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Christmas Edition
 DECEMBER 25 & 26, 2021

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Upcoming Events

Big Spring's Festival of Lights Christmas display in Comanche Trail Park, featuring more than 1 million light bulbs and Big Spring's famous lighted poinsettias on the dam, is open nightly from 6 to 10 p.m. through Dec. 25. Enter at the north entrance on U.S. Highway 87, across from Wal-Mart.

Senior Citizens Dances are held the third Friday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Dora Roberts Community Center. The next dance is Jan. 21. Entry fee is \$5 and includes a snack. For more information call 517-9097.

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THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

Gospel of Luke, Chapter 2, Verses 1-20

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria). And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which



Courtesy photo

Participants in this year's Drive Through Nativity at Big Spring's First Church of the Nazarene portray Mary, Joseph and shepherds in the stable following the birth of Jesus.

the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Salvation Army Angel Tree program a success

By **ROGER CLINE**
 Herald Staff Writer

Local citizens once again stepped up and helped the Salvation Army fulfill the Christmas wishes of local children and senior citizens... and this year, disabled persons... through their annual Angel Tree program.

The program, in which Christmas gift wishes are written on cards and hung on Christmas Trees to be taken by generous residents to fulfill those requests, went well, according to Major Pam Moretz of the Salvation Army.

"Very well. We're doing the stats now, actually," she said. "We came up with 571 individuals, over 200 families. That's including seniors. This year, we did something a little different: We did persons with disabilities. We call them "Silver Angels," that and the seniors citizens. Higginbotham took most of the senior citizens. Wal-Mart, United Groceries in Snyder, Back in Motion, Dr. Ward, the list goes on and on. We've got certificates

of appreciation that we're going to hand-deliver."

Moretz said credits the local community for its generosity in making the program a success.

"This is probably one of the most supportive communities that we've been involved with in 25 years of our officership," she said. "It's just nice to know that you have people who understand the mission, helping needy people without discrimination. We don't ask people about their lives. If they're in need and they have the right credentials, we apply for them. If they need housing or food, we have the pantry. We hook up with The Chalet if they need clothes."

Moretz's husband Dean, also a Major in the leadership of Big Spring's Salvation Army, agreed with his wife's assessment of the program.

"I'm pleased with the way Christmas is going, the Christmas campaigns. The Angel Trees - Pam is the guru on Angel Trees and what

See **ANGEL**, Page 3



Courtesy photo

Big Spring firefighters and Boys & Girls Club members helped deliver Angel Tree gifts for the Salvation Army

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Obituaries

Santiago "Jimmy" Abreo

Santiago "Jimmy" Abreo, 84, died Tuesday, December 21, 2021. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

jobs, according to the union.

The next steps remain highly uncertain for the president and his party, with Congress on recess for the holiday break.

The White House appeared to take interest in Manchin's and the centrist coalition's preference for a reimagined bill that would do far less but for longer than the bill passed by the House.

But it will be extraordinarily difficult for Democrats to rebuild trust in their ranks for a fresh round of negotiations, having devoted much of Biden's first year in office to what is now essentially a collapsed effort.

The package was among the biggest of its kind ever considered in Congress, unleashing billions of dollars to help American families nationwide — nearly all paid for with higher taxes on corporations and the wealthy.

For families with children, it would provide free pre-school and child care aid. There are subsidies for health insurance premiums, lower prescription drug costs and expanded Medicaid access in states that do not yet provide it. The bill would start a new hearing aid program for seniors. And it has more than \$500 billion to curb carbon emissions, a figure considered the largest federal expenditure ever to combat climate change.

A potential new deadline for Biden and his party comes with the expiration of an expanded child tax credit that has been sending up to \$300 monthly directly to millions of families' bank accounts. If Congress fails to act, the money won't arrive in January.

To all the people at Midway Baptist Church, thank you so much for the cards, visits, and phone calls to ask if there's anything I need. Your thoughtfulness is much appreciated. To all my friends in the community and to my beloved family, I'm grateful for your visits, your care and your concern. I am home recovering and hope to see you soon! Thank you to the medical and rehab teams who took good care of me these last few weeks.

God bless and love to you all--

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MEMBER 2021

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

Biden and Dems scramble to salvage social, climate package

By LISA MASCARO and FARNOUSH AMIRI

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden, along with progressive and moderate Democrats, appears determined to return to the negotiating table with Sen. Joe Manchin, the holdout Democrat who effectively tanked the party's signature \$2 trillion domestic policy initiative.

In the days since the West Virginia lawmaker gave a thumbs down on the package, delivering a stunning blow to months of negotiations on Biden's agenda, Democrats of the left and center have joined the White House in attempting to salvage the social services and climate change bill.

"We have worked too long and too hard to give up now, and we have no intention of doing so," Rep. Pramila Jayapal, head of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, said in a statement Wednesday.

Jayapal said she and members of the caucus have been in conversations with White House officials about the prospects of achieving the plan's goals through a combination of Biden's executive powers and legislation, instead of legislation alone.

"The legislative approach, while essential, has no certainty of timing or results," she said, "and we simply cannot wait to deliver tangible relief to people that they can feel and will make a difference in their lives and livelihoods."

At the same time, White House officials have spoken with Rep. Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., chair of the House's centrist New Democrat Coalition, on its plan to scale back the number of provisions but have them stay in effect longer. Manchin said he supports that approach.

But Republicans are voicing greater confidence now that they can beat back much of what they don't like in the package. "As we ended the year, it looks to me like they couldn't swallow the spinach," Sen. Mitch McConnell, the Senate Republican leader, said Wednesday of the Democrats.

Biden spoke Tuesday about the families who would benefit from the Democrats' ambitious, if now highly uncertain, plan to pour billions of dollars into child care, health care and other services.

"Senator Manchin and I are going to get something done," Biden said.

The president's off-the-cuff remarks were his first public statement since Manchin's announcement over the weekend that he would not support the bill, as is.

Since then, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer told Democrats on a 90-minute video call to expect a vote in January on the package.

Schumer told senators the party was "not giving up" on the proposal, according to a Democrat who was on the private call Tuesday and provided details on condition of anonymity.

But the Democrats face serious questions over whether the initiative can be refashioned to win Manchin's crucial vote and head off a devastating defeat for the party.

Manchin and his party are so far apart, his relationships so bruised after months of failed talks, it's unclear how they even get back to the negotiating table, let alone revive the more than 2,100-page bill.

All of that is encouraging to McConnell. "Now, I know Schumer said last night on a call he's not giving up," the Kentucky Republican told the Hugh Hewitt Show. "I don't expect him to do, but the worst of BBB, it appears to me, is dead." He used the shorthand for the Build Back Better plan.

Biden spoke forcefully of the economic pressures that strip away the "dignity of a parent" trying to pay the bills, and the assistance millions could receive from the federal government with the legislation. He also said his package would help ease inflationary pressures and pointed to analyses suggesting it would boost the economy.

"I want to get things done," Biden said. "I still think there's a possibility of getting Build Back Better done."

The setback has thrown Biden's top legislative effort into deep doubt at a critical time, closing out the end of the president's first year and before congressional midterm elections when the Democrats' slim hold on Congress is at risk.

Coupled with solid Republican opposition, Manchin's vote is vital on this and other initiatives, including the Democrats' priority voting rights legislation that Schumer also said would come to an early vote.

Schumer has said that if Republicans continued to block voting rights legislation in January, the Senate would bring forward proposals for changing the Senate rules, a Democrat on the video call said. That's a nod to long-running efforts to adjust or end the filibuster, which typically requires a 60-vote threshold for measures to advance.

While Manchin has said he cannot explain the bill to constituents in West Virginia, a union representing coal miners, including some of the nearly 12,000 from his home state, urged the lawmaker to "revisit his opposition" to the package.

Cecil Roberts, president of the United Mine Workers of America, outlined the ways the package would benefit union members, such as those in West Virginia, the most coal-dependent state in the country.

Some of those provisions would extend the current fee paid by coal companies to fund benefits received by victims of coal workers' pneumoconiosis, or black lung. The bill would also provide tax incentives to encourage manufacturers to build facilities in the coalfields, potentially employing miners who have lost their

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Roger's Reviews

Spider-Man: No Way Home



In "No Way Home," Holland's Peter Parker is still reeling from the situation we left him in at the end of 2019's "Spider-Man: Far From Home"... Mysterio (Jake Gyllenhaal) had just outed Parker as the Webslinger, and the world is agog, split right down the middle on whether our Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man is a good guy or a villain who did poor little Mysterio a grievous harm.

Peter, MJ (Zendaya), and Ned (Jacob Batalon) apply to several colleges, including M.I.T., but all three are turned down because of the ongoing hubbub over Spider-Stuff.

Peter goes to Doctor Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch) to see if the Sorcerer Supreme (wait, check that – apparently he lost that title when he got Thanos-snapped), er, the Wizard of Bleecker Street? can send him back in time to stop Mysterio from pulling the big reveal.

The good doctor, of course, no longer possesses the Time Stone by this, er, time...having surrendered it to be scattered across the universe from the other Infinity Stones...so he can't pull off the trick. Instead, he offers to make everyone forget about Parker's secret ID. A very funny scene follows as Strange begins casting that spell.

Suffice it to say it doesn't go as planned, instead cracking the barriers between universes and bringing a slew of old Spider-foes to say "Hi!" to the Holland version of the Web-Head, as well as a couple of familiar versions of Spidey.

Strange creates some magical holding cells in his

dungeon (er, basement) and charges Peter, MJ and Ned to track down the bad guys (I'll let you discover which ones, if you haven't already) to be zapped back to their home dimensions.

There is a lot of fan service in this movie. Again, won't go into detail, but we get a Secret ID Only appearance by at least one more superhero, who this actor has portrayed (if I recall correctly) only on a certain streaming service. We won't talk about the hero's other Silver Screen appearance, because it's bad. So...bad....

As far as the bad guys, we've got some tentacles (Alfred Molina), we've got some zaps (Jamie Foxx), we've got some Pumpkin Bombs (Willem Dafoe), we've got a pile of silicon (Thomas Haden Church), and we've got a humanoid reptile (Rhys Ifans).

It has plenty of action, but it also has a decent story too. If you're a Spider-fan, give "No Way Home" a look...and don't forget to stay for the mid- and end-credit scenes. We're looking forward to Doctor Strange 2 now. At least, I am. Eight and a half stars.

Spider-Man: No Way Home

Director: Jon Watts

Writers: Chris McKenna and Erik Sommers, "Spider-Man" by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko

Production companies: Columbia Pictures, Marvel Studios, Pascal Pictures, Sony Pictures.

PG-13; 2 hr. 28 min; Superhero; Dec. 17, 2021

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I honestly like Tom Holland better than either of the other live-action Spider-Men, though of course the voice acting by Shameik Moore and the animation in "Into the Spider-Verse" (2018) remains my favorite on-screen depiction of the Webbed Wallcrawler.

In the three Holland Spider-Man films thus far, he portrays the Amazing Arachnid as a young, naive teen full of wonder and concern for his friends, still learning how to cope with his powers and balance superheroing with school and, well, just life in general.

Here's a bit of synopsis, and watch out – I won't spoil the ending, but I will almost definitely spoil some things that come up before then.



ROGER CLINE

ANGEL

Continued from Page 1

we did there, and I do the Kettles and our goals and all our stuff here," he said.

Pam Moretz said the program will probably serve a few more local people for one reason or another.

"We'll probably wind up with a few more, because we're still getting calls. It's a perpetual program," she said. "Usually we're finished on distribution day, and then we have an overflow for people who just moved to town, or didn't get their application in because of COVID or some kind of health issue. We don't turn anybody away unless they're just being belligerent and we can't do anything. But that's few and far between."

Although not all the angel ornaments were adopted by generous individuals, local organizations stepped up

"They were not all adopted. But we had some organizations...The hospital did a lot. Delek – they just bought gifts, and then we made a little Toy Shop area a week ago and shopped for those that didn't get chosen off the trees. So everybody got something," she said. "This year, we did the entire family. Mom and dad got a food box, a ham...and a robe or slippers or something that they didn't know they were going to get. And then the kids."

Among local organizations that stepped up

in addition to those she already mentioned, Big Spring's YMCA, Star Dodge and Scenic Mountain Medical Center came through in a big way.

Moretz credits Dathan Jones of the "Y" with outstanding generosity.

"They called and said, 'What do you need?'" she said. "We had a family that nobody bought bikes for, and I said, 'Would it be too much to ask to get three bikes for teenagers, and headphones, and underclothes? Underclothes of all sizes.' And he went and got it all, and we delivered it. I couldn't believe it."

Scenic Mountain Medical Center also contributed to a lot of Howard County's residents.

"Not only did they do about 3000 pounds of food they also took an angel tree and sponsored that too," she said.

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Opinion

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-FIRST AMENDMENT



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CHRISTMAS TIME WITH DONNIE, LUM AND ABNER

By Tumbleweed Smith

Special to the Herald

When Donnie Pitchford of Carthage was in college, the campus radio station played old time radio programs. Donnie became a big fan of Lum and Abner, a radio show that was on the air from 1931 to 1954. The program began with the ringing of an old timey telephone. Lum picks up the phone and says, “Jot ‘em Down Store. This is Lum and Abner.” It dealt with life in the small town of Waters, Arkansas near where the two creators of the show, Chester Lauck and Norris Goff grew up. In 1936, due to the popularity of the program, Waters changed its name to Pine Ridge, the name of the fictional town in the series.

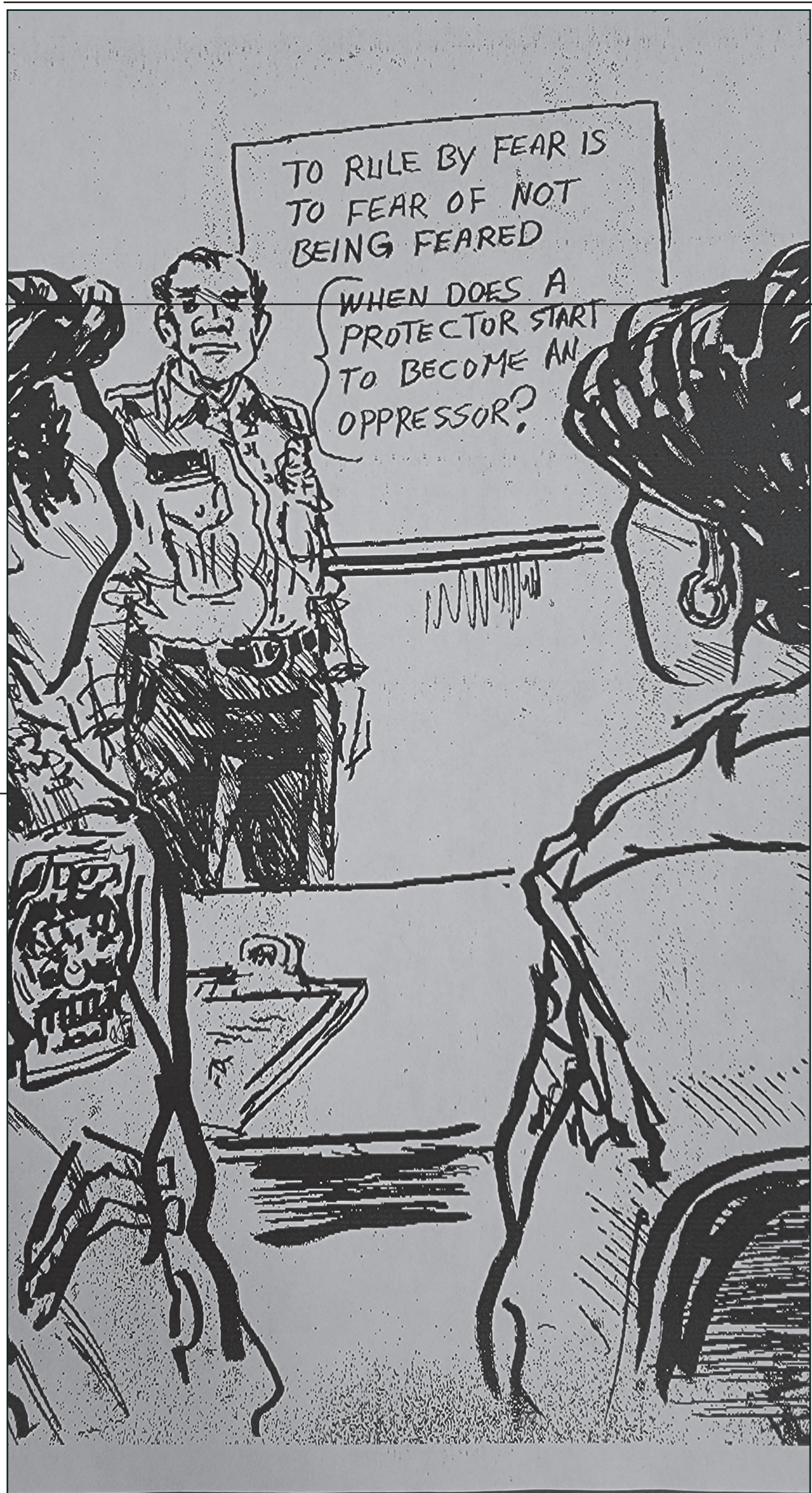
For ten years Donnie has produced a Lum and Abner comic strip, syndicated to newspapers and magazines nationally. “I do it weekly,” says Donnie. “It’s a traditional pen and ink comic strip. We started out producing an audio version for our blind friends, using character voices, music and sound effects. So we re-create in audio what the comic strip depicts every week.” His comic strip and audio version are on lumandabnercomics.com. “We’ve got people in their 20s, 30s, 40s, not just the people who remember the old radio show. We’ve got young peo-

ple who are discovering these characters.”

Of the 5,000 programs, two have stood the test of time and are now repeated over some media outlets. One is the Thanksgiving episode. The other is the Christmas program which originally began with the announce saying, “We invite you to listen to Lum and Abner’s Christmas Story.”

Donnie says it is classic radio. “In 1933 the Lum and Abner program had been on the air just 2 years. They wrote a little story for Christmas and broadcast it on Christmas Eve. It was designed around the symbolic story based on the birth of Christ. The program featured a poor man and his pregnant wife that had sought refuge from the winter weather in an old barn and Lum and Abner heard about it, called the doctor and headed for the barn, which was hard to find. “Where about is the east star,” asked Lum. Abner replied, “It’s right ahead of us. We’re going in the right direction.” Lum said, “We’ll just follow the east star, that’ll lead us to it.” Donnie says instead of the 3 wise men it is Lum, Abner and Granpap going to an abandoned barn to help this young couple. At the end of the program the doctor comes to the door and tells the 3 men waiting outside, “It’s a fine baby boy.”

Donnie says that show was so popular they re-performed it every year live until they went off the air. You can find it easily on line. Donnie, an artist and sculptor, was honored to write some Dick Tracy strips and introduced Lum and Abner to Dick Tracy. Donnie does all the production on the audio version, using voices sent to him by email from actors in several states. Donnie taught audio and video production in high schools for several years.



DAILY PRAYER

Thank You, Lord, for Your gentle understanding of us. May we be gentle with others. Amen

Do you have a passion for writing? Do you want to share your work with others? Submit your column for consideration to editor@bigspringherald.com.

Second Time Around

By **STEVE BELVIN**

Contributing Writer

I don't really know what's going on, but they've got something cooking down the road in Ackerly. It smells good and the rest of the Texas basketball world is catching a whiff of it. The Sands Mustangs are the No. 1 Class A girls basketball team in the land, according to the Texas Association Basketball Coaches poll.

Ben Connell is in his second stint as basketball coach for Sands. His first time he went six years. After a five year stop at Lubbock Roosevelt, he is now in his seventh year at Sands this time around. "I'm a South Texas kid, but I just like it down here in this part of the country," said Connell. "I have four kids and I've raised them here. I have a freshman daughter, Haley. She's more of a runner though. I like the values they have here at the school and the community. The kids respect and respond to the coaches. They listen and they're good athletes."

Connell, who also doubles as the track coach, started brewing his winning recipe in the spring of last year. The Mustangs shocked the track scene by scoring 48 points and winning the state Class A track meet. "We hadn't won a meet all year and then we win state. We did it with relays," said Connell.

Sands won the 800 and 1,600 meter relays and Landry Morrow finished second in the 300 hurdles. Me-a Gonzalez graduated but Morrow, Elysa Martinez and Lili Porras return for their senior years. They are the catalyst for a Sands team that has its sights on a state championship run in basketball. That and the fact that Connell has it set up like this.

He knew he had a solid team coming back so he prepared for a long playoff run by scheduling the toughest competition he could come up with. He had to play the price. Fourteen of the Mustangs home game have been on the road, yet they are still 14-2, losing only to Sudan 43-42 and Canadian 48-45. Oh yea, Sudan is ranked in the top 10 in Class 2A and Canadian is ranked number 1 in Class 3A.

Larger schools like Greenwood, Frenship, Monahans and Fort Stockton have felt the wrath of Sands as well as smaller school heavyweights like New Home and Nazareth. The women from Nazareth has won more state titles than anybody in Texas.

"Nobody wants to go to a Class A team's gym and get beat," said Connell.

So it's needless to say most bigger schools don't want a small school com-

ing into their home court and smashing them. There for it's hard to schedule quality games.

Connell said his "big three" are such competitors and it rubs off on their teammates. "Landry (Morrow) is a coach's dream. She's a great athlete, she works hard every single day. She's, an unbelievable defender and a strong rebounder," Connell said.

"Martinez is our scorer. She's the quarterback. She's 5-foot-6 and plays 6-3. She spends a lot of time in the gym. Porras is the defensive player of the year. In fact all of these kids love to play defense and rebound. If anyone likes to see a team that plays aggressive man-to-man defense I suggest they come out and watch this team play a game."

Don't be alarmed if the game isn't in Ackerly.

MIGHTY MIGHTY WILDCATS

Congratulations to the Westbrook Wildcats in winning the Class A state football championship as they defeated the May Tigers 72-66 last week. Kudos to coach Homer Matlock, a Westbrook native, for leading the Wildcats to the promised land.

Westbrook as done very well in sports in recent years. Last year the Lady Wildcats were defeated by Nazareth in the state basketball semifinals.

This is the second team championship a school from Mitchell County (Colorado City, Loraine, Westbrook) has ever won. Before Intercell, Wallace, playing in in the Prairie View Interscholastic League, for black schools only, won four state boys basketball titles in 1959, 1960, 1962 and 1966. Their team mascot name? Wildcats.

CHRISTMAS WISH LIST

Dear Santa. All I want for Christmas is the Dallas Cowboys to get into the playoffs and win at least one playoff game. Gotta start somewhere.

For my beloved Oklahoma Sooners to clean Oregon's clock in the Alamo Bowl, earning interim coach Bob Stoops one more victory, closing out Lincoln Riley's tenure at OU on a positive note.

For a new football coaching staff at my ala mater Colorado City. One that can break the 1-29 funk we're in.

Merry Christmas everyone.

No makeups for CFP semis if team can't play due to virus

By **RALPH D. RUSSO**

AP College Football Writer

If a team is unavailable to play in College Football Playoff semifinals because of COVID-19 issues, the game will be forfeited and the available team will advance to the championship game.

With COVID-19 cases spiking across the country due to the omicron variant, the CFP announced Wednesday contingency plans for the semifinals and national championship game, which is scheduled for Jan. 10 in Indianapolis.

No. 1 Alabama is scheduled to face No. 4 Cincinnati in the Cotton Bowl in one New Year's Eve semifinal and No. 2 Michigan is set to play No. 3 Georgia in the Orange Bowl in the nightcap of the CFP doubleheader.

Not long before the CFP announced its contingency plans, Alabama announced offensive coordinator Bill O'Brien and offensive line coach Doug Marrone had tested positive for COVID-19 and were isolating with mild symptoms.

Also, Texas A&M became the first team to drop out of a bowl game, citing COVID-19 issues and season-ending injuries as the reasons it would not have enough available players for the Gator Bowl against Wake Forest on Dec. 31.

As college basketball faced a wave of cancellations and postponements due to the omicron surge over the last week, it seemed only a matter of time before it impacted bowl season.

"As we prepare for the Playoff, it's wise and necessary to put into place additional precautions to protect those who will play and coach the games," College Football Playoff Executive Director Bill Hancock said in a statement. "These policies will better protect our students and staffs while providing clarity in the event worst-case scenarios result."

The contingency plans were agreed to by the CFP management committee, comprised of the 10 FBS conference commissioners and Notre Dame's athletic director.

While there will be no rescheduling of either semifinal, the championship game could be delayed until as late as Jan. 14.

If a team cannot play in the title game, the available team will be declared national champion. If neither team has enough available players by Jan. 14, the championship will be considered vacated.

For the semifinals, if both teams scheduled to play each other are unavailable, that game shall be declared a no contest and the winner of the the other semifinal will be declared national champion.

If three semifinal teams are unavailable to play on Dec. 31, the team that is able to play will be declared national champion.

Semifinals participants were scheduled to arrive

at their bowl sites as soon as Christmas Day and no later than Dec. 26.

Now all bowl activities will be optional and the teams are permitted to arrive at their sites as late as Dec. 29.

Earlier this week, Alabama coach Nick Saban said more than 90% of his team was vaccinated with a booster shot, and players were being allowed to go home for a few days before the defending national champion Tide traveled to Dallas on Dec. 26.

"We give them a care package with everything they need to say safe, and we have implemented all the protocols here since we've been back that we had last year in terms of wearing masks to meetings, washing hands, social distancing in meetings," Saban said. "And we are encouraging the players to do that when they leave here. So we're really putting the protocols in place that we used a year ago, which was helpful to us."

At Michigan, the plan was for all the players to get booster shots as a team on Wednesday.

"I think everyone understands the gravity of the situation, to have an outbreak now would be devastating to a lot of people," offensive lineman Andrew Stueber told reporters Tuesday. "Understanding the concern there is a big thing, so we've taken the proper precautions there."

The vaccination rates among college football teams are purportedly much higher than the general population. Many coaches boasted about how the vast majority of their players had been immunized before the season — including Georgia's Kirby Smart and Michigan's Jim Harbaugh.

Most schools have been operating under guidelines that do not require regular surveillance testing of vaccinated individuals. Only those who show symptoms are required to be tested for COVID-19, and vaccinated individuals were no longer subjected to long quarantines after being exposed to an infected person.

The CFP policies said schools would be allowed to use whatever protocols they used during the season, leading up to the games

"The director of athletics and the institution's chief medical officer must certify that each person with access to the playing field on game day has tested negative for COVID-19 within 72 hours of the kickoff or has been fully vaccinated," the policy said.

The high vaccination rates helped major college football sail canceled the regular season with no games being canceled or postponed, unlike last year when the disruptions were constant.

Last season, more than 100 regular-season games were postponed or canceled because of COVID-19 issues with one or both teams, and only 25 bowl games were played out of the 42 that had been originally scheduled.

The College Football Playoff was completed without delays.



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

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MOMMA
by MELL LAZARUS

FRANCIS, LOOK AT ALL THE AWARDS AND TROPHIES YOUR BROTHER, THOMAS, WON IN HIS LIFETIME!

IT'S A SHAME YOU NEVER HAD A MOMENT OF GLORY. MOMMA, I'VE HAD A MOMENT OF GLORY! I HAVE A TROPHY!

YOU? YES! I ALWAYS KEPT IT IN THE CLOSET...

HERE... MODESTLY HIDDEN FROM VIEW... IT'S FOR "SCHOLASTIC EXCELLENCE"!

CHECK IT OUT, MOMMA. AN ACTUAL TROPHY! IT'S...

JUST A SECOND, IT'S GOT THOMAS' NAME ON IT! SURE.. -AND COPPING IT FROM HIM WAS A REAL MOMENT OF GLORY!

GEE... MOMENTS OF GLORY DON'T GROW ON TREES, MOMMA...

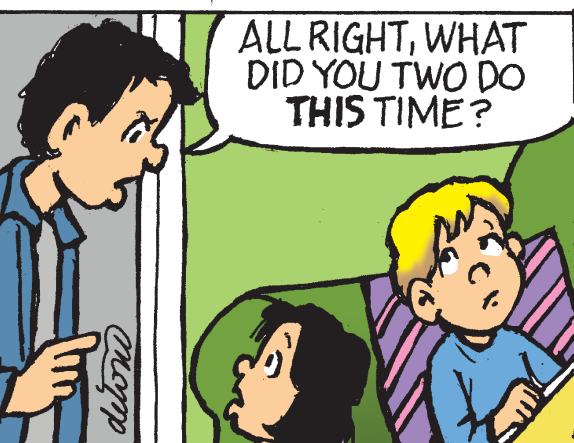
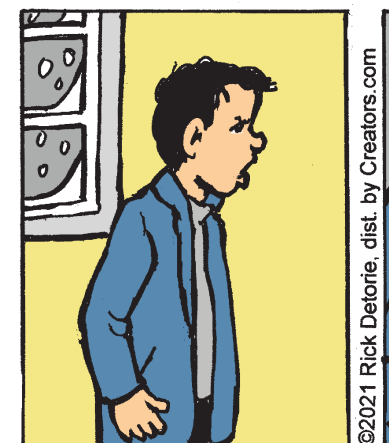
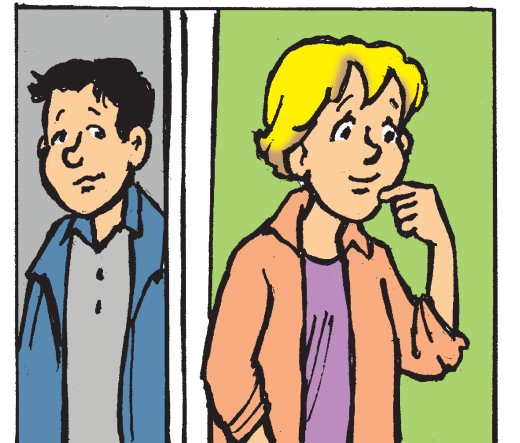
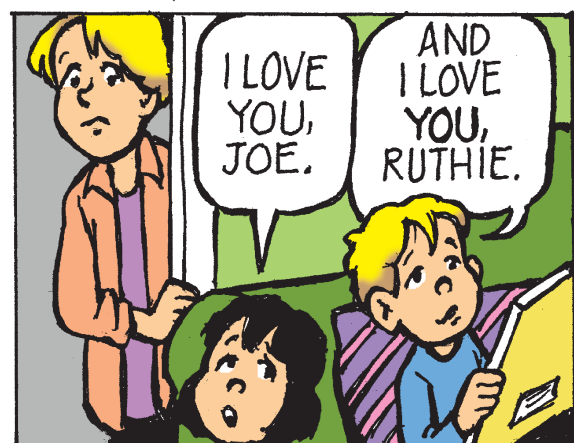
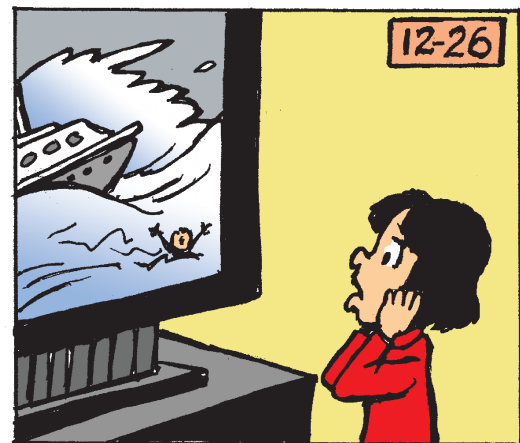
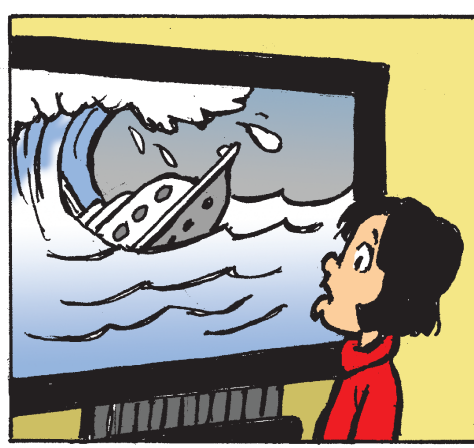
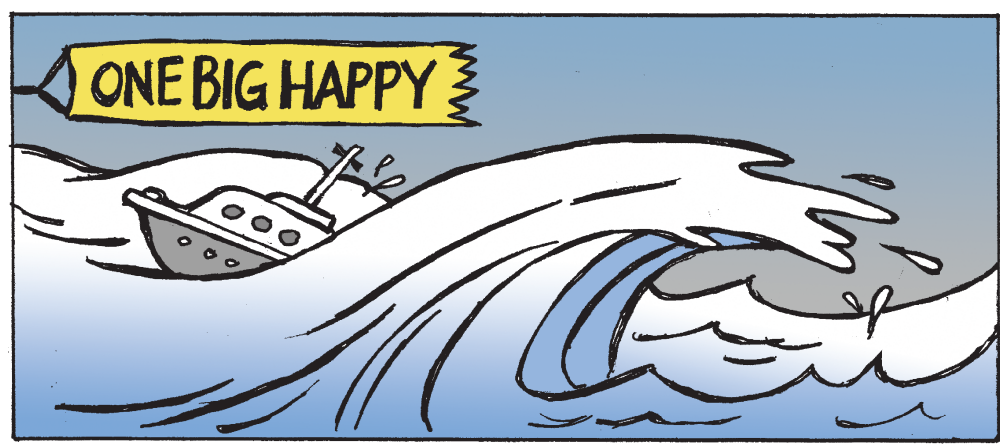
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Agnes
by TONY COCHRAN

I AM GOING TO BE A METEOROLOGIST. YOU MEAN "WEATHER GIRL"?

YOU MAKE IT SOUND SO PEDESTRIAN. ...AND YOU MAKE IT SOUND SO HOOTY-SNOOTY.

IS THIS AT LEAST THE RIGHT MAP? THAT'S A CHOCOLATE STAIN ON A BEACH TOWEL.



ANDY CAPP

by Smythe



GOLDSMITH & GARNETT

US probes potential of drivers playing video games in Teslas

By TOM KRISHER

AP Auto Writer

ATHENS, Ohio — The U.S. has opened a formal investigation into the potential for Tesla drivers to play video games on a center touch screen while the vehicle is in motion.

In a document posted Wednesday on its website, the agency says the feature, called "Passenger Play," may distract the driver and increase the risk of a crash.

"To date, the agency has received one owner complaint describing the gameplay functionality and has confirmed that this capability has been available since December 2020 in Tesla "Passenger Play"-equipped vehicles," a NHTSA spokesman said in an email. "Before this time, enabling gameplay was only possible when the vehicle was in park."

The probe, which covers all four Tesla models, the S, X, Y and 3, was opened "to evaluate the driver distraction potential of Tesla 'Passenger Play' while the vehicle is being driven." Investigators "will evaluate aspects of the feature, including the frequency and use scenarios of Tesla "Passenger Play."

The probe by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration covers about 580,000 electric cars and SUVs from model years 2017 through 2022.

The NHTSA documents do not list any crashes or injuries caused by the problem.

An investigation can lead to a recall. A message was left early Wednesday seeking comment from Tesla, which has disbanded its media relations department.

Tesla owner Vince Patton, who lives near Portland, Oregon, filed the complaint with the agency last month. In August, he was watching a YouTube video of a Tesla owner who discovered that he could now play a video game on his touch-screen while the vehicle is moving.

Curious to see for himself, Patton drove his own 2021 Tesla Model 3 to an empty community college parking lot, activated a game called "Sky Force Reloaded" from a menu and did a few loops.

"I was just dumbfounded that, yes, sure enough, this sophisticated video game came up," said Patton, a 59-year-old retired broadcast journalist who lives near Portland, Oregon.

He tried Solitaire, too, and was able to activate that game while driving. Later, he found he could browse the internet while his car was moving.

Patton, who loves his car and says he has nothing against Tesla, worries

that drivers will play games and become dangerously distracted.

"Somebody's going to get killed," he said. "It's absolutely insane."

So he filed the complaint early last month.

"NHTSA needs to prohibit all live video in the front seat and all live interactive web browsing while the car is in motion," Patton wrote in his complaint. "Creating a dangerous distraction for the driver is recklessly negligent."

Earlier in December, Mercedes-Benz issued a recall for a similar issue caused by a computer configuration error, raising questions about whether Tesla was being allowed to do something that other automakers are not. Most automakers disable front touch screens while vehicles are moving.

In the Mercedes case, drivers could browse the internet or watch television while the cars were moving. The automaker said it intended to disable the features while the cars are in motion. The issue was corrected by updating a Mercedes server.

NHTSA already is investigating why Tesla's "Autopilot" partially automated driving system keeps crashing into stopped emergency vehicles, and it has inquired about why Tesla didn't file recall documents when it did an over-the-air internet update in an effort to address the safety problem. It's also looking into the performance of Tesla's "Full Self-Driving" software after getting a complaint that it nearly caused a crash.

Tesla says neither system can drive vehicles and that drivers must be ready to intervene at all times.

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BETTER HEARING IN 30 DAYS OR YOUR MONEY BACK

Tumbleweed Smith: A Tribute

By BJ MAYO

Wednesday October 6th, 2021 reminded me of another day in time in the early seventies at a pool hall in Big Spring, Texas. A friend asked me to accompany him to the old Cue and Triangle Billiard Hall where he was to teach me how to play a game called snooker. Although I do not remember exactly how the game was played, I do remember a man that was racking balls called Mr. Mac. He was very mild mannered and friendly when we would call for a rack. For some reason, I agreed to play him a game. "It will only hurt a minute or two" he said. Ferociously competitive at that age, the challenge was accepted. This man appeared to be in his mid to late seventies and I was a young man of 17.

This man's glasses were quite thick as I remember and it was improperly concluded on my part that he would have a hard time playing the game. The lesson he demonstrated on the snooker table was beyond amazing and I was left to mostly sit and watch while he slammed balls into the small pockets. When he did not have a good shot, he was deft at hiding the cue ball behind another ball.

Needless to say, it hurt for more than a minute of two as Mr. Mac said. My friend giggered me about it for a long time.

Forty-nine years later, here I sat in a parking lot eating fried chicken and waiting to interview a Texas broadcasting legend at his home. Bob Lewis (Tumbleweed Smith) and I met at the Big Spring Heritage Museum a month or so prior. A close friend called him and told him I had just written a novel and Tumbleweed called me to schedule an interview. He was very relaxed, charming and quite full of questions surrounding the details of the book. After the interview was complete, I asked him if he would allow me to interview him some day. Now, that day had arrived. The old Cue and Triangle feeling welled up in my gut as I finished eating my chicken and nervously watching my watch. Mr. Mac was a master at snooker. Tumbleweed Smith was a master interviewer and broadcaster with over 13,000 interviews and counting, with over fifty-years under his belt and numerous awards and credits to his name. His melodic voice reminded me of water trickling over rocks in a stream or maybe a slight wind moving through the pines. His unique ability to gain personal insight into the lives and activities of anyone he interviewed had always amazed me. His interviews cover literally thousands of subjects and diverse subject matter from a pig calling DA, to a beer drinking goat named Clay Henry from Lajitas, Texas. His relaxed interviewing style is so good, he can coax the most intricate of detail from the folks he interviews. Now, it was my turn. Apprehensive might be a good choice of words as I pulled into his driveway.

Tumbleweed greeted me at his front door at 1:00 p.m. sharp with a strong handshake. "BJ, I am so glad you are here".

We made our way to a living room next to his outdoor deck overlooking the beautiful southwest portion of Big Spring.

All of my inhibitions were swept away as soon as the first question was asked.

Question: I do not know what questions you could possibly ask Tumbleweed Smith. Who was your biggest influence in broadcasting?

Just out of the Army, I went to an advertising agency in Waco working for \$1.00 an hour. I was hired for six weeks and got to stay for seven weeks. I was making \$6.00 a day. When my old college roommate called and asked me to come to Big Spring, Texas I agreed to do so. That is where I got started in radio. My personal philosophy is to never worry about what is ahead. I just know that whatever it is, it is going to be ok. That is how I live my life.

Question: Would you change anything about the path you took?

Good gosh no. I grew up working in a grocery store. That is hard work, man. This job I have had for over fifty years, it is not work. It is what I enjoy and I get paid for it.

Question: I look at your website from time to time and I simply cannot keep up with you because your so busy. Is retirement and option?

Retirement? That word is not in my vocabulary. I want to die with my boots on doing what I am do-

ing. This is not work. Interviewing people, driving around beautiful Texas. It is enjoyable and enriching. I have never thought about anything else.

Question: Your new one-man show. "Outrageous Texas Women of Character" was first put on in Fort Davis on July 3, 2021. My wife and I were fortunate enough to get to see it. It was hilariously funny. What is your go-forward plans for this show and how can folks get their hands on it?

Well, I have changed it up a little and presented it to a lady's club and will be presenting it again in Midland in February, 2022. I hope they are receptive to it.

I do not see how they could not. I noticed you have a great affinity and respect towards women. Your closing remarks in Fort Davis were very reflective of how you feel towards them.

Thank you. Most of the adjectives I used in that closing describe my wife, Susan.

Question: I know you love music. Who is your very favorite Texas musician that you have interviewed?

Jody Nix. Without a doubt. Besides that, he is a good friend. We have a good time together.

Question: Did you know Hoyle Nix?

Indeed, I interviewed him as well.

Hoyle Nix played with Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys as I recall. The Stampede has been out on the edge of Big Spring for a very long time. I have never been inside the doors but was raised with a bunch of guys that did. Their statements to me were that Hoyle did not like foul language, especially during when the Cotton Eyed Joe was played.

Question: What is your favorite music genre and song?

My favorite song? "Tenderly" by George Shearing

My favorite musician: Stan Kenton (Jazz). Big band.

Question: So, you like big band, orchestra type music?

Yes.

Question: Do you and Susan dance?

She does and she wishes I did. I am not a very good dancer.

We also have a symphony orchestra here in Big Spring that we have worked with for over forty years. We do advertising for the symphony, the rodeo and the Howard County Fair. Most of the big events here in town. Billboards and magazines. Just advertising in general.

Susan runs our advertising agency: Multi-Media Advertising. She is a better writer than I am, a better actor than I am and has a better sense of humor. She just about outdoes me in every way.

Yes, I think that is true for each of us as far as our wives are concerned.

Question: You have done over 13,000 interviews to date. You have been doing this for over fifty years. I did a little calculating and that equates to two-hundred and sixty interviews per year. With that said, how many speaking engagements do you handle in an average year?

Oh, maybe eight to twelve. Here lately, with covid, it has only been two or three.

Question: With your previous and current schedule, how many miles would you estimate you drive in a given year?

Well, when I first started it was about 200,000 miles per year. Now, it is about 36,000-40,000 miles per year. Now when I first started, I would go to Amarillo and get one interview and then to Del Rio and get another. Now, I go to one place and get three to four. I have streamlined it a lot. It cuts down on the driving quite a bit. When I started, it was a great time to get started. My gosh. LBJ had just left the White House. I never interviewed him but I did send him an album I made. He sent me back a thank you response on how much he enjoyed it.

At that particular time, the Texas Chili Culture was emerging and the Texas Folklife Festival was just getting started. The Chili festival was in Terlingua and the Texas Folklife Festival was in San Antonio. The Hill Country was just brimming with these characters. I would go to the Folklife Festival and get twenty interviews. It was really easy. I would get a dozen or so interviews at the Chili Festival and capitalize on some of these state wide events. I got to interview some of Texas most prolific characters. Hondo Crouch, Ace Reid.....

Question: You got to interview Ace Reid?

Yes, many times. I practically lived with him when I was in the Hill Country. I stayed at his place. The Draggin S Ranch. He had a little office built over a stream and I would stay there. I never saw Ace stay there. I asked him where he did his "Cowpoke" cartoons. He laughed and said "I do them at 4:30 in the afternoon on my bed while watching "Hogan's Heroes".

I also interviewed Elmer Kelton. I was asked to

do a eulogy when he passed but did not actually get to do it.

That alone is very big in itself. In 1995, Western Writers of America named him the "greatest Western author of all time."

Question: How many years have you and Susan been married?

We have been married 58 years. We were married August 26, 1963. We were married in El Paso. The next morning, we got on a train and went to Chihuahua, Mexico then went on down to Mazatlan, on the train.

Question: Is it as safe today as it was then in Mexico?

Oh, we use to go down there every five years or so. Beautiful drive. If we got tired, we just pulled over and took a nap in the woods. I would not do that now, of course.

I went to school in Monterrey. I lived with a family there while in school. It was the summer of 1956 between my junior and senior years while I was at Baylor University. My college roommate and I went down there and lived with a family. We took a course in Spanish.

Question: Do you still speak Spanish?

I am not very good but I get by. Yes.

Question: If you could pick the top three interviews in your life that you remember the most, what would they be?

Ace Reid. Hondo Crouch and Hallie Stillwell (Justice of the Peace in Alpine, Texas) She was the matriarch of the Texas mountains. You might look her up. Of course, you know about Ace Reid. Hondo Crouch, he put Luckenbach, Texas on the map and had a lot of fun doing it.

Question: Is he the person that had the beer-drinking goat?

No, that is in Lajitas.

Question: Have you met that goat?

Oh yes. Many times. Clay Henry is his name. He stayed at the General Store.

Question: You live in a lovely area with a good



See TUMBLEWEED, page 2B

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Completion of Emergency Department Expansion/Renovation Phase I

Effective 12:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 28, 2021. Patients will now enter the Emergency Department at the back of Martin County Hospital, as was done prior to this construction project. The driveway is accessed via turning east off Beaugard. Parking is available immediately adjacent to the new area.

Signage will be placed to clearly guide the patient to the Emergency Department Entrance.

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TUMBLEWEED

Continued from page 1B

view. Who picks out your yard-mowing outfits?
Well, I do. I have not needed them lately. I just mowed it a week ago.

Question: I have been wondering about that. You showed up for my interview at the Heritage Museum in a pair of the ugliest, lime green shorts I have ever seen. They were so bright, I had to put my sun glasses on. You wore them very boldly. I told my wife you were not remotely embarrassed in wearing them. I was just curious if Susan picked them out for you.

Laughter. The mosquitos have been so bad lately, I have not worn them. I do pick them out though.

Question: You wrote "Under the Chinaberry Tree". How would you describe this book?

It is book of East Texas folk lore. The title came from my mother and her sisters. She and her sisters used to sit and shell peas under a chinaberry tree at Aunt Hattie's place near Canton. The ground was as hard as a rock under that tree. They use to sweep it with a branch off of the tree to keep the snakes out and everything. They would sit under that tree in the shade, shell peas and gossip.

Question: Did you ever participate in the pea-shelling?

Oh sure. Also, I picked cotton for about three minutes. I shelled more peas than I snapped.

You said you picked cotton for about three minutes. I hoed cotton for a man here in Big Spring for \$1.00 an acre. He went to the field with us the next morning. "How far did you boys get?" I pointed to a row and indicated we got to about there. He walked with his hoe in the cotton and gently moved the leaves aside to reveal the tiny careless weeds that had just began to sprout. "These make big weeds. Let's hoe this again." The other two boys quit. I needed the money and stayed on. Needless to say, it was a painful lesson walking in the same tracks you walked in the day before. I did learn a great lesson though. My first check was \$25. I went to Montgomery Ward and bought a pair of shoes, socks, pants, belt and a shirt that did not match well. I wore them to church. My wife still remembers how bad I looked.

Question: Who is your favorite author?

Thomas Wolfe. He wrote a number of things. Of Time and The River, You Can't Go Home Again and things like that. He was the most descriptive writer about America. He made me want to see America. It created a wander-lust in me that is still going on to this day. Pat Conroy, that wrote the "Prince of Tides" was also very descriptive in his writings. He was a favorite author as well.

Question: What is your favorite city and vacation place? They can be two separate places.

I like Fort Davis.

The most interesting place in Texas is Jefferson, Texas. It is in northeast Texas.

Question: What advice would you give a young person that is aspiring to pursue a career in broadcasting?

Gosh. What would I tell them? Go get a real job (laughter). Broadcasting has changed. It used to be mom and pop operations. Most now are owned by big conglomerates where money is the very bottom line. There are still some mom-and-pop companies that still "tend" to the communities they reside in. I have taught students for over forty years. I advise students to develop some type of skill. Maybe writing, production or something you can do that will satisfy your soul. Money is not everything and you cannot sleep with it. Do something good, that you are proud of and that other people will appreciate. That in itself is very fulfilling in my book. My advice to young people is to not go into this broadcasting business unless you have traveled, studied business, political science, economics and basically know a little about a lot of subjects before you decide. The fun of radio is the lowest paid thing, a DJ. I was never a DJ but that is probably the most fun job in all of radio. There is money in the management end of things, sales and as possibly as an owner. To me, that is kind of sterile. The fun of radio is being a DJ, the lowest paid thing. My background was in news.

Question: When did you start "Sounds of Texas"?

1969.

I have been listening to you from about that time. Many of us that worked in the oil field out of Big Spring. One of the highlights of the day was listening to Tumbleweed Smith and Paul Harvey while eating a bag lunch. The fact that we are here today is miraculous, in my opinion. 13,000 interviews later, here you are.

One of the things that gives me the most pleasure is hearing a farmer say that he or my daddy or my grandfather, listened to you from his tractor while plowing the field. It still gives me chill bumps just talking about it. It means so much to me.

Question: Do you get requests for past interviews from children or families of folks you have interviewed in the past?

One of the blurbs from my latest novel "Sparrows of Montenegro" was done by a Hispanic man from Coleman, Texas.

While telling him about this scheduled interview with you, he made casual mention that you interviewed his father in the early 1990's. His father was a POW in the Philippines during World War II and a survivor of the Bataan Death March. He told me he was going to find that interview and let me listen to it.

Yes, I get those requests a lot. They will play portions of interviews at funerals, eulogies etc. You mentioned Paul Harvey. I have sent stories into him and visited with him over the phone.

There are basically two or three things I wanted to do in broadcasting:

. I wanted to work at a 50,000-watt radio station.
. Number two, I wanted to be on a national network.

I left Big Spring twice. I arrived in 1960 and in 1962, I had won quite a few news awards and a radio station in Houston called and offered me a job. There were eleven folks there and I was number eleven. I was privileged to work with the great Ray Miller. He was the guru of broadcast journalism in Texas at that time. I learned a great deal from this man and still use much of what I learned today. Anyway, after being number two in Big Spring, I was number eleven there. That was not a big deal to me, I just wanted a smaller deal. I came back to Big Spring and married Susan. In 1964, right after our first son was born, I was offered a fellowship to go to graduate school at the University of Missouri and study journalism. After I finished there, I was offered a job at a broadcasting company in De Moines, Iowa doing feature interviews on radio and television. While there, I got the pleasure of interviewing an eleven-year-old blind girl. Her enthusiasm and exuberance about life was just beautiful and came through very nice over the radio. The folks there said I should send that to NBC Monitor and let them listen to it. This program a weekend program that was started in 1956 and lasted twenty years. I sent the interview to Gordon Frazier, the Producer of NBC Monitor. He wrote me back and said your interview will be on NBC Monitor at 2:30 p.m. on a certain date. Just to know that something I did was good enough to be on national and international radio as well, was very fulfilling. We went out and bought a brand-new stereo in De Moines just so we could hear the interview well in our living room. That was a ceremony. I felt like I ought to be wearing a tux or something but was actually wearing shorts and a t-shirt.

Question: Let's hope it was not the same kind of green shorts you wore when you interviewed me. How long was the actual interview?

They wanted two minutes and fifteen seconds so that is how long the whole thing was. My daily program here is two minutes and thirty- seconds which includes open and close. It is very tight and edited, or concentrated.

Question: I was recently asked this question in an interview. It is a very thought-provoking question that I had not been asked before and I am going to spring on you. What advice would your older self, give to your younger self?



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I would say... be aware of interesting people and stay away from the ones that criticize you or do not like you. Stay with the people that you find interesting and you find fascinating. That will make you a lot happier. I do not know what you said but that is what I said.

Well, I told my wife that the question was a tough one. I simply said you can see a lot of life from the back of a good horse. It is probably better to see it at a "trot" instead of a full-gallop and miss the small things.

Question: Are there any final thoughts you would like to share?

I am honored that you interviewed me. I am so proud of my family and being married all of these years to Susan. When we were on our honeymoon in Mexico, we both said "Why don't we just stay down here? We loved it so much. We have brought up that thought at different stages of our life. I am glad we came back. We have two wonderful sons that are kind of in the same field. Kevin, our oldest is a television director in Dallas and has one an Emmy for live-sports television. He is the technical director for all of the professional sports in Dallas. My younger son BZ (Brian Zack) has a recording studio in Oakland, California. He has won eight Emmys for music he as created for movies and television.

Question: Do they wear green shorts when they mow their yards?

No! (laughter). They wear plaid.

Question: You know, I would pay good money just to have a photograph of you in those shorts to put in my home. Is that possible? The glare off of those shorts was so bad, my sunglasses did not help.

Also, I want you to know this interview has been a great honor for me.

Thank you. I do have a pair of yellow shorts you know.

The highlights of my life:

. Being on NBC Monitor for about 10 years after the blind-girl interview. I was mid-western correspondent while I was there. When I came back to

See **TUMBLEWEED**, page 9B



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Development and conservation clash at Komodo National Park

By **VICTORIA MILKO**

Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — On a dirt path, forked yellow tongue darting from its mouth, a member of world's largest lizard species lazes on an island in eastern Indonesia's Komodo National Park as tourists snap photos. And about 18 miles (30 kilometers) away on another park island that harbors Komodo dragons, trees have been removed and concrete poured for new tourist facilities that have aroused the ire of residents and environmental activists.

The construction is part of an ambitious Indonesian initiative that has generated tensions between a government that wants to develop natural attractions for luxury tourism and conservationists who fear habitat for the endangered Komodo dragon will be irreparably harmed. United Nations officials have also voiced concerns about potential tourism impacts on this unique wildlife-rich park.

Encompassing about 850 square miles (2,200 square kilometers) of land and marine area, Komodo National Park was established in 1980 to help protect the famed dragons. Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry estimates around 3,000 of the reptiles live there today, along with manatee-like dugongs, sea turtles, whales and more than a thousand species of tropical fish.

Because of its biodiversity and beauty, the park became a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Heritage Site in 1991. And it's one of Indonesia's crown jewels for tourism, typically drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world each year.

For years the government has been trying to figure out how to best capitalize on the park, most recently designating it part of the country's "10 New Balis" initiative — an effort to draw more tourists, as the island of Bali did before border restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We are embarking into a new era of tourism in Indonesia based on nature and culture, focusing on sustainability and quality tourism," Indonesian Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy Sandiaga Uno told The Associated Press.

Part of that multimillion dollar tourism development is a project on Rinca Island, where more than one-third of the park's dragons are estimated to live on generally hot and dry terrain. The construction includes an expanded ranger station, viewing platform, boat dock, toilets and other infrastructure.

The project worries local environmental activists and residents within park boundaries who say their livelihoods as tour guides, boat drivers and souvenir sellers depend on the draw of the area's natural beauty.

"When we talk about the development in the conservation area, we have to think ... whether this is a wisely considered economic effect for the local people — or the environmental effect," said Gregorius Afioma, a member of the local non-governmental organization Sun Spirit for Justice and Peace. "The situation now is like collective suicide."

"We think that this kind of business will eventually kill others' businesses and even themselves because they destroyed the environment," Afioma said, adding that local residents also fear they won't get construction jobs for the luxury tourist destination the Indonesian government is promoting.

UNESCO — the United Nations body that designates World Heritage Site status — has also raised concerns about development in the park.

"The state party did not inform us, as required by the operational guidelines," said Guy Debonnet, chief of the body's natural heritage unit. "This is definitely a project of concern, because we feel that the impacts on the universal value (of the park) have not been properly evaluated."

During a meeting in July, UNESCO expressed other concerns, such as the project's reduction of the park's wilderness zone to one-third the previous area, addition of tourism concessions within the property, lack of an adequate environmental impact assessment, and a target to dramatically increase visitors.

"Third-party information transmitted to the State Party indicates that a target of 500,000 annual visitors for the property has been proposed, which is more than double the pre-COVID-19 pandemic visitor numbers," said a report from the meeting. "This raises the question of how this tourism model fits (Indonesia's) vision of moving away from mass tourism to more sustainable approaches."

At UNESCO's request, the country submitted more information about the project. But after reviewing it, the U.N. agency requested in October 2020 that Indonesia not "proceed with any tourism infrastructure project that may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property prior to a review of the relevant environmental impact assessment" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

IUCN is an international, non-governmental organization that provides UNESCO's World Heritage Committee with technical evaluations of natural heritage properties.

After multiple attempts to get permission from government authorities, The Associated Press was unable to gain access to the construction site, which has been closed to the public for months. But satellite imagery shows construction continued after UNESCO requested the project be paused. The government did not respond to an email last week seeking comment.

As of Dec. 6, UNESCO still had not received the requested revised assessment, said Debonnet, the world heritage unit chief.

The Indonesian government also granted at least two business permits in Komodo National Park, including for projects on Rinca, Komodo and Padar islands, according to an email to the AP from Shana Fatina, president director at the Labuan Bajo Flores Tourism Authority, which helps coordinate government tourism efforts.

Some experts fear tourism expansion in the park could lead to disturbance of Komodo dragon habitat.

The predatory lizards, which can reach a length of 10 feet (3 meters) and more than 300 pounds (135 kilograms), were recently moved from "vulnerable" to "endangered" status on the IUCN list of threatened species. The organization cited the impacts of climate change and deterioration of the dragons' habitat — including human encroachment — as reasons for the change.

Unless carefully managed, tourism projects could "have a big impact, not just from the number of people disturbing the behavior of the dragons and disturbing their prey, but also how much freshwater is being siphoned off," said Bryan Fry, an associate professor at the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Queensland in Australia. "That could dramatically impact the very delicate balance of these islands."

The opening date for the new Rinca Island facilities has yet to be announced. UNESCO's Debonnet said it is engaged in talks with Indonesian officials to arrange a monitoring mission to assess the impact of ongoing development on the park and review its state of conservation.

And while World Heritage sites are usually discussed by the UNESCO committee on two-year cycles, Komodo National Park will be discussed in 2022, said Debonnet. "That is kind of an indication that we see there is some urgency in this issue," he said.

Public Records

Howard County Justice of the Peace Outstanding IBC Warrants:

- Jasmine Ahrnkeil, 1301 Princeton, Big Spring
- Sherri Monique Aldridge, 1507 E. Sixth St., Big Spring
- Anthony Anderson, 3401 Camellia Dr. #707, Temple
- Steve Antoine, 1425 E. 6th St., Big Spring
- Katie Cole L. Baker, P.O. Box 3372, Big Spring
- Letitia Baucham, 1202 Stanford, Big Spring
- Linda Beck, 1713 Worley Rd., Banner Elk, N.C.
- Joshua Bell, 1962 Tuscola, Snyder
- John Bochnicka, 538 Westover Rd. #260
- Chad Wayne Brown, 3901 Ave. O, P.O. Box 391, Snyder
- Douglas "Doug" Lee Brown, 205 W. 14th St. P.O. Box 275, Monahans
- James Bullard, 202 Fourth St., Palestine
- Melinda Burns, 2218 Carlton Way, San Angelo
- Gloria Cerna, P.O. Box 55, Lamesa
- Matilda Cortez, 302 N St. Teresa
- Roy E. DeBlanc, 1066 Cutrer Rd., Osyka, Miss.
- Laura W. Dennis, 1511 Scurry, Big Spring
- Humberto Diaz Jr., 3417 N. Midland Dr, Midland
- Nelba DeLosRios Diaz, 10600 McMillian Dr., Austin
- Krista A. Dickson, 6917 Todd, Sachse
- Jimmy Dodson, 405 31st St., Snyder
- Ben Doherty, 5019 McKinney St. No. 105, Dallas
- Angela Doty, 1401 E. Rundberg, Austin
- Clayton W. Durbin, 6508 Centerpoint, Big Spring
- Tina Marie Ellis, 4002 Austin Ave., Snyder
- Selena Bethani Enriquez-King, 100 E Parker, Midland
- Joanna Esparza, 501 S.Tackitt Seymour, Texas
- Carol W. Evans, 809 E 33rd, Plainview, Texas
- Chris M. Fagan, 3508 W. Eighth St., Amarillo
- Kristen Falcon, 2606 Fairchild Dr., Big Spring
- Leza Faulkner, 1102 South Water, Burnet
- Mumduh Felemban, 9338 Perrin Beitel Apt. 701, San Antonio
- Alexander Fernandez, 404 Cypress, Colorado City
- Juana Fierro, 406 N. W. 5th St., Big Spring
- Tracy D. Flores, 2401 Russell Ave., Abilene
- Ellen French, P.O. Box 942, Poteau, Okla.
- Sharlamarr Frink, 3723 Monclair, Odessa
- Johnnie Fuller, 3801 23rd St., Snyder
- Juan E. Garcia, 3355 River Road North Keizer, Ok
- Mary Jo Garner, 11802 Silver Barring Cove, San Antonio
- William Gene Garner, 704 Rosemont, Big Spring
- Rosa M. George, 509 W. Second St., Stanton,

See **Records**, page 4B

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Stocks waver in early going on Wall Street ahead of holiday

Stocks are wavering between small gains and losses in the early going on Wall Street Wednesday in muted trading heading into the Christmas holiday. The S&P 500 was little changed shortly after the opening bell, as was the Dow Jones Industrial Average. The Nasdaq slipped 0.1% and the Russell 2000, a measure of small-company stocks, fell 0.3%. Major indexes are still on track for weekly gains after a rally on Tuesday. Indexes were mostly higher in Europe and Asia. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note fell to 1.45%. U.S. markets will be closed Friday in observance of Christmas.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. AP's earlier story follows below.

BEIJING (AP) — Global stock markets rose Wednesday after President Joe Biden reassured investors by calling for vaccinations and testing but no travel curbs in response to the omicron coronavirus variant.

Shanghai, Frankfurt, Tokyo and Hong Kong advanced. London opened lower.

Wall Street rose after Biden announced Tuesday the government will provide rapid-test kits and increase vaccination efforts but gave no indication of plans for restrictions that might disrupt the economy. Other governments in Asia and Europe have tightened travel controls or pushed back plans to relax curbs already in place.

Merry Christmas from our crew!

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The City of Big Spring

BIG SPRING TEXAS

RECORDS

Continued from 4B

Texas
 Perry Gholar, 1510 Nolan, Big Spring
 Elizabeth Gomez, 509 Raleigh St., Plainview
 Guillermo Gomez, 2107 Morrison, Big Spring
 James E. Gonzalez, 604 Neff St., Sweetwater
 Jeremy Goodman, 3471 Green Meadow #24, San Angelo
 Kay Grant, 4405 N. Garfield #1005, Midland
 Isaiah Green, 4801 State St., Abilene
 John Grima, 914 E. Sixth St., Big Spring
 Thomas E. Gross, 4100 S. Highway 87 #37, Big Spring
 Lynn Guerrero, 203 W. Ave #3, Clayton, N.M.
 Melissa Gutierrez, 3310 SF Austin, No. 58, Brownwood
 Sandra Ann Gutierrez, 1501 N. Fourth Place, 1312 S. Ave. L, Lamesa
 Mike Haddix, 401 Humble St. Apt. E, Midland
 Dylan Hammons, 4401 E. 11th Place, Big Spring
 William J. Harman, HC 76, Box 147K-1, Big Spring
 Nicholas D. Hasenbalg, 207 W. Williams St. #9, Breckenridge
 Ann Hashem, 120 Airbase Rd. 15-5, Big Spring
 Christine Henderson, 420 N. El Paso
 Juanita Hernandez, 1502 Bluebird, Big Spring
 Scott Herrera, 4608 Ash St, Big Spring
 Billy Dean Hill, 7117 Alissa, Rowlett, Texas
 Johnny R. Hill, 704 San Antonio, Big Spring
 Kaleb Hill, 910 Baylor, Big Spring
 Shatiya Lasha Jenkins, 4590 N Texas #198 Odessa
 David Kelley, P.O Box 724, Salado
 Joni D. Kelly, 3050 Co. Rd 139, Colorado
 Renola S. Kelly, 4503 LA Salle Circle, Colorado City
 Cynthia Lee Kent, Moved to Newport News, Virginia
 Kayle R. Lane, P.O Box 83965, Waco
 Rafael Lemus, 1804 Mittel, Big Spring
 Jesse Paul Lopez, 101 Scurry St., Big Spring
 Ruben Lopez Jr., 107 Milburn St., Synder, Texas
 Clifford G. Lowe, 501 Circle, Big Spring
 Patricia D. Lyons, 7502 Interstate 27 number A, Lubbock
 Aaron Christopher Mack, 2134 Bonham Ave., Odessa
 Bruce Edward Mallard, P.O Box 3265 504 Westover, Big Spring
 Barbara A. Marshall, P.O. Box 1065, Deming, New Mexico
 James Martinez, P.O. Box 269, Ft. Davis
 Rene N. Martinez, 8618 Serene Ridge, Big Spring, Texas

Victoria Josephine Martinez, 323 S. Main St., Loraine
 Karen McCalister, 5925 Raton Ln. number 154, Ft. Worth
 O'Neal McClain, 911 17th St., Snyder
 Diana McCool, 504 Donley, Big Spring
 Ethel Laverne McVae, 4202 Parkway Rd., Big Spring, Texas
 Heriberto Palafox Mora, 1311 Mobile St., Big Spring
 Felicia Ornelas, 538 Westover Rd.
 Dana Kay Peach, 1806 N 13th, Lamesa
 Nicole Preston, 1605 E 11th place, Big Spring
 Gilbert P. Ramirez, 1614 Settles, Big Spring
 Byron Roberts, 2206 Alabama St Big Spring
 Veronica Romero, 103 Becker Rd., Big Spring
 Elizabeth Salazar, 1808 Hearn, Big Spring, Texas
 Shane Skaggs, 1 Courtney Place, Apt. 301, Big Spring
 Derrick Dewayne Smith, 703 West 16th, San Angelo, Texas
 Michael Ray Watson, 1503 Tucson Rd., Big Spring
 Tamara Ruth Whitt, 1909 Morrison, 2526 Fairchild, Big Spring
 Jamie Wiggins, 1905 Wasson Rd., Apt. #28, Big Spring

Marriage Licenses

David Howard Traylor, 54, and Tania Vanessa Chavarria Ramirez, 42, both of Big Spring.
 Kenneth Wayne Crawford, 41, and Lisa Nicole Byers, 43, both of Amarillo.
 Alfonso Vargas, 32, and Vanessa Averilla Corona, 31, both of Big Spring.

County Court Judgements

Defendant: Edrion Houston
 Offense: Criminal mischief \$100 to \$750
 Sentence: \$100 fine, \$270 court costs, \$110 reimbursement fee, 30 days in jail.
 Date: Dec. 16, 2021

Defendant: Tyrone Brown
 Offense: Violation of protective order - communicates
 Sentence: \$100 fine, \$270 court costs, \$120 reimbursement fee, time served.
 Date: Dec. 15, 2021

Defendant: Alicia Larocque
 Offense: Driving while intoxicated - open container
 Sentence: \$100 fine, \$270 court

costs, \$85 reimbursement fee, 45 days in jail.
 Date: Dec. 13, 2021

Defendant: James Miller
 Offense: Escape from custody
 Sentence: \$100 fine, \$270 court costs, \$60 reimbursement fee, time served
 Date: Dec. 16, 2021

Defendant: Sonny Olivio
 Offense: Burglary of a vehicle
 Sentence: \$100 fine, \$270 court costs, \$120 reimbursement fee, time served.
 Date: Dec. 13, 2021

Warranty Deeds

Grantor: Carl Condray, independent executor of the estate of Bob Powell Kennedy, deceased
 Grantee: George Kennedy and Cynthia Kennedy
 Property: 1/2 of Grantor's undivided interest in a 1.0-acre tract in NE/4 Sec. 23, Blk. 33, T-1-S, T&P RR Co. Survey
 Date: Dec. 13, 2021

Grantor: George Kennedy and Cynthia Kennedy
 Grantee: Larry Chandler and Jennifer Chandler
 Property: A 1.0-acre tract in NE/4 Sec. 23, Blk. 33, T-1-S, T&P RR Co. Survey
 Date: Dec. 13, 2021

Grantor: Nancy Phernetton fka Nancy Cobb
 Grantee: Anglia Phernetton
 Property: Lot 4, Blk. 1, Sunset Place Addition
 Date: Dec. 14, 2021

Grantor: Shelley Neighbors
 Grantee: A.C. Neighbors aka Albert Clyde Neighbors
 Property: All grantor's interest in the following: Tract 1: Lot 7A, Blk. 1, Capehart Addition; Tract 2: Lot 24AA, Blk. 7, Capehart Addition; Tract 3: Lot 26A, Blk. 1, Capehart Addition; Tract 4: Lot 26B, Blk. 1, Capehart Addition; Tract 5: Lot 28A, Blk. 1, Capehart Addition; Tract 6: Lot 34B, Blk. 1, Capehart Addition; Tract 7: Lot 41A, Blk. 1, Capehart Addition; Tract

8: Lot 41B, Blk. 1, Capehart Addition; Tract 9: Lot 10, Blk. 11, Kentwood Addition (Unit 1).
 Date: Dec. 14, 2021

Grantor: RFJ Auto Properties LLC
 Grantee: Big Spring FL LLC
 Property: Tract 1: All of Lots 1-3, 10-12, and part of an abandoned alley, in NW/2 of Blk. A, Earle Addition; Tract 2: Lots 4-9, and part of an abandoned alley, in NW/2 of Blk. A, Earle Addition; Tract 3: Lot 1, Blk. B, Earlea Addition; Tract 4: E/50 feet of N/2 Lot 11, and E/50 feet of Lot 12, Blk. B, Earles Addition; Tract 5: Lots 1-6, Blk. 24, Original Town of Big Spring; Tract 6: Lots 7-12, Blk. 24, Original Town of Big Spring.
 Date: Dec. 15, 2021

Grantor: Anglia Phernetton
 Grantee: Nancy Phernetton
 Property: Lot 4, Blk. 1, Sunset Place Addition
 Date: Dec. 15, 2021

Grantor: Texas Co. Title Inc.
 Grantee: J. Hopper Homes Inc.
 Property: Lots 1 and 2, Blk. 9, and Lots 1 and 2, Blk. 1, Douglas Addition.
 Date: Dec. 15, 2021

Grantor: Alfredo Morales, Daniel Morales, Celia Ovalle, Ida Leyva and Cynthia M. Islas
 Grantee: Dianna Yanez
 Property: An 0.161-acre tract in Lot 1, Blk. 16, Jones Valley Addition
 Date: Dec. 16, 2021

Grantor: Michael Cogburn
 Grantee: Oscar G. Barraza
 Property: A 1.0-acre tract in S/2 of Sec. 31, Blk. 32, T&P RR Co. Survey
 Date: Dec. 16, 2021

Grantor: Michael A. Torres
 Grantee: Amber Cox
 Property: Lot 9, Blk. 18, College Park Estates
 Date: Dec. 16, 2021

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Tomorrow's Horoscope

BY HOLIDAY MATHIS



Fresh Season; New Thoughts

The word "intelligence" is an umbrella over so many areas that even its dictionary entry, spreading from math to biology to angels, feels incomplete. Our understanding of intelligence is as intricate, mysterious and ever-changing as our expanding knowledge of the world itself. The first Sunday of a fresh season brings new ways of being smart.

they wish. You do not take this freedom for granted and will exercise its limits, trying on different beliefs to see how they fit.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You're strong enough to do it on your own, but it's much better when you include others. You need input. A partner will show you what you're not seeing, keep you on track and be good company along the journey.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You get to decide who you want to work and socialize with. Keep in mind that tenderness can be a powerful form of strength. Gentle, warm, positive people will bring out the best in you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You've invested in different projects and people, so some of your energy is still out there circulating in the universe. Take stock of what you have. It may be time to call it back to you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You offered advice that wasn't taken. This is your chance to say, "I told you so,"

but you'll refrain because you're above such infantile jabs. What you care about more than being right is being helpful.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Someone erroneously told you, "To get the fruit, you have to climb the tree," or a message akin to that. The truth is that sometimes, the fruit hangs low, and all you have to do is reach up and pluck it off.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're unique, and the world you've made for yourself is a thing of wonder. You give people the opportunity to participate in situations they normally wouldn't be able to access.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Knowing why you want to do

something is much more important than knowing how to do it. You'll find many different "hows" when you have a

You'll clear your mind, serve your heart and prioritize in such a way to make your life sing with the elements that bring you joy. In the professional realm, your enterprising ways will create opportunities for advancement. Taurus and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 1, 4, 44, 16 and 41.

FORECAST FOR THE WEEK AHEAD: The final days of 2021 feature a Jupiter change, a conjunction of Mercury and Venus, and finally a Mercury change just before the new moon in Capricorn. The themes will be worked out as we sort through an emotional landscape of the year's ending notes.

Jupiter in Pisces touches our feelings with the magic wand of expansion. What starts as a vague notion becomes large enough to classify. In the weeks to come, little attractions are magnetized. Small kindnesses are indicative of bigger, warmer experiences to come. Loose ties become bonds; irritations become grievances; wishes turn into passion quests; and affection grows desirous.

Mercury and Venus add to profundity with a

conjunction that lets us understand the implications of our daily habits and how often we are really doing what we love. These repetitions are, of course, our life. Course adjustments will be more easily made with a ramp-up starting Wednesday, so don't wait to make your resolutions. Go into the change with your top three intentions in mind.

New Year's Day brings the Mercury shift into Aquarius, a fantastic omen for technological and social wins. With the right tools and team, anything is possible.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: David Sedaris shares his diaries from 2003 to 2020 in his latest release, "A Carnival of Snackery." Capricorn is known for ambition, civic responsibility and work ethic, a magic combination that Sedaris exemplifies in unparalleled ways, not only through his daily writing practice, intensive tour schedule and custom of signing books for hours until the last patron is satisfied but also for his habit of roaming the English countryside picking up garbage.

Write Holiday Mathis at HolidayMathis.com.
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TAURUS (April 20-May 20). As you seek the next right action, you must also consider the wisdom of inaction. In the stillness, you will feel your different options, which include the option to watch and wait.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). People have fought and died for the freedom to believe as



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Chinese Muslim group
- 5. Alternative name
- 10. Resounds
- 12. Supporter
- 14. Furnishes anew
- 16. Beloved Hollywood alien
- 18. Supervises flying
- 19. Ballplayer's tool
- 20. Coarse edible red seaweed
- 22. Former CIA
- 23. Basketball player
- 25. Travel necessities
- 26. Honey producer
- 27. Military analysis (abbr.)
- 28. Diego, Francisco, Anselmo
- 30. Mental sharpness and inventiveness
- 31. Popular Easter meal
- 33. Man (Spanish)
- 35. ___ de la ___
- 37. Counterweights
- 38. Made a harsh, grating noise
- 40. Monetary unit
- 41. Commercials
- 42. Cool!
- 44. Partner to cheese
- 45. Expression of creative skill
- 48. Unit of angle
- 50. Transported
- 52. N. American people of Kansas
- 53. Computer game character Max
- 55. Moved swiftly
- 56. Everyone has one
- 57. Tin
- 58. A mole is one
- 63. Nocturnal hoofed animals
- 65. Oppositional to
- 66. Monetary units
- 67. Not on time

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Hogshead (abbr.)
- 2. Misery resulting from affliction
- 3. Defunct European group
- 4. Line on a map
- 5. Becomes less intense
- 6. Back muscle
- 7. Frosted
- 8. Ethiopian town
- 9. Midway between south and east
- 10. Wipe from the record
- 11. In a continuous way
- 13. Breathe
- 15. Cleaning device
- 17. Male organ
- 18. Tab on a key ring
- 21. Criminals
- 23. Taxi
- 24. Cheer of encouragement
- 27. Wartime American escort carrier
- 29. Polish river
- 32. Current unit
- 34. Life form
- 35. Painful contractions
- 36. Glowing
- 39. Press against lightly
- 40. Melancholic
- 43. Something you can be under
- 44. Of the mind
- 46. E. Indian cereal grass
- 47. Couple
- 49. Sharpshoot
- 51. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 54. ___ Blyton, children's author
- 59. Human gene
- 60. Data mining methodology (abbr.)
- 61. Examines animals
- 62. Mineral
- 64. Cools your home

Annie's Mailbox

Relatives Ruining the Holidays

Dear Annie: I need some advice on how to approach my older sister about how both she and her husband conduct themselves at family gatherings. They feel entitled to anything my parents have. The first thing you have to know about them is that they are nearly 40 years old, yet they still act like children. They heavily rely on my parents financially and have no real drive to better themselves.

For instance, my parents own a lake house and a beach rental that my sister always seems to call dibs on whenever my parents announce they will not be using them that weekend. That by itself is not bad, but it's the way that they go about it and the way they treat other people's belongings that becomes annoying. They have literally caused thousands of dollars of damage on multiple occasions, but they never even dream of paying back my parents.

They also love claiming whole weekends as soon as they know my parents will not be there, and then they invite their other grown-up children friends to

"party" and take advantage of my parents' good nature. I think this has not gone unnoticed by my parents, but they have always enabled her and keep letting her do whatever she wants. My sister and her husband are also the cheapest people on the planet, but they have no problem spending my parents' money or taking advantage of any situation that my parents afford them. At family gatherings, they have this habit of getting sloppy drunk and making fools of themselves.

This involves both of them draining nice bottles of wine that my parents put out for everyone. My brother-in-law will take half a bottle in his glass and then joke about wanting to make sure he gets the good wine. My sister is the exact same way, and she will empty bottles so fast that my parents, or anyone else, can barely get a glass before it is gone.

I would love nothing more than to call them both out the next time they do this, but I don't want to be the one to ruin Christmas (where I know this will happen again). When facing any criticism, my sister will scream and cry like a toddler, so it has always been hard to approach her about anything she needs to change.

How would you tell someone like that to grow up and think of someone other than herself? I've talked about this with my parents and know that the whole situation annoys them, too, but they still enable her and allow

her to act the way she does. -- Fed-Up Younger Brother

Dear Younger Brother: Wow, it is very understandable that you are fed up with your sister and brother-in-law. To say their behavior is childish, selfish and rude is an understatement. But in order for the behavior to change, the real people who have to get truly fed up are your parents. It is their wine and their lake and beach house that your sister and brother-in-law are taking advantage of. Maybe you need to have a family meeting or some sort of an intervention.

Getting sloppy drunk and taking advantage of your parents in their 40s can't do much for their self-esteem. My guess is that, deep down, your sister and brother-in-law are probably not very happy and probably need some help instead of judgement about all of their terrible behaviors.

Think of your family as a team that needs to work together, and two of your teammates are really hurting the rest of the team through their self-destructive actions.

"Ask Me Anything: A Year of Advice From Dear Annie" is out now! Annie Lane's debut book -- featuring favorite columns on love, friendship, family and etiquette -- is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit <http://www.creatorspublishing.com> for more information.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

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TUMBLEWEED

Continued from page 2B

Big Spring, I was their Texas correspondent. I interviewed Stan Kenton, the great jazz musician and band leader. He came to my home, right outside there on the patio we are looking at. I had previously interviewed him in De Moines when I was with WHO. He played a concert in Big Spring and then on to Waco on a Thursday night. We were there. Then he put on a concert in Fort Worth. We were there.

Question: What are your biggest plans for the remainder of 2021 and all of 2022?

I am hoping we get to take a trip somewhere. We have been to about forty countries. I want to go somewhere. Our last trip was in 2019. We went to Iceland. That has been too long. Sometimes, we take two cruises or trips per year. It is rare, but sometimes we do that. We were scheduled to go to Israel this month. We were supposed to leave on the 10th. It just became impossible with Covid and all of the red tape involved. We still want to go to Israel eventually, as well as Costa Rica and the Canary Islands. We hoped to see Petra in Jordan as well. My favorite country was South America on our 50th wedding anniversary. It lasted 18 days and started in Rio de Janeiro and then onto Buenos Aires in Argentina. Then to Santiago, Chile before coming home. We had so much fun on that trip. Another fun trip was in Italy. We actually kayaked

in the Mediterranean. We have been to Lima, Peru as well. The first time we were there in Lima, they were celebrating their independence. We went to a little restaurant. All of the waiters were wearing their special independence pens. I asked one of them where I could buy one. He gave me his independence pen. That set the tone for the whole trip.

We have traveled to Alaska twice on cruises, once with our grandson.

Question: With all of that traveling, you have had a taste of a lot of foods. What is your very favorite food?

I like salmon that we cook on the grill. Susan makes this very good seasoning on the salmon and I cook it on the grill.

She seems to be the most important person and influence in your life. She is a very sweet person.

Are you kidding? She is like my right hand. She is so qualified in so many areas. She is an artist. She is all kinds of things to me.

Question: Any other comments?

I have had a great life. I like to think I am a little bit of the some of the characters I have interviewed over time. You take on a part of them.

Yes indeed. I specifically liked that "Hog Call Lady" as well as the lady that had buried six husbands. We raised goats and I have my very own special "goat call" that I used to call them up.

What is that call BJ? Goatie-Goatie?

Well, let's just say it has never been done publicly because it might be used against me.

Notes from the author:

It is worthy to note that two things happened after this interview with the legendary "Tumbleweed Smith".

(1) The family of the World War II veteran (survivor of the Bataan Death March and three years as a POW) were not able to locate the interview of their father. There are ten children in this family. Upon request, Tumbleweed was not only able to locate that specific interview but two others as well. Those interviews were sent to this family via email to one of the sons. He shared with each of his siblings for their early 2021 Christmas gift. Imagine getting to hear their father for the first time since he passed away in 1991, shortly after the last interview.

(2) My wife bought Tumbleweed a pair of fuchsia-colored shorts and an aqua blue t-shirt. I brought them by his home. If you put these on and send me a picture, I will let you record my goat call on an interview. That was a mistake. I am now required to enter the goat calling contest at the Goat Cook-Off on Labor Day in Brady, Texas in 2022. The "lilting arpeggio" goat call can be heard live on Tumbleweed Smith's December 16, 2021 on any station he broadcasts on.

My life and a multitude of others have been made abundantly better by knowing this man. He lives life as it should be lived, living each day that is given to him to the very fullest with his wonderful wife Susan and with the folks he interviews.

Until next time
BJ Mayo

After SCOTUS hearing, a new look at baby 'safe haven' laws

By ASTRID GALVAN

Associated Press

PHOENIX — For years, Nicole Olson had longed for a baby and gone through a rigorous and emotional adoption process. Then Olson and her husband got a call asking if they'd like to adopt a newborn. That day. As soon as possible.

The baby had been relinquished through what's known as a safe haven law. Such laws, which exist in every state, allow parents to leave a baby at a safe location without criminal consequences.

The laws began to pass in state legislatures in the early 2000s in response to reports of gruesome baby killings and abandonments, which received copious media attention. Infants are at the highest risk of being killed in their first day of life, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Olson rushed to a Target, filled four carts with baby stuff and was home with the newborn boy by dinnertime. Ten years later, the baby Olson and her husband, Michael, named Porter is thriving. He's athletic, funny and has adjusted well after a rough time during the pandemic, Olson said.

Safe haven laws drew attention this month when U.S. Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett raised the role they play in the debate around abortion rights. Barrett made the comments during a hearing this month on a Mississippi law that would ban most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy — and possibly upend abortion rights established by the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion throughout the United States, and upheld by the court's 1992 ruling in Planned Parenthood v. Casey.

Barrett, with a long record of personal opposition to abortion, zeroed in on a key argument against forcing women into parenthood, suggesting safe haven laws address those concerns. "Why don't the safe haven laws take care of that problem?" she asked.

Julie Rikelman, the attorney arguing against the Mississippi law, rebutted that argument, saying abortion rights are not just about forced motherhood but about forced pregnancy.

"It imposes unique physical demands and risks on women and, in fact, has impact on all of their lives, on their ability to care for other

for a sibling.

But when they met their newborn, the couple didn't know his exact date of birth, his race, or any pertinent medical information.

"We didn't really know what we were walking into. It's just one of those things where it's a total leap of faith," Olson said. "But I feel like that's true of any child, whether it's your biological or adopted."

It's hard to find critics of safe haven laws, and advocates say if they save even one baby from being killed, they are worthwhile.

But some question their efficacy. Adam Pertman, president and CEO of The National Center on Adoption and Permanency, said the laws' effectiveness, including in preventing death, aren't studied enough.

"It's flawed from the get-go because a woman who would put her kid in a trash can is not instead going to see a sign and say 'Oh I'll go to the police station instead,'" he said, adding that a woman in that situation is "not cogent enough to make a decision, or she wouldn't put her kid in the trash can."

Pertman said safe haven laws don't address the needs a woman might have if she were in such a crisis that she'd hurt her child, nor do they provide resources for someone in need.

Pertman says further restricting abortion access, or overturning Roe v. Wade altogether, could result in more children being left at safe havens and not adopted the traditional way — with medical background and thorough health information.

There isn't a national database that tracks the number of babies turned over through safe haven laws, but the National Safe Haven Alliance, a nonprofit that promotes the laws and provides resources to parents in need, collects figures from most states each year.

Slightly over 4,000 babies have been surrendered since the first law took effect in 1999, according to both the organization and the CDC, which put out a report in 2020.

The CDC found that a majority of infant homicides that take place on the day of birth are committed by young, unmarried mothers with lower education levels who had not sought prenatal care, and that they're often associated with a hidden, unplanned pregnancy and with giving birth at home.

The study found that the overall infant homicide rate was 13% lower

in the years since safe haven laws were adopted nationwide. The study compared data from 1989 to 1998 to data from 2008 to 2017. Every state had adopted safe haven laws by 2008.

The number of babies killed during their first day of life dropped by nearly 67%, according to the study. But most homicide victims were too old to have been relinquished under safe haven laws at the time of their deaths. In 11 states and Puerto Rico, only infants who are 72 hours old or younger can be relinquished to a designated safe haven, while 19 states accept infants up to 1 month old, and other states have varying age limits in their statutes.

The CDC recommends that states "evaluate the effectiveness of their Safe Haven Laws and other prevention strategies to ensure they are

achieving the intended benefits of preventing infant homicides."

A vast majority of child welfare advocates praise safe haven laws, saying they keep babies alive and safe when a birth parent isn't able to care for them. The babies are adopted quickly, rarely going through foster care.

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