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19/07

BIG SPRING HERALD

VOLUME 103, NUMBER 74

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2007

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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 WEEKEND



INSIDE
Knight says
new NCAA
rule will
hurt college
basketball
programs.
Page 1B

Second, costly deadline near on property taxes

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

Area property owners that haven't paid their 2006 taxes may want to get a move on, as the second deadline — and more penalties and interest — are just over the horizon.

After Feb. 28, Howard County property taxpayers will see a 7 percent penalty and 2 percent interest if their marker hasn't to be cleared, according to County Tax Assessor Kathy Sayles.

"Once the taxes go delinquent in February, the penalties and interest start at 7 percent and increase each month," said Sayles. "As of July 1, penalty and interest grows to 18 per-

"Once the taxes go delinquent in February, the penalties and interest start at 7 percent and increase each month. As of July 1, penalty and interest grows to 18 percent, with an additional penalty tacked on for attorney fees."

Kathy Sayles
Tax Assessor

cent, with an additional penalty tacked on for attorney fees."

Sayles said area residents that aren't sure how much they owe can get that information over the phone or in person at the tax office.

"Some individuals don't get their statement for whatever

reason," said Sayles. "We can pull up their name on the system and tell them the amount that's due. So if you haven't received a statement, call us or come by the office. Some people, because of their homestead exemptions, have no taxes, so we don't send them a notice.

However, if they just want to make sure everything is OK, all they have to do is call.

"They can reference their check with an account number that we can give them so they can get their payment in the mail. Once that's done, we mail them back a receipt for their

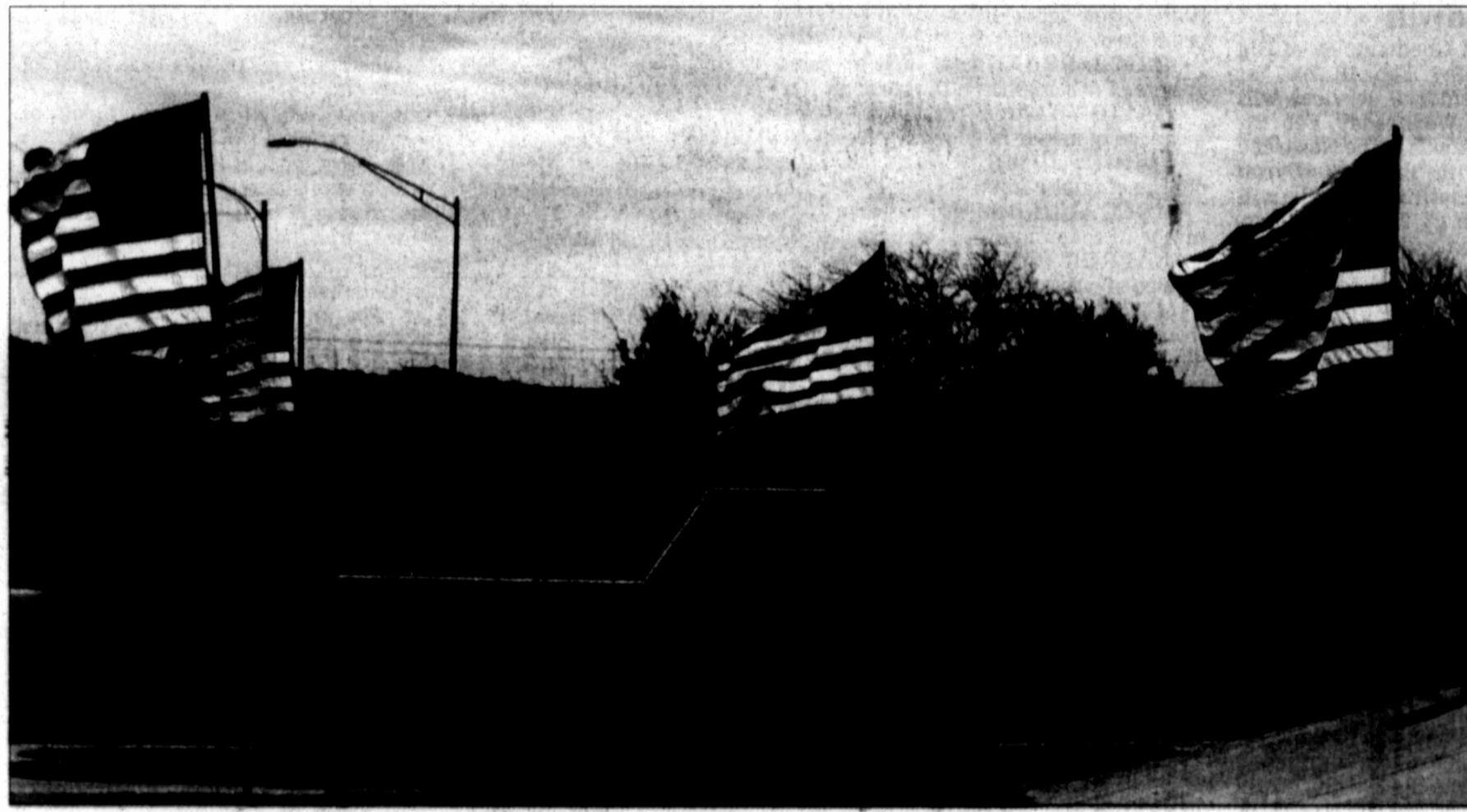
payment."

The tax penalty and interest schedule after the Feb. 28 deadline is as follows: after March 31, 8 percent penalty and 3 percent interest; after April 30, 9 percent penalty and 4 percent interest; after May 31, 10 percent penalty and 5 percent interest; and after June 30, 12 percent penalty and 6 percent interest, including an additional 20 percent attorney fee.

For more information, contact the Howard County Tax Collector's Office at 264-2232.

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

FLYING THE COLORS ON PRESIDENT'S DAY



Officials with the Big Spring VA Medical Center show their patriotism Monday, as the facility displays its best "red, white and blue" attire in honor of Presidents Day.

Smoked

Supreme Court throws out verdict in tobacco lawsuit
By **MARK SHERMAN**

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court threw out a \$79.5 million punitive damages award to a smoker's widow Tuesday, a boon to businesses seeking stricter limits on big-dollar jury verdicts.

The 5-4 ruling was a victory for Altria Group Inc.'s Philip Morris USA, which contested an Oregon Supreme Court decision upholding the verdict.

In the majority opinion written by Justice Stephen Breyer, the court said the verdict could not stand because the jury in the case was not instructed that it could punish Philip Morris only for the harm done to the plaintiff, not to other smokers whose cases were not before it.

States must "provide assurances that juries are not asking the wrong question ... seeking, not simply to determine reprehensibility, but also to punish for harm caused strangers," Breyer said.

The decision did not address whether the size of the award was constitutionally excessive, as Philip Morris had asked.

Punitive damages are money intended to punish a defendant for its behavior and to deter repetition.

See **VERDICT**, Page 3A

Lawmakers not convinced to support mandate

By **LIZ AUSTIN PETERSON**
Associated Press Writer

AUSTIN — After hearing six hours of testimony on Gov. Rick Perry's anti-cancer vaccine mandate, lawmakers seemed to leave as wary and skeptical of the requirement as ever.

The House public health committee adjourned early Tuesday without taking action on a bill that would override the gover-

nor's Feb. 2 order requiring sixth-grade girls to be vaccinated against the human papillomavirus, or HPV.

The vaccine, called Gardasil, protects girls and women against strains of HPV that cause most cases of cervical cancer and genital warts.

Many of the committee members raised questions about the vaccine's safety, efficacy and cost and seemed to support state

Rep. Dennis Bonnen's proposal to bar state officials from requiring the vaccine for school attendance.

The committee is set to meet again on Wednesday, when it could vote to move the measure to the full House.

Ninety state representatives have signed on as co-sponsors of Bonnen's bill, just short of two-thirds of the 150 House members. Fourteen senators are co-spon-

soring an identical bill.

Conservatives oppose the vaccine requirement because they believe it contradicts Texas' abstinence-only sex education policies and strays too far into families' lives. Others have balked at the \$360 cost for the three-shot series.

"Until we can say we understand it fully ... we can't give it

See **HEARING**, Page 3A

Administration backed by appellate court

By **MATT APUZZO**

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Guantanamo Bay detainees may not challenge their detention in U.S. courts, a federal appeals court said Tuesday in a ruling upholding a key provision of a law at the center of President Bush's anti-terrorism plan.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled 2-1 that civilian courts no longer have the authority to consider whether the military is illegally holding foreigners.

Barring detainees from the U.S. court

system was a key provision in the Military Commissions Act, which Bush pushed through Congress last year to set up a system to prosecute terrorism suspects.

The ruling is all but certain to be appealed to the Supreme Court, which last year struck down the Bush administration's original plan for trying detainees before military commissions.

The Military Commissions Act was crafted in response to that decision and the president hailed it as a necessary tool for bringing terror suspects to justice.

Civil libertarians and leading Democrats decried the law as unconstitutional and a violation of American values. The law allows the government to indefinitely detain foreigners who have been designed as "enemy combatants" and authorizes the CIA to use aggressive but undefined interrogation tactics.

But the most criticized provision of the law was the one stripping U.S. courts of the authority to hear arguments from detainees who said they

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Obituaries

Mildred Raye "Nema" Gamble



Mildred Raye "Nema" Gamble, 79, of Big Spring died Sunday, Feb. 18, 2007, at her residence. Funeral services will be 2 p.m. Wednesday at Myers & Smith Chapel with the Rev. Jim Binnix, pastor of Midway Baptist Church, officiating. Burial will be at Trinity Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 6:30 p.m. until 8 p.m. Tuesday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

She was born April 29, 1927, in Howard County to Thelma and Samuel Foster. She graduated from Coahoma High School where she was Valedictorian of her class. She worked as a telephone operator for Southwestern Bell and also as a telephone operator for Malone and Hogan Clinic and Scenic Mountain Medical Center. She also had been a dental assistant. She was a member of the American Women's Business Club, as well as a member of the Howard County Sheriff's Posse for more than 30 years. But most of all she was "Nema" to many friends, family and relatives. She was a lifetime resident of Howard County.

She is survived by her husband, Joe T. Gamble of Big Spring; one daughter, Janice Gaskins and her husband, Ronnie of Big Spring; four sons, Buddy Owens and his wife, Diann of Big Spring, Terry Gamble and his wife, Galynn, Michel Gamble and his wife, Janie, all of Colorado City, and Perry Gamble and his wife, Wanda of Big Spring; 17 grandchildren; and 27 great-grandchildren.

In addition to her parents she was preceded in death by her first husband, Jack Owens in 1964; and one granddaughter, Tera Gaskins.

Pallbearers will be Chris Evans, Matthew Gamble, Nathan Greer, Logan Gamble, Justin Gamble and Johnny Russworm.

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

Paid obituary

Marjorie Brazeal Goodwin



Marjorie Brazeal Goodwin, 73, of Big Spring, died Monday, Feb. 19, 2007, at her residence. Memorial services will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2007 at the First Church of the Nazarene of Big Spring with the Rev. Byron Brown pastor, officiating. A service will be held Friday, Feb. 23, 2007, at Mallory-Martin Funeral Home Chapel in Stigler, Okla. with Ernie Strong, officiating. Interment will follow at Stigler Cemetery.

She was born Aug. 31, 1933, in Stigler, Okla. and married Robert Gene Goodwin Sept. 1, 1951, in Stigler, Okla.

Marjorie and her husband came to Big Spring in February of 1969. She had worked as a library aide for the Big Spring Independent School District and was a Licensed Vocational Nurse at Scenic Mountain Medical Center for 10 years, until retiring. She was a member of the First Church of the Nazarene.

Survivors include her husband, Robert Gene Goodwin of Big Spring; two sons, Robert L. Goodwin of Houston and Joseph T. Goodwin of Santa Fe; one sister, Betty Williamson of Sapulpa, Okla.; and two granddaughters.

She was preceded in death by her mother, father, two brothers and one sister.

The family suggests memorials be made to the First Church of the Nazarene, 1400 Lancaster, Big Spring 79720, The Alzheimers Disease Research, 22512 Gateway Center Drive, Clarksburg, Md. 20871-1950, or to a favorite charity.

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

Hollis Puckett

Hollis Puckett, 90, of Big Spring, died Monday, Feb. 19, 2007, at his residence. His services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring.

Dennis E. Black

Dennis E. Black, 63, of Waxahachie, formerly of Big Spring died Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2007, at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Morgan Marion

Morgan Marion, 82, of Big Spring died Monday, Feb. 19, 2007, in Ennis. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Lottery

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Monday night:
Winning numbers drawn: 1-4-14-15-22.

Results of the Texas Two Step drawing Monday night:
Winning numbers drawn: 6-10-17-24. Bonus Ball: 21.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Monday night, in order: 4-8-0

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Monday afternoon, in order: 2-8-7

Police blotter

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

- LEON SCRIGGINS, 31, 1402 S. Main, was arrested on a charge of interfering with an emergency phone call.
- LANA RUTH MUNOZ, 43, 400 Dallas, was arrested on a charge of driving while license suspended.
- CHRISTOPHER CASTANUELA, 22, 4117 Muir, was arrested on a charge of driving while license suspended/enhanced.
- ASSAULT BY THREAT was reported in the 2700 block of Wasson.
- ASSAULT CAUSING BODILY INJURY was reported in the 1400 block of Main.
- CLASS C ASSAULT was reported in the 1700 block of Runnels.
- BURGLARY OF A BUILDING was reported in the 700 block of San Antonio.
- BURGLARY OF A VEHICLE was reported in the 700 block of San Antonio.
- DRIVING WHILE LICENSE SUSPENDED/INVALID was reported in the 2900 block of Highway 87 and the 1700 block of Wasson.
- INTERFERING WITH AN EMERGENCY PHONE CALL was reported in the 1400 block of Main.

Sheriff's report

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

- GERMAN GASPER ADAN, 53, was arrested on a parole violation warrant.
- ADOLFO HUANTE LOPEZ JR., 34, was arrested on a Midland County warrant.
- DANIEL ALBERTO SANTIESTEBAN, 20, was arrested by DPS on a charge of evading arrest or detention with a vehicle.
- ASHLEY DAWN SMITH, 21, was transferred from BSPD after being arrested on a charge of violating promise to appear.
- ERIC I. URANGA, 21, was arrested by DPS on a charge of driving while intoxicated.
- DAVID YBARRA JR., 20, was arrested by DPS on a charge of minor in consumption of alcohol.
- DANIEL JESUS LEMON, 38, was arrested on a charge of public intoxication.
- ABEL ABUNDEZ, 20, was arrested on a charge of minor in consumption of alcohol.
- GABRIEL PAUL PAREDEZ, 20, was arrested on a charge of public intoxication.
- CARL GENE BURLESON, 45, was transferred from BSPD after being arrested on charges of disobedience of a court order and driving while license suspended.
- JOE MICHAEL CANALES, 26, was arrested on a charge of driving while intoxicated.
- CHARLES ROY BURKE, 48, was arrested on a motion to revoke probation for contempt of court.
- JAMIE RAE SMITH, 30, was arrested on a bondsman off bond warrant for driving while license suspended/invalid.
- DAVID CHARLES PATTERSON, 29, was arrested on a charge of theft.
- NICK RODRIGUEZ VALENCIA, 23, was arrested on a charge of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.
- JUAN MIGUEL LERMA, 19, was arrested on a charge of driving while license suspended/invalid.
- MELISSA ANN HERNANDEZ, 22, was arrested on a failure to appear warrant for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.
- SHARI MINTZ BOUNDS, 31, was arrested on a charge of theft of service.
- TERRI DEEANN ALLEN, 36, was transferred from BSPD after being arrested on a charge of driving while intoxicated.
- CHRISOPHER RYAN CASTANEULA, 22, was transferred from BSPD after being arrested on a charge of driving while license suspended/invalid.
- HENRY JOHN RAYMOND, was transferred from BSPD after being arrested on a bondsman off bond warrant for possession of a controlled substance.

Weather

Today — Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 60s. West winds 15 to 25 mph.
Tonight — Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 30s. West winds 10 to 15 mph.
Wednesday — Sunny. Highs in the mid 70s. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph.
Wednesday night — Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 40s. South winds around 10 mph in the evening becoming light and variable.
Thursday — Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 70s. South winds 10 to 15 mph.
Thursday night — Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 40s.
Friday — Sunny. Highs in the upper 70s.
Friday night — Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 40s.
Saturday — Mostly cloudy. Windy. Cooler. Highs in the mid 60s.
Saturday night — Partly cloudy. Windy. Colder. Lows in the lower 30s.
Sunday — Sunny. Highs in the lower 60s.
Sunday night — Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 30s.
Monday — Sunny. Highs in the lower 60s.

Fire/EMS

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

- TRAUMA was reported in the 3200 block of Drake. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 500 block of S. Main. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1100 block of Sycamore. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 800 block of W. Interstate 20. One person was transported to VAMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 600 block of S. Bell. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1600 block of State. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1500 block of Chickashaw. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1100 block of E. 12th. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2300 block of Wasson. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 400 block of E. Fourth. Service was refused.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1800 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to VAMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 500 block of State. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 2600 block of Old Gail Highway. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1600 block of Lancaster. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 1800 block of N. Highway 87. One person was transported to VAMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 4400 block of Elder. Service was refused.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2300 block of Marshall. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 2500 block of Gunter. One person was transported to SMMC.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 3200 block of Parkway. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 800 block of Scott Drive. Service was refused.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 1700 block of Lancaster. Services was refused.
- GRASS FIRE was reported in the 1500 block of Sycamore.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 1700 block of Lancaster. Service was refused.
- MEDICAL was reported in the 1700 block of Lancaster. One person was transported to SMMC.
- TRAUMA was reported in the 1400 block of S. Main. One person was transported to SMMC.

Bulletin Board

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

- TUESDAY**
- Big Spring Band Boosters meets at 5:30 p.m. in the high school band hall. All band parents are invited to attend.
 - Big Spring Art Association meets at 7 p.m. in the Howard County Library. All working artists and those interested in art are invited to attend.
 - Order of the Eastern Star No. 67 meets at 7:30 p.m. at 221 Main.
- 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. in the Scenic Mountain Medical Center classroom for Stretch and Tone. Call 268-4721.
 - Downtown Lions Club meets at noon at the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
 - Duplicate Bridge Club meets at 1 p.m. in the Big Spring Country Club.
 - Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie meets at 7 p.m. in the Eagles Lodge, 703 W. Third St.
- THURSDAY**
- Gideon International Big Spring Camp U42060 meets at 7 a.m. in Herman's Restaurant.
 - Kiwanis Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room. Call 267-6479.
 - Staked Plains Lodge No. 598 meets at 6:30 p.m. at 221 Main. Meal served. Meeting at 7 p.m.
- FRIDAY**
- Signal Mountain Quilting Guild meets from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. at 1019 Nolan St. Call 267-1037 or 267-7281 for more information.

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Gathering to address wildlife and humans coexisting in Texas

By **BETSY BLANEY**
Associated Press Writer

LUBBOCK — Wildlife officials have heard the scary stories across Texas with increasing frequency: Farmers get spooked by rampaging feral hogs. Alligators show up in ponds too close to home. Coyotes snatch cats and dogs from the back porch.

The interactions between wildlife and humans rapidly encroaching on their habitats have become so common that officials have enlisted the help of biologists and other experts for the state's first conference aimed at avoiding such clashes.

"Concerns like nuisance coyotes and overpopulated deer can become flashpoints for divided communities, but properly managed wildlife and green space are vital to our quality of life," said John Davis, a Texas Parks and Wildlife Department biologist.

Those attending the Dallas conference today will learn how to educate residents to be smarter around wildlife, such as not hand feeding coyotes. Cities' officials also will be encouraged to establish response plans

should a wildlife issue arise.

The animal run-ins vary across Texas. In many parts of the state, farmers and ranchers struggle to deal with the estimated 2 million wild hogs. The nation's largest feral pig population has been causing millions of dollars of damage to crops with their razor-sharp tusks and digging snouts.

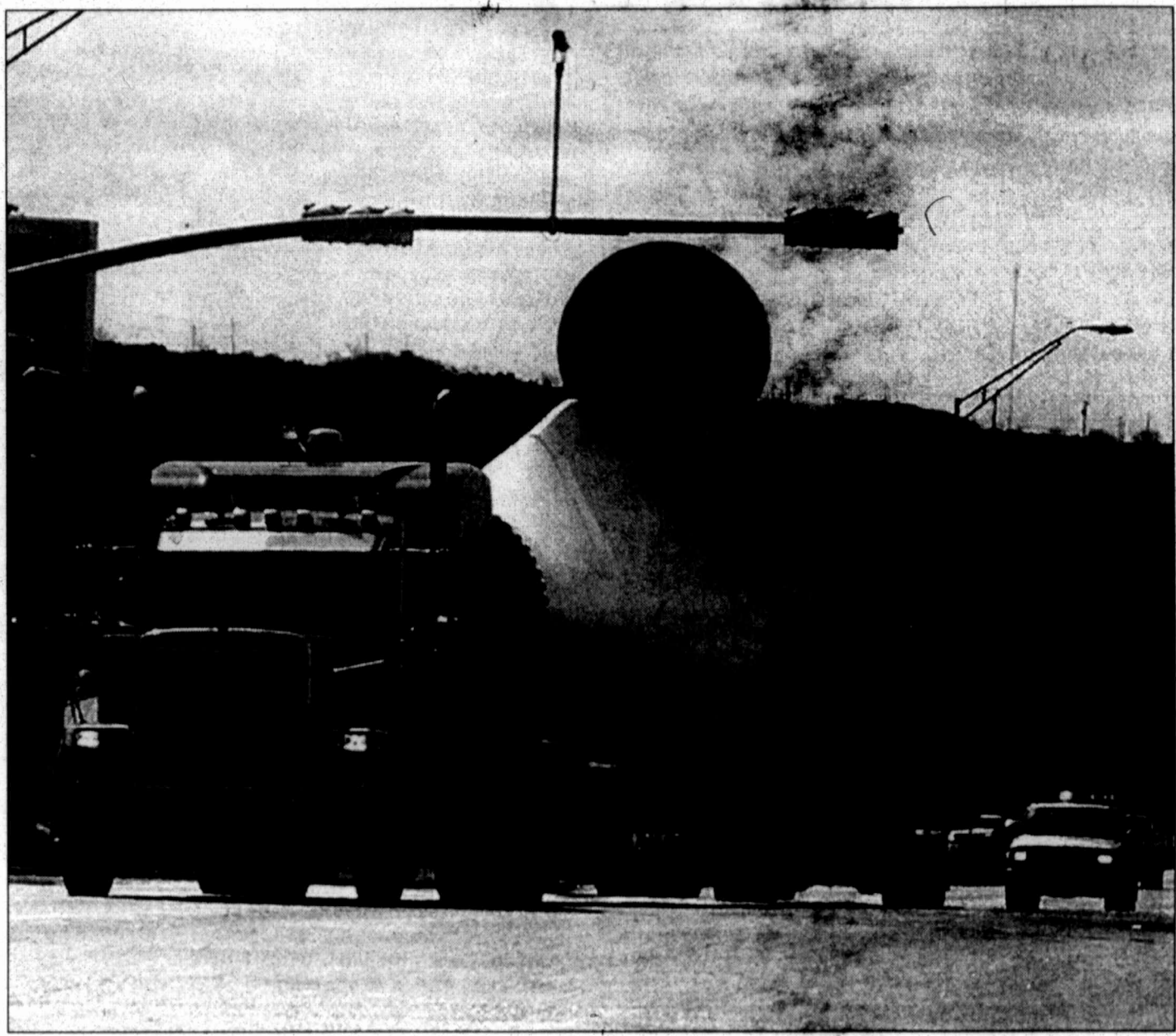
Hogs typically run away, but when they're cornered or feel threatened "they have come at people," said Billy Higginbotham, a wildlife and fishery specialist with Texas Cooperative Extension.

Rob Denkhous has found success by trapping and humanely killing the animals that in recent years were running amok at the Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge, where he is the natural resource manager. Hundreds have been killed since 2003, and hog sightings are now a rare occurrence.

"If it had been left untreated, it was going to become a severe environmental problem as well as a safety problem to our visitors," Denkhous said.

It's an approach that can work in other parts of the state, Davis said.

BIG BLADE ON THE MOVE



Area motorists got an eyeful Monday afternoon, as this tractor trailer transporting a single blade destined for a wind turbine made its way down Gregg Street.

HERALD photo/Thomas Jenkins

VERDICT

Continued from Page 1A

Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Samuel Alito, Anthony Kennedy and David Souter, joined with Breyer.

Dissenting were Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Antonin Scalia,

John Paul Stevens and Clarence Thomas.

Mayola Williams sued Philip Morris for fraud on behalf of her husband, a two-pack-a-day smoker of Marlboros for 45 years. Jesse Williams died of lung cancer more than nine years ago. Philip Morris makes Marlboros.

She argued the jury award was appropriate because it punishes Philip Morris' miscon-

duct for a decades-long "massive market-directed fraud" that misled people into thinking cigarettes were not dangerous or addictive.

Williams, according to his widow, never gave any credence to the surgeon general's health warnings about smoking cigarettes because tobacco companies insisted they were safe. Only after falling sick did Williams

tell his wife: "Those darn cigarette people finally did it. They were lying all the time."

The cigarette maker, however, said a jury can punish the company only for the harm done to Williams, not to other smokers. The jury should have been told explicitly that other smokers, no matter how tragic their stories, would have to prove their own cases, the

company said. The Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers and trade associations representing car and drug makers have weighed in on behalf of tighter restrictions on damage awards.

The case also was watched closely as a test of whether the new makeup of the Supreme Court would lead to changes in

its prior rulings limiting punitive damages.

Roberts and Alito, the two newest members, were in the majority Tuesday, giving no hint of a change in the court's approach to punitive damages.

The case is Philip Morris USA v. Williams, 05-1256.

HEARING

Continued from Page 1A

that good old government seal of approval, which is a mandate," said Bonnen, a Republican from Angleton.

Supporters of the vaccine mandate, however, say it offers a unique

opportunity to fight a cancer that kills 3,700 American women each year.

Amanda Vail, a graduate student from Houston, told the committee she contracted a virulent form of HPV after being raped in December of 2006.

She said she feels victimized again each time

she has to undergo another test to make sure she hasn't developed cancer.

"I would not have to be repeatedly violated had I been vaccinated," said Vail, 29. "That option wasn't available to me, and it is now available to these young women."

A tax debate on the House floor Monday delayed the hearing for

several hours and many people who wanted to testify had to leave before they were called to speak.

Cheryl Swope Lieck had to leave to catch a flight home to Anahuac, near Houston, before she could testify in support of a vaccine requirement.

Lieck, the county attorney for Chambers County, was diagnosed

with cervical cancer in 2002 even though nothing abnormal had ever shown up on her annual pap smears.

She said requiring the vaccine would ensure girls of all income levels received the vaccine.

"I just think it's going to save lives in the long run," she told reporters before the hearing began.

RULING

Continued from Page 1A

were being held illegally. Attorneys argued that the detainees aren't covered by that provision and that the law is unconstitutional.

"The arguments are creative but not cogent. To accept them would be to defy the will of Congress," Judge A. Raymond Randolph wrote.

U.S. citizens and foreigners being held inside the country normally have the right to contest

their detention before a judge. The Justice Department said foreign enemy combatants are not protected by the Constitution.

Randolph and Judge David B. Sentelle ordered that the hundreds of cases

pending in the lower courts be dismissed.

Judge Judith W. Rogers dissented, saying the cases should proceed.

"District courts are well able to adjust these proceedings in light of the government's significant

interests in guarding national security," Rogers wrote.

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Immaculate Heart of Mary 5:00 P.M.
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Mildred Raye "Nema" Gamble, 79, died Sunday. Funeral Services will be at 2:00 PM Wednesday at Myers & Smith Chapel. Burial will be at Trinity Memorial Park. The family will receive friends from 6:30 until 8:00 PM Tuesday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.
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Dennis E. Black, 63, died Tuesday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

EDITORIAL

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

-FIRST AMENDMENT

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OTHER VIEWS

Border case:
Two wrongs
far from right

Very little has gone by the book since Border Patrol agents Ignacio Ramos and Jose Compean shot a fleeing drug suspect two years ago and then tried to cover up evidence of the incident. Each was sentenced to more than a decade in prison by a federal judge in El Paso after a jury found them guilty of charges including assault with a deadly weapon and violation of civil rights. Both are appealing their convictions.

The two former lawmen have become the object of a nationwide campaign by mostly conservative lawmakers to get their convictions overturned or to have President Bush pardon them. They demanded protection for the two men after other prisoners in a federal prison in Missouri beat Ramos.

The former border agents' convictions are based on the testimony of admitted drug smuggler Osbaldo Aldrete-Davila, a Mexican national who was attempting to smuggle more than 700 pounds of marijuana into the United States when he was stopped by the agents on the border near Fabens in South Texas. He testified he jumped from a van unarmed and was shot while running toward the Rio Grande. He fled across the river and escaped.

Under a grant of immunity, Aldrete-Davila later testified against Compean and Ramos. They claimed they thought he was carrying a firearm and feared for their lives.

U.S. Rep. John Culberson of Houston has been the former agents' outspoken champion. Culberson claims the agents' prosecution was unjustified and "weakens border security by discouraging all U.S. law enforcement officers from drawing their weapons in self-defense or in the defense of our nation."

Culberson is angry that staffers for Homeland Security Inspector General Richard Skinner gave erroneous information to him and other lawmakers months ago painting the agents as rogue cops who bragged before the incident that they wanted "to shoot a Mexican." Last week Skinner admitted there was no basis for those statements, and Culberson has called for the Skinner and his deputies to resign. U.S. Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Calif., threatened to push for impeachment of President Bush if either former border guard is killed in prison.

The president has taken a cautious approach to the case, telling an El Paso television reporter that law enforcement officers must follow standards, "and according to a jury of their peers, these officers violated some standards." Bush also appealed for a calm analysis of the case.

The U.S. attorney who oversaw the prosecution, Johnny Sutton, maintains that the agents shot someone they knew to be unarmed, covered up a crime scene and then filed false reports. That hardly sounds like the profile of people whose supporters describe them as persecuted heroes.

It's obvious there have been missteps and misstatements by Homeland Security officials in this case. However, mistakes subsequent to the former agents' action cannot justify those actions.

Two wrongs don't make a right. President Bush is wise to tread carefully through this highly emotional minefield while avoiding any endorsement of actions that a jury decided were crimes.

Other lawmakers should follow his example.

The Chronicle
Houston

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A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

You find us, Lord, when we're lost. Thank You for Your love.

Amen

A case of prosecutor's discretion

Last month, when Border Patrol Agents Ignacio Ramos and Jose Compean began serving 11-year and 12-year prison sentences, respectively, for shooting at a fleeing drug smuggler, many Americans were outraged that the federal government would prosecute two agents for doing their jobs.

Their trial uncovered policies that seem designed to undermine success — such as the rule that prohibits agents from pursuing a speeding suspected smuggler without a supervisor's authorization. Drug smugglers know that if they speed to the border, they'll likely get away.

But the real outrage in this story is how federal prosecutors used their discretion to shelter a drug smuggler and go after two men who, at the worst, should have been fired for shooting at the smuggler and then not reporting what they had done. The outrage is that this case ever came to trial.

Reading the trial transcript — which was released Tuesday — you can't tell which witnesses seemed credible. Nor do you see drawings that show the lay of the land on the afternoon of Feb. 17, 2005, when drug smuggler Osvaldo Aldrete-Davila drove a truck filled with 743 pounds of marijuana off a West Texas road and then tried to run for the border when he encountered agent Compean.

Did agents Ramos and Compean shoot at a man whom they knew to be unarmed? I see reasonable doubt. Compean said that as Aldrete-Davila fled, the smuggler turned toward him with a shiny object in his hand, so the agent fired back in self-defense. Ramos said that he heard the shots while he was crossing a ditch and could

not see what was happening. Then, fearing for his partner's safety, he fired one round at the suspect, who first dropped out of sight and then was seen walking into Mexico and being driven away in a friend's car.

I see how jurors could have seen the agents' failure to tell supervisors about the shooting, their failure to tell other agents the suspect was armed, and the fact that agents scooped up the spent shells when Ramos and Compean realized they had engaged in a bad shoot. Hence the guilty verdict.

But there is no way to know for certain if Aldrete-Davila had a gun or a cell phone in his hand as he fled. Yet U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton's office waged this prosecution based on Aldrete-Davila's version of events — even though the smuggler originally lied to a Border Patrol agent when he said he was shot as he was simply returning to Mexico. He left out the drug smuggling.

Later, when Aldrete-Davila was supposedly telling the truth, his story still smelled. As Ramos' defense attorney, Mary Stillinger, said in court, Aldrete-Davila claimed "he's a little mule, and he needed money for his mother's doctor's bills, and he needed money to renew his commercial driver's license" — which was current. "He doesn't know who hired him. He doesn't know where the stash house is."

Later, Stillinger added, Aldrete-Davila apparently abused the border-crossing card provided by Uncle Sam to assist with the medical care he needed because the bullet severed his urethra. She noted in court, Aldrete-Davila "did it again in October, he personally took the load to the stash house."

Was he smuggling again? Sutton replied, "To our knowledge, Aldrete has not been arrested or indicted on any other loads." The records are sealed.

Oh, and Aldrete-Davila is suing

the Border Patrol for \$5 million. It doesn't help the prosecution's credibility that Aldrete-Davila testified in court that a family friend, the Border Patrol agent who started this investigation, told Aldrete-Davila that he might sue the Border Patrol and helped him find a lawyer — which the agent denied.

In addition, three agents testified against Ramos and Compean (with limited immunity for their role in the alleged cover-up), but none of them saw the whole exchange. Two were too busy checking out the drug van to run to the scene when they heard gunshots.

Sutton argues he has to prosecute when his office sees a crime. He told me, "Of course, my office would have preferred to have sent the alien to prison for his crimes, but when the agents broke the law, destroyed the crime scene and covered it up, they made that impossible."

I do not countenance law enforcement officers shooting at unarmed suspects. If that's actually what happened, Ramos and Compean should lose their jobs.

But a just government does not put men who have risked their lives in the line of duty — men who are not criminals, who did not premeditate their misdeed and who have not been running criminal rackets on the job — in prison for more than a decade.

When you think of the considerable resources spent on this trial, so that prosecutors could put behind bars two agents who may have screwed up dangerously in the heat of pursuit and lied about it — in order to help a drug smuggler who has a financial incentive to lie — you wonder where the justice is. And you cannot see it here.

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Anna Nicole Smith unto eternity

One did not expect flags to be flown half-mast for Anna Nicole Smith — or candlelight vigils or a nationwide minute of silence. Still, it was a bit unsettling to see how seamlessly the celebrity moved from life to the great beyond. The media offered few phony tears or declarations of grief. One heard only a subtle changing of gears as her pre-mortem scandals turned into post-mortem ones.

Perhaps the comic-book feel of the former Playboy Playmate comes from our inability to pin any reality on her. Her name was altered, along with most of her early biography. She was not born in the little Texas town of Mexia, but in Houston. (Her twang was real.) Her hair wasn't blonde. Her breasts were fake, as were her lips. The Broward County, Fla., coroner had to conduct as much an archeological dig on the 39-year-old body as an autopsy. And he couldn't fix on a cause of death.

This part of Smith's bio is true: While stripping at a Houston club, she picked up an ancient oil billionaire, J. Howard Marshall, and they married. He died 13 months later. Her efforts to obtain a big chunk of his inheritance were

ongoing at the time of her passing.

I'm going to give Smith the benefit of the doubt and assume that there was a human under the sandbag breasts and addiction to attention — in which case, she had to have been psychotic. In making the diagnosis, I don't count her dressing up as Marilyn Monroe or countless personal revelations. That's part of the marketing. That her weight gains and assorted antics transformed her from sex symbol to spectacle mattered not. There was money in it.

Indifference to one's children would seem the line separating standard neurosis from serious mental illness. Smith leaped over it.

This is how Mark Twain described his feeling after receiving a cable that his daughter Suzy had suddenly died: "It is one of the mysteries of our nature that a man, all unprepared, can receive a thunderstroke like that and live."

But less than three weeks after Smith's 20-year-old son Daniel died from a lethal combination of drugs — and after Smith had given birth to a girl — the celeb was out clowning for the cameras: Wearing a bridal outfit and holding hands with her lawyer-confidant, she leaped off a boat into the blue Caribbean. The two were celebrating their "commitment ceremony." At that point, Daniel hadn't even been buried.

It makes you wonder: Had Smith been poor, would social services

have taken her infant away?

People magazine devoted a colorful four-page spread to the mock wedding, but its writers were clearly handling the story with rubber gloves. They dryly noted that Daniel had complained to his doctor of being "depressed, bored, isolated." And the "sympathetic" second-hand quote — "She needs something now" — originated from Howard K. Stern, Smith's lawyer and "partner." The writers didn't provide it themselves.

Having so little to work with, the media can be forgiven then for not taking Smith's permanent departure to heart. The night of the day that she died, Nancy Grace and friends were on CNN laughing over her life's complexities. Grace put on a serious face only to discuss the upcoming autopsy. "The uterus is looked at," she informed the audience. And CNN legal expert Jeffrey Toobin opined on matters pertaining to her late husband's estate, including the uncertain paternity of the baby girl and the more prosaic question of her state of residence.

What the media need from Anna Nicole Smith, she still delivers. That Smith is no longer living has become a mere technicality, and that does seem strange.

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DEBRA SAUNDERS



FROMA HARROP

Bird Poop:

A robin survives youngster's BB gun assault

Although it had rained the day before, the neighbor's sprinklers created a sparkling mist in the early morning light. Patiently waiting in the massive mulberry trees were a flock of birds. As the sprinkler heads receded into the lush grass, the songbirds descended en masse in their hunt for food.

Each bird practiced the same behavior. A quick paced walk, almost a run, of several feet. Stopping, they would look from side to side, and listen. Then their antics were repeated. Suddenly, one would plunge its yellow beak through the grass and into the soil. Extracting a wiggling earth worm, the bird readily swallowed the morsel in one extended gulp. With such success, the others sensed they, too, would find something to eat.

The hungry members of the flock soon spilled over into adjacent yards. The previous day's rain had softened the earth, and numerous worms were readily found. Satisfied, the flock soon reunited in a live oak to preen.

Having watched the return and feeding frenzy of her favorite springtime birds, the homeowner left her kitchen window to start her daily routine. There would be other times during the day when she could watch them.

That afternoon, the woman heard the school bus stopping at the corner. Neighborhood children, with books, backpacks, and no longer needed jackets, walked in several directions on their way home. As one of the students passed her yard, she noticed his looking into the trees. He probably has seen all those birds from this morning, she thought.

Entering his home, the youngster immediately went to his room. His most treasured gift from Christmas was waiting on him. Having fixed him an



Courtesy photo

Once a bird of the forests, the American robin has adapted well to suburban areas. Its melodious song, cheerup cheer cheerup, is as colorful as its bright blue eggs.

after-school snack, his mother told him she would be home as soon as she met his dad at the airport. She reminded him to start on his homework.

Much later and tired of studying, the boy could see through his bedroom shutters that those birds were now in the neighbor's yard. Hurrying outside, he was careful not to scare them away. Intent upon finding worms or insects, the flock was not unduly disturbed by his presence. Sidling to another part of the yard, they seemed tolerant of the boy's measured approach.

Once again enjoying her view of the feeding birds, the woman saw her

neighbor's son. Running out the front door, she yelled as he pulled the trigger. A robin slumped on the grass. The woman's scream and the burst of the boy's BB gun caused the flock of songbirds to explode in flight.

Horrified and angry, the woman crossed her yard and approached the boy. At that moment, his parents pulled into the driveway. Having seen their son aim and fire the rifle was a sickening disappointment.

The Christmas gift had only been given after much discussion with their son before and after the holidays. As they left their car, the neighbor

signaled for the parents to stop. The adults noticed that the rifle now lay discarded in the wet grass. About a foot from the bird, the boy, with head down, wasn't moving. Noticing the tears running down his cheeks, the threesome waited for the boy to experience the impact of what he had done.

"It's not dead," said a frantic voice on the phone. "His parents took him inside while I picked it up. Planned on burying it, but it wasn't limp," the woman added. Having put the bird on some towels in a cardboard box, she had seen that it was breathing. "Can I bring it to you?"

When we opened the box, the robin appeared to be asleep. The lady's placing it in a quiet, dark place would allow it the robin some recovery time from the shock and stress of being shot. We both could see that the left eye had been grazed by the small pellet.

Its dark brick-red chest indicated the bird was a male robin. The female's breast would be a duller, paler coloration. Both sexes would have the almost black head, wings, and tail. The greyish feathers on top, long legs, and white around the eye completed the distinguishing marks of the spring visitor.

Walking the lady back to her car, I told her the robin had a chance. Not only was a wildlife sanctuary available, but a veterinarian who had helped us with our cat. When a cactus thorn had become imbedded in the middle of his eyeball, I had watched as the vet extracted the object. I felt confident the robin would have the best care possible.

The woman left with the assurance that the bird would be held at the wildlife center for whatever time was necessary. For it to be capable of returning to nature was important.

Several hours later I called the bird's rescuer. "Robin redbreast" was awake and active.

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



BEBE McCASLAND

Saturday nights reserved for hot rodder's nostalgic trip

By ALLEN ESSEX

Valley Morning Star

HARLINGEN — Baby boomers grew up in the days when you could drop a dime in a jukebox to hear "Little Deuce Coupe," "Dead Man's Curve" or "409."

Drag races at the stoplights in front of the Sunoco station were regular Saturday night entertainment. The rumbling of big-bore V-8 engines at the local drive-in was as common as cheerleaders wearing their boyfriend's letterman jacket.

To Leroy Greek, those days will never die. Scorning today's imports, he continues to build real hot rods from the ground up.

He and other serious "motorheads" still live back in the day, Greek said.

"The hot rods, they all meet at the Dairy Queen on Saturday night, if it's nice," he said. "If it's raining, they won't be there. A few of the hardcore guys will be there. But, if it's a nice weekend, there will be a pretty good crowd. They usually meet anywhere from 6 o'clock to 8:30."

While in some parts of the Rio Grande Valley there are car clubs that have rallies and car shows, the 'rodders in the Harlingen area are more independent, Greek said.

"We're not interested in clubs, we're just a bunch of guys with old cars, hot rods and muscle cars," he said. "We just enjoy getting together."

Greek's latest prize-winning project, a '27 Ford Roadster with a 500-horse-

power 406 cubic-inch Chevy engine, belongs to his nephew, and Greek hopes he'll move it to Dallas so he can have more room for his other projects, he said.

His workshop is crammed with project cars he and his friends are building. His works-in-progress include an early 1950s Studebaker President and a late 1960s Dodge Charger.

All the old cars from the 1920s and 1930s have long since been turned into hot rods, restored to their original condition or rusted to pieces in junkyards or a farmer's pasture, Greek said. So he had to fabricate the frame and suspension of the 1927 Ford from scratch, then mount a fiberglass body, spending thousands of hours to create an authentic hot rod, he said.

The 1927 Ford Roadster cost \$33,000 plus 1 1/2 years of labor to build,

Greek said. It won Best of Class and Outstanding Street Rod at a recent O'Reilly AutoRama car show in San Antonio, with a \$100 prize, he said. The only car shows with big money prizes are mostly on the West Coast, he said.

He's taking it to another show in Dallas in a few weeks, Greek said.

The 1960 Rio Hondo High School graduate proudly showed an article from a 1963 edition of The Cardinal, the Harlingen High School newspaper, featuring a 1937 Ford he restored.

The article is displayed on the wall of his shop at 1850 N. 77 Sunshine Strip, next to a 1940 Ford pickup he's building with a 440 cubic-inch Chrysler engine.

"When I was 15, I saw a '55 Studebaker," he said. "That was what first turned me on to cars. Since then, I've been building, modifying, hot rodding."

Greek was in the Army from 1963 to '68 and served 13 months in Vietnam, he said. His interest in cars is strictly a hobby, he said.

He hopes future genera-

tions will keep hot rod-

ding alive, Greek said. "I would like to pass on what I know. I don't know everything, never will," Greek said. "But I've done

things that most people don't do. You learn by reading. I have always read everything (about cars) that I could get my hands on."

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TEXAS NEWS BRIEFS

Man kills wife's friend, then turns gun on self

WACO (AP) — A man due in court Monday to finalize his divorce instead fatally shot his estranged wife's male friend and then killed himself, police said.

Investigators say Michael McPhalen, 27, confronted his wife and her friend as they arrived at her home early Sunday.

McPhalen appeared from the side of the house yelling, pulled out a gun during an argument and fired, striking Candy Arias, 34, on his left side, Waco police said.

Arias collapsed several houses away as he tried to flee. Michael McPhalen then shot himself in the head. His wife, Shere McPhalen, 25, was not hurt, investigators said.

Arias was pronounced dead at Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center, where Michael McPhalen was also pronounced dead, police said.

The McPhalens had three children and had been separated since August, said Rosalinda Flores, Shere McPhalen's roommate.

One dead in plane crash in Lago Vista

LAGO VISTA (AP) — One person died Monday night when a small airplane crashed near the Lago Vista airport, the Texas Department of Public Safety said.

The crash of the single-engine plane was reported just after 6 p.m. No other details on the crash were immediately available.

Weevils found in some El Paso jail food

EL PASO (AP) — Some inmates at the El Paso County Jail annex were served noodles infested with weevils, sheriff's officials said.

Sheriff's Deputy Jimmy Apodaca said the food was removed as soon as they learned of the problems.

"We have prepared new meals and are taking extra steps to safeguard that this type of incident doesn't take place again," he said in a news release.

There were no immediate reports of anyone becoming ill from the bad food. Health officials are investigating the case.

Deputy Jesus Tovar said it appeared the weevils were in boxes of noodles shipped to the facility for use at the annex and the downtown El Paso jail.

Lesbian couple gets civil union in Coahuila

PIEDRAS NEGRAS, Mexico (AP) — A lesbian couple from Texas became the first international visitors to take advantage of Coahuila state's new civil union law when they registered their union on Monday in Ciudad Acuna, across the border from Del Rio.

Maria Carreon Lara, 39, and Amparo Maldonado, 24, of Midland, registered as a "civil solidarity union" under a law that went into effect in January making Coahuila the first of Mexico's 31 states to grant recognition to such unions.

The Coahuila law allows nonresidents to register under the law as long as they are in the state legally. It is not clear if the Mexican union would have any legal standing in the United States.

House passes elderly property tax measure

AUSTIN (AP) — The Texas House approved a measure Monday intended to ensure that elderly homeowners will get the same property tax relief others are getting from a new school funding law.

The House also tentatively approved legislation put forth by Republican leaders to allocate money to pay

for a \$14 billion school property tax cut granted in a special session last year.

The Senate unanimously approved a proposed constitutional amendment last week that would do essentially the same thing as the House property tax measure for senior citizens. A slight difference in the two versions will have to be worked out between the House and Senate.

The House version passed on a 146-0 vote.

Airman missing for 62 years buried

ARANSAS PASS (AP) — Rodney Ives was only 4 when his father disappeared during World War II, but that didn't dampen his drive to bring the missing airman home for burial more than 60 years later.

U.S. Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Dudley Ives was buried Monday among relatives and with full military honors in Aransas Pass on the Texas Gulf Coast.

The elder Ives went missing in April 1944, when the B-24 fighter plane he was copiloting crashed in Papua New Guinea during a mission to destroy Japanese bases. Ives served with the 403rd Bombardment Squadron, 43rd Bombardment Group.

His son, 68-year-old Rodney Ives, said he contacted the military in 2002 when he heard a report about the discovery of American plane wreckage in Papua New Guinea. A DNA test identified the remains as Dudley Ives'.

Prosecutor seeks state help in youth jail probe

MONAHANS (AP) — A West Texas district attorney said he has asked for state help to investigate claims that high-ranking officials at an isolated state juvenile prison molested young male inmates.

A Texas Youth Commission internal investigation

found that many prison staffers at the West Texas State School in Pyote had complained about the abuse to their immediate bosses and to officials in Austin, but for more than a year, no one in charge did anything to stop it.

A Texas Rangers investigation in early 2005 found that the prison's assistant superintendent and the school's principal had repeated sexual contact with inmates.

Ward County District Attorney Randall Reynolds said Monday that the case wasn't prosecuted because of a "breakdown in communications."

He said he has asked the Texas Attorney General's Office for help in determining whether the two former prison officials should be prosecuted.

"I think the case is going to move pretty quickly now," he said.

Also Monday, state Sen. Juan Hinojosa, D-McAllen, said the commission's management needs to be held accountable.

"If I were king, I'd fire everybody and start over," said Hinojosa, who has filed a bill to set up more independent oversight of the commission.

Hinojosa said he plans to call TYC Executive Director Dwight Harris to appear at a committee hearing.

Commission spokesman Tim Savoy said Monday that agency officials had no comment.

Harris has said that agency officials were stunned to learn that the Texas Rangers had substantiated charges of abuse at the Pyote facility in 2005.

su | do | ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

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

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

Contract Bridge

Getting Your Ducks in Order

West dealer. Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ A Q 4
 ♥ A Q J
 ♦ 8 7 6 2
 ♣ K 6 4

WEST
 ♠ K 9 7 6
 ♥ 8
 ♦ Q J 10 3
 ♣ Q 10 9 8

EAST
 ♠ J 10 8 5 2
 ♥ K 3
 ♦ 9 5 4
 ♣ A J 3

SOUTH
 ♠ 3
 ♥ 10 9 7 6 5 4 2
 ♦ A K
 ♣ 7 5 2

The bidding:
 West North East South
 Pass 1 NT Pass 4♥
 Opening lead — queen of diamonds.

When declarer has a choice of plays to make, the order in which he makes them is often of critical importance.

Here is a typical situation. South wins the diamond lead and has three different plays to consider. He can take a spade finesse, a heart finesse or lead a club to the king.

Since there is no urgency about leading spades or clubs, South starts by taking a trump finesse. If West has the king, South's troubles are over. However, East wins dummy's jack with the king and returns a diamond.

Declarer wins, plays a trump to the queen and ruffs a diamond. This brings him to the point where he must decide whether to broach the clubs or spades next.

It should not take South long to see the advantage in leading a spade and finessing the queen, even though he has only a singleton spade. In the actual deal, the spade finesse wins and assures the contract, since South can discard a club on the ace of spades. He later loses two club tricks, but winds up making four. However, as can be seen, if declarer tackles clubs ahead of spades, he loses three clubs and goes down one.

There are two good reasons for taking the spade finesse before leading clubs. First, it costs nothing to try the finesse. If it is unsuccessful, declarer loses a spade trick unnecessarily, but is sure to get the trick back because the ace of spades is still available to take care of one of his club losers. The transaction amounts to an exchange of losers.

But the chief reason for playing spades first is that if the finesse fails, South retains his chance that West may have the ace of clubs, while if he tackles clubs first and the ace is in the wrong hand, he goes down with a club return by East. By tackling spades before clubs, South thus gives himself two chances to make the contract instead of just one.

Tomorrow: The delicate art of defense.
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Bedtime Stories

A WORM IS SAVED BY A BIRD

Ethel Earthworm was in her friend's garden, doing what earthworms do best. She was digging through the soil, loosening up the dirt so her friend could plant a vegetable garden. Ethel and her friend knew this would help the vegetables grow and grow. She even hoped that her friend would plant some of her favorite vegetables, like cucumbers. Ethel just loved cucumbers. Do you like cucumbers? Do you like broccoli? What is your favorite vegetable?

I love spinach. Ethel's friend would always plant sunflowers around the edge of the garden, too. He just loved to watch the sunflowers grow. Ethel's friend was Bradley Bluejay. Bradley loved everything. He loved all the vegetables. He loved all the flower seeds. He loved Ethel, too.

He had many friends. He was a very good bluejay. He planted a vegetable garden every year. He always planted enough vegetables for all of his friends. They all loved his garden. They knew that when those vegetables were ready to eat, they would have some, too. They looked forward to each springtime, because they knew that is the very best time to plant a garden. Just as Ethel was almost done with loosening up the soil in Bradley's garden, something terrible happened! Ethel had been working very hard all day long. She was getting very tired. She needed to rest just a little. Have you ever seen a tired little earthworm? I don't think I have,



either. Maybe I have and just didn't know it. What does a tired little earthworm look like? She decided to come up to the top of the ground and get some fresh air and sunshine. This is

not a very good thing for an earthworm to do. Etta Robin was on her way north to spend the summer where it would be very cool. She, as well as all the other robins did this every year. The robins love to spend their winters in the south where it is warmer. And they like to spend the summers in the north where it is cooler. Do you like winter

and cold weather? Do you like summer and warm weather? I like both of them.

Etta had stopped on a tree branch in Bradley's yard to rest, too. She had been flying all day on her way north. She loved to perch on the highest branch of the tree and watch all the other birds and animals while she was resting. Then she saw Ethel. Robins love earthworms, too. But they like to eat them! She quickly, quietly swooped down toward Ethel. Ethel was so tired she never saw Etta coming. Etta grabbed Ethel. She flew back to the high branch so she could perch again and enjoy her freshly caught earthworm.

Bradley Bluejay saw the whole thing. He could not let his friend be eaten by the robin. He flew up to that highest branch to talk to Etta about his friend, Ethel. "Please don't eat Ethel,"

he cried, "She is one of my best friends. She also helps me plant my vegetable garden each year. Please don't eat her!" Etta was not a bad robin, so she listened to Bradley, feeling very bad about almost having Ethel for her supper. "But I must eat," said Etta. "And earthworms are a robin's favorite food."

Then Bradley Bluejay thought of something that might help Etta, and certainly would help Ethel. "Have you ever tried eating flower seeds instead of earthworms?" "Why yes, I have," said Etta. "I love flower seeds most of all, but I can never find enough to fill my tummy."

"Please don't have Ethel for supper. Wait! I'll be right back with something for you," said Bradley. Soon Bradley was back, with a big bag full of sunflower seeds. Etta loved sunflower

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seeds even more than earthworms. She took Ethel back to the ground and gently put her down. Ethel quickly scrambled back into the soil. Etta flew back to the tree branch where that delicious bag of sunflower seeds was waiting. What a great supper she had!

They all became good friends after that. Etta told all the other robins about Bradley's sunflower seeds. Now they would never look for worms like Ethel anymore. Ethel was very glad. So was Bradley. So was Etta!

Ethel Earthworm just dug two more holes in the soil. In earthworm talk, that means, "Good Night!"

Trio of climbers saved by electronic beacon and dog

By SARAH SKIDMORE
Associated Press Writer

GOVERNMENT CAMP, Ore. — Trevor Liston saw one friend, then a second, then a third disappear over an icy ledge on Mount Hood. A black Labrador mix plunged over as well.

That left Liston and four others wondering what had happened to their companions — two women and a man. They used a rope to lower one of their climbing party over the edge, trying to spot the trio.

But there was no sign of the three.

So the five remaining climbers decided to use a cell phone to call rescue authorities and ask for help as a snowstorm raged and winds howled at up to 70 mph.

The climbers' fall was the start of yet another

drama on Oregon's highest mountain, one that had a happy ending Monday as rescuers reached the three who had slid about 500 feet.

All three, plus Velvet the 4-year-old dog, who had been clipped to a rope the trio of climbers had used, were transported off the 11,239-foot mountain Monday afternoon, accompanied by their rescuers.

"I'm really glad they were there for us. They did an incredible job. They were amazing," said Matty Bryant, one of the three climbers, thanking rescuers.

"We're soaking wet and freezing," said one of two rescued women as she walked from a tracked snow vehicle to an ambulance. After the three got in, Velvet leapt in after them.

The rescuers credited

the group's rescue to two things — one low-tech and one high-tech: Velvet, who offered warmth as the three climbers huddled overnight, and the activation of a radio transmitter the size of a sunglasses case that helped rescuers to the group.

"The most important part of this rescue is that they did everything right," said Lt. Nick Watt of the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office.

Liston, who described himself as a veteran of Mount Hood climbs, said those in the party of eight had experience either rock climbing or mountaineering.

They'd known about the Mount Hood disaster that left three climbers dead in December. But Liston said that wasn't the reason the group decided to bring Mountain Locator

Units, devices that can send out electronic signals to rescuers.

"We've been up on the mountain for many years," Liston said. "With the group we were going up with this time, we just wanted another extra level of security, just in case something happened, especially with winter conditions."

In addition to Bryant, 34, a teacher in the Portland suburb of Milwaukie, the rescued climbers included Kate Hanlon, 34, a teacher in the suburb of Wilsonville. The other woman, whose name was not released, was being treated for a head injury, said Jim Strovink of the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office.

"She's going to be fine," he said, noting that she had walked most of the way down the mountain.

Velvet, owned by Bryant, had minor cuts and abrasions on her back feet and legs caused by prolonged exposure to the snow. She was cleared to go home.

"The dog probably saved their lives" by lying across them during the cold night, said Erik Brom, a member of the Portland Mountain Rescue team.

As the group started out on Saturday, the weather was clear and Velvet was leading the way, Liston said. "She looked back every once in awhile to make sure we were OK."

They planned to scale the mountain the next morning. But a storm started moving in. On Sunday, they started their descent with high winds and blowing snow making for perilous going.

"You had no visual reference around you to

determine if you were going up or down," Liston said. "You could make out a climber at 30 feet at best."

After the three climbers fell, the remaining five made a distress call and hunkered down in a snow cave. Searchers brought the main group down to Timberline Lodge on Sunday evening.

Liston said he felt that he and his climbing companions were well-equipped for climbing Mount Hood in the winter — bringing with them cell phones, Global Positioning System gear and the beacons.

"We'd been in those conditions up on this mountain before," he said. "We've walked out in whiteouts before. We didn't know it was going to be that bad. But we were prepared that it might be snowing and blowing."

Closing arguments to begin in CIA leak case

By MATT APUZZO
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Prosecutors who spent more than three years on the CIA leak case, like the defense lawyers on the other side, have been given just three hours to make their final arguments to jurors.

Special Prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald, who led the investigation, wanted more time to argue Tuesday that former White House aide I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby lied to the FBI, then blamed his lies on a faulty memory.

Defense attorney Theodore Wells said he needed about four hours to argue that Libby never lied but rather honestly forgot his conversations with reporters regarding ousted CIA employee

Valerie Plame. Such a schedule would have pushed closing arguments into Wednesday, something U.S. District Judge Reggie B. Walton didn't want. Walton — who has tried to keep the monthlong trial from becoming a debate on the war in Iraq, a study of the science of memory or an examination of mass media scruples — held firm at three hours for each side.

Prosecutor Peter Zeidenberg will go first, recounting for jurors that in mid-2003, Plame's husband Joseph Wilson ranted the White House by accusing the Bush administration of doctoring prewar intelligence on Iraq. While trying to publicly discredit Wilson, prosecutors say, Libby told reporters that Plame worked for the CIA.

Plame was outed publicly by reporter Robert Novak, who touched off an FBI investigation with a July 2003 syndicated column. Though Libby wasn't the Novak source, prosecutors say he feared he'd be charged with discussing classified information with other reporters.

So, prosecutors say, Libby lied. He told investigators that he learned about Plame from his boss, Vice President Dick Cheney, then forgot about it until a month later, when he was surprised to hear it during a phone call with NBC's Tim Russert.

That call is the key to Libby's defense. Anything he told reporters about Plame, Libby testified, wasn't official government information. It was just rumors he heard

from Russert. Russert testified that exchange never happened.

Wells will follow Zeidenberg with a much different story. He argues Libby was swamped with national security issues and honestly forgot that Cheney told him about Plame.

Wells will try to discredit former New York Times reporter Judith Miller, who testified that Libby told her about Plame days before the Russert conversation. Miller's testimony was inconsistent and her memory is spotty, too, Wells says.

He was expected to remind jurors that Libby's former deputy recalled his "awful memory." And he'll note that the government's key witnesses all have memory failings of their own.

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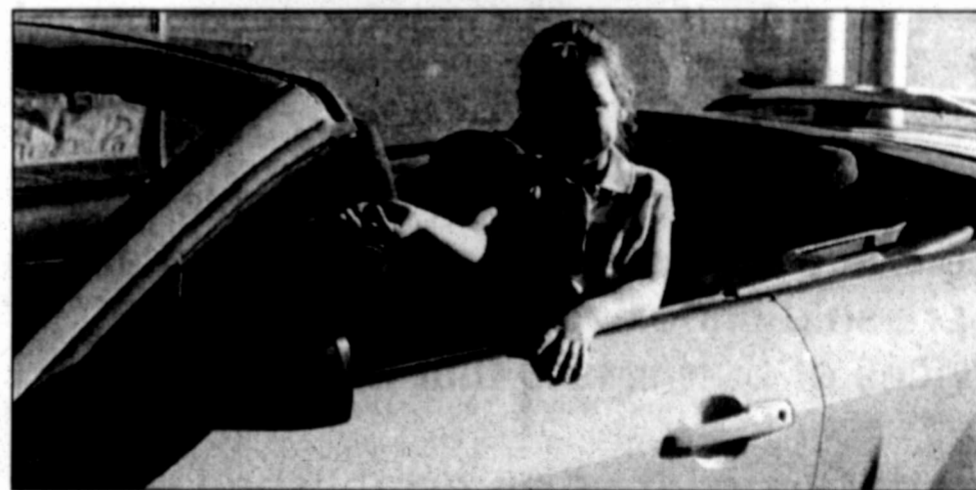


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IN BRIEF

Howard Hawks athletic schedule

The Howard College women's basketball team will return to Dorothy Garrett Coliseum Thursday, when they host New Mexico Junior College.

The women's game is scheduled for 6 p.m.

The men's team will face New Mexico Junior College at 8 p.m. at the Coliseum.

The women's softball team will begin conference play at home when they host Midland College, Wednesday at 1 p.m.

Hawks fundraiser has been set

On Tuesday, Feb. 27, the Howard College Rodeo team will conduct a Cow Pattie Bingo fundraiser.

The event will be held at 1:30 p.m. on the east grounds of the Student Union Building and all squares are \$ 10. Tickets are now available.

For more information contact Coach Greg Kernick at 816-9477.

Big Spring girl's softball registration

The Big Spring Girl's Softball Association will be holding sign-ups to register for the upcoming 2007 season.

Females from ages 4 to 7 (as of Jan. 1st) are eligible to participate in the league.

Sign-ups will be held each Saturday, beginning Feb. 24th, through March 17th at the Big Spring mall.

The registration fee is \$40 and there is a discount for the second child. This fee will cover all uniforms.

A division for boys between 4 and 6 years old will be available this season.

For more information contact Ron Shafer at 213-3747.

Mutombo ready to play 1 more season

Houston Rockets center Dikembe Mutombo plans to put off retirement for at least one more season.

"I will play next year. Hopefully I will play here again. That's my hope and my wish," Mutombo said.

At 40, Mutombo is the oldest player in the league. In all, he's played in 1,123 NBA games during his career with Denver, Atlanta, Philadelphia, New Jersey, New York and Houston. During his 16-year NBA career, Mutombo has averaged 10.3 points and 10.5 rebounds a game.

The 7-foot-2, 260-pounder is second in the league's history for blocked shots, with 3,215. Mutombo trails only former Rocket Hakeem Olajuwon, who had 3,830 blocks.

Knight says rule hurts basketball

By DOUG TUCKER

AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The new rule that says players must be at least one year removed from high school before entering the NBA is "the worst thing that's happened to college basketball since I've been coaching," says Texas Tech coach Bob Knight.

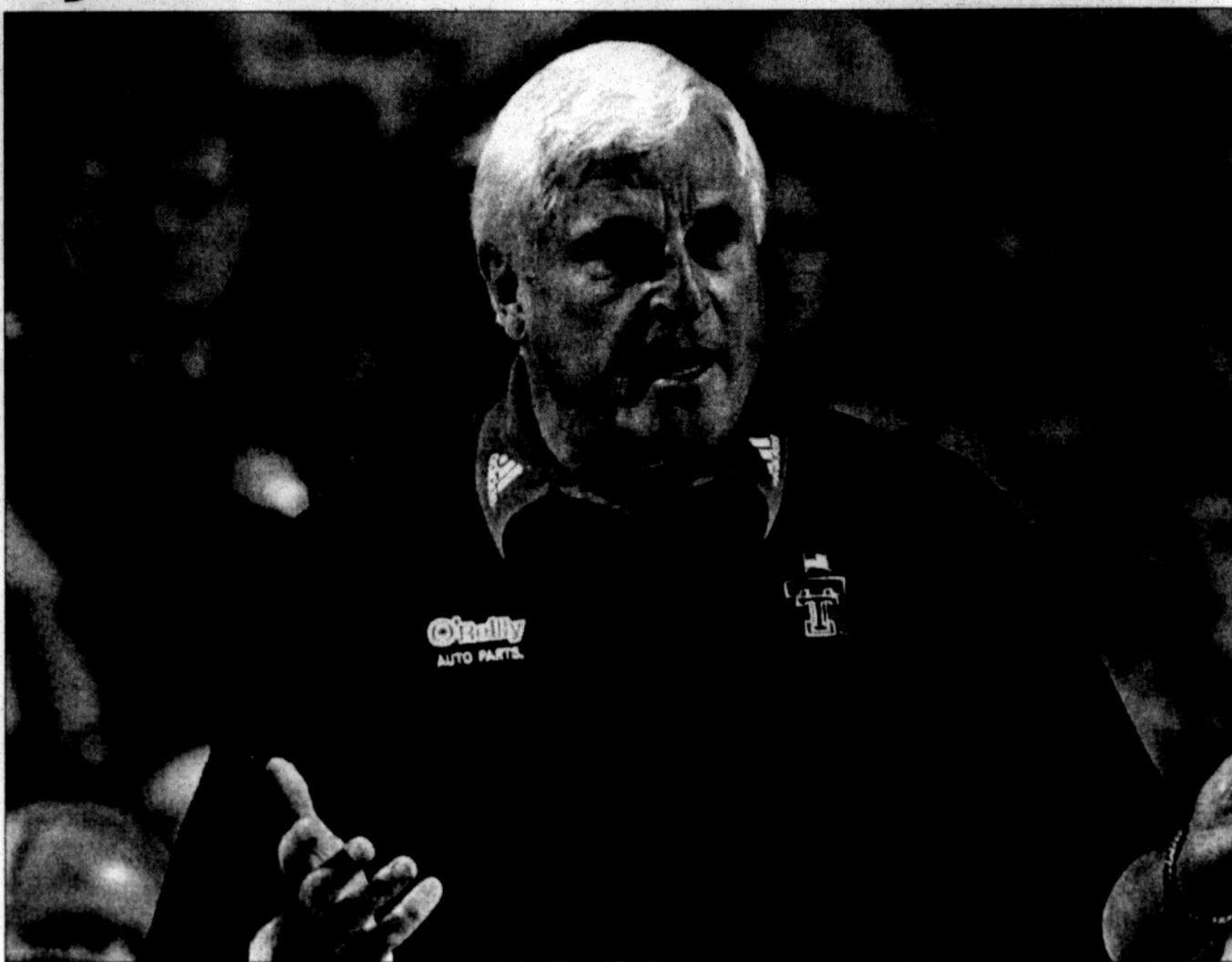
In the Big 12, it might be called the Kevin Durant Rule after the Longhorn freshman who has electrified the entire country and leads the conference in both scoring and rebounding. Instituted last year by the NBA, it means that super-talented players must wait at least a year rather than jumping into the pros right out of high school.

Many coaches have hailed this new approach as a blessing for the college game, because it lets NCAA schools showcase their abilities at least for one season. But Knight, the winningest college coach of all time, said he deplors it.

"Because now you can have a kid come to school for a year and play basketball and he doesn't even have to go to class," Knight said Monday during the Big 12 coaches call. "He certainly doesn't have to go to class the second semester. I'm not exactly positive about the first semester. But he would not have to attend a single class the second semester to play through the whole second semester of basketball."

"That, I think, has a tremendous effect on the integrity of college sports."

No player better exemplifies the new rule than Durant. Amazingly quick, agile and athletic for an 18-year-old, the 6-foot-9 Durant would have been a sure-



Texas Tech head coach Bob Knight has not always agreed with officials in the Big 12, now he does not agree with the new rule regarding a players NBA eligibility.

fire NBA lottery pick any other year. But he had to find a college to play for. He chose Texas and perhaps will be remembered as the greatest to ever wear a Longhorns uniform, even though he seems likely to vault into the NBA after a sensational freshman season.

He has been named Big 12 player of the week three times and

conference rookie of the week five times. He leads the league with 24.9 points and 11.4 rebounds per game and has a good chance at being national player of the year.

Knight said he would never have recruited Durant, although he doesn't blame Texas coach Rick Barnes for doing so. "I don't fault those that have, because it's

within the rules," Knight said. "But the rules are just ridiculous, the way the thing is set up."

"It's just a tremendous disservice, the way that it's structured, to the integrity of college sports."

Barnes, who did not hear what Knight said earlier on the Big 12 coaches call, said he did not

See **BIG12**, Page 2B



Clint Bowyer climbs out of his burning race car after a crash on the final lap of the Daytona 500 at Daytona International Speedway at Daytona Beach, Fla., Sunday. Despite the cars wrecking right behind the two leaders, Daytona officials made the decision to not stop the race with less than two miles to go.

Eventful race shows need new rule book

NASCAR officials are questioned

By JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — It was a split-second decision that NASCAR could get neither right nor wrong.

As the cars tumbled across the track in the Daytona 500's closing moments, series officials had to make a tough choice.

They could throw a caution flag immediately, giving Mark Martin a sentimental victory while denying Kevin Harvick a chance to race to the finish. Or they could let them race on — even as a seven-car demolition derby exploded behind them — in a frenzied final stretch that will be remembered as one of the best in NASCAR history.

NASCAR went for the drama.

When the cars crossed the finish line, the cheating scandal that ensnared

five teams and tainted preparations for the Great American Race was forgotten — at least for a while.

By allowing Harvick and Martin to race to the checkered flag, giving Harvick his first Daytona 500 victory and dropping Martin to 0-for-23, NASCAR created a whole new controversy.

"We get criticized for everything we do, and this is no exception," competition director Robin Pemberton said Monday. "If we throw the flag too early, people are mad that we kept Harvick from winning. If we throw it too late, people are mad that Mark Martin didn't win."

"It's hard. It's always hard. All we can do is make the best decisions that we can in that moment."

But in that moment NASCAR slightly changed its own rules.

In the old days, drivers See **NASCAR**, Page 2B

Astros fulfill dream for Williams

By CHRIS DUNCAN

AP Sports Writer

KISSIMMEE, Fla. — Woody Williams grew up in Houston and always loved the hometown Astros.

He went to countless games with his father as a boy, gazed star-struck at the players took batting practice, then stood outside the Astrodome after games to gather autographs.

And when the other kids in the neighborhood organized pickup games, Williams would grab his orange Astros batting helmet, put a sticker with the number of one of his favorite players on the

back and go play.

After 14 major-league seasons, Williams is thrilled that his childhood dream has finally crossed paths with his career.

The 40-year-old Williams signed a two-year, \$12.5 million contract in November to be the Astros' No. 3 starter, backing up Roy Oswalt and Jason Jennings.

"When you spend your whole life focusing on one goal and it finally comes, it's very, very meaningful," Williams said. "I've always wanted to be an Astro. It was a lot less to do with baseball. I just wanted to be a part of that

team. I started playing baseball when I was 6, and I've been heading in that direction since."

Williams went 12-5 with a 3.65 ERA for San Diego in 2006, then became a free agent for the third time since Toronto drafted him 1988. Williams tried to join the Astros twice before, but the sides could never agree on contract terms.

Now they have, and the former University of Houston Cougar couldn't be happier.

"It's a long time coming and something I've always wanted to do," he

See **ASTROS**, page 2B



Pitcher Woody Williams is now pitching for his home town Houston Astros and he said he could not be happier.

A-Rod confirms he and Jeter are no longer "blood brothers"

By The Associated Press

(AP) — Alex Rodriguez and Derek Jeter were once inseparable buddies, a dynamic duo of major league talent and friendship.

Well, times have changed, and so has the relationship between the two All-Stars.

"Hopefully, we can just put it behind us," Rodriguez said as he sat in the New York Yankees' first-base dugout Monday at Legends Field in Tampa, Fla. "You go from sleeping over at somebody's house five days a week, and now you don't sleep over. It's just not that big of a deal."

A-Rod and Jeter were buddies in the 1990s, when Rodriguez was a young star shortstop in Seattle and Jeter emerged as a force that helped the Yankees win four World Series titles in five years. But A-Rod dissed Jeter in a 2001 Esquire article, saying "Jeter's been blessed with great talent around him" and "he's never had to lead."

Those comments led to a noticeable cooling in their relationship — but it's not as bad as some make it out.

"People start assuming that things are a lot worse than what they are, which they're not. But they're obviously not as great as they used to be. We were like blood brothers," Rodriguez said. "You don't have to go to dinner with a guy four, five times a week to do what you're doing. It's actually much better than all you guys expect, but I just want to let the truth be known."

Jeter left the clubhouse by the time reporters were allowed back in. His agent, Casey Close, said later that Jeter didn't want to comment.

Rodriguez also talked about his poor postseason ("I stunk"), his pride at being the highest-paid player in U.S. team sports ("It's pretty cool") and his refusal to rule out exercising the opt-out provision in his contract after this season ("I understand my options").

In other Yankees news, outfielder Bernie Williams was nowhere to be seen, and general manager Brian Cashman doesn't think that will change.

"It appears he made his decision. That's all I can take from it," Cashman said. "I'm assuming at this stage that

he's not coming."

With the emergence of Melky Cabrera as the fourth outfielder, the move of Jason Giambi to designated hitter and the planned platoon at first base, there's no room for a fifth outfielder on the roster. Manager Joe Torre said Sunday that Williams was hurt the Yankees didn't offer him a guaranteed spot on their regular-season roster. Williams doesn't want to play for any other team, and Torre said that if he wants to extend his career, he should report with or close to the other position players.

In Surprise, Ariz., Texas Rangers closer Eric Gagne threw off a mound for the first time at spring training, completing a 37-pitch session with no complications.

Gagne, who had as many surgeries (two) as relief appearances last season, said he'll do some light throwing Tuesday before returning to the mound Wednesday or Thursday.

"I felt free," said Gagne, who had elbow surgery in April and season-ending back surgery in July. "It's good to get back on the mound again. I'm going slow, but feel really good right now."

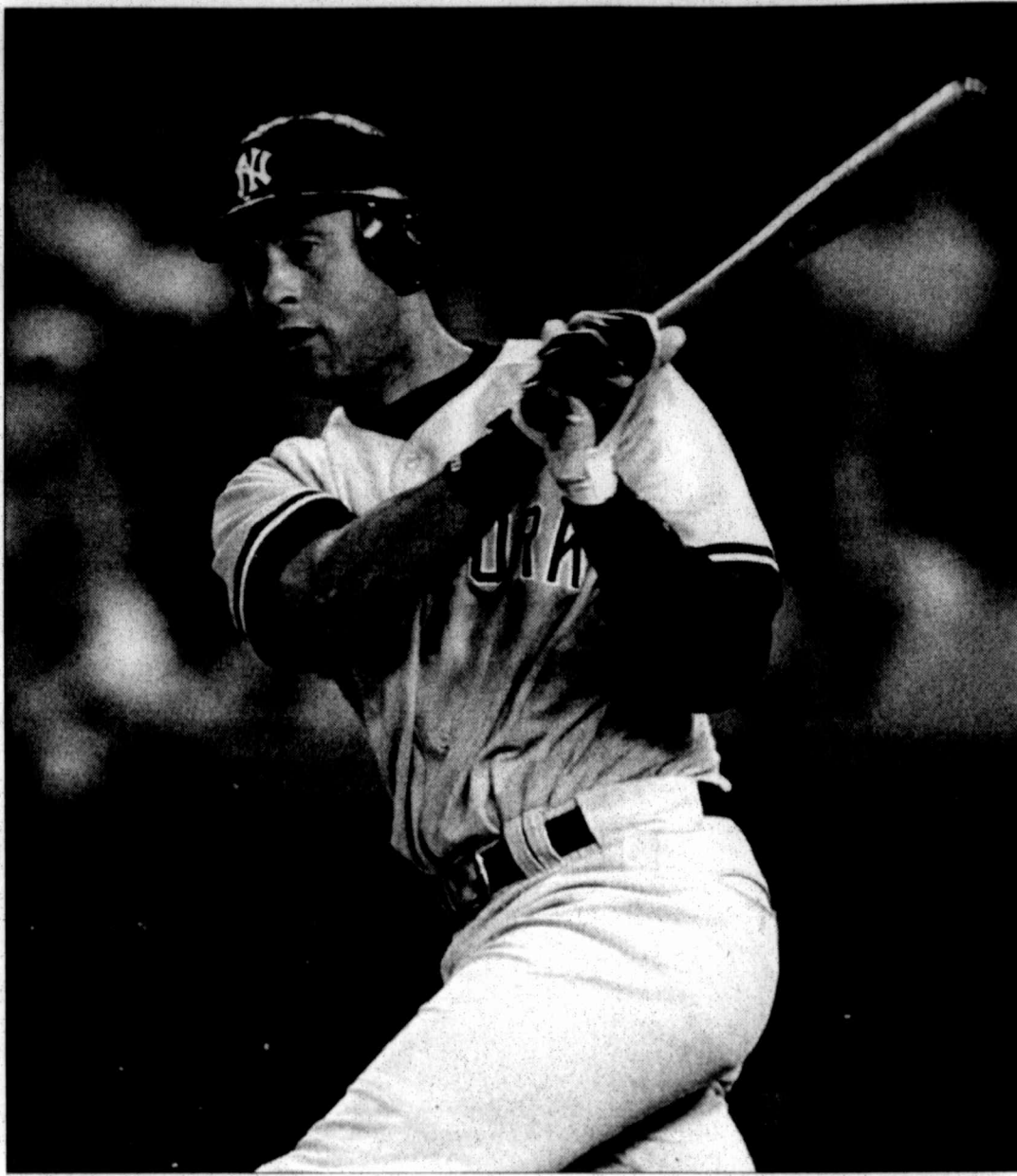
The 31-year-old right-hander, who won the 2003 NL Cy Young Award, was limited to 15 2-3 innings the past two seasons because of his elbow and lower back. He signed a \$6 million, one-year deal loaded with performance incentives.

At Peoria, Ariz., Khalil Greene's left middle finger is still sore six months after he injured it, but the San Diego Padres shortstop insists it's not an issue.

"It's still sore when I swing," Greene said. "It's in a loosening phase. It's hard to gauge because all the weather has been sub-50 degrees. When it was warm, it felt good ... There's still some sense of soreness, but it's not major. It's about normal."

Greene was limited for much of August and September after injuring his finger. He hit .245 with 15 homers and 55 RBIs for the Padres, who repeated as NL West champions before losing to St. Louis in the playoffs.

At Port St. Lucie, Fla., Carlos Beltran said he wants to be more of a base stealer this season for the New York Mets.



MCT photo/David L. Pokress/Newsday
New York Yankees' Derek Jeter bats in the third inning during Game 3 of the American League Division Series against the Detroit Tigers at Comerica Park, in Detroit, Michigan, Friday, Oct. 6, 2006

After stealing 42 bases last year, the All-Star outfielder had just 18 a year ago.

"I know that if I'm healthy and I have no pain in my knees and all of that, I'll be able to do that," Beltran said after he reported to Tradition Field to take some light batting practice.

At Fort Lauderdale, Fla., shortstop Miguel Tejada arrived at camp and

vowed to be "a different Miguel" for Baltimore this season.

Despite leading the Orioles with a .300 average, 24 home runs and 100 RBIs, and setting a club record with 214 hits, Tejada also drew criticism from within the organization for sometimes failing to run out grounders and being the last player to arrive at the ballpark most days.

BIG12

Continued from 1B

recruit Durant as a one-semester student.

"All we've ever said is if we recruit a player and that player said to us, 'I'm coming to school for one year and as soon as basketball season is over with I'm dropping out of school,' we would not recruit that player," he said.

"We cannot afford to jeopardize our program in that way. We want players that if they're going to come, we want them committed to a whole year academically. We tell them that's what's expected coming in."

On the subject of offici-

ating, Knight did not let a public reprimand by Big 12 commissioner Kevin Weiberg stop him from blasting game officials who work five or six games a week.

"To have some guy 54 or 55 years old referee six times a week is a real disservice to the kids who are playing," said Knight, who was reprimanded last week for criticizing officiating in one of his games.

"They have plenty of other places they can go. They can go to the NBA, they can go to the NAIA, they can go to junior college, they can go to high school. For years, the NCAA has hidden behind individual employment contractors. I think that's all (baloney).

"You say, 'All right, if you're going to work in this league, this is how you're going to work. And if you don't want to work in this league, fine, you've got other leagues to work in.'"

Knight said he would support an effort to have the Big 12 hire its own officials who do not travel the country working different games in different leagues several nights a week.

"But these guys are so greedy, they end up trying to work these six games a week. And they're not capable of doing that," he said. "Check schedules and you'll rarely see where kids play three games a week. These kids are 19, 20 and 21 years old."

ASTROS

Continued from 1B

said Monday. "I'm here and it's so nice to put on this uniform, so nice to have the opportunity to play in my hometown. I can't wait for us to start playing."

But Williams knows the Astros didn't acquire him out of sentiment.

The Astros were attracted by his experience, his 4.09 career ERA, and his nine wins at Minute Maid Park, the most by an opposing pitcher.

Williams said he always felt comfortable pitching in Houston because it was home. Now that he's on the hometown team, he thinks he could pitch even better.

"I've always wanted to win, but I've never had the desire to win more than I do now," Williams

said. "Does that always equate to more wins? No. But I think being here is something that will keep my fire going a little bit more."

The Astros expect Williams to fill a leadership void left when Andy Pettitte bolted for the New York Yankees. If Roger Clemens decides not to return, Williams would be the team's second-oldest player behind Craig Biggio, who is 70 hits of 3,000 for his career.

Williams is ready to embrace any role the Astros need — as long as no one asks him to lead and pitch in the same ways Clemens and Pettitte did.

"I can't be Roger, I can't be Andy," he said. "All I can do is, when they give me the ball, go out and do what I know I can do. Who I am is who I am.

For them to ask me to be somebody else, I can't do it."

Williams has thought about becoming a manager after his playing days, and he isn't afraid to speak up if he senses a problem in the clubhouse. Pitching coach Dave Wallace said Williams is already filling a leadership role.

"He's a tremendous asset," Wallace said. "He's the first one to each field, he knows exactly what to do, what's expected, and he seems open to taking guys under his wing."

But Williams is a pitcher before he's a mentor and is focused on contributing this season with results more than advice. The key is staying healthy.

"The more innings I pitch, the better chance I have to win," he said.

NASCAR

Continued from 1B

raced to the flag when the caution came out. That practice was stopped in 2003, when NASCAR determined it was too dangerous to allow speeding cars to zip past an accident scene.

Now, the field is frozen and all cars must slow down when a caution comes out. Multi-car mayhem generally warrants a caution. But as Kyle Busch, Matt Kenseth and Jeff Gordon bumped and banged across the track just a few hundred yards from the finish, NASCAR let the racing go on.

It wasn't until Clint Bowyer flipped, crossing the finish line on his roof as flames ripped through his car, that NASCAR finally waved the yellow flag.

By then, it was too late for Martin. Harvick already had nosed ahead, beating him across the finish line by the length of his car hood. The .020 margin of victory was the closest in the history of electronic scoring at Daytona.

Martin initially was irate over his radio, criticizing NASCAR for not throwing the caution.

"I can't believe they waited!" he wailed.

Still, he refused to blast NASCAR for its decision — which might have cost Martin his last shot at a Daytona 500 victory. He's easing into retirement and is racing a partial schedule this season, with no firm plans for his future.

"No one wants to hear a grown man cry," the 48-year-old Martin said. "I'm not going to cry about it. This is the end. They made the decision".

That's just how it goes in NASCAR, where the rules can be a moving target and enforcement is almost always arbitrary.

On any other lap at any other race, it's likely the caution would have come out the moment Busch and Kenseth made contact.

Arguing that it was OK because it was the last lap isn't right, either. In 2005, NASCAR froze the field on the final lap at Talladega Superspeedway because of a spinning car way behind the leaders. Tony Stewart crossed the finish line first, but Dale Jarrett got the win.

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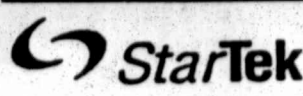
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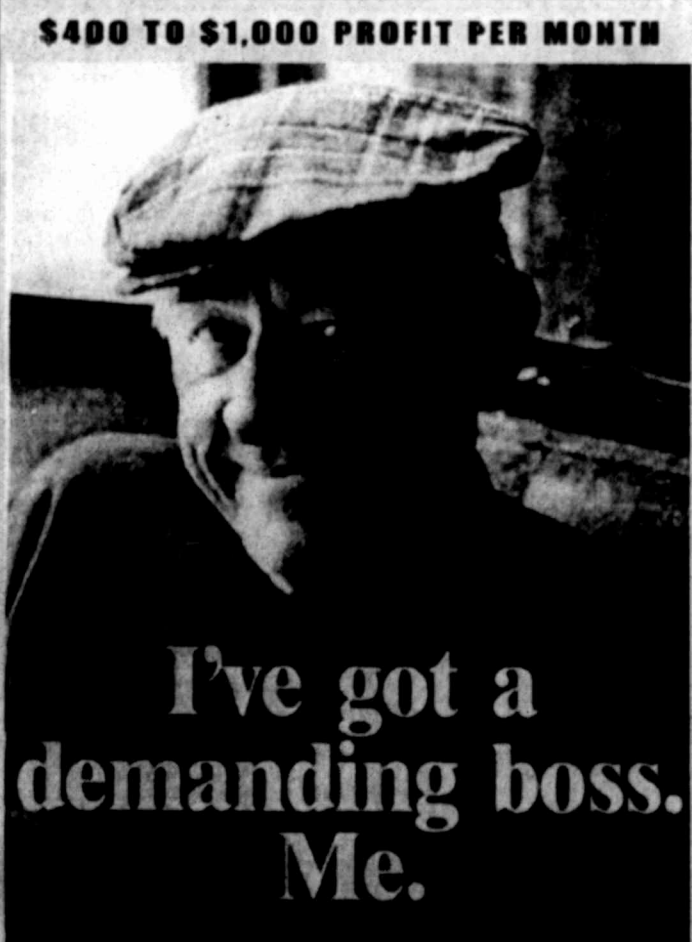
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FOR SALE, 1995 Maroon Ford Van with inside lift, \$9,600. Triple white dresser & nightstand, \$450. (4) arm chairs on rollers, tan, like new. (432)393-5712.

Lost and Found

REWARD: \$500 for the return of "Fido," black & white Boston Terrier Bulldog. Missing since February 13th, from Edwards Ranch off of FM 461. No questions asked if returned.

Miscellaneous

\$199. KING/ Cal King Pillow-Top mattress set. In plastic, warranty. (806)549-3110

A KING PILLOWTOP Mattress Set. Must Sell \$249. Brand New still in Plastic. Full Factory Warranty. 432-349-4043.

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NEW BEDROOM SET 5 pieces. Still in boxes. List \$2250. Sell \$550. **BEDROOM SET** Brand new. All wood. Retail \$3800. Sell \$999. 432-349-7945.

Miscellaneous

NEW PUB TABLE Solid wood, butterfly leaf, still in box. List \$899. Sell \$390. **DINING ROOM SET** Table, chairs. New and boxed. Sacrifice \$475. Can deliver. 432-349-7945.

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407 East 8th- 1/1 bath. Stove & refrigerator. \$275. month, \$175. deposit. CH/A. No HUD and no pets. No Bills Paid. Call (432)267-2296.

602 LINDA LANE. 3 bedroom, 1 bath, carpet. New paint, tile and carpet. CH/A. \$535. month, \$450. deposit. Call (432)263-8005 or 816-1330.

712 GOLIAD. 2 Bedroom, 1 bath. Washer & dryer connections, CH/A. \$550. month, +deposit. No HUD. No Bills Paid. Call (432)267-2296.

DOWNTOWN OFFICE for rent-421 Main, approx. 2500 sq. ft. of executive offices, reception area and storage. Call (432)263-7676.

Real Estate for Sale

#30 MEADOWBROOK Rd. CISD. 3/2, large 2 car garage, large front verandah. New Carpet & Paint. 3 Extra Lots. \$129,500. Vicki Dahmer 432-264-8048 or Dana Baker 432-816-6258.

1.05 ACRE. 305 Driver Rd. Water well, great view. Forsan District. Call (432)213-2400.

1812 BENTON. 3 bedroom, 1 bath, CH/A, 1224 sq. ft. Close to Goliad school. Covered patio and yard. \$44,900. No Owner Finance. Call (432)264-8983, (432)263-0118.

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803 E. 15th., 2 Bedroom, 1 bath w/garage & carport. Updated Bath. Call (432)816-1107 or 264-0051.

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Tomorrow's Horoscope

BY HOLIDAY MATHIS
The Aries moon packs a candy store's array of treats into this busy day. We're too impatient to read instructions, chart the map or research our next move. It's just go, go, go and figure it out along the way. There's a conflict between the new and old way of doing things, but the new way wins out because it is, quite simply, more fun.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Love. You can't substantiate it with well-documented written evidence. And yet you know it exists - particularly between you and a fellow fire sign. Acknowledge it in your mind and heart. But don't take action yet.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). All your wants are competing for space in your thoughts, your schedule and your bank account. Breathe. Get centered. It can all happen from moment to moment. The future is an infinite succession of nows.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). There are times to go to extremes, and there are times to go easy. Going easy is advised. Taking frequent breaks instead of pushing yourself will produce bigger, better results.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Partners and family seem to make a game of challenging you. Getting angry and frustrated isn't necessarily negative, as long as it's directed appropriately. Use your love as your guiding light.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're not crazy. The fact

that others don't see a problem doesn't mean it isn't there. Believe your own perception. Stressful situations can be relaxed by asking for help.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Superficially, a task seems easy, but there's much more to it than meets the eye. Add the missing layers of work. You'll arrive at your destination, and thus your reward, soon enough.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Improve your environment. After all, it's where you live, both metaphorically and actually. You don't have to be rich to turn your home into a masterpiece. All you have to be is creative, which, of course, you are.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). A loved one is afraid that if you have a life of your own you won't need her anymore. Don't buy into this fear. The best way you can help others is to shine your light as big and bright as you can.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Life on hold? Still at the mercy of a busy someone? There's no reason you should feel honored by scraps of attention and stolen moments. Place your energies where you'll get something in return.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're the rock of your group. Others depend on you, and you're strong enough to share. It's rewarding to provide what others need. Dig in. Get your hands dirty.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're at an intersection. Down one road you see hills and valleys and a glorious, but very distant oasis. The other road curves so suddenly you can't see a thing. How adventurous do you feel?

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). It seems like everyone wants your money. But what are you really getting for it? Wait until you know that what you're buying will bring you joy, joy, joy. It's not what you have; it's what you do with it.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: Drew Barrymore is quoted as saying, "Love is the hardest habit to break, and the most difficult to satisfy." A Pisces with a highly sensitive Cancer moon, Barrymore may take that sentiment back when she discovers mother-love, which, for a Cancer moon individual, is like love in a new dimension. However, she'll likely wait another three years before broaching that subject.

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

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Annie's Mailbox

Dear Annie: My youngest child is 13 and the only one left at home. We live in the country, and our only neighbor has a daughter, "Beth," the same age. The girls ride the bus together and hang out after school and on weekends.

Beth is not very clean and has a terrible odor. My husband took the girls in his car once and had to roll all the windows down because he could not stand the smell. It bothers my daughter, but she feels bad for Beth because people make fun of her at school.

Yesterday was the last straw. Beth came over and the girls were making cookies. Her odor was so bad I couldn't breathe while being in the same room with her. It was awful. After she left, I had to spray my house with air freshener.

I'm angry with Beth's parents because they don't teach her about bathing regularly and ignore how this affects their child's self-esteem. Do I say something to the parents? Do I tell my daughter she can't have Beth come over anymore? How should I handle this awful, uncomfortable situation? - Holding My Nose

Dear Add: Yes, you can be Mrs. Smith-Jones. Hyphenated names are a relatively recent trend, and people have been making up the rules as they go along. Many women choose to keep the name of their ex-husband when there are children from the marriage, or because they have established an identity with that name. If Mr. Jones doesn't mind, neither do we.

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

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KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

married name. My situation is different.

I was married for many years to "John Smith" and was recently divorced. My children are now grown, and I'm planning on getting married again soon to "Bob Jones." My ex-husband and my future husband and I are all close friends, and we get along great. Once I marry Mr. Jones and take his name, would it be proper to use both last names, even though neither is my maiden name? My ex-husband has not remarried, so there wouldn't be another woman using his name. - To Add or Subtract

Dear Add: Yes, you can be Mrs. Smith-Jones. Hyphenated names are a relatively recent trend, and people have been making up the rules as they go along. Many women choose to keep the name of their ex-husband when there are children from the marriage, or because they have established an identity with that name. If Mr. Jones doesn't mind, neither do we.

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	Dallas	Midland	Spanish	Odeasa	Odeasa	Telemundo	Midland	Atlanta	Odeasa	Odeasa	Discovery	Classics	Spike TV	Atlanta	Black Ent.	Disney	Sports	Sports	Science Fic.
6	News (CC)	News Wheel-Fortune	Duelo de Pasiones	King of the Hill	The Simpsons	Vicida de Blanco	News Be a Millionaire	Raymond	Dr. Young	News-Lahr	How It's Made	How It's Made	CSI: Crime Scene	Law & Order	Live (CC)	Phil of Future	College	College	Stargate SG-1
7	Funnest Home Videos	Funnest Home Videos	La Faa Mas Bella	American Idol	NCIS (CC)	Marina	Datinelie NBC (CC)	Raymond	Update/Israel	Nova (CC)	Dirt Jobs (DVS)	Movie: Dances With Wolves	CSI: Crime Scene	NBA Basketball	Movie: Next Friday (CC)	Movie: Jump In! (CC)	DePaul at Michigan State	Wisconsin at Michigan State	Stargate SG-1
8	Primetime	Primetime	Mundo de Fieras	The Unit (CC)	Zorro - La Espada y la Rosa	Law & Order: Criminal Intent	Sex and-City	Light of the Southwest	Frontline (DVS)	Dirt Jobs (DVS)	Survive This	Survive This	CSI: Crime Scene	NBA	Nuggets at Spurs	That's-Raven	NBA Coast-to-Coast (CC)	College Basketball	Stargate SG-1
9	Boston Legal (CC)	Boston Legal (CC)	Camino a Premio lo Nuestro	Becker (CC)	CSI: Miami	Decisiones de Famosos	Law & Order: SVU	Friends (CC)	Independent Lens	Survive This	Survive This	Survive This	CSI: Crime Scene	NBA	Top 25-Black America	Ule Derek Phil of Future	NBA Live	LSU at Kentucky	ECW
10	News (CC)	News Nightline	Primer Impacto	70s Show	News Raymond	Noticias 12 Corazones	News Tonight Show	The Hour of Healing	Charlie Rose (CC)	Dirt Jobs (CC)	Dirt Jobs (CC)	CSI: NY (CC)	Basketball: Phoenix Suns	Jamie Foxx	Jamie Foxx	Zack & Cody	NBA Live	SportsCenter	The Dresden Files (CC)
11	The Insider	Jimmy Kimmel Live (CC)	La Hora de la Risa	King of the Hill	Letterman	Late Late	AI Rojo Vivo!	Late Night: Feeling	Sign Off	Dirt Jobs (CC)	Dirt Jobs (CC)	Movie: The Egyptian	CSI: Crime Scene	at Los Angeles Clippers	In Living Color	Phil of Future	NASCAR Now	NBA Fastbreak	The X-Files (CC)
12	Live (CC)	Extra (CC)	El Privilegio de Anar	Malcolm-Mid	Show The Insider	Malcolm-Mid	My Wife-Kids	Conan O'Brien	Minnesota	Dirt Jobs (CC)	Dirt Jobs (CC)	Star Trek: Voyager	Inside the NBA (CC)	Comicview	Proud Family	Sister, Sister	Series of Poker	SportsCenter	The Twilight Zone (CC)

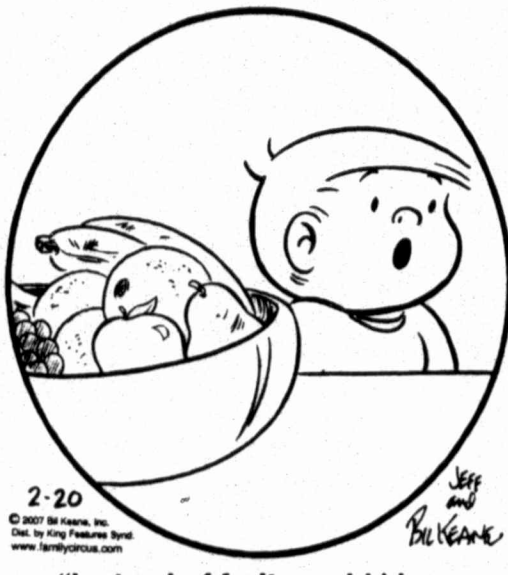
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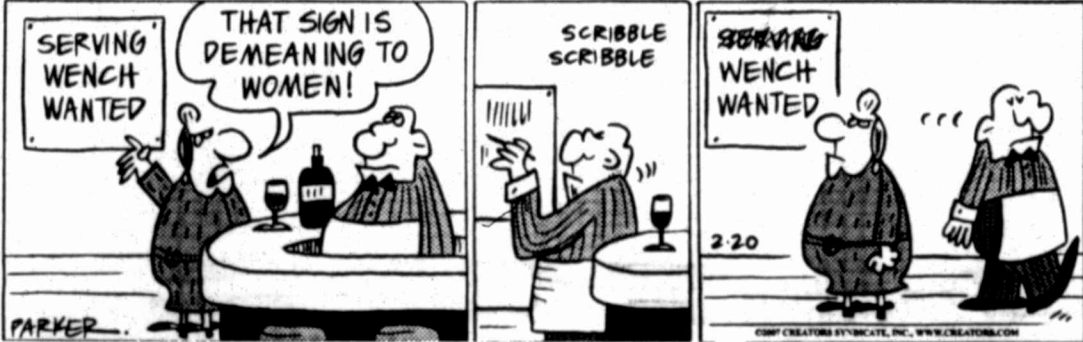
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This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, Feb. 20, the 51st day of 2007. There are 314 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 20, 1962, astronaut John Glenn became the first American to orbit the Earth, flying aboard Friendship VII.

On this date:

In 1790, Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II died.

In 1792, President George Washington signed an act creating the U.S. Post Office.

In 1809, the Supreme Court, in United States v. Peters, ruled the power of the federal government is greater than that of any individual state.

In 1839, Congress prohibited dueling in the District of Columbia.

In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt signed an immigration act which excluded "idiots, imbeciles, feebleminded persons,

epileptics, insane persons" from being admitted to the United States.

In 1944, during World War II, U.S. bombers began raiding German aircraft manufacturing centers in a series of attacks that became known as "Big Week."

In 1965, the Ranger VIII spacecraft crashed on the moon after sending back thousands of pictures of the lunar surface.

In 1987, a bomb blamed on the Unabomber exploded behind a computer store in Salt Lake City, seriously injuring store owner Gary Wright.

In 1987, Soviet authorities released Jewish activist Josef Begun.

In 2003, fire broke out during a rock concert at The Station nightclub in West Warwick, R.I., killing 100 people and injuring about 200 others.

Today's Birthdays: Fashion designer Gloria Vanderbilt is 83. Actor Sidney Poitier is 80. Actress Marj Dusay is 71. Jazz-soul singer Nancy Wilson is 70. Singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie is 66. Hockey

Hall-of-Famer Phil Esposito is 65. Movie director Mike Leigh is 64. Actress Brenda Blethyn is 61. Actress Sandy Duncan is 61. Rock musician J. Geils is 61. Actor Peter Strauss is 60. Rock singer-musician-producer Walter Becker (Steely Dan) is 57. Country singer Kathie Baillie is 56. Newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst is 53. Actor Anthony Stewart Head is 53. Country singer Leland Martin is 50. Actor James Wilby is 49. Rock musician Sebastian Steinberg is 48. Comedian Joel Hodgson is 47. Basketball player Charles Barkley is 44.

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Answer to previous puzzle

ASTIR	CHAT	PAWN
CHASE	YULE	ALOE
HITASINGLE	SORE	
ERE	IRIS	YASTED
TRAGIC	PEST	
INS	WARSHIP	
AMER	HERS	EERIE
LOAFS	MAY	TBALL
EPCOT	CPAS	UBES
SHRINES	TAC	
CAREER	SOOT	LOA
OLEO	SANDDOLLAR	
LEAN	ERIE	REESE
ACME	SEYS	SANTA

Newsday Crossword

AT THE DOOR by Sally R. Stein
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

- Ewe's mate
- Piece of dinnerware
- Furnace's output
- Sedan or convertible
- Ascends
- Not doing anything
- Until
- Not appropriate
- Church area
- Traditional Florida dessert
- Federal agent, for short
- ___ seeds (burger-bun feature)
- Editor's "remove"
- Get ready, for short
- Rushmore and Everest
- Ring out
- Spring flower
- Tire in the trunk
- St. ___'s fire
- Cotton bundles
- Sign of the future
- Vote into office
- Bench or couch
- Have to have
- Placed in order
- Urban-renewal target
- Take, as advice
- Creamy dessert
- Mexican snack
- '60s pants feature
- Limburger feature

DOWN

- Money of India
- Law experts: Abbr.
- Money, slangily
- Beef entree
- End of the ___ (last stop)
- Right away, in memos
- Lukewarm
- High regard
- Be determined by
- Dutch cheese
- Thomas ___ Edison
- New driver, often
- Arctic birds
- Mischievous kid
- ___ Angeles
- Historical periods
- Stacks
- Word on a "Hello!" tag
- Cypress or sycamore
- Transmit
- Social equal
- Singer Fitzgerald
- Prayer ender
- Do battle
- Walrus relative
- One who trips
- Ess follower
- Rubble
- Bovine bellow
- Big name in tractors
- Speak
- Get to work
- Turns bad, as milk
- CPR experts
- Japanese cuisine ingredient
- Citrus drinks
- Apple center
- Burden
- Lo-fat, on labels

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