

GOOD MORNING

WEATHER

Today: Rain, clouds and foggy periods. High 43, low 34. Page A2

SLIDING AWAY

Drive time is slide time when black ice comes to town. Page B1



BY THE FIREPLACE

Treats to leave out for Santa and his reindeer. Page C1



PARALYSIS

Transit strike slows New York City to a crawl. Page E1

PRESCHOOL PLANNING

A push for more preschool education is valid, but let's start with kindergarten, today's editorial says. Page A6

STANDING FIRM

Four GOP senators holding out against Patriot Act prove to be thorn in Republican strategy. Page A4

COMING UP

Letters to Santa

Read the wish lists of children from around Magic Valley.

Thursday in The Times-News

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A NEW ERA BEGINS

Former TFHS coach takes charge of college's new program

By Eric Larsen
Times-News writer

TWIN FALLS — It's a no-brainer. When the College of Southern Idaho announced in late November that it would add softball to its roster of National Junior College Athletic Association Division I sports in 2007, the most repeated question around the college's athletics department quickly became, "Will Nick Baumert be the coach?"

CSI athletic director Jeff Duggan answered that question during a Tuesday press conference, announcing the hiring of Baumert as the program's first-ever head coach.

Baumert, 38, will make the jump to CSI and the Scenic West Athletic Conference after coaching the Twin Falls High School Braves to a 159-115 record from 1999-2005. During that span, Baumert coached 29 Idaho High School Activities Association Region III First-Team members, six region Players of the Year, and 12 players who moved on to play college softball.

"This is an exciting time for the College of Southern Idaho," Duggan said. "It's always an exciting time to announce a new member of the CSI coaching family, and even more exciting to add a sixth sport."

The executive board of the College of Southern Idaho Board of Trustees voted in mid-November to begin a women's softball program. The search for a coaching staff began immediately.

Baumert, who has resigned as the head softball coach at TFHS, will join the CSI staff immediately while fulfilling the remainder of his teaching contract at Twin Falls' O'Leary Junior High School. During that span, Baumert will be paid a \$1,000 stipend per month. His annual salary will be \$43,000 starting July 1.

With a full complement of 16 to 18 players to recruit, a softball field and facility to build from the ground up, and the necessary equipment to buy, there is no shortage of tasks on

Please see BAUMERT, Page A2



Nick Baumert of Twin Falls speaks Tuesday at a press conference announcing he will coach the new softball team at the College of Southern Idaho.

New Jerome schools may open simultaneously

By Joshua Palmer
Times-News writer

JEROME — Sometimes schools cut vocational programs — such as construction — from their class offerings because they can't afford it, and sometimes it comes back to haunt them.

LKV Architects gave a progress report on the preparations for the new elementary and middle schools to the Jerome School Board on Tuesday evening. Although the original plans were to complete the middle school by the beginning of the school year in

2007, and the elementary school a few months later, some board members asked why both schools couldn't be completed simultaneously.

The answer was simple: there are not enough qualified workers in the Magic Valley area. "To build them simultaneously is a challenge, not impossible, but a challenge," Wayne Thowless, an architect with LKV, said to the school board.

A limited construction workforce — that is already struggling to meet market demand — may make it difficult

for the district to find qualified contractors willing to work within the district's budget.

Jim Cobble, superintendent of the Jerome School District, said he would like to open both schools by the summer of 2007, but he is concerned about finding reasonably priced contractors that can handle the magnitude of the projects.

The district is hoping to use a local workforce from Magic Valley to construct the schools, but it may be forced to use outside labor if the district decides to build both schools simultaneously.

But some board members said the district should use outside contractors (if needed) to reduce the strain on the community. They said it is the community that would ultimately bear the burden of delayed construction.

"My inclination would be to focus on the students and families, rather than protecting the bid-locks," said Rob Williams, a board member. "I'm just a little reluctant about protecting them."

Thoughtless said the designers focused primarily on the middle school because the dis-

Please see JEROME, Page A2

Sunni leaders claim election fraud

They say militias intimidated voters; ballots were rigged

By Amer Madaani
Chicago Tribune

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Sunni leaders alleged Tuesday that rampant fraud in last week's election squelched the voice of their supporters as election officials released a preliminary tally for the entire country that indicates the main Shiite religious bloc will have the dominant hand in forming the next government.

Adnan al-Dulaimi, head of the leading Sunni political alliance, the Iraqi Accordance Front, said the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq should take unspecified measures to change the election results that are skewed by intimidation and ballot forgery.

IRAQI ELECTION

Shiite dominate populated regions

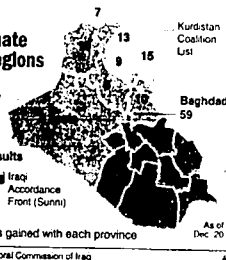
Partial results from Iraq's election show voters split along sectarian lines.

Partial election results

United Iraqi Alliance (Shiite) | Iraqi Accordance Front (Sunni)

Numbers show seats gained with each province

SOURCE: Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq



In Baghdad, for example, al-Dulaimi's group and the secular Shiite list headed by Ayad Allawi were expected to make strong showings. But Dulaimi's slate only took 19 percent of the vote and Allawi 14 percent, while the Shiite bloc won 59 percent. Sunni leaders allege that in many cases their supporters were prevented from casting votes, ballots were tampered with and militias allied with the main Shiite religious parties stood outside polling places intimidating voters.

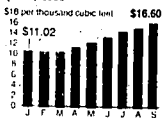
Baghdad province, which includes the capital, was a place where Allawi and the Sunni lists were prevented from casting votes, ballots were tampered with and militias allied with the main Shiite religious parties stood outside polling places intimidating voters.

Please see IRAQ, Page A2

Fuel costs rise

Natural gas prices are expected to rise 38 percent, or \$281 per household on average this winter.

U.S. Natural Gas residential price, 2005



SOURCE: Energy Information Administration

Natural gas prices draw suit

BP, Exxon are accused of limiting available supply

The Associated Press

JUNEAU, Alaska — An antitrust lawsuit filed Monday against Exxon Mobil Corp. and BP PLC claims the two oil giants are restricting the nation's supply of natural gas and keeping prices at record highs.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Lubbock, says the two companies acted together to eliminate competition for the exploration, development and marketing of natural gas from Alaska's North Slope to U.S. markets.

The only reason for it to collectively not to sue is to try to continue the scarcity that has driven natural gas prices to historic highs, said David Boies, the attorney for the Alaska Gasline Post Authority, which filed the lawsuit.

BP and Exxon Mobil are two of Alaska's biggest oil and gas leaseholders, and are the operators for the North Slope's largest oil and gas fields, Prudhoe Bay and Point Thomson. Alaska's North Slope is estimated to have at least 35 trillion cubic feet of natural gas reserves, which could supply 7 percent to 10 percent of the nation's natural gas, Boies said.

The January future contract for natural gas rose 41 cents Monday to settle at \$14.04 per 1,000 cubic feet on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The gas contracts have reached record levels near \$16 per 1,000 cubic feet in recent months.

"I don't think anybody can tell you exactly how much the prices would decline, but it's clear it would decline substantially," Boies said.

The federal lawsuit arose from the producers' refusal to sell supplies of natural gas to the port authority, which wants to build a pipeline from the North Slope to Valdez. From there, the gas would be liquefied and shipped by tanker to the West Coast.

BP and Exxon Mobil, along with other producers, have

Please see LAWSUIT, Page A2

Idaho gets small grant to revise roadless plan

The Associated Press

BOISE — Idaho received \$150,000 on Tuesday to help pay for meetings across the state intended to help revise management plans for its 9.3 million acres of roadless federal forest land.

Gov. Dirk Kempthorne says the U.S. Department of Agriculture money shows the federal government is willing to work with states, though critics of the roadless-plan revamp say the amount is so small the effort remains an "unfunded mandate."

On May 5, the Bush administration scrapped a roadless rule imposed by President Clinton in January 2001, a move that opened nearly a third of all remote national forest lands to potential road building, logging and other commercial ventures. The new Forest Service rules have a provision enabling

states to petition the agency for changes to existing roadless-area management plans.

Kempthorne has proposed meetings to gather feedback in communities — including those in or near the state's 10 national forests — before sending his petition to the federal government by the Nov. 13, 2006, deadline.

Only Alaska, with 14 million acres, has more roadless territory than Idaho. Montana ranks third with 6 million acres, about 9.3 million acres of roadless national forest lands in Idaho are being considered for potential development.

Idaho's plans call for protecting 1.37 million acres as federally designated wilderness, prohibiting road-building on 2.26 million acres and opening 5.66 million acres to some timber harvesting, mining oil and gas wells and motorized recreation.

TWIN FALLS FORECAST

Today: Rain likely with clouds and foggy periods. Highs low to middle 40s.

Tonight: Chance of rain mixing with snow late. Lows low to middle 30s.

Tomorrow: Rain likely, freezing rain and sleet possible. Highs low to middle 40s.

BURLEY FORECAST

Today: Cloudy with areas of rain showers and fog. Highs middle 40s.

Tonight: Rain showers persist. Areas of fog and low clouds expected. Lows up to 20s.

Tomorrow: Another cloudy and damp day expected. Highs low to middle 40s.

IDAHO FALLS FORECAST

SUN VALLEY, SURROUNDING MTS.

Snow fresh powder is going to be on the slopes late in the week. Conditions will be favorable for skiing, not so much for a light dusting of snow is expected.

BOISE

Temperatures will remain fairly mild through weeks end. This will result in some high clouds developing each day, however, a mist of snow and sleet is possible at night.

NORTHERN UTAH

Last week's snowfall may run into some high clouds each day, however, a mist of snow and sleet is possible at night.

TWIN FALLS 7-DAY FORECAST

Today	Tonight	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
High 43	Low 34	44/88	41/84	44/81	43/87

TEMPERATURE PRECIPITATION HUMIDITY BAROMETRIC PRESSURE SUNRISE AND SUNSET

Temperature	Precipitation	Humidity	Barometric Pressure	Sunrise and Sunset
Yesterday's Low: 34	Month to Date: 1.03"	Yesterday's Maximum: 90%	Yesterday's 3:30 P.M.: 30.17	Yesterday: 8:08 AM - 5:00 PM
Record High: 83 in 1979	Year to Date: 8.22"	Today's Minimum: 36%	Today's 3:30 P.M.: 30.17	Today: 8:08 AM - 5:00 PM

MOON PHASES

Day	Phase
Dec 23	New Moon
Dec 24	Waxing Crescent
Dec 25	First Quarter
Dec 26	Waxing Gibbous
Dec 27	Full Moon

MOONRISE AND MOONSET

Day	Moonrise	Moonset
Dec 23	6:58 AM	10:00 PM
Dec 24	7:05 AM	10:15 PM
Dec 25	7:15 AM	10:30 PM
Dec 26	7:28 AM	10:45 PM
Dec 27	7:45 AM	11:00 PM

U.V. INDEX

Low Moderate High

The higher the index the more sun protection needed.

TWIN FALLS FORECAST

City	Today	Tomorrow	Friday
Boise	42 38 30	40 32 24	38 30 22
Idaho Falls	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Pocatello	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Shoshone	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Arden	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Blaine	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Blackfoot	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Challis	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Donnerstag	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Elgin	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Hammond	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Heppner	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Home	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Idaho Falls	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Jerome	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Lowell	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Malheur	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Mesa	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Minidoka	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Mountain Home	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Oronago	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Pocatello	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Shoshone	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
St. Lawrence	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Timber Lake	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Townsend	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Walters	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20
Yellowstone	40 36 28	38 30 22	36 28 20

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City	Today	Tomorrow	Friday
Albany	41 33 25	39 31 23	37 29 21
Arden	41 33 25	39 31 23	37 29 21
Blackfoot	41 33 25	39 31 23	37 29 21
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WATERGATE

Watergate scandal revisited...

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WATERGATE

Watergate scandal revisited...

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NATION

Judge nixes 'intelligent design'

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — In one of the biggest courtroom clashes between faith and evolution since the 1925 Scopes Monkey Trial, a federal judge barred a Pennsylvania public school district Tuesday from teaching "intelligent design" in biology class, saying the concept is creationism in disguise.

U.S. District Judge John E. Jones delivered a stinging attack on the Dover Area School Board, saying its first-in-the-nation decision in October 2004 to insert intelligent design into the science curriculum violated the constitutional separation of church and state.

The ruling was a major setback to the intelligent design movement, which is also waging battles in Georgia and Kansas. Intelligent design holds that liv-

ing organisms are so complex that they must have been created by some kind of higher force.

Jones decried the "breath-taking inanity" of the Dover policy and accused several board members of lying to conceal their true motive, which he said was to promote religion.

A six-week trial over the issue yielded "overwhelming evidence" establishing that intelligent design "is a religious view, a mere re-labeling of creationism, and not a scientific theory," said Jones, a Republican and a churchgoer appointed to the federal bench three years ago.

The school system said it will probably not appeal the ruling, because several members who backed intelligent design were ousted in November's elections

and replaced with a new slate opposed to the policy.

During the trial, the board argued that it was trying to improve science education by exposing students to alternatives to Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection.

The policy required students to hear a statement about intelligent design before ninth-grade lessons on evolution. The statement said Darwin's theory is "not a fact" and has ineliminable "gaps," it referred students to an intelligent-design textbook, "Of Pandas and People."

But the judge said: "We find that the secular purposes claimed by the board amount to a pretext for the board's real purpose, which was to promote religion in the public school


classroom."

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that states cannot require public schools to balance evolution lessons by teaching creationism.

Eric Metzger, an attorney for the families who challenged the policy, called the ruling "a real vindication for the parents who had the courage to stand up and say there was something wrong in their school district."

Richard Thompson, president and chief counsel of the Thomas More Law Center in Ann Arbor, Mich., which represented the school district, and describes its mission as defending the religious freedom of Christians, said the ruling appeared to be "an ad hominem attack on scientists who happen to believe in God."

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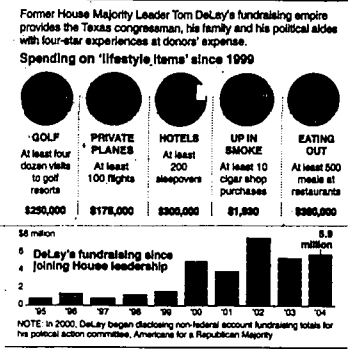
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Donors fund DeLay's ritzy lifestyle

Documents tell the story

WASHINGTON (AP) — As Tom DeLay became a king of campaign fundraising, he lived like one too. He visited cliff-top Caribbean resorts, golf courses designed by PGA champions and four-star restaurants — all courtesy of donors who bankrolled his political and personal life.

Over the past six years, the former House majority leader and his associates have visited places of luxury most Americans have never seen.



SOURCE: Reports filed by DeLay and his political and charitable organizations. AP

Americans have never seen, often getting there aboard corporate jets arranged by lobbyists and other special interests.

Public documents reviewed by The Associated Press tell the story: at least 48 visits to golf clubs and resorts; 100 flights aboard company planes; 200 stays at hotels, many world-class; and 500 meals at restaurants, some averaging nearly \$200 for a dinner for two.

Instead of his personal expense, the meals and trips for DeLay and his associates were paid with donations collected by the campaign committees, political action committees and children's charities the Texas Republican created during his rise to the top of Congress. His lawyer says the expenses are part of DeLay's effort to raise money from Republicans and to spread the GOP message.

Put them together and a

lined marina at Palmas del Mar. Dishes include bouillabaisse for about \$35.50, Dover sole for \$37.50 and filet mignon for \$28.50. Palmas del Mar is also a DeLay donor, giving \$5,000 for DeLay's Americans for a Republican Majority PAC in 2000.

Since he joined the House leadership as majority whip in 1995, DeLay has raised at least \$35 million for his campaign, PACs, foundation and legal defense fund. He hasn't faced a serious re-election threat in recent years, giving him more leeway than candidates in close races to spend campaign money.

AP's review found DeLay's various organizations spent at least \$1 million over the last six years on hotels, restaurants, golf resorts and corporate jet flights for their boss and his associates.

lifestyle emerges.

"A life to enjoy. The excuse to escape." Palmas del Mar, an ocean-side Puerto Rican resort visited by DeLay, promoted in a summer ad on its Web site as a golf ball bounced into a hole and an image of a sunset appeared.

The Caribbean vacation spot has casino gambling, horseback riding, snorkeling, deep-sea fishing and private beaches.

"He was very friendly. We always see the relaxed side of politicians," said Daniel Vassi, owner of the French bistro Chez Daniel at Palmas del Mar. Vassi said DeLay has eaten at his restaurant every year for the last three, and was last there in April with about 20 other people, including the resort's owners.

The restaurant is a cozy and popular place on the yacht-

While it's illegal for a lawmaker to tap political donations for a family vacation, it is perfectly legal to spend it in luxury if the stated purpose is raising more money or talking politics.

Until his recent indictment in Texas on political money laundering charges, DeLay was the second most powerful lawmaker in the House and as such, could command an audience of donors wherever he went.

DeLay attorney Don McGahn declined to identify which trips listed in the reports were taken by DeLay and which by his associates. But he said all the travel was legal and not done for DeLay's benefit. "Raising political money costs money," he said.

"Mr. DeLay has done extensive fundraising, and traveled far and wide to do so, but you would be hard-pressed to find someone who has raised more for others, whether for candidates or political parties," McGahn said.

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NATION

GOP foes of Patriot Act holding firm

By Charles Babington
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn., could barely conceal his anger.

"The Patriot Act expires on December 31, but the terrorist threat does not," he told reporters at the Capitol Tuesday.

Those on the Senate floor who are filibustering the Patriot Act are killing the Patriot Act. There was just one problem. Well, four problems, technically. Four of the 46 senators using the delaying tactic to thwart the Patriot Act renewal are members of Frist's party. It is a pesky irritating fact for Republicans who are eager to portray the impasse as Democratic obstructionism, and a ready-made rejoinder for Democrats expecting campaign attacks on the issue in 2006 and 2008.

The four Republican rebels — Larry Craig of Idaho, Chuck Hagel of Nebraska, John E. Sununu of New Hampshire and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska — have joined all but two Senate Democrats in arguing that more civil liberties safeguards need to be added to the proposed renewal of the Patriot Act. The law makes it easier for FBI agents to monitor phone calls, search homes and obtain business records of terror suspects. The four stand calmly at the center of a political storm that soon will determine whether the law, enacted soon after the 2001 Tuesday attacks, is renewed in a modified form or allowed to expire in 11 days.

The House passed the Patriot Act renewal Dec. 14, but two days later the Republicans joined most Democrats in the Senate in blocking action on the bill.

The four Republicans' concerns about the proposed Patriot Act renewal are largely the same as those of most Senate



"The beauty of Westerners is that we have a healthy distrust of our government. Whether they are business records or they are gun dealers' records or whatever, they are records that can be gained."

— Idaho Sen. Larry Craig

Democrats. They say the bill is slanted too heavily in the government's favor when it comes to letting targeted people challenge national security letters and special subpoenas that give the FBI substantial latitude in deciding what records should be surrendered. The targeted persons should have a greater ability to challenge such subpoenas and require the government to show why it thinks the items being sought are connected to possible terrorism, the Republicans contend.

Their Republican colleagues try to look the other way, but Democrats are delighted to have some bipartisan cover. "In a full-court press by the White House to denounce Democrats, it's great to see we've got at least four Republican profiles in courage," said Jim Manley, spokesman for Minority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev.

It would be easier for GOP leaders to shrug off the mini-rebellion if it came from the well-known moderates of Maine and Virginia. Democrats, it's great to see we've got at least four Republican profiles in courage," said Jim Manley, spokesman for Minority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev. They include a dyed-in-the-wool conservative (Craig), a rising star and presidential aspirant (Hagel), and two second-generation Republican achievers (Murkowski and Sununu).

For this week, at least, the most striking thing they have in common is an unshaken resolve to oppose the law's proposed renewal despite heated appeals by President Bush. "The senators who are filibustering the Patriot Act must stop their delaying tactics," Bush said Monday. He said he will not sign a temporary extension of the existing law, a plan pushed by Democrats who want to allow House-Senate negotiations to resume talks in hopes of a four-year renewal.

Asked about the president's remarks Tuesday, Murkowski smiled and said softly: "I think the responsible thing to do at this point is to move forward with a three-month extension" of the current law. Murkowski, who inherited her seat from her father, said she has received some angry phone calls and e-mails from non-Alaskans. "But I've got to listen to my constituents first," she said, and they have been "very supportive."

White House officials, she said, "have left me alone," as she has must follow GOP leadership. "I have not had people jumping around me asking me if I've changed my mind," she said.

Hagel appears equally sanguine. "I took an oath of office to the Constitution. I didn't take an oath of office to my party or my president," he recently told reporters.

Sununu whose father was a New Hampshire governor and

White House chief of staff to Ronald Reagan — took issue with Bush's ultimatum. "How can the president justify vetoing the temporary extension?" Sununu said. "That suggests that he thinks the country is better off without any Patriot Act provisions in place than with a three-month extension. And that makes no sense at all."

Craig is a solid conservative and long-time favorite of the National Rifle Association. Like his three counterparts, he said he is comfortable with his stand, even in light of Bush's comments. "Obviously the president by his actions has ratcheted it up a bit," Craig said Tuesday. "And there's nothing wrong with that."

His constituents are with him, Craig said. "The beauty of Westerners is that we have a healthy distrust of our government," he said, adding that gun owners are particularly leery of laws that give federal agents greater powers to secretly search offices and homes. "Whether they are business records or they are gun dealers' records or whatever, they are records that can be gained" under the law, Craig said.

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VP calls for expanded presidential powers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Dick Cheney on Tuesday called for "strong and robust" presidential powers, saying executive authority was eroded during the Watergate and Vietnam eras. Some lawmakers objected that President Bush's decision to spy on Americans to foil terrorists showed he was flexing more muscle than the Constitution allows.



Cheney

The revelations of Bush's four-year-old order approving domestic surveillance without court warrants has spurred a fierce debate over the balance of power between the White House, Congress and the judiciary.

"I believe in a strong, robust executive authority and I think that the world we live in demands it," Cheney said.

"I would argue that the actions that we've taken there are totally appropriate and consistent with the constitutional

authority of the president. ... You know, it's not an accident that we haven't been hit in four years," the vice president said, speaking with reporters on Air Force Two en route from Pakistan to Oman.

On Capitol Hill, senators from both parties said the role of Congress cannot be sidelined — even in wartime.

"I think the vice president ought to reread the Constitution," said Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass. Democrats said they were deeply troubled by the surveillance program, and contended the president had no authority to approve it. "He has no legal basis for spying on Americans without court approval," said Sen. Richard Durbin of Illinois, the No. 2 Democrat in the Senate.

Republicans said Congress must investigate whether Bush was within the law to allow the super-secret National Security Agency to eavesdrop — without warrants — on international calls and e-mails of Americans and others inside the United States with suspected ties to al-Qaida.

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WORLD

Mexicans react with rage to U.S.-proposed border wall

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The Mexican government, angered by a U.S. proposal to extend a wall along the border to keep out migrants, pledged Tuesday to block the plan and organize an international campaign against it.

Facing a growing tide of anti-immigrant sentiment north of the border, the Mexican government has taken out ads urging Mexican workers to denounce rights violations in the United States. It also is hiring an American public relations firm to improve its image and counter growing U.S. concerns about immigration.

Mexican President Vicente Fox denounced the U.S. measures, passed by the House of Representatives on Friday, as "shameful" and his foreign secretary, Luis Ernesto Derbez, echoed his complaints on Tuesday.

"Mexico is not going to bear, it is not going to permit, and it will not allow a stupid thing like this wall," Derbez said.

"What has to be done is to raise a storm of criticism, as is already happening, against this," he said, promising to turn the international community against the plan.

Some stretches of the U.S.-Mexico border are already marked by fences, but in some heavily-trafficked sections, walls are already being erected by the United States, often using 10-foot-high sections of military surplus steel. Those sections, which typically run several miles, can be found in southern Arizona and California.

It's hard to underestimate the ill-feeling the proposal has generated in Mexico, where editorial pages are dominated by cartoons of Uncle Sam putting up walls bearing anti-Mexican messages.

Many Mexicans, especially those who have spent time working in the U.S., feel the proposal is a slap in the face to those who work hard and contribute to the U.S. economy.

Fernando Robledo, 42, of the western state of Zacatecas, says the proposals could stem migration and disrupt families by breaking cross-border ties.

"When people hear this, it worried everybody, because this will affect everybody in some way, and their families," Robledo said. "They were incredulous. How could they do this, propose something like this?"

Robledo, whose son and mother are U.S. citizens, predicted the measure "would unleash conflict within the United States" as small businesses fail for lack of workers.

He said many Mexicans felt betrayed by the anti-immigrant sentiment.

"We learned to believe in the United States. We have a binational life," he said of Zacatecas, a state that has been sending migrants north for more than a century. "It's not just a feeling of rejection. It's against what we see as part of our life, our culture, our territory."

The government is scrambling to fight on two fronts. On Monday it announced it had hired Allyn & Company, a Dallas-based public relations company to help improve Mexico's image and stem the immigration backlash.

"If people in the U.S. and Canada had an accurate view of the success of democracy, political stability and economic prosperity in Mexico, it would improve their views on specific bilateral issues like immigration and border security," Rob Allyn, president of the PR firm, told The Associated Press Tuesday.

Jose Luis Soberanes, head of the government's National Human Rights Commission, suggested Mexico go further.

"I would expect more energetic reactions from our authorities," Soberanes told local media. "It's preferable to

have a more demanding government, more confrontation with the United States."

Mexico has also said it is recruiting U.S. church, community and business groups to oppose the proposal.

And the government has stepped up its defense of migrants, airing a series of radio

spots here aimed at migrants returning home for the holidays.

"Did a labor accident in the United States? You have rights... Call," reads the ad, sponsored by Mexico's Foreign Relations Department, which has helped migrants bring compensation suits in the United States.

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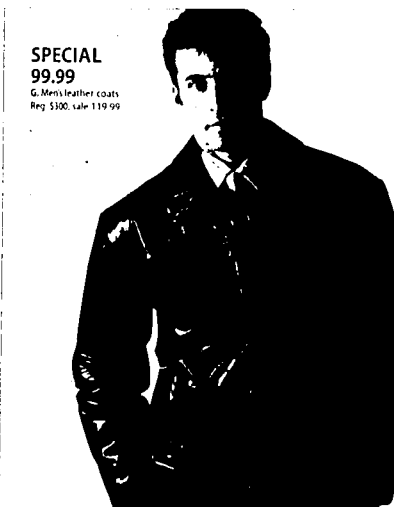
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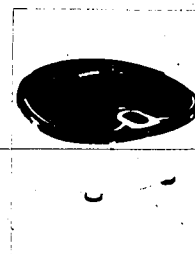
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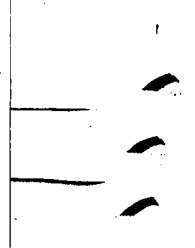
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EDITORIAL

Kindergarten laws deserve attention before preschool

A group of Idaho businesses and chief executive officers is worried about the future generation of workers. When we say next generation, we mean 4-year-olds.

These CEOs, who are part of the Idaho Business Coalition for Excellence, say Idaho's Legislature needs to clear the way for more preschool education. The group is pushing a bill to change state laws that prohibit spending money on children under age 5. It's not a bad idea for a progressive education.

more preschool is sensible for many Idaho children, but Idaho leaders first need to address issues regarding kindergarten.

Two years ago, the Idaho House overwhelmingly defeated a bill that proposed mandatory kindergarten in public schools. The chamber was filled with effusive debate about inflicting on

Our view: Pushing for more local investment in preschool is wise, but requiring kindergarten is an even better start for Idaho kids.

What do you think? We welcome viewpoints from our readers on this and other issues.

parental control. One legislator, Rep. Dick Harwood, R-St. Maries, even said the bill took a page from Communist Manifesto because it was "another step toward state control of education."

But the bill's defeat sent a contradictory message. Schools are held accountable for student performance on the Idaho Reading Indicator test for first-grade and kindergarten students, yet kindergarten—or even a required home school program—isn't required.

The other issue revolves around full-day kindergarten curriculum. Full-day kindergarten is available in some schools, such as Hagerman School District and Lincoln Elementary in Twin Falls district, but federal grants make up a large part or all of their funding. Advocates now think the day has come for full-day classes, that that move would create a huge demand for staffing and facilities in local schools.

As worthy as a goal as it may be to support more preschool opportunities, education advocates should force the Legislature to revisit the mandatory kindergarten bill first. Until Idaho clears that hurdle, early education reform is putting the cart before the horse.

I've always rejected comparisons between the Iraq war and World War II because they are so misleading. Yet when people ask me whether this week's Iraq elections are a turning point that may enable U.S. troops to draw down, I find myself quoting Winston Churchill. "This is not the end," Churchill said, following Montgomery's victory at El Alamein in November 1942. "It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

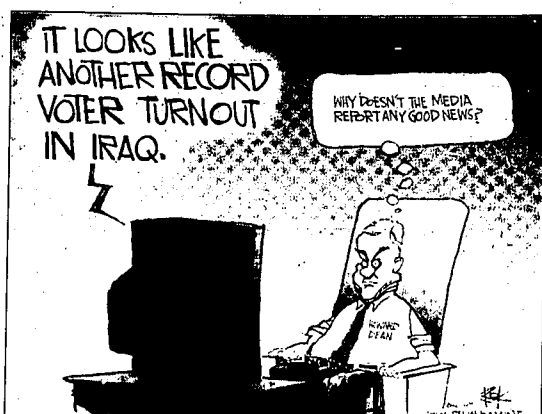


The Iraq elections offer a hope that the conflict may begin to shift from the era of car bombs into an era where violence is undercut by politics.

Presidential elections stem from the bloodshed because they failed to address the problem that underlies the violence. The alienated Sunni minority, which ruled Iraq under Saddam and produces most of the insurgents, felt it had no role in the new Iraq. Sunnis refused to take part in legislative elections which ruled Iraq under Saddam and produces most of the insurgents, felt it had no role in the new Iraq. Sunnis refused to take part in legislative elections which ruled Iraq under Saddam and produces most of the insurgents, felt it had no role in the new Iraq.

Two factors led to this Sunni attitude change. First, many Sunnis realized the boycott shut them out of a political process in which Kurds and Shiites were dividing up the country. In July, when I was in Baghdad, Sunni intellectuals and clerics told me their boycott had been mistaken. New election laws—which assured the Sunnis of more seats—were passed in Baghdad.

Second, U.S. policy toward the Sunni minority has undergone a sea change. Under U.S. ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, who arrived in July, Iraq has been actively engaging Sunni leaders in hopes of undercutting the insurgents. He displays diplomatic skills that have been sorely lacking until now.



even mid-level members of Saddam's political party with no hope of work.

When I visited Ramadi in 2003, well-known Sunni tribal sheikhs told me they had been willing to work with the Americans. But instead, U.S. soldiers had raided their homes. Probably some of those same tribesmen went on to support insurgents who lay the IEDs that blow up U.S. troops.

But U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, who arrived in July, Iraq has been actively engaging Sunni leaders in hopes of undercutting the insurgents. He displays diplomatic skills that have been sorely lacking until now.

There are some hopeful signs. In Ramadi, Sunni tribal guards—not U.S. or Iraqi soldiers—protected the polling places. This is a critical shift, since Iraq's new army still has few Sunni troops.

Another hopeful sign: Insurgent groups like the Islamic Army of Iraq told their fighters not to attack polling stations (though they urged Iraqis to keep killing U.S. soldiers). Even al-Qaeda—which denounced the elections—didn't threaten

to disrupt them. In other words, the different insurgent factions, both Iraqi and foreign Arabs, understood they could not flout the public will.

So Iraq has reached the end of the beginning phase of post-Saddam Iraq, where Sunnis chose to resist only with the gun. But will this lead to a phase where Iraqis can settle their differences in parliament and American troops can leave?

Not clear. At present, many educated Sunnis still believe—falsely—that they are a numerical majority. The elections will produce a Sunni bloc of about 20 percent in the national assembly. Can Sunnis come to grips with their reduced role?

Moreover, the reason so many Sunnis voted is because they want to resolve huge grievances. They fear the dominant Shiite and Kurdish parties will split Iraq into pieces. Iraq's new constitution prevents Kurdish and Shiite provinces to join into super-regions and control the rich, unexplored oil fields in the north and south.

If the new Iraqi government addresses these concerns, it is possible that Sunni leaders, in-

cluding tribal sheikhs, may take a stronger stand against parts of the insurgency, especially the Arab jihadists who are blowing up Shiite markets and mosques. Then Shiite, Kurdish and Sunni leaders could work together on another key Sunni demand: a timetable for U.S. troop withdrawal.

But this all depends on a host of new factors with little experience of compromise. It also depends on Khalilzad's skills and a whole lot of luck.

Iraq's new parliament could do much, but leaders unable to keep the country from splitting. Or new Sunni leaders could, like Northern Ireland's Sinn Fein, provide a front for continuing violence by IRA-style guerrillas.

The Iraqi elections have offered hope but no guarantees. They are the end of the beginning. Now we have entered a new phase whose outlines will only become clear in the next few months.

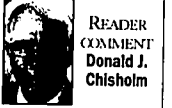
Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editor and board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to her at trubin@phillynews.com.

Semprea rekindles air stringency rules

Semprea's proposal to build a coal-fired generating plant in Jerome County may be the catalyst which causes Idaho's Legislature to re-think Idaho's official environmental policy. That policy says, in effect, that Idaho would like to protect the state's environment.

Under Section 39-118B of the Idaho Code, no rule adopted by the Legislature of Environmental Quality, which is more stringent than the provisions of the federal clean air act, shall be effective until specifically approved by a statute passed by the Legislature. The stringency rule is not limited to air quality issues. It is repeated in various forms in more than six of Idaho's environmental statutes to make sure it is not overlooked.

To make sure the DEQ board does not violate the stringency rule, the Legislature requires that any proposed rule which



would be broader in scope or more stringent than federal law or regulations, or which would regulate an activity not regulated by the federal government, must be based upon a time-consuming and costly analysis of the science and data supporting the rule. The analysis must be completed before the notice of proposed rule-making is published. The requirements are codified in Section 39-107D of the Idaho Code.

DEQ is a department of the executive branch of Idaho government. If the governor's office tells DEQ to propose a rule to adopt the new federal

cap and trade standards for mercury emissions from coal-fired generating plants when they are issued, the notice of proposed rule-making will not include the information required under Section 39-107D for a more stringent rule. As a result, DEQ's board will not have the choice of adopting a more stringent rule unless it restarts the rule-making process.

The inefficiency imposed on DEQ's rule-making process by the stringency rule creates a high probability that the Legislature, not DEQ, will decide Idaho's rule on mercury emissions from coal-fired generating plants. That action is likely come in the 2006 session of the Legislature with little public input.

I have served on Idaho's Board of Environmental Quality for five years. The few federal mercury emissions standards have not yet been released, and Sempra has not yet filed an ap-

plication for its air quality permit. I am not sure how to proceed either. I want to make sure citizens understand the constraints on the power of DEQ's regulations to adopt protective regulations. I don't want to be disappointed by the board's action of inaction on the mercury emissions issue.

Citizens who are concerned about mercury emissions from Sempra's plant should be talking to their legislators about their concerns. Don't let them pass the buck to DEQ's board, unless they give the board the authority to do so. Stay actively with the issue.

Donald J. Chisholm of Burley is an attorney at the firm of Minidoka County attorney and Rupert attorney. He was appointed to the Idaho Board of Environmental Quality in 2002, where he served as chairman for two years and was reappointed in 2002.

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Craig turns his back on U.S. security

Is Larry Craig nuts? I will personally join the next terrorist attack on USA soil directly at his feet. The time has come to boot Craig out of getting America ahead of some fuzzy ideas about civil rights.

MIKE BEVAN
Kimberly

Smell of fresh popcorn missing at matinee

I am an avid moviegoer. Just as some people love their golf game or horseback riding, I look forward to going to the movies. The technology of modern movies is fantastic, and we are lucky enough to still have some of the wonderful old movie theaters to enjoy. Part of the experience is the smell of the popcorn being popped as you enter the theater and, somehow, a movie isn't just a movie without having popcorn and a soda.

I am going to sell old, cold popcorn, then maybe you should discount it because, at \$3.50, I think we are being ripped off.

I know I am not the only one to feel this way, but the time when I left the theater and said I am going to write to somebody about this problem, I did. See ya at the movies!

GALE FOSTER
Twin Falls

Take some holiday cheer to the parking lot

Worry about the wrong things. Of this letter should have been written before: Thanksgiving. I think there has been a little too much fuss about how to greet someone about the holidays. Merry Christmas or happy holidays—what's the problem? Don't we have a freedom of choice?

Anyway, now the real problem: take your life into your hands in the parking lot as well as the aisles in the stores; people are so one-tracked during the holidays. Never mind you and watch out for me. When I am shopping and I see how some people drive their cars, I wonder if they drive like that on the highways. Being that it is the holidays, my Christmas is yes. Why can't people slow down a bit? What happens to that goodwill toward man? Oh, that's right. It's shopping season.

People in retail always ask, "Are you ready for Christmas?"

My answer is always, "Ready for it to be over," so I do not have to worry about walking through a parking lot.

JAMES TICKER
Twin Falls

Customer comments on checks, loans, cars

Money and appearances: After church Sunday, I stopped by a fast-food restaurant to treat the grandkids to lunch. When my wife pulled out the checkbook, we were told that the store no longer accepts checks. This happened weeks ago at a different business. I am not in the habit of carrying money because I've found that I tend to spend it more quickly and can't allow the account for where it went. We entered ourselves and went and enjoyed lunch at a restaurant where they did take our check. Add another name to our list of places we

will not be visiting.

an assurance, the fees that businesses and banks charge for insufficient funds checks and the legal ramifications pale in significance to what my wife would do to me were I ever write an insufficient funds check.

After the state investigates gasoline costs, perhaps it could take the time to find out why printer ink is so expensive. Then they might ask our local bank why it induced us to repay our home equity loan by allowing it to automatically deduct the payment on the 15th of every month to get a lower interest rate but did not disclose to us that if the 15th fell on a holiday or a weekend that the payment wouldn't be deducted until the next business day. The problem is that (1) we paid more interest for those extra days and (2) the bank records indicate that we were late on a number of occasions.

If the branch manager had

informed us that these problems would have occurred, we would have made sure payment would have been made on the first business day prior to the 15th.

We recently purchased a pre-owned car at a local dealer and were very pleased with the salesman, who I intended to thank. We were looking for, didn't waste our time and made this one of the most pleasurable car purchases we've ever made. We are enjoying our new-to-us vehicle very much.

The time and make the effort to keep up with your landscaping. Offer high praise. I tend to shop more often at stores whose appearance in front (and in the case of restaurants, whose back is kept tidy and neat.

And finally, to The Times-News. I thoroughly enjoy the Cheers and Larry editorials.

DIANE PORTER
Hansen

OPINION

The campaign to delete religious Christmas

JOHN GIBSON

Now is the time of the year when the anti-Christmas forces I wrote about in my book, "The War on Christmas," come out of the woodwork.

These are the Christmas battles fought at the school board, in the local library and public park, and in the offices and lobbies of the town halls of small to medium-size cities.

It is at this time of year that people who believe Christmas trees, Santas, the colors red and green, and even the word "Christmas" itself are religious symbols, feel that as such they must be banned from the public square.

It is these people who demand that a Christmas tree be taken down, that Santa be dismissed, that parents not bring red and green napkins and paper plates to the kiddies' "holiday party" just before "winter break" because these are symbols of Christianity — and as such, must be banished from public places.

When these arguments are made they are sometimes successful, but only because the true state of the law isn't always known to decision-makers on the local level. An ACLU lawyer may declare these symbols of Christmas to be religious, but the Supreme Court of the United States does not — and what most local officials don't seem to realize is that the court has always held these symbols to be secular, not religious, and they are entirely permissible in

public places. Obviously there is a continuing debate about purely religious symbols, such as the Nativity scene and the cross, but for Christmas trees, and Santas, there are simply no restrictions from a constitutional-law point of view.

So what does it mean when someone says there are restrictions? In the stories I tell in my book, I reveal how some people in the anti-Christmas movement don't really care what the law says, and are perfectly willing to go way beyond the law if they can get away with it.

If they are challenged by a reasonably competent lawyer, though, those anti-Christmas forces almost always lose, and rightfully so.

One other thing these developments mean is that a war on Christmas is really a war on Christians. Some of the secu-

larists in this war are active anti-religionists, atheists and agnostics who, as one rabbi explained to me, "don't want anything to do with their parents' religion and certainly don't want anything to do with yours."

The other group of anti-Christmas forces are often themselves from a Christian family and background, but find themselves opposed politically to positions taken by groups of well-organized conservative evangelical Christians.

So opposition to conservative Christians' position on abortion or gay marriage or intelligent design will often translate into a casual and easily accepted bias and opposition to Christian practices and holidays — like Christmas.

What you always hear from secularists is the question, "Why don't Christians practice their faith in their homes and churches and leave the rest of us alone?"

Well, the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects religious free speech. Evidently what some people have forgotten is that free speech requires the tolerance of people hearing speech they do not like.

In fact, the religious tradition of this country is tolerance — and what Christians want is for the same sense of tolerance that has always been extended to religionists of small or minor populations to be extended to the religionists of the overwhelming majority of the U.S. population — Christians.

"Merry Christmas" has never been hurtled as an insult. A Christmas tree is not put up as an affront. People who say they are offended by the greeting or the tree should realize their taking offense indicates a hostility or an animosity to Christians.

John Gibson hosts "The Big Story" on Fox News and is the author of the book "The War on Christmas." He wrote this for The Free Lance-Star in Frederickburg, Va.

"Never doubt that a group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."
— Margaret Mead

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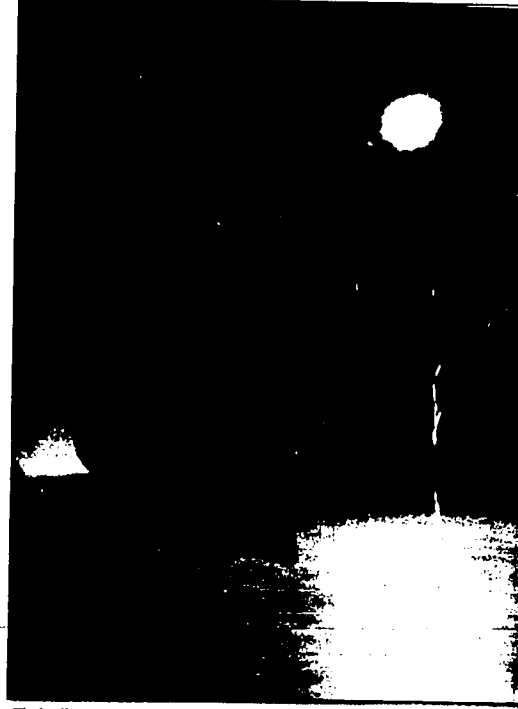
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"How can an American education become more relevant?"
"We could start using the daily newspaper in our public schools."
— Walter Cronkite

Photo by Ryan Unger




Timbrell Essma performs her own freestyle ballet to "O Holy Night".
Timbrell is one of many local performers appearing in tonight's television special *A Magical Valley Christmas* exclusively on KMVT.

TWIN FALLS CHRISTMAS SPECIAL AIRS TONIGHT

Break out the hot cocoa, turn on the TV and cozy up to a half hour of holiday entertainment. For the 6th year in a row First Federal, Anmarc Productions, & KMVT present *A Magical Valley Christmas* and it all begins tonight at 8:00pm on CBS Channel 11. "It's a community program that's filled with some great local talent," says Producer & Director Mark Bork, "and it is filmed entirely in the Magic Valley." "I found the historic district to be reminiscent of the manger scene," Bork said. "It's ancient, simple and beautiful all at the same time." The 30 minute special is a massive undertaking requiring the expertise of many businesses. Each song was individually pre-recorded at Sound Trax Randy Quigley's sound studio. Lighting was provided by Luis Vargas' Midnight Productions. Anmarc Productions provided the camera, dolly & track and One World Media provided a camera crane. "Christmas is all about people celebrating with each other," says Bork. "In that same spirit, this show is a collection of local video & audio professionals coming together to create a television program with heart and soul." *A Magical Valley Christmas* is commercial free and made possible by First Fed. It begins tonight at 8:00pm and continues airing various times on KMVT through Christmas Day.

Also showing:
Thurs. Dec. 22 — 11:00am
Fri. Dec. 23 — 10:36pm
Sat. Dec. 24 — 5:30pm & 10:36pm
Sun. Dec. 25 — 4:30pm & 10:36pm

TONIGHT 8:00pm



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NATION

Deficit reduction likely nominal

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — For all the time and speeches it has devoted to deploring the budget deficit, Congress will soon adjourn for the year without making more than a dent in it. The Senate is expected to vote today on a package of cutbacks that have already passed the House. But the whole package would trim only about \$3 for every \$1,000 the government would otherwise spend.

In its particulars, the spending cuts bill has spawned considerable outrage — notably over its negative impact on spending for Medicaid, welfare reform and student loans. The measure barely squeaked through the House. And the Senate vote is considered such a cliffhanger that both Republicans and Democrats have gone to extraordinary lengths to maximize their votes.

Vice President Dick Cheney cut short a Middle East trip to

be available to cast the decisive vote in case of a tie. Across the aisle, Democratic Sen. Christopher Dodd, who had been home in Connecticut recuperating from knee surgery, was called back to the Capitol so that he could vote against it.

All 44 Democrats and one independent were expected to oppose the bill. That means Republicans can afford to lose no more than five GOP votes, and at least five Republicans seemed poised to vote no.

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Another rescue:
This time, it's snow-
mobilers in E. Idaho.
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MAGIC VALLEY

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Obituaries B2-4

City Editor: Matthew Brady, 735-1234

The Times-News

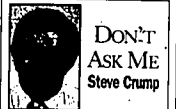
Wednesday, December 21, 2005

Section B

It's Christmas eve: What's your hurry?

I am composed. I am serene. Most of all, I am ready. These past four weeks while you letter models have fretted and sweated, I have been secure in the knowledge that when push comes to shove — and there's a lot of shoving on Dec. 24 — I will be master of the game.

I am Last-Minute Shopper, a unique polisher about it. I understand, even if you do not panic rules on Christmas Eve, and that panic is our friend.



Put yourself in the shoes of Store Manager, who has a quota to meet, goals to reach, cash to sweep up and send off to Cincinnati or Plano or Minneapolis or Green Bay or Troy or Benlovenville or Issaquah, Ill. or her success in doing so will have much to do with whether he or she will be doing the same thing next Dec. 24.

This individual is eager to deal.

He or she is eager particularly because no perspiration appears on my brow. My bluff is on. I know, even if the retailer does not think it necessary I can complete my shopping at midnight on Christmas Eve with one mad splurge at 7-Eleven, batteries not included.

So my ID does not twitch and my hand does not tremble when I say, "Make me an offer."

You other folks are driven by the primordial fear of the zero option, the notion that Christmas will dawn and you will not have anything — or enough — to give to those you love.

I know better, for I have on a Christmas Eve scooped up an ashtray off a waiting room table, wiped it clean, bought a fresh pack of Marlboros and added a book of matches, only to know that my Christmas shopping is done.

I have, at convenience stores both near and far, embraced the idea that the flashlight, the 8-track tape — even the box of Ding Dongs — can be Christmas.

Consider the incredible, edible egg. Take my word, it's unobtainable at any convenience store at any price by noon on Christmas Day.

But that might happen if I secured 10 or 12 dozen eggs on Christmas Eve? Am I the hero of the pumpkin pie and the eggnog, or all I got?

Last-minute Christmas shopping is arm about filling a desperate need at a desperate moment, and I know that the Easy Bake Oven (with a 20-watt light bulb) — not a 40.

It amuses me, invariably, to watch you Early Shoppers, who purchased everything, wrapped it and mailed it. I'll allow you paid full price, and you'll have nothing — zilch — to do on Dec. 24 except watch Perry Combs special re-runs.

But will be on task and on the prowl, skittering in and out of last-minute bargains and preclearance sales.

And in the end, if my presents are wrapped in a gift bag while yours are in fine foil and satin, what difference does it make? I'm the guy with the 9-volt batteries.

Mr. Santa Claus, who for all you know doesn't start work until 4:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve.

Maybe the shepherds were last-minute shoppers. Maybe so were the Wise Men (there was a 24-hour Wal-Mart in Nineveh that carried frankincense).

See see CRUMP, Page B4

Opponent tries to stall Sempra station

By Michelle Dunlop
Times-News writer

JEROME — A Jerome County resident is continuing his battle to block the building of a proposed coal-fired power plant.

"Our self-protection is what I'm fighting for," said Lee Halper of his effort to stop Sempra Generation.

Halper recently asked the district court to weigh in on the first permit granted to the San Diego-based company, acting under the subsidiary of Idaho Valley Energy, that intends to build a

600-megawatt coal-fired power plant northeast of Jerome. In June, the planning and zoning committee approved Sempra's request to build a meteorological tower, which it needs to collect data for an air quality permit. Halper has fought the energy company ever since.

And that's something Sempra spokesman Art Larson doesn't understand.

"We find it rather puzzling that Mr. Halper would try to obstruct something as benign as collecting air quality data," Larson said.

In November, Halper filed a lawsuit

against the county saying officials ignored several public process provisions. However, Halper said, the law requires him to file a motion to stay Sempra's permit to stop the company from legally building the weather station.

Meanwhile, Sempra continues to work on building the road to the weather station location, Larson said. The company intends to have the station up and running by the end of January.

When Sempra officials initially applied to the planning and zoning committee for the permit, residents requested that

the company conduct additional monitoring of existing pollutant levels — mercury and ammonia — in the air. The company has agreed to monitor ammonia on-site, but will not test for mercury on-site, instead paying for mercury testing at Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve.

"In essence, they have a permit that doesn't meet any of the conditions that the public asked for," Halper said.

Times-News reporter Michelle Dunlop can be reached at 735-3237 or by e-mail at mdunlop@magvalley.com.

SPECIAL GUESTS AT THE GAME



Soldiers with the 1016th Petroleum U.S. Army Reserve unit sit with their families and other fans in the stands at the Twin Falls High School girls basketball game Tuesday evening after being celebrated as guests of honor with a pre-game show. According to an Army news release, the unit is under alert for potential mobilization to Iraq.

T.F. nursery gives away trees to the needy

Program starts earlier this year
By Candace Baltz-Smylie
Times-News correspondent

Free trees for those in need
What: Sixty trees to give away
Where: Kimberly Nurseries
2162 Addison Ave. E., Twin Falls
When: Starting at 9 a.m. today
How: First come, first served

TWIN FALLS — It shouldn't be hard to do something nice, especially around the holidays.

But for Kimberly Nurseries, giving away free Christmas trees to the needy has been anything but easy for the last few years.

"We always bring in fresh cut Christmas trees for sale, and normally we have quite a few left," said Jed Garner, an employee at Kimberly Nurseries. "We've tried giving them away in the past, but haven't had much luck."

Apparently, no one knew about the deal, and those who did, didn't have enough time to

get the trees.

So this year, instead of waiting until Dec. 24 to try and give away what's left, Kimberly Nurseries is starting the free tree tradition today. They have 60 trees to give away.

"We wanted to give them time to decorate," said Garner. "It's first come, first served. We hope we reach those who need it the most."

Dave Wright, president of Kimberly Nurseries, can't remember when they began

giving Christmas trees away, but he says this year is especially important to do so.

"Kimberly Nurseries is a part of the community, we understand what it means to have difficult times and what it means to make a difference, and that's what we want to do for those in need this season," he said. "Obviously, there is no financial gain in it for us — it's a big loss — but we're part of this community and we should do this."

"I wouldn't say it's the quintessential symbol of Christmas — that's the birth of Jesus — but Christmas trees are a household thing, it's a family tradition and I think every house should have one," said Wright.

No trees have been especially set aside for the giveaway; recipients can pick from about 120 trees.

What they don't give away,

they will sell for half price.

"Our least expensive tree is \$25 at full price," said Garner. "And we still have some trees that sell for more than \$100. These are nice trees."

Kimberly Nurseries is not looking for any proof of income or need.

"We'll take their word for it," said Garner.

"We just hope we find some people who can take advantage of the program, without taking advantage of it."

Kimberly Nurseries is located at 2162 Addison Avenue East in Twin Falls next to D&B Supply. The giveaway starts at 9 a.m. Wednesday and lasts until they've given away 60 trees.

Correspondent Candace Baltz-Smylie can be reached by e-mail at Candacebaltz@whoi.com.

Forest Service purchase expands snowmobile trail

STANLEY — The snowmobile trail connecting Stanley to Redfish Lake, and beyond, within the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) is now open thanks to the Forest Service's recent purchase of the trail easement and conservation easements from the Piva family.

Normally the conservation easements do not provide for public access; however, this conservation easement acquired a trail route over the Piva Ranch adjoining the city of Stanley south of the Stanley airport.

The conservation easement also purchased the development rights on the bench that the trail crosses. This will reduce future use conflicts and protect the cherished scenic, historic, and pastoral qualities of the Stanley Basin.

Sara Baldwin, Sawtooth National Recreation Area Ranger, expressed her pleasure at securing the access and conservation easements. "We have made this purchase on behalf of all those who enjoy the variety of opportunities to recreate on the Piva and who love the unique char-



Snowmobilers enjoy Sawtooth Mountain scenery along the snowmobile trail through the Piva Ranch property near the Stanley Airport. Public access through the area has been made possible with the recent purchase of a conservation easement through the Piva Ranch.

acteristics of the open, working landscapes. These easements are part of our continuing success in implementing the 1972 Congressional direction in the SNRA legislation.

"We are grateful to the Pivas for their cooperation in working with us," said Baldwin. The Piva family, second and third generation Stanley Basin ranching families, sold to the U.S. the majority of their development rights on 2100 acres over three properties in the Stanley vicinity.

The Forest Service also purchased a permanent right for public access to portions of the Challis National Forest over the Basin Butte Road.

Baldwin added, "We appreciate the efforts of the Idaho congressional delegation in obtaining the appropriations for this purchase. We are also thankful for the assistance of the Sawtooth Society and others in working to generate support and funding for the conservation easements."

Money for the SNRA protection program comes from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a non-income tax fund generated from off-shore oil and gas royalties.

The purchase of the Piva easements brings to a total of 91 conservation easements the Forest Service has acquired over the past 30 years. Permanent protection now exists over 17,000 acres of the approximately 20,000 acres of private land within the SNRA boundary. More than \$65 million in dollars has been invested to preserve the natural, scenic, historic, pastoral, and fish and wildlife values of the SNRA while retaining lands in private ownership and on the county tax rolls.

Freezing rain sends cars sliding

By Terry Smith
Times-News writer

SHOSHONE — Freezing rain and black ice did their mischief on highways north and south of here early Monday evening, scattering cars like jackstraws, according to one eyewitness.

Numerous slide-offs and collisions were reported between Hilday and Interstate 84 along U.S. Highway 93 east and Idaho Highway 75.

Dee Silver, a supervisor at the Southern Idaho Regional Communications Center, said Tuesday that there were no reports of fatalities but "we had some pretty nasty slide-offs."

An accident seven miles south of Shoshone sent two people and a Magic Valley Regional Medical Center, according to Idaho State Police. The injuries did not appear to be serious, ISP said.

Laura Hall, a Hilday resident who was on her way to Boise, said road conditions were so treacherous "you couldn't even step on the road without your foot sliding away. It was concerning because they said it was like jackstraws all over the place."

Jackstraws is a children's game similar to pickup sticks, Hall explained.

"There were tow trucks going hither, thither and thro' there," she said.

Silver said Shoshone records showed six slide-offs and two collisions in Lincoln County between 5:20 and 9:13 p.m.

Jerome County reported three slide-offs and two non-fatal crashes. A report was not available from Blaine County.

Silver said Lincoln County authorities temporarily closed Highway 75 between Shoshone and the Blaine County line to prevent more accidents and to clean up the ones that had already happened.

It was pretty bad. It got really nasty for a while," said Lincoln County Sheriff's Deputy Josh Eggleston.

Hall said her car slid off the road near the Shoshone Ice Caves.

"It took me three hours before they could get me back on the road," she said. "I was OK. It was not my time — I'm just so thankful!"

Hall, who had to cancel her trip to Boise, said the freezing rain struck without warning shortly after 5 p.m.

"It just started a freezing rain and it just caught us all off-guard," she said.

Man injured after vehicle hits power pole

The Times-News

JEROME — A 27-year-old Jerome man was in critical condition Tuesday at Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise after his 1985 Chevrolet Blazer slid out of control and struck a power pole near Golf Course Road south of here.

Idaho State Police identified the accident occurred about 7 a.m. near the intersection of 500 South and 75 East.

ISP said Allen had to be extracted from the vehicle and was flown by air ambulance to Saint Alphonsus.

The accident remained under investigation Tuesday afternoon. ISP said Allen was not wearing a seat belt.

Snowpack totals

Watershed	% of Avg.	% Below
Salmon	82%	30%
Big Lost	89%	32%
Little Wood	90%	29%
Big Lost	93%	29%
Little Lost	83%	29%
Newsa Fork/Teton	87%	31%
Upper Snake Basin	94%	32%
Oakley	115%	34%
Salmon Falls	110%	35%

As of Dec. 20

MAGIC VALLEY

OBITUARIES

For obituary rates and information, call 735-3278 Monday through Saturday. Deadline is 4 p.m. for next-day publication. The e-mail address for obituaries is obits@magicvalley.com. A free service and can be placed until 4 p.m. every day. To view or submit obituaries online, or to place a message in an individual online guestbook, go to www.magicvalley.com and click on "Obituaries."

David Monroe Sellgren



David Monroe Sellgren has completed his journey through life. He left us on Dec. 15, 2005, after a long illness. He was calm and peaceful in his final step. Dave was born Nov. 21, 1929, to Arnold and Marian Foss Sellgren. He lived most of his first 50 years in San Diego. He went to San Diego High School, then on a full scholarship to the United States Naval Academy, to Stanford University. There he majored in political science. He also met Marian Christopherson, whom he married after graduation in 1952. After completing his service tour with the Navy, he settled in San Diego where they had four children. Annual ski trips were a staple of family life. He began a career as a stock broker in San Diego, then started his own company, Charter Counseling. In 1978, he and Marian decided to move to Idaho. He discovered and in-

vested in our Wood River Valley by purchasing the Big Wood Golf Course and surrounding land.

He also owned Mulvains Restaurant in 1978. Marian died in April 1986, but Dave continued to live in the Valley

to enhance his golf course. His goal was to make it the best nine-hole course in the West. He played tennis and golf throughout his life. He married his companion of 17 years, Elizabeth (Liz) Bosted in May 2004.

He is survived by his wife, Ricky; children, Kristen (Kris), Peter, Leslie and Coco; grandchildren, Julie Diane (JD) and Christopher (Chris); and twin brothers, Charles Alan (Al) and William (Bill).

A celebration of his life is tentatively planned for May when the valley is starting to wake up from a long cold winter.

Please consider memorial gifts in Dave's name to your favorite charity, or to the Community Library, P.O. Box 2138, Ketchum, ID 83340, or Hospice of the Wood River Valley, P.O. Box 4320, Ketchum, ID 83340.

Lillian Gertrude Bell



ARCO — Lillian Gertrude Bell, lifetime resident and well-known community volunteer of Butte County, passed away Dec. 18, 2005.

Lillian was born April 17, 1914, at the family homestead in Darlington, Idaho. She was one of 13 children born to Lewis and Anne Smith, pioneers of the Lost River Valley. Her family was a source of pride to her and they remained very close throughout her life. Lillian attended grade school in Darlington and high school in Mackay.

On Nov. 13, 1933, she married John W. Bell in Jerome, Idaho. They made their home in Darlington, where they farmed the original Bell homestead and adjacent properties, developing it into one of the best in the valley. They had five children, three sons and two daughters. They continued to farm along with two sons, Harold and Preston, until John's death in 1977. She retained an active interest in the ranch until it was sold in 1999 and then moved to Arco.

Lillian was very active in community service organizations and received numerous awards in recognition of her efforts and achievements. She served on the original board that organized and brought to completion the Lost Rivers

Hospital in 1959. She was a charter member of the Hospital Auxiliary, donating over 6,000 hours of her time to support the hospital. She was also a longtime member of the Butte County Fairboard, a 4-11 Club leader, president of the P.A. chairman for the Red Cross blood drives, hostess at hospital health fairs, chairman of Candy Strippers, chairman of the Christmas tree festival, member of Lost River Senior Citizen board and active member of the Arco Baptist Church.

Included in her awards were Butte County Mother of the Year and the Farm Bureau's farm wife of the year. Her most treasured award was the Distinguished Merit Award by the

Idaho Hospital Association and medical organizations for her volunteer service to health care. For this achievement, she was presented their most prestigious award - the Star Garnet.

Survivors include two sons, John (Eunice) Bell of Arco, Idaho, and Preston (Kathy) Bell of Darlington, Idaho; three daughters, Sharon (Ralph) Halstead, Idaho Falls, Idaho, and Shirley Bell, Pocatello, Idaho; a daughter-in-law, Jessie Bell, Pocatello, Idaho; a brother, Lloyd Smith of Mackay, Idaho; three sisters, Goldie Pettit, Lucile Carlton and Claribel Prince, all of Jerome, Idaho. She leaves eight grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband; a son, Harold Bell, and two grandsons, John Kelly Bell and Gregory Lynn Bell.

A funeral will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 22, 2005, at the Arco Baptist Church. A viewing will be held from 10 to 10:45 a.m. Thursday at the Hawker Lost River Funeral Chapel. Interment will be in the Hillcrest Cemetery in Arco.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Lost River Hospital Auxiliary, Lost River Senior Center or a charity of choice.

Gary Curtis Bowyer



CARSON CITY, Nev. — Gary Curtis Bowyer, 50, of Carson City, Nev., and formerly of Twin Falls, Idaho, passed away Dec. 14, 2005, at his home. Gary lost a two-year battle with cancer, but never let it prevent him from doing the things he loved to do.

Gary was born in Corpus Christi, Texas, on Dec. 19, 1954, to Charles and Deon Bowyer. He was one of four children.

Gary's father was in the Navy so he was fortunate to have attended many different schools growing up, and he graduated from Twin Falls High School in 1972.

He married Dana Ostrom in 1973, and graduated from Boise State University with a bachelor's degree in 1976. They had two wonderful girls, Leslie and Kilee. They divorced in 1985, but remained lifelong friends. He went on to pursue his master's degree in technology at Oregon State University. In 1983, he married Lou Ann Spaulda, and they moved to Carson City, Nev. in 1997. He took a job with the BLM. They divorced in 2004.

Gary worked extensively on culture resource projects with the Virginia City National Landmark, including water line, railroad, school improvements and mining issues. Gary's most definitive legacy rests with his contribution to the various Comstock cemeteries located

on nearly 70 acres of land strewn across the landscape. For these sites, in partnership with the Comstock Cemetery Foundation, he completed all archaeological work, developed a master property plan, received a Save America Incentives Grant for a nearly 1 million dollar restoration project, began a stone repair program (Operation Hagar), and worked on the completion of a \$300,000 fencing project. His contributions are unmatched and represent a historic benchmark in the evolution of these landscapes.

Gary loved life and lived it to the fullest. His true passions were his family, his friends, his work, good food and good beer. Gary was a wonderful man who touched all those who came in contact with him. His

sense of humor was infectious, and his generosity was unequalled. Gary's battle with cancer was one fought with dignity to the very end.

He is survived by his parents, Charles and Deon Bowyer of Twin Falls, Idaho, his daughters, Leslie Bowyer Saiss (Nathan) of Albuquerque, N.M. and Kilee Bowyer (Steven) of Twin Falls, Idaho, one grandson, Kaitlan, and one on the way. In addition, one sister, Gary Cassen (Roger) of Filer, Idaho; and two brothers, Charles Bowyer III (Laurie) and Dennis Bowyer (Cathy) of Twin Falls, Idaho. He is also survived by many nephews and nieces.

There will be a memorial service held in his honor in Twin Falls, Idaho, at 1 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 28, at the American Legion Hall located at 447 Seastrom. A celebration of Gary's life will follow the memorial service.

For directions or questions, please call 208-734-4151 or 205-385-8538. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions be made to the Twin Falls County Historical Society and Museum.

There will be a memorial service held in his honor this spring in Virginia City, Nev. For more information go to: www.comstockcemeteryfoundation.com, look at the special icon for Gary Bowyer.

SERVICES

Eather Grace Johnson of Buhl, funeral at 11 a.m. today at the Calvary Assembly of God Church in Buhl (Farmer Funeral Chapel).

Zenda Lee Schmidt of Twin Falls, memorial service at 2 p.m. today at the Community Christian Church on Grandview Drive South (Parke's Magic Valley Funeral Home).

Christopher Wayne Guter of Redding, Calif., and formerly of Twin Falls, celebration of life at 2 p.m. today at Reynolds Funeral Chapel, 2466 Addison Ave. E., Twin Falls.

John W. Reynolds of Heyburn, casual service at 1 p.m. today at Rasmussen Funeral Home, 1350 E. 16th St., Burley.

Fanne Haines of Oakley, funeral at 11 a.m. Thursday at the Oakley Stake Center of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 301 N. Center Ave.; friends may call from 6

until 8 p.m. today at Rasmussen Funeral Home, 1350 E. 16th St., Burley, and from 10 to 10:45 a.m. Thursday at the church.

Virgil William Carllie of Rupert, funeral at 11 a.m. Thursday at Hansen Mortuary Rupert Chapel; friends may call from 6 to 8 p.m. today at the mortuary and one hour before the service.

Alice Maycock Shaw of Rupert, funeral at 11 a.m. Thursday at Aescupa 1st LDS Ward Chapel, Friends and family may call from 6 to 8 p.m.

today at Hansen Mortuary Rupert Chapel, 710 Sixth St., and one hour before the service at the church.

John Devan Longden of Shoshone, gathering of family and friends from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday at Demary's Shoshone Chapel.

Gregory Lyle Bell of Rupert, funeral at 11 a.m. Friday at the Rupert LDS 5th Ward; viewing for friends and family from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday at the Hansen Mortuary Rupert Chapel and one hour before the service at the church.

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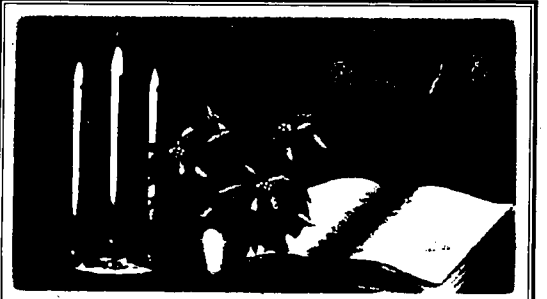
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DEATH

NOTICES

Justice D. Allen
TWIN FALLS — Justice D. Allen, 9-month-old son of Crystal Wren and Jeremy Allen, died Sunday, Dec. 18, 2005, at her home in Twin Falls.
Arrangements will be made by Reynolds Funeral Chapel, Twin Falls.

Heather Garman
KIMBERLY — Heather Garman, 34, of Kimberly, Idaho, died Dec. 20, 2005, at her home in Kimberly, Idaho.
Arrangements will be made by Park's Magic Valley Funeral Home of Twin Falls, Idaho.

Walter Hazelton
TWIN FALLS — Walter Hazelton, 75, of Bliss, Idaho, died Dec. 19, 2005, at St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise, Idaho.
Arrangements will be made by Park's Magic Valley Funeral Home of Twin Falls, Idaho.

Omar L. Mann
TWIN FALLS — Omar L. Mann, 86, of Twin Falls, died Dec. 20, 2005, at his home in Twin Falls, Idaho.
Arrangements will be made by Park's Magic Valley Funeral Home of Twin Falls, Idaho.

Jerry P. Feriante
TWIN FALLS — Jerry P. Feriante, 89, of Twin Falls, died Dec. 20, 2005, at Bridgeview Estates in Twin Falls, Idaho.
Arrangements will be made by Park's Magic Valley Funeral Home of Twin Falls, Idaho.

Nyal C. Hoffman
FILER — Nyal C. Hoffman, 73, of Filer, died Dec. 19, 2005, in Twin Falls.
A funeral will be at 11 a.m. Friday, Dec. 23, 2005, at the LDS Stake Center in Filer. Visitation will be from 4 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 22, at the Farmer Funeral Chapel in Bull.

OBITUARY

Harold Everett Patterson



SHOSHONE — Harold Everett Patterson, 70, of Shoshone, died Sunday, Dec. 18, 2005, at Sunbridge Care Center in Twin Falls.
Harold was born March 15, 1935, at Sheldon, Mo., the son of Everett Edward and Frances "Maude" Faith Patterson and was reared and educated at Sheldon.
He came to Idaho with his family in 1952 and they settled in Jerome.
Harold married Glenda Smith at Elko, Nev., on Nov. 27, 1954, and they later moved to Shoshone in 1977.
Harold worked at various jobs in the Magic Valley until he became disabled.
Survivors include his wife, Glenda of Shoshone; his chil-

dren and Judy (Monte) Copenbarger of Wendell.
Also surviving are two brothers, Howard Dean Patterson of Jerome and Glenn Patterson of Quincy, Calif.; one sister, Mary Smith of Twin Falls, seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.
Harold was preceded in death by one daughter, two sons, one brother, one sister and one grandchild.
A funeral for Harold Everett Patterson will be conducted at 1 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 22, 2005, in the Hove Robertson Funeral Chapel. Burial will follow in the Jerome Cemetery.
Friends may call from 6 until 8 p.m. Wednesday evening at the chapel and from 9 a.m. until noon Thursday.

dren, Dave (Lola) of Shoshone, Bob (Carric) of Filer, Jim (Garalynn), Donald (April) and Janet Patterson, all of Twin

Another obituary is on Page B4 of today's paper

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MAGIC VALLEY/IDAHO

OBITUARY

Gregory Lyle Bell

RUPERT — Gregory Lyle Bell died peacefully in his home on Dec. 19, 2005. He was born on Aug. 26, 1947, in Idaho Falls, Idaho, to Lynn W. and Norma Jefferys Bell. He moved to a homestead north of Rupert, in 1956 with his parents. After graduating from Ricks College in 1967, Greg married Sally Anne Bryson in the Idaho Falls LDS Temple. They raised seven children on a farm in the Kinman area.



Greg was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He loved the gospel and enjoyed his various callings including Bishopric Counselor, Ward Clerk, Young Men's President, Sunday School and Boy Scouts. He enjoyed farming, operating equipment, tutoring math, working with the Boy Scouts, singing in the Ward Choir and playing the organ. He loved spending time with his children and grandchildren. He retired in 1999 after farming for

30 years and returned to school. He earned his bachelor's degree in mathematics from Idaho State University. While working on a master's degree in math, he taught at the ISU math lab and as a substitute in Minidoka County. This brought him much happiness.

Greg is survived by his wife, Sally; sons, Wesley (Rachel), Stanley (Leslie), Mark (Jennifer), Brian, Andrew (Vanessa) and Courtney (Vanessa) Bell; and daughter, Amelia (Jeremiah) Wade; 13 grandchildren; his parents, nine brothers, four sisters and 75 nieces and nephews.

A funeral will be held at 11 a.m. Friday, Dec. 23, 2005, at Rupert 5th LDS Ward Chapel, 324 E. 18th St., with Bishop Brent Griffin officiating. Burial will follow at the Rupert Cemetery. Friends and family may call from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday evening at the Hansen Mortuary-Rupert Chapel, 710 S. 2nd St., and one hour prior to service on Friday.

The family wishes to thank family, friends, community members, the ISU Math Department, Dr. Pates, Minidoka Home Health and Sun Bridge Care Facility for their kindness and assistance in caring for Gregory.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made at US Bank to a Gregory L. Bell Scholarship account.

Searchers rescue snowmobilers

IDAHO FALLS (AP) — Search-and-rescue crews retrieved eight snowmobilers stranded in two separate incidents in eastern Idaho.

In the first case, six Bigby residents spent more than 10 hours Saturday trying to get out of a canyon that they had snowmobiled into, officials said. The next day, an Idaho Falls snowmobiler and his son became stuck for nine hours after snowmobiling into a different canyon.

"They were lucky," said Brett Mackert, a commander with the Fremont County Search

and Rescue team. Canyons "trap a lot of people. There's a natural funneling action that (makes it) steep and narrow and you can't get out."

The snowmobilers all made it home safely, in part because they took precautions, he said.

Two women snowmobiling with the larger group stayed at the top of the canyon and were able to call for help after they were found by four Shelly residents. The rest of the party, still stranded, used a piece of cardboard, gasoline and a spark plug to build a fire.

Crump

Continued from B1.
Our text this morning comes from the esteemed Clement Clarke Moore, author of "A Visit From St. Nicholas." Mr. Moore grasped, even if you cannot, that Christmas is best done on the fly and in a hurry:

*"More rapid than eagles his couriers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name,
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
Oh, Comet! on Cupid! on Dancer and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away!
dash away all!"*

Like Santa, my work will be done about 11:30 on Christmas night.
Merry Day-After!

Times-News columnist Steve Crump can be reached at 733-3223, or write to him at scrump@magvalley.com.

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Santa's favorite family

The Adamses satisfy Kringle's sweet tooth



By Matt Christensen
Times-News writer

TWIN FALLS — Some families pass down heirlooms. A quilt, a ring or a painting. In the Adams family, it's Christmas recipes.

Each year, Jann Adams gathers her mother, Joan Brower, and children — 14-year-old Clerissa, 11-year-old Creighton and 6-year-old Ashton — in her Twin Falls kitchen for a six-day holiday-baking marathon. Grandma Brower taught Jann the secret holiday recipes, and now Jann is teaching her children. Christmas treats are this family's heritage.

Saturday morning, the cooks were up to their elbows in caramel, chocolate and nougat. It was day four. The peanut brittle was done. The fudge — some with nuts, some without — was already in the Christmas tins. A gingerbread town stood on the dining-room table. But the turtles, chocolate-covered coconut balls, Boston creams, chocolate-covered peanut balls and peanut rolls were still on the list, as well as Santa's sugar cookies.

Ashton and Clerissa laid out pecans on a cookie sheet — the base for turtles. Grandma Brower stirred a boiling pot of caramel. Jann chopped peanuts for the peanut roll, and Creighton dipped peanut balls in melted chocolate.

Grandma Brower didn't have to do much coaching — the kids help out every year, and by now, they know almost all the recipes by heart.

"Tradition," said Brower, "means a lot when it comes to making candy."

Indeed, they use the same pots and pans every year, even though Jann has a new set. The treats are rolled on a marble slab that Grandma Don Brower



Top, starting from left to right: Creighton, Ashton, Jann, and Clerissa Adams with Joan Brower stand with some of their Christmas candies Saturday morning in their Twin Falls dining room.

Left, Ashton Adams, center, takes a seat on the floor after munching on a few Christmas treats Saturday morning in their Twin Falls kitchen. Also helping out are, from left, her mother, Jann Adams; grandmother, Joan Brower; sister, Clerissa Adams and brother, Creighton Adams. The family gathers each Christmas season to bake hundreds of sweets.

Photo by MICHAEL THOMPSON/The Times News

nabbed from a construction scrap pile four decades ago. And, of course, there are the recipes, gathered and tweaked by Grandma Brower over the years.

"I learned most of these recipes by trial and error," she said. "Now I pass down the secrets, and I think we make new secrets every year."

Clerissa and Creighton are apt pupils. Ashton, on the other hand, prefers to taste test. Her favorite spot is the kitchen counter, within reach of

the cooling candy.

On Saturday, with legs dangling over the counter's edge, Ashton assumed her position next to the coconut balls. She swallowed them almost as fast as Creighton could dip the candies in a fondue pot of warm chocolate.

When she'd had her fill, Ashton climbed down to the kitchen floor, perhaps to absorb the family traditions through osmosis.

The rest of the family, however, had

little time to rest. All the cooking had to be done by Monday, when Jann packed tins of treats for friends and family across the country. In six days, the Adamses baked nearly 500 sweets.

But the kitchen isn't closed yet. On Christmas Eve, the Adamses will gather again — this time for Santa's sake. They'll turn to Grandma Brower for her famed sugar cookie recipe. Clerissa will help roll the dough. Creighton

will cut the cookies. And Ashton, well, she'll be there to ensure the cookies are up to Adams family standards.

Reluctantly, they've decided to share a couple of secret recipes, even Santa's favorite cookies. Perhaps these treats will bring your family as much joy as they've brought the Adamses.

Times-News features writer Matt Christensen can be reached at 735-3243 or mattchristensen@tn.com.

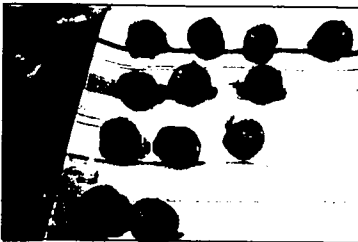
GREAT HOLIDAY RECIPES FROM THE ADAMSES



Ashton, left, and Clerissa Adams arrange pecans for the traditional turtle candies the family makes each Christmas.



Two different caramels are diligently stirred by Jann Adams and her mother, Joan Brower, on the fourth day of the family's traditional six-day Christmas candy baking session.



Chocolate-covered coconut balls dry Saturday morning in the Adams' Twin Falls kitchen.

SUGAR COOKIES

These classic sugar cookies are sure to please Santa. And they're loads of fun to make. The Adams family gathers every Christmas Eve to prepare and decorate the cookies. As Santa knows, they're best enjoyed with a glass of cold milk.

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt
6 tablespoons butter or margarine
1/3 cup shortening
3/4 cup sugar
1 egg
1 tablespoon milk
1 teaspoon vanilla

Stir together flour, baking powder and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Beat butter and shortening for

30 seconds; add sugar and beat until fluffy. Add egg, milk and vanilla; beat well. Add dry ingredients to beaten mixture, beating until well combined. Cover and chill for 2 hours. Roll out on a lightly floured surface and cut into desired shapes. Place on cookie sheet and bake at 375 degrees for 8 minutes or until done. Makes 36-48 cookies.

PEANUT ROLLS

These peanut rolls are an Adams favorite. They're also a favorite of extended family and friends. That's because plenty of peanut rolls are packed in Christmas care packages, that the Adamses send away this time of year. They're a bit tricky to make, says Jann Adams, but well worth the effort.

2 cups powdered sugar
1 (7 ounce) jar marshmallow creme
21 ounces caramels
3 tablespoons water
3 cups chopped, salted peanuts

Put bowl, combine 1/2 cup of the powdered sugar with marshmallow creme; blend thoroughly. Knead in remaining powdered sugar. Divide mixture into 4 parts. Form each part into a rope 1/2 inch in diameter. Cut into pieces 1 1/2 inches long. Place on waxed paper-lined cookie sheet. Freeze about 20 minutes or until firm.

Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan over low heat, heat caramels and water until caramels are melted, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Dip frozen marshmallow pieces into caramel mixture; roll in peanuts. Place on waxed paper-lined cookie sheet. Freeze until set. Store in covered container in refrigerator. Makes 5 1/2 dozen candies.

Line cookie sheet with waxed paper. In medi-

FOOD & HOME

These gifts are sure to please any gardener

It was the week before Christmas and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, certainly not my spouse. For he was clueless. OK, so I'm not a poet, but I can dig up a list of hints for those who want to give a little something to their favorite gardener.



GREEN THUMBPRINTS Cathy Walworth

One more to come

Cathy Walworth, formerly of Twin Falls and now of Wyoming, says she'll retire from writing her weekly column, which has appeared in *The Times-News* for years. Next week's "Green Thumbprints" column will be her last.

How about a new pair of gloves? I try to take care of my gloves, but they work hard taking care of me, and they often end the season looking like they died a violent death.

For roses and other prickly things, I like goat skin gloves. They're always soft, yet tough enough to keep the thorns out. For weeds and sleepy weeds, I like the rubberized gloves with tight cuffs to keep the yuck out.

Garden clogs can be beat for dry feet. These all-rubber clogs are comfortable and always dry. I'm partial to the Bird-clogs because of the cork footbed — it fits every curve in my feet and feels great even after a whole day of gardening. The footbed can be slipped out while you rinse the clogs under the hose, too.

Once upon a time my true love gave to me a certificate for five holes. We were just starting a new landscaping project, and those holes came in handy. He uses a bigger shovel than I do.

Speaking of gift certificates, those from your favorite nursery are wonderful. Some folks dislike giving a gift certificate because it has a dollar amount on it. Kind of like somebody forgetting to remove the price tag. So don't give one with a dollar amount — give one for, say, a hanging basket. Or a tree, or a flat of petunias. What fun it will be to dream of all the ways to spend such a gift!

Garden sculpture is a delight hidden among summer's blooms but really comes into its own in the winter garden. Tour the garden center now for the perfect cement critter. Prices are especially good on garden art this time of year, too.

Or how about a gardener's va-

cation? Seattle's Flower and Garden Show is coming up in February; garden tours of England can be had from your friendly travel agent. Brochures from either of those, all wrapped up and tied with a bow, would be most welcome.

Burr's Bees makes all manner of skin remedies. Gardeners get too much sun, risk insect stings, suffer from dry cracked skin and more. Once you explore all the goodies from these fine folks (found at the garden center) it will be hard to decide which product to take home. So try the gift pack with everything. Your gardener will thank you.

My favorite garden helper gets bored driving the John Deere around, so last year he got a battery-operated CD player. It was labeled tough enough for joggers, so it does fine on the back of a lawn tractor. You might include a couple of his/her favorite recording artists with this gift.

However you celebrate this holiday season, I wish you peace, love and hope, now and throughout the coming new year.

Write to former Twin Falls resident Cathy Walworth in care of this newspaper or e-mail her at ccwalworth@msn.com.

Healthier treats

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Next week in Food & Home

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Training adds the master touch to gardeners

The Times-News

TWIN FALLS — Ready to see your gardening savvy bloom? The 2006 Master Gardener Training, conducted by the University of Idaho Extension System and local county extension offices, will begin in January. Master Gardener training teaches participants about an array of horticultural subjects and builds their skills. The goal? To enable participants to assist fellow gardeners with horticultural problems.

Anyone with an interest in horticulture is welcome, the U of I says. Participants must be willing to share their new knowledge with others. Attendance at all classes and volunteer hours are required.

Master Gardener trainees must complete a 30-hour volunteer commitment by answering garden questions at Extension-sponsored plant clinics, giving horticulture talks, conducting workshops, leading garden tours, doing community beautification

projects, and introducing children to gardening.

Classes are taught by U of I Extension specialists, Extension educators and community experts. Topics covered in the 30 hours of instruction are lawn care, insects, disease and weed control, pesticide safety, soil and water management, fruit and vegetable culture, composting, trees and shrub care and pruning, and problem diagnosis.

The \$80 cost covers registration, supplies, handouts and the required text, "Master Gardener Handbook."

Class size is limited to 30 registrants in each area; a minimum of 10 participants is required to hold the classes. Deadline to register is Jan. 6.

Pesticide recertification credits are offered for several of the courses. Licensed pesticide applicators may register for those classes individually. If space is available, for \$10 per class. Certified Crop Consultant credits also are available with previous arrangements.

For information or to register,

Master Gardener training

Where: University of Idaho Extension offices in Twin Falls, Burley and Rupert.

When:

- 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Thursdays, Jan. 12 through March 16, Twin Falls Extension office, 240 Third Ave. E.; call 734-8590.
- 1 to 4 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 12 and 26, Feb. 9 and 23, and March 9, Burley Extension office, 1013 W. 16th St.; call 878-9461.
- 1 to 4 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 19, Feb. 2 and 16, and March 2 and 16, Rupert Extension office, 85 E. Baseline; call 438-7184.

Cost: \$80, includes registration, supplies, handouts and "Master Gardener Handbook."

To register: Contact the Jerome County Extension office, 600 Second Ave. W., 324-7578.

visit the Jerome County Extension office at 600 Second Ave. W. in Jerome, or call 324-7578.

People who complete the training are eligible to participate in the Rupert or Twin Falls Master Gardener clubs. The Rupert club meets at 2 p.m. the first Tuesday of each month at the Rupert Extension office; call Teri McAfee at 436-9191. The Twin Falls group meets at noon the third Tuesday of each month in the Rupert or Twin Falls Extension office; call Karen Garroll-Brown at 734-7683.

Cooking Club gets cooking

The Times-News

TWIN FALLS — It's been nearly two weeks and our cooking club is gathering steam. Flipper Karma Metzler Fitzgerald and friends are sharing their adventures in cooperative cooking. The goal is to create quick home-cooked meals together in the perfect

blend of food and fun. Two Sundays ago, they got together to cook in bulk — now they're sharing the results with us on our cooking-club blog at magpiesvalley.com. Readers can add comments and recommend recipes. Fitzgerald will share the results of the experiment in the Jan. 4 Food section of *The Times-News*.

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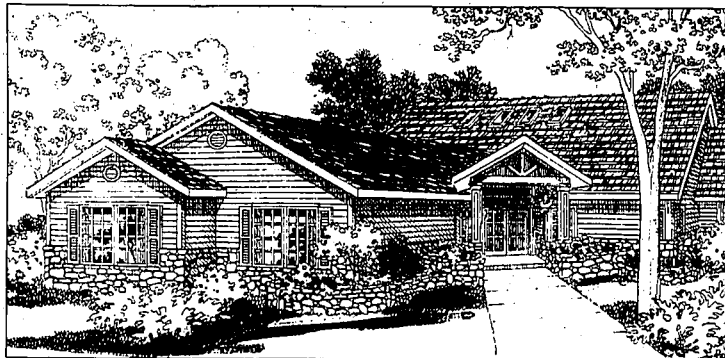
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FOOD & HOME



Relaxed Williston shows off pool

An indoor pool is easily the most remarkable feature of the Williston, though not by far, the only one. The multilevel, curvilinear stone planters gracing the entry facade are also quite striking. This plan is designed for active families that appreciate a relaxed mix of indoor and outdoor living environments.

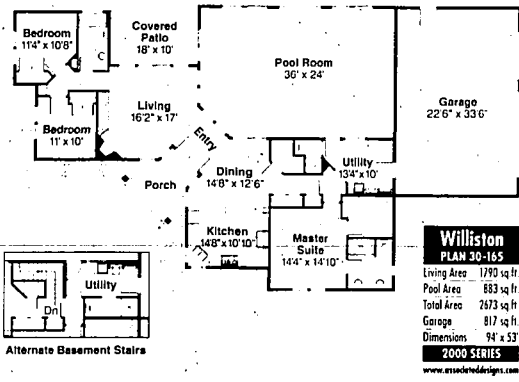
Entering through double doors, you immediately face the sky-lit, glass-enclosed pool. Sliders in the dining room offer the closest access. You can also get to the water by passing through the utility room, equipped with a convenient shower and toilet.

Three sets of sliders open the pool to the exterior, maximizing fresh air circulation when desired. The covered patio is handy for outdoor dining, while the patio spanning the rear is great for soaking up rays. In moderation, of course.

Entry, living room and dining room are bright and spacious. All have 9-foot ceilings and are awash with light from the pool enclosure.

Kitchen and dining room flow together. A raised eating bar provides partial separation without blocking the view. Kitchen counters wrap around four sides. The built-in desk makes it easy to set books, hold alkalis in order, and the huge walk-in pantry boasts storage space.

Amies-five-gas fireplace in the



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 Pool Area 883 sq ft
 Total Area 7673 sq ft
 Garage 817 sq ft
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living room offers concentrated warmth on chilly days. The home entertainment center is sufficiently deep and wide to house an assortment of electronic equipment plus a large collection of CDs, tapes and videos.

Amenities in the Williston's master suite include a generous

walk-in closet, private bath with dual vanity and oversized shower. Last, but not least, it's new steps to the pool.

For a review plan, including scaled floor plans, elevations, section and artist's conception, send \$25 to Associated Designs, 1100 Jacobs Dr., Dept. W, Eugene, OR 97402. Please specify the Williston 30-165 and include a return address when ordering. A catalog featuring more than 550 home plans is available for \$15. For more information, call (800) 634-0123, or visit our website at www.associatedesigns.com.

Locks for thermostats can be energy savers

Knight Ridder News Service

Question: I have a '50s rancher and hot-water baseboard heat. Another member of the household cranks up the thermostat to the mid-70s. My thermostat isn't programmable — it has a dial. Is there any way to put a lock on it?

Also, does a cement-block foundation cause a home to be measurably colder? The floor feels cold, but I don't know if that translates into colder air in the house or higher heating bills.

Answer: First question: Yes

seen plastic covers with locks on thermostats in commercial buildings. You may be able to find one at a hardware store or online. If a programmable can be accommodated, I'd buy one — they are proven energy-savers.

Second question: The cement blocks per se don't make a house colder, but the air spaces where each of the floor joists penetrates the foundation might. You'll need to air-seal those spaces with polyurethane foam after stuffing insulation sealed inside a white or black plastic kitchen bag in the pocket to close it up.

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New cabinet hardware gives the kitchen more

By Stacy Downs
 Knight Ridder News Service

Updating a kitchen doesn't have to cost thousands of dollars. Instead of replacing countertops or appliances, the cabinets might just need new pulls and knobs.

So how can bits of metal hardware make a difference? Consider this: The average kitchen has 45 doors and drawers, most of which have pulls. That means metal sticks out of 45 surfaces in most kitchens.

"Although they're such a small detail, not much bigger than 3 inches, pulls show up over and over again," says Tom O'Malley, owner of Knobs & Pulls Stores in Kansas. "They're a part of the house you touch every day."

O'Malley has seen houses that sit on the market for a long time, but when the seller replaced the outdated kitchen cabinet pulls, the house sold sooner after. "It would," he says, "but it works."

Cabinet hardware reflects the look of an era. In the 1970s and 1980s, the brownish gold look of antique brass pulls. Shiny gold brass sometimes accented with white porcelain, marked the 1990s.

Currently, two finishes are hot: Oil rubbed bronze, with its dark

brown tone, has an understated, old-fashioned look. Brushed nickel has a clean, modern look that works well in kitchens with stainless steel appliances.

"Other silver finishes and pewter come in behind those," says Jay Marshall, who owns Knobs & Locks, another Kansas store. "But mostly people walk in and ask for the brown ones."

The up and coming finish is French brass, a brushed, dulled gold. The patina has more depth than oil-rubbed bronze or nickel and would look good with ornate cabinetry.

Besides color, Marshall has noticed another trend. People are matching the hardware to the function of the door or drawer instead of using the standard 3-inch pull. Heavy pantry doors are getting 6- to 10-inch pulls. Old-fashioned bin pulls are being used on drawers that hold hefty pots and pans.

"People have become much more comfortable with mixing the size and style of hardware in a room," Marshall says. "But it's typically best to stick to the same finish for a room."

Stores often let customers borrow samples of several types of pulls so they can determine what's best for their kitchen.

O'Malley suggests that people choose smooth, simple

Refinishing metal hardware

Approximate cost of materials: \$25

- 1) Remove pulls from cabinets using a screwdriver. Tip: An electric screwdriver works much faster for this task than a manual one.
- 2) Soak pulls in a metal stripper for about 30 minutes.
- 3) Use sandpaper to roughen surface of pulls.
- 4) Hammer nails (two per pull) into a piece of plywood so you can set pulls on top of them. This makes painting easier.
- 5) Spray metal primer on pulls. Let dry according to instructions.
- 6) Spray on one coat of metal finish. Let dry. Repeat process for a second coat.
- 7) Spray on top coat of satin acrylic. Let dry.

pulls and knobs. Hardware with ornate details retain grease from the kitchen and dirt from hands. Eventually, the finish starts to pit, leaving permanent dark marks.

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Advice from 'Professor Apple': Mix 'em up

By Marcia Kramer
The Washington Post

Tom Burford, "Professor Apple" to his friends, has some advice for bakers torn between using tart or sweet varieties to make an apple dessert: Use both. In fact, toss in a third, a sweet-tart combination, for a fuller flavor.

Apples are Burford's passion. If his mother hadn't made it back to the house on time on a hot August day 70 years ago, he might have been born under an apple tree. Until 1935, he owned and operated a nursery outside Lynchburg, Va., where he grew both heirloom apples and modern varieties. He is now an orchard and nursery consultant, author and apple historian. Decades before the folks at *Cooks Illustrated* concluded that two kinds of apples are twice as good as one in making the ideal apple pie, Burford was using three. His mother did it, and so did her mother. "For an exceptional pie, there should be a mixture of apples," Burford says, "not just Granny Smith, for goodness' sake."

When blending different varieties of apples — long the practice in making cider and juices — Burford looks for tartness and sweetness, then supplements those apples with a third type that has both. The degree of ripeness affects the balance as well.

Over the years, he has experimented with countless combinations from among the 400 apple varieties in his nursery. "It may be different every time," he says, "but it's always good, that's the thing about it."

One seeming problem in using more than one type of apple in a baked dessert is that one variety might cook faster and turn mushy while others are still firm. No problem, says Burford. "The Golden Delicious will cook down most, and that's good because it becomes sort of the bonding agent for the rest of the apples," he says.

When Burford bakes, the flavor comes from the apples. Period. Because he is using apple varieties, there's no added sugar in his fillings, nor cinnamon, nutmeg or spices of any kind. Lemon juice? Perish the thought. Leaving out all those distracting flavors, he says, "allows the palate to taste the apples, and not the support system."

What about serving apple pie with a slice of cheddar or a scoop of vanilla ice cream? There's a long pause on the other end of the phone. Suffice it to say, save them for another use.

SIMPLE APPLE CRISP

6 to 8 servings

This is Burford's favorite combination. The Golden Delicious contributes sweetness, so there's no need for sugar in the filling. The Winesap is tart, hence, no lemon juice. The Jonathan is both sweet and tart, for added depth of flavor. Taken together, this crisp is slightly tart. Based on a traditional Virginia mountain recipe.

Look for a balance

Tom Burford, "Professor Apple," advises picking apples from each of the three categories to get the proper balance of acid (tartness), sugar, tannin and fiber. You can even pick six different apples, Burford says — as long as the balance is maintained with two selections from each category.

If you're determined to make an apple pie or crisp using just one variety of apple, make your choice from the sweet-tart category. These are Burford's suggested apple choices:

SWEET
Golden Delicious
Gimes Golden
Gala

TART (listed in descending order of tartness)

Granny Smith
Rhode Island Greening
Gravenstein
Stayman
Winesap

SWEET/TART

Jonathan
McIntosh
Newtown (Albemarle) Pippin
Northern Spy
Fuji
York

6 apples: 2 Golden Delicious, 2 Winesap and 2 Jonathan, peeled, cored and sliced into eighths

4 ounces (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened

1 cup flour

2 to 4 tablespoons apple-cider or hard cider (optional)

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Have ready an ungreased 8- or 9-inch-square baking pan.

Mix the apples together in a medium bowl and transfer them to the pan. In a medium bowl, using a whisk, combine the butter, flour and sugar until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle it over the apples.

Bake for 50 to 60 minutes or until golden brown and bubbly. Halfway through the cooking, if the apples look a little dry, add 2 to 4 tablespoons of cider. Let cool slightly before serving, or serve cold.

Chirping smoke detectors prove mysterious problem

By Alan J. Heavens
Knight Ridder News Service

The cricket in the basement. It's true that some detectors can be overly sensitive to heat, although I've never heard anything about dust. Or one of the batteries could be faulty, new but on the verge of being old.

If the beeping were occurring when someone was taking a shower and the alarm was near the bathroom, I'd say "aha!" but the middle of the night? Since you have four alarms, the only way I can see to find the culprit is trial and error. Remove the batteries from three each night, and leave one armed.

Question: I live in a two-story townhouse, and I have had trouble with the four smoke alarms on the second floor. One of them will go off at night for no reason. Last a couple of weeks, the batteries are new. I have read online that they can sometimes be overly sensitive to heat, dust and other things. Is there a less-sensitive brand to buy? Is there any way to figure out which one is the culprit?
Answer: It's like trying to find



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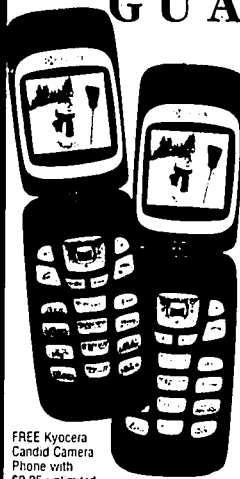
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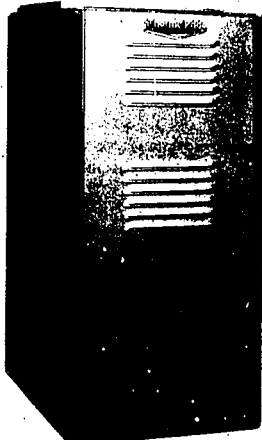
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FOOD & HOME



This is a high-efficiency condensing gas furnace. This furnace does not require a chimney and the uses outdoor combustion air for greater efficiency and safety.

Photo courtesy of Home Depot

Homeowners should mull many factors before choosing heat source

DEAR JIM: I bought a house which needs a new heating and air-conditioning system. With high fuel prices, how can I determine if it is better to install an oil, gas, propane, electric, or alternative system?

— Gus H.

DEAR GUS: With the rapidly changing home heating fuel and electricity prices, it can be difficult to determine which type of system is best in the long run. The relative prices of the fuels vary from region to region; so, do some local cost research. I made several calls, and I found a 20 percent variation in propane prices among companies in Cincinnati.

There are several criteria to consider when selecting a system. Obviously, your monthly utility bill is a primary one. The initial cost of the system is another. Also, consider the lifetime maintenance costs and the impact using each fuel type will have on the environment and your children's long-term health and well-being.

Calculating the relative cost of fuels is simple. First, calculate the cost of one Btu of each fuel type. This is done by dividing the utility rate or price per gallon, cord, etc., by the Btu heat content in that amount of fuel. Next, divide this result by the efficiency of the heating appliance. The following are typical heat contents for common fuels: natural gas — 1,025 Btu/cubic foot; oil — 138,700 Btu/gallon; propane — 91,000 Btu/gallon; electricity — 3,414 Btu/kilowatt-hour; firewood — 22,000,000 Btu/cord; and corn — 448,000 Btu/bushel.

In many areas, you will find geothermal heat pumps to be the least expensive to operate. This is because they tap into the natural heat in the ground. Their drawback is a significantly higher installation cost. Also heat pumps, whether air-to-air or geothermal, have motors, compressors and other moving parts, so you should factor in higher maintenance costs.

Hybrid systems are becoming more popular. With these systems, you install a regular gas or oil furnace with a heat pump instead of just a central air conditioner. A heat pump costs several hundred dollars more than a similar central air conditioner. During mildly cold weather, the heat pump is less expensive to operate than the furnace. As the outdoor temperature drops and the heat pump becomes less efficient, the gas or oil furnace takes over. The contractor can adjust the changeover temperature based on the relative local cost of gas/oil and electricity.

Alternative fuels, such as corn, wheat, wood pellets and cherry pits, are an option to consider for a furnace or just a freestanding heater. In many



SENSIBLE HOME
James Dulley

areas, shelled corn purchased directly from farmers is very inexpensive. Fifty-pound bags of corn are available at most pet stores. I buy 40-pound bags of pellets at some home center, feed supply and wood stove stores.

An added advantage of a freestanding unit is many models have backup battery power. If the electricity goes off and your furnace stops, these still continue to operate so pipes won't freeze.

DEAR JIM: I am going to remove paneling and install drywall in a room. I want it to act as an airtight seal. How far should I drive the drywall screws into it so it holds up well and creates the air seal?

— Dan W.
DEAR DAN: If you seal the corners of the drywall and all the penetrations from electric outlets and switches, drywall can improve the airtightness to help save energy. Also, install air sealing conduit boxes.

The head of a drywall screw should be driven just slightly below the surface of the paper skin. It should dimple the paper, but not break through it. If it breaks through, the gypsum inside provides very little strength.

Send inquiries to James Dulley, 6906 Royalgreen Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit www.dulley.com.

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Coming in *The Times-News*

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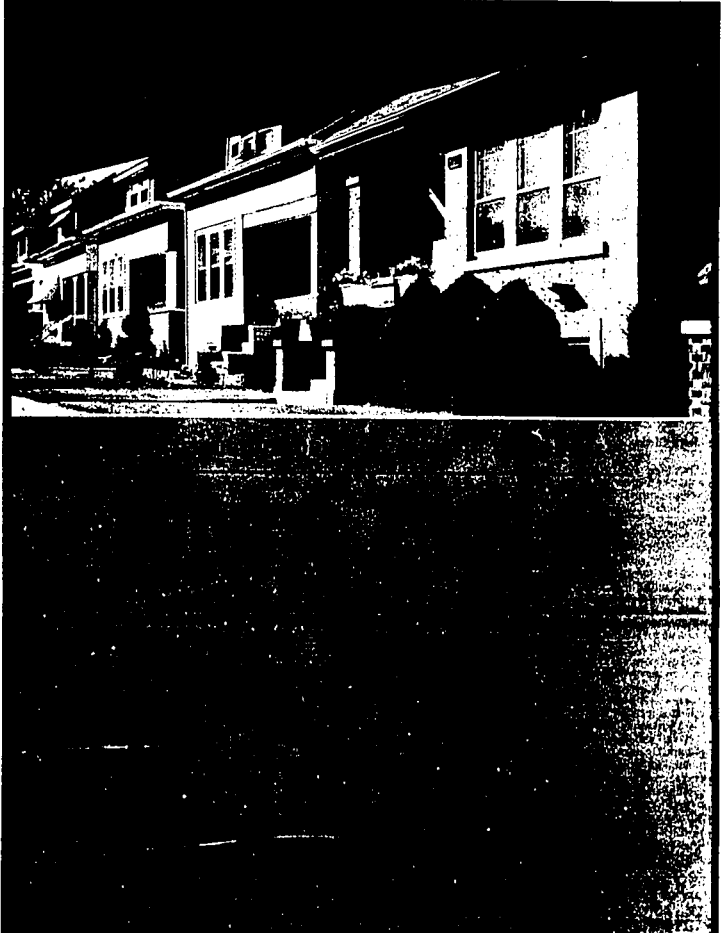
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SPORTS



Miami Heat center Shaquille O'Neal approaches the basket in the third quarter against the Atlanta Hawks during an NBA basketball game, Tuesday in Miami.

Heat hammers Hawks

MIAMI (AP) — Shaquille O'Neal made his first eight shots and finished with 28 points and 10 rebounds in only 24 minutes, and the Miami Heat beat the Atlanta Hawks 111-92 Tuesday night in the city's first home game since replacing Stan Van Gundy as coach.

Gary Payton added 15 points, Dwyane Wade snook off an early injury to score 14 and Antonio Walker had 13 for Miami, which is 4-1 under Riley.

O'Neal had six dunks and two layups in the opening half. Miami held Atlanta to a season-low nine points in the first quarter and built a 56-35 halftime lead on the way to beating the Hawks for the ninth straight time.

Marvin Williams had 17 of his career-high 26 points in the fourth quarter for Atlanta, which trailed by 38 points midway through the third quarter before trimming the deficit against Miami's reserves.

Damon Jones made four 3s in a stretch of 3:17 in the third as the Cavs won their third straight and improved to 10-3 at home. James added six rebounds, four assists, three steals and two blocks in 29 minutes before spending the entire fourth quarter resting after the Cavs outscored the Jazz 33-15 in the third.

Mariners let Franklin go

SEATTLE (AP) — The Seattle Mariners failed to offer a \$200 million contract to Ryan Franklin on Tuesday night, making the pitcher a free agent.

Americans

so they shrink away from spending money and engaging in activities. Yiannakis also said children are taught, intentionally or not, that they shouldn't play sports if they are not good at them. It happens when kids get into sports teams, or when coaches bench them for poor play.

Century girls knock off Minico, 64-62

Local sports

RUPERT — Century rallied from down 15 points in the first half to upend Minico 64-62, in girls basketball play Tuesday night.

"We had the game won," said Minico girls head coach Clint Straatman. "We were up by 15-16 points in the first half and just rolling and playing well. We tore up their press."

But the Spartans got complacent when up big and Century rallied with a spurt by McKenzie Gentry who scored 10 points in the final two minutes of the second quarter to make it 31-28, Minico, at the half.

"Century shot them back into the game," Straatman said. "Minico's Sarah Schenk scored a game-high 24 points and came up with some big baskets in the second half to keep the Spartans close until Century pulled away."

Schenk hit a couple big shots," Straatman said. "It was a great learning experience."

Dany Ramirez scored 18 and Michelle 10 in the loss. Minico (4-7, 1-1) hosts Jerome on Friday, Dec. 30.

Century 64, Minico 62. Century 34, Minico 28 at the half. Century 54, Minico 30 at the end of the third quarter.

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Richfield 55, Wendell 39

WENDELL — The Richfield Tigers defeated the Wendell Trojans behind Cassie Woods' 21 points and nine rebounds in Tuesday night action.

"Richfield is a very good team they hot their shots did what it took to win," Cassie Woods was everywhere," said Wendell coach Luke Kelsy.

Mo'ie Hubsch scored 13 and Angela Kent 12 for Richfield. Halle Kelsey and Jaci Lancaster each scored 14 for the 5-4 Trojans, who host Castleford on Jan. 5.

Richfield 55, Wendell 39. Richfield 28, Wendell 20 at the half. Richfield 47, Wendell 30 at the end of the third quarter.

Jerome 29, Pocatello 27

POCATELLO — Jerome hit its free throws down the stretch to shove off Pocatello, 29-27, Tuesday night.

Karl Green scored seven points and Megan Parrish six to pace the Tigers, who play at Minico on Dec. 30.

Jerome 29, Pocatello 27. Jerome 15, Pocatello 10 at the half. Jerome 24, Pocatello 17 at the end of the third quarter.

Nets 99, Clippers 85

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Vince Carter scored 35 points and added nine assists and nine rebounds, leading the Nets to a season-high third straight victory over the Clippers.

Richard Jefferson scored 20 points and Neal Kross had 17 for the Nets (12-12), who returned to .500 for the first time since they were 7-7 after beating Denver on Nov. 28. Carter had 20 points in the first half.

Eliot Brand had 21 points and 13 rebounds for his 16th double-double of the season. Curtino Mobley added 15 points for the Clippers, who have lost four of five.

Gooding 44, Filer 29

GOODING — The Gooding Spartans picked up a 34-27 victory over rival Filer Tuesday, 44-29.

The Spartans jumped out to an early lead, 18-3 at the end of the first, but struggled against the Wildcat defense in the second quarter, netting only four points.

Shoshone 42, Valley 38, OT

SIOUSSHONE — After Valley's Nathan Hanson sank a tying three at the end of regulation, Shoshone's Haley Harris hit two free throws in overtime to lead to a 42-38 nonconference victory for the Indians at home Tuesday night.

"I thought both teams play really hard," said Shoshone head coach Tim Chapman. "It was a close game all the way through."

Kori Bingham led the way for the hosts with 12 points while Kyle Aside had nine points and nine boards.

The Vikings' Lindsey Wood put up a game-high 17 points. Hanson finished with 11.

Shoshone (11-1, 3-1) visits Northside rival Richfield on Wednesday, Jan. 4. Valley hosts Gledens Ferry on Thursday, Jan. 5.

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Boys basketball

MURTAUGH 50, Magic Valley Christian 42. MURTAUGH — Murtaugh's Chepe Saucedo scored 22 points, draining five 3-pointers to lead Murtaugh past Magic Valley Christian 50-42 at home Tuesday night.

The Red Devils jumped out to a 23-1 first quarter lead but fell flat in the second quarter to settle for a 25-all tie at the half.

"We got going good then all of a sudden we got lazy with it," said Murtaugh coach Rex Romander. "We got satisfied a bit and stopped working hard and obviously couldn't buy a bucket. They out-rebounded us in the second quarter 14-1. Then in the third quarter and fourth quarter we managed them better."

Cory Paulson paced Magic Valley Christian with 13 points and Brandon Van Esch had 12.

Murtaugh (2-6, 1-3) hosts Oakley on Thursday, Jan. 5.

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Hansen 74, Oakley 61

HANSEN — The Hansen Hornets outlasted the Oakley Hornets, 74-61 behind 20 points from junior guard Devin Jenkins. Bryan Careza was right behind with 19 and Ryan

Castleford 64, Lighthouse Christian 60

CASTLEFORD — Nathan Pryor scored a game high 19 points and Spencer Vulgamore added 14 as Castleford picked up a home Magic Valley Southside Conference win as they defeated Lighthouse Christian 64-60 Tuesday.

"We just rebounded and played hard," said Castleford coach Mike Carson. "We had Mike

Hansen (5-2, 3-0) will host Castleford on Thursday, Jan. 5.

Castleford 64, Lighthouse Christian 60. Castleford 34, Lighthouse Christian 28 at the half. Castleford 54, Lighthouse Christian 30 at the end of the third quarter.

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NHL commissioner: Hockey mourns with Gretzky

BRANTFORD, Ontario — Flags flew at half-staff on city buildings Tuesday in the hometown of Wayne Gretzky as local residents mourned the death of his mother.

Phyllis Gretzky died Monday night after a battle with lung cancer. She was 64.

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said the hockey world is grieving.

"Phyllis Gretzky's influence on her family no doubt matches Wayne's impact on hockey," Bettman said in a statement. "She taught tenaciousness and teamwork, hard work and humility, respect for people and for the game. Her legacy is defined daily by the way Wayne, and all his children, have shared those lessons in every area of their lives."



As visitation took place at a local funeral home, residents sighted books of condolences at the local arena and city hall.

Mayor Mike Hancock said the city has "lost a part of our extended family."

"There is a real sense we've lost somebody close to us. There is a real sense of mourning in Brantford," Hancock said.

Wayne Gretzky took a leave of absence from his job as head coach of the Phoenix Coyotes on Saturday to fly home as his mother's condition worsened. She died at Brantford General Hospital following a bout of pneumonia.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Italian player suspended for giving fans a ride. M.L.A.N. and Rucklin are on play for the 2006 World Cup. The New Zealand Herald newspaper said Remington and Rucklin were about 600 miles from the Canary Islands riding out a strong headwind when the attack occurred.

"It was a unjust sentence, it was an unjust decision," Di Canio was also fined \$1,977 by the Italian Soccer League. The 37-year-old forward will miss Lazio's match at Lecce on Wednesday.

Italian papers ran photos on Dec. 12 showing Di Canio with his arm outstretched as he was being escorted during the second half of Lazio's 2-1 loss to Livorno the previous day.

The arm gesture is associated in Italy with the salute used by the rule of fascist dictator Benito Mussolini.

That game featured teams whose fans have opposing political allegiances: Lazio fans wave swastika flags, while Livorno fans had red Communist flags. Clashes between Livorno fans and police were reported outside the stadium before the game, with one officer slightly injured.

Rudkin said on the Web site that he considered tapping a flare to a cooking gas canister, and trying to shoot it "flaw" style, but thought better of it.

UTEP Toledo seeking to end bowl losing streaks. MOBILE, Ala. — Once loveable LOSER, the UTEP Mavericks have already ended a five-decade stretch without consecutive bowl games.

Now they're trying to actually win one. The resurgent Minors (8-3) face Toledo on Wednesday night in the GMAC Bowl, seeking their first postseason victory since 1967.

The game at Ladd-Peebles Stadium gives coach Mike Elia his 36th appearance during the past two seasons. In 2003, he was 0-1 with a 6.23 ERA in nine relief outings for the Red Sox.

Miller, a pioneer drag racer who had a career as a driver and car builder in many facets of motor racing for six decades, died Dec. 15 of a heart attack in a rest home in Pico Rivera, Calif. He was 84.

Miller began his racing career on southern California's dry lakes in the 1930s as a charter member of the Roadrunners, one of a group of car clubs that created the Southern California Timing Association and the National Hot Rod Association.

He was twice a president of the SCTA and was a charter member of the SCTA, serving as vice president with Wally Parks as the founding president.

After a long association with hand-speed record attempts on the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah and Muroc dry lakes, Miller was elected to the Dry Lakes Hall of Fame.

Miller also competed in the Pikes Peak Hill Climb, events in 1000 off-road races and events in Italy and Mexico.

With Ray Brock as his crewman, Miller won in his class nine times at the Pikes Peak and also won the 1963 Baja 1000.

Shark attacks trans-Atlantic rowing boat. WELLINGTON, New Zealand — A 12-foot shark attacked the boat of a New Zealand team competing in a trans-Atlantic race on Tuesday, rocking the vessel and leaving the rowers "shell shocked."

"We were really scared," rower Tara Remington said. "The shark was 6-6.5 with 25 teeth, so aggressive and powerful, remaining on the boat for 30 minutes."

The shark bopped the boat for 15 minutes, forcing Remington and teammate Laine Rudkin into the well of the 24-foot Woodvale Pairs class ocean rowing boat.

"It was just hitting the boat, having a go at the rudder, the sea anchor and hull. We weren't sure it wasn't biting holes in the underside so we rang the support ship for advice and possible rescue."

Pak was fouled and dropped in his first throw attempt of the game. The score at his 29 points in the second half, showing 7-12 from beyond the 3-point arc.

Completed from wire reports.

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Table with columns for various sports events, including basketball games like 'Miami Heat at Atlanta Hawks' and 'Detroit Pistons at New York Knicks'.

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Advertisement for Honda Civic Sedan 2006 Motor Trend Car of the Year, featuring a photo of the car and pricing information.

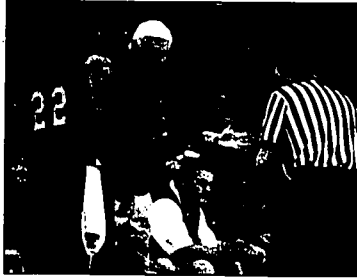
Advertisement for Middlekauff Honda, featuring a photo of a car and contact information for the dealership.

SPORTS

Texas Tech's Knight still intense as career winds down

LUBBOCK, Texas (AP) — It's been quite an unusual 40th season for Texas Tech coach Bob Knight so far. His successor has already been picked, he's off to his worst start in a decade, but he's still got the same intensity that helped him win three national championships with Indiana.

"I'm still coaching. My name is still on there as the coach," the 65-year-old Knight said. "My name's on there, then that's what I'm doing."



Texas Tech coach Bob Knight argues a call during the first half of Tech's college basketball game against UNLV at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas on Saturday. Tech's Jarrius Jackson is at left.

Knight, with 860 career wins, needs 20 to overtake Dean Smith for No. 1 on the all-time list. But with a team that's struggling and 19 games remaining before postseason play, Knight seems like it will have to wait for next season.

After last year's team made a surprising run to the round of 16 in the NCAA tournament, the team's Red Raiders (6-5) are the most inexperienced team Knight has ever coached. There are seven freshmen and one junior college transfer on the roster. The influx of new players and the fact that several interior players have been hobbled by injuries means Knight is off to his slowest start as a coach since 1985 at Indiana.

"We've got an awful lot of work to do to be competitive," Knight said. "Forgetting the injuries, we're not where I had hoped we would be at this point."

Knight said he's "disappointed" so far by this team, which plays Arkansas (8-2) for the first time since 1991 Wednesday in Dallas.

Knight pointed to a leadership void and the departure of former walk-on Ronald Ross, one of the sparks during the NCAA tournament, as major factors in the team's struggles. "That has been a huge," Knight said. "I did not think that replacing Ronald, as good as he was and as much as he meant to that team, would be as difficult as it is."

Pat Knight, who signed a designated him as his father's successor as Texas Tech's

coach, said the team has been inconsistent without a leader. "We told our team it doesn't need to be one guy," he said. "It can be the whole team, just as long as somebody takes the burden of the coaching staff."

Tech started 10-1 in each of Bob Knight's first two seasons, and the Raiders have won at least 20 games all four years since he arrived — a first for the school. Despite Knight's first slow start in Lubbock, some who have watched him for years see him utilizing the same techniques he's been doing since 1965, when he became the youngest coach in Division I history when Army hired him at age 24.

"I don't see any changes since they made the (successor) announcement," said Tech senior associate athletic director Steve Downing, who played for Knight in 1972-73 at Indiana and followed him to Lubbock. "It's doing exactly the same things that he did when he was at Indiana when I was a player."

Tech athletic director Gerald Myers said he believes that "gradually" his longtime friend and colleague would shift some of the head coaching responsibilities to his son. For

now, though, Pat Knight is helping his father in much the same way he always has, though some of the players may view him differently.

"I would think that they would look at him as a person with a little more authority than maybe they thought he had, as far as having a lot of input in the program," Myers said. "It's always been active in workouts and practices."

The line of succession has "already had a positive effect" in recruiting, both for the players and Pat Knight, Myers said.

"The players can feel comfortable in that they would still be part of the program as far as why they were recruited," Myers said. "I think that now he will have a bigger interest in the players he's evaluating, not only trying to evaluate for his dad as the head coach, but also looking at it from his own perspective."

Myers believes Bob Knight probably will stay in Lubbock after he retires. His contract, which was extended in September, expires in 2009.

"He likes it here," Myers said. "A lot of good recreation that he likes. Plus, his son will be coaching. He'll want to see him coach some."

Paterno earns AP coach of year with Penn State's stunning turnaround

NEW YORK (AP) — Joe Paterno doesn't have to say "I told you so." JoePa, who turns 79 on Wednesday, got an early birthday present Tuesday when he was an overwhelming choice as The Associated Press college football coach of the year.

So much for critics who said the game had passed him by. Not that he's gloating about Penn State's resurgence. "The only thing I wanted to do is try to get us back to where we were a good football team and we could be very competitive and make some plays we hadn't made," he said. "We got that done and I feel good about that."

After four losing seasons in the last five years, Paterno and the Nittany Lions rebounded in 2005 to go 10-1, share the Big Ten title and earn a spot in the Bowl Championship Series.

For that, Paterno received 45 of 65 votes from media members on AP's college football poll board. Texas' Mack Brown was second with eight votes, after leading the Longhorns to a perfect regular season and a spot in the Rose Bowl. Notre Dame's Charlie Weis and Southern California's Pete Carroll, whose Trojans will face Brown's Longhorns for the national title, got three votes each.

West Virginia's Rich Rodriguez received two votes. Miles of LSU, Steve Spurrier of South Carolina, George O'Leary of Central Florida and Tommy Tuberville of Auburn, last year's winner, each received one vote.

"It's very flattering," Paterno said. "I think anytime, regardless of whether it be my first year or my 50th year, to have people recognize what's been done is very, very... uplifting. The only thing I feel sometimes is that the head coach gets too much credit. I think sometimes it ought to be coaching staff of the year."

Despite going 4-7 in 2004, Paterno was convinced that the Nittany Lions were on the verge of good things.

In search of playmakers, he landed two of the nation's top recruits in speedy receivers Derrick Williams and Justin King. By doing so, Paterno showed



Joe Paterno

that he and his staff, led by recruiting coordinator and former Penn State quarterback Mike McQueary, were still capable of bringing in blue-chippers.

Paterno believed in quarterback Michael Robinson, who spent three seasons moving from passer to runner to receiver, and gave offensive coordinator Galen Hall and quarterbacks coach Jay Paterno the job of building a system around the multidimensional star.

Hall and Jay Paterno, Joe's son, went to Texas in the offseason to check out what Brown was doing with Vince Young. "We got some great ideas," Joe Paterno said. "It was a big help to us. It really was."

Robinson and the fast fresh made the Nittany Lions explosive again, and JoePa had himself a 21st century offense to go along with a rugged defense, led by a throwback Penn State linebacker, junior Paul Posluszny.

The Nittany Lions had signature wins over Ohio State and Wisconsin and rose to No. 2 in the nation. In Paterno's 40th season, Penn State was just a couple of seconds away from going unbeaten. Its only loss was 27-25 at Michigan, on a

AP Coach of the Year List

2005 — Joe Paterno, Penn State
 2004 — Tommy Tuberville, Auburn
 2003 — Nick Saban, LSU
 2002 — Kirk Ferentz, Iowa
 2001 — Ralph Friedgen, Maryland
 2000 — Bob Stoops, Oklahoma
 1999 — Frank Beamer, Virginia Tech
 1998 — Bill Snyder, Kansas State

last-play touchdown. Paterno now has 353 victories. Only Florida State's Bobby Bowden (359) has more among Division I-A coaches, and the two will meet in the Orange Bowl on Jan. 3. Penn State's BCS debut.

Five outside Happy Valley saw this coming. Frogn 2000-04, Penn State was 27-33 overall, 16-24 in the Big Ten, with seven victories combined in 2003-04. Nevertheless, Paterno has never tied success solely to wins and losses.

"I never felt bad when we were 4-7 last year because I thought we had a bunch of kids that never quit," he said. "And that's the joy of coaching. It isn't B-C. It isn't 11-0. It isn't any of that stuff. It's did you get the most out of your football team."

Now Paterno is in vogue again. Maybe more than ever before.

The doubters who cried for change, who thought Paterno was hurting the school by refusing to let go, have had to eat their words.

But don't expect Paterno to call out his critics. "To be honest, I really have never thought that way. It's not my nature," he said. "I'm not a vindictive guy. I don't read the papers. I realize the media's got a job to do and I realize the alumni, if they're interested in your program, are going to die when you lose and so forth, and a lot of them get carried away," he said.

"What good does it do for me to say 'I told you so'?"

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BRIEFLY IN MONEY

Drug to be sold over the counter

CHICAGO — By the end of the decade, consumers should have another prescription-strength option to treating heartburn that won't burn a hole in their wallets.

TAP Pharmaceutical Products Inc. has agreed to license rights to its blockbuster heartburn drug Prevacid to health-care giant Novartis AG, which plans to launch an over-the-counter pill once the patent on TAP's prescription version expires in 2009.

This is expected to be good news for millions of heartburn sufferers who may be looking for a cheaper and just-as-effective option to expensive brand-name drugs like prescription-strength Prevacid and Nexium — both of which cost about \$4 a pill on average at retail prices. An over-the-counter version is expected to cost less than \$1.

Prevacid is the nation's fourth-best-selling heartburn name prescription in the United States, trailing heartburn rival Nexium, 3, and cholesterol-lowering drugs Zocor and top-seller Lipitor.

Gold falls below \$500 per ounce

NEW YORK — Gold plunged through the psychological \$500-an-ounce level Tuesday at the New York Mercantile Exchange amid end-of-the-year liquidation and book squaring.

The benchmark February contract settled down \$9.10 to \$497 an ounce, while spot gold fell \$9.30 to \$493.80 an ounce.

"Gold seriously started to suffer from the year-end lack of liquidity today," wrote analysts at MSF Finance. "The New York hours were extremely thin, with prices squeezed within a \$3 range for most of the session."

In reaction to a very weak afternoon trading session in London, traders said they started aggressively selling gold, which fell below the key \$500 mark.

As funds liquidated ahead of the New Year and caused gold to fall, "the rest of the complex followed gold," said Leonard Kaplan of Prospector Asset Management. "We are going to get a lot lower before the end of the year and will probably see gold at \$480 or less."

Some traders agree that gold — which last week traded at 25-year highs — is retaining its bullish tone and that buying is likely to be seen on the dips with targets above \$540 realistic into 2006.

Nielsen will include Univision in ratings

HOLLYWOOD — Nielsen Media Research will include in its national ratings shows aired by Univision Communications Inc. starting next week, a decision expected to better measure the nation's growing Latino audience.

Nielsen has long been criticized for failing to provide a complete picture of Latino viewership by using a system that excludes the preferences of millions of Spanish-speaking Latinos when it calculates the size of TV audiences and the most popular shows.

Executives at Los Angeles-based Univision, controlled by billionaire A. Jerrold Perenchio, anticipate that next week's change will eventually translate into tens of millions of dollars in additional ad sales. Last year, the company took in nearly \$1.5 billion in TV revenue.

"Univision will finally be measured alongside its main competitors — the major English-language broadcast networks," Ray Rodriguez, Univision's president and chief operating officer, said Monday.

Since 1992, Nielsen has estimated the audiences for Spanish-language shows through a separate audience panel, excluding those numbers with little fanfare. In Nielsen's National Hispanic Television Index, Univision typically delivers most of the top 20 Spanish-language shows.

Those separate ratings have led some advertisers to overlook Univision when deciding how to divvy up their dollars, anticipate that next week's change will eventually translate into tens of millions of dollars in additional ad sales. Last year, the company took in nearly \$1.5 billion in TV revenue.

Former Qwest CEO indicted He's charged with 42 counts of insider trading

The Associated Press

DENVER — Former Qwest Communications CEO Joseph Nacchio was indicted Tuesday on 42 counts of insider trading accusing him of illegally selling off \$101 million in stock after privately learning his company faced a series of financial risks.

The criminal charges are the first against Nacchio in the government's nearly four-year-old investigation of Qwest Communications International Inc., the Denver-based telephone service provider. In 14 mostly Western states that are now recovering from a multibillion-dollar accounting scandal.

Nacchio, 56, appeared in court a few hours after the indictment was announced and pleaded not guilty. U.S. Magistrate Patricia Coan said Nacchio could be released on a \$2 million bond but that was not immediately clear when it

would happen. Prosecutors did not seek to have him detained.

Nacchio was ordered to surrender his passport as a condition of his release. He said nothing during the brief hearing and was led out of the courtroom in handcuffs.

"After many months of intense media attention and speculation, Joe Nacchio looks forward to vindicating his name in court," his attorneys said in a prepared statement.

The charges come nearly three years after then-Attorney General John Ashcroft announced the first indictments in the Qwest investigation, calling it an example of the government's intolerance of white-collar crime. With Nacchio's indictment, U.S. Attorney William Leines said, that investigation is virtually complete.

The indictment accuses Nacchio of selling \$101 million of Qwest stock.



Joe Nacchio, former Qwest chief executive, in sunglasses, is shown at Denver International Airport on Monday with his lawyer, Herbert Stern. Nacchio pleaded innocent Tuesday to 42 charges of insider trading.

Consumers improving homes at faster pace

By Andrea Coombes MarketWatch

SAN FRANCISCO — It's the season to be jolly, and apparently also the season to improve the home, according to a recent survey from Deloitte & Touche, the consulting firm.

U.S. consumers plan to spend an average of \$6.9 on improving their homes this holiday season, up 13 percent from the \$6.04 they said they'd spend in 2003 at this time.

That means, of the total \$2.341 consumers say they'll spend this holiday, the biggest portion will go to the home, with 27 percent going to home improvement, while 26 percent will go to gifts, 17 percent to so-called "entertaining," 12 percent to entertaining at home, 7 percent to home clothing and 2 percent to both gifts and home clothing, according to the 20th annual Deloitte survey of 12,110 consumers, taken in October.

The survey didn't define "home improvement," so on consumers could be counting everything from buying new furniture to remodeling. While a big portion of holiday dollars are going to home improvement, that work still falls to prior years. Said the lead economist in Deloitte's consumer business practice, Goss, based in Los Angeles, "I buy a chaise longue on a dining-room table, the outfit in dollars is enormous relative to other gifts I might give."

It's likely consumers direct to beauty, then, home, as consumers need to use those items in recent years, he said. "There's a belief that 'I can't spend on my home and get the money back,'" Goss said. "But buying furniture appears to come consumers to add to the home's value. Home furniture is a depreciating asset, but no one thinks of it that way, and you do not get pairs to your home, people think that adds to the value of the house," Goss said.

"This 'there's more entertainment' view at the holidays," he said. "It's a natural time to assess your home."

But if you look solely at the kind of home improvement that consumers can do, they tend to be higher during the spring and summer months, Baker said. Baker, director of the remodeling business program at Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies, said:

"The program produces a quarterly index of home improvement activity. Home improvement spending generally increases in the winter, but spending is weak in the fourth quarter. The heaviest time is spring and summer. Baker said, noting that the weather-driven phenomenon.

The dollars spent on home improvement have been on a declining trend since 2001, starting at a steady decline in 2001, then dipping in 2002, rising in 2003, and then dipping again in 2004. The dollars spent on home improvement have been on a declining trend since 2001, starting at a steady decline in 2001, then dipping in 2002, rising in 2003, and then dipping again in 2004.

Homeowners spent more than \$2 billion on home improvement in the third quarter of 2004, up 4.4 percent from a year ago, but that growth rate appears to be easing slightly, Baker said. In the fourth quarter of 2003 and the first quarter of 2004, homeowners spent \$1.4 billion and \$1.87 billion, respectively, on home improvement, with both figures representing double-digit gains from year-ago periods.

"Housing sort of cooled through this last recession," Baker said. "Falling interest rates encouraged a lot of people to refinance, and they cashed money out and took on a slightly bigger mortgage and used a lot of that for home improvement."

Now, the market appears to be calming, he said. There's not much refinancing activity any more, new and existing home sales numbers look like they've peaked. "The sense is we're on the downslide of this cycle," Baker said. "There are no signs the market's heading into recession, but no signs that it's starting to accelerate," he added.

Paralyzing chaos Transit strike strands New York commuters

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Commuters trudged through the freezing cold, rode bicycles and shared cabs Tuesday as New York's bus and subway workers went on strike for the first time in more than 25 years and stranded millions of riders at the height of the Christmas rush. A judge slapped the union with a \$1 million-a-day fine.

State Justice Theodore Jones leveled the sanction against the Transport Workers Union for violating a state law that bars public employees from going on strike. The city and state had asked Jones to hit the union with a "very potent fine."

"This is a very, very sad day in the history of the city of New York City," the judge said in imposing the fine. The union said it would immediately appeal, calling the ruling "entirely excessive."

The strike over wages and pensions came just five days before Christmas, at a time when the city is especially busy with shoppers and tourists. The heavy penalty could force the union off the picket lines and back on the job. Under the law, the unions' 33,000 members will also lose two days' pay for every day they are on strike, and they could also be thrown in jail.

The courtroom drama came through a day in which the walkout fell far short of the all-out chaos that many had feared. With special traffic rules in place, the morning rush came and went without monumental gridlock. Manhattan streets were unusually quiet, some commuters just stayed home.

The nation's biggest mass-transit system ground to a halt after 3 a.m., when the TWU called the strike after a late round of negotiations with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority broke down. The subways and buses provide more than 7 million rides per day.

New Yorkers car-pooled, shared taxis, rode bicycles, roller-skated or walked in the



Pedestrians crowd a midtown intersection Tuesday in New York. Subways and buses ground to a halt as transit workers walked out the job following days of acrimonious labor talks, threatening to plunge the city into chaos by forcing more than 7 million daily riders to find new ways to get around.

freezing cold. Early morning temperatures were in the 20s. Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who said the strike would cost the city as much as \$400 million a day, joined the throngs of people crossing the Brooklyn Bridge by foot.

"They can't get a ride!" J. Plastino, a resident near his home in the northern tip of Manhattan, Plastino, who was headed to his midtown job, was angry at the union. "This is a big city. Don't they realize that?"

Gov. George Pataki said the union acted illegally and "will suffer the consequences." But union attorney Arthur Schwartz accused the MTA of provoking the strike.

No negotiations were scheduled between the two sides, although a union lawyer planned to meet with three mediators. It was the city's first transit strike since an 11-day walkout in 1980. The effect this time, however, was tempered by the advent of personal computers, which enabled many commuters to stay home and work via the Internet.

Others boarded water taxis

needed a water taxi across the East River to get home. The International TWU, the union's parent, had urged the local not to strike. The first day of the strike was expected to cost the city \$400 million in revenue, with an additional loss of \$300 million per day afterward, according to the city comptroller's office. Countless stores and restaurants were affected.

The mayor put into effect a sweeping emergency plan, including a requirement that cars entering Manhattan beyond 96th Street have at least four occupants.

The union said the latest MTA offer included annual raises of 3 percent, 4 percent and 3.5 percent. Pensions were another major sticking point in the talks, particularly involving new employees.

Union local president Roger Toussaint said the union wanted a better offer from the MTA, especially when the agency has a \$1 billion surplus this year.

The contract expired Friday at midnight, but the two sides had continued talking through the weekend.

As fuel costs rise, households get heat for the holidays

By Ryan Nakashima The Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — When Sandy Turk learned her 81-year-old mother set her thermostat at a chilly 65 degrees to save money this winter, she thought of the perfect gift — though it's about as much fun as a lump of coal in the stocking.

Turk, 57, bought three \$50 gift certificates to help pay her mother's natural gas bill. "It's up to 68 now. It's very pleasant," said her mother, Phyllis Perry, who lives alone on

Social Security payments at the Prairie Du Sac home her husband built in central Wisconsin. Perry said she's careful to turn the thermostat down to 64 and close "the drapes" and blinds when she goes to sleep to keep the costly heat in. "You have to watch your pennies," she said.

Americans are doing everything they can to save money and keep each other warm this winter, when natural gas prices are expected to rise 38 percent, or \$21 per household on average, according to the federal Energy Information Administration. Please see HEAT, Page E3



Phyllis Perry, right, shows off three \$50 gift certificates at her home in Prairie Du Sac, Wis., that she received from her daughter, Sandy Turk. Turk bought the energy gift certificate after discovering her mother had set the thermostat at a chilly 65 degrees to save money.

MONEY

General Motors drops down the Dow Qwest

Other indexes drop slightly

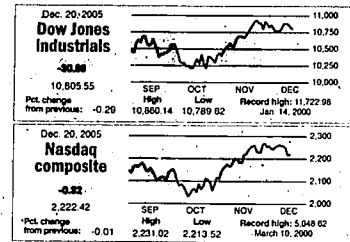
NEW YORK (AP)—Stocks fell in a volatile session Tuesday, with a sharp decline in General Motors Corp. dragging down the Dow Jones industrial average...

Nasdaq composite index fell 0.32, or 0.01 percent, to 2,222.42. The index moved lower, with the 10-day average yield on the 10-year Treasury note rising to 4.47 percent...

In economic news, a jump in home construction last month helped ease worries about the housing market. Housing starts rose to an annualized rate of 2.128 million homes...

The Labor Department's producer price index fell 0.7 percent for the month as energy prices declined. Economists had expected a 0.5 percent drop.

Even with energy prices resumed, so-called "core" PPI rose 0.11 percent, the highest in two months. It is the best since the start of the recession...



relatively tame, the Federal Reserve is considered more likely to halt its current regime of rate hikes soon. In company news, General Motors stock fell \$1.20, or 5.7 percent, to \$19.65...

Wal-Mart Stores Inc. is the subject of a federal criminal investigation because of faulty accounting. The retailer said the probe centers on the transportation of hazardous materials from its stores...

New Mexico Wal-Mart further hurt the stock, which fell 36 cents to \$48.60 on the news. Qwest Communications International Inc. fell 12 cents to \$5.65...

The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 0.53, or 0.08 percent, to 672.78. Overseas, Japan's Nikkei stock average surged 1.62 percent. Britain's FTSE 100 rose 0.15 percent...

Continued from E1
world of company stock in the first five months of 2001 when he allegedly used insider information. The sales took place in 42 transactions ranging from \$191,000 to \$13.6 million...

Each court carries a penalty of up to 10 years in prison and a \$1 million fine. Corporate executives are prohibited from enriching themselves while the public remains in the dark about the true financial condition of their companies...

The government has alleged in both civil and criminal cases that Qwest and some of its former executives participated in a massive financial fraud between April 1993 and March 2002 by falsifying revenue reports...

The indictment said Nacchio was well aware of Qwest's "extremely aggressive" financial tactics and that he knew those tactics would cause the company to be significantly below its flagging "returning revenue business."

from other sources to "close the gap" between Qwest's publicly stated goals and its actual performance.

Federal prosecutors have lined up some of Nacchio's former colleagues to testify. Qwest's former chief financial officer Robin Sziliga, who pleaded guilty to insider trading...

In addition, former Qwest President Afshin Mobeihbi has been granted immunity and is expected to testify about the case to trial. Mobeihbi's attorney, Paul Grand, has said Mobeihbi will not face criminal charges but declined further comment.

Sziliga pleaded guilty to a single count of insider trading stemming from a stock sale in April 2001 and received a plea bargain regarding SEC charges. Two former midlevel managers also pleaded guilty to insider trading...

Nacchio was hired to head Qwest in 2001 after a year-long search for a CEO. He was assigned under pressure in June 2002, about eight months before Qwest restated revenue for 2000 and 2001.

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NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE

Table with columns: Name, Div, Last, Chg. Lists various stocks including AIG, ALU, AMZN, AAPL, etc.

MARKET SUMMARY

Summary of market activity for NYSE, AMEX, and NASDAQ. Includes Most Active, Gainers, Losers, and Diaries sections.

INDEXES

Table showing performance of various market indices like S&P 500, Dow Jones Industrial, etc.

STOCKS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Table listing stocks of local interest with columns for Name, Div, PE, Last, Chg, YTD.

NASDAQ NATIONAL MARKET

Table listing NASDAQ National Market stocks with columns for Name, Div, Last, Chg, YTD.

How to Read the Market Report: Here are the 525 most active stocks on the New York Stock Exchange, the 400 most active on the Nasdaq National Market and 100 most active on the American Stock Exchange...

MARKETS

CLOSING FUTURES

Table of closing futures prices for various commodities including soybeans, corn, wheat, and oil. Columns include contract name, price, and change.

BEANS

Table of soybean futures prices, including soybean meal and soybean oil.

GRAINS

Table of grain futures prices, including wheat, corn, and soybeans.

POTATOES

Table of potato futures prices.

WHEAT

Table of wheat futures prices.

SUGAR

Table of sugar futures prices.

MARKETS

Table of market prices for various commodities.

LIVESTOCK

Table of livestock prices, including cattle, hogs, and sheep.

CHEESE

Table of cheese prices.

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Table of metal and money prices.

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Table of heating oil prices.

UNLEADED GASOLINE

Table of unleaded gasoline prices.

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Table of heating oil prices.

UNLEADED GASOLINE

Table of unleaded gasoline prices.

Heat

Continued from E1. Energy Information Administration... American Electric Power Co. Inc., the nation's largest power generator, said on Tuesday...

So far this year, Alliant has sold 400 certificates totaling \$11.7 billion... The company serves some 400,000 natural gas customers in Wisconsin...

Hardwax stores like Home Depot say they are seeing high sales of energy-saving devices like low-flow shower heads, weatherstripping...

Federal disbursements from the budget are more than \$1 billion unclaimed at around \$1.9 billion since its start 1981...

Something missing?

We are able to customize our market reports. If you're interested in a stock, mutual fund, or commodity that's not in our report, give us a call and we'll try to include it.

Advertisement for Perkins, Smart & Boyd, Inc. featuring a large image of a person and text: 'When You're Serious About Investing... Call Nita Barnes Clontz for appointment'.

COMICS

B.C.

By Johnny Hart



Baby Blues

By Rick Kirkman and Jerry Scott



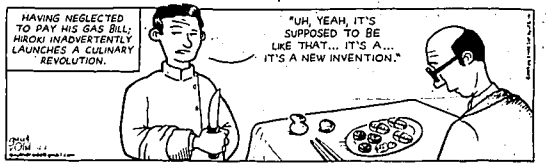
Baldo

By Hector D. Cantu and Carlos Castellanos



Brevity

By Guy & Rood



Dilbert

By Scott Adams



Doonesbury

By Gary Trudeau



The Elderberries

By Phil Frank and Joe Toiso



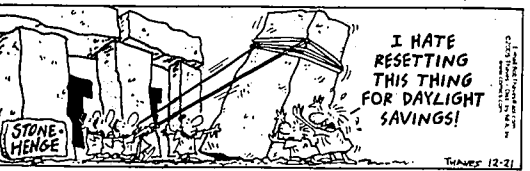
For Better or For Worse

By Lynn Johnston



Frank and Ernest

By Bob Thaves



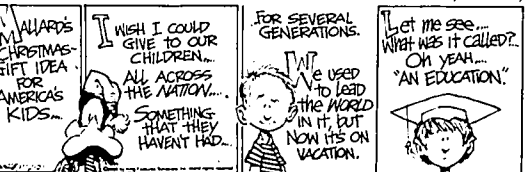
Luann

By Greg Evans



Mallard Fillmore

By Bruce Tinsley



Pearls Before Swine

By Stephan Pastis



Pickles

By Brian Crane



Rose is Rose

By Pat Brady



Zita

By Jim Borgman and Jerry Scott

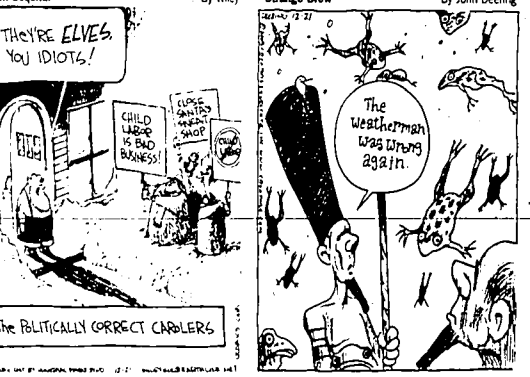


Non Sequitur

By Wiley

Strange Brew

By John Deering



Pisces still finds time for fun

IF DEC. 21 IS YOUR BIRTHDAY: With such a smooth road ahead it might be a good time to think about getting in better physical shape in 2006. You can take the bull by the horns from March through May when it is easy to start new projects and show off your leadership skills. Avoid friction with others in mid-April when your impetuosity could ignite controversy. Start making regular deposits to a savings plan at the end of January or beginning of February but avoid taking charges with new investments in late June or the end of August.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Be a fearless leader. Put your ideas in motion and never waver in your passion to see them through. A holiday harmony makes romantic interludes especially delectable this evening.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Warm yourself in front of a roaring fire. The winter solstice means the longest night of the year is at hand and this can be perfect for lovers who want to snuggle just a bit closer.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Huckle around the clock. Think with miles to go before they sleep can't take time off from daytime chores. Expect to be

HOROSCOPE
Jeraldine Saunders

the object of someone's tender attentions later this evening.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Be flexible about changes. The latest information or technology may force you to reevaluate plans. Careful analysis will show you how to honor traditions while implementing the new.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Amorous activities may be in the stars. Permanent attachments that span both time and space may come to mind tonight. Connections made on the spiritual level may be the most satisfying.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't judge a book by its cover. Peace and tranquility lurk beneath terse business dealings. The dark hours of this solstice may be a perfect time to sing a romantic duet with a special someone.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Purchase gifts that are of lasting beauty. Use your imagination to tickle the fancy of a loved one by finding a last-minute present or just being at your glamorous best this evening.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Strike while the iron is hot. In business, if you are on the right track now is the time to act. Passionate playtime may be in the stars, as those who love you the most are drawn closer.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Prove your enduring love on this shortest day of the year. People may seem terse and preoccupied where work is concerned, but you can charm a favorite playmate later tonight.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Share to show you care. Contact old friends to catch up on gossip or phone home to discuss holiday plans. Peaceful stars twinkle this evening and promote harmony between romantic partners.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): That twinkle in your eye may attract flirtatious new admirers from all walks of life. Enjoy jolly holiday pastimes with others on spreading peace and good will.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): On this first day of winter you may be busy juggling numbers to balance end-of-the-year statements or lining up presents under the tree. After work is done there is still plenty of time for fun.

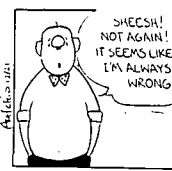
Beetle Bailey



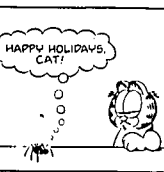
Blondie



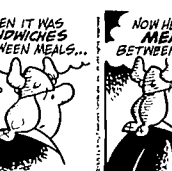
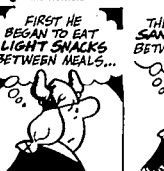
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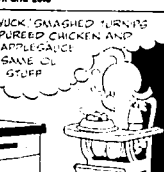
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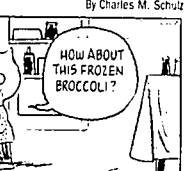
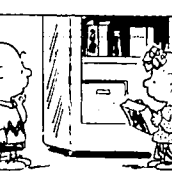
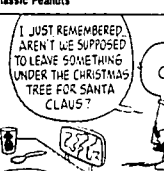
Hagar the Horrible



Hi and Lo



Classic Peanuts



The Wizard of Id



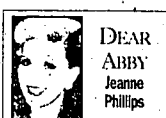
Dennis the Menace



By Mort Walker

Letter to serviceman overseas leads to love and marriage

DEAR ABBY: Some years ago, I responded to your Operation Dear Abby program. I thought it would be nice to have a pen pal while I was in high school. I'm happy to report that I got much more than I ever dreamed of.



DEAR ABBY: Jeanne Phillips

I began writing to Karl, and we corresponded for more than a year before we were able to meet in person. When we did meet, we both felt an immediate attraction to each other — but as fate would have it, he was stationed overseas again and I was leaving for college. Fortunately, we reconnected and began to date again.

Readers, as I am sure you already know, this is a time of year when our young men and women in the military feel most poignantly their separation from their families and the people they love. While it is not within our power to make that go away, it does present an opportunity to show them we appreciate the fact that they are fulfilling their duty at the risk of their own safety. Today, and during the rest of this holiday season, won't you please make a special effort to let them know they are in our thoughts and prayers. Go to www.OperationDearAbby.net and send a message of support. It'll mean the world to them.

To make a long story short, we recently celebrated our 15th wedding anniversary. We are each other's best friend and feel blessed to have three beautiful children. Thank you, Abby, for bringing us together.

DEAR ABBY: My daughter is an attractive, well-educated, single, professional woman in her early 40s. She is gay. I've been known about her sexual orientation since she was in high school and has always been

— KATHY K., ROANOKE, VA.
DEAR KATHY K.: Thank you for an outpouring of love. Many love stories began with Operation Dear Abby, and continue to be created through OperationDearAbby.net — the online version that now operates 24/7 year-round. I'm pleased that writing to a member of the armed services was not only rewarding for you, but also became the pathway to your future.

supportive. We have enjoyed a good relationship.

I have been friendly to my daughter's same-gender friends in the past, until she moved into the home of a divorced woman who claims she is also gay. Abby, this woman is in her mid-40s. She has two children, ages 5 and 12, from her previous marriage to a man. There is significant financial advantage for her to have my daughter move in with her.

Between you and me, I don't believe that she is really gay. Is it possible for a woman to become gay after many years of marriage that produced two children? Thanks for your help.

— PERPLEXED MOTHER

DEAR PERPLEXED: Yes, it is possible for a person to discover that she (or he) is gay after having been married and having children. Usually, the person felt a same-sex attraction much earlier, but denied it and married, hoping the feeling would go away. Many years — sometimes decades — later, the man or woman realizes that something is "missing," meets someone, and the feelings reemerge stronger than ever. And that's when they finally come out.

Mona Lisa got her start on pine

The Mona Lisa is not on canvas. Leonardo Da Vinci painted his famous portrait of Lisa Gherardini on pine wood. The most popular painting in the Louvre has a room of its own to accommodate the crowds of viewers.



RANXOXI KINXOX FGINXESS Jack Mingo Erin Barrett

This day in history: On Dec. 21, 1890, women got the right to vote on the Isle of Man.

with the smart idea to reverse the letters.

One estimate has it that a car kills an animal on the road every 11.5 seconds.

Alligators make very good mothers. For the first two years of life, a young gator-traveler will have almost constant protection as she goes, riding either on her back or in her mouth. She defends her babies fiercely against hungry turtles, otters, skunks and other alligators.

The first written mention of gin appeared in the late 1500s. Queen Elizabeth I sent soldiers over to Holland to help them throw off their Spanish rulers. The soldiers drank a juniper-based liquor called jenever, which they nicknamed "Dutch courage" and shortened to "gin."

What's the difference between a "margarita" and "spread"? By law, margarita has to have at least 15,000 IU of vitamin A per serving. It also has to be at least 80 percent oil. A spread doesn't have to meet those two standards. Since tigers only pounce from behind, India natives have found that wearing a Halloween-style mask back-

Snowman project outdoes them all

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — With the help of his kids and neighbors, Billy Ray Powers built more than just a snowman. They've dubbed his 16-plus-foot-tall creation "Snowzilla."

Odds & Ends
just flabbergasted." They neighbor Darrell Estes. "We walk up and knock on it to make sure it's real snow, not Styrofoam."

After using up all the snow in the family yard, they turned to neighbors' yards and carried buckets of sled. They hand-packed the snowman like an ice-cream cone.

Magazine finds a new name for kangaroo meat

SYDNEY, Australia — Is the idea of eating kangaroo steak on the grill upsetting? How about a tender cut of austras?

It took a month to complete the project. It was too big to use buttons for its eyes, so Snowzilla's gauges over a neighborhood from beer bottles. Powers says the project took on a life of its own as it got bigger and bigger. Now Snowzilla is attracting plenty of sightseers. "People stop by, and they're

A food magazine's hunt for a new name for kangaroo meat — aimed at tourists — spans the step of efforts to sell the product — has a winner, media reported Tuesday.

More than 2,700 people from 41 nations entered the Sydney-based Food Companion

International magazine competition to rename meat derived from one of Australia's best-loved — and most recognizable animals.

Before settling on "austras," judges skipped over suggestions including "kangaroo," "manoo," and "kangasaurus."

Millions of kangaroos are culled each year, to prevent them eating crops and to supply meat — but most of the kangaroo cuts go to pet food suppliers and only a small percentage is sold for human consumption.

Australia's kangaroo population fluctuates, depending on weather conditions, but is estimated at up to 50 million more than double the country's human population.

— compiled from wire reports

'Tis the season to share.

2 FOR 1

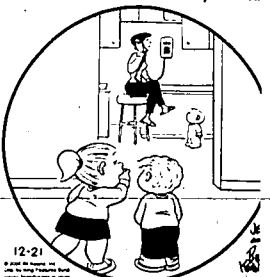
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THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Mommy's spelling things 'cause PJ's there."

"WHAT? I'M JUST PRACTICING OPENING MY PRESENTS, SO I'LL BE READY FOR CHRISTMAS."

Former hijacker freed

1985 incident led to killing of Navy diver

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — A hijacker in a terrorist act that riveted America — the 1985 seizure of a TWA jet in which a U.S. Navy diver was killed — has returned home to Lebanon, paroled by Germany after serving 19 years of a life sentence.

The United States said Tuesday it wants Lebanon to turn over Mohammed Ali Hamadi for trial in the killing of the diver, Robert Dean Stott. "We have done nothing over the years that when we believe an individual is responsible for the murder of innocent American civilians, that we will track them down and that we will bring them to justice in the United States," State Department spokesman Sean



Hamadi

McCormack said. He said the United States is talking with the Lebanese government about Hamadi, but the U.S. does not have an extradition treaty with Lebanon. Hamadi was in temporary Lebanese custody, according to a U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity because the negotiations with the Lebanese are confidential. A senior Lebanese judicial official contacted by

The Associated Press declined to comment. Trans World Airlines' Flight 847, with 145 passengers and nine crew members, was flying from Athens to Rome on June 14, 1985, when it was hijacked by Shiite Muslim militants demanding the release of hundreds of Lebanese from Israeli jails. During a 17-day ordeal, the plane was forced to crisscross the Mediterranean from Lebanon to Algeria, landing in Beirut three times before it was finally allowed to remain there.

Iranians unfazed by president's ban on Western music

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — A young woman driving through the Iranian capital blared the Eagles' "Hotel California" from her car speakers — an act that would have gotten her pulled over by police, and possibly arrested, 20 years ago during the frenzy of the Islamic Revolution. "I'm Pari Mahmoodi, who grew up in an era when many of the 1979 revolution's restrictions have been dropped or ignored, a new ban on Western music ordered this week by Iran's hard-line president seems too ludicrous to be real."

"Don't take this man seriously," the 25-year-old scoffed Tuesday, referring to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. But some fear the ban that Ahmadinejad enacted Monday is a sign of more to come. The order affects only state-run television and radio, which occasionally play Western music — without lyrics — in the background of newscasts or other programs. However, some worry it is only a first step toward the wider bans imposed after the revolution, which forbade all popular music — including Iranian — as "un-Islamic." That crackdown was applied to music shops, musicians and even music in people's homes and cars.

"We are concerned about the cultural policies of this government," said Hamid Vafaei, director of a music school in Tehran. "History has proved that a policy of restrictions can't work for long. One of the reasons for brain drain in our country is the restrictions imposed by the government on the nation." Ahmadinejad was elected in June after promising a return to the values of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's revolution. So far, he has been reflected more in foreign policy, taking a tough line in nuclear negotiations with Europe and outgunning the West with a series of anti-beach comments. In Washington, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said the ban shows that Ahmadinejad "is taking Iran 180 degrees from where the rest of the world is going."

At home, Ahmadinejad has purged government ministries, replacing pragmatists from the previous pro-reform government with former military commanders and inexperienced religious hard-liners. But so far, his administration has not attempted to roll back the freedoms Iranians grabbed during seven years of the reform government. Though the vestimentary and heavy makeup banned, Tehran's streets are filled with women in makeup with flimsy headscarves that barely cover their hair. A ban on the sale of music by female singers has not been enforced in years. "It's not inconceivable that the government could start imposing restrictions again. This president speaks as if he is living in the Stone Age. If he can't tell the people what to listen to and what not to listen to, Mohammed Reza Hosseini-pour said while browsing through a Tehran music shop. Iranian guitarist Babak Rahbipour said a wider ban on music could not be enforced because Iranians' access to the outside world through the Internet and satellite television is easier than it was in the 1980s. "Mr. Ahmadinejad maybe doesn't know his society well enough... especially among the youth," he said. "We can still get the music we would like to listen to from elsewhere. We can get it from the Internet, we can get it from Tehran's big black market, anywhere."

Western music, films and clubs in Tehran, and music is central to weddings and parties, where men and women often dance together. All of that was strictly banned during the revolutionary heyday, when imposing an "Islamic morality" was a key part of Khomeini's rule. Police stopped cars to search for music tapes, destroying any they found and sometimes arresting those caught listening to them.

ONE BUILDING, TWO IDEOLOGIES

Communist symbol of E. Germany to be razed

The Washington Post

BERLIN — In a few weeks, demolition crews will descend on a grand monstrosity that has sat empty in the German capital for 15 years: the Palace of the Republic, former home of the East German parliament and one of the few Communist relics left in the city. The palace's destruction is eagerly awaited by many Berliners who view the rust-colored structure as a shameful eyesore. And it won't be the first time that Germans have used the wrecking ball to rewrite history on this swampy plot of land in the heart of Berlin.



Protesters' signs read, 'You build castles, we become impoverished' and 'Bread instead of cake' in front of Berlin's Palace of the Republic, soon to be razed. The palace is the former home of the East German parliament and one of the few Communist relics left in the city.

In 1950, East German Communists blew up another palace that stood on the site for 500 years: the Berliner Schloss, a baroque castle on the Spree River and an architectural showpiece of the historic German capital. Officially, the castle was razed because of damage incurred at the end of World War II. But that was largely a pretext to get rid of the castle for ideological reasons: the Communists derided it as a symbol of Prussian imperialism. Today, the Communists are the ones who stand ideologically disgraced, while memories of Prussian times

are growing fonder. The present German government has given approval to plans to replace the East German parliament not with a modern addition to the city skyline but an \$800 million replica of the long-gone Berliner Schloss. Officially, German lawmakers and bureaucrats condemned the Palace of the Republic, created by dictator Erich Honecker, because it was infested with asbestos. But like the Communists half a century ago, many are driven by an ideological aversion. "In the West,"

said Uwe Hacker, a German government official in charge of the demolition, "they think of it as well as a home for Honecker and his parliament." The campaign to rebuild the castle is emblematic of how many Germans want to celebrate honorable chapters in their nation's troubled history. While not discounting the 20th century horrors of World War I, the Third Reich or the Cold War, these people say they'd like to recall parts of their past without feeling guilty. But some Germans wonder

whether the zeal to erase all remnants of the Communist era is tantamount to pretending it never happened. "You can't wipe out history just by tearing down a building," said Lothar de Maziere, the first and last democratically elected leader of East Germany, who presided over the final legislative moments of the palace in 1990. "The people who want to rebuild the castle see it as a way to reverse what happened in 1950 and go back to Prussian history."



Evgeniy Rozhkov, a local emergency official, puts together sealed bottles with water to send for testing on the banks of the threatened Amur river on Russian-China border near village Nizhnespasskoye on Tuesday.

Russian city braces for toxic slick from China

KHABAROVSK (AP) — Residents of this Far East city stocked up on water Tuesday in the hours before the arrival of a toxic slick of chemicals that could force authorities to shut off water and central heating in subzero temperatures. With the chemicals that spilled last month from a factory explosion upriver in China expected to reach Khabarovsk by Wednesday, the regional governor said hot water supplies might have to be suspended for as long as seven days and cold water for three days. "We hope we can deal with the situation but we have to prepare ourselves for a cutoff of water supplies," Gov. Viktor Ishaev was quoted as saying by the ITAR-Tass news agency. Sergei Yarov, a spokesman for the Emergency Situations Ministry, told The Associated Press late Tuesday that the spill was still about 44 miles up the Amur River from city limits, and it was unclear

when the slick would arrive. The Nov. 13 chemical plant explosion dumped 100 tons of toxins into northeastern China's Songhua River, disrupting water supplies to millions of Chinese and straining relations with neighboring Russia. Apartment blocks in this city of 500,000, where daytime temperatures hovered around 4 below zero, are warned by water heated at central facilities. Authorities said they may have to shut down that central heating to stop the chemicals from entering municipal pipes. Dmitry Koteney, a 60-year-old retired serviceman, bought two 1.3-gallon bottles of water, frozen cutlery and plates, and pounds of plastic fruit. He said his apartment was full of water stored in canisters, washing bowls and cooking pots. "This is a Khabarovsk resident's New

Year reserves," he said. Others, like Galina Osipova, opted to leave the city. The 30-year-old wanted in line to buy a plane ticket to Moscow, 3,800 miles away. "I don't have any faith in the authorities and I have decided to wait out the effects of this spill with my relatives in Moscow," she said. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov played down the health threat to Khabarovsk residents and praised cooperation with China. "All necessary measures are being taken," he said. "There is no threat whatsoever for residents of these Russian regions, thanks to the measures which have been taken, including measures taken in close cooperation with the Chinese side, which has helped ensure a normal regime of the river passage by our territory that would pose no threat to life."

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200 Employment	600 Real Estate Rentals	1000 Transportation	BUSINESS HOURS Monday - Friday 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
300 Financial	700 Agriculture		
400 Education	800 Merchandise		



LANDS FOR LEASE
BIA ACCEPTS BID FOR FARM/PASTURE LEASES
The Bureau of Indian Affairs is now accepting sealed bids until noon, January 24, 2006 on various, farm/pasture leases on the Fort Hall Reservation.

PUBLISH: December 16, 18, 21, 23, 25, 28, 30, 2005, January 1, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22 and 24, 2006

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF ANNUAL OPEN PUBLIC MEETING
People for Pets - Magic Valley Humane Society, Inc.
Wednesday, January 4, 2006 at 6:00PM

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Open Public Meeting of People for Pets - Magic Valley Humane Society, Inc. will be held on Wednesday, January 4, 2006 at 6:00 PM at 4200 Victory Avenue, Twin Falls, Idaho.

PUBLISH: Wednesday, December 21, 2005 and Wednesday, December 28, 2005

PUBLIC NOTICE
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101 Lost and Found

FOUND Bull Mastiff, Black face and cream body. Wearing a collar with a vet tag. West Paul corn maze. Call 208-338-9003.

FOUND Christmas Gifts in Macy's parking lot on Saturday 12/10 in Twin Falls. Call 208-338-2029 to identify items.

FOUND German Shepherd X, male with new black collar, very young. Found near Rock Creek Point. Call 734-4385.

FOUND Lab, female, black, near Froyway and Hwy 20. Call 438-8967 or 431-4758.

FREE DOGS TO GOOD HOME (for Christmas?) - Were dropped off in King Hill, now to Jerome. All dogs one year old or well-mannered. One male and two female lab crosses.

LOST Blue Heeler, male, black, indian design collar. Lost in Cottonwood Springs Road 12-16. Call 208-731-3610.

LOST Border collie/American Eskimo Mix male dog. All white except for 2 big black patches on his face. Curled fluffy tail. Blue collar, 500 South in Heyburn. Call 208-676-4599 or 670-2771.

LOST English Setter, male, white with black spots, black ears, injured right leg. Wearing violet colored collar. Lost in the vicinity of 100 W 500 S in Jerome. Answers to: Fambou. Please make our sad Christmas a happy one. Reward. Call 308-3598 or 308-3596.

LOST Golden wedding band on 12-11-05 near ASW on Addison. Reward for return. Call 927-0005.

LOST Retriever female in the area of 3200 South and 2200 East in Wendell. Call 208-536-2415.

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Wanted experienced, milkers, also assistant herdsmen & breeder. Apply in person 911 E 4000 N, Buhl. Call 208-543-8283.

DRIVER
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200 Employment

COSMETOLOGIST
Experienced Cosmetologist. Drug free work place. Call 736-2793

DRIVER
Long haul driver. CDL Class A req. Call 208-788-9012

DRIVER
CDL Class A, home most weeks. Drug free work place. Robert Leitch LLC. Call 208-543-0118.

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EDUCATION
Fisher School District is seeking applications for a Senior Project Coordinator for the 2005-2006 school year. This position will be 12 hours a week for 18 weeks. Open until filled. To apply contact Sandra Roberts, Fisher School District 700 Stevens Ave, Filer, ID 83325 or (208) 328-5991

ELECTRICIAN
Journeymen Electrician needed for Roberts Electric. Commercial & residential construction in the Sun Valley area. Full time, year round employment. Benefits, 401k, vacation, pension & insurance. Prides in employee ownership. P.O. Box 1020 Howard Road at 208-788-3238 for more info.

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200 Employment MEDICAL CNAs or NAs assisted livings, evenings and nights. 208-212-9115

200 Employment RESTAURANT Cashier & Cook Both positions are open plus 12 available mornings & evenings and be 19 yrs old. Bilingual a plus.

401 School Instruction Message Technician Training 109 hours, begins 2/06/06. Starts on Fri. 7-10pm

502 Homes For Sale RUPERT 5 bdrm, 3 bath, split, level, corner heat/AC, new windows

513 Acreage and Lots BUNL KANAKA RAPIDS \$31,000 Breathtaking views from this wonderful property

500 Unfurnished Homes FILER Clean 1 bdrm to 2 bdrm homes, 3375-5400 month + deposit

504 Unfurnished Apartments BUNL cute 1 bdrm, well kept low utilities, no smoking/pets. \$350 + dep. 308-3668

SALES The Wood River Journal Seeking an assertive and dynamic Sales Representative for an expanding weekly newspaper based in Idaho.

SALES Telemarketer for Industrial products & supplies. Call 208-735-1808

SECRETARY Top notch Legal Secretary/Paralegal for growing interesting practice in a beautiful office.

SHOSHONE Brand new 2,300 square foot manufactured home on permanent foundation

FILER 4 bdrm, 2 bath newer mfg. home on permanent foundation. 308-3320 or 326-4729

FILER Clean 1 bdrm to 2 bdrm homes, 3375-5400 month + deposit. Call 208-731-0919

TWIN FALLS Clean 3 bdrm, 1 bath, all garage, \$525 + dep. 308-731-0919

SALES Outside Advertising Executive We seek a motivated self-starter to sell newspaper advertising for The Times-News in both the Burley and Twin Falls markets.

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TWIN FALLS 2500 sq ft, 4 bdrm, 2 bath w/ig, lot, mature landscaping. 733-9004 or 490-0426

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SALES Do you want to wake up every morning and look forward to going to work? If so, then Edge Wireless is where you need to be!

WAREHOUSE (2) Warehouse space 10,000 sq ft. Must be able to lift 55 lbs. repeatedly. Full-time, 40+ hrs. Apply at Kimberly Seed 521 Hwy 20 East, Drug Free Work Place.

HAZELTON County back home conveniently located between Twin Falls and Burley. 4 bedroom, 2 bath, fireplace, 2 car garage with water and sewer system.

STATE REALTY, INC. 208-734-0400 TWIN FALLS income property, 40 acres w/ice houses, both are rented. Salmon track water. 208-326-5450

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TWIN FALLS 2 bdrm, 1 bath, bonus room, carpet, tile, new appliances, garage, some utilities paid, no pets. \$555 + dep. 313 614 8270. Call Nathan 734-6230

SALES Superior interpersonal communication skills, computer aptitude, adaptability, and a consistently positive attitude required. We offer long-term incentive opportunities, commission potential and a 401(k) plan.

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Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2005

THE ACES ON BRIDGE

Bobby Wolff

"Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose."

— Gertrude Stein

In the high-stakes rubber bridge game at TGR's Bridge Club in London, all undoubted making contracts are scored up as made exactly rather than with overtricks. Doing so speeds up the play dramatically...

Having said that, all close contracts are defended with vigor, and given the pedigree of many of the players, some fine coups are recorded. On today's hand, West was Ronnie Rubin, who represented the United States in Portugal this October...

Three spades became the final contract, and Rubin led the diamond king, on which Hallberg echoed with the six. Dummy was intimidating, and Rubin knew his high cards were poorly placed.

So Rubin continued with his second top diamond followed by a low one, on which Hallberg cooperated by discarding a heart. Declarer ruffed and did his best by leading a fourth diamond, trying to pitch a heart himself, but Hallberg ruffed in this time. Declarer overruffed, but now when Hallberg came in with his ace of spades, he was able to play his last heart. Rubin won and returned a heart for East to trump which the ruff was transferred from one suit to the other.

NORTH ♠ Q 9 8 3 12-21-A ♥ K 7 ♦ Q J 9 5 4 ♣ A Q

WEST ♠ A 4 10 8 3 2 ♥ A K 8 7 ♦ A K ♣ A K

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

SOUTH ♠ K J 10 6 ♥ J 9 4 ♦ 10 3 ♣ J 10 9 5

Vulnerable: North-South Dealer: West

The bidding: South West North East 1 ♠ 2 ♠ 3 ♠ 3 ♠ 3 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass

Opening lead: Diamond king

BID WITH THE ACES 12-21-B

South holds: ♠ Q 9 8 3 ♥ K 7 ♦ Q J 9 5 4 ♣ A Q

ANSWER: Bid three spades. Although your partner's call may not be forcing, it is constructive, and he can still have anything up to an opening bid. You do not have enough to drive the hand to game, but you need to show your extras and trump support...

So you would like to contact Bobby Wolff, e-mail him at bdyw@worldnet.att.net

611 Heating and Air Conditioning BLAZE QUEEN, free standing wood stove with cast-iron radiator. Some pipe, nice. \$450. 208-739-1603.

612 Auctions/Auctioneers BILL DOWNS AUCTION SERVICE (208) 467-1712 www.billdowns.com

Upcoming Auctions Check Out The Magic Valley Section of The Times-Herald for the auction calendar, overviews and on-line at 247 at www.magicvalley.com

613 Jewelry ENGAGEMENT RING North Diamond 1.03 carat, certified. Marquis Brilliant cut. Approx. value, \$2,800. Asking \$3,500 or best offer. Call 208-734-2626.

614 Furniture & Carpet DRESSER antique, white, vanity with mirror, and table, \$200 for all 4 pieces. 2x2x4 and table \$50 for both. 2-banana chairs \$20. 75 color, 100 734-3669/16pm

615 Exercise Equipment AIR SCISSOR, Body by Jacks Paid \$250, sell for \$225. New, never used. \$200. Call 208-654-2158 or 312-2669

616 Miscellaneous For Sale SADDLES (2) leather, 16-18 inch, 1-8225 and 1-6196. Stove heavy duty gas, 2000. 195 Snow blade with wheel weights and chains for tractor. \$195. 208-733-8484.

617 Musical Instruments DRUM SET Synco, good condition. \$250. Offer. Please call 208-760-4091.

618 Musical Instruments ORGAN, excellent condition with bench. \$300. Call 208-543-5460.

619 Musical Instruments PIANO Baldwin baby grand, very nice. \$8,500. 208-733-3905.

620 Tools & Machinery DIGITAL GRAND AGAR, Kurtzwell-Mark series. Like new. \$10,000. Call 208-924-4378 or 529-4378

621 Musical Instruments DIGITAL PIANO Yamaha Clavinova CVP-20, 76 keys, 22 voices, 32 rhythms + 12 auto accompaniment \$1,000. 208-626-6199

622 Musical Instruments KARAOKE JVC components system with 2000 CD's and \$400.00 offer. For more information call Steve 208-200-1002.

623 Musical Instruments ORGAN, Yamaha with bench, includes family organ course and lots of music. \$350. Please call 734-24280.

624 Musical Instruments PIANO 1916 Howard upright light player piano. Excellent tone. \$300. Call 208-320-1777.

625 Musical Instruments PIANO Baldwin baby grand, very nice. \$8,500. 208-733-3905.

626 Musical Instruments TRUMPET Yamaha warranty care, Exc. condition. \$300.00 offer. Call 208-467-2612.

627 Musical Instruments DIGITAL GRAND AGAR, Kurtzwell-Mark series. Like new. \$10,000. Call 208-924-4378 or 529-4378

628 Wanted To Buy WANTED FUR CELLO. Also a CHICKEN COOP or other supplies. Call 208-525-5715.

629 Wanted To Buy WANTED 300 Winch-ester mag rifle or a 300 Weatherby mag rifle. 208-424-1721.

630 Wanted To Buy WANTED Kawasaki motorcycle, 900 Z1, 750Z2, 500H1, (3 cyls.) 1969-1975. Call 208-208-0929.

631 Wanted To Buy WANTED Old gas pumps or gas station items. Top money paid. Call 208-586-0274.

632 Wanted To Buy WANTED TO BUY 2 young ducks preferably a pair for pets. Call 420-3674.

633 Wanted To Buy WANTED TO BUY boots, skis & skis. Women's & men's is Exc condition. (3) \$225 per set. Call 208-543-5570.

634 Wanted To Buy SCOOTER Amigo 3 wheel electric, new battery, adjustable seat. \$100. 208-543-5570

635 Wanted To Buy BENEILI Auto Super Black Eagle, 26 barrel, 5 chokes. \$700. Call 208-543-5570

636 Wanted To Buy REMINGTON 700, 270 caliber, with scope 4400 scope. Almost brand new condition. \$425. 208-543-5570

637 Wanted To Buy SHOTGUN Remington 1100, 12 ga. Like new. No cracks on stock or barrel. \$500.00 offer. 324-2428

638 Sporting Equipment MEMBERSHIP Jerome County Club membership for sale. \$500. Call 208-283-4386

639 Snowboards BACK COUNTRY Boots, skis & skis. Women's & men's is Exc condition. (3) \$225 per set. Call 208-543-5570

640 ATVs ATV TRAILER 4 place tandem axle \$1,000. Call 208-431-2147.

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642 Polaris 90 Sportsman 700, ready for action. \$450. Call 208-543-5570

643 Polaris 90 Sportsman 500, only 400 miles. \$5,000. Call 208-312-7700

644 Motorcycles HONDA 1100XR, perfect condition. \$1,000. Offer. Call 324-4624

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610 Furniture & Carpet DRESSER antique, white, vanity with mirror, and table, \$200 for all 4 pieces. 2x2x4 and table \$50 for both. 2-banana chairs \$20. 75 color, 100 734-3669/16pm

611 King Pillowtop \$239, mattress and box set. Never used. \$200 per cord. 208-420-6350

612 King Size Quilt SET Salfan quilt, 3 mo. like new. \$85. Call 208-208-2500

613 Love Seat Leather, leather, exc. cond. \$200. 208-543-5570

614 Mattress Queen \$40. King \$60. December 21, 16. Cash only. Express. 1910 Fillmore St. N.

615 Mattress Set 7 Piece Orthopedic, 399. Brand new. Can deliver. 208-420-6350

616 Queen Pillowtop \$109, mattress and box set brand new, factory warranty. Can deliver. 208-420-6350

610 Furniture & Carpet DRESSER antique, white, vanity with mirror, and table, \$200 for all 4 pieces. 2x2x4 and table \$50 for both. 2-banana chairs \$20. 75 color, 100 734-3669/16pm

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620 Miscellaneous BEDROOM SET queen size, 4 pieces. \$100. Stroller, double pogo. \$70. 734-8656

621 Computer Desk, corner unit with unique curve, light maple veneer, silver accents, new cond. \$100. 208-543-5570

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