

BIG SPRING

HERALD



INSIDE
AFL pioneer
Lamar Hunt
dies at age
74

Page 1B

VOLUME 103, NUMBER 19

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2006

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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 WEEKEND

Court rules Nelson will get new trial

Howard County man was
convicted of murder in 1991

By STEVE REAGAN

Staff Writer

The only Howard County man on Texas' death row will get at least part of a new trial, thanks to a federal circuit court ruling this week.

The 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans ruled by a vote of 9 to 7 that Billy Ray Nelson, convicted of capital murder in the February 1991 death of 18-year-old Charla Wheat, must receive a new punishment trial.

The court ruled that jurors in the original trial were not allowed to fully consider possible mitigating circumstances before they returned a death sentence in the case in 118th District Court in Big Spring on Dec. 13, 1991.

"We conclude that, on the facts presented here, there is a reasonable likelihood that the Texas capital-sentencing scheme

"We conclude that, on the facts presented here, there is a reasonable likelihood that the Texas capital-sentencing scheme precluded the jury from giving full effect to Nelson's mitigating evidence as required by the Supreme Court."

—Ruling by the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals

precluded the jury from giving full effect to Nelson's mitigating evidence as required by the Supreme Court," the court stated in its majority ruling.

See NELSON, Page 3A



HERALD file photo

Coahoma Elementary School students participate in the school's Polar Express drive through in this 2005 file photo. The third annual Polar Express will be held Monday evening at the school.

Coahoma's Polar Express to make tracks for third season

By STEVE REAGAN

Staff Writer

COAHOMA — All aboard!

For the third year in a row, Coahoma Elementary School students will bring a beloved Christmas story to life when they hold the Polar Express Drive Through at the school Monday.

Coahoma Elementary Principal Patricia Bennett said students will enact scenes from the book in a layout similar to the recent Drive-Thru Nativity at First Church of the Nazarene.



Bennett

"Each grade will pantomime scenes from the book," Bennett said. "We'll have pages from the book on posters for people to read while they watch the children act out what's on the page, then they can drive to the next scene."

While the event promises to be entertaining for visitors, Bennett said it will be even more so for her students.

"It's great," she said. "The best thing about it ... is that this way,

they can get out there and act out anything. They can dress up in their pajamas and pretend they're on the Polar Express. They have a great time."

The last stop on the Drive Through will give children a chance to visit with and have their pictures taken with Santa Claus, Bennett said.

Admission is free to the event, which will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., although donations will be accepted. Proceeds will go to the school's playground equipment fund.

MUSEUM EXHIBIT



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Magen Williamson of the Heritage Museum admires one of the displays for the "Silent Night, Holy Night — A Walk-Through Nativity" exhibit, which runs through the end of the month at the museum, located at 510 Scurry.

Sales tax rebates up for Big Spring, brushes \$5 million mark for the year

By BILL MCCLELLAN

News Editor

Once again, Big Spring witnessed an increase in sales tax rebates — albeit a small one — comparing December 2005 to December 2006.

Big Spring received \$376,254.38 this month compared to \$352,262.51 a year ago, according to the State Comptroller's Office. That's an increase of 6.81 percent. With the 12th month of the year, the city almost eclipsed

the \$5 million mark in rebates, but not quite. Big Spring received \$4,993,329.60, up a healthy 15.48 percent over 2005's totals.

Coahoma continued to experience strong increases — 50.80 percent this month. The community took in \$6,829.72 this month compared to \$4,528.99 for December of 2005. For the year, Coahoma received \$84,264.11, up 35.78 percent when compared to

2005. Forsan's sales tax rebates were back up this month after being down 10.5 percent in November. Forsan took in \$7,782.75 this month, compared to \$6,385.08 in December of 2005. For the year, Forsan received \$85,499.79, a figure ahead of last year's pace by 12.36 percent.

Abilene brought home \$2,401,353.84 this month, up 10.85 percent compared to the \$2,166,189.97 that came in for

December 2005. Abilene received \$31,860,526.67 this year, up 9.22 percent.

Andrews, which increased its sales tax from 1 percent to 1.75 percent last December, continued to post near unbelievable increases — 78.76 percent this month — comparing December 2006 rebates of \$245,548.71 to December 2005 rebates of \$137,358.72. For the year, Andrews received

See REBATES, Page 3A

INDEX

Classified 3-5B
Features 5A
Obituaries 2A
Opinion 4A
Sports 1-2B



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NUTCRACKER COMING

The Big Spring Symphony will renew a tradition Saturday with its presentation of "The Nutcracker" — a ballet featuring the music of Russian composer Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky.

In 1892, Tchaikovsky composed "The Nutcracker." It was first performed at Russia's Maryinsky Theatre, today's home of both the Kirov Ballet and the Kirov Opera.

Tickets — \$15 for adults, \$10 for senior citizens and \$5 for students — are available at the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce, Faye's Flowers, the Heritage Museum, Blum's Jewelers, the First Bank of West Texas and the Big Spring Herald.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

The Coahoma High School Band will present its annual Christmas Concert at 7 p.m. this evening in the high school auditorium.

The concert program will begin with the sixth-grade beginner band performing, followed by an appearance by the junior high band.

The high school band will then take the stage to conclude the concert. Band Director Shane Faucett and his assistant, Carey Karvonen, will perform a "shared solo" on trumpet and French horn, respectively.

Admission is free. For more information, call 394-4535.

11 Shopping Days Til Christmas

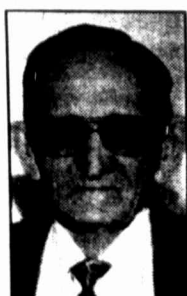


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Obituaries

James L. Gortney



James L. Gortney, 77, formerly of Big Spring, died Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2006, at his home in Kingsland. The family will receive visitors from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 14, 2006, at Waldrope-Hatfield-Hawthorne Funeral Home Chapel in Kingsland. Funeral services will be Saturday, Dec. 16 at 11 a.m. at Sunset Memorial Garden Funeral Home in Odessa. Interment will follow with services officiated by the Rev. Joanie Jackson and the Rev. Ben Steen.

He was born Nov. 8, 1929, in Pontotoc, Miss., to Freeman and Irene Gortney.

He married Wanda Beth Clanton in Big Spring on July 2, 1948. They moved to Odessa where he worked for John Drilling Company as a drilling superintendent for more than 37 years before retiring in 1989. The Gortneys moved to Kingsland in 1991. He was a member of Calvary Hill Church of Kingsland.

He was preceded in death by a daughter, Laurie Michelle Gortney; a grandson, Jason Shawn Cole; and both parents.

Survivors include his wife, Wanda Beth Gortney of Kingsland; daughters Edna (Ricky) Lane and husband Jerry of Odessa, Donna Diane Paugh and husband Ray of Kingsland and Pamela Beth Little and husband Steven of Waco; a son, Lanny Gortney and wife Jamie Lorene of Odessa; eight grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; sisters Billie Ruth Brooks of Palm Desert, Calif., Doris Jean Jordan and husband Ernest of Kingsland, Judy Owen of Katy and Shirley Turner and husband Gene of Odessa; and brothers Aubrey Guy Gortney and wife Kathy of Odessa and Jerry Don Gortney and wife Nelda of Sweetwater.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made to Seton Highland Lakes Hospice of Burnet.

Arrangements were entrusted to Waldrope-Hatfield-Hawthorne Funeral Homes Inc. of Kingsland.

Freyda Griffin



Freyda Griffin, 70, of Coahoma, died Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2006, at the Lubbock Heart Hospital. Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Friday at First Baptist Church in Coahoma with the Rev. Elwin Collom of Hillcrest Baptist Church Big Spring, and the Rev. Wes Massey of First Baptist Church in Coahoma, officiating. Graveside services will be 4 p.m. Friday at Silver Valley Cemetery in Coleman. The family will receive friends from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. Thursday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Freyda was born Feb. 9, 1936, at Brown County to Willie and Fred Woods. She graduated from High School at Monahans in 1954. Freyda married Stan Griffin in Carlsbad, N.M. Aug. 18, 1954. They moved to Howard County in 1961, from Wickett. Freyda worked at Bilt Rite Pallet Company, and also worked for 15 years at Coahoma ISD, retiring in 1991. She was a member of First Baptist Church in Coahoma. Freyda was a member of the Busy Bee Club, and her hobbies were sewing, arts and crafts, painting and gardening.

Freyda is survived by her husband, Stan Griffin of Coahoma; one son, Jesse Griffin and his wife Rose of Coahoma; three daughters, Sherry Griffin and Janna Griffin, both of Austin, and Rhonda Griffin of Midland; four grandchildren, Chelsea Griffin of Lubbock, Braden Griffin of Coahoma, Laura Thomas and her husband, Jason of Zillah, Wash., and Kyle Wyatt and his wife, Carmen of Austin; one great-grandson, Hayden Stevens of Zillah, Wash.; two brothers, Bobby Woods and his wife, Neeta of Del Rio, and Alfred Woods of Hobbs; several nieces and nephews; and special friends, Melissa Fodo and Amy White.

In addition to her parents, Freyda was preceded in death by one brother, Harold Woods; and one sister, Sheila Van Woods. Pallbearers will be Richard Gilmore, Mike Shaw, Tommy Wyrick, Bill Millican, D. C. Lee, and Lonnie Reid.

The family suggests memorials to Relay for Life, c/o Diane Wood, 3200 Greenbrier, Big Spring 79720; Youth Department, First Baptist Church of Coahoma, P. O. Box 376, Coahoma 79511; or other favorite charity.

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

Paid obituary

Weather

Tonight — Mostly clear. Lows in the upper 30s. Light and variable winds.

Friday — Sunny. Highs in the lower 70s. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph.

Friday night — Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 40s.

Saturday — Sunny. Highs in the mid 70s.

Police blotter

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

- **JAMES MASON**, 51, of 803 Eighth Street, was arrested Wednesday on a local citation.
- **JUAN ALBERT LOPEZ**, 23, of 215 N.E. Ninth Street, was arrested Wednesday on two local warrants.
- **ERNEST MURPHY**, 50, of 2515 Fairchild, was arrested Wednesday on a Dublin County warrant.
- **THEFT** was reported:
 - in the 2300 block of Wasson.
 - in the 1700 block of FM 700.
- **ASSAULT CLASS C/FAMILY VIOLENCE** was reported:
 - in the 1600 block of 16th Street.
 - in the 800 block of Seventh Street.

Sheriff's report

The Howard County Sheriff's Office reported the following activity:

- Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 40 inmates at the time of this report.
- **TERRY ALAN COLLINS**, 35, was arrested Wednesday by the HCSO on a charge of theft by check.

Fire/EMS

The Big Spring Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services reported the following activity:

- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 2300 block of Allendale. Service was refused.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1100 block of Ridgeroad. One person was transported to SMMC.
- **MEDICAL** was reported in the 1800 block of North Highway 87. One person was transported to the VAMC.
- **STRUCTURE FIRE** was reported in the 1200 block of Sycamore.
- **GRASS FIRE** was reported in the 2500 block of Dow.
- **GRASS FIRE** was reported in the 300 block of Sgt. Paredez.
- **AUTOMOBILE FIRE** was reported in the 100 block of South Young.

Take Note

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

• **HANGAR 25 AIR MUSEUM CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS**, part of the Big Spring Heritage Series, are available for the holiday season; however, only a few remain. Sales of the ornaments supports community history and the museum.

For information, contact Hangar 25 at 264-1999 or come by 1911 Apron Drive.

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

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

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

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

• **ROAD TO RECOVERY**, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, seeks volunteers to drive cancer patients to treatment in Midland. This requires just a few hours commitment each month.

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

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

Call 264-0771 for more information.

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

Bulletin Board

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

- TODAY**
- American Legion Auxiliary meets at 6 p.m. at 3203 W. Highway 80.
 - The Prospector's Club meets at 7:30 p.m. at 606 E. Third St. The public is invited to these meetings. For more information contact Lola Lamb at 263-3340 or Doyle and Virginia McClain at 263-8407.
 - Neighbors and Newcomers Club meets. New members are welcome. Call 263-2005 for more information.
 - Staked Plains Lodge No. 598 meets at 6:30 p.m. at 221 Main. Meal served. Meeting at 7 p.m.
 - Coahoma High School Band Christmas Concert, 7 p.m. in the high school auditorium featuring sixth-grade beginner band, junior high band and high school band.

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

- SATURDAY**
- Big Spring Shrine Club meets at 6:30 p.m. at Goliad and First streets for a meal with a meeting to follow.
 - Eagles Lodge Dance at 8:30 p.m. at 703 W. Third.
 - Big Spring Squares. Call 267-7043 or 263-6305 for more information.

- SUNDAY**
- MONDAY**
- The Big Spring-Howard County Retired Teacher's Association meets in the Cactus Room at Howard College, 1001 Birdwell Lane. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m.
 - Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) No. 21 meets at 5 p.m. in the Dora Roberts Rehabilitation Center, 306 W. Third, for weigh-in. The meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. Call 1-800-392-8677 or 263-0391 or 263-1758.
 - Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) No. TX 1756 meets at 5:30 p.m. in the First Christian Church of Big Spring, 911 Goliad. A different program is offered every week. Enter through the south side door off 10th Street. Call 263-2786 for more information.
 - Polar Express Drive Through at Coahoma Elementary School, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Hot cocoa and cookies; donations accepted.
 - Evening Lions Club meets at 6:30 p.m. at the Event Center, 1607 E. Third St.
 - DAV and Auxiliary Chapter 47 meets at 6:30 p.m. at 610 Abrams St.
 - Christian Singles Fellowship meets from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church Youth Hall. All singles in the community are invited for an evening of fellowship, food and table games.
 - Prospector's Club work night begins at 7 p.m. at 606 E. Third.

- TUESDAY**
- Big Spring Rotary Club meets at noon in the Howard College Cactus Room, 1001 Birdwell Lane.
 - Big Spring Band Boosters meets at 5:30 p.m. in the high school band hall. All band parents are invited to attend.

Lottery

Results of the Lotto Texas drawing Wednesday night: Winning numbers drawn: 11-30-37-38-50-52.

Number matching six of six: 0.
Estimated jackpot for Saturday night drawing: \$13 million.

Results of the Cash 5 drawing Wednesday night: Winning numbers drawn: 2-9-10-24-33.

Number matching five of five: 0.
Next Cash 5 drawing: Thursday night.

The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Wednesday night by the Texas Lottery, in order: 3-2-1

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News in brief

Polygamy sect leader back in court for hearing

ST. GEORGE, Utah (AP) — Prosecuting Warren Jeffs on charges of rape as an accomplice could enhance, not diminish, the way the polygamist sect leader is revered by faithful followers, historians say.

The case against Jeffs, head of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, was scheduled to resume with a hearing Thursday to determine whether the case should go to trial.

The outcome isn't likely to lessen the 50-year-old Jeffs' popularity. The FLDS sect traces its roots to early Mormon theology, which promoted plural marriage. The modern Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints disavows polygamy and renounced the practice in 1890 as a condition of Utah's statehood.

The FLDS, however, consider themselves "fundamentalist Mormons" who continue to believe polygamy will bring glory in heaven. They also consider Jeffs a prophet of God with dominion over their salvation.

"Prosecution will actually strengthen

his position as a leader," said Martha Bradley, a University of Utah professor and author of a history of government raids on the FLDS community. "You just can't underestimate the power of becoming a martyr."

Authorities rounded up and imprisoned FLDS church members in the 1940s and 1950s, but the prosecuted returned home to the community on the Arizona-Utah state line as heroes, Bradley said. The persecution also strengthened the community's resolve to continue its religious practices.

Technician's wife found dead in Nacogdoches home

NACOGDOCHES (AP) — A radiology technician's wife was found dead Wednesday in the couple's home and police are trying to locate her husband.

The death of Tina Marie Eubanks, 36, is being investigated as a homicide, police said.

An autopsy has been ordered to determine the cause of death.

Authorities said Timothy Thomas Eubanks, 37, called a friend to say his wife had died and that he was contem-

plined suicide. The friend contacted police, the Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel reported in its Wednesday online editions.

"Hopefully it's just a matter of time before we find Mr. Eubanks and learn what actually happened," said Lt. Greg Johnson.

The couple's five children, ages 7 to 16, were staying with friends in Nacogdoches until relatives could arrive.

Police say the two older children had gone to school, while the three youngest children were home when they arrived. Their mother's body was found in a locked bedroom.

The children were not hurt. No sign of a struggle was found at the home, police said.

The family in 2005 moved from Tullahoma, Tenn. Eubanks serves as director of radiology services at Nacogdoches Medical Center.

Ex-boyfriend from Arizona, East Texas woman die

TYLER (AP) — A woman wounded in an attack blamed on her ex-boyfriend

died one day after he fatally shot himself, authorities said Wednesday.

Wood County Sheriff Dwaine Daugherty said it appears Bernie Cochran shot Tina Martin in the chest and head before turning the gun on himself.

Martin, 42, a barrel racer from Coke, died Wednesday at a Tyler hospital.

Friends said that Martin had moved back to Texas after a few months in Arizona to get away from Cochran, whom they say she met through the Internet.

Nancy Hopkins, a fellow barrel racer, said Martin had told her that Cochran was too jealous.

"I'm empty. I'm just empty about it," barrel racer Melanie Covington, of East Mountain, said. "I'm praying, but I'm on autopilot."

Martin had called law officers Tuesday afternoon to report a disturbance at her home in Wood County. Officers found Martin and Cochran, of Arizona, both shot.

Cochran, believed to be about 50, died hours later at a hospital in Quitman.

Police believe Martin recently ended their long-distance relationship.

NELSON

Continued from Page 1A

Mitigating evidence Nelson pointed to in his appeal included an abusive childhood, a history of drug and alcohol abuse, troubled relationships with women and a "borderline" mental disorder.

Midland attorney J.K. "Rusty" Wall, who has represented Nelson since 1997, said that when Nelson was convicted in 1991, the jury had to answer two "special issues" in the affirmative before handing down the death penalty.

Those special issues were whether the victim's death was the result of deliberate action and if there was a probability the defendant would constitute a future threat to

society.

Since that time, however, subsequent federal court rulings state that juries in death penalty cases must fully consider mitigating

circumstances as a third special issue before handing down a sentence, Wall said.

With the ruling, the case is now remanded back to District Court here in Howard County, but it is unlikely to be heard locally anytime soon. Wall said that, in all likelihood, the State of Texas will first appeal the circuit court ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court.

"The state has about 75 other people on death row

who could be affected by this ruling," Wall said. "Do you think the state is just going to throw in the towel? ... They've got to appeal it."

The circuit court decision pertains only to retrying Nelson on punishment and has no bearing on his established guilt, officials said.

Nelson, who was 22 at the time of the murder, was convicted of sexually assaulting and stabbing to death Wheat in her home in the 2500 block of Hunter early on the morning of Feb. 23, 1991. Her roommate, Carol Maynard, also was sexually assaulted and stabbed, but survived to testify against Nelson in his trial.

In a pair of confessions he made to police at the time, Nelson said he was drunk and "schized" on

cocaine when he killed Wheat.

Nelson became the third man in history to be sentenced to death by a Howard County jury. The men previously sentenced to die, in 1934 and 1948, were electrocuted in Huntsville within 15 months of their convictions. Nelson has been on death row for 15 years.

There are currently 390 inmates on Texas' death row.

Former Howard County District Attorney Rick Hamby, who represented the state in the trial, said Nelson was the beneficiary of changes in the law and public opinion since 1991.

"The only thing I can say is that, at that time, the court did everything the law provided," said Hamby, who now has a private law practice in

Big Spring. "Any opinion now rendered is based on an evolutionary pattern that the high court has undergone since that time. I think it will be much harder to get the death penalty now than when we originally tried the case."

Don Richard, who represented Nelson in 1991, was unavailable for comment this morning.

Current Howard County District Attorney Hardy L. Wilkerson said it will likely be quite some time before a new trial is held.

"If the court's ruling stands ... undoubtedly, this will not be something coming down in the next couple of weeks," Wilkerson said.

If the circuit court ruling stands, it would become the responsibility of 118th District Judge Robert H. Moore III to set

a date for a new trial to determine Nelson's punishment.

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



Nelson

REBATES

Continued from Page 1A

\$2,690,164.21, up a whopping 147.61 percent.

Brownfield took in \$74,052.06 this month, an 11.53 percent increase when compared to the \$66,394.51 taken in for December 2005. Through 12 months of 2006, Brownfield received \$1,013,027.45, up 14.16 percent.

Colorado City had an increase of 25.77 percent, comparing sales tax rebates received this month — \$61,467.19 — to rebates received in December of last year — \$48,872.48. For the year, the Mitchell County seat received \$466,628.10, up 13.17 percent.

Fort Stockton received \$133,768.67 this month, down 5.09 percent compared to the \$140,952.03 received in December 2005. For the year, Fort Stockton took in \$1,732,139.30, up 12.99 percent.

Kermit, in Winkler County, took in \$45,705.83 this month, up 28.02 percent when compared to the \$35,699.83 it received a year ago. For 2006, Kermit received \$504,796.77, an increase of 40.48 percent.

Lamesa collected \$74,362.01 this month, up 15.32 percent compared to the \$64,481.53 the Dawson County seat took to the bank in December 2005. This year, Lamesa received \$1,014,835.19, up 11.6 percent.

Lubbock collected \$3,327,896.02 in sales tax rebates this month, a 7.7 percent increase when compared to the \$3,089,887.25 gathered in December 2005. For the

year, Lubbock received \$44,441,043.18, up 8.35 percent.

Midland took in \$2,497,599.83, a 31.12 percent increase when compared to the \$1,904,775.53 received in December 2005. For the year, Midland received \$29,969,537.80, up 22.87 percent.

Monahans received \$119,660.37 this month, up 17.45 percent compared to the \$101,877.44 in rebates collected for December 2005. For the year, the Ward County seat received \$1,315,883.05, up 27.23 percent.

Odessa accumulated \$1,555,888.10 this month, an increase of 13.82 percent compared to \$1,366,886.58 gathered for December last year. For 2006, Odessa pulled in \$19,698,365.29, up 16.3 per-

cent.

Pecos received \$82,120.81 in rebates, up 20.16 percent compared to the \$68,341.81 received a year ago. Over the past 12 months, the city took in \$999,056.84, up 13.78 percent.

Rebates received by San Angelo totaled \$1,366,906.37, an increase of 11.16 percent compared to the \$1,229,653.61 received in December 2005. For the year, San Angelo received \$17,640,913.21, up 13.78 percent.

Snyder took in \$153,193.44 this month, an increase of 9.46 percent compared to the \$139,952.25 taken in for December 2005. For 2006, the Scurry County seat received \$2,019,753.41, up 13.94 percent.

Stanton brought in

\$14,426.09, a decrease of 31.67 percent when compared to the \$21,112.70 taken in last year. For 2006, the home of the Old Sorehead Trade Days received \$309,041.97, up 11.17 percent.

Sterling City took in \$8,731.86 this time around, up 9.41 percent when compared to the \$7,980.71 accumulated in December of 2005. For 2006, Sterling City amassed \$109,684.46, up

11.75 percent.

Sweetwater received \$182,543.36 this month, up 3.07 percent compared to the \$177,097.45 taken in for December 2005. This year, the Nolan County seat received \$2,491,435.08, up 10.5 percent.

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

MYERS & SMITH FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL

24th & Johnson 267-8288

Freyda Griffin, 70, died Tuesday. Funeral Services will be at 11:00 AM Friday at First Baptist Church in Coahoma. Graveside services will be at 4:00 PM Friday at Silver Valley Cemetery in Coleman. The family will receive friends from 5:30 until 7:30 PM Thursday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

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- December 19 * Tuesday
 - Mall Walking - 8:00 AM
 - Supper Club "Cowboys" - 5:30 PM
- December 20 * Wednesday
 - Sit & Be Fit - 10:30 AM
 - Senior Appreciation Day - 11:30 AM
- December 21 * Thursday
 - Mall Walking - 8:00 AM
 - Coffee @ Gale's - 10:00 AM
 - BUNKO - 5:00 PM

- December 22 * Friday
 - Christmas Pot Luck & Present Swap - 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM
 - December 26 * Tuesday
 - Mall Walking - 8:00 AM
 - Supper Club "Spanish Inn" - 5:30 PM
 - December 27 * Wednesday
 - NO Sit & Be Fit Today
 - Senior Appreciation Day 11:30 AM
 - December 28 * Thursday
 - Mall Walking - 8:00 AM
 - Coffee @ Gale's - 10:00 AM
- The Senior Circle office will be closed December 25 through December 29, 2006.

We hope you have a safe and healthy Christmas and a Happy New Year from the staff at Scenic Mountain Medical Center.

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-FIRST AMENDMENT

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

Ronnie Cupetid
PublisherJohn A. Moseley
Managing EditorBill McClellan
News Editor

OUR VIEWS

The Nutcracker
a holiday must
Saturday night

The Nutcracker, one of the world's most famous and beloved ballets — not to mention a Christmas season tradition — will take the stage Saturday night at the Big Spring Municipal Auditorium, as the Midland Festival Ballet arrives to help the Big Spring Symphony Orchestra bring to life the magical show featuring the music of Russian composer Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky.

In 1892, Tchaikovsky composed The Nutcracker and the ballet has been thrilling audiences during the Christmas season ever since.

The Nutcracker story, which will unfold for the audience at 8 p.m. Saturday, is well known for almost all of us.

It's Christmas at the Stahlbaum home. There's a huge tree, and many guests arrive to celebrate with the family. Clara's godfather, Herr Drosselmeyer, makes magical toys. He entertains the guests with two life-sized dolls that dance around the room. Then he gives gifts to the children, and gives Clara a very special gift of a nutcracker. Her brother, Fritz, is jealous, and grabs the nutcracker and it gets broken! Clara is very upset, so Herr Drosselmeyer repairs the doll before handing it back to her.

Soon after, all the guests leave and the children go to bed. Clara gets up in the night and goes downstairs to get her nutcracker from under the tree. She falls asleep there, and is transported into Christmas fantasy where her nutcracker has grown to the size of a human. When the Mouse King attacks, the Nutcracker Prince tries to valiantly defend young Clara, but is struck down in the battle. Clara in turn saves her Nutcracker Prince by throwing her shoe at the Mouse King and defeating him.

With the nasty Mouse King out of the way, Clara runs to the Nutcracker Prince. When she kisses him, he turns into a human! Then she and her Prince are whisked away through the Enchanted Forest, where they see dancing snowflakes and other wonders. Then they travel further to the Kingdom of the Sweets.

There Clara and the Prince behold the wondrous beauty of the Sugarplum Fairy. She invites the couple to stay for a while and enjoy the entertainment of her subjects. Clara and the prince watch in awe as the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Sweets dance before them.

When the dancers are finished, Clara and her Prince sail home in a magic sleigh made of ice and candy. On Christmas morning, Clara wakes under the tree holding her nutcracker doll.

It is a show that's nothing short of magical.

Tickets for the show — priced at \$15 for adults, \$10 for senior citizens and \$5 for students — are available at the Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce, Faye's Flowers, the Heritage Museum, Blum's Jewelers, the First Bank of West Texas and the Herald.

We hope you'll take the time this holiday season to put The Nutcracker on your schedule.

There's no doubt in our minds that your holiday season will be enriched by the experience.

LETTER POLICIES

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor.

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

A SMALL PRAYER

by K. Rae Anderson

come out of a problem with a smile and a solution when we consult You, Lord.

Amen

Granddaddy of armchair quarterbacks

It's painful to watch the Iraq Study Group (ISG) selectively invoking our Cold War policies to support their recommendation that we negotiate with our enemies. We didn't negotiate an end to the Cold War. We kicked the Soviets' rear end. Indeed, the very type of "realists" in charge of the ISG largely opposed Ronald Reagan's confrontational approach toward the Soviets that enabled us to graduate from stalemate to victory.

Here are some other thoughts and questions about the vaunted ISG report (ISGR):

• The ISG seems convinced we are "perilously" close to defeat in Iraq. With this method of war scorekeeping could America have ever won a war, or will it ever again?

• Did the ISG ever seriously consider that we pursue outright victory over the terrorists, or did their initial bias preclude them from considering that option?

• Are the ISG's recommendations based on their assumption that Iraq is not part of the overall war on terror? If so, and they are wrong — which they are — is their entire report flawed, having been primarily based on an erroneous assumption?

• The Framers understood that foreign policy must not be conducted by committee, which is why they made the president — not Congress — the singular commander in chief.

• If the ISGR serves no other purpose, it will provide excellent ammunition for Democrats and the mainstream media (MSM) to crucify President Bush to the extent he rejects its recommendations.

• In fact, if the left were primarily about ideas rather than destroying President Bush, they would be none too pleased with the ISGR for its refusal to endorse a Murthaified withdrawal. But they are willing to ignore the report's contradictions, generalities and absence of real solutions, because they view it as a vindication of their perennial opposition to Bush.

• James Baker said, "This is the only bipartisan report for sale." Whoop-dee-do. I agree with others that the ISG is promoting bipartisanship as an end in itself, even prioritizing it above pursuing the best policy. In a column in 2002, I attributed a similar attitude to Democrats, writing, "What [Certain Democrats] are essentially advocating is that bipartisanship be elevated to sacrosanct status, as if it were an end in itself to be pursued even above the best interests of the nation."

• While the MSM are heralding the ISGR as the Second Coming, we should remember that ISG members are unelected and will never be held accountable for their suggestions. Some of their recommendations reflect their lack of accountability, such as that we should increase the number of U.S. troops training Iraqi forces from 3,000 or 4,000 to 10,000 to 20,000. On what hard facts are they basing a recommendation that has a 100 percent fudge factor? Plus, if we get those additional troops from combat brigades in Iraq and we're already "perilously close to defeat," won't the reduction in our combat forces draw us perilously closer to defeat?

• But nowhere is the ISG's lack of accountability better demonstrated than in its casual acknowledgment that its own proposals may not work, but we must try them anyway. Lee Hamilton said, "No course of action in Iraq is guaranteed to stop a slide toward

chaos. Yet, in our view, not all options have been exhausted." Where is it written that we must try every idea, no matter how foolish, like negotiating with nations — Iran and Syria — that are dedicated to our destruction and who are behind much of the violence and ethnic strife in Iraq?

• On that point, how can James Baker seriously argue that if Iran refuses to cooperate, we can expose it as an enemy of peace and turn the world against it? If the world — including the American left — isn't already convinced the Iranian regime is evil, then redundant evidence will not persuade it. Even if the appeasers were temporarily disabused of their misplaced trust, all it would take to turn them back toward Ahmadinejad is another one of his "thoughtful" love letters to the American people.

• But what might even be worse is if Iran were to accept our offer, agree to negotiate, then make false promises the ISG would doubtlessly recommend we rely on.

• Why is it that the ISG bends over backward to give the benefit of every doubt to the bad guys (Iran, Syria) and goes out of its way to undercut the good guys (Israel and the Iraqi voters)?

• The ISG says we should withdraw most of our troops by early 2008. Why then? What happens if our efforts to train Iraqi troops haven't sufficiently succeeded by then? Are we bound to withdraw then anyway since the omniscient ISG chose that arbitrary date?

• Why did President Bush shoot himself in the foot by appointing committee member Robert Gates secretary of defense?

To find out more about David Limbaugh, please visit his Web site at www.davidlimbaugh.com.

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A presidency unrelated to reality

Thinking of George Bush the other day — which I'm required to do from time to time, a downside of this gig — reminded me of one of the greatest of all American movies: Billy Wilder's "Sunset Boulevard," a dark, elegant story of decadence, naked ambition and faded glory played out on the crumbling edges of Hollywood.

It begins with a lingering shot of a corpse floating face-down in a swimming pool while an unseen narrator provides a voice-over. Astonishingly, you soon realize that the narrator is the corpse.

We are listening to a tale told by a dead man.

The scene is a perfect metaphor for the Bush Iraq policy. It too is floating face-down in the pool while Mr. Bush, its author, prattles on about victory, unmindful of the fact that it's dead, as is his presidency.

Here are a few of the headlines that would have greeted Mr. Bush in recent weeks were he a reader of newspapers (which he's not):

- "Spy Agencies Say Iraq War Worsens Terrorist Threat"
- "United States Military Predicts Rising Violence in Iraq"
- "Deeper Crisis in Iraq, but Less United States Sway as Bush Looks for Solutions"
- "Bush Adviser's Memo Cites Doubts About Iraqi Leader"
- "Iraq Panel: Situation Grave and Deteriorating"
- "Rumsfeld Memo Proposed

'Major Adjustment' in Iraq"

Not a lot of good news there for a president who thinks we're on the path to success in Iraq, but perhaps the hardest to take was Rumsfeld's memo.

Rumsfeld, after all, was one of the Happiness Boys who sold us on the fact that the war in Iraq would be easy. Just knock off Saddam, replace him with a leader of our choosing and leave, to the cheers of a grateful Iraqi population. Rumsfeld's suggestion that "major adjustments" are needed is an indication that reality is finally reaching the highest levels of government, where it has been a stranger. (Not that the memo was very useful. It simply threw out a blizzard of suggestions, apparently on the theory that there might be a solution in them someplace, like the kid digging through a roomful of manure on the theory that there must be a pony in there somewhere.)

If that weren't enough, Mr. Bush was forced to suffer the humiliation of having his Iraqi puppet, Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki, cancel a meeting with him after he'd gone half way around the world for it. On top of that, a joint report from the State Department and the Pentagon has found that our \$1.1 billion training program for Afghan police has been a dismal failure.

And on top of that, Mr. Bush, at a White House Welcome-to-Washington reception for incoming legislators, approached Senator-elect James Webb, the father of a Marine in Iraq and a passionate critic of the war, and said, "How's your boy?" To which

Mr. Webb answered, "I'd like to get them out of Iraq, Mr. President."

Never one to take a hint, President Bush pressed on: "That's not what I asked you. How's your boy?"

"That's between me and my boy, Mr. President," Webb, a decorated ex-Marine, fired back.

A president knows things aren't going well when he's dissed by one of his flunkies AND a freshman senator, all in the same week. I'm not even going to mention that while all this was going on the Bush daughters, those beguiling twins Jenna and Barbara, were cavorting in Argentina, behaving so outrageously that the Argentine government asked them to leave.

I don't mention it because picking on politicians because of their dimwit children seems to me the second-last refuge of scoundrels, right before Fox News. I will pass on, however, Jon Stewart's observation that while Argentina welcomed fugitive Nazi war criminals with open arms after World War II, the Bush twins were more than it could take. Makes you wonder what they were doing and whether we can get pictures, doesn't it?

It's no wonder Mr. Bush doesn't read newspapers. After all, what's reality ever done for him?

Don Kaul is a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington correspondent who, by his own account, is right more than he's wrong. Email him at dkaul1@verizon.net

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VW EOS

Brings new look to convertible with a fun and affordable car

By MATT NAUMAN

San Jose Mercury News

The new Eos restores my faith in Volkswagen as a producer of fun, affordable cars. In fact, driving this new convertible for a week brought back fond memories of when I first drove the New Beetle in rural Georgia in 1998.

The New Beetle was rather tame on the road, but "the magic of its shape," as one executive termed it, made it an instant hit. The new Eos looks almost ordinary as a hardtop coupe, but predictably swells as a convertible. It has plenty of get up and go. Combined with a starting price near \$28,000, that should make it a strong seller for a brand that has begun to restore its reputation with buyers, too.

For too many years, I've driven cars like the VW Phaeton sedan, the Touareg sport-utility vehicle and even the V-8 version of the Passat that simply reflected corporate hubris rather than buyer wants and needs.

These cars were technically adept, but grossly expensive and completely out of the realm of what VW means (and should mean) to U.S. buyers.

New versions of existing models have helped salve those wounds, as the redesigned Passat, Jetta and Rabbit (the former Golf) have been well-received.

But it takes all-new sheet-metal to get excited about an automaker, and that brings us to the 2007 VW Eos. It's a convertible, but quite unlike any other on the market.

VW marketers have invented something called CSC to describe the Eos, with those letters standing for coupe, sunroof and convertible.

The coupe part is easy. With its roof up, the Eos looks like a small, sporty coupe. It might not be the prettiest car in the world, with a back-end treatment that resembles some sort of early '90s offering, but it's by no means ugly. Our car was painted an alluring shade of light blue that VW calls Eismeer blue.

And the convertible part also is pretty self-explanatory. Take down the roof and — poof! — you have a convertible. The process is irresistible to watch, as young and old in my neighborhood and here at work gathered for the show. Motors — eight hydraulic cylinders — whirl. Roof panels lift and separate. Body panels lift and fold. And, in the end, the complex structure ends up in the trunk after about 30 seconds. (A cargo shield in the trunk must be clicked into place for the roof to operate, and trunk room, which is a very adequate 9.3 cubic feet with roof fixed, drops to a much less useful 5.4 cubic feet when the roof is stored.)

Other automakers, including of high-priced Cadillac, Lexus and Mercedes-Benz models and more affordable ones from Volvo and Pontiac, are seeing the merit of retractable hardtops. The list includes all-weather use, better security and, not to be discounted, the gee-whiz factor.

Finally, it's the "S" part, the sunroof, that makes the Eos more intriguing. A panoramic, tinted glass sunroof is part of the Eos'

roof. The roof can be opened to allow some air and some sun in, but without the full "hey, my hair looks crazy" effect.

Powering the Eos is a turbo-charged, 200-horsepower, 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine. It comes standard with a six-speed manual transmission. Buyers can opt for the 250-horsepower, 3.2-liter V-6 engine. It comes standard with a six-speed automatic (which is an option on the 2.0 T).

City fuel economy, according to government figures, is 22 or 23 mpg, depending on engine and transmission choice. On the highway, the range is 29 to 32 mpg.

Our test model had the turbo-charged four-cylinder and the optional six-speed automatic (\$1,075). On the road, this proved a winning combination for a touring car. We took it on a typical Sunday drive and enjoyed it on the back road, city street and interstate. Along curving Niles Canyon Road near Fremont we enjoyed the autumn colors and the crisp smell of the air.

Handling was stable. Steering was well-balanced. Acceleration was crisp, too, even with three people in this 3,686-pound car.

The interior is Euro-posh. Our test model came with the \$3,490 luxury package that added cornsilk beige leather seats. There was a bit of wood trim and a dash of bright metal to make the cabin stylish and contemporary. Air vents, shaped like ski goggles, were a bit overdone though.

Getting in and out of the back seat was not a difficult chore. Its roominess was closer to adequate than comfortable for four adults.

Eos pricing ranges from just under \$28,000 for the base version to \$36,850 for a V-6, automatic model. Rivals include the \$28,565 Pontiac G6 and the \$39,090 Volvo C70.

The Eos comes at an important time in VW's U.S. history. In 1999 the brand sold more than 315,000 cars and SUVs. It has a hip choice among trendy buyers. Last year, VW dealers sold only about 225,000 vehicles.

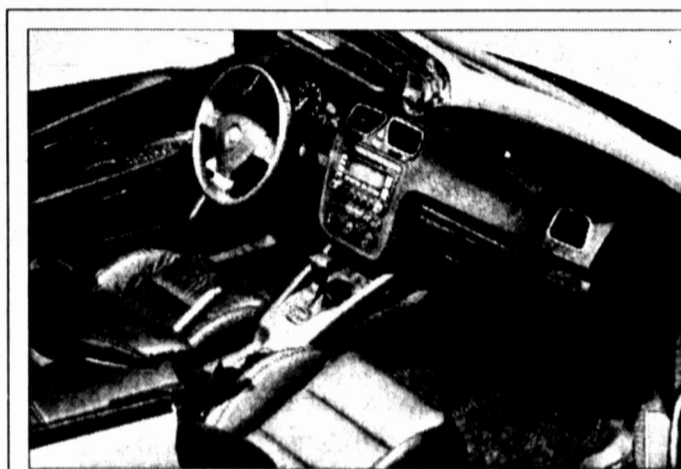
This year, through October, VW sales were up a healthy 9.9 percent. That reflects a return to normalcy for the afford-



The 2007 Volkswagen EOS

able European brand. More new models such as the Eos will keep the turnaround on pace.

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Information Services.



NUTS & BOLTS

What we drove: 2007 Volkswagen Eos 2.0T, a two-door, four-passenger subcompact hard-top convertible with a turbo-charged 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine and a six-speed automatic transmission.

Base price: \$29,990
Price as tested (includes options and delivery charge): \$36,985
Curb weight: 3,686 pounds

Length: 173.5 inches
Turning circle (curb-to-curb): Not available

Standard features: Electronic Stabilization Program (ESP); anti-lock brakes; 16-inch alloy wheels and all-season tires; dual front, side and side-curtain air bags; daytime running lights; fog lights; tire-pressure monitoring

system; cargo cover; anti-theft alarm for vehicle and radio; dual-zone automatic climate control; cruise control; power windows; 12-way power driver's seat; eight-way manual passenger seat; heated front seats; leather steering wheel, hand brake and shift knob; floor mats; auxiliary input jack; power retracting hard-top roof; AM/FM/CD stereo.

Options on test vehicle: Luxury package with leather seats, multi-function steering wheel, wood interior trim, rain-sensing wipers, six-disc CD player, 12-way power passenger seat, satellite radio and 17-inch alloy wheels; DVD navigation system with armrest CD changer; six-speed automatic transmission.

EPA figures: 23 mpg (city); 31 mpg (highway)

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♦ 8 7 5 4 3
♥ J 9 8 7
♦ —
♠ 10 8 4 3

SOUTH
♦ A
♥ A Q 5
♦ Q J 10 8 6 4 2
♠ K Q

The bidding:
South West North East
1♣ Pass 3♦ Pass
4NT Pass 5♥ Pass
5NT Pass 6♦

Opening lead — King of spades.

South's interest in getting to a grand slam on this deal was well-founded. Once partner had responded with three diamonds and followed by showing two aces in response to Blackwood, South was correct to inquire about the number of kings North held by bidding five trump.

South was willing to undertake seven diamonds if partner responded six hearts, showing two kings. In that case, if they were the red kings, there would be no losers, while if the kings were in spades and diamonds, one heart loser would go off on the spade king and the other on the ace of clubs, provided the North hand contained as many as three clubs.

As matters turned out, with North having only one king and only two clubs, South had his hands full making six. The correct play to assure the slam is not immediately apparent, even if the opponents' cards are known. But South found the answer where a less-thoughtful declarer might easily have overlooked the winning stroke.

After taking the ace of spades, the question is how to avoid losing two heart tricks. If declarer eliminates both spades and clubs from dummy's hand and his own, he is still subject to defeat when he leads a heart from dummy, whether he finesses the queen or allows East's seven to hold the trick. In fact, had South followed this line of play, he would have gone down.

Instead, South led a diamond to the king and trumped the six of spades. He then cashed two clubs, ending in dummy. The jack of spades was next led, but instead of trumping it, South discarded the five of hearts! The five was bound to be a loser in any case, but by disposing of it on the spade jack, the defense was placed in a hopeless position.

West took the queen of spades, but any return he made spelled defeat. Discarding a loser on a loser made South a winner.

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.
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That's Racin'

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Go online and check out www.thatstracin.com for the latest information and news on stock-car racing, updated daily.

"(The Busch Series) has such a wide range of experience levels. You got a lot of Cup guys and you got a lot of newcomers coming in there, so it actually makes for great racing."

— Denny Hamlin, on why he enjoys racing in the NASCAR Busch Series



In the headlines

Running down NASCAR's biggest stories of 2006

By DAVID POOLE
McClatchy Newspapers

That's Racin's David Poole begins a two-part look back at the 10 biggest stories in NASCAR in 2006. Next week — the year's five biggest stories.

NO. 10: TEAMED UP ON AT TALLADEGA

Dale Earnhardt Jr. led the UAW-Ford 500 at Talladega on the final lap, driving his No. 8 Chevrolet off Turn 2 for the final time with Jimmie Johnson and Brian Vickers right behind him.

Johnson and Vickers both drove for Hendrick Motorsports, but Vickers was leaving the team at season's end. He was still looking for his first career victory, and he was determined not to just sit still and finish third.

As the cars steamed toward Turn 3, Johnson made a move to the inside.

Vickers followed, rapping Johnson's No. 48 Chevrolet on the rear in an attempt to help push them both past Earnhardt Jr. Then, in the time it takes to take a deep breath, Johnson's car was sideways and turning into Earnhardt Jr.'s. They skittered off the track into a patch of grass at the bottom of the entrance to Turn 3, kicking up a plume of dust.

Vickers kept going and took the checkered flag. "It is what it is," he said later. "This is Talladega. If I would have not touched him we would have finished one-two-three. Junior, Jimmie and me."

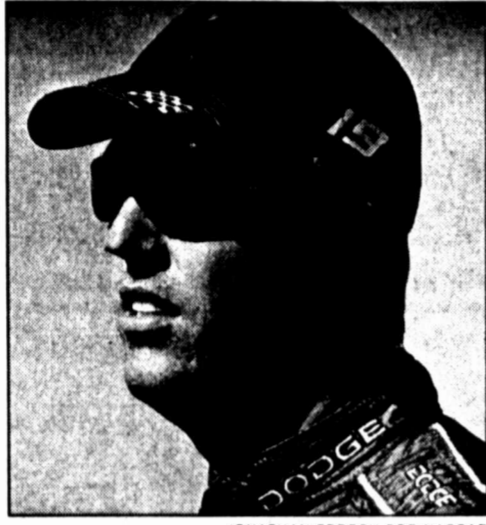
Earnhardt Jr. finished 23rd. Johnson finished 24th and languished in eighth in the Chase for the Nextel Cup standings, 156 points behind leader Jeff Burton.

Johnson tried hard not to savage Vickers through clenched teeth. If Earnhardt Jr. had climbed from his car steaming, he easily could have incited a riot. But Earnhardt Jr. played it cool. "He didn't wreck anybody on purpose," Earnhardt Jr. said. "He just got excited trying to push the No. 48. ... He was just racing hard there."

NO. 9: A HALL OF A DEAL FOR NASCAR

Right now, at least, the selection of Charlotte, N.C., as the host for a NASCAR hall of fame is a bigger story for the city than it is for NASCAR. Ground will be broken officially on the site early next year and it may be 2010 before the museum actually opens.

But the existence of an "official" shrine to NASCAR's greatest drivers and memorable moments is important for the sport. It's an opportunity for the sport to successfully do something it's had tremendous difficulty doing in recent years, balancing its history with its desire to keep getting bigger.



Jonathan Ferrey for NASCAR
Jeremy Mayfield's split with Evernham Motorsports attracted headlines this season.

NO. 8: HARSHIPS WITH RAYS OF HOPE

Kasey Kahne won six races in 2006, more than any other driver in the sport. Scott Riggs didn't qualify for the Daytona 500, but bounced back and finished a respectable 20th in the final standings.

And then, there was Jeremy Mayfield. It was an eventful year for Ray Evernham, the owner of those three Dodge teams. While Kahne was making the Chase for the Nextel Cup, giving Evernham a car in the Chase in each of his first three years, Mayfield's team was blowing up.

Mayfield, frustrated by his team's sagging performance, indirectly questioned Evernham's focus on his Cup operations before qualifying at Chicagoland in July. Two days later, a news conference meant to allay rumors of tension did anything but that.

The end came after Mayfield completed just 82 laps and finished 41st at Indianapolis. Evernham announced that Bill Elliott would drive the No. 19 Dodge at Watkins Glen in Mayfield's place, and Mayfield went to court to block that move.

In documents filed in the case, Mayfield alleged that his team's performance had been hurt by Evernham's relationship with Ern Crocker, the driver for an Evernham-owned team in the Truck Series. Evernham said his relationship with Crocker was nobody's business, and hired Elliott Sadler from Robert Yates Racing to drive the No. 19 beginning the next weekend at Michigan.

Despite the turmoil, Kahne won at California and finished third at Richmond to squeeze into the Chase in the 10th and final spot, just 16 points ahead of Tony Stewart.

NO. 7: THE VERY THOUGHT OF YOU

No Toyota has raced in a Nextel Cup event, but the manufacturer's impending arrival in NASCAR's top series still moved the needle.

Toyota's Tundra dominated the Craftsman Truck Series, winning 12 races and sweeping the top six spots in the final standings with Todd Bodine winning the title. Meanwhile, the manufacturer assembled its roster for 2007, with Michael Waltrip, Bill Davis and Team Red Bull lining up seven teams to begin Cup competition.

Rival team owners accused Toyota of subsidizing these car owners, allowing them to offer exorbitant salaries to drivers, crew chiefs and mechanics to lure them to the new teams or to force existing teams to dramatically ramp up their pay scales. Toyota officials said they were simply helping their teams develop race cars and engines and providing support commensurate with other manufacturers.

Dale Jarrett, a former Cup champion, will drive one of three cars owned by Waltrip, a two-time Daytona 500 champion who will drive a second himself and put David Reutimann in the third. Jeremy Mayfield joins Dave Blaney on Bill Davis's team. Brian Vickers will team with A.J. Allmendinger at Team Red Bull.

NO. 6: OPEN SEASON ON OPEN WHEEL

Usually, the rumor goes the other way. Some NASCAR star, usually Jeff Gordon, is said to be toying with the idea of going to Formula One. But at Chicagoland Speedway in July, when Chip Ganassi announced that Juan Montoya would replace Casey Mears in the No. 42 Dodges in 2007, the racing world was stunned.

Montoya, who has won the Indianapolis 500 as well as in F1, had fallen out of favor with his team in the world's most prestigious series. But his decision to turn to stock cars was a sharp body-blow to America's open-wheel ranks, and it was not the last.

A.J. Allmendinger, the only American to win in the ChampCar World Series, later announced he was coming to Cup to drive Toyotas for Team Red Bull. Sam Hornish, who won the Indianapolis 500 this year, drove in Busch Series races late in the 2006 season and will run several more in 2007 with plans beyond that still to be determined.

Even Danica Patrick flirted with stock cars, using the immediate interest that generated as leverage for a new deal with Andretti Green Racing in the IndyCar Series.



Allmendinger



NASCAR is slated to begin construction of its hall of fame in 2007.

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE

TV analysts share thoughts on the state of Nextel Cup racing

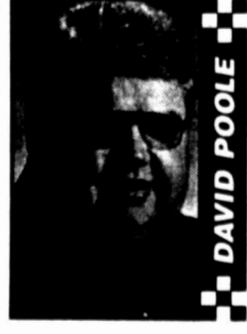
Fox Sports brought its NASCAR team together in Charlotte, N.C., to look ahead to the 2007 Nextel Cup season, which begins with Fox coverage of the Daytona 500.

That's Racin' motorsports writer David Poole sat down with analysts Darrell Waltrip and Larry McReynolds for a conversation about the state of the sport. Waltrip, a three-time champion in the Cup series, and McReynolds, who worked with such drivers as Davey Allison and Dale Earnhardt as crew chief, had some pointed things to say.

Here are some highlights (an extended version of this interview is available on www.thatstracin.com):

■ **David Poole:** NASCAR is expected to announce fairly minor "tweaks" to the Chase for the Nextel Cup format next month. What do you think about the format?

Darrell Waltrip: The problem with



DAVID POOLE

the Chase is it's too long. Ten races is too many. Ten drivers are enough, you don't need any kind of fan vote or wild card or anything like that.

I think if you had some system where if you had 10 races and had sort of a five-race playoff to get to the finals. You have 10 guys going in, but after the fifth race the bottom five are kicked out. Then those five guys run the final five races for the championship.

■ **Poole:** But they've said they're not looking at anything that dramatic.

Waltrip: NASCAR just opens the paper up and reads it and says, "The fans want a green-white-checkered rule, so we'll give them that. The fans don't want to race back to the caution, so we won't race back to the caution." They listen to the fans, up to a point, but then

when it comes to something they don't want to do, they don't want to listen.

The Chase is their idea, and you know how they are about their ideas.

Larry McReynolds: And that's where the "car of tomorrow" fits in, too.

■ **Poole:** Everywhere I go people talk about how we need to square off the cars and make them boxier. I've even had people tell me the trucks are like "flying bricks" and that's a good thing. Now, Tony Stewart uses that same term to talk about the "car of tomorrow and it's a negative thing. What am I missing?

McReynolds: But the problem could have been fixed with what we've got.

Waltrip: They say the new car is safer and is going to cost the teams less money. How can you argue with that? That's what they put on you to start with, like some kind of guilt trip.

But they said they were going to make a car that's less aero-dependent. What are the two most aero-dependent

things you can put on a race car?

McReynolds: A splitter (on the front air dam) and a wing.

Waltrip: A splitter and a wing.

Those cars in traffic are going to be worse than they are now because those two things are aero driven. They don't work unless there is air on them, so when you're riding around behind somebody, what's going to happen?

They will eventually get them better, I guess. Initially, though, they're going to have their hands full trying to make this package work.

■ **Poole:** The television ratings dipped in 2006 and there's talk about the sport's growth beginning to stall out. The saying is that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." My question, then, is whether it's broken?

Waltrip: The races aren't too long, they just take too long to run. They're being interrupted, whether it's a 13-gallon fuel cell or a debris caution every time you turn around, races are being interrupted too often. A race has a flow.

It's not different from watching any other sport and the referees are whistle-happy, stopping the action.

■ **Poole:** How does that impact a crew chief when he's calling the race?

McReynolds: I think it makes it more predictable because you know you're going to get a debris caution. Chad Knaus (Jimmie Johnson's crew chief) said, "I had no problem putting four tires on at Atlanta because I knew there would be a caution to bunch us back up."

Waltrip: That is out of control. Every time a hot dog wrapper blows across the track, you have to have a caution.

McReynolds: And it just seems like so much of the emotion has been taken out of it, whether that's because the Federal Communication Commission has cracked down or whatever, the fans are asking whether the guys are making so much money now that they're not willing to race as hard as maybe they used to.

POLL POSITION

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

What do you think will be the biggest impact of Nextel Cup champion Jimmie Johnson's off-season injury during a golf outing?

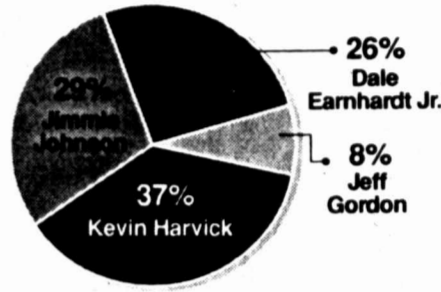
Cast your vote at:

www.thatstracin.com

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

Who would be your choice for NASCAR driver of the year?

Number of votes: 6,359



RACIN' NOTES

Borland adjusts to new job at Waltrip Racing

Things have been quite different for Matt Borland the past couple of days, but in a way it has had a familiar feel to it.

Borland started work last Thursday at Michael Waltrip Racing, and on Friday the team announced that he will be crew chief for the No. 44 Toyotas driven by Dale Jarrett beginning with the 2007 Daytona 500.

"Starting with a new manufacturer and a new team is a big undertaking in NASCAR these days," said Borland, who left Ryan Newman's No. 12 Dodge team Penske Racing to join Waltrip's three-car Nextel Cup operation.

"But it feels sort of like when we started the team at Penske in a truck bay in the corner of the shop. There are a thousand things to do, but it feels good to do that again. It's going to be fun."

Borland, 35, helped Newman win rookie of the year in 2002 and the team won 12 races and was in the top 10 in the final standings in each of its first four seasons.

But Newman finished 18th this year with no victories and just two top-five finishes. Borland took a leave for the final two races of 2006, with Mike Nelson working as crew chief. Nelson was officially named crew chief for Newman in 2007 earlier this week.

"We definitely were not having the success we needed to have," Borland said of his final season with Newman.

"It was nobody's fault in particular, we just were not getting it done. We started off the year and never got it to where we were running like we were used to. We never hit on a package that worked for us."

Borland said it was a tough decision to leave the team he's been with since he came to stock-car racing as an engineer in 1999 after working in what is now the ChampCar series and for Pi Research and General Motors.

"It is sad to leave those guys. They're a great group and I will really miss them," Borland said.

Jarrett, who won the Cup championship in the year Borland came to stock cars, just ended a 12-year tenure at Robert Yates Racing. He won 29 of his 32 career victories with the Yates team, winning his championship driving the No. 88 Fords.

"Dale expressed his ideal crew chief was someone like Matt Borland," Waltrip said. "We were actually able to deliver Matt. His spirit and determination will permeate throughout our shop."

David Hyder will be crew chief for Waltrip and his No. 55 team in 2007, while Larry Carter will be on the No. 00 Toyotas driven by David Reutimann.



Matt Borland will be the crew chief for veteran Nextel Cup driver Dale Jarrett next season.

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Big host

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Sports

BIG
SPRING HERALD

Do you have an interesting sports item or story idea? Call Sports Editor Mike Grimes at 263-7331, ext. 237. Email results to: sports@bigspringherald.com

Thursday, December 14, 2006

IN BRIEF

Big Spring Steers host Greenwood

The Big Spring Steers basketball team will be in action Friday night at the Steer Gym.

This will be the last home game before the semester break and all students, student parents and Big Spring Steer fans are encouraged to come out and support the teams. The game is scheduled for a 7:30 p.m. tip off.

Cowboys new home will keep iconic hole

The Dallas Cowboys are taking their distinctive hole-in-the-roof design with them to their \$1 billion new stadium. Only this time, the playground will feature a sliding lid to keep the elements out. That's a must considering there's going to be a 60-yard-long, 50-foot-high scoreboard hanging over the football field.

Class 5A high school football playoffs

By The Associated Press

DIVISION I STATE SEMIFINALS
Southlake Carroll (14-0) vs. Allen (13-1), 1 p.m. Saturday, Irving's Texas Stadium
Pearland (12-2) vs. Austin Westlake (11-2), 2 p.m. Saturday, Kyle Field

DIVISION II STATE SEMIFINALS
Cedar Hill (14-0) vs. Garland (12-2), 5 p.m. Saturday, Irving's Texas Stadium.

Class 4A high school football playoffs

By The Associated Press

DIVISION I
Copperas Cove (12-2) vs. SA Alamo Heights (13-1), 6 p.m. Saturday, San Antonio's Alamodome
DIVISION II STATE SEMIFINALS
Wolforth Frenship (12-2) vs. Waco (12-2), 1 p.m. Saturday, Justin Northwest
La Marque (13-1) vs. Schertz Clemens (13-1), 3 p.m. Saturday, Berry.

Six-Man high school football playoffs

By The Associated Press

DIVISION I Region I and Region II STATE FINAL
Rule (12-0) vs. Richland Springs (13-0), 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Abilene's Shotwell Stadium
DIVISION II Region I and Region II STATE FINAL
Jayton (11-3) vs. Vernon Northside (13-1), 3 p.m. Saturday, Abilene's Shotwell Stadium

Forsan varsity basketball update

The Forsan varsity boy's basketball team defeated Grady Tuesday night, 54-49.

Adam Bailey led the scoring with 17 points before fouling out. Jeremy Robbins added 13 points and 12 rebounds, Cameron Parker had 13 points and Seth Johnson added 8 points.

Next game is Friday at home vs. Garden City.

Chiefs owner Lamar Hunt dead at 74

By DAVID KOENIG

Associated Press Writer

DALLAS — Lamar Hunt, the pro sports visionary who owned the Kansas City Chiefs and came up with the term "Super Bowl," died Wednesday night. He was 74.

Hunt, a founder of the American Football League and one of the driving forces behind the AFL-NFL merger, died at Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas of complications from prostate cancer, Chiefs spokesman Bob Moore said.

Hunt battled cancer for several years and was hospitalized the day before Thanksgiving with a partially collapsed lung. Doctors discovered that the cancer had spread, and Hunt had been under heavy sedation since last week.

"He was a founder. He was the energy, really, that put together half of the league, and then he was the key person in merging the two leagues together," said Cowboys owner Jerry Jones, Hunt's neighbor. "You'd be hard-pressed to find anybody that's made a bigger contribution (to the NFL) than Lamar Hunt."

The son of Texas oilman H.L. Hunt, Lamar Hunt grew up in Dallas and attended a private boys' prep school in Pennsylvania, serving as captain of the football team in his senior year. His love of sports led to his nickname, "Games."

Hunt played football at SMU, but never rose above third string. His modest achievements on the field were dwarfed by his accomplishments as an owner and promoter of teams in professional football, basketball, baseball, tennis, soccer and bowling. Hunt's business dealings were



Kansas City Chiefs' team captains Samie Parker (18), Kris Wilson (84) and Jimmy Wilkerson (96), stand with Chiefs owner Lamar Hunt before the coin flip in with the Dallas Cowboys at Texas Stadium, Sunday, Dec. 1, 2005.

also the stuff of headlines. Hunt didn't need to make money — his father was an oil wildcatter who was often referred to as the richest man in the world. But he tried to build on his father's

wealth. Along with two brothers, Hunt tried to corner the silver market in 1979 and 1980. Their oil investments also soured in the 1980s. Some estimated the fami-

ly's losses in the billions. Hunt also suffered setbacks in the world of pro sports, but overcame them.

See HUNT, Page 2B

Six of nine Texas teams go bowling

MIKE GRIMES
Sports Editor

Six of the nine Division I college football teams from the Long Star State will be participating in college football games over the holidays.

Only SMU, UTEP and Baylor will be left out of the 2006 bowl games, but without an in-state team playing in at least a New Year's day bowl, the feeling is that this was a down year for Texas' football programs. That assessment coincides with the way the AP voters feel as well. In the Top 25 Poll, only Texas (19) and Texas A&M (21) are ranked, with TCU and Houston gathering a few votes. Or in the Cougars' case, a single vote.

Can everyone be right? I don't think so.

As the bowl games unfold, starting with the first one of the season — the Poinsettia Bowl — look for TCU to get things

started with a win over Northern Illinois and for the colleges from Texas to win four of the six games this holiday season.

San Diego County Credit Union Poinsettia Bowl
San Diego, CA
Qualcomm Stadium
Dec. 19, ESPN2
Bowl Matchup: TCU vs. Northern Illinois — Line: TCU -12; Take the points.

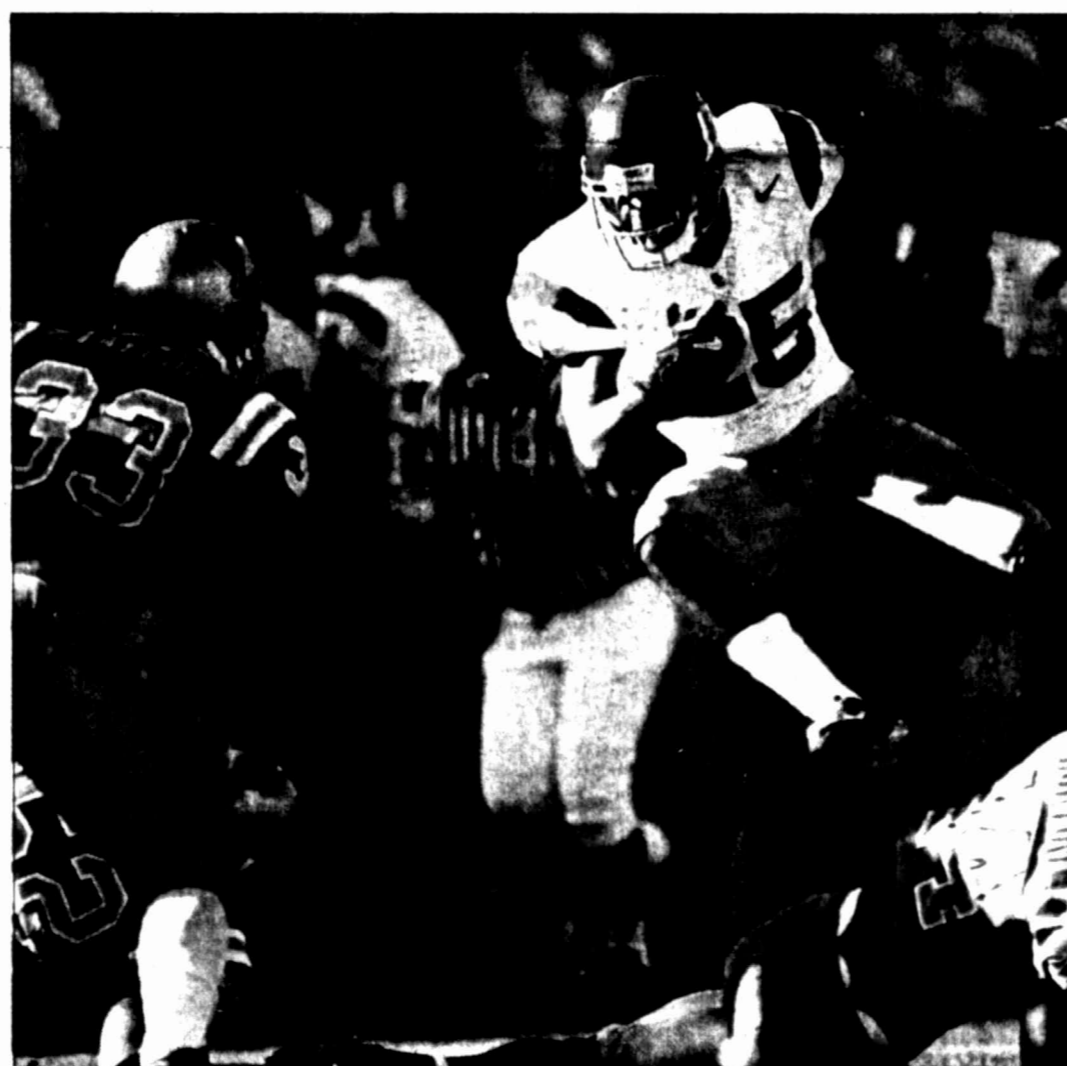
Las Vegas Bowl
Las Vegas, NV
Sam Boyd Stadium
Dec. 21, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Oregon vs. BYU — Line: BYU -4; BYU covers spread.

New Orleans Bowl
New Orleans, LA
Louisiana Superdome
Dec. 22, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Troy vs. Rice — Line: Rice -5.5; Take the Owls this year.

New Mexico Bowl
Albuquerque, NM
University Stadium
Dec. 23, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: New Mexico vs. San Jose State — Line: New Mexico -4; N.M. covers.

PapaJohns.com Bowl
Birmingham, AL
Legion Field
Dec. 23, ESPN2

See BOWLS, Page 2B



Southern California tailback C.J. Gable leaps over UCLA's Chris Horton during the first half, Saturday, Dec. 2, in Pasadena, Ca. The Bruins defeated the Trojans 13-9.

T.O. felt 'alone'; blames 'snitch'

By JAIME ARON

AP Sports Writer

IRVING, Texas — Terrell Owens really likes being part of the Dallas Cowboys except for one thing: "The Snitch."

Owens remains upset that someone within the organization has been airing his dirty laundry. It started with a preseason report about him being late to work and continued with the story about a problem that causes him to fall asleep in meetings.

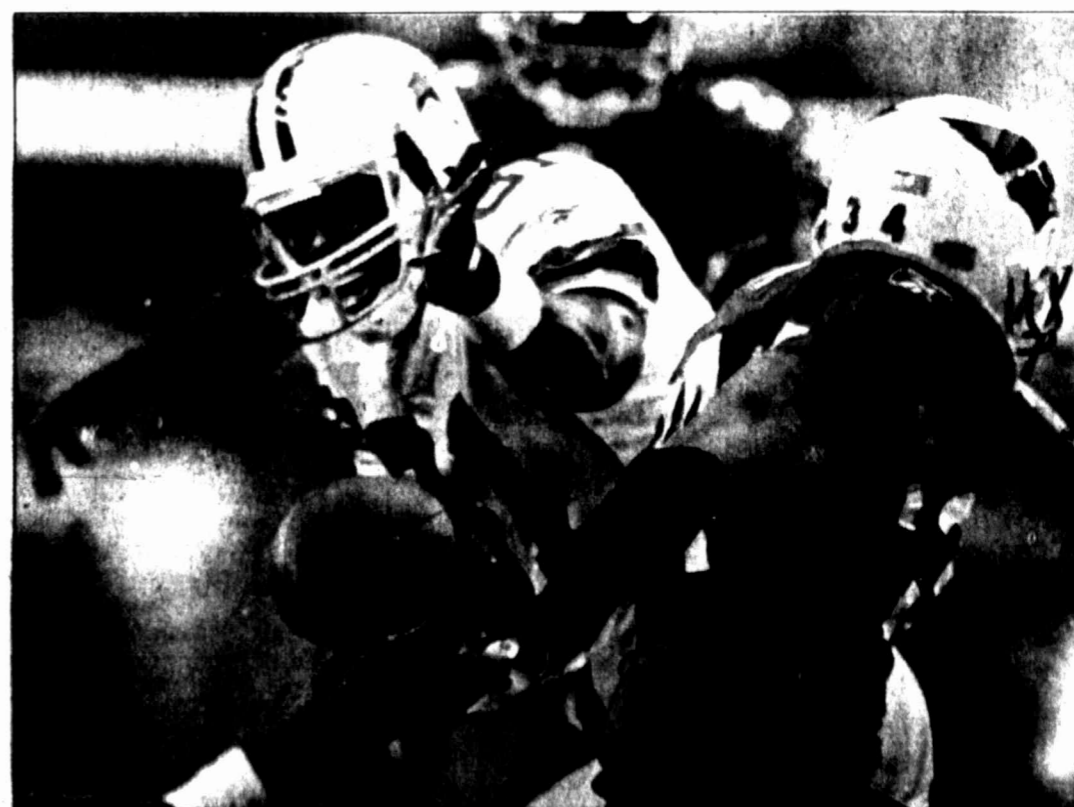
Those things happened earlier this season, but the bitterness lingers. Owens told ESPN in an interview that aired

Sunday that he was "faking it" in practice because he was so frustrated, and he explained himself much further in a nearly half-hour interview in front of his locker Wednesday.

Describing his tumultuous early season, which also included a hamstring injury in training camp and a broken hand that led to an "accidental overdose" on painkillers, Owens said: "I just felt like I was out there, just out there. I didn't feel like I was a part of the team."

"One of the coaches came to me after one

See BOYS, Page 2B



Cowboys wide receiver Terrell Owens can't find the handle on a pass in the third quarter, as the Arizona Cardinals' Robert Griffith defends on the play. The Cowboys defeated the Cardinals, 27-10, Sunday, Nov. 12.

Matt McCoy starting QB while Horns wait for Colt

By JIM VERTUNO

AP Sports Writer

AUSTIN — Matt McCoy, a senior walk-on who has never thrown a pass in college, is practicing as the No. 1 quarterback for Texas while the Longhorns wait to see if injured Colt McCoy will be able to play in the Alamo Bowl against Iowa.

"We still don't know about Colt," coach Mack Brown said Wednesday. "It's a long way till game time and they have not told us yet if he'll play."

Colt McCoy, who suffered a severely pinched nerve in his neck in the final minute of a 12-7 to Texas A&M, said he

expects to play when the Longhorns (9-3) and Hawkeyes (6-6) meet Dec. 30 in San Antonio.

"It's coming along every day," Colt McCoy said. "All of the pain is gone."

Colt McCoy set a school record with 27 touchdown passes as a redshirt freshman and had led the Longhorns to eight straight wins before he hurt his neck the first time on the first drive of a 45-42 loss at Kansas State on Nov. 11.

He was able to return to the field against the Aggies, but got visibly weaker as the game went on and threw three interceptions.

Jevan Snead, the No. 2 QB all season, then decided to transfer.

That left the Longhorns with Matt McCoy, who has taken only a handful of snaps in mop-up duty the past two seasons. A fourth-year walk-on, his high point in high school was leading private Episcopal School of Dallas to the 2002 Division II title game of the 18-team Southwest Preparatory Conference.

On Wednesday, Matt McCoy said he doesn't expect to start the bowl game.

"We know Colt's going to be ready to play," Ma McCoy said.

And if I gets injured again?

"Hopefully, Colt will be prepared and play the whole game," he said.

If Matt McCoy had to play, Brown said he's a fast runner who has shown ath-

leticism running the scout team in previous seasons. He ran a veer option offense in high school.

Brown said he'll also prepare sophomore wide receiver Quan Cosby as an emergency quarterback but with a very limited package of plays.

Cosby was a high school All-American quarterback at Mart before signing a minor-league baseball contract and taking off from football for a few years.

Cosby, the second-leading receiver on the team with 38 catches, said he has no desire to switch positions.

"I'm the emergency quarterback only," Cosby said.

HUNT

Continued from 1B

When NFL owners rebuffed Hunt's attempt to buy a franchise and move it to Dallas, Hunt — ignoring his father's advice — founded the AFL. He owned one of the AFL's eight original teams from the inaugural 1960 season, the Dallas Texans.

"I looked around and figured Kansas City could be a success," he told The Associated Press. "By our fourth or fifth year, we started to succeed. The Cowboys of course did

very well too."

In 1967, the Chiefs lost the first AFL-NFL championship — it was then called the World Championship Game. Three years later, the Chiefs beat the Minnesota Vikings for the title.

By then, the championship game had been christened the Super Bowl. Hunt came up with the name while watching his children play with a SuperBall.

In 1972, Hunt became the first AFL figure to be inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and each year the Lamar Hunt Trophy goes to the

winner of the NFL's American conference.

Hunt long campaigned to let teams other than Dallas and Detroit play at home on Thanksgiving Day. To honor his effort, the NFL scheduled a third game on the holiday this year — in Kansas City. Hunt missed it, though, because he was in the hospital and couldn't get the game on TV.

For several years, Hunt also owned the minor-league baseball Dallas-Fort Worth Spurs, but his 1964 effort to bring major league baseball to the Dallas-area failed. Eight years later, the

Washington franchise moved to suburban Arlington and became the Texas Rangers.

In 1967, Hunt was one of 10 original founding partners in the Chicago Bulls basketball franchise. He was the last remaining original owner.

Also in 1967, Hunt started the first organized effort at a pro tennis tour with World Championship Tennis, and in 1968 he helped bring pro soccer to the United States with his Dallas Tornado of the old North American Soccer League.

More recently, Hunt and

his sons owned Hunt Sports Group, which manages Major League Soccer franchises in Dallas, Kansas City and Columbus, Ohio.

Hunt was part of H.L. Hunt's "first family" — the wildcatter had 15 children by three women.

Despite huge losses in the silver and oil markets, family members kept

much of their wealth protected by elaborate trusts, and their names have long dotted lists of the wealthiest Americans.

Counting pro football, Hunt has been inducted into eight halls of fame, including ones for soccer and tennis as well as the Texas Business Hall of Fame and the Kansas City Business Hall of Fame.

BOYS

Continued from 1B

game and I just told him I felt alone in this locker room. That's how I felt at that time. It was weighing a lot on my mind during

the course of the game. My mind really wasn't clear to play football."

T.O.'s season has followed the same arc as the team's record. He was mediocre early, then began putting up big numbers when Tony Romo replaced Drew

Bledsoe at quarterback.

"Winning cures a lot of things," Owens said.

Despite all that's happened, Owens said he is happy enough that he could envision finishing his career with the Cowboys.

"Oh, yeah, I definitely

would," he said. "Unless somebody knows something I don't know. ... I mean, I don't see any reason not to, you know what I mean?"

Well, there is that snitch still lurking.

"Yeah, that's my main part of frustration."

BOWLS

Continued from 1B

Bowl Matchup: East Carolina vs. South Florida — Line: S. Floria 4; USF minus the points.

Armed Forces Bowl
Fort Worth, TX
Amon G. Carter Stadium.
Dec. 23, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Utah vs. Tulsa — Line: Utah 2; Utah covers.

Hawaii Bowl
Honolulu, HI
Aloha Stadium.
Dec. 24, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Arizona State vs. Hawaii — Line: Hawaii -8; Hawaii at home.

Motor City Bowl
Detroit, MI
Ford Field.
Dec. 26, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Central Michigan vs. Middle Tennessee — Line: Central Michigan -10; Take the points.

Emerald Bowl
San Francisco, CA
AT&T Park.
DEC. 27, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Florida State vs. UCLA — Line: UCLA -4.5; UCLA covers again.

Independence Bowl
Shreveport, LA
Independence Stadium.
Dec. 27, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Oklahoma State vs. Alabama — Line: Oklahoma State 2; Cowboys minus the points.

Holiday Bowl
San Diego, CA
Qualcomm Stadium.
Dec. 28, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: California vs. Texas A&M — Line: California -5; Aggies cover.

Texas Bowl
Houston, TX
Reliant Stadium.
Dec. 28, NFL Network
Bowl Matchup: Kansas State vs. Rutgers — Line: Rutgers -7.5; K-State covers.

Champs Sports Bowl
Orlando, FL
Florida Citrus Bowl.
Dec. 29, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Purdue vs. Maryland — Line: Pick; Purdue.

Music City Bowl
Nashville, TN
The Coliseum.
Dec. 29, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Kentucky vs. Clemson — Line: Clemson -10; Kentucky with 10.

Sun Bowl
El Paso, TX
Sun Bowl.
Dec. 29, CBS
Bowl Matchup: Missouri vs. Oregon State — Line: Oregon State -3.5; Mizzou covers in El Paso.

Insight Bowl
Phoenix, AZ
Sun Devil Stadium.
Dec. 29, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Minnesota vs. Texas Tech — Line: Texas Tech -6.5; Get your guns up — Tech covers this year.

Liberty Bowl
Memphis, TN
Liberty Bowl.
Dec. 29, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Houston vs. South Carolina — Line: S. Carolina -6.5; Carolina covers.

Alamo Bowl
San Antonio, TX
Alamodome.
Dec. 30, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Texas vs. Iowa — Line: Texas -11; Take Iowa and the points.

MPC Computers Bowl
Boise, ID
Bronco Stadium.
Dec. 30, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Nevada vs. Miami — Line: Miami -3.5; Caines win big.

Meneke Car Care Bowl
Charlotte, NC
Bank of America Stadium.
Dec. 30, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Boston College vs. Navy — Line: Boston College -6; B.C. covers.

Check-Til-A Bowl
Atlanta, GA
Georgia Dome.
Dec. 30, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Virginia Tech vs. Georgia — Line: Virginia Tech -2.5; Hokies cover this season.

Gator Bowl
Jacksonville, FL
Gator Bowl.
Jan. 1, 2007, CBS
Bowl Matchup: Georgia Tech vs. West Virginia — Line: West Virginia -7; Yellow Jackets cover and win.

Cotton Bowl
Dallas, TX
Cotton Bowl.
Jan. 1, 2007, Fox
Bowl Matchup: Nebraska vs. Auburn — Line: Auburn -3; Nebraska in Dallas.

Outback Bowl
Tampa, FL
Raymond James Stadium.
Jan. 1, 2007, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Penn State vs. Tennessee — Line: Tennessee -4.5; Vols big.

Capital One Bowl
Orlando, FL
Alltel Stadium.
Jan. 1, 2007, ABC
Bowl Matchup: Arkansas vs. Wisconsin — Line: No Line; Arkansas.

International Bowl
Toronto, Canada
Rogers Centre.
Jan. 6, 2007, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Western Michigan vs. Cincinnati — Line: Cincinnati -8; W. Mich.

GMAC Bowl
Mobile, AL
Ladd Peebles Stadium.
Jan. 7, 2007, ESPN
Bowl Matchup: Southern Miss vs. Ohio — Line: Southern Miss -6.5; Ohio with points.

BCS GAMES
Rose Bowl
Pasadena, CA
Rose Bowl.
Jan. 1, 2007, ABC
Bowl Matchup: Michigan vs. USC — Line: USC -1; Michigan upset.

Fiesta Bowl
Glendale, AZ
Glendale Stadium.
Jan. 1, 2007, Fox
Bowl Matchup: Oklahoma vs. Boise State — Line: Oklahoma -7.5; Sooners.

Orange Bowl
Miami, FL
Dolphin Stadium.
Jan. 2, 2007, Fox
Bowl Matchup: Wake Forest vs. Louisville — Line: Louisville -10; Cardinals big.

Sugar Bowl
New Orleans, LA
Louisiana Superdome.
Jan. 3, 2007, Fox
Bowl Matchup: Notre Dame vs. LSU — Line: LSU -9; Irish with 9 points.

BCS Championship Game
Glendale, AZ
Glendale Stadium.
Jan. 8, 2007, Fox
Bowl Matchup: Ohio State vs. Florida — Line: Ohio State -7.5; Gators and 7.5.

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© 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

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

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THURSDAY

Table with 24 columns (stations) and 12 rows (times). Columns include WFAA (2) Dallas, KMIID (3) Midland, UNI (4) Spanish, KPEJ (5) Odessa, KOSA (7) Odessa, KTLT (8) Telemundo, KWES (9) Midland, WTBS (11) Atlanta, KMLM (12) Odessa, KPBT (13) Odessa, DISC (20) Discovery, AMC (21) Classics, SPIKE (22) Spike TV, TNT (23) Atlanta, BET (26) Black Ent., DISN (27) Disney, ESPN2 (28) Sports, ESPN (29) Sports, SCIFI (64) Science Fic.

DENNIS THE MENACE



"I'M WORKIN' ON BEIN' GOOD. CAN YOU GIVE ME A COUPLE MORE WEEKS?"

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

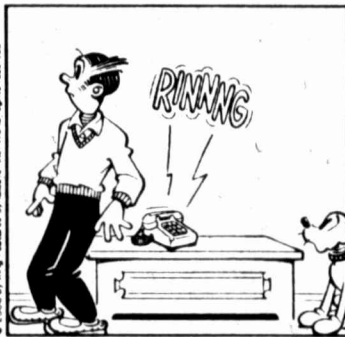


"I'm putting you out of business, Daddy."

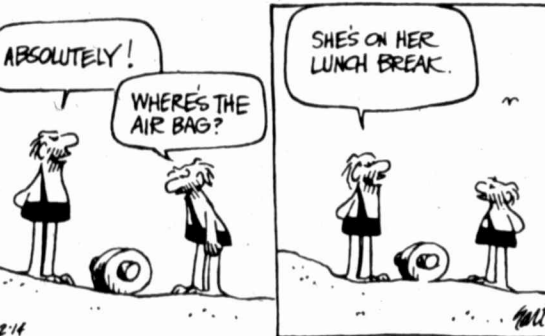
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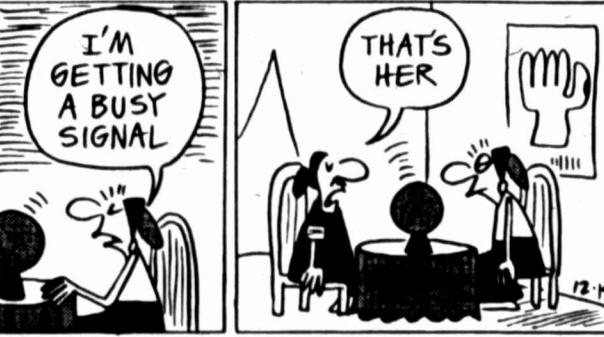
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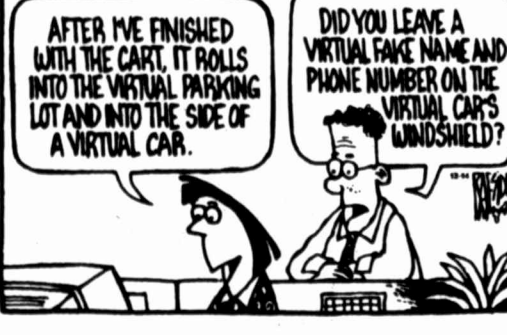
AGNES



HI AND LOIS



THE OTHER COAST



SNUFFY SMITH



BEEBLE BAILEY



This Date In History

Today is Thursday, Dec. 14, the 348th day of 2006. There are 17 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

- On Dec. 14, 1799, the first president of the United States, George Washington, died at his Mount Vernon home at age 67.
On this date:
In 1819, Alabama joined the Union as the 22nd state.
In 1861, Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, died in London.
In 1911, Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen and his group became the first men to reach the South Pole, beating out an expedition led by Robert F. Scott.
In 1939, the Soviet Union was dropped from the League of Nations.
In 1946, the United Nations General Assembly voted to establish U.N. headquarters in New York.

In 1962, the U.S. space probe Mariner 2 approached Venus, transmitting information about the planet.
In 1975, six South Moluccan extremists surrendered after holding 23 hostages for 12 days on a train near the Dutch town of Beilen.
In 1981, Israel annexed the Golan Heights, which it had seized from Syria in 1967.
In 1986, the experimental aircraft Voyager, piloted by Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager, took off from Edwards Air Force Base in California on the first non-stop, non-refueled flight around the world.
In 1995, Presidents Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia, Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and Franjo Tudjman of Croatia signed the Bosnian peace treaty in Paris.
Today's Birthdays: Jazz musician Clark Terry is 86. Former "60 Minutes" executive producer Don Hewitt is 84. Actor-playwright George Furth is 74. Actor Hal Williams is 68. Actress Patty Duke is 60. Pop singer Joyce Vincent-Wilson (Tony

Orlando and Dawn) is 60. Entertainment executive Michael Ovitz is 60. Actress Dee Wallace is 58. Rhythm-and-blues singer Ronnie McNeir (The Four Tops) is 57. Rock musician Cliff Williams (AC/DC) is 57. Rock singer-musician Mike Scott (The Waterboys) is 48. Singer-musician Peter "Spider" Stacy (The Pogues) is 48. Actress Cynthia Gibb is 43. Rhythm-and-blues singer Brian Auger and the Trinity (Soul For Real) is 31. Actress Tammy Blanchard is 30.
Thought for Today: "How the 'I' pervades all things!" - William Ellery Channing, American clergyman (1780-1842).

Answer to previous puzzle
NAMES MIRA WASP
EVADE ORAL ALTO
WAGONWHEEL LOAD
TSO SASS UTTERS
STOWED TUROW
ASEA SEEHRE
GOBI RICES IRAN
ELAL NOS TINY
TERI STOUT META
SONNETS PIMA
GYROS MENTAL
PEEWEE ORO UNO
ALTA WATERWORKS
DIAL ETTA EXILE
SELL DOOR DYNES

Newsday Crossword

PUZZLE, INC. by Donna Levin
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS
1 Gush
5 Lot unit
9 Oscar winner Berry
14 Well-thought-out
15 Better than fair
16 Ovine sign
17 Dress down
20 Essay
21 Unornamented
22 "Abracadabra!" equivalent
23 Anjou alternative
24 Butterfingers' exclamation
25 Kirk's vessel
30 Syrup choice
31 Business-envelope abbreviation
32 College in Troy, NY
35 Entreaty
36 Dagwood's dog
38 Diner display
39 Clinton or Kennedy: Abbr.
40 Gibson or Georgy follower
41 "Sour grapes" storyteller
42 Suzanne Somers sitcom
46 Jot
47 la Douce
48 Eastern French region
51 Tosca highlight
52 Air-safety org.
55 Problematic issue
58 Pantry staple
59 Hard to believe
60 Drop
61 One of Cotton-tail's siblings
62 Desperate Housewives role
63 Slosh through the surf
DOWN
1 Army drill instructor, often: Abbr.
2 40% of a full house
3 Partner of avarice and gluttony
4 Like Willie Winkie
5 Horrified
6 Strong-arm
7 Luxury-hotel amenity
8 Academic URL ender
9 Chignon affixer
10 Gunsmoke star
11 Prevaricates
12 For fear that
13 Petro-Canada competitor
18 Steakhouse order
19 Jazzy
23 Composer Bartok
24 Chooses, with "for"
25 Diamond judges
26 Back-to-school event
27 Beat
28 Train tracks
29 Pension-law acronym
33 Lowly worker
34 Cosby/Culp series
36 Atkins acolyte
37 Vicinity
38 Salt's rap partner
40 Bodega
41 King Abdullah's capital
43 Respite
44 Sewing group
45 Camden Yards player
48 Like many radios
49 Composer Schifrin
50 Wire punctuation
51 Way yonder
52 Crisis-relief org.
53 Like the Sahara
54 Pony up, in poker
56 Loc. for gamblers
57 Intimidate

13x13 crossword grid with numbers 1-61 indicating starting positions for words.

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Business Opportunity

THIS NEWSPAPER is not responsible for the specific content of the National Classified ads. Before investing money in a business/employment opportunity with which you are unfamiliar, please call the National Better Business Bureau at 703-276-0100 or visit www.bbb.org

Educational

SOUTHEASTERN CAREER INSTITUTE Midland Campus Act now for career training from Southeastern Career Institute - Midland. Train in Computer business Systems, Dental Assistant or Medical Assistant. 1-800-497-1557 www.scinow6.com 4320 W. Illinois Avenue, Suite A, Midland, TX 79703

Garage Sales

AVON CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE! 614 Dallas Street Sat., Dec. 16th 9a.m.-12p.m Other hours 2:00p.m.-6:00p.m. We have many gift giving ideas and stocking stuffers including makeup, skincare, fragrance, bath, jewelry and more! Credit Cards and checks welcome!

INDOOR SALE, 101 Airbase Rd. December 15th-? 9:00-6:00. Electrical, plumbing supplies, misc. hardware, furniture, household goods, Christmas decorations, and lots of miscellaneous.

Garage Sales

GARAGE SALE, 2613 Cindy. Friday, 9:00-? Saturday, 8:00-? Material, crafts, clothes, what-nots, cups, books, records, some collectors editions, Christmas items, coat rack, purses, shoes, lamps, speakers, toys.

GIGANTIC INSIDE Sale, 2710 S. Anderson. Christmas decor & gifts, tools, home decor, furniture, toys, name brand clothing, computer accessories, collectibles, linens & more! Friday, Saturday, 8:00-12:00, Sunday, 1/2 Price, 3:00-5:00.

Help Wanted

ARE YOU Bilingual? Are you interested in working for \$9.50 per hour. If so please call 432-264-2007 leave message.

BLAST MASTERS has a position available for: * Crew Technician Come by 1711 Snyder Hwy., and pickup an application. No phone calls please. Must have a valid TX drivers license and pass mandatory drug test.

Help Wanted

Apartments Maintenance needed. Apartment plus hourly wage. HBAC Certification required. Apply at 801 W. Marcy Drive. M-F 9am-5pm. EOE

BACKHOE OPERATOR with at least 1 year experience. Call or go by Rusty's Oilfield Service in Stanton. Call (432)756-2821.

Help Wanted

CLINE CONSTRUCTION is accepting applications for the following: General Laborers, Concrete Workers. Apply at 1807 N. FM 700, OR call (432)267-6006.

BUFFALO COUNTRY FINA now hiring for full time position. Experience preferred but will train. Apply at 4911 South Hwy 87. No Phone Calls.

DELL'S CAFE is looking for part time cook helper. Come by 1608 East 4th Street. Please No Phone Calls.

DRIVERS BE HOME DAILY. Coastal Transport is a leader in transport of LPG Asphalt & Petroleum Products. Coastal serves high profile accounts & needs dedicated professionals to join our growing team in Big Spring. Quality 23 with class A & One year driving experience. Inquire about Sign-on Bonus up to \$4000. Call Jay at 888-527-7221.

FULL TIME Recovery Driver needed, CDL required, willing to train. Pat Gray Towing and Recovery. Call (432)263-0582.

Help Wanted

DRIVERS: CDL-A Hot Oil, Vacuum Operators, Home Daily! Excellent Pay, Benefits! Great Company w/lots of work! C&W Transport 432-570-1911.

EZ PAWN now Hiring 2 full-time SLR's. Need to have High School/GED, pass background, drug test. Come in for application, 1010 Gregg.

HELP WANTED- We are looking for part time night Auditor. Starting pay \$6.00. Also need Full-time maintenance person. Experience in Commercial property. Starting pay \$7.50. Must pass back ground check. Please apply at Comfort Inn, 2900 E I-20. No phones please.

Denny's

NEEDED COOKS *SERVERS All shifts available Apply at: 1710 East Third Street E.O.E.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1988 which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis.

BUSINESSES & SERVICES \$1.89 Per Day; 6-Month Contract:\$1.58 Per Day Call 263-7331 to place your ad today!!

Grid of 48 small advertisements for various services including Auto Care, Auto Parts, Carpet, Concrete, Firewood, Heating & AC, Home Improvement, Janitorial, Lawn Service, Nail Salon, Pest Control, Plumbing, Rentals, Repairs, Roofing, Storage, Tree Trimming, Welding, and Windows.

Big S Thurs HOWAF now ac part-time lation cl to work will be 22nd. A experie public, ence an applicati ing libra MAKE U !! Lookir to man outside 19th th vestmen 10am th nation. 888-585 MATUR work in school. Part tim Apply in MEDICA needed from Ho Fax res or call 1- MIDWES now hir days. A Gregg. N NEED HVACR Spring a Ice Maci Willing to right per benefits paid vac sharing. sideratio 888-229 Cary. NEED desk p phone s and Dep cation a 1109 N. NEED part-time Apply in Grill, 24 NEW CH station n person. E-mail re tdworkk No Ca StarTek and com 501 Bi or D to f you fre a emp sca F C Wash or ca Fran Cent We' beco to ce Fedu Tom Franch Tax Sp Big Spr advances mitment, all empl Require Must be Must ha Must be backgro describe Benefits Plan, Life Please c 1701 A more inf Email re dopez@

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Help Wanted

HOWARD COUNTY Library is now accepting applications for part-time (30 hrs. week) circulation clerk. You must be able to work Saturdays. Applications will be taken until December 22nd. Accuracy, dependability, experience with working with public, and computer experience are required. Please pick application at 500 S. Main during library hours.

MAKE UP TO \$1,500 in 13 days!! Looking for enthusiastic adult to manage a fireworks stand outside Big Spring, December 19th thru January 1st. No investment required. Phone 10am thru 5pm for more information. 432-550-2264 or 888-585-9484.

MATURE CHRISTIAN adult to work in a private Christian Preschool. Experience preferred. Part time or full time available. Apply in person, 118 Cedar Rd.

MEDICAL RECORD Clerk needed full time. Experienced from Hospital or Doctors Office. Fax resume to 417-777-8459 or call 1-800-873-1831.

MIDWEST FINANCE CORP now hiring Part-time Help for days. Apply in person, 600 S. Gregg. No Phone Calls!



NEED AN experienced HVACR technician for the Big Spring area. Refrigeration and Ice Machine experience a plus. Willing to pay top dollar for the right person. Guaranteed work, benefits package, sick leave, paid vacation, 401K and profit sharing. For confidential consideration please call 888-229-1757 and ask for Tony Cary.

NEED EARLY Morning Front desk person. Computer & phone skills a plus. Honest and Dependable. Pick up application at Holiday Inn Express, 1109 N. Aylsford.

NEED EVENING Dishwasher part-time. Must be 16 yrs. old. Apply in person, Red Mesa Grill, 2401 S. Gregg.

NEW CHRISTIAN FM radio station needs full time sales person. Start immediately. E-mail resume to tdwork@gmail.com.

StarTek
Now hiring Customer Care Representative. StarTek offers great benefits and competitive pay. Come by 501 Birdwell Lane, Suite 30 or call 432-264-2700

DON'T PAY to find work before you get the job. For free information about avoiding employment service scams, write the Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580 or call the National Fraud Information Center, 800-876-7060.

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We're looking to hire and train people to become tax professionals. You'll learn to complete even the most complex Federal and State returns.
Tommy Richmond 1512 S. Gregg
Franchise Tax Specialist Big Spring, TX 79720
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Big Spring Correctional Center offers great opportunities for career advancement and is seeking qualified applicants with determination, commitment, and the desire to succeed. The appropriate training is provided to all employees.
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Benefits package includes: Medical, Vision, and Dental Insurance, 401k Plan, Life Insurance, Disability Plan and Tuition.
Please contact the Human Resources Department at: 1701 Apron Drive, Big Spring, TX 79720 or call 432-264-0060 for more information.
Email resume to: HYPERLINKmailto:diopez@cornellcompanies.com
diopez@cornellcompanies.com or fax to 432-264-6641.

Help Wanted

NEW PAIN MANAGEMENT Practice seeking a full time LVN/ Office manager and a Medical Assistant. LVN should have excellent communication and office management skills. An experienced medical office manager without LVN certification will also be considered. This is an excellent opportunity for a motivated team player. Computer skills needed. Medical assistant with good communication skills and good computer skills preferred. Spanish speaking is a plus. Good salary and benefits. Please e-mail your resume to drsaig@yahoo.com or Fax to 432-263-0151.

NIGHT OWLS - child care position 5:30 p.m.-midnight. Apply at Jack & Jill Child Care, 1708 Nolan.

NOW HIRING COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION JOB SUPERINTENDENT must be professional and experienced in all phases of construction. Drug test, pre-employment physical and travel required. Mail resume to: GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT PO BOX 60708 MIDLAND, TX 79711

NOW HIRING full time. Apply in person at Gill's Fried Chicken, 2100 S. Gregg. No phone calls please.

PARKPLACE RETIREMENT Living is seeking a late night front desk clerk. This position is shift work from 12:30am to 8:30am. 16 hours part time. Apply in person at 501 W. 17th. Street.

PARKVIEW NURSING & REHABILITATION Come join our team! Be part of our devoted staff providing resident care. Now Hiring for LVN's, which offers competitive pay, great benefits and a fantastic working environment. Apply in person at 3200 Parkway Rd.

PARKVIEW NURSING & REHABILITATION Be a part of our devoted staff providing resident care. Now Hiring for Certified Nursing Assistant's, which offers competitive pay, great benefits and a fantastic working environment. Looking for reliable and caring CNA's to join our team. Apply at 3200 Parkway Rd.

PIZZA INN NOW HIRING FOR ALL POSITIONS. APPLY IN PERSON AT 1702 GREGG. NO PHONE CALLS.

POLLARD CHEVROLET is taking applications for the parts department. Computer knowledge & experience in automotive preferred. Some heavy lifting. Benefits: Health & Life insurance, 401(k). Apply at 1501 East 4th St.

POST OFFICE NOW HIRING. Avg. Pay \$20/hour or \$57K annually including Federal Benefits and OT. Paid training, vacations. PT/FT. 1-800-584-1775 USWA Ref#6901.

START YOUR DAY EARNING EXTRA MONEY! Work 4:30a.m.-7:30a.m. at Jack & Jill Child Care. Apply in person at 1708 Nolan.

Help Wanted

STATE LICENSED, JOURNEYMAN ELECTRICIANS and HELPERS
Local Company Seeks Qualified applicants for LOCAL work. Paid holidays, Vacation and Sick Time. Weekends Off. All interested applicants, please phone (432)263-3939.

TexaStone Quarries is hiring full time laborers to work in the plant and also in the quarry. Benefits available. Apply in person 1400 Sherrod Road, Garden City or call 432-354-2569.

THE BIG Spring Independent School District is accepting applications for Full Time Evening Custodian. Benefits available. Apply in person at the Bus Barn. 3600 E. 11th Place. (432)264-4108.

The Martin County Hospital District of Stanton is seeking personnel for a housekeeper on an as needed basis. Please contact Paul McKinney, CEO or Alison Israel, CFO at 610 N. Saint Peter, Stanton, Texas or call (432)756-3345.

THE MARTIN County Hospital District of Stanton is seeking a Physician Assistant for employment in a Clinic. Please contact Paul McKinney, CEO or Alison Israel, CFO at 610 N. Saint Peter, Stanton, Texas or call (432)756-3345.

TRANSIT MIX CONCRETE MATERIALS COMPANY is now hiring MIXER TRUCK DRIVERS. CDL license is required. We offer competitive wages along with an excellent benefit package including medical, dental, 401(k) profit sharing and a pension plan. EOE/AA
Please apply in person at the following location:
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Helena Chemical Company, a national agricultural-chemical company, has an immediate opening for an experienced truck driver. This position will make deliveries, load and unload product, utilize a forklift, and perform general warehouse duties. Requires high school diploma or equivalent, CDL with HAZMAT endorsement. We offer an excellent working environment and outstanding compensation and benefits package. For consideration, please apply in person:
Helena Chemical Company
100 S. St. Peter
Stanton, TX 79782
Pre-employment drug screen required.
EOL M/F/V/H

WAREHOUSE/ DELIVERY Wanted for local Rental Store. Benefits include paid vacation, retirement & health insurance. Requirements are back ground check, drug screening, good driving record and be at least 21 years old. Starting pay \$8.50 per hour. Apply in person. Credit World, 1611 Gregg.

WIS INTERNATIONAL is now hiring for Inventory Clerks. Starting pay \$7.00/hr. up to \$9.00/hr. for Crew Managers and up to \$11.00/hr. for Team Leader. No experience required for inventory clerks. Must have some management experience for Crew Manager or Team Leader. All who are interested please call Natasha, (806)543-1778 or (806)793-2598.

VAN DRIVER. Apply at Jack & Jill Child Care, 1708 Nolan.

WANTED: 29 Serious people to work from home using a computer. Up to \$1500 or \$5000 PT/FT.
www.WorkNowNotLater.com

WAREHOUSE/ DELIVERY Wanted for local Rental Store. Benefits include paid vacation, retirement & health insurance. Requirements are back ground check, drug screening, good driving record and be at least 21 years old. Starting pay \$8.50 per hour. Apply in person. Credit World, 1611 Gregg.

WHY PAY Rent? 10x16 storage buildings. \$59.00 a month. Delivery/Financing. 432-563-3108.

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ESTATE AUCTION
Next auction: Saturday, December 16th, 2006.
View time starts @ 8:00AM. Auction starts @ 10:00AM.
1609 E. 4th, Big Spring, TX
For More Information Call **432-264-0822 or 432-466-3088**
Remainder of estate and others, furniture, kitchen items, linens, variety of figurines, angels, misc. tools, and lots more! End of year clearance auction! Too many items to list!
Don't miss this one!
Visit our website @ LittleValleyAuction.net
Little Valley Auction
Auctioneers: Eddie & Margaret Barber
TDL 15206 & 15207

Items for Sale

3 BUDGET gaming computers. 2 BFG 7600 GTOC PCI-Express, video cards SLI. 1 AMD 3200 + Processor, 939 Socket Athlon 64. 2 AMD 3700 + Processor, 939 Socket Athlon 64. Call (432)935-6191 or come by 2408 Alabama Street for more information.

DEMO- 5 to 6 person Hot-Tub \$79.00 a month. Delivery/Financing. 432-563-3108.

SHELLED PECANS. Pick up at the Fillin' Station, FM 700, Ezell-Key Feed or Big Spring Farm Supply or call (432)267-1180

SPECIAL PURCHASE - 12x24 Barn \$99.00 a month. Delivery/Financing available. 432-563-3108.

SPECIAL REDUCTION - 8x8 and 8x10 Display/ Demo Buildings. Will Deliver. 432-563-3108.

Lost and Found

FOUND 1 Chihuahua male and 1 female. Call (432)263-3108 to identify.

FOUND CHIHUAHUA puppy, male, between Lamar and Neighbors. Call (432)935-6599 to identify.

REWARD!! LOST: 2 female chocolate labs: in the area of FM 461 & 87. Orange collar on larger dog & bright striped collar on smaller dog. Please call (432)457-0164 if you have any info. Thanks!

Miscellaneous

ALL NEW Mattress Set, Full Size still in packaging. Sell for \$119. Call 432-349-4043.

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

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Tomorrow's Horoscope

BY HOLIDAY MATHIS
Hold a happy thought for your partners in life during this Libran moon — not only significant others, family and friends, but the people you depend on every day, like the checker in the grocery store or the mail carrier. We're all part of the human team, and there's always something we can do to help our team win.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). In order to be the best at what you do, you have to stretch into unknown territory. You may not see immediate positive benefits for your risk, but you can bet they're coming. Have faith.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Anyone can refrain from burning bridges, but it takes a special person



HOLIDAY MATHIS

like you to put in the maintenance required to keep those bridges in tip-top shape. After all, your network is one of your most significant assets.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It's not about what is coming to you, it's about WHO is coming to you — genuine, fun individuals, excellent company. Tonight's bonus: Romance makes you impervious to cold, hunger or just about anything unpleasant.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Be a communicator. The communicators not only create peace, they get all of the best perks and sweetest things in life. Be able and willing to understand what others are afraid of.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). If you're not getting what you want from a relationship, relax for a moment and take into consideration the 6 billion other humans you're sharing the planet with. Chances are, one of them could fill

your need.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You coolly withdraw from a frantic pace only to rejoin it again in a couple of hours. A little of this, a little of that makes for an even, successful mood. Life is just better when you approach each task in two-hour stints.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Your hidden agenda isn't so hidden anymore. If you've been unconsciously working against yourself, your inner foe is revealed and you can battle it out on a more conscious level. Change is inevitable.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Steer clear of the attention-hogs. You like good drama as much as the next person, but a mellow personal life allows you to pursue a truly exciting mission.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). People want you to like them, do business with them, befriend them. So you'll hear sweet compliments, but beware.

Flattery is like perfume. It's meant to be sniffed, not swallowed.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Not only are you doing something to help, you're doing it without being asked. And you're doing it first. This makes you the kind of friend people want on their side.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The stakes are high in this game. There is no time to waste in squishing your self-image, especially through feeling guilty. If you feel guilty, absolve yourself. And don't go looking for new reasons to feel guilty.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). After days of too many people around for too much of the day, you find yourself alone — what a joy. You spend the time as if solitude were a privilege. Others feel privileged to be with you, so why shouldn't you?

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "I'm a Libra who just got married to a Virgo. Everything that

could go wrong before the wedding did, and I was fearful that the stars were trying to warn us not to go through with it. We did, and the honeymoon was beautiful. But when we came back, his family, who had come from Egypt for the wedding, was still here. It was horrible. They were not how my husband had described them, but instead were pushy, loud, needy and rude, constantly standing over us, walking into our bedroom when the doors were closed and obviously thinking of us as a bank. They even opened some of our wedding presents! The worse part is that my husband wants them to move here, and some of his family is already scheduled to come visit every two years for two months. My husband says this is a part of his culture and he can't say no. I can't take it. I'm thinking of getting the marriage annulled. Should I? Is there a chance things can

change?"

I recommend the annulment. I can assure you that this Virgo man cherishes the traditions of his family and won't compromise on this matter.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: The Sagittarius heart is adventurous and open, so it is no wonder "The O.C.'s" resident cute boy Adam Brody fell head-over-heels for equally adorable co-star Rachel Bilson, both on screen and off. Like his gorgeous girlfriend, Brody wants to make the full-time leap to the big screen. With the upcoming "Smiley Face," Brody is poised to see his name more often on the movie house marquee.

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.

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Annie's Mailbox®: Advice for those in need

Dear Annie: My granddaughter, "Ingrid," is 21 and has been living in and out of her home since she was 17. Ingrid sometimes stays with us until she can work herself back into her parents' good graces. The last time was for six weeks. While in our home, Ingrid seldom takes, comes and goes as she pleases, and if we say anything about her behavior she argues until we get sick of it.

There are no drugs or alcohol involved. Ingrid just wants to do things her way with no concern for others. She certainly does not know how to communicate with her parents. I know Ingrid will be coming back here

soon. Our home is her last resort. Do I tell her how little she has been a part of the family, how many mistakes she has made and that her behavior is not acceptable? Should I say she is no longer welcome here? She doesn't have enough money to live on her own, and I'm afraid if we force her to fend for herself, she'll live in her car.

Her parents' marriage was not good when Ingrid was growing up, and I've always had compassion for this girl. I want the family to work on this together, but her parents don't feel the problem is their fault. I worry that Ingrid will just sink lower and lower. Can you help?



KATHY MITCHELL
MARCY SUGAR

— Grandma Rose
Dear Grandma: Counseling doesn't mean someone is at fault. It's a way to work on problems. Don't lecture Ingrid about past mistakes. Instead,

tell her you know she has the potential to be independent, self-reliant and successful. Offer to help her find a job and an apartment. (If she already has a job, she should be paying you rent.) Encourage her to take classes at a community college where she can better herself and take advantage of the counseling services. We think Ingrid will come around. Don't give up on her.

Dear Annie: I can sympathize with "Losing it in North Carolina," who found out about his wife's sexual past. Like him, my wife swore there was only one guy before me (that was 25 years of marriage ago). Last year, I found

out there were at least five others. I felt duped into marriage, but I have grown to accept that these things happened before we met. We've talked a lot in the past year, and I think our relationship is better now.

The problem is, I can't stop asking my wife about the details. I spend lots of time thinking of questions regarding her past. Not only does she not want to discuss any of this, she gets very angry whenever I bring it up. I told her this is my way of trying to come to grips with it. Is it OK to keep asking her about these details, or should I try to find some way to erase my memory? — Lost in Virginia

Dear Lost: Let's get one thing straight. You were not "duped" into marriage. Your wife's previous sexual life does not change the person you fell in love with. Second, stop asking for details. It's masochistic. We understand this is hard for you, and we commend you for trying to put the past behind you, but you need to talk to a professional so you can sort through your feelings and truly forgive.

Dear Annie: My husband just brought a notice home from work, wishing us a happy holiday season and giving us a gift certificate for the purchase of a food pantry in the company's name. The certificate is for \$10.

Annie, my husband has NEVER worked fewer than 50 hours a week. This is not a hard-pressed company. When a rich company abuses its hard-working employees, throws them scraps, then asks for them back, what kind of holiday spirit is that? — Exhausted in Wisconsin

Dear Wisconsin: Sounds like the holiday spirit of Scrooge. Still, there are others less fortunate than you. Since the certificate is for an amount you consider negligible, donating it would be an act of kindness.

Dear Annie: I never would have thought about writing to an advice column, but yours has caught my eye. I notice people ask truly heart-wrenching questions and get intelligent responses, so please help me. I cannot go to someone close to home without ruining my husband's reputation.

I have discovered that my husband has lied about his past. In fact, since I found out, I've noticed he does it quite a lot. He has lied about his

military service. He has lied about his life before I knew him. Now I see that he lies about stupid little things, like putting his car in the paper to sell, or whether he kissed me when he came to bed, or things that are so insignificant they are meaningless.

I have not confronted him, because I don't know how. I don't want him to feel as if I don't love him, because I do, and he will take any mention as a personal attack.

I don't understand how someone who is such a good dad and husband can be such a liar. How can he demand honesty from the people around him? How will I know when he is telling the truth about important things? My heart is broken. — Only Want The Truth

Dear Want The Truth: Chronic and compulsive lying is often a sign of antisocial personality disorder. This can be treated with psychotherapy and medication. Don't confront your husband, triggering his defenses. Instead, discuss it lovingly. Hold his hand when you say you've noticed he has trouble with the unvarnished truth. Explain that his lying hurts the entire family. His doctor can refer him to a therapist (he doesn't have to tell the doctor why), or he can find one through local hospitals. Therapy sessions are strictly confidential. Ask him to do this for the sake of his children, and let's hope he finds the courage to go.

Dear Annie: This is in regard to the letters about euphemisms for passing gas, "the other F-word." I prefer "heiny whistles," while my Italian husband's family likes "pootzes." Hope you're having fun with these. — Karen in Massachusetts

Dear Karen: Well, yes and no. But the readers seem to enjoy them. Here are a couple more:

From Maine: A while ago my husband and I created a humorous description for the body's normal passing of gas. We call it "Uranus Eruptus," which continues to crack us up every time.

Sarasota, Fla.: Our family has its own unique word for flatulence. We call them "prubs," which is "burp" spelled backward.

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.

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