "international opinion" to preempt resolutely if it appears necessary to assure survival of the country.

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Bush's Iraq plan facing uphill battle on Capitol Hill

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush's plan to send more troops to Iraq is already running into trouble on Capitol Hill, with Republicans joining Democrats in raising eyebrows before the president even makes his case.

Bush, who met on Saturday with his national security team, has tapped new military commanders to lead the war effort and will disclose a new war strategy as early as Wednesday that is expected to include political, military and economic components.

The military solution, which has attracted the most attention and skepticism from Congress, probably will call for an increase in U.S. troops, possibly 9,000 additional troops deployed to Baghdad alone.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., shot down the suggestion of more troops within a day of gaining control of Congress.

"Based on the advice of current and former military leaders, we believe this tactic would be a serious mistake," Reid said in the Democratic radio address Saturday. Instead, Reid and Pelosi want Bush to begin pulling troops out in four to six months.

"Our troops and their families have already sacrificed a great deal for Iraq," Reid said. "They have done their part.

It's time for the Iraqis to do their part."

Bush told more than a dozen senators Friday that he would settle on the option only if the Iraqi government offered certain guarantees, according to senators who attended the meeting.

While lawmakers said they were willing to wait and see the entirety of Bush's plan before dismissing it entirely, members — including some Republicans — said they remained deeply skeptical about sending more troops.

"My conclusion was that it would be a mistake to send more troops to Baghdad. I think the sectarian violence there requires a political, not a military, solution," said Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine., who had not had a chance yet to meet with the president.

Rep. Heather Wilson, R-N.M., an Air Force veteran and member of the House Intelligence Committee, said she would not support increasing troop levels "to do for the Iraqis what the Iraqis will not do for themselves."

"I also have not seen a clarity of mission, and I think that's the greatest weakness that we have right now," Wilson said. "We're talking about goals in lofty terms that are not vital American national interests. American troops should only go in harm's way to protect America's vital interests."

World's only wild flock of whoopers continues comeback

By LYNN BREZOSKY
Associated Press Writer

HARLINGEN — Once down to about 15, the world's only wild flock of the statuesque whooping crane has continued its comeback, now numbering a record 237 birds in its Texas Coastal Bend wintering ground.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologist Tom Stehn, who tracks the whooping crane flock, said 45 cranes were born this year, including seven sets of surviving twins, which is unusual for the species.

Stehn rides in a single-engine plane at low altitude over the 35-mile stretch of Texas coastline where the birds feast on blue crab and wolfberries. The birds tend to stay in family groups in territories about a mile wide.

Stehn plots the small groups on photocopied maps of the areas. Last year he counted 220, and this year, 237.

Whooping cranes were one of the first species to appear to rebound from extinction over the past century thanks to a con-

centrated effort of legislation and public awareness. While far from reaching the kind of numbers enjoyed by the gray whale and American peregrine falcon on Fish and Wildlife's list of recovered species, their numbers have slowly increased since counting started in 1938.

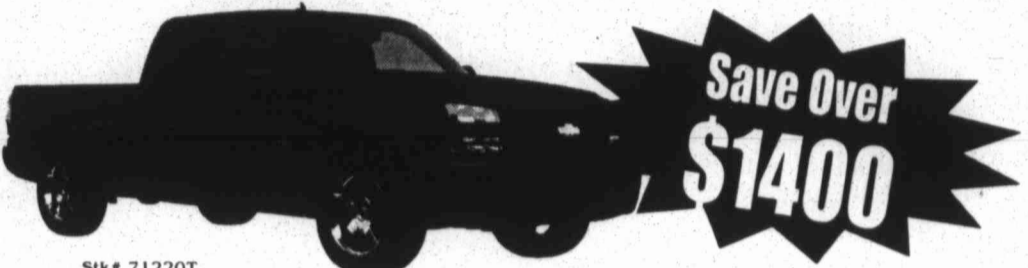
The Texas coast has had a good decade for species recovery, most notably perhaps with the whooping crane and the Kemp's ridley sea turtle on Padre Island.

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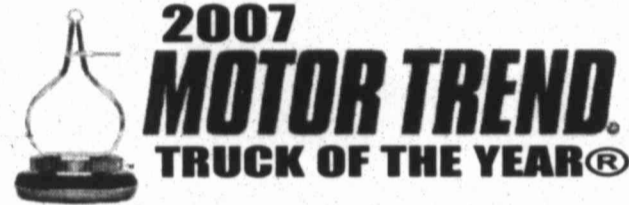
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► News at a glance

Car bomb kills 1, wounds 6 in Baghdad; U.S. troops kill 4 in raids targeting bomb makers

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — A parked car bomb targeted the convoy of a high-ranking Iraqi police officer in central Baghdad on Saturday, killing one pedestrian and wounding six others, police said.

The head of emergency police in the Iraqi capital, Maj. Gen. Ali al-Yassiri, survived the attack on his convoy in a commercial area of the Karradah neighborhood, a police official said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to reporters.

One civilian died and six others were hurt, including three of al-Yassiri's bodyguards, the official said.

Hours earlier, a roadside bomb exploded in eastern Baghdad, injuring one civilian, police said.

Meanwhile, U.S. troops killed four people and captured a fifth in raids targeting suspected bomb makers in Baghdad, the military said.

Over 300 members of U.N. peacekeeping missions investigated for sexual exploitation

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United Nations has investigated more than 300 members of U.N. peacekeeping missions for alleged sexual exploitation and abuse during the past three years and more than half were fired or sent home, according to a senior U.N. official.

The announcement came as the United Nations was trying to determine whether a report in a British newspaper involved new allegations or ones the U.N. had investigated or was investigating. *The Daily Telegraph* report alleged U.N. personnel in southern Sudan were involved in sexual exploitation and abuse of more than 20 children.

U.N. Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Jane Holl Lute said Friday that the U.N. has done more in the last two years than ever before to try to combat sex abuse in its 16 peacekeeping missions "but we're not satisfied with where we are."

With nearly 200,000 people from more than 100 countries rotating through the peacekeeping missions every year, some people "are going to behave badly," she told a news conference. "What's different now is ...

our determination to stay with this problem ... and constantly improve our ability to deal with it."

Between January 2004 and the end of November 2006, Lute said, the U.N. investigated allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving 319 peacekeeping personnel "in all missions" — from East Timor, the Middle East and Africa to Kosovo and Haiti.

New details emerge in the Marine killings of 24 Iraqi civilians after 2005 bombing in Haditha

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Marine squad that had just endured casualties from a roadside bombing ordered five unarmed Iraqi civilians out of a taxi, and the squad leader shot them, eyewitnesses say in a new report obtained by *The Washington Post*.

The report by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, which reveals previously undisclosed details about the incident, says a white taxi happened upon the scene shortly after the explosion. Witnesses told investigators the Marines' squad leader, Staff Sgt. Frank D. Wuterich, ordered the passengers out of the car.

The Post, in its Saturday editions, said naval investigators found that the defenseless Iraqis were then shot one by one by Wuterich as they stood next to the vehicle and about 10 feet from Wuterich.

Another Marine allegedly fired shots into the victims' bodies as they lay on the ground.

Third snowstorm in 3 weeks blows through hard-hit Colorado; ranchers struggling

DENVER (AP) — The third snowstorm in as many weeks barreled into Colorado, blanketing the Denver area with up to 8 inches of new snow and further hampering efforts to rescue thousands of cattle stranded by last week's blizzard.

Crews worked around the clock after the storm hit Friday to clear roads so residents could get to stores for food and medicine. Several school districts canceled classes because winds gusts up to 30 mph had reduced visibility.

In Kansas, an estimated 60,000 people were still without power after more than a week, and the new storm was headed their way after dumping nearly a foot of

snow in the foothills west of Denver.

An estimated 6,000 to 10,000 utility customers were without power Friday night in Nebraska, the utility company said.

New mayor's death sparks controversy in Louisiana town; coroner calls it a suicide

WESTLAKE, La. (AP) — In the hours before his death on the evening of Dec. 30, the first black mayor of this overwhelmingly white town started learning his new job.

About noon, he set City Hall's alarm system for the first time. He got instructions on how to raise and lower the U.S. flag. He had already ordered a new mayoral letterhead with his name on it and a button-down shirt embroidered "Gerald Washington, Mayor."

A few hours later he indulged in a hobby, placing a \$4 bet at a nearby horse racing track.

But by 10 p.m. Gerald "Wash" Washington was dead in the deserted parking lot of a former high school, a bullet wound in his chest. His gun was found by the body.

The coroner and the sheriff have pronounced Washington's death a suicide — a finding that has embroiled this oil-refinery town in conspiracy theories, with Washington's kin and friends insisting he had no reason to end his life.

Momofuku Ando, the Japanese inventor of instant noodles, dies at 96

TOKYO (AP) — Momofuku Ando, the Japanese inventor of instant noodles — a dish that has sustained American college students for decades — has died. He was 96.

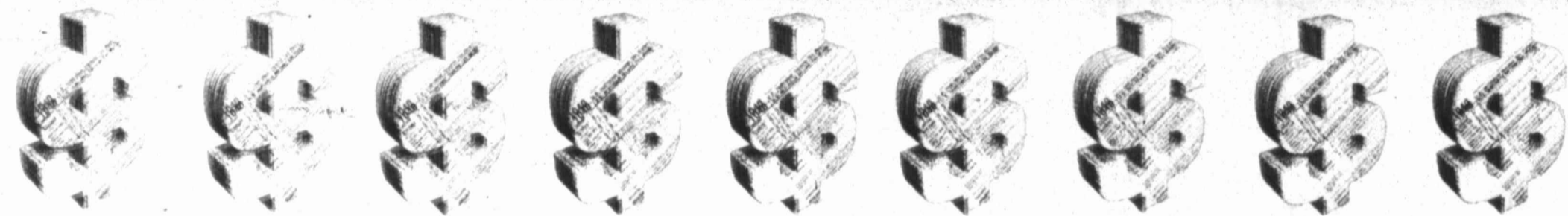
Nissin Food Products Co., the company Ando founded, said on its Web site that he died Friday after suffering a heart attack.

Born in Taiwan, Ando founded his company in 1948 from a humble family operation. Faced with food shortages in post-World War II Japan, Ando thought a quality, convenient noodle product would help feed the masses.

In 1958, his "Chicken Ramen" — the first instant noodle — was introduced after many trials.

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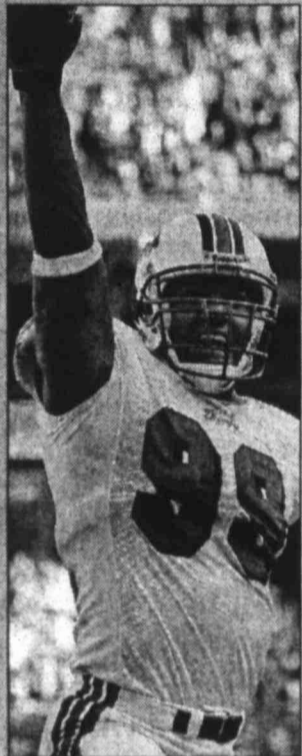
IN BRIEF

NFL first round playoff schedules

Saturday:
Kansas City at Indianapolis, 3:30 p.m. (NBC)
Dallas at Seattle, 7 p.m. (NBC)

Sunday:
New York Jets at New England, Noon. (CBS)
New York Giants at Philly, 3:30 p.m. (FOX)

Taylor earns NFL's defensive MVP



Jason Taylor accumulated 13 1/2 sacks, forced 10 fumbles, recovered two, intercepted two passes and returned both for scores — all in route to being named the defensive MVP of the NFL.

See Page 2B

Seattle Seahawks adjust playoff roster

The Seattle Seahawks bolstered their depleted wide receiving corps Friday by promoting rookie Ben Obomanu from the practice squad.

Seattle waived veteran tight end Itula Mili to make room on the roster for its NFC wild-card game Saturday against Dallas.

Two Seahawks wide receivers are listed as questionable against the Cowboys and their recently porous defensive secondary. Leading receiver Darrell Jackson has not practiced all week because of a strained toe ligament in his left foot. Emerging wideout D.J. Hackett injured a hip flexor in last Sunday's win over Tampa Bay.

NFL names Coach of the Year - Payton

Sean Payton might have had the toughest coaching job in football this season, making his selection Saturday as The Associated Press NFL Coach of the Year that much more impressive.

Payton, in his first year as a head coach, didn't just lead the New Orleans Saints to a 10-6 record, the NFC South championship and a first-round playoff bye. He helped revitalize a battered city's spirit.

With New Orleans ravaged by Hurricane Katrina 2005, the Saints became nomads that year. Payton, an assistant coach in Dallas, was hired to revive one of the NFL's most unsuccessful franchises.

Parcells and Holmgren are similar

By GREGG BELL

AP Sports Writer

SEATTLE — About the only thing Bill Parcells and Mike Holmgren appear to have in common are long coaching careers and Super Bowl wins.

But don't completely believe what you see.

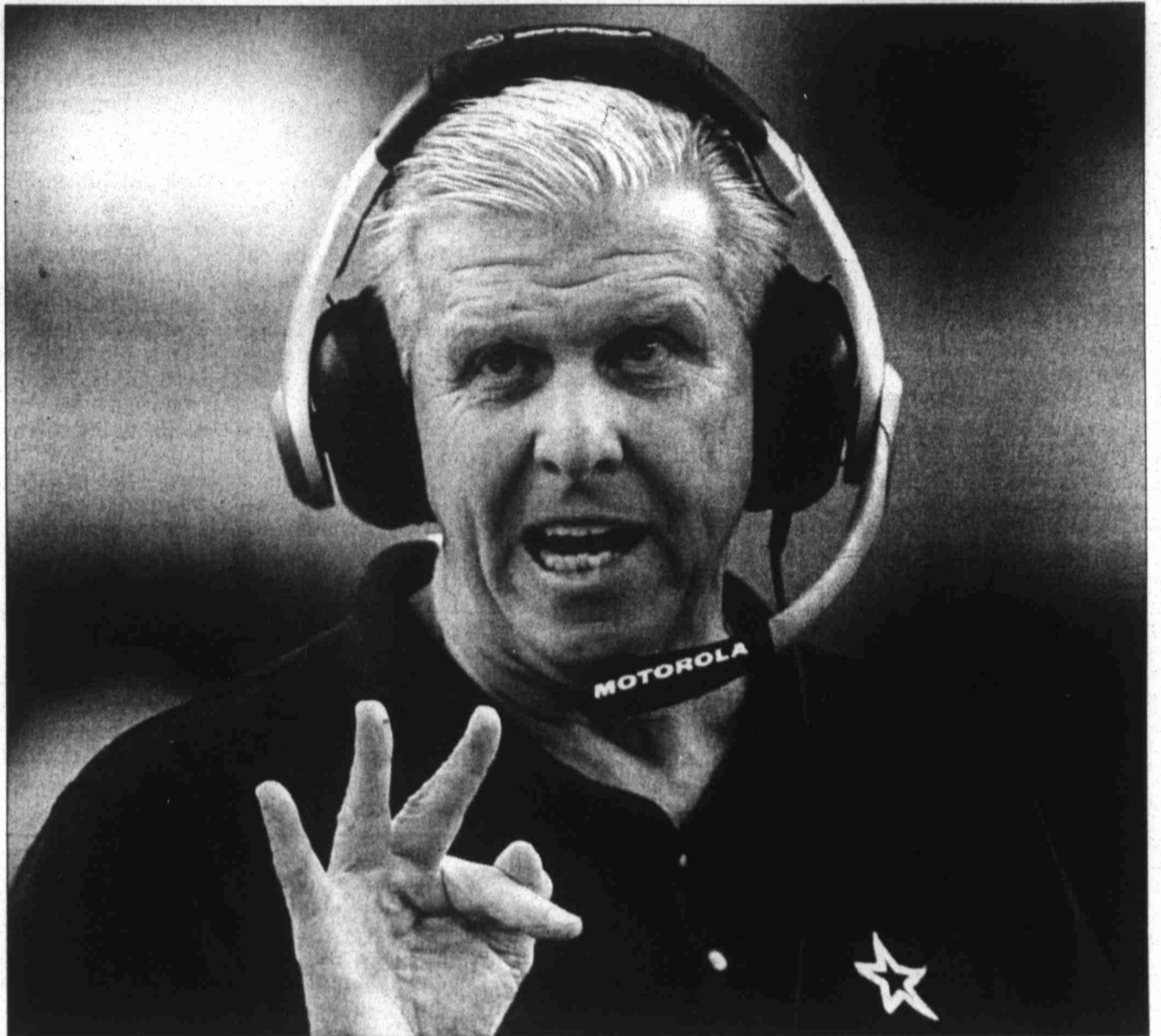
Parcells is the iconic, 65-year-old Dallas Cowboys coach who has a 19-year NFL head coaching pedigree built upon rugged defenses. His reputation is also rugged, hardened by coaching both New York teams for a combined 11 years. Parcells is irascible, often caustic, to inquisitors — many of whom he believes try to "antagonize" him.

"A legend," is what Holmgren calls his self-described friend on the eve of their first postseason meeting since the 1997 Super Bowl.

When people in Dallas kept pressing Parcells this week for comments on the Cowboys losing three of their last four games entering Saturday's NFC wild-card playoff game against Seattle, he said, "If you want to talk about history, go down to the museum."

Holmgren, the 58-year-old Seahawks coach, is a California-bred architect of elaborate NFL offenses which have valued finesse and precision for 21 years, the last 15 as a head coach.

He is a paternal figure around Seattle who rings bells for charity downtown during the holiday season. In November, after Holmgren ripped into his players immediately following a listless, mistake-filled loss at San Francisco, he met with his team the next day and apologized to them for being so vile.



Dallas Cowboys head coach Bill Parcells talks to coordinators during the second quarter against the Arizona Cardinals at University of Phoenix Stadium in Arizona, Sunday, Nov. 12, 2006.

No one's ever documented Parcells doing that. But he says he's on a streak of kindness.

"I think I've been pretty subdued this year," Parcells said.

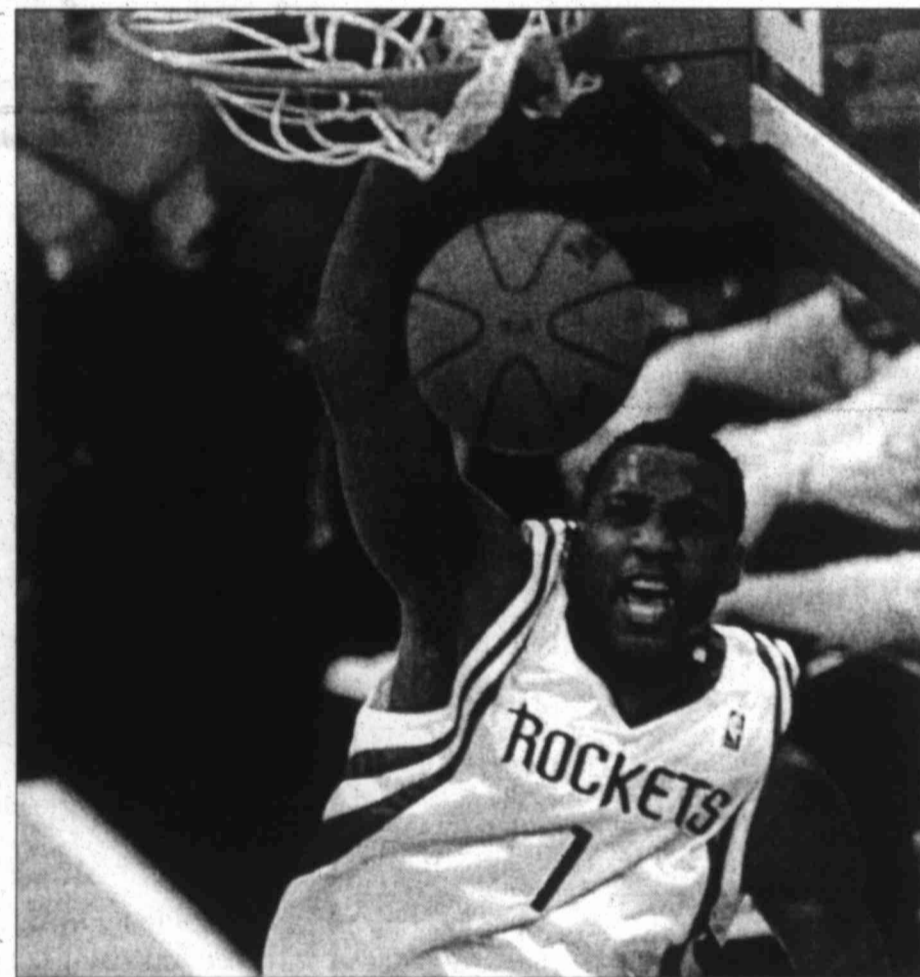
"You should have seen me about 15 years ago.

"We all from time to time get caught at the wrong minute, but I haven't had a profane-laced

tirade I can recall this year."

Like Holmgren, Parcells cites his personal life surrounded by

See COACHES, Page 2B



Rockets Tracy McGrady slam dunks during their game against the Washington Wizards earlier this season. McGrady scored a season-high 44 points Thursday night.

Rockets streaking, McGrady leads way

By CHRIS DUNCAN

AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON — Tracy McGrady seemed particularly inspired by Dikembe Mutombo's pregame pep talk to the Houston Rockets on Friday night.

McGrady scored a season-high 44 points, topping 30 points for the fourth consecutive game, and the Rockets beat the Utah Jazz 100-86 for their fifth straight victory.

McGrady hit 14 of 31 shots and went 13-for-16 from the free-throw line, reaching 40 points for the 39th time in his career.

Mutombo grabbed a season-best 19 rebounds after a quick motivational speech before the game, reminding the Rockets of their season-opening 107-97 loss in Utah.

"I told them don't expect anything to be easy tonight," Mutombo said. "This team beat us so well in Utah. Somehow, we had to find something to give back to them."

McGrady was that "some-

thing" from the start, scoring 11 points during the Rockets' 15-3 run to open the game. He swished two 3-pointers in the first 2 minutes, then blew by Derek Fisher for an easy layup. McGrady ended the burst with a 3-pointer from the wing, confidently nodding as he trotted down the court.

"I tried to set the tone right away," McGrady said. "I wanted to let my teammates know that this is how it's going to be until the final buzzer ends it."

McGrady fell four points shy of his high game in three seasons with Houston, set against Dallas in December 2004. McGrady's career high is 62 points, accomplished in his final season with Orlando.

He missed seven games in December with back spasms, but has looked as healthy as ever in Houston's past four games, averaging 36 points.

See ROCKETS, page 2B

No. 880 is in the books, Tx Tech returns to normal

By BETSY BLANEY

Associated Press Writer

LUBBOCK — All is quiet again on the Texas Tech campus.

With Bob Knight's coaching victory No. 880 in the bag, most TV crews have gone home and it's back to the business of getting this team ready for conference play.

Whether it will be competitive in the Big 12 is anyone's guess.

"We've had a lot of play that would indicate that we've really come a long way, and we're ready to play," Knight said, pointing to stretches in the past three games where Tech played "extremely" well. "But the downside is it comes from three different games."

Texas Tech (11-4), picked to finish sixth by conference coaches before the season,

hosts Oklahoma on Saturday in the conference opener for both teams. The Red Raiders want to erase the memories of last season, when they went 15-17. It was the second-worst record ever for a Knight-coached team, and only the fourth time one of Knight's teams sat out the post-season.

Tech guard Charlie Burgess, last year's junior college player of the year, said things get serious when Big 12 play starts.

"It's a lot more competitive, more like bragging rights," he said. "I'm very excited."

If Knight can turn Tech into a Big 12 contender, it won't be the first time he's pulled a bit of a surprise in West Texas.

In his first four seasons, Knight led Tech to 20-plus wins, a first at the school. On a

See TECH, page 3B



Texas Tech's Charlie Burgess passes around Texas Christian's Brent Hackett in the first half at Daniel Meyer Coliseum in Fort Worth. Burgess said he is excited to begin Big 12 competition.

Bright spot for Miami: Taylor wins defensive MVP

By STEVEN WINE

AP Sports Writer

DAVIE, Fla. — If Jason Taylor calls it quits, he'll leave at his peak.

The Miami Dolphins' defensive end, who is contemplating retirement at age 32, was honored Friday as the league's defensive player of the year.

Frustrated by a franchise-record five consecutive years out of the playoffs, Taylor said he's unsure whether he'll return next season.

"I don't want to create a drama," he said. "Let me get away for a while and recharge and get on the boat a little bit and spend some time with my kids. They'll probably drive me crazy enough to want to come back to work."

Taylor provided one of the few bright spots during the Dolphins' disappointing season. They lost 10 games to finish last in the AFC East, then lost their coach this week when Nick Saban bolted for Alabama, ending more than a month of speculation.

"The award is about

making plays that make a difference, and Jason certainly did that," said former Dolphins safety Dick Anderson, who won the honor in 1973. "He's a guy who changes the scope of the game. He's just a spectacular player."

Taylor earned 22 votes from a nationwide panel of 50 sports writers and broadcasters. Denver cornerback Champ Bailey received 16, and San Diego linebacker Shawne Merriman finished third with six.

Chicago linebacker Brian Urlacher received four votes, followed by two Baltimore Ravens with one apiece, linebacker Ray Lewis and lineman Trevor Pryce. Urlacher won the award last year.

While the Dolphins stumbled to their third losing season since 1969, the defense ranked fourth in the NFL, thanks largely to their No. 99.

Taylor's 10th NFL season was his best, but he's unsure whether there will be an 11th. A career in acting beckons, and the father of three said family and wear on his body are

considerations. Then there's the Dolphins' playoff drought. Taylor has yet to play in an AFC championship game, much less the Super Bowl.

"Probably the toughest thing is the losing," he said. "I'd be lying if I said frustration didn't have a part in it — the disappointment and frustration and anger with losing. Sometimes you get to the point where you say enough is enough. ..."

"I would trade in the award and every sack and every play I made, this season and for the last 10 years, to get a chance to go on and play here and in February."

Taylor said the choice of a new coach will influence his decision about his future. He was close to Saban and defended the coach, vilified in South Florida for leaving after he said he wouldn't.

"He made a decision to make a change, and I respect him for it," Taylor said. "I love coach Saban. I think he did a great job."

"I know he's getting lambasted in the media and by the fans. I don't

have a problem with what he did. I think we all need to settle down a little bit and realize that life does go on."

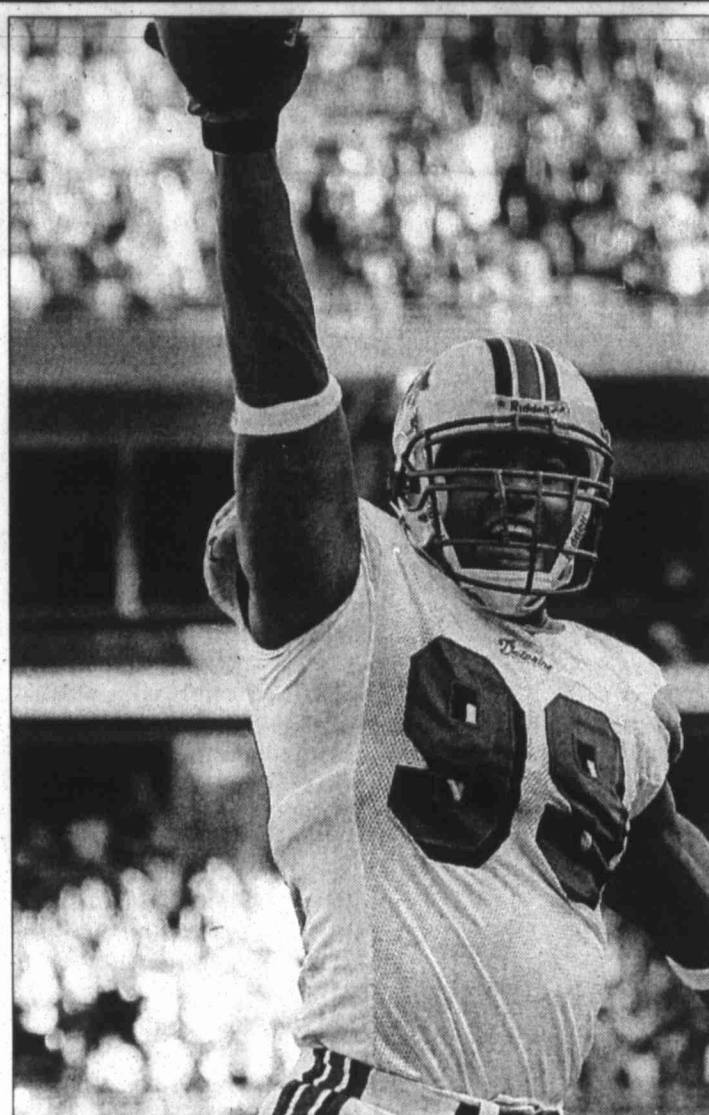
Taylor enjoyed the roaming role he had in Saban's defense, sometimes lining up at linebacker or inside. The unpredictable scheme made it more difficult for blockers to double-team him, and with his speed and quickness, he won a lot of one-on-one matchups.

"He's probably the best defensive player I've ever played against," said Kansas City tackle Jordan Black, who then reconsidered his assessment. "There's no probably about it. He is."

Taylor said the first award he can remember winning was a junior-high karate trophy that he put on the mantle at home.

"He'll savor the latest honor as well."

"This is special," Taylor said. "These are the pros, the best of the best. To be picked among those guys as the NFL defensive player of the year, it's awesome."



MCT photo/C.M. Guerrero/Miami Herald
Miami Dolphins defensive end Jason Taylor celebrates as he crosses the end zone on an interception and touchdown run back

COACHES

Continued from 1B

women as his grounding mechanism. Holmgren and his wife, Kathy — a breast cancer survivor whom Holmgren often honors by wearing a pink ribbon on his coaching gear — have four grown daughters and four granddaughters who he says "keep me very, very humble at home."

Parcells?
"Pretty quiet. To myself," he said. "I have three wonderful daughters. They're grown women now. They're productive citizens in society. Some of them have families of their own and I'm proud of that."

The only male in Parcells' home is his girlfriend's cat, Cody.

Bet Terrell Owens didn't know his laser-glared coach has a kitty. "No, I didn't know about cats," said Ron Wolf, the former Green Bay Packers' general manager whom Parcells describes as his best friend.

"He's a good size cat," Parcells said. "He's about 16 or 17 pounds, very athletic. Very, very athletic. He can do stuff you wouldn't believe."

Wolf used to have morning coffees with Parcells at the league's annual scouting combine each March. When Wolf hired Holmgren, then San Francisco's offensive coordinator, to become Green Bay's coach in 1992, Holmgren joined the annual coffee circle.

Parcells, the defensive mind, said he would ask Holmgren how many offensive plays he'd have for a

game or season, or how he ran his practices.

Recently, they talked about the twilight of their careers. Holmgren considered retiring after last February's Super Bowl, then agreed to a contract extension with Seattle through 2008.

When Parcells was asked this week if he looks more forward to this postseason opportunity because you know time might be running out, he said, "Sure, yeah."

"When you get older like I am, and the games get more precious to you, they really do because you don't know how long things are going to go. ... Actually, Mike and I talked about this this past spring at the combine."

"I kind of got the sense that he feels the same way."

Wolf and Parcells still talk regularly, and Wolf has visited the Cowboys' training camps in Oxnard, Calif., in recent summers. But, no, Wolf is not offering his opinion on whether Parcells is close to leaving the Cowboys once this season ends.

"He and Mike have been successful no matter where they've been because of their intellect," Wolf said Friday by telephone near his home in Annapolis, Md.

"Just how they interact with people of any profession, any background. It's just exceptional. I believe they are each in that upper echelon of people who would succeed no matter what they pursued in life."

Parcells has won two Super Bowls — with the Giants following the 1986 and '90 seasons — and has coached in a third, which he and his Patriots lost to Holmgren's

Packers. With 183 wins, he's second among the NFL's active coaches behind San Diego's Marty Schottenheimer (205), and ninth overall.

Last February, Holmgren became the fifth NFL coach to take two franchises to the Super Bowl. The others are Parcells, Dan Reeves, Don Shula and Dick Vermeil. Holmgren has 158 wins, fourth among active coaches, just behind Joe Gibbs (162) now that Bill Cowher (161) has resigned from Pittsburgh.

Holmgren calls himself "a high school history teacher who is one of the luckiest guys in the world."

He agrees that while he and Parcells have different personalities, they share beliefs.

"We view the game the same way," Holmgren said. "We're kind of football purists. We have tremendous respect for the game and have very strong opinions on how things should be done."

Parcells, unsolicited, offered a strong opinion when asked to reflect upon his career.

"I feel very, very fortunate to have survived in this business as long as I have. And I'm grateful for that," he said. "I'm not trying to be sentimental here. I'm just telling you that I will never leave this game with anything but good feelings about it."

"It's been a great experience for me and a lot of fun and I've met a lot of good people — players, coaches, owners, guys that I like. You've got one of them coaching there in Seattle. I think very highly of Mike. I don't know why we hit it off but we did. ... Right now he's the enemy, but I like him."

offense and all we took were outside shots," Sloan said. "If you don't run your offense, then you had better hit all your shots, and we didn't."

McGrady scored 17

points in the first, but missed consecutive off-balance shots before going to the bench for a rest. The Jazz trailed 29-19 after the opening quarter.

Utah finished the half

with a 9-1 run, capped by Williams' banked-in 3-pointer from 33 feet at the buzzer that cut Houston's lead to 54-45. McGrady had 27 points at the break.

ROCKETS

Continued from 1B

"If I've got it rolling like that and my guys are knocking down shots, we can beat the best of them in this league," McGrady said.

Mutombo had a double-digit rebound total for the fifth straight game. The 40-year-old center has ably filled in for the injured Yao Ming, out at least six weeks with a broken right leg. The Rockets are 5-1 without Yao.

Carlos Boozer had 15 points and 17 rebounds and Deron Williams scored 19 points for Utah, which never recovered from Houston's game-opening burst.

"They took us on early and put us out of the game," Utah coach Jerry Sloan said.

The Jazz missed six of their first seven shots before Fisher's 3-pointer with 8:15 left in the first quarter. Utah missed 17 of its first 24 shots.

"They did a terrific job in taking us out of our

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Mavericks prove they are the best in Texas

Dallas 90
San Antonio 85

By ELIZABETH WHITE
Associated Press
Writer

SAN ANTONIO — Dirk Nowitzki scored a season-high 36 points and Josh Howard added 18 to lead the Dallas Mavericks to their 13th straight victory, 90-85 over the San Antonio Spurs on Friday night.

Howard grabbed 12 rebounds as Dallas won in San Antonio for the third straight time, dating back to Game 7 of last season's Western Conference semifinals.

San Antonio was led by Manu Ginobili, who scored 25 points. Tim Duncan had 18 points, Tony Parker contributed 15 and Fabricio Oberto was perfect from the field, going 7-of-7 and adding 14 points.

It was the teams' third meeting of the season and their second in San Antonio. The Spurs beat the Mavericks 97-91 in November in Dallas. The Mavs answered

later that month, beating the Spurs 95-92 in San Antonio.

Mavericks owner Mark Cuban, who has made fun of San Antonio's River Walk in the past, donned a shirt early in Friday's game that read: "I went to the San Antonio River Walk and all I got was a rash." But later on he was sporting a different one.

The Spurs blew a 12-point lead and the game was tied with 3:38 to go. The teams were tied again at 82 before Dallas pulled away with baskets by Howard and Devean George.

Nowitzki's fade-away jump shot with 40 seconds left put the Mavericks up 88-84. Duncan made a foul shot to bring the Spurs within three, but Bruce Bowen followed by a pair of made free throws from Howard ended the evening.

The Spurs took a 29-21 lead into the second quarter and extended it to 51-40 at halftime. Oberto scored all of his points in the first half, including a last-second tip-in just

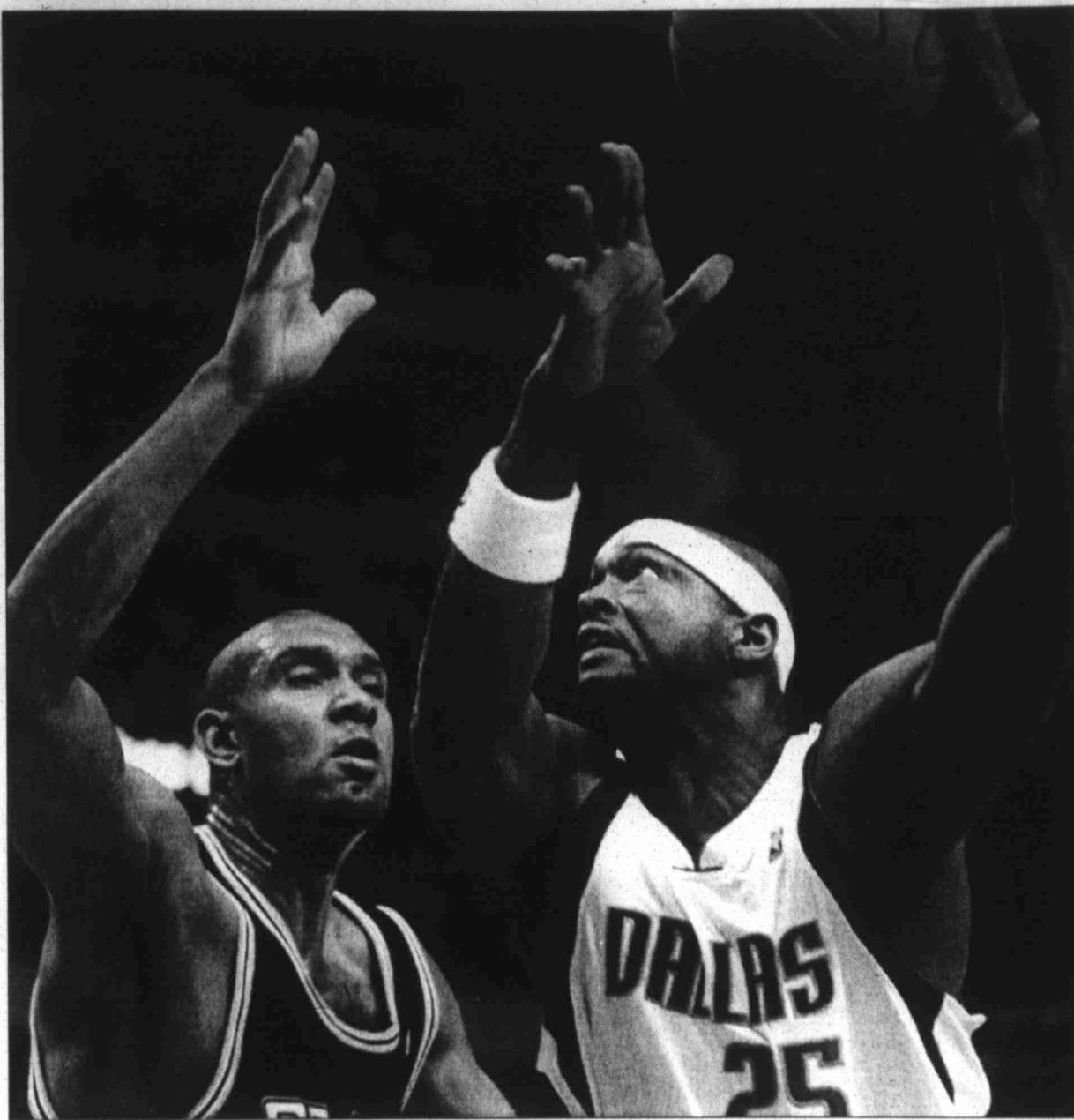
before the second quarter ended.

Nowitzki, who had 18 points in the half, was left to make up for poor shooting by his teammates. He went 7-of-9 from the field, while the Mavericks' other four starters made just only one shot apiece during the first half of the game.

Both teams managed to get off to a slow start in the third period, but Howard eventually got going to help out Nowitzki. He ended up with nine points in the quarter, including a 3 with 1:44 left that brought Dallas within two.

A pair of free throws by Nowitzki soon brought the Mavericks within a point, but a last-second basket from Michael Finley gave the Spurs a 69-66 advantage heading into the final 12 minutes.

The Mavericks briefly took the lead off a 3-pointer from Nowitzki. Ginobili, who was 4-of-6 behind the arc, matched him nearly two minutes later to tie the game at 80.



MCT photo/Ron Jenkins/Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Dallas Mavericks' Erick Dampier scores over San Antonio Spurs' Tim Duncan during the first half at the American Airlines Center in Dallas, on November 2, 2006.

Durant and the young Texas Longhorns head into Big 12 play

By JIM VERTUNO
AP Sports Writer

AUSTIN — For Texas and its crew of talented freshmen, the last two months were a fun, sometimes frustrating, always exciting, introduction to the season.

Now comes the hard part with the start of Big 12 conference play. Kevin Durant and crew are about to learn what it takes to survive in a tough, physical league.

The Longhorns (10-3), last season's Big 12 co-champs, open conference play Saturday at Colorado (4-6).

"This is when it gets really intense. This is a different level of play," said sophomore guard A.J. Abrams, the old man in a starting lineup with four freshmen. "Last year there were a lot of veterans on the team. This year is going to be different."

So far, the Longhorns have been a textbook study of the steps talented freshmen take in

adjusting to the college game.

The Longhorns lead the league in scoring but rank 11th in points allowed. They are undefeated at home with a tough win over old Southwest Conference rival Arkansas.

They went to New York City and beat St. John's but lost to Michigan State. They went to Arizona and got blown out by then-No. 22 Gonzaga.

They beat No. 14 LSU — the team that knocked the Longhorns out of the NCAA tournament last season — in Houston, but also blew a big lead in an overtime loss at Tennessee.

For every step forward, the kids were forced to take a step back. Coach Rick Barnes said his team must be more physical to win the rugged Big 12.

"Right now, it's on," Barnes said. "We know what conference play brings."

Texas knew it would be an up-and-down season when freshmen would be expected to fill the rather large void left when P.J. Tucker, Daniel Gibson and LaMarcus Aldridge left school early for the NBA after last season.

Long and lean, the 6-foot-9, 225-pound Durant has been every bit as good as expected, showing the ability to score from just about anywhere on the court. He's been arguably the best freshman in the country, with team-leading averages of 21.5 points and 10.2 rebounds.

No Texas freshman has led the team in scoring and rebounding for a season.

He likely would have jumped straight from high school to the NBA if the league hadn't imposed a minimum age limit. Instead, he's been named the Big 12 rookie of the week four times in what figures to be his only season in burnt orange.

TECH

Continued from 1B

national level, he got Tech to No. 13 during a seven-week stretch in the Top 25 in early 2004.

The Red Raiders got to the regional semifinals in 2005, Knight's first trip there in 11 years. There have been some big wins, too, such as Tech beating then-No. 2 Kansas in double overtime in 2005.

Knight's results at Tech, though, are considerably less impressive than what he did at Indiana his first five seasons. In his second year the Hoosiers finished third in the NCAA tournament; Indiana went undefeated in the Big Ten his fourth season and a year later, in 1976, Knight won the first of three national titles and that season's undefeated record — 32-0 — hasn't been matched since.

Just after getting win No. 800 in February 2003, Knight said that if he got

to the point where he didn't think Tech could be good, he'd retire. The parameters for that don't seem to include high rankings or titles, though.

"Being really good is being able to step out and be able to play anybody," Knight said then.

Time will tell, but at least the team can focus on playing now. Knight may have twice called the record a "thing" during an interview with The Associated Press the day he broke it, but the image of tears rimming Knight's eyes with Frank Sinatra's "My Way" blaring afterward confirms that it was at least a substantial "thing."

Though he believes the pressure shouldn't have bothered his players, Knight said lots of people think it did.

"This might be one of those situations where everybody else is right and I'm wrong," Knight said this week. "I'm not sure."

H&R Block Hosting National Tax Advice Day Rally

Tax professionals hit the streets to help Americans claim commonly missed tax benefits.

WHAT H&R Block is hosting National Tax Advice Day 2007 with 50+ rallies across the country, including Big Spring, to kick off the 2007 tax season.

WHERE: H&R Block
1512 S. Gregg
Big Spring, Texas

WHEN: Thursday, Jan. 11, 2007
Open House 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
The IRS begins accepting e-filed returns on Jan. 12.

WHY: Americans overpay the IRS by \$1 billion each year due to overlooked tax deductions and credits. On Jan. 11, H&R Block tax professionals nationwide will hit the streets to inform taxpayers of new and existing tax benefits that could mean the difference between owing the IRS and getting a refund.

WHO: More than 14 local H&R Block tax professionals with over 100 years of experience.

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Close roots but different paths led Meyer and Tressel to stardom

By RALPH D. RUSSO

AP Sports Writer

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Jim Tressel spent 15 years in Division I-AA before finally convincing Ohio State to give him the coaching job he coveted most.

Urban Meyer took the fast track to the top of his profession, going from first-time head coach at Bowling Green to \$2-million-a-year man at Florida in about a third of the time Tressel spent at Youngstown State.

Much has been made of the similarities between the coaches of the top-ranked Buckeyes (12-0) and No. 2 Gators (12-1) as they prepare for the BCS national championship game Monday night, two Ohio natives with deep Buckeyes roots.

They share a mentor, an obsession for detail and a passion for special teams. They talk about a team being a family and players being accountable for making that family flourish.

Over the last six seasons, few college coaches have had more success than Meyer, who is 60-12 in that time, and Tressel, who is 62-13. Both make over \$2 million per year.

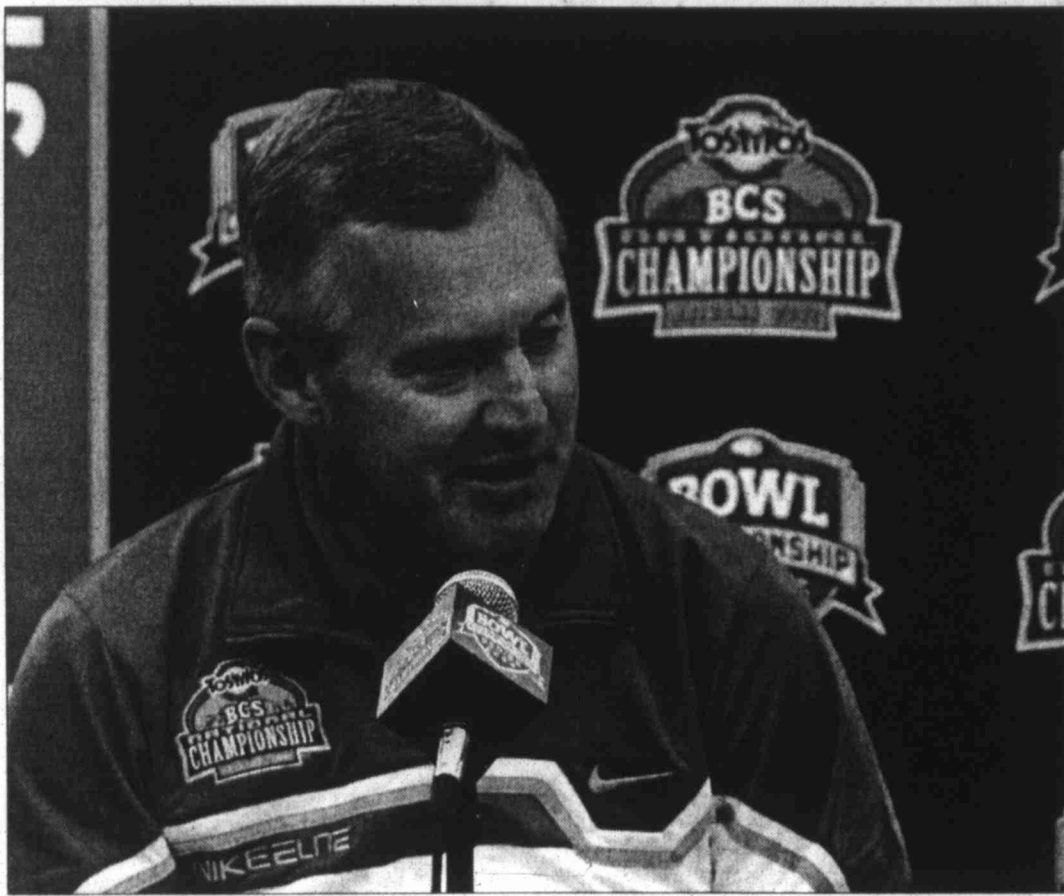
"I think what they have in common is they're both good teachers on the field, they're leaders because they lead by example," said Earle Bruce, the former Ohio State and Colorado State coach who had both Tressel and Meyer as assistants. "Most certainly they're the guys in charge on the field."

But their paths to stardom and their first head-to-head meeting in Glendale have been quite different.

The 42-year-old Meyer is tall, dark and handsome, still built like the college football player and minor league baseball player he once was. Smiles don't seem to come easy for him. Intensity does.

"I think Urban is much more emotional than Jim," Bruce said Friday. "We always think of Jim as being very calm, collected and in charge of his emotions."

Meyer rooted for Ohio State growing up in Ashtabula in northeast Ohio. He still has buckeyes and a picture of former Ohio State coaching great Woody Hayes in his home. His first college coaching job was as a graduate assistant under Bruce in 1986.



Ohio State head coach Jim Tressel fields questions during the BCS Championship Bowl Game Media Day at the University of Phoenix Stadium in Arizona.

In two years in Columbus, Meyer got a taste of big-time college football that became the foundation for his career.

"I get to Ohio State and meet Earle Bruce and watch the way things are done and get a piece of that tradition," Meyer said. "Everything we do ties into building tradition. The Gator Walk. Singing the fight song with the student body. All those types of things I learned first at Ohio State."

Florida targeted Meyer in 2004 as he was leading Utah to an unbeaten season. So did Notre Dame. He had quickly risen to the top of the charts among young coaches by engineering rapid turnarounds at Bowling Green, where he went 17-6 in 2001-02, and with the Utes, who 22 won games in his two seasons.

"The biggest thing I learned, and it is an offshoot of the guys I worked for, Lou Holtz, Bob Davie, Earle Bruce, is that

the head coach's job is to get involved in every aspect of the program and turn it over to no one," Meyer said Friday during media day at University of Phoenix Stadium. "Ultimately, it is your responsibility."

Meyer surprised many by turning down Notre Dame because he had been an assistant in South Bend and his contract with Utah had a clause that would've allowed him to opt out to coach the Fighting Irish. He took over a Florida program in need of a new direction. The Gators were a talented but undisciplined group.

"I think (Meyer) just made all the guys really accountable for one another," Florida quarterback Chris Leak said. "He really stressed teamwork and what it takes to be a championship team of guys coming together and working hard in the offseason and growing as a family."

Leak and the Gators have blossomed in two years under Meyer and will play for the school's second national title Monday.

The 54-year-old Tressel, with his trademark sweater vests and silver hair parted to the side, has the look of a man who would scold his players for leaving a messy locker room behind after practice — which he does.

"He thinks there is a direct correlation to how you act off the field and how you perform on the field," Ohio State defensive tackle David Patterson said. "The more we are respectful to the people at our hotel, the more our grades are taken care, the more we are courteous in cleaning up our locker room at the end of a day's practice, he thinks those little things have a direct effect on how we play on the field."

"I believe him because it's working for us."

The son of a football coach, his father, Lee, won a Division III title with Baldwin-Wallace, Tressel had been running backs and receivers coach under Bruce at Ohio State from 1983-85.

Tressel left in 1986 — the same year Bruce hired Meyer as a graduate assistant — for Youngstown State. And there he stayed, even becoming athletic director for a while.

"You know, those years in Youngstown really helped me understand how much impact a good football program can have," he said. "That was a great learning time for me."

He landed his dream job with the Buckeyes in 2001 by winning over then-athletic director Andy Geiger and beating out the other top candidate, former Ohio State player Glen Mason, who was fired by Minnesota last week.

"Ohio State didn't really come to me," said Tressel, who won four national championships at Youngstown State. "I called Ohio State in this particular case."

The Buckeyes were wise to pick up. Tressel has gone 5-1 against Michigan, won his last four bowl games and established himself as maybe the best big-game coach in the country — with another chance to prove it on Monday against Meyer.

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They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat upon them. He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water.'

-- Isaiah 49:10

Courtesy photo
The Rev. Robin Hoover, at the podium, accepts the Mexican Human Rights Award during ceremonies at President Felipe Calderon's residence, Los Pinos, in central Mexico City.

'Local' man receives prestigious Mexican Human Rights Award

The man and woman have been walking through the dry, hot desert for two days, maybe more. They're not sure anymore. The man barely remembers that he is trying to get across the border, into the United States, find a job and send money back to his impoverished family. But now, he and his sister are lost and terribly dehydrated. The little water they brought has long since been consumed. They can't go much farther.

In the distance, he sees what looks like a flag. She sees it, too. They stumble toward it. At its base is water. Precious water. Humane Borders has saved two more lives.

Many people talk about how it is important to help others. For the Rev. Robin Hoover, the daily act of reaching out to those in need is simply living life as the Lord teaches.

Rev. Hoover oversees a vast, non-profit effort he founded that places water stations in the desert so that migrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border will not die of dehydration.

The Big Spring High School graduate is pastor of First Christian Church in Tucson, Ariz., where he founded the organization, Humane Borders, in 2000. His efforts recently earned him the Mexican Human Rights Award, presented by the newly inaugurated president of Mexico, Felipe Calderon. It is the most prestigious human rights award presented in Mexico.

The award ceremony of Mexico's National Commission for Human Rights was held Dec. 13 at President Calderon's residence, Los Pinos, in central Mexico City. It recognized Hoover's role in helping save lives of migrants.

"It is one of the most gracious places I have ever been in my life. Many people in the United States don't realize this because when they think of Mexico they think of the border towns.

We were honored and treated most courteously," said the Rev. Hoover. "The president stood up and gave one of the most important human rights speeches in either country in many years. I was very honored."

"It speaks so well of the thousands of volunteers who have committed so much of their lives and their resources."

Proudly attending the ceremony were his mother, Freda Hoover, a longtime Big Spring resident, her other son, Kenneth Hoover of Flower Mound, daughter Jan Callison of Anna and sister Pattie Phillips of Odessa.

A delegation of six Humane Borders volunteers from Tucson traveled with the Rev. Hoover and his wife, Sue Ann, to accept the award on behalf of thousands of volunteers and supporters who carry out the organization's missions.

The Humane Borders story has been filmed by crews from 23 nations and chronicled in major media markets throughout the world since it was founded by Rev. Hoover.

Among his strongest supporters, naturally, have been his parents, Freda and the late Russell Hoover.

"Hundreds die from dehydration every year. No one will ever know how many are saved by the water, but we do know that many of them have stopped at the water stations because of what they leave behind and the amount of water used since the barrels were last serviced," said Freda. "Also, Humane Borders receives calls, letters and donations from the families of the migrants who benefited from the water stations."

Humane Borders utilizes four water trucks equipped to deliver water to more than 80 stations positioned across the desert. The 65 volunteer drivers make 70 trips a month May through September and 30 trips a month October through



Courtesy photo
The Rev. Robin Hoover displays his award while standing next to his mother, Freda. Also attending were his brother and sister — like him, fellow graduates of Big Spring High School.

April. The organization also distributes health kits at three migrant shelters and provides food packs to migrants encountered in the desert during water deliveries.

The effort relies on thousands of volunteers. "Every minute of work done is done by

volunteers, except for a very small salary for a very important person who runs the office and takes care of all the scheduling, correspondence, archiving and other duties. That would be my daughter-in-law, Sue Ann," said Freda. Sue Ann said bi-

national efforts between Humane Borders and the Commission for Human Rights have been ongoing for two years to bring awareness to migrant safety issues in both countries.

"The president's speech indicated forthcoming efforts to create more economic opportunity for Mexicans so that people will be more inclined to stay in their home country rather than migrate to the U.S.," Sue Ann said.

The Rev. Hoover realizes his efforts are not always well accepted, especially with an emphasis the past several years on illegal immigration.

"Our task is not to solve the intricacies of labor and management in the western hemisphere, but to speak clearly in the face of injustice. ...

Matthew 25 makes it clear that nations are judged by whether they provide water, food, welcome, clothes for the naked, medical assistance and visits to the prisoners," he wrote in a recent church news letter. "Those happen to be the

resumes of the migrants, the political refugees and the asylum seekers. Ours is a ministry to these."

Humane Borders operated on a budget of \$155,771 in 2005, up from \$106,628 in 2003. Funding sources, according to the organization's Web site, www.humaneborders.org, include the Pima County Board of Supervisors, Disciples of Christ, United Church of Christ, Presbyterian Church USA, United Methodist Church, corporate sponsors (AmeriMex, Radio Unica, Univision) and in-kind contributions.

Those who wish to help can contribute monetarily, purchase Humane Borders shirts, caps and mugs, or make flags to place over water stations, food kits or health kits.

To contribute, contact the First Christian Church, 740 E. Speedway Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85719, call (520) 628-7753 or visit the Web site.

Article by Bill McClellan,
Herald news editor



Philadelphia Inquirer photo/Michael Perez
Jodi Ipsen, a member of Humane Borders, fills a water station in Three Points, Ariz., April 27, 2006. Humane Borders sets up numerous water stations around the desert for illegal immigrants who are making the journey to the United States.

Weddings

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Ferguson, Hanmer wed

Tracy Hodges of Bonham and Glen Ferguson of Big Spring would like to announce the wedding of their daughter, Crystal Brooke Ferguson to Nathan Michael Hanmer.

Crystal is the granddaughter of Verma Enfield and Omer Decker of Big Spring and Kathleen Ferguson and the late Don Ferguson of Big Spring.

Crystal and Nathan were united in marriage at 4 p.m. Dec. 16, 2006, at the home of Nathan's grandparents, Doug and Vivian Hanmer in Sangerville, Maine. Nathan's parents are Rick and Tammy Hanmer of Connecticut. A small reception and dinner followed the ceremony.

Crystal wore a white tea-length strapless gown with a fitted bodice and full skirt. The satin dress

with a silk organza overlay was embellished with seed pearls. Crystal wore her hair up with a fingertip veil and she carried a bouquet of pink and yellow roses. Nathan wore his Air Force dress uniform.

Crystal and Nathan met in Biloxi, Miss., during Air Force technical school. They are both trained in computer technology.

Crystal is stationed at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, and Nathan is stationed at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Anchorage, Alaska.

Following their wedding, the two spent time with friends and family in Maine and Connecticut before returning back to Germany and Alaska.

Parents of the bride will be hosting a wedding reception in Big Spring at a later date.



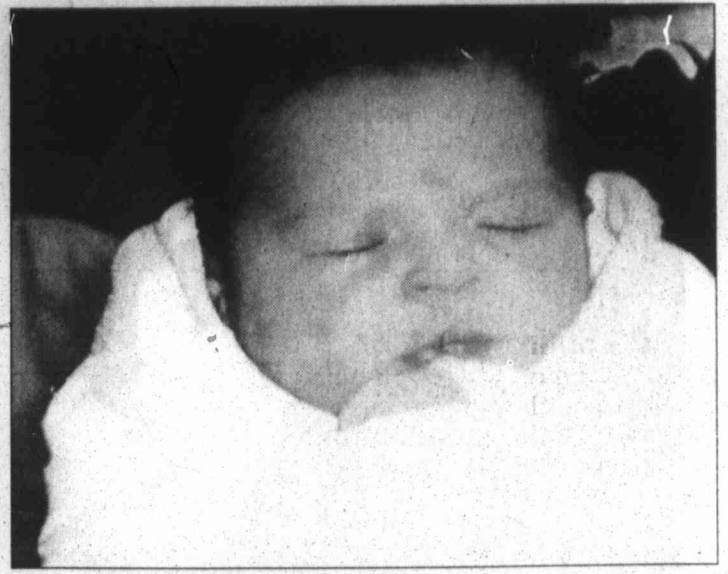
Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Hanmer

Births

Jazzy's
Children's Boutique

sponsored by

1712 S Gregg • Big Spring



Julian Omar Gonzales Lazo, a baby boy, was born at 9:20 a.m. Dec. 29, 2006, weighing 9 pounds, 2 ounces and was 19 inches long.

He is the son of Jose and Catalina Lazo of Big Spring. His parents are Antonio and Esther Gonzalez of Big Spring and Mariana de Jesus Reyes of El Salvador.

Julian was welcomed home by siblings Donovan and Joseph.



Kage Douglas Garza, a boy, was born at 9:14 p.m. Dec. 25, 2006, weighing 7 pounds, 8 ounces and was 20 3/4 inches long.

His is the son of Christina Leann Paul and Brian Michael Garza of Big Spring. His maternal grandparents are Ric and Terrie Hobbs and Wayne

Paul of Midland and Billy Wilson of Big Spring. His paternal grandparents are Suzi and Eddie Garza of Big Spring.

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Bennie and Ruelene Porter

Bennie and Ruelene Porter celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Dec. 28, 2006, with family at K.C. Steakhouse.

Their children are Jana Porter of Andrews and Nancy Porter of Big Spring. They have six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Bennie was born in Cross Plains and Ruelene was born in Hobbs, N.M. They met on a blind date. They attended College Baptist Church and enjoy spending time with their

family. It is not unusual to find them watching Barney and Veggie Tales with their great granddaughters, Brianna and

Sara. They share a strong love for the Lord and have been Christian examples throughout their lives.



Suzanne A. Beck, M.D., P.A.

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James Jay Herman, M.D.
Georgeanna Welch, RN, FNCP

Schedule An Appointment Today

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Lubbock, TX 79410 806-799-4192

Howard County Awarded Federal Funds Through FEMA

HOWARD COUNTY HAS BEEN AWARDED FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER THE EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER NATIONAL BOARD PROGRAM. Howard County has been chosen to receive \$15,694.00 to supplement emergency food and shelter programs in the county.

The selection was made by a National Board that is chaired by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and consists of representatives from The Salvation Army; American Red Cross, United Jewish Communities; Catholic Charities, USA; National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA; and United Way of America. The Local Board was charged to distribute funds appropriated by Congress to help expand the capacity of food and shelter programs in high-need areas around the country.

A local Board, made up of the County, City, United Way and other local charitable organizations will determine how the funds awarded to Howard County are to be distributed among the emergency food and shelter programs run by local service organizations in the area. The Local Board is responsible for recommending agencies to receive these funds and any additional funds under this phase of the program.

Under the terms of the grant from the National Board, local organizations chosen to receive funds must: 1) be private voluntary nonprofits or units of government 2) have an accounting system, 3) practice nondiscrimination, 4) have demonstrated the capability to deliver emergency food and/or shelter programs, and 5) if they are a private voluntary organization, they must have a voluntary board. Qualifying organizations are urged to apply.

Howard County has distributed Emergency Food and Shelter funds previously with The Salvation Army, Isaiah 58, Northside Community Center and St. Vincent DePaul Society participating. These agencies were responsible for providing over 8,000 meals, 8,000 pounds of food and over 300 nights of lodging.

Public or private voluntary organizations interested in applying for Emergency Food and Shelter Program funds must contact Cynthia Scott at the United Way of Big Spring at (432) 267-5201 or come by 808 Scurry for an application.

The deadline for the submission of applications is January 15, 2007.

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Listen to Your Hunger

Double Quarter Pounder with Cheese



i'm lovin' it

Weight before cooking. # or (226g) per

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*Submit weddings,
anniversaries, engagements,
births and other information
to life@bigspringherald.com*

Menus

Bg Spring ISD

Monday - Breakfast, cereal, cheese bite, apple juice, milk choice; Lunch, pepperoni pizza, seasoned corn, sliced peaches, milk (high school choice, chicken strips).

Tuesday - cheese omelette, hashbrown sticks, milk; Lunch, Salisbury steak, mashed potato, glazed carrots, spiced apples, wheat roll, milk (high school choice, indian blanket).

Wednesday - Breakfast, pancake on stick, pineapple juice, milk; Lunch, popcorn chicken, seasoned new potatoes, green beans, roll, pineapple jello, milk (high school choice, ham and cheese pocket).

Thursday - Breakfast, cereal, sausage patty, orange smiles, milk; Lunch, nacho grande, border beans, mandarin oranges, milk (high school choice, rib sandwich).

Friday - Breakfast, sausage roll, grape juice, milk; Lunch, hamburger, salad, pickle slices, oven fries, whole wheat cookie, milk (high school choice chicken quesadilla).

Forsan ISD

Monday - Breakfast, cereal, toast, juice, milk; Lunch, grilled cheese, vegetable soup, fruit cup, crackers, milk.

Tuesday - Breakfast, biscuits, sausage, juice, milk; Lunch, tacos, w/shells, grated cheese, pinto beans, lettuce & tomatoes, assorted fresh fruit, milk.

Wednesday - Breakfast, pancakes, sausage, juice, milk; Lunch, spaghetti w/meat sauce, corn, tossed salad, garlic bread, fruit gelatin, milk.

Thursday - Breakfast, oatmeal, toast, juice, milk; Lunch, chicken-fried steak, mashed potatoes/gravy, green beans, hot rolls, mixed fruit, milk.

Friday - Breakfast, donuts, juice, milk; Lunch, ham & cheese croissant, lettuce/tomatoes/pickles, chips, brownies, milk.

Sands CISD

Monday - Breakfast, sausage roll, juice and milk; Lunch, chicken fajitas, refried beans, seasoned corn, orange smiles, chocolate pudding cup, milk.

Tuesday - Breakfast, waffle sticks, juice and milk; Lunch, barbecue rib sandwich, pinto beans, baked chips, pineapple orange salad, milk.

Wednesday - Breakfast, muffin and graham cracker, juice and milk; Lunch, chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes/gravy, green beans, hot roll, strawberry shortcake, milk.

Thursday - Breakfast, hot pockets, juice and milk; Lunch, meat and bean chalupas, Spanish rice, lettuce and tomatoes, rosie applesauce, milk.

Friday - Breakfast, cereal and graham cracker, juice and milk; Lunch,

pizza choice, tossed salad, baby carrots with Ranch, chocolate cake, milk.

New Hope Christian School

Monday - chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes, corn, bread, milk.

Tuesday - ham sandwich, vegetable soup, peaches, milk.

Wednesday - steak fingers, mashed potatoes, green beans, bread, milk.

Thursday - pizza, tossed salad, orange halves, milk.

Friday - grilled cheese sandwiches, French fries, apple slices, milk.

Spring City Senior Citizen's Center

Monday - Lunch, chicken fried steak, cream gravy, mashed potatoes, vegetable salad, peaches, whole wheat rolls and low fat milk.

Tuesday - Lunch, beef tips & rice, mixed vegetables, lemon bars, whole wheat rolls and low fat milk.

Wednesday - Lunch, chicken supreme, macaroni & cheese, broccoli normandy, apple cobbler, rolls and low fat milk.

Thursday - Lunch, roast beef & gravy, toast, lettuce/tomato salad, banana pudding and low fat milk.

Friday - Chicken spaghetti, green beans, salad, garlic toast, white cake/chocolate frosting and low fat milk.

Newcomers

Lance Wright, wife, Hardware. Carrie of Montgomery, Will Snelgrooes, wife, Ala. He is employed by Misty, of Dalhart. He is a Harris Lumber & conductor for U&P Railroad.

Greg Kizzich, wife, Sabrina, daughters, Amanda, 16, and Stephanie, 6, of Forest City, Penn. He works for the federal prison. Llovana Munoz, son, Joseph, 15, daughter, Vilot, 9, of Midland. She is employed at Subway Sandwiches. Chuck Daniels, wife, Donnella, sons, Brandon, 7, and Holden, 12, of College Station. She is employed by Surety Title Co.

Engagements

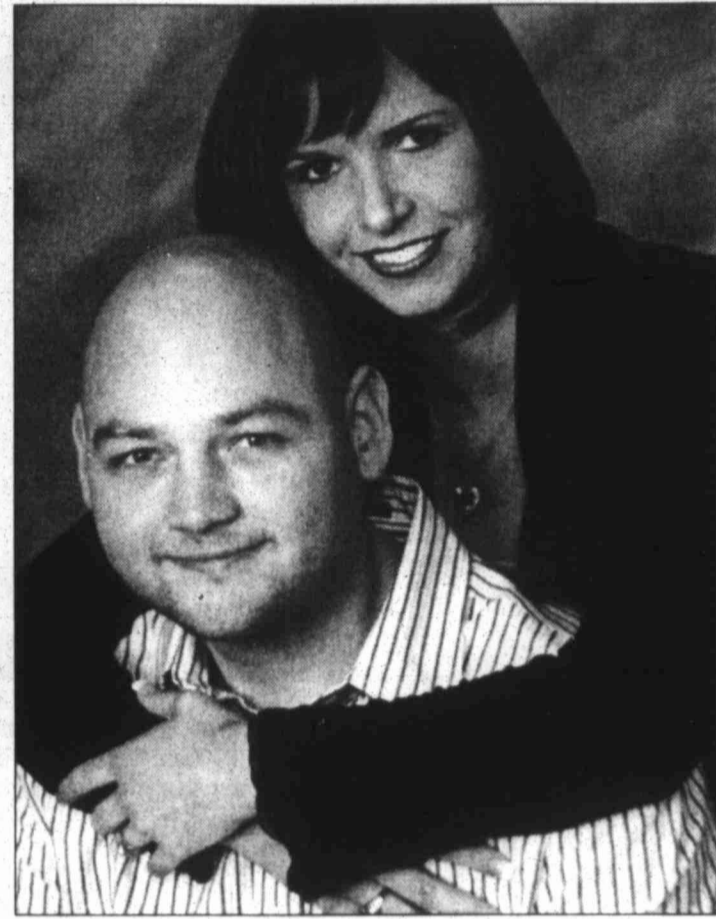
Blum's Jewelry

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In The Big Spring Mall. • 267-6335



Wright and Green



Hughes and Wright

Capt. Frankie Green of the United States Air Force, formerly of Big Spring, and Aaliyah Wright of Charleston, S.C., will exchange wedding vows Saturday, Feb. 17, 2007, at 4 p.m. at Morris Brown AME Church, Charleston, S.C.

Aaliyah is the daughter of Andrew and Redell Wright and the granddaughter of Ruby Brooks

and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Wright.

Frankie is the son of the Rev. Floyd and Mrs. Sandra Green, grandson of the Rev. Floyd Green Sr. and the late Corine Green and the late Rev. Robert Bracy and Emma Bracy and step grandson of Ruby Bracy.

Heather Leigh Hughes and Jimmy Paul Wright, both of Lubbock, announce their intention to exchange wedding vows Feb. 3, 2007, in Lubbock.

The bride-elect is the daughter of Chip and Theresa Hughes of Lubbock. The future groom is the son of Norman and Betty Wright of Ruidoso, N.M.

Heather is a graduate of

Lubbock Christian University and is employed with social services. Jimmy is a graduate of Big Spring High School and is attending Texas Tech University. He is employed by UPS.



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Sale Starts 403 Runnels, Big Spring, Tx. Sale Ends
Jan 8th Open Mon.-Sat. 9-6:30 Jan 13th

HOT HOUSE TOMATOES
33¢ LB.

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5 TO 6-OZ.

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1.75-OZ.

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2-LB. PKG.

BREAKSTONE SOUR CREAM OR FRUIT & COTTAGE CHEESE 5/\$1.00

COVERED WAGON BACON
69¢ LB.

GALLON CAN MERCHANDISE 2/\$3.00

CAN COKES & FLAVORS 6/\$1.00

DAVIDS SUNFLOWER SEEDS 4/\$1.00
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OSCAR MAYER LUNCHABLES 3/\$1.00
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Open 7 days a Week 5 am-Midnight
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Get Ready. Get Red and Go. Take time out for our 4th annual **Women's Heart Symposium** on **Saturday, January 20**. It's an important part of Covenant Health System's campaign for women's heart health leading up to National Wear Red Day™ on February 2. Join us at the **Lubbock Civic Center from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.** for healthy heart demonstrations and FREE health screenings worth hundreds of dollars.

At 11:30, join us for lunch with heart disease survivor Mellanie True Hills and hear her keynote address, "Be Still My Heart: Surviving and Thriving in a Hyperbusy World." Get great food and gifts—like our cookbook, *Heart Healthy Eating with West Texas Flavor*—all for \$10. To pre-register for screenings, lunch and your chance to win valuable prizes, call 1.866.4COVENANT (1.866.426.8362).

Isn't it time to take care of the woman who takes care of everybody?

Pre-register for your **FREE** health screening at the **Women's Heart Symposium on January 20**.



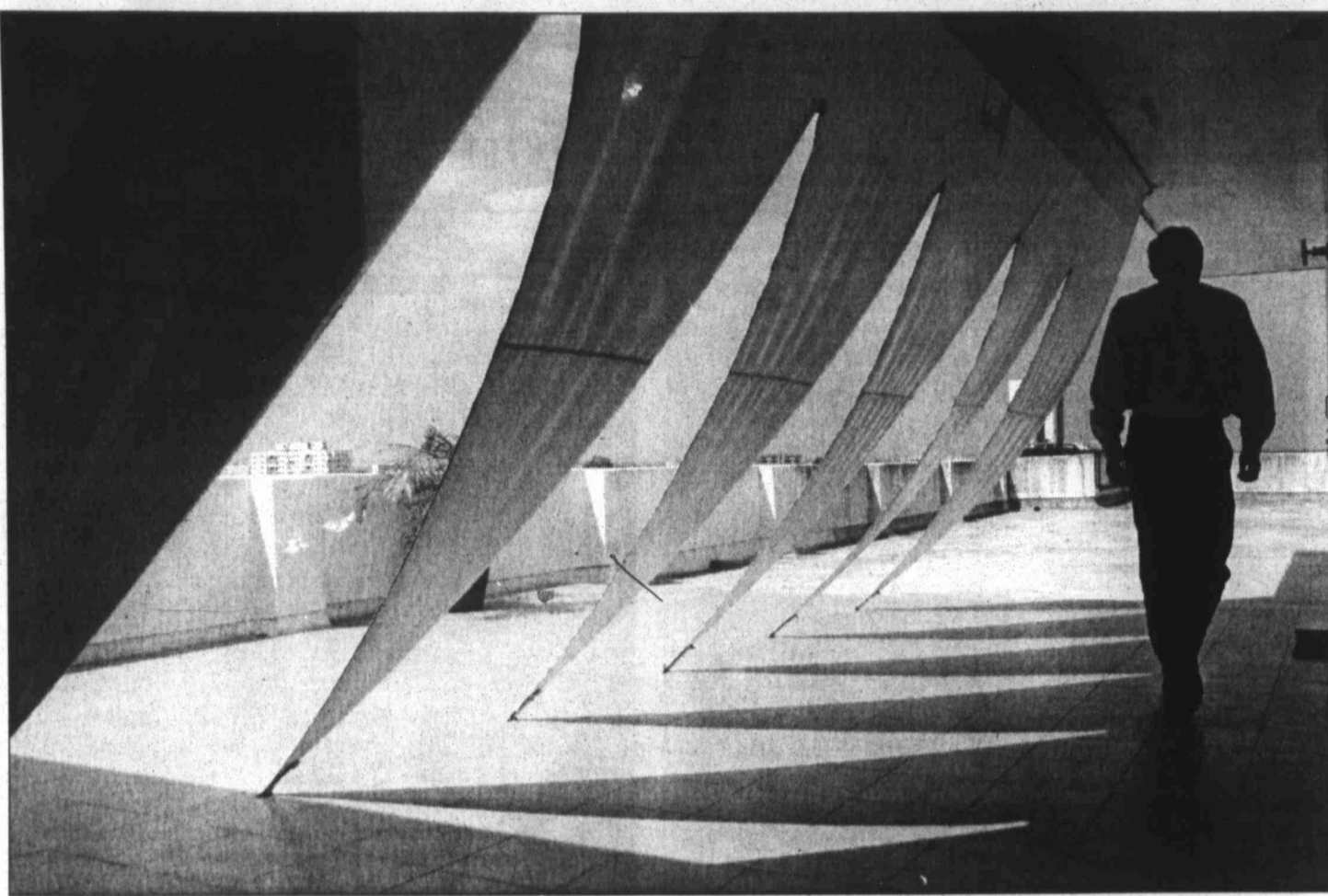
Find out if you have:

- High cholesterol*
- Elevated blood sugar*
- High blood pressure
- Increased risk of osteoporosis
- Adequate oxygen flow
- Healthy body mass ratio
- Good overall physical fitness

*Be sure to fast for 12 hours prior to your free health screening.

Pre-register today! Call 1.866.4COVENANT (1.866.426.8362).





Washington Post photo/Andrea Bruce

Information Management Consultants of Reston, Va., also has offices in Pune, India (shown), with 125 employees. Sudhakar Shenoy, an Indian immigrant, founded IMC in the early 1980s. About 25 percent of the technology and engineering companies launched in the past decade had at least one foreign-born founder, according to a new study.

Immigrants a driving force behind start-ups, study says

By KRISAH WILLIAMS

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — About 25 percent of the technology and engineering companies launched in the past decade had at least one foreign-born founder, according to a study released Wednesday that throws new information into the debate over foreign workers who arrive in the United States on specialty visas.

The report, based on telephone surveys with 2,054 companies and

projections by researchers at the University of California at Berkeley and at Duke University, found that immigrants — mostly from India and China — helped start hundreds of companies with estimated sales of nearly \$50 billion.

Technology-industry lobbyists have already cited the study in a push to persuade Congress to increase the annual allotment of H-1B visas, which allow U.S. companies to sponsor temporary workers in specialty occupations, such as

computer programming and systems analysis. The companies say they cannot find enough Americans to fill jobs; other proponents contend that globalization requires U.S. companies to import talented workers.

"This research shows that immigrants have become a significant driving force in the creation of new businesses and intellectual property in the U.S. — and that their contributions have increased over the

See FOREIGN, Page 5C

Cures for holiday debt hangovers

The holiday season often flies by in a blur. But, some overly-generous gift-givers are constantly reminded of their overspending every time a credit card bill comes in the mail.

A new poll from Consumer Reports says the average credit card holder was expected to rack up \$626 in credit card purchases during the holiday, and 17 percent of shoppers were expected to exceed \$1,000. In addition, 23 percent of American spenders are not planning to pay off their holiday debt until March or later.

Mike Sullivan, director of education for Take Charge America, a national non-profit credit counseling company, says holiday debt can easily carry into the next holiday season if it's not dealt with quickly.

"The first couple months of the year are often used for debt damage control," he said. "The best plan of attack: make paying off holiday debt your top priority. Then, take steps to make sure it doesn't happen again."

Sullivan has five tips for those in search of a cure for the holiday debt hangover:

Don't Put Off Payments — Ignoring holiday debt won't make it go away. In actuality, you are making the problem worse as the interest you owe increases. You can also end up paying

hundreds of dollars more than you originally planned if you only make the minimum payments.

Gift Card Exchange — Gift cards are continually gaining in popularity. The National Retail Federation estimated that gift card sales would near \$25 billion this past holiday season. That is up \$18.48 billion from last year. But, did you know you can turn those gift cards into cash? Web sites like www.cardavenue.com allow users to sell their gift cards. You can use the extra cash to make additional payments on your credit card. If you don't want to sell your cards, you can also use them to purchase future gifts so you don't go broke during the next holiday season.

Don't Make it Worse — How can you make your holiday debt worse? By tacking even more purchases onto that debt. If you've managed to rack up a sizable amount of debt during the holidays, put a moratorium on credit card purchases. Cut your cards or leave them at home if you cannot avoid the temptation to charge it. Even small purchases add up, and you will end up paying even more money in interest.

Visit a Credit Counselor — Sometimes we need help to climb out of debt. If you are facing severe debt problems and cannot meet

See CREDIT, Page 5C

Site dares users to share silly stunts

By ALEX PHAM

Los Angeles Times

HOLLYWOOD — Ben Bacal and Daron Niemerow definitely want you to try this at home.

The Southern California friends are the producers behind DareJunkies.com, an online mash-up of YouTube.com and the television show "Jackass." The site dares users to film themselves doing various stunts and share their antics on the Internet.

DareJunkies is part of a new crop of Internet companies vying for a slice of the red-hot market for online amateur video. Instead of serving up clips on any topic such as Google Video and YouTube, these newer entrants shoot for a narrower audience with a special interest focus or riskier fare.

As the name implies, DareJunkies hopes to capture eyeballs with videos that are wacky, exhibitionist or bizarre. The site invites people to choose from a list of dares and submit clips to compete for cash prizes of \$100 to \$5,000. The amount depends on how highly viewers rate their videos.

The dares are designed to be harmless enough to avoid lawsuits from stunts going badly awry but silly enough to be entertaining. Examples: Take a bath in public, sell doughnuts in front of a police station or smear yourself with peanut butter and walk into a dog park.

"This takes America's Funniest (Home) Videos to the next level," Bacal said. "It's outrageous and shocking like 'Jackass,' but not with people getting hurt."

Their strategy may skirt liability, but it still has risks. Going narrow can limit the number of viewers, cutting down the level of interest advertisers may have in the site. And serving up more daring videos can make sponsors even more leery.

"There are lots of viewers, but the amount of time they spend on it and the relative importance of that still has to be determined," said analyst David Hallerman of research firm EMarketer Inc.

Hallerman estimates that 107.7 million Americans viewed an online video at least once a month this year, up from 89.4 million last year. By 2010, he pre-

dicts that figure will jump to 157 million, their popularity driven by the social aspect of videos.

But ad spending for online video, although also growing rapidly, remains a tiny fraction of overall spending.

Marketers will have spent \$410 million this year, up 82 percent from 2005, according to EMarketer. That's still just 2.6 percent of the estimated online ad spending in 2006. By 2010, however, Hallerman predicts that more than \$1 out of every \$10 spent for online ads will go to video, making it a \$2.9-billion market.

The medium took center stage in October, when Google Inc. agreed to buy video-sharing site YouTube Inc. for \$1.65 billion, creating buzz around other players in online video such as Metacafe Inc., Break.com and Revver Inc.

Some analysts predict that the next wave of video sites will be more like DareJunkies, carving out ever narrower niches.

"We'll start to see lots of companies come in with weird angles trying to

See STUNTS, Page 5C



Los Angeles Times photo/Stephen Osman

Daron Niemerow, left, and Ben Bacal's DareJunkies.com Web site offers ideas for stunts.

Public Records

Howard County Justice of the Peace Outstanding IBC Warrants:

Javier Alcantar, 1513 Scurry, Big Spring
Lisa Aleman, 306 W. First St., Big Spring
Lorie Avina, 603 Steakley Dr., Big Spring
Stephanie Renee Beaty, 2718 E. SH 176, Andrews
Samantha Ann Berrera, 606 Lamar, Sweetwater
Kerrie Lea Bhuiyan, 538 Westover, Big Spring
Chad Wayne Brown, 3901 Ave. D, Snyder
Douglas (Doug) Brown, 205 W. 14th St., Monahans
Kendra Jade Brownfield, 207 Providence Rd., Big Spring
Richard Henry Burk, PO Box 171933, Arlington
Quinton Dale Burton, 419 Westover Road, Big Spring
Paul D. Calhoun, P.O. Box 842, Plains
Latonya Campbell, 5948 Callaston Lane, Fort Worth
Maria Campos, 751 Agua

Pesada, El Paso
David Canales Jr., 501 E. 17th, Big Spring
Wayne V. Carpenter, 3766 Patriot Dr., Abilene
Rebecca Carrillo, 261 County Road 625, Sinton
Lenard Carson Jr., 102 S. Peach, Pecos
Scott S. Carter, 3223 Cornell, Big Spring
Andrea Coxey, P.O. Box 1042, Sterling City
Patrick C. Criss, 8030 Catalpa, Texas City
James V. Ditto, 501 W. 17th, Big Spring
Pricillia Domino, 2832 Waco, San Angelo
Johnnie Lou Dry, RR11, Box 156, Longview
Kathi Duke, 337 Greenbow, Summerville, Ga.
Shannon Fonda, 910 N. Runnels, Coahoma
Hilda Fuentes, 502 S. Seventh Street, Lamesa
Matt Fuentes, 3843 Penbrook No. 107, Odessa
Aldo Gustavo Galindo, 922

Jeter, Odessa
Kenneth Galindo, 6830 El Paso Dr., El Paso
Concepcion Garcia, PO Box 16156, Lubbock
Claudet Garza, 3106 E. Elm, Laredo
Jennifer Garza, County Road 83300, Lenorah
Eugene Gentry, 203 N. 18th Street, Lamesa
Joe E. George Jr., 6336 FM 585, Bangs
Christopher George, 215 E. Third, Laramie, Wyo.
Frank Gibbs, 1102 Hwy. 176, Big Spring
Katherine A. Gladhill, 7670 M. Trailer/2718 Rear, Lubbock
Michael Glidewell, P.O. Box 204, Fort Davis
Rebecca Ann Morales Gomez, 1606 E. Fifth Street, Big Spring
Raul Gonzales, 2106 Johnson, Big Spring
Naomi Gonzales, 1209 Runnels, Big Spring
Fernando Gonzales, 3000 Schadt, Fort Worth
Martha Graham, 2135 Mossy

Creek Drive, San Antonio
Jeffrey M. Grams, 224 Lelon Lane, Springtown
Nora Gutierrez, 606 N. Eighth Street, Lamesa
Timothy Edward Hansen, 1310 Park Ave., Big Spring
Jeremy Royce Harman, 6713 E. Robinson Rd., Big Spring
Nicholas Hasenbalg, 207 W. Williams, Breckenridge
Dana L. Holguin Havink, 600 Star Linda Ct., Arlington
John A. Hernandez, 4405 N. Garfield, Midland
Robert Stephen Hoback, 1516 Cumberland Rd., Odessa
Gerald R. Hodges, 4312 Crane, Houston
Allan J. Hoey, 1401 N. Highway 87 Apt. 2, Big Spring
Joann Baldwin Hubbard, 504 Eugene or 4000 W. Illinois, Midland
Lucas Shane Hughes, No. 1 Courtney Lane, Big Spring
Jeanie Renee Ivey, 5326 Old State Hwy 71, La Grange
Sharon Annette James, 1311 W. Second, Big Spring

Ronald Jeffery, 1101 Fitch, Odessa
Rae Lynn Jennings, 1904 E. 25th St., Big Spring
Tyler J. Voss, Fannin County Road 4925, Leonard
Georgianna Williams, 907 E. I-20, Big Spring
Kristi Oden Womack, 710 Bell, Sweetwater
Bernest Eugene Woolridge, 4110 S. Jackson, Amarillo
Richard M. Wren Jr., 3303 91st Street, Lubbock
Jerry Lee Wrightsill Jr., 2816 Ridge Road, Fort Worth
Anthony Yates, 5001 Dawson, Big Spring
Shuang Cheng Zhang, 1201 Gregg St., Big Spring

for 12 months, \$500 fine, court costs.
Probated judgment; Steven Franco; duty on striking unattended vehicle; 180 days in jail/probated for 12 months, \$200 fine, court costs.
Probated judgment; Ector Brandon Jaramillo; evading arrest; 180 days in jail/probated for 12 months, \$1,500 fine, court costs.
Probated judgment; Fred Allen Perry; driving while license suspended; 180 days in jail/probated for 12 months, \$500 fine, court costs.
Probated judgment; Jose Munoz III; driving while license suspended; 180 days in jail/probated for 12 months, \$500 fine, court costs.
Probated judgment; Michael Arnulfo Hernandez; driving while intoxicated/second offense; 365 days in jail/probated for 12 months, \$2,500 fine, court costs.
Probated judgment; Clifford Raymond Stinson; driving while

See RECORDS, Page 5C

FOREIGN

Continued from Page 4C

past decade," wrote the study's author, Vivek Wadhwa, a former technology executive who immigrated from India with his family as a young man.

Another study will be released next month by the Center for Immigration Studies, which supports low levels of immigration. That report says most specialty visa holders come to the United States to do low-level professional jobs for relatively low pay.

Wadhwa's study looked at founders of engineering and technology companies started from 1995

to 2005, and analyzed the World Intellectual Property Organization Patent Cooperation Treaty database. About 25 percent of international patents filed in the United States in 2006 were submitted by immigrants.

Scott McNealy, chairman and co-founder of Sun Microsystems, is among the advocates for an expanded visa program, writing editorials, calling members of Congress and supporting political action committees.

McNealy noted that immigrants Vinod Kosla of India and Andy Bechtelshelm of Germany co-founded Sun.

The company "created tens of thousands of jobs that have generated bil-

ions of dollars in exports and has created thousands of patents and intellectual-property positions," McNealy said. "Why would you have any arbitrary number on smart people?"

Last year, the industry raised the issue in the national debate over immigration reform, but Congress ended its session without acting on the Securing Knowledge, Innovation and Leadership Act. The bill would increase the annual quota on the H-1B visas to 115,000 from 65,000, eliminate green-card caps for some advanced-degree holders and streamline the processing of employment-based green cards. Tech lobbyists want to revive it.

"We are working on that new piece of legislation that will hopefully be a great fix for a lot of our companies," said Andrea Hoffman, vice president of government and political affairs for TechNet, an industry lobby backed by hundreds of technology companies, including Apple Computer, Microsoft and Google.

Those who favor low levels of immigration and oppose expanding the specialty-worker programs contend that foreigners accept lower pay and depress wages.

Jessica Vaughan, an analyst at the Center for Immigration Studies in Washington, said an increase in the cap would amount to "a subsidy for business because it allows

them to bring cheaper labor from overseas."

It is unknown how many of the immigrants who founded technology companies had H-1B visas.

At least two Virginia tech companies were founded by former H-1B holders. Sudhakar Shenoy, founder and chief executive of Reston-based Information Management Consultants (IMC), immigrated to the United States in 1970 after gradu-

ating from the Indian Institutes of Technology — known informally as the "MIT of India" — and attending graduate school in Connecticut. In 1974, he was offered an H-1B visa, and a manufacturing company sponsored his green card in 1977.

Four years later, he founded IMC, which has 350 employees in Reston and 125 in Pune, India.

Peter Harrison came from Britain on the specialty visa and later became chief executive of GlobalLogic (formerly Induslogic), a Vienna, Va.-based software development company founded in 2000 by two men from India, who were also H-1B holders.

The company has grown rapidly and employs 1,600 people in the United States, India and Ukraine. Only a few dozen of them have H-1B visas.

"They are very, very hard to come by," Harrison said. "We are always at a challenge to recruit people."

STUNTS

Continued from Page 4C

build targeted communities for advertisers," said Allen Weiner, media analyst at Gartner Inc. "We think there will be a land grab for the niches."

Bacal and Niemerow, both 28, believe their idea will appeal to both video viewers and creators.

"There are a lot of people who want to make videos, but they don't necessarily know what to shoot, so you end up with

videos of sunsets or somebody's sleeping cat," Bacal said. "We wanted to give filmmakers a blueprint so they can go out and create something great. Something hilarious and funny that lots of people will want to watch."

Bacal came up with the idea nine years ago while at a family dinner.

"I got kinda bored and my imagination started to go," he said. "I thought, 'Wouldn't it be funny if everyone started to expose secrets about each

other and admit to all the naughty things they've done in their life?' That's when I formulated this idea for having these funny video clips on the Web."

At 19, he pitched his idea to various production companies.

"But I was too young to articulate my idea well enough and nobody took me seriously," he said.

He let the idea go until this year, when he teamed with Niemerow, a childhood buddy from West Hollywood. With \$160,000

in personal savings and an additional \$350,000 from friends and family, the two got to work. They tapped WebSight Design Inc. in Sausalito, Calif., to build and maintain the site in exchange for part-ownership.

DareJunkies, based at Bacal's house in West Hollywood, hopes eventually to make money from ads, sponsors and selling DVDs of top videos.

"Ben and I are going to tap into a revenue stream we call 'product placement challenges,'" Niemerow said. "Drink a Pepsi and give us your best burp, for instance."

The site went live Dec. 12, and most of the videos on it have been made by the founders' friends.

Bacal and Niemerow, who screen all the dares on their site, say they're only after good, clean fun.

"A lot of the challenges aren't dangerous at all," Bacal said. "One is to do a video about sibling rivalry. Show the world all the silly things you guys fight about. Or interview the guy with the 18-foot rein-

deer on his house. You can make some great videos without having to fall out of a window."

Bacal said his site's dares leave lots of room for creativity and imagination.

"It can be in the way you act, in your editing, in your improvised dialogue, the location you pick, the people you integrate into your script," he said. "You can still end up with something original that can make people laugh. Or cry."

RECORDS

Continued from Page 4C

intoxicated; 180 days in jail/probated for 12 months, \$1,500 fine, court costs.

Probated judgment-deferred adjudication; Nathan Lozano Torres; fictitious/counterfeit inspection document for display; six months probation, \$250 fine, court costs.

Probated judgment; Carolina Moskoe; driving while license suspended; 180 days in jail/probated for 12 months, \$500 fine, court costs.

Probated judgment; Jerrick Decova Straughter; assault causing bodily injury; 180 days in jail/probated for 12 months, \$1,500 fine, court costs.

Marriage Licenses:

William J. Franks, 30, and Leslie Kayla Jones, 24, both of Big Spring.

George Michael Kennedy, 49, and Cynthia L. Roberts-Parker, 44, both of Big Spring.

Brian E. Lower, 26, and Aimee L. Sinclair, 20, both of Ohio.

District Court Filings:

Erin L. Cloud vs. Kenneth C. Cloud, divorce.

David Martinez Jr. vs. Victoria Valbuena Martinez, divorce.

Warranty Deeds:

Grantor: Jimmie Sholults Sr. Grantee: Faye Southern and Paula Stevens Property: Lots 10 through 15, original town of Forsan Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Maria Barber Grantee: H.D. Barber Property: Lot 5, block 20, original town of Big Spring Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Ackerly Oil Co. Grantee: Eddin-Walcher Co. Property: Tract out of section 30, block 32, T-1-N, T&P RR Co. survey Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Calvin C. and Irene O. McWhorter Grantee: James A. and Stephanie J. Rosenblum Property: Part of Lot C, tract 8, Kennebeck Heights Addition Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Cleo L. Carlile Grantee: Cosme and Juley Ramirez Property: Lot 11, block 3, Piner Heights Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: William R. and Brenda Fay Banks Grantee: James T. and Janet L. Scott Property: Lots 2 and 3, block 3, Marshall Fields Estates Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Midfirst Bank Grantee: Secretary of Veterans Affairs Property: Lot 17, block 4, Douglass Subdivision Date: Dec. 28, 2006

Grantor: Raymond B. and Norma N. Alexander Grantee: GRR Properties Property: Lot 5, block 3, Coronado Hills Addition Date: Dec. 28, 2006

CREDIT

Continued from Page 4C

your necessary monthly payments, consider talking with a credit counselor. A credit counselor can help you consolidate your debt and create a workable budget to help you meet your financial goals. Visit the Better Business Bureau at www.bbb.org to check out reputable credit counselors. You can also visit www.takechargeamerica.org for more information.

Prevention — You can take steps right now to prevent future holiday debt hangers. Start setting aside a small amount of money each month in a savings account so you have a substantial chunk of cash that can be used for

gifts, rather than dipping into your credit card reserves. In addition, don't purchase unnecessary items throughout the year on your credit card if you cannot afford to pay off the total balance at the end of the month. Debt prevention is a year-round effort.

About Take Charge America

Founded in 1987, Take Charge America, Inc. is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Phoenix, Ariz. TCA offers a variety of services including financial education, credit counseling and debt management. To learn more about TCA or its programs, call 1-800-823-7396 or visit www.takechargeamerica.org

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Grantor: Troy Koenig Grantee: Rodolfo and Christina Brito Property: Lot 1, block 1, Belvue Addition Date: Dec. 29, 2006

Grantor: Josue and Cindy Lugo Grantee: Brandon Boreliz Property: Lot 7, block 4, Thorp Subdivision Date: Dec. 29, 2006

Grantor: Wells Fargo Bank Trustee Grantee: Henry Backes and Jo Carruth Property: Lot 12, block 26, Monticello Addition Date: Dec. 29, 2006

Grantor: Gayla D. Williams Grantee: Robert Rowan Property: Lot 6, block 30, College Park Estates Date: Dec. 29, 2006

Grantor: Warrant Deeds with Vendor Lien: Grantor: Roy Taylor Grantee: Robert L. and Kelly D. Hankins Property: Tract out of northeast quarter of section 41, block 32, T-1-S, T&P RR Co. survey. Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Warrant Deeds: Grantor: Jimmie Sholults Sr. Grantee: Faye Southern and Paula Stevens Property: Lots 10 through 15, original town of Forsan Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Warrant Deeds: Grantor: Maria Barber Grantee: H.D. Barber Property: Lot 5, block 20, original town of Big Spring Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Warrant Deeds: Grantor: Ackerly Oil Co. Grantee: Eddin-Walcher Co. Property: Tract out of section 30, block 32, T-1-N, T&P RR Co. survey Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Warrant Deeds: Grantor: Calvin C. and Irene O. McWhorter Grantee: James A. and Stephanie J. Rosenblum Property: Part of Lot C, tract 8, Kennebeck Heights Addition Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Warrant Deeds: Grantor: Cleo L. Carlile Grantee: Cosme and Juley Ramirez Property: Lot 11, block 3, Piner Heights Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Warrant Deeds: Grantor: William R. and Brenda Fay Banks Grantee: James T. and Janet L. Scott Property: Lots 2 and 3, block 3, Marshall Fields Estates Date: Dec. 27, 2006

Grantor: Warrant Deeds: Grantor: Midfirst Bank Grantee: Secretary of Veterans Affairs Property: Lot 17, block 4, Douglass Subdivision Date: Dec. 28, 2006

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